

THE PINNACLE CLUB JOURNAL

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Edited by

- - - Dorothy Pilley (Mrs. I. Armstrong Richards)

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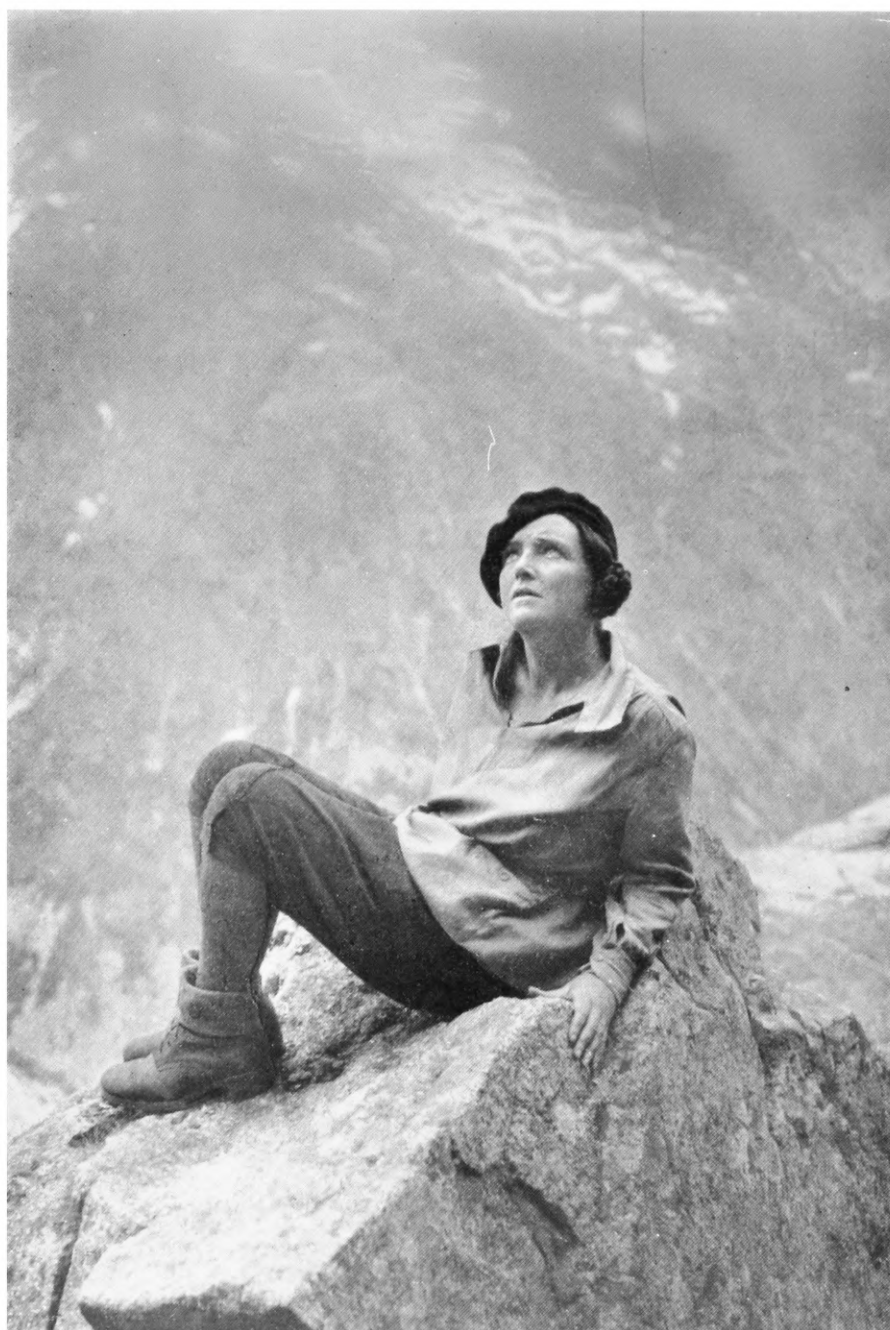
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1932-34



I. A. Richards

DOROTHY PILLEY
PRESIDENT 1933—35

The Pinnacle Club Journal 1935

EDITED BY
DOROTHY PILLEY
(Mrs. I. Armstrong Richards)

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THE PINNACLE CLUB

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THE OPENING OF THE EMILY KELLY HUT

5TH NOVEMBER, 1932

‘THE objects of the Club are to foster the independent development of rock-climbing amongst women, and to bring together those who are interested in the pursuit. . .’

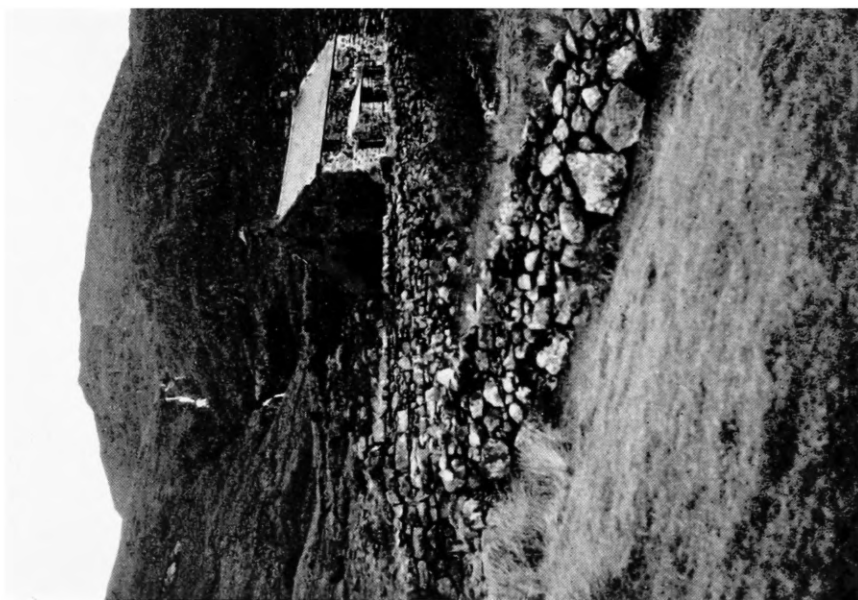
So reads Rule 2, and though its phraseology is of the stereotyped rule-book order, the spirit which inspired its statement will always shine through the stilted words. Our Founder had faith in her sex, saw visions of women working out for themselves a mastery of the art of rock-climbing, and, by the pure flame of her enthusiasm and example, inspired others to see like visions. Great would have been her content had she been there on the 5th of November, 1932, to see her Club take over the little cottage in Cwm Dyli, a place, if ever there was one, to ‘bring together those who are interested in the pursuit.’ Pinnacle Club members are scattered far and wide, and, until 1932, had no headquarters where they might be sure of meeting each other.

That is all changed now. The hope that we might someday and somewhere have a Hut of our own had been simmering gently in Club minds for some time, and at the Easter Meet, in 1932, the cottage in Cwm Dyli was noticed by a party returning from Lockwood’s Chimney. Lowe immediately recognised the possibilities of the little place, and, with characteristic promptitude, started negotiations with its owners at once. Seven months later our Hut—as we could at last call it—was ready for its official opening. The sturdy little building had been transformed from a storehouse for all the odds and ends from the North Wales Power Station, to a neat habitation, and on the Fifth of November members and friends came trooping down, in response to a widely broadcast invitation, to the opening ceremony.

After days of storm and rain, the weather had cleared beautifully to sun and crisp frost, and as our visitors crossed the slab footbridge and came up the fell side, they saw the Hut at its best, a snug, grey building, backed and surrounded by russet bracken and lichened outcrops, with the dark crags towering up

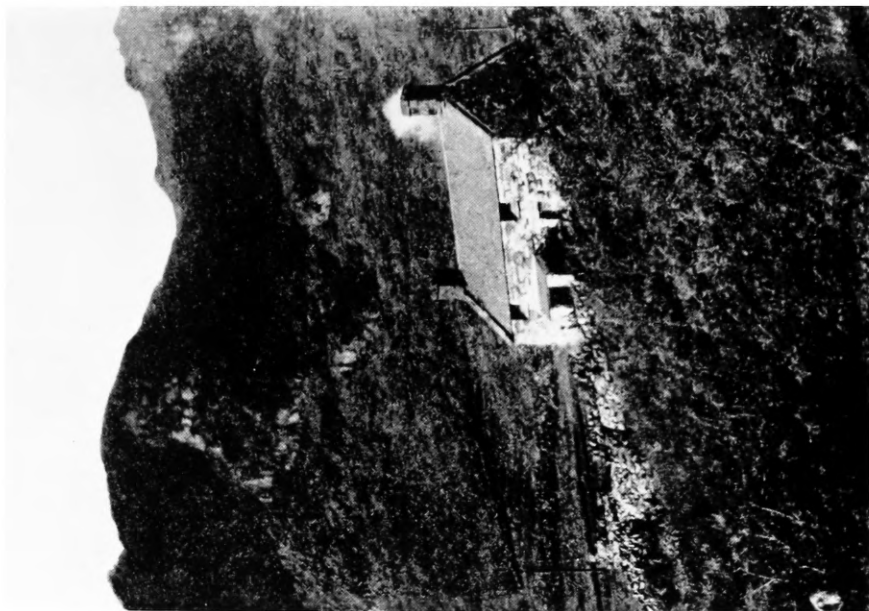
behind, and the foaming stream hurling itself down its rocky channel in front. As the guests arrived at the cottage, they were ushered in and carefully escorted round the spick and span interior. The great open fireplace at one end, with its huge, rough-hewn cross-beam, was the feature which caught immediate attention. In the centre of the beam hung a beautiful little oak panel bearing, in carved relief, the inscription : ' Emily Kelly Hut, 1932.' Both the thought and the gift of the panel were Lowe's, again a characteristic piece of work. The large lower room with its flagged and cemented floor, divided into two parts of unequal size by the stairway, and holding a tiny kitchen recess in one corner, was inspected with interest by the company, who also trickled up and down the stairs on their way to and from the long airy dormitory on the top floor. Here the green sailcloth bunks, gaily bedded with scarlet blankets, were proudly displayed by those who were going to sleep in them for the first time that night.

As four o'clock approached, members gently shepherded their guests out of the cottage, and the whole company gathered round the entrance, some perching on the low wall opposite the door, others standing in close groups. The time for the real opening had come. The door of the cottage was closed, and Dr. Corbett, our then President, stood alone in the little stone porch to perform the simple ceremony. She welcomed our guests, many of them representatives of kindred and sympathetic clubs ; she spoke of the Club, of its growth and advance ; of the joy it would have given to its Founder to realise that her hopes and faith were being justified. She gave thanks for and to Lowe, without whose enterprise, persistence, and hard work the cottage would never have become our Hut, and rejoiced that we had, in her, the very best Hut Secretary possible. It was a perfect little speech, simply worded, and very moving to those of us whose memory could go back to the Club's earliest days. Being made by Dr. Corbett, it finished on a practical note : ' And now I hope you'll all come in and have tea.' And it was a tea worthy of the occasion, from the huge and decorative trifle in a washing basin, down to tiny and delicious cakes, all contributed by willing members. The Hut's modest store of utensils was utterly inadequate for the boiling of water for tea, so rows of buckets stood on the fire and primus stoves.



Evelyn Pirie

THE EMILY KELLY HUT, CWM DYLI



Evelyn Clarke

A *few* of our guests were able to find seats on the orange-and-blue canvassed chairs, these being one of the first gifts to the Hut from a member of a kindred club. The feet of some of the most privileged were allowed to rest on the President's gift, a superb wool hearthrug made by herself in pattern of ice-axes and looped rope.

The crowd chattered and laughed, drank tea and spilt it over their very near neighbours, ate what they could reach of the good things, and gradually oozed out of the door into less congested space. The crowning glory of the Hut was switched on—electric light ! And we looked hopefully for signs of envy in the eyes of members of other less fortunate clubs, whose huts have no such blessing. Outside, the sky had darkened to dusk, stars came out, and frost crinkled under foot. Most of our friends departed, and we could see the lights of their cars winding up the steep road towards Pen-y-gwryd. A few who were left with us magically produced some fireworks—was it not, after all, also Guy Fawkes' Day ?—and a riotous half-hour was spent in final celebration. Supper followed, the last guests were evicted, and at length a contentedly weary band of some fifteen members were free to enjoy their first night's rest in their new Club Home. It had been a good day.

A WEEK-END MEET AT THE EMILY KELLY HUT

By

EVELYN WORSLEY LOWE

THE train deposits you at Bettws-y-coed, and the Bus at Capel Curig or Pen-y-gwryd, or your car on the very threshold.

Is there smoke going up? Good! Someone else has got there first, and that someone is sure to have a kettle boiling and the huge red tea-pot handy, and there'll be a mug for you.

Dump your rucksack on your favourite bunk upstairs, and change into 'unwomanly rags,' and the Hut feeling sets in . . . the feeling that nothing matters much except eating, sleeping, and climbing.

It's always sausage and mash for Friday's supper, so that people can have fresh lots of it as they arrive, and of course, fruit and cream; that Cwm Dyli cream that excels all other brands!

A rather creaky first night, because we are not tired enough to sleep soundly in bunks. Tomorrow everyone will sleep too soundly to want to turn over, or to turn out when Sunday morning comes.

Saturday morning, and a general stir; those who wake first kindly get busy on fires and Primus stoves and sweep the place out; then they leave the rest to the later risers, while they go off to rid themselves of dirt and dust under the waterfall . . . lovely to be met by the smell of frying bacon as you return from that quick dip in the stream that comes straight from Snowdon, with an appetite straight from Snowdon, or some equally strong source.

Breakfast over and sandwiches cut, and the washing up done by a new set of recruits; and everyone is ready for 'Off' by about 10-30. A long day's climbing, and then back to the Hut in time to get the enormous Saturday Night Stew going, or alternatively the Saturday Night Boiled Hams with Vegetables. A match to drying stove and fire, left ready laid, and all is cosy in a very short time, and the red tea-pot again in great requisition.

A WEEK-END MEET AT THE EMILY KELLY HUT 11

The latest laggards are in by half-past eight, and then our most important event, dinner, takes place ; and after those who have not cooked it have washed up, more drinking round an immense fire, with climbing talk, depending somewhat in tone on what is drunk ! However, the larger the meet, the more likely that the beverage is tea or coffee, which ensure a fairly meek and moderate account of moderate climbing . . . And so to bed.

Sunday is a more or less pleasant repetition of Saturday, according to the weather vouchsafed, except that towards evening the shades of our prison houses are closing in upon us. The party begins to thin out on Sunday night. Monday, if it is a Bank Holiday or Half-Term Meet, still has its climbing party, and even its dining party, but Monday night or Tuesday morning sees a general exodus, though even then some of us do the Milestone Buttress on the way home, loath to let our week-end go.

CIP-OLWG

By

EVELYN WORSLEY LOWE

WITH the acquiring of the Emily Kelly Hut in Cwm Dyli in November, 1932, members began a much more thorough exploration of the climbs in the Snowdon and Ogwen districts, even sometimes making a pilgrimage to Cwm Silyn.

The subject is very near my heart, but for that very reason I have hesitated long over this article, being well aware that I am far from being a worthy chronicler with the worthy chronicles of others before my eyes. . . . notably 'More of Arfon,' written by A. B. Hargreaves who knows the, for me, forbidden cliffs of Clogwyn d'ur Arddu, and the newest climbs on Dinas Mot and Glydr Fach, and can compare these with climbs of the same calibre in Cumberland. I can do none of these things; I can only run the loving eye of memory over the oft-described routes, gloat or laugh over those special days that are haloed for ever, and raise my pæan of praise to Lliwedd as I pass. If I can find a man so brave (or so deluded) that he will dangle me over Clogwyn or drag me slowly up the new route on Dinas Mot, I will add my broken postscript to this article, but failing that unlikely occurrence, you must bear with the singing over of an old song.

When the Hut was opened I possessed one lead on Lliwedd, Route II. I knew it wet and I knew it dry, in boots and in rubbers. So everyone who wanted to, went up Route II in my wake. But by the time I felt I couldn't bear to see it or hear of it again, other Route II leaders had emerged, and I could knock off and turn to other routes. Do not misunderstand me, Route II is a fine climb, and I am just as pleased to grasp the T.G. hold each time as I was that first time—that first time when we neither of us knew how it was tackled, and each tried the pitch three times, all by different methods, except for the return journey!

With a very few exceptions the best climbing days have been those when things went wrong; either when we did a far better route than we meant to do, in error, or when weather conditions altered the cliffs past recognition. To such days belongs the ascent of East Gully in mistake for Slanting Gully in an impene-

trable mist, mist which changed when half-way up to heavy rain. I shall always in future miss the piquancy added by the fact that the descriptions of the pitches of Slanting Gully, as read aloud by my Second, could be made to fit the obstacles we were dubiously regarding, except that the pitches got stiffer and stiffer instead of easier and easier. When I recognised the cave with the well-nigh impossible exit (at this time a waterfall) and the utterly horrible variation exit by a traverse, my Second, who was finding life a burden, chose that moment to ask : 'What made you sure that this was the Slanting Gully?' In grim amusement I replied, 'Because it looks so like it.' For I thought that with a traverse over doubtful blocks before us, the morale of the party could stand no shocks! As soon as the four of us had negotiated the traverse in safety I regained the gold standard, saying : 'This, girls, is the East Gully, and we've done a better climb than we thought we were doing.' And only one of my gallant crew called me Ananias!

The hardest, longest, and best day's climbing I have had was another such day of mistakes retrieved. For a long time I had been anxious to do Avalanche, for Archer Thompson's description reads most alluringly. The friend with whom I do most of my climbing did not know the route, and wet weather put us off on several occasions. Finally, a day was set aside for it and we met, four strong, at Pen-y-pass, one day shortly after Easter. Light snow and sleet had fallen overnight, but another friend who had been climbing from Pen-y-pass declared it a perfect day for Avalanche 'Too much snow?' 'Not a bit of it.' 'Wouldn't care to lead it in boots?' 'Why not? Quite all right for boots.' So off we set, two parties of two for the sake of speed. The other leader had been having a spell of soft living in London, and soon discovered that he was not himself, so the swift couple of couples became one slow string of four. As we got up higher every hold was full of frozen sleet which needed clearing, for the holds are small on this route. The larger ledges were filled with the old snow, piled high and frozen hard, and the belays were hidden under these hard banks. It took a long time for all four to assemble at the Sickie, and when we read the description of this fearsome pitch we decided that if we could avoid it we had better! Prospecting to the left I decided that we were where we were not, and that I could

get out from there to the rocks of easier angle further left. After two virgin pitches of real difficulty, I realised that I was quite wrong, but much preferred going up to going down the whole thing as last man, insufficiently belayed ! I parked myself at the foot of a pitch which might or might not have had a boot on it before, but gave no sign; I thought it ought to go, but after a freezing wait of forty-five minutes sitting on a small spike of rock on a ledge of frozen snow, I attacked it in a state of rock-bottom melancholy. It was a lovely pitch ; a tricky pitch ; it only just went. Confronted by a breast-high bulwark of snow above it, I stood on a pin of rock and suddenly babbled to my friends below, for I saw that ' the issue was no longer in doubt,' we had joined the Central Route below its best pitch, and we finished it out in good spirits, getting off the mountain just as dark fell. Our fourth man who had had leanings towards ' a nice moderate ' was rather tired ; she said that ' her opinion of Lliwedd was confirmed ' A dark saying, though we did not press for a clearer translation. Our second said, ' So is mine, an admirable mountain ! ' He of the intemperate London life said that it was the hardest day he'd ever had. So we made plans to come again on a perfect Summer's day, and skip up Avalanche in rubbers and enjoy ourselves—which I did in other company—but though the Sickle is a clever pitch, and though it tried to scare me by coming away under my foot, our mixed route remains pre-eminent, and the best wear is boots with blunt nails, and the best conditions are snowy ones . . . to my way of thinking !

Pinnacles may be interested in some impressions of other routes on Lliwedd. Those I do know I have enjoyed, with few exceptions. The exceptions are all situated on the West Peak, where the rock is much interspersed by heather and bilberry. On the West, Slanting Buttress, a moderate route on pleasant rock with one or two really good pitches. Slanting Gully, if nothing is shirked is very good indeed, but keep the party small or else everyone's serenity is taxed by falling stones ! Craig Yr Aderyn has at least one difficult pitch, especially if you jam your boot in it, as I always do, and then have to hang upside down undoing the laces !

Bracket Gully is a nice climb, and Elliptical and Rocker Routes are interesting, sound and clean.

On the East Peak, the Horned Crag is diverting, with an ingenious ending ; my old friend Route II 'always the same' ; Roof Route, a very fine route demanding good balance, and in one place, for the short, a spot of faith. Shallow Gully, not really a gully climb at all, slabby and delicate and hard.

Stack and Shelf, and other such variations are rather hard to find, but sporting when found.

Central Chimney Route, to which I have only just been introduced, is an excellent way up the mountain, for not only is it attractive in itself and hard enough, but it deposits you at the foot of Red Wall, and that in its turn leads you to the start of J. Longland's and A. B. Hargreaves' further route, and *that* pops you out right on top, after some lovely, light-hearted climbing.

Another good linking of routes is Central Gully with the exit on to East Peak, traverse across the Gully and finish up Great Chimney, which, take heart, is not as difficult as the description !

I have saved to the very last that delicious upward flight, so well named Paradise. Three pitches of, roughly, a hundred feet each, and each one better than the last. I am grateful to the man who found Paradise. . . . And now, 'it's time for us to leave her,' Lliwedd, 'most admirable mountain.'

Another early excitement was Crib Goch Buttress, and the excitement remains, not only in the long stride from the Pinnacle, but throughout the whole steep, airy route, all too short.

Clogwyn y Ddysgl is an interesting crag, with its strange strata, the whole cliff apparently standing on a low layer of dark brown sandstone, for all the world like an imposing cake with a layer of chocolate filling ! The cliff itself is of excellent hard rock, and some of the routes are excellent hard routes, too ! The 'Unclimbed Crack' is still unclimbed by me, but I know the other older routes. I think the Gambit is undoubtedly the best, taken as a whole ; Black Gates has the one stiff pitch, but the Gates passed, only pleasant moderate climbing remains. The Rectory Chimneys make an interesting route, their characteristic being the peculiar method of entering the chimneys ; never an honest start from the foot, but a delicate traverse along a wall and a sudden round-the-corner assault, landing the climber in the middle of the chimney. The big chimney varies very

much according to season ; with ice on the chimney wall we have been held up a long time, whereas I had no recollection of the pitch done in rubbers in dry weather.

The situation of Clogwyn y Ddysgl, frowning down on the tiny jewel-green Llyn Glas, at the head of that unfrequented cwm, would draw me back each year if there were nothing better to climb than Ribbon and Clasp and Organ routes, but with good climbing and green lakes, and the hope of a new variation finish everywhere, it is pleasantly surprising that its comparative solitude remains, even on Summer days.

There are gullies here for Winter work, and the Parson's Nose and Arête make a good route under Winter conditions ; also the gullies on Y Wyddfa, though I have no personal knowledge of them.

Coming into the Ogwen valley I must begin with the climbs on Tryfaen. Even as I began my climbing on Tryfaen—and what kind memories I have of that mountain—such sympathetic rock for a beginner, who liked a step the size of her boot, and a real pillar-box to hawl on ! The Milestone Buttress, starting with the Ordinary and ending (unless someone discovers a super-super-direct) with the Super-Direct ; the North Buttress—that, too, was bracketed with the Milestone Ordinary as my 'firstest friend.' There was no one to climb with for two long months after my first outing, so I used to do those routes (the only ones I knew) over and over again by myself, and I can still feel the stomachic twinge I used to suffer as I crossed the exposed step on the North Traverse.

Then came the Gashed Crag, South Buttress, North Gully with its guillotine cave pitch ; and then, sudden excitement, someone had made a new route on Tryfaen, King's climb, and we mustered at its foot on the first day possible. The start is an awkward balance movement, when you beseech your friends on the Heather Terrace to make your bed soft and to make your bed soon. But you don't come off that time ; and then you feel more like it than ever on a later pitch where an unseen handhold and a rolling movement towards same, relying on friction, save you yet again. It's a pity that you can walk away from this route so easily ; if it were only continuous climbing it would be such a very good route. The Grooved Arête is certainly the best of the long routes on Tryfaen, interesting

and difficult enough, without being beyond any good steady climber.

A long time later came the fairy-footed things on the Terrace Wall ; Cheek, Long Chimney, and Terrace Wall Variant; but I fear I shall have to be more than fairy-footed before I tackle Kirkus' and Waller's routes next door ! I shall need an astral body, in fact !

From Tryfaen a well-marked path leads us to Glydyr Fach ; that grand little crag above Llyn Bochlywd. Splendid rock and very steep, with very few moderate, and not a few of the super-severes ; notably Lot's Groove and Lot's Wife.

I first made the acquaintance of Beta, on the slab below the North-East Buttress, followed by the Chasm ; one pitch, the Vertical Vice, is an awkward lead and redeems the route from mediocrity. Our later use of the Chasm has been mostly for quick descents, but I confess to circumventing the Vice in these descents.

Next came climbs on the Hawk's Nest and Gable Buttress ; then the Slab route with its very good first pitch ; and then came a happy day when a more experienced climber came along, saying : 'What about Alpha and the Direct ?' That was a day to remember, for I fell in love . . . with the Direct. Some climbs one thinks are very fine climbs, some one respects and is glad to have experienced, but never again, thank you ! Some one likes, some one dislikes ; some (for me, the Devil's Kitchen) fill one with morbid melancholy ; and with a few one falls in love. My loves in Wales are Paradise and the Direct ; In Cumberland, Keswick Brothers, and Woodhouse's and Herford's on the Pinnacle Face ; and in the Alps I had fallen in love, on paper, with the Zmutt ridge of the Matterhorn, and I remained so after our meeting last August.

To get back to the Direct—first love—that day neither of us did the final crack, which left me with an unsolved problem for next time. The next time was a grey day, but for two Pinnaclers a very bright one. Drizzle was in the offing, and as I definitely preferred to try leading it in rubbers, we felt we must snatch it swiftly if it were to go at all. The route was just as charming as I had remembered it, and I had the added joy of watching Ruth enjoy each pitch for the first time. We were bubbling with suppressed enthusiasm, though the

drizzle had begun ; we even looked at Gibson's Chimney. Having looked, we traversed soberly round to the Alternative Toe and Finger traverse. Everything went beautifully ; even the final crack yielded itself, taking only our breath as payment. I was there again this Summer ; it was just as good ; I think it always will be, and if it *should* ever feel a shade easy there's still Gibson's Chimney.

Next door is another very good climb, the Oblique Buttress. In boots on a damp day it is very good ; I don't know it under other conditions. Of the Lots I am not entitled to speak ; I only gape upwards now and then.

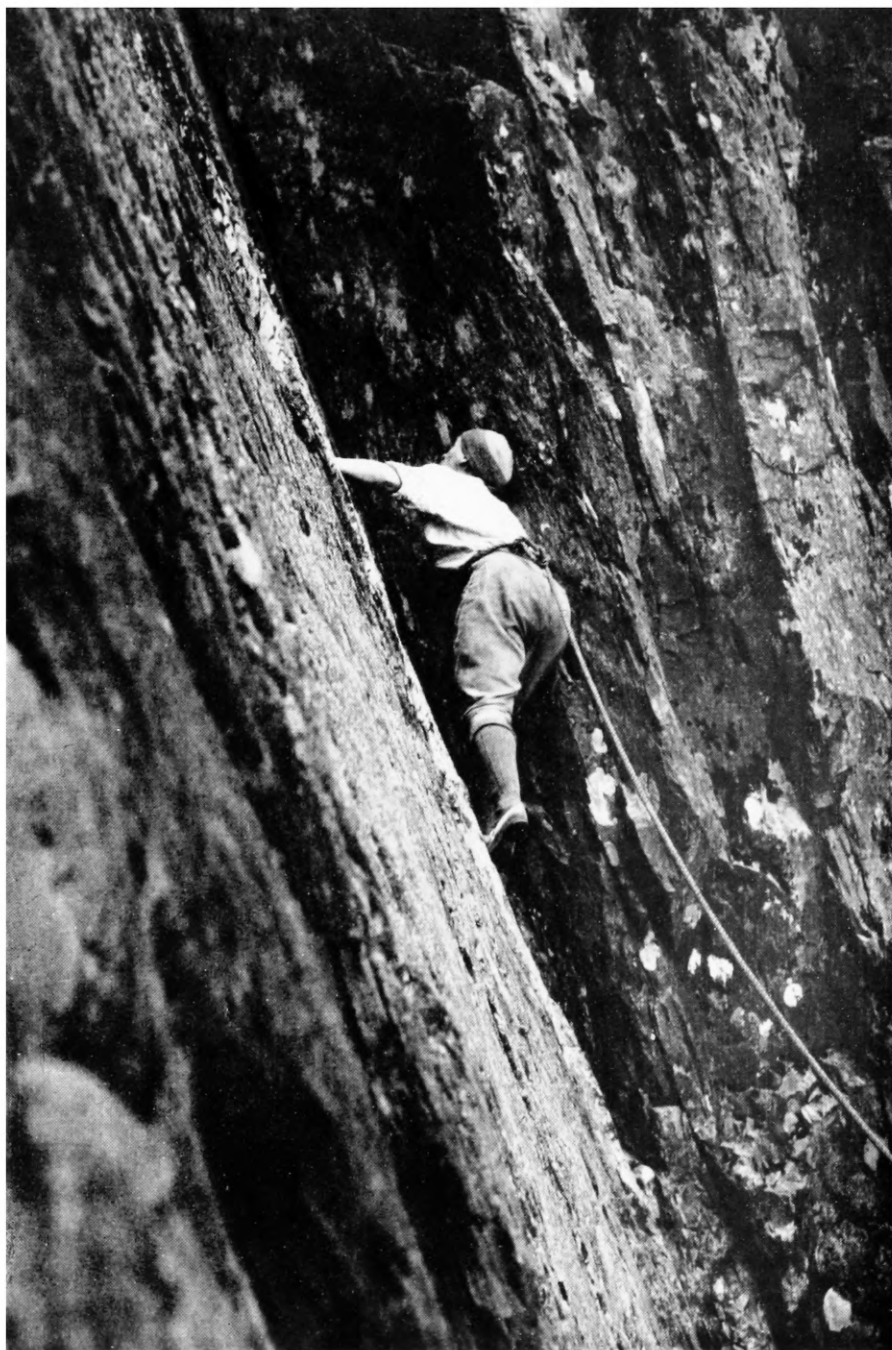
From Glydr Fach we'll pass to Glydr Fawr, our path taking us under the facet of the Gribin, which has three good, though short, routes. The Monolith, inside and outside, and the Zig-Zag.

The Monolith has been given a very fine character by Abraham ; I think rather too fine a character ; but it remains a most interesting rift and a fearsomely accurate gauge of figure. The female figure, so well fitted for woman's many sedentary tasks, is particularly likely to be denied admittance. Whiles I get in, and whiles I don't ; I know one man who submits himself to Monolith Measurement every year.

Up to this narrow entrance to the big rift in the rock, the pitches are stiff chimney pitches, steep and fairly exposed ; once inside, the climbing is done on small holds on one wall of the rift with an exit between chockstones out on to the top of the cliff. For those whose figure debars them from this final pitch, or for those whose spirit needs subduing, there is an outside alternative which felt to me the most exposed and unsafe thing I had ever been on. One starts off with a stride suitable for goats, and having taken this bold leap no T.G. or decent stance awaits one. You breathe a pious T.G., for nothing more tangible than the grace given you to go on sticking on at the wrong angle.

I was taken up it, not from the necessities of the figure, but as a cruel jest to humble the spirit ; as there may be other jesters abroad I hereby forearm their possible victims.

The Zig-Zag is a snappy affair of cracks and chimneys, good as ascent or descent ; but a last man descending needs to be five foot five at least ; otherwise a friend should stand by



Penelope Seth Hughes

THE 60-FOOT SLAB, WESTERN GULLY, GLYDER FAWR.

to block her in as she drops the last few inches without her hands, for the rebound might be really damaging. I speak with feeling, for when I came down last, my second and third men were some distance away, conferring over a photograph; I remarked that I could not reach anything with my feet, muscled up on my arms again and waited for the rush of feet to my assistance; there was no immediate rush, however, but my enquiry (with some acerbity) 'Is anyone interested?' had the desired effect.

At the far end of Idwal lake rise the Slabs; such a well-known playground that I feel any description of the older routes on them would be considered unnecessary, yet in gratitude, I cannot leave them out—Faith, Hope and Charity, where we learnt so much; to climb without Tryfaen's pillarbox holds; to trust our feet without our hands; to look down on the smooth sweep of grey rock below us, undismayed, until with Faith, Hope and Charity ours, we started gingerly up Tennis Shoe, with its thin patches and fine airy finish; and then raised our eyes as high as Holly Tree Wall, and finally raised ourselves up it, after some ado.

There are Javelin, Piton, Saint's Wall and, I believe, many another good route waiting for those who raise their eyes still higher. Good luck to them.

On the Crag above the Slabs there is an amount of moderate climbing, a fine straightforward route on Central Arête, the ridge becoming so narrow in its final reach that one can (and does) embrace it. Close to the start of this route is the West Gully, whose first 60 feet slab is one of the finest slab pitches I know, here, or in Cumberland. Afterwards the climbing seemed to us technically moderate, though the whole route is exposed, and the leader has to run out a long rope. The description in the Ogwen Guide badly needs revision.

We must complete the amphitheatre of rock around Idwal with the limestone cliffs which stand between Glydr Fawr and Y Garn. As I confessed earlier in this rambling talk, Twll Du fills me with morbid melancholy. Perhaps if someone who had fallen in love with it said, 'Come,' I'd go, but I can't say 'Come' myself with any conviction. Hanging Garden Gully I do know, but anyone wanting to read an excellent description of that should go to C. E. Montague's *Fiery Particles*. I was

one of a sober party of climbers, and though we might have had a milder repetition of C. E. Montague's experience, for one of our party was also an ardent botanist, we were spared from desperate traverse by the discretion of the *Lloydia*, which was 'not at home.'

Craig yr Ysfa, crag of craving, itch, or aching desire, was for a long time the crag of *my* craving itch and aching desire, until one day this Summer one said 'come' and I went.

Others had said 'Come' at intervals, but Great Gully seemed to be fated to be withheld from me; dry weather always broke the night before my day; yachts, with me on board them, stuck on sandbanks; leaders fell ill. On one such day, finding a merry stream issuing from Great Gully, we did Amphitheatre Buttress 'instead.' This is a very finely situated buttress, with a few good pitches; but it does not do 'instead'; nothing does. In size, Great Gully reminded me most of Moss Ghyll, but merely reminded me. I think it must be unique among gullies. Such variety of pitch; pitches of such quality and setting, and with that final exit onto the very top of the crag; so utterly surprising, so magical. Below lies Cwm Eigiau, and around us rise all the mountains—the mountains whose buttresses, faces and gullies I have so clumsily been trying to enchain with a pen. Not pens, but boots are the weapons we should use. Yet, as someone wrote to me at the end of a requested letter of Swiss advice:—

P.S.—It is always a pleasure to write and think about climbing.

THE WAY OF A NEOPHYTE

By

MABEL M. BARKER.

THE Solway shore does not seem a very hopeful milieu for the making of a mountaineer, but I suppose the will to climb was there from the time when, a delicate and undersized infant, I walked and ran at nine months old. ('The very smallest thing I ever saw walking.') All children climb, more or less, and by the fortune of circumstance I never stopped. There are a few trees, even at Silloth, and our house had a useful roof on it. The understructure of the pier offered a good field for adventure to a young brother and me, as, I am glad to see, it does still to my young nephews. There was also a fine 'sailor's ladder,' now, to my regret, filled up with concrete—down the side of the old dock gates. Derelict chemical works also provided us with a varied, and as I should now suppose, a highly dangerous climbing ground, but there was nobody much concerned to call us to heel in the holidays, and neither of us ever had an accident. People are, as a rule, too much afraid for their children, and should have the courage to let them take their risks. Do the clumsy or the agile children come to grief more often? I wonder.

But the fells were another matter, and very far away. Daily I looked at the hills: English and Scottish hills, as my nurse told me; and though Criffel, just across the Solway, was the nearer and looked the more imposing, my heart yearned to Skiddaw.

When seven years old I was taken for a long drive in a dog-cart. Seated back to the horse, I have no memories of the journey, till suddenly my mother said, 'Look where you are going.' I turned, and Skiddaw was there, close, close above me. It was one of those poignantly vivid moments which can never be forgotten, becoming part of us for the rest of life; but I don't suppose the child said anything—she probably disappointed the rest of the party by a lack of enthusiasm. It is hard to know what children are thinking, and impossible to tell what they will remember.

After that it was years till I reached the fells again. Nobody

around me talked of them or suggested going there, but in my early teens I became the owner of a bicycle, and in the holidays took to cycling from Silloth to the fells round Bassenthwaite, and exploring them alone. There was a day when I left the cycle at a farm near Bassenthwaite village, thought out and took a route up the long ridge by Ullock Pike and Carl Side, and stood at last on Skiddaw. In an ecstasy of joyful emotion I tidied up the signs of human heedlessness which even in those days desecrated the summit cairn of my beloved mountain; and then sat on it and read Swinburne's 'Hertha.'

On another occasion, somewhere on the west side of the lake, I deliberately went up into the mist to see what it felt like (surely I had achieved a map and compass by then?) and wandered for a long time in a grey mysterious fairyland. I question if anyone ever enjoyed mist more than I did on that first experience of it; I felt it as a thin veil hiding unimaginable things: enclosing me in a secret intimacy with something intangible, far from the world of men. In a small green hollow I found three witches' brooms. But I came down out of fairyland safely, and alone as I had entered it.

Indeed, I seem in retrospect to have been alone with the fells for a long time; but I have no records of those early wanderings and cannot date them, nor does that matter. The only point of these very personal confessions is that I was doing something it does not seem possible for any young thing to do now. For I not only went there alone—I met nobody. The fells were empty, and they were mine, mine with a great emotion of possession, like a secret love, a passion which could not even be shared with the beloved. It seemed impossible that anyone should find their way into my kingdom; should love the hills as I did; and the discovery, years later, that others loved and knew them intimately came as a strange discovery, rather slowly grasped.

Nobody bothered much about my doings, till my father perplexed and astonished me by spasmodic efforts to do so when I was well on in the twenties! (Too late by far!). But my brother began to join me sometimes, and once we induced Mary Crosby to come with us, our one-time nurse, and since our mother's death, our very dear housekeeper. That excursion is chiefly memorable because on the return journey we nearly

ran into a large grey horse, loose on the road somewhere near Bothel.

Then came an era of cycle tours. By not returning the same night we covered more ground, and friends who came to stay with us frequently became more or less willing victims of such expeditions. Mrs. Crosthwaite, of Lake Road, Keswick, with whom I stayed at intervals for years, always greeted me with 'Do you remember that time your brother burnt his boots?' Here, our father probably did more than any of us. He knew the roads of the Lake District better than most, for he was a great cyclist, from the days of the penny-farthing solid tyre to the motor-cycle he rode to the end, at eighty. This widened one's area of course; but for me a cycle was always a means of transport; the *real* expedition began off the roads.

One of the first serious fell walks with a companion that I can remember, was with Mary Briggs, of Aspatria, perhaps about 1906. We cycled to Seathwaite, took a room for the night, and went up Scawfell Pike. It was April, and a dense mist came on when we were part way up. She had been to the top before, so I offered to turn back, but to my great satisfaction she wanted to go on. We had started far too late, and when, after a brief stay on the summit, we turned to go down, it was already growing dark, and very soon it was completely so. For the upper part of the way there was a covering of snow in which we could follow our own tracks, and it was not till we left it that we found ourselves in the most perfect darkness that I have ever experienced in the open; for there was no moon, and the mist hid the stars. Literally one could not see one's own hands, and the track was not cairned then as it is now.

Mary was a fine companion, equally devoid of funk or sense of direction. On Esk Hause she wanted to turn to the right and make for Langdale. I said, shortly, 'Very well, I am going home,' and she came. I had some matches (no flash lights then) and struck one occasionally to see if we were on any sort of a track. I had not been there before, but remembered the map, and knew our route was left at Esk Hause, and right on the Sty Head, and that if we overshot the track there, as we very well might, we should begin to go up Great Gable. My one real anxiety was to avoid bogs near the tarn—that, and a fear

lest Mary should twist an ankle or damage herself in any way, for she was built on a generous scale. Slowly and very carefully we worked our way down, and four hours after leaving the summit reached the farm, where the anxious Richardsons had hung out a lantern for our guidance, and were meditating a search party. The effect of this adventure was exhilarating and encouraging: it was a kind of deeper initiation. If I could do that safely, and enjoy doing it, then the fells were mine by night as well as day; there was nothing to fear on them ever, save results of my own carelessness.

(I can well imagine a few caustic comments here from some into whose hands these confessions may fall. 'Rotten habit of her's getting benighted'—'Yes, we've had some!')

Sometimes, about this time, I wrote stories and verses. They were influenced by William Morris and other romantics, yet were also, as I read them now, an attempt to find expression for the moods resulting from such contacts with the beloved earth. None of them ever saw the light, and have seldom been owned to before now. And the habit faded as solitary wandering gave way to efforts at guiding others.

My first real walking tour was in the Scottish Highlands in 1910. (I have some written notes on that lovely and unrepeatable experience, and those may have them who care for such confessions of my now distant youth!) In the same year I volunteered to take two Welsh girls (who had never, strangely enough, been on their own mountains) walking in the Lake District. We met at Ambleside, most unsuitably clad, and in pouring rain set off up Langdale, our destination Wasdale Head. Knowing of no track there, I led them right up the bed of Rossett Ghyll. By the time we were on Esk Hause in gathering dusk we would have passed for the three witches in Macbeth. All had very long hair, now down and dripping. There wasn't a dry rag among us, either on our persons or in our home-made kit bags. With no desire to make a fuss, but merely anxious to be getting on with it if necessary, one of my companions asked quietly, 'Isn't it about time to lie down and die now?' 'Die? No! We're going to Wasdale,' said I cheerfully, and we eventually got there, my wretched victims half-dead with fatigue, but uncomplaining. That was my first visit to Mrs. Whiting, and three more bedraggled objects



Violet Masters

FOURTH ASCENT OF CENTRAL BUTTRESS, SCAWPELL
(18TH AUGUST, 1925)

never entered that hall. Soon we were all warm and dry, dressed in her clothes!

I met with no rock climbers in those days. I knew that they existed, but they were as the gods, and far beyond my ken. I wanted to get onto Scawfell though, and hunting about on Mickledore one day was delighted to find a narrow cleft with evident signs of use in it. This must be the path, so I took it unhesitatingly, more than once. On one such occasion I came down what we now call Mickledore Chimney. I did lots of scrambling up and down gullies, with no fear of accident, and never seeing a climber or a rope. Sometimes I have thought it a pity that I was not caught really young, but in fact I was more inclined to hide from stray pedestrians than to seek them, being still, when alone, rather like a shy wild animal.

But once, in an inn, I don't know when or where, I met a Mr. Raeburn, and he, finding that I knew the fells, told me a thrilling yarn about a rock climb. Now I know that this was an incident on the first ascent of the Central Buttress. Which of us would have been the more surprised, I wonder, to know that I myself should feel those rocks one day, make, in fact, in two hours, with C. D. Frankland, its fourth ascent?

It was not until 1913 that a colleague and I took a group of students from Saffron Walden Training College, camping at Seathwaite. On the introduction of a mutual friend, I hired some tents from Millican Dalton. He came to see us one evening, and sat late with us, talking and singing round the camp fire. Rock-climbing was mentioned. Oh yes, he would take some of us for a climb if we liked!

What? Could such a wild and impossible dream be realised?

On July 31st, 1913, we stood at the foot of the Needle.

'Skirt detachable?' said he.

'Yes.'

'Take it off.' I obeyed, and knew the feel of the rope for the first time.

Several more of the party, including a young Japanese student, who took excellent photographs, were taken up in turn. But while he was on the rope I wanted to get a photograph of the top, and have still a faded old print of a startled Dalton turning towards my camera, level with the top block

from somewhere on the Needle Ridge. Later in the day he took eleven of us up the Ridge on one rope—rather an achievement, and a test for even his immense patience.

After that I climbed with him and others of his party for a few precious days each summer, hesitating to intrude among the gods lest my slower pace should keep the party back and I be a hindrance to them. At last, in 1922, Dalton proposed me for membership of the Fell and Rock. With great nervousness I entered Olympus; in other words, climbed Moss Ghyll with H. B. Lyon, H. P. Cain and Dr. Burnett; and that fear passed away with other ghosts of girlhood.

BORROWDALE

Blow, winds in Borrowdale
And rains down fall—
The voices of the waters and the wild birds call.

Black rocks of Borrowdale
And frost-split slate,
Floods in the valley when the beck's in spate.

Dark tarns and moorland where
The mist wreaths form,
And sun follows thunder on the edge of the storm.

'Neath birches of Borrowdale
The wee mosses bide,
And soft is the bedding there for bridegroom and bride.

Blow, winds of Borrowdale.
And snow down fall;
I would come to Borrowdale the last time of all.

From my heart in Borrowdale
The rowan trees shall grow:
I shall be undying in the earth I know.

M. M. B.

THE NORTH WEST FACE OF THE SCHEIDEGG WETTERHORN

By
MOLLY FITZGIBBON

DIRECTLY from the pastures of the Grosse Scheidegg, the great North West face of the Wetterhorn towers up for nearly 5,000 feet, one of the most formidable rock faces of the Alps. The peak crowning this precipice is known as the Scheidegg Wetterhorn or Grindelwald Dru, and is joined to the true summit of the Wetterhorn by the North West arête. This wall was first climbed in 1929 by Dr. Finzi, with Franz Joseph Biner and Joseph Knubel; they reached the top of the Grindelwald Dru in ten hours, and descended by the Hühnergutz Glacier and the Krinnefirn to the Gleckstein Hut. The second ascent was made in 1930 by W. G. Standring, with Joseph Georges *le skieur*; who after completing the ascent, continued along the arête, reached the summit of the Wetterhorn in nine hours and descended to Rosenlaui.

On my first visit to the Alps in 1930 I saw this side of the Wetterhorn from the Engstlen Alp. The dark fir woods of Rosenlaui, the grey rocks of the tremendous face leading up to the superb white pyramidal summit, from which the Rosenlaui Glacier falls steeply to the West (literally, an 'avalanche of roses' in the sunset glow), pasture and pine trees, rocks and snow and ice are here combined in such proportion as to make the first sight of this view one of the moments of one's life. The desire to climb the Wetterhorn by this face grew into a dream, and joy became complete when Joseph Georges said that we might include it in our programme for 1933.

There is at present no guide book to the Wetterhörner group of the Bernese Oberland, and we found this a disadvantage in working out the details of the climb. Joseph thought we should get to the top in twelve hours, and we decided to descend to the Gleckstein Hut, although he had never been on this side of the mountain, as we had designs on the Schreckhorn traverse afterwards. If we were forced off the North West arête we knew there must be a route down to this hut from there, as Knubel had descended by it on the first ascent. As it happened, J.G.'s genius for route finding picked out a faultless line, even to

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finding the track down the moraine in the dark, a feat which may appear almost incredible to those who have tried to follow it in the early morning with a lantern.

The evening of August 13th, 1933, found us at the Grosse Scheidegg—an evening of long blue shadows over the peaks of the Engelhörner, the setting sun just touching the tops of the mountains above Stein—but the moon was encircled by a golden ring, always a sure sign of approaching bad weather.

I do not think that anyone who is going to do the face of the Wetterhorn will sleep very much the night before, there is too much Ides of March feeling combined with natural excitement; but the fact of being able to spend a few hours in a comfortable bed instead of in a hut, alleviates one's feelings considerably.

We left the hotel on the Scheidegg at 3-25 a.m., and with a grey dawn gained the rocks to the north of the Schlafhubel. After a few minutes it was necessary to exchange boots for something more adequate to the exceptionally smooth limestone slabs of which the lower part of the climb is composed. The texture of these slabs is very interesting—rather like a tarmacadamed road set at an awkward angle, practically holdless, and overlapping downwards with a considerable slope; the only similar rock which I have ever encountered is the last pitch of the Teufelsjoch from the South West, in the Engelhörner.

The route zig-zags to the left, then to the right; the terraces of slabs being joined together by chimneys. I have an unpleasant recollection of one chimney, of about 12 feet high, where the leader required a shoulder, and where it was difficult to find a secure enough stance on the slabs to give him one. Joseph, whose technique on unsound rock is magnificent, reached the top without a murmur; but as I followed, the whole of the inside of the chimney threatened to fall out on me—and then just thought better of it. Above this point the slabs commenced to steepen, owing to this my kletterschuhe (which seemed to be the wrong kind!) would not grip, and became suicidal. Something had to be done about them at once. Joseph has a pair of rubbers that stick in rain or shine, and he suggested that we should change footwear, but he found the kletterschuhe *très mauvais* and would have nothing to do with them, so the only thing to do was to put them away in my sac and climb in my stockings, which was really preferable on the slabs, as sometimes



Brugger, Meiringen

NORTH WEST FACE OF THE SCHEIDEGG WETTERHORN

there was a wrinkle one could get a toe into. At the apex of the traverse to the right is the great chimney, which looks very formidable, but provides an interesting climb of about 60 feet, first by bridging to a chockstone, then backing up to a through exit at the back of the chimney. A welcome patch of scree below—the first place where a stop was possible—invited a meal. It was now 8 a.m.; we had been crawling over those cold grey slabs for four hours. Joseph burst suddenly into song; something about some shipwrecked, hungry sailors who were driven to—

tirer à la courte paille

Pour savoir, qui, qui, qui, serait mangé

Pour savoir, qui, qui, qui, serait mangé O-hé, O-hé ! . . .

a mournful ditty, which, as we had just been discussing bivouacs, seemed singularly appropriate. We did not laugh much on the face of the Wetterhorn; we were too aware of the grey clouded sky, the urgent necessity for haste, and the grim atmosphere. On a big climb Joseph is terribly stern and concentrated, it is part of the secret of his genius.

Above the great chimney the slabs are very steep. One section was wet owing to melting snow above; there was no hold, and no belay, and the rope was no use, so the leader seized my hand and we crept across, inch by inch, water actually streaming over our feet for some yards. A steep wet corner then led us to the crux of the climb, the vertical wall to the South of the great couloir. An open chimney leads vertically upwards for 65 feet to a small ledge; from there the only way by which progress is possible is by an oblique traverse to the right. Dr. Finzi's party climbed this in one run out of 120 feet, inserting a piton and using a karabiner. On our ascent the leader elected to stop half-way and bring me up to the ledge. The piton is too low and far away to be of use as a belay, there is no hitch for the rope, and the ledge is probably too narrow to give a stance sufficient to hold anyone in case of a slip. I arrived to find that after accommodating J. G. and the two sacs, there was about a foot of space left for me. The tactics here were interesting—we had to unrope in order to detach the rope from the piton, through which it had been passed as a safeguard; and I spent some most uncomfortable moments in passing Joseph's sac across to him and getting my own on again, the

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wall behind doing its best to push us out into space. This ledge is a unique place—we looked straight down over our toes to the verdant pastures of the Scheidegg, and the pine trees of Rosenlauri, 5,000 feet below.

The traverse to the right ends with a belay—the only one on the climb—passing this we went to the right, the leader considering this procedure easier than the two difficult chimneys to the left, taken by himself on the second ascent in 1930; the rocks, however, proving impossible, we were eventually forced, in order to gain the boss of rock above the great couloir—the clue to the line of ascent—to descend a quartz-marked chimney, which overhung at the top and was very difficult; the leader considers that we lost an hour by trying this variation.

Here we stopped for a hurried meal at 1-30 p.m. The haloed moon proved herself to be right; a grey misty drizzle descended on us, and all the rocks were wet for the remainder of the day. It was not possible to go back, and so we had to go on. 'I have promised you, Mdlle., that we shall bivouac to-night in the hut.' Owing to the rain I was able to resume the kletterschuhe, which after six hours climbing in stockings, were very welcome. There was still 2,000 feet of difficult climbing to do before reaching the arête, and although it was without incident, and we did it in under two and a half hours, it seemed much the longest portion of the climb. At first, the white overhanging seracs of the Schwartzwaldfirn loomed far above, after a long time we drew level with them, then after what seemed ages, suddenly we saw the arête. . . . and the Schwartzwaldfirn now very far below. We reached the arête at 4.5 p.m. and the summit of the Grindelwald Dru shortly afterwards, thus completing the ascent. The North West arête curled up ahead of us to the summit of the Wetterhorn, invisible in a swirl of black cloud. The Eiger was hidden, and over towards the Grimsel a thunderstorm had come up out of Italy. The rain had stopped, so still hoping the weather would clear and allow us to reach the top, we continued along the arête; the rock was difficult and rotten, and progress was slow. At 5 o'clock we were reluctantly compelled to decide that the remaining three hours of daylight were not enough to allow for the completion of the traverse and for the descent. In daylight and good weather two and a half hours from the summit of the Wetterhorn

THE NORTH-WEST FACE OF THE SCHEIDEGG WETTERHORN 31

to the Gleckstein by the ordinary route is good going. We might have reached the rocks of the Great Couloir before dark, but to arrange deliberately, to spend a night out at 11,000 feet in an impending thunderstorm is not mountaineering; so it became imperative to find a route off the arête.

After descending a chimney and stopping for our third meal, a rock gully led down to the Hühnergutz glacier, which we reached after a little difficulty in finding a place to cross the bergschrund. Traversing the glacier and ascending a snow slope we gained the rock ridge below the South West arête, and eventually got down to the Krinnefirn as dusk was falling. Hurtling after Joseph down the infinitesimal moraine path in the dark, the light from the Gleckstein Hut a welcoming star below, lost in a blissful dream of complete happiness and admiration of Joseph George's wonderful leadership, I found myself miraculously at the door of the hut just before 9 p.m.

The ascent of the Scheidegg Wetterhorn by this route is a lead for a super rockclimber who is also a mountaineer, there is no possibility of a second being of any use whatever to a falling leader, and in moving together all members of the party must be absolutely sure. There is (apart from the one and only belay which greets one ironically) no hitch for the rope and very little stance. We were the first party to carry their boots on this climb (the two previous parties having left theirs behind), undoubtedly this slows one down, I should think at least an hour, as a heavy bulging sac interferes with balance on the slabs, and it is impossible to ascend most of the chimneys and the vertical part wearing a sac. On a long climb where every second is precious, to be continually taking off and hauling up sacs and axes is tiring, and wastes valuable time; but it is unpleasant to wear rubbers or kletterschuhe for any length of time on snow, and although impracticable on the ascent, boots are, as Joseph says, 'plus commode' for the descent.

To be climbing hard from dawn to dusk on a mountain face of this magnitude is an unforgettable experience. Each climb that we do, each day that we spend among the hills, gives us something—perhaps intangible, perhaps distinctly realizable—and leave an impression that was not there before. The Wetterhorn was for me a dream fulfilled, a lifetime of experiences crowded into one long day.

EARLY DAYS IN THE WELSH HILLS

By

DALONI SETH HUGHES.

‘LET’S go upstairs and look at the mountains.’ When we were children this was generally the concluding remark to our family discussions about the weather. And if it was such an important question as a birthday picnic that was being decided, there was an instant, eager rush to the highest window in the house, where we could gaze across ten miles of wooded country to a blue wall of mountains beyond. In summer, when the distant hills lay before us, pale and unclouded—in winter, when their massive shoulders were silvered by a frostily-starched cape of snow—when the early morning clouds were floating away to leave tip-tops of peaks, remote and intriguing, or when the late afternoon sun threw a golden shaft of light across their shadowed faces—that was where we always wanted to go. Even when a gloomy mist poured over the ridges, and the rain-clouds above curdled in angry masses, we waited hopefully, with noses pressed against the window, for the first arrow of light to pierce the darkness. It so often brought a promise of fair weather! So the report we carried down was cheerily optimistic, and the picnic party would turn with happy steps towards the mountains.

A few miles below the head of the Nant Ffrancon pass, a small, square house lies snugly in a hollow above the river. Protected and half hidden from the road by a band of trees, and shrinking back under a broad slate verandah, it has worn the same slightly secretive expression as long as I can remember. One hot summer we spent a short holiday there; delicious days of basking in the sun, plunging through the waterfall to swim in its limpid pool, or collecting the brilliant toadstools that brightened the damp, springy moss. But before many days had gone, we were begging to be allowed to climb a mountain. Though the one chosen for ascent was a mere rocky slope, clothed with monstrous bilberry bushes, it seemed a most formidable undertaking when we set out. Alas, the short legs of my five-year-old sister grew too weary, and the

bracken twigs and heather scratched our bare feet unmercifully. Our courage weakened and we did not even reach the cairn. But the desire to get to the top of things had been strongly stirred within us, and after this, we climbed every available tree, wall, lamp-post and haystack. We startled the neighbours with our simian poses in the branches overhanging their gardens, and on wet days practised glissades down the bannisters or perilous traverses round the edge of the bath.

In early days, when the routes up the mountains were not so clearly scratched, our people had done some exploring in the hills, and they needed little encouragement to tell us of their past experiences—tales we knew so well, but loved to hear retold again and again. How a large party of them had circled round in mist on the Glydres till they found themselves trying to descend precipices, completely on the wrong side of the mountain; how, the first time they went up Tryfaen, a cousin, who had had some Alpine experience, insisted on testing every boulder before the ladies were allowed to step on it—till the ladies went on and left him to test alone; how Father once tried a short cut across unknown slabs and had to put his entire weight on one decayed tuft of heather; how the dog had hysterics on the Bristly Ridge, and how their French governess, suspended by her petticoats to the wall beyond the Milestone, shrieked ‘I hang! I hang!’ and when released, declared that now, without doubt, she *must* go on to the top as she couldn’t possibly turn back and reascend that wall! We listened with breathless attention to the recital of these adventures, and longed to try hill-climbing ourselves; but for some years, ill-health and the hated word ‘rest’ debarred me from very strenuous exercise. I could only dream of the mountains, and climb them in my imagination.

The time came when I grew perfectly strong again, and we began to realize our good fortune in living less than a dozen miles from such a happy hunting-ground. All that fascinating country of hill and valley, waiting to be explored! Ridges and crags, friendly rock buttresses and inviting cracks to delight the heart of any eager climber; transparently clear lakes and deep pools, set where they catch the loveliest reflections—the vision of all we might do and see, glowed in our minds with a comforting warmth.

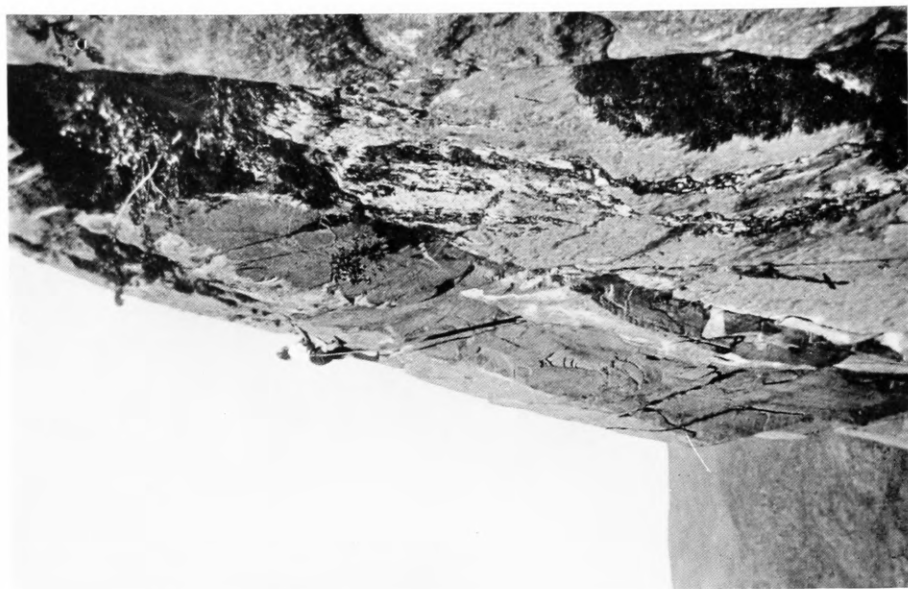
Neither my sister nor I followed the best mountaineering principles. We chose a fine day, put on as few clothes as possible, and started up a mountain, hoping for the best. If a mist swept down, its bewildering grey folds blurring and distorting every outline, we gaily followed our noses, and moved with caution until the world around reappeared in its natural proportions. Moments of discomfort such as these dwindled with recollection, and were forgotten when we looked back on the hours of joy spent in wandering over lonely hill-tops, where the wind bent the silky tassels of the cotton-grass and lifted a scent of honey from the heather at our feet, or when we remembered the sense of well-being we had felt after racing up a spine of sun-warmed rock, to relax, breathless and content, on some windless summit.

Once we climbed through mist on the Carnedds, and looked down to a valley filled with clouds, heaped upon each other in stormy confusion. Brilliant sunlight illuminated the curving line of hills beyond the ridge where we stood, and on the troubled cloud-surface we saw ourselves as tiny black images, each in a circle of prismatic colours. Again, on Tryfaen, a horribly gloomy day was brightened suddenly by the perfect reflection of a rainbow, thrown in a quivering arch upon the opaque darkness of the lake. And could we forget one winter sunrise on Snowdon, when the sun burst through curtains of streaming mist, in a flame of red and orange, to glitter with a cold fire on the icy embroideries clinging to every rock?

So we explored and scrambled, blundered and learnt lessons by our mistakes. We enjoyed it all enormously.

One day I thought it would be pleasant to try an unfrequented gully on the Ysgolion Dduon. This fine cliff is not a popular haunt—the five miles trudge, with only a few gully pitches at the end of it, turn most climbers aside—but a view of the great cwm, with its amphi-theatre of imposing crags, will repay the walk at any time. I decided to find some way up and invited a couple of friends to come too. One was a slightly built Welshman and the other a definitely heavy-weight German, so we made a rather ill-balanced trio of climbers. However, as we had no rope that didn't matter much.

It was a hot grind up the steep valley path, but we soon cooled down, almost to the point of shivering, when we reached



Penelope Seth Hughes

MILESTONE, DIRECT



Daloni Seth Hughes

GASHED CRAG, TRYFAEN

the shadow of the 'Ladders.' We started up a slimy crack, thick with vegetation, and continued over steep, grassy shelves till a definite gully appeared. It seemed to lead right to the top of the cliffs, but unfortunately we were soon scared out of it by an impassable chockstone. Then things began to be slightly uncomfortable. We were forced on to a perpendicular arête of unstable rocks, loosely cemented together with wet turf. Presently one of us dislodged a large block, seriously alarming our Teutonic friend, whose nose it missed by less than an inch. We longed to regain the safety of our delightful gully, and the only possible way was by a funnel-shaped groove of restricting dimensions. It ended in an easy grass ledge. I wriggled up and the lean man followed. There was a furious scraping of boots, a blonde head poked out of the groove, and a dismayed voice enquired: 'Please, what must I do next? I cannot *gom* up, but I *can* fall down.' Then a more poignant appeal—'Please, I am slipping, help!' Our courageous second threw himself full length in the mud and tried to fish up the victim. Immediately a muscular arm freed itself from the crack to cling with octopus-like grip round his neck. It was perfectly obvious that it wouldn't be long before he was dragged down, head first, so I had to take a roll in the mud, too, and attach myself firmly to his ankles. There were a few minutes of horrid suspense. Then, snorting and puffing, and accompanied by a loud noise of grating from all the buttons and buckles foreign people wear about their clothes, the German managed to haul himself out of the hateful groove. He staggered over our prostrate bodies to the furthest corner of the shelf, murmuring, 'Tank Gott, I am safe!' and began to devour lettuce sandwiches with silent ferocity. We scrambled up the rest of the gully feeling rather subdued, for we knew quite well that this had not been at all good climbing.

There seemed to be no luck about gullies, for not long afterwards we had another expedition which nearly ended in disaster, this time in the Twisting Gully on Glydr. Someone had read of 'this charming climb,' so an enthusiastic party of six set out to prove its attraction. I was determined to be prepared for emergency, and at the last moment concealed a length of window cord at the bottom of my rucksack 'in case anything went wrong.'

We pattered up the Idwal staircase, flourished about on the slabs above, and crossed the quartz platform. Everything went marvellously until the gully was reached, but there the fun ended. The genial warmth of a pleasant summer day departed like magic. A spiteful drizzle began to fall and the wind snarled through the rocks. We were all too busy trying to climb toppling masses of grass and ferns to notice this, and were well in the embrace of the gully before we realized that the rain was absolutely pouring down. The rock staircase turned into a waterfall, and we were soon chilled to the marrow. Everyone tried hard to be cheerful and splashed their way through the torrent, till fingers and toes became so numb that the window cord had to be hurriedly brought into action. Fortunately, not once was *everyone* in difficulties at the same time, but we all pulled each other out of awkward positions till the thing became a perfect nightmare. At one time we had the whole weight of a twelve-stone man dangling on that wretched piece of whip-cord! It seems incredible that we could have found such alarming situations in this simple little gully, but we were half paralysed with cold and could hardly have climbed a step ladder with safety. Nothing very terrible happened after all. Six shivering, drowned rats reached the top of the gully and vowed they did *not* appreciate its charm, the gallant window cord, now as stiff as wire, was re-interred in the rucksack, and the whole party unfroze in a warm discussion of their ridiculous performances.

But at least these unhappy attempts at gully climbing taught us something. That in future we must exchange cotton frocks and flimsy gym-shoes for a pair of warm trousers and stout boots, and that a proper rope was essential if we ever hoped to become decent rock-climbers. So we gradually amassed a useful collection of climbing accessories, from Father's old plus-fours to an aluminium water bottle. The purchase of the 'proper rope' came later.

Our Mother and three Aunts went for a holiday in Switzerland, and we seized the opportunity to borrow a rope. It was only 60 feet, and by the time we had tied careful knots round three waists (a small sister, who objected to being left behind, had to be included in the party), there wasn't much space left between us. It was enough, however, for some easy climbs

on Tryfaen and the Idwal Slabs, and proved the comfort of its moral support in the Twisting Gully, which we ascended once more in torrents of rain.

The family returned from abroad, and we managed to convince them that easy climbs without a rope may be more dangerous than hard climbs with a rope. We really ought to get one at once! But before the rope arrived my provoking sister was on her way to London to study music, and I was obliged to look about for fresh recruits.

The first volunteer for the Milestone Buttress was one of my Aunts. She was small and very deaf, but extremely spirited, and as nimble as a goat on rocks. Her ear trumpet had, of course, to be left at the bottom of the climb, so we arranged to signal to each other by pulls on the rope. It was rather disconcerting, when I gave the rope an accidental tug half-way up a pitch, to hear the gay announcement, 'All right; I'm starting up!'

As I pulled in the last rope-length at the top, she looked at me, tucked comfortably between two rocks, and remarked: 'Now I understand the use of the rope—it is to allow lazy people to rest between every pitch!'

When my sister came back for the holidays we began climbing in real earnest. And she complained that it was very trying to be taken straight from mild ambles in Kensington Gardens and be hunted up the Monolith Crack, just because it was a nice safe climb for the leader! I assured her that it was also an excellent climb for loosening town-stiffened muscles, and the next fine day saw us struggling up that famous crack, so beloved by the slim and sinuous.

We lay in the sun afterwards, refreshed by a bathe in the chill water of the lake, stretching tired limbs in a drowsy silence. The water lapped at little stones with a soothing rhythm, and the reflections in the lake gathered colour till they trembled with a network of changing shadows. Then a troupe of small fishes swam up to remind us that it was long past lunch-time, and that they were hungry if we were not. We woke up, and between mouthfuls of bread and jam began to discuss our next climb.

Someone said ‘Why not join the Pinnacle Club?’ That was just two years ago, and since then we have tried to climb regularly, and can remember many days of sunshine and adventure. Yet how incredibly little we have done compared with what we still have left to do, even in this small circle of Welsh hills! So it is not unlikely that towards the end of this century, two very old ladies will still be saying to each other: ‘Let’s go upstairs and look at the mountains.’

* * * * *

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter thy mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine,
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
But, out! alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven’s sun staineth.

Shakespeare, *Sonnet XVIII*.

A DOLOMITE FORTNIGHT

By

SUSAN HARPER

IN 1932 Marjorie Heys-Jones and I spent a fortnight climbing in the Dolomites. We had asked Johann Demetz of Santa Cristina to meet us at the Vajolet Hut, and we started self-consciously from Merano by bus, amid the amused comments of the passers-by. Women in climbing kit are definitely funny in Italy. The publicity got worse when we disembarked at Carezza, in front of a super-hotel, amid elegant youths in flannels and young ladies with white berets miraculously suspended on one ear. But the solid red bulk of the Rosengarten hung above us, and we made our way through golf courses and tennis courts to a stony path along the flank of the mountain. It was a hot walk—for we were at the height of a blazing summer—to the Alle Coronelle hut, where we proposed to spend the night, and where we had the first of our odd encounters.

Two young Italians on a walking tour attached themselves to us, amusing themselves with my extremely imperfect Italian, and showing a strong tendency to accompany us next day. We were pretty certain we did not want them, so that it was fortunate that they quailed at the prospect of crossing the Santner Pass. They were not, they explained, heroic. 'The Duce says, better be a lion for a day than a sheep for a hundred years. But we do not think so.' The Coronelle was an excellent, a civilized pass. Would we not change our plans? We would not.

At the evening meal we were annexed by an English-speaking German, who had just arrived over our pass, and wanted to tell someone about his climbs. He gave us tea (made with tepid water in a jug on the table), and then he told us. When we proposed to go to bed, he made more tea and told us more. He was horrified to hear that we climbed with guides; he had never done such a thing; and if his friends always led—well, he was still guideless. He was outraged to hear that we had never abseiled, he offered to take us climbing. We explained that our plans were made, and enquired about our ferocious pass. It was perfectly safe, he replied, so long as we did not

glissade. His friend had glissaded, and was in bed with his thigh-bone badly bruised. 'I myself am an exceptionally brave man, but I did not glissade.'

We escaped at last, but next morning he invaded our 10 by 8 bedroom when we were packing to go, and tried to explain the theory of abseiling, on the end of the bed with a 200 foot rope. He got more like Laocoön every minute, and finally Marjorie and I collapsed on the beds, and laughed ourselves sick, while he struggled madly in the doorway. We got out at last, shaken and weeping, to encounter the Italians lying in wait. Would we not change our minds and come with them? We would not. A conference in a corner, of which I caught the concluding sentences. 'Well, shall we go with them?' A pause. 'No, I must think of my mother.'

After all this the pass proved a most mild affair, and we landed at the Vajolet Hut in good time, down the extraordinary Valley of Desolation between the Rosengarten and the Vajolet towers. Dolomite scenery can be violently ugly. A fantastic juggle of peaks on the left, a dull lump of a thing on the right, all white hot and bleached in the sun. Dust and scree and loose stones. Ugly and rather frightening, like a story by H. G. Wells. And then the hut—large, noisy, crammed with people, most of them Italian tourists who played rival tunes on mouth organs all at the same time, and yelled in the intervals. Only at night everything changed. The noise died down; the moon sailed overhead, and above us the Winkler Tower, silver and curved like a scimitar, was crowned with an enormous star.

Next morning the magic was still powerful. We climbed two of the towers, the Stabeler and Delago—the first delightfully steep, but not hard, the second ending in a long vertical crack (the Pichlriess) which I found hard enough, and where the space under one's heels seemed limitless. There is a splendour of great pillars of rock plunging down into the corrie behind the Vajolet Towers that is extraordinarily impressive.

From the Vajolet Hut we went on to the Sella Hut, a curious place, on a main motor-road, and so half climbing hut, half restaurant—amusing, unfriendly, set in a wide, green meadow, with the Langkoffel Group rising abruptly on one side, the Sella Group on the other, while the Grappa da Cir is in the distance. We began with smallest Sella Tower (for we were out of



Ella Mann Standing

ON THE JAHN WEG (TRAVERSE) THIRD SELLA TOWER (G. R. SPEAKER)

training, and stiff still from the Vajolet Towers), and then tackled the Fünffingerspitze by the Schmittkamin. This is a most exhilarating climb, mainly slab-work, as is the case in many of the great Dolomite chimneys. But I remember one very tight squeeze, when I felt extraordinarily like the meat in a sandwich; only the meat can't roll out sideways (I was mainly horizontal at the time), whereas I could, and very nearly did. Another pitch sticks in my memory, easy but fascinating, a place where one bridged out of a cave, a foot on each side, and looked straight down to the screes, with nothing at all in between but air. We came down by the Daumenscharte, which is steep at the top, but with enormous bucket holds, and then eases off to a scramble.

Next day Marjorie very wisely took a day off. We were both thoroughly soft (an exceptionally hot Italian summer is not a good preparation for climbing), and we had meant to begin much more gently. But between the weather and the mountains and Demetz—especially Demetz—we found ourselves climbing every day and doing quite strenuous things. Demetz refused to believe we were tired or incompetent, when another party's guide suggested that the Pichlriess was no place for ladies, he had replied simply, 'But these are English ladies.' We had to live up to that. So hypnotised was I, that I went off to do the third Sella Tower by the south face the day after the Schmittkamin, leaving Marjorie safe in bed. Demetz looked down disapprovingly in the first chimney and said, 'Why do you pant?' I wrestled with the chimney and the Italian language for a few minutes in silence, and then replied, 'Because the air is so pure.' (I have not yet discovered the Italian for 'thin' air.) When I arrived at the top Demetz said (really interested), 'But why should good air make you pant?' A question I could not answer adequately, even in English; so he just had to suppose that I have eccentric lungs. Fortunately the rest of the climb was out-of-doors, on slabs with smallish, adequate holds, and one long airy traverse on the edge of nothing—all very pleasant and not in the least strenuous.

That night, however, I went down with a chill, and a temperature which felt about 120°, so Marjorie went off with Demetz to do the Adang Chimney without me. She returned

triumphant, but pale, with tales of a horrifying traverse taken instead of the overhang, since she was not tall enough for Demetz to reach the top from her shoulders. But it was not the climb that had shaken her, it was the journey. She had gone on the flapper-bracket of Demetz's motor-cycle, which was braked solely by the foot of the rider on the road, and was tied up at various points with string. The swoops round the hairpin bends down the pass were masterly, but shattering.

That night we slept at Sta. Cristina, starting early next morning for the Firenze Hut and the south face of the Piccola Fermeda. It was our one bad morning. A series of thunderstorms—all at night—had apparently discouraged the fine weather, besides giving us most magnificent views of lightning-lit mountains. We had a weeping mist all the way to the hut, but it soon cleared, and gave us a sunshiny day of face-climbing by a route up which Demetz had been the pioneer.

On our return to the Firenze Hut, we found a large friendly group of Italians in possession. They had come up to do the Gran Fermeda, and were making a party of it, with toasts and songs. We were swept into the party, and found ourselves discussing the most unexpected subjects, in a medley of broken French and Italian. In the intervals we tried to cheer up a melancholy German, who was there alone with his guide, and who got left out because his only foreign tongue was a little English. He was a queer person. As far as we could make out (he had little English, and we less German), he climbed because he was under a Curse. He did not say so, but there must have been some reason for his doing what he evidently so much disliked. He sat there, looking like the saddest kind of spaniel, and told us how he had loathed climbing the Gran Fermeda by the ordinary route. It had been a terrifying experience, which would haunt his dreams. He was going to do the Fünffingerspitze in two days' time. Had we done it? We admitted that we had, and added that it was a good climb. If possible, his gloom deepened. 'It is very difficult,' he said. 'You went by the Daumenscharte?' 'No, by the Schmittkamin—but we came down by the Daumenscharte, and it was very pleasant,' we said, thinking of our stroll down after the excitements of the chimney.

Whatever he wanted us to say, this was not it. 'The



J. Burton

JOHANN DEMETZ ABSEILING ON THE THIRD SELLA TOWER

Daumenscharte is very difficult. I go to climb it,' he said, and so withdrew.

Next day, as we said goodbye to the Italians, he appeared again.

'You,' he said bitterly, 'can do everything. You climb very well, you speak all languages. Goodbye.' Having discharged this broadside of erroneous ideas, he crept out after his guide—a bearded, truculent person, who reeked of liquor—and we saw him no more.

Our tour had manifestly begun at the wrong end. The ascent of the Piccola Fermeda by the south face had been a very pleasant climb, but it did not compete in interest or difficulty with our earlier climbs; the Gran Fermeda, which we traversed next day, afforded wonderful views, but indifferent climbing. We lay in the sun half-way up and listened to the piping of Demetz's eldest brother's youngest son, herding cattle in the pasture below; we lay on the top and watched an aeroplane, and thought about nothing at all. It was all very pleasant and lazy, and quite wrong for the end of a tour. We had two days left after that, so we decided on a short day, with a descent to Sta. Cristina in the evening, and then a day on the Grappa da Cir. The short day was brief but strenuous; we remember a horrid spike called the Kastnerkoffel without pride.

On the Grappa da Cir we did two or three shorter climbs, including the Rodiferria Chimney and the Pescosta Crack. The latter I found harder than anything else we did. This was the more annoying as Marjorie had sailed up in front of me in the most competent fashion, and had stuck on, even when about half the cliff, including the bit I was standing on, departed valleyward with the most shattering burst of dust and sound. As I was unroped at the time, both she and Demetz were quite sure I had gone too, and were correspondingly cross with me when they found I had not. I stood on a small and quite different bit of cliff, to which I had apparently jumped, and listened meekly to a dignified request (in English) and an impassioned appeal (in Italian) not to do things like that when people are climbing. I thought subsequently of quite a number of appropriate remarks (in both languages) to be delivered when I rejoined them at the top; but my failure to deal adequately with the crack so discouraged me, that they re-

mained unspoken. On this dramatic note, the exciting part of the holiday ended.

NOTE.—I must apologise to giving some of the proper names in this article in the German form, and some in the Italian. In general, I believe in using the Italian names, now that the district belongs to Italy, if only because it saves the unwary beginner from spending hours over the map (as I did) looking for the Rosengarten when it is staring her in the face, effectively disguised as Catinaccio. In detail, I think Camino Schmitt looks silly ; and if the Daumenscharte has an Italian name, I never heard it. Hence the mixture.

* * * * *

How dost thou wear and weary out thy days,
Restless Ambition, never at an end !
Whose travels no Herculean pillar stays,
But still beyond thy rest thy labours tend ;
Above good fortune thou thy hopes dost raise,
Still climbing, and yet never canst ascend ;
For when thou hast attained unto the top
Of thy desires, thou hast not yet got up.

That height of fortune either is controlled
By some more powerful overlooking eye,
That doth the fulness of thy grace withhold,
Or counterchecked with some concurrency,
That it doth cost far more ado to hold
The height attained, than was to get so high,
Where stand thou canst not, but with careful toil,
Nor loose thy hold without thy utter spoil.

Samuel Daniel, Chorus, *Philotas*, 1605.

IN THE ENGELHÖRNER

By

BRENDA RITCHIE

THE Oberland is not generally associated with rock-climbing, but the Engelhörner above Rosenlauri are almost Dolomites. They are a small range of limestone peaks, none of them much over 9,000 feet high, yet possessing sheer rock walls of 2,000 feet and over. They have not got the red of the real Dolomites, but there are delicate pinks and yellows in the rock which glow in level sunlight. On one side of them there is the civilised valley of the Reichenbach, with its motor-road, and 'Post' to Rosenlauri; on the other side the range drops in great precipices, divided by bands of grass slopes, to the Urbachtal, empty save for herds of chamois, a grand and wild valley, perhaps one of the wildest in the Oberland. There are a few routes up the Engelhörner from this side, not often climbed. From the Rosenlauri side, there are climbs of all varieties to be had on them, from quite easy to very hard. The easiest ones are easy only when one particular route is followed; to miss the way is to get into difficulties.

The traverse of the two Simelistöcke is one of the shorter of the Engelhörner climbs, but full of good things. There is a steep descent from the lower peak, the Klein Simelistock, with one awkward step, and an exhilaratingly narrow ridge between the two. The ridge ends in a remarkable, though not difficult, crawl round a corner, where at one moment most of the climber's anatomy is overhanging the foot of the rocks, some considerable way below. After this there is a horizontal traverse, with vertical cliffs above and below, which suddenly peters out into space; the route then, surprisingly, goes straight up the vertical wall above, which turns out to have enormous holds. From the top of the Gross Simelistock there is abseiling for about 200 feet down to the Simelisattel. (There are three routes *up* these 200 feet of steep rock, all very hard; the Eck and the Sudwand, exposed face-climbs, and the Macdonald Kamin, holdless and exhausting.) The way down from the Simelisattel is a climb in itself; it should be easy, but the right route is not at all obvious.

Perhaps the traverse of the six peaks, known as the Mittelgruppe, on the ridge circling the Ochsenthal, gives the best general impression of the Engelhörner. The Ochsenthal is an

almost flat-floored hollow, so hidden away that you come upon it with startled surprise ; it is usually filled, in summer, with patches of old snow, and the great sloping walls of the Engelhörner spring smoothly up out of it, and cut off the sunlight even at midday. As a ridge-climb the Mittelgruppe would be hard to beat. For seven or eight hours there is climbing along a narrow ridge, rising into a succession of aiguilles, with a smooth sweep of rock, never less than 2,000 feet, on one side, down into the Ochsentäl, and a succession of precipices on the other. The climbing begins at once, from the floor of the Ochsentäl, up over slabs, the whole height of the Engelhörner wall, to the Gemssattel on the ridge. It is an unforgettable moment, after those 2,000 feet of climbing in chilly shadow, in a dark amphitheatre of black-streaked rocks, to step over the edge into bright morning sunlight ; by contrast, the well of the Ochsentäl behind looks fathomless, to be measured only in tens of thousands of feet.

The traverse along the ridge takes in Gamsenspitze, Klein Engelhorn, Mittelspitze, Ulrichspitze, Gertrudspitze, Vorderspitze. Gertrude Bell, in her letters, describes how Ulrich Führer and she did this traverse for the first time ; it makes fascinating reading, and her descriptions of individual pitches are perfectly recognizable. The Klein Engelhorn has a tricky route to find, a trap to catch the unwary. Owing to my having forgotten the proper way, Antoine Georges climbed a heroic, but quite superfluous 'exceptionally severe' on this peak. Ulrichspitze is simple, but steep and delightful climbing. Gertrudspitze presents a formidable 'wall of repellent aspect,' which actually overhangs ; there are such good holds, however, that it can be fairly easily climbed. There is good practice to be had in abseiling on the Mittelgruppe, though there are steeper abseils elsewhere on the Engelhörner.

It was on the Mittelgruppe that our party was entertained and followed for several pitches by a wall-creeper, a most lovely bird, grey, with broad bars of brilliant crimson on its wings. Its method of perching was to cling to a vertical wall of rock and hold these exquisite wings open, like a butterfly, to the sun. It was a danger to the party, for we feasted our eyes on it till we nearly fell off.

One of the most attractive climbs in the group is the traverse



Brügger, Meiringen

GERTRUDSPITZ, ULRICHSPITZ AND MITTELSPITZ.
SLABS LEADING UP TO GEMSSATTEL ON EXTREME RIGHT

of Kingspitz, up from the Teufelsjoch and down the ordinary way. The Teufelsgrat is extremely steep and yet fairly easy climbing. The sheer drops on either side of the ridge are tremendous ; so also, fortunately, are the handholds. It was this ridge in particular that a certain excellent St. Niklaus guide disliked so much. Kletterschuhe had been provided for him, but he had never worn them before, and scrabbled and would not trust them. Excellently trained in the technique of big mountains, where to climb gendarmes is to be benighted, he instinctively sought to avoid the vertical steps in the ridge, casting from side to side to try and 'turn' the 'gendarme' ; only with difficulty could he be persuaded to go straight up. Once or twice he remarked mournfully, 'These are not mountains where guides go.' He was, however, a little cheered by our pointing out to him on that occasion, the King of the Belgians, between two first-class Oberland guides, traversing the Simelistock on the other side of the Ochsental.

Certainly one of the hardest, if not the most spectacular, of the Engelhörner climbs, is the ascent of Ulrichspitz by the West face. This was only climbed for the first time in 1921, and when M. G. Bradley led a party up it in 1930 it had been very seldom climbed since then. It is the only route up the wall of the Mittelgruppe between the Simelisattel and Gemssattel ; the way is hard to find, and hard to climb when it is found. There is a long stretch of exposed climbing up a rounded slabby rib, where belays grow only at long intervals ; higher up, a traverse across a vertical wall with awkward and unattractive holds, and some loose rock here and there. Just below the top there is a traverse, which gives the climber a view of the whole wall down to the Ochsental, beneath his feet ; the climbing at this point, luckily, is easy. On the lower stretches of this climb we were embarrassed by the attentions of a herd of goats, who followed us hungrily some way up the rocks. It was amazing, and most humiliating, to see them pirouette casually up slabs where we had already roped and were climbing carefully. We were also considerably anxious for the fate of our boots, deposited Dolomite-fashion below the rocks, where we hoped to pick them up at the end of the day. When finally the goats moved off, however, it was in another direction, and they do not realise probably to this day what a fine dinner of best English boot they only just missed.

SOME CLIMBS IN URI AND THE EASTERN OBERLAND

By
D. M. DEED

1933 was a good year, and it is still one of those abiding possessions which constantly recur to one's memory on the many days spent far from the hills. When friends write to describe the golden red of autumn bracken in Langdale, or tell of snowy days on the Carnedd's or the Glyders, or post-cards come from Göschener Alp or from Stein, or when I am most homesick for the hills, then I go to my bookshelf and take down some climbing journal. The hills come a little nearer and I am a little comforted. This is why I agreed to the Editor's request for an article. Some day I shall take down a copy of the *Pinnacle Club Journal* and read of Wales and the Engelhörner, and then I shall read of the climbs of 1933. This sounds very selfish, but perhaps there are others who, loving the hills, may find something in what I have written which will conjure up for them also memories of good climbing days.

I arrived at Rosenlaui early in August to join M. G. Bradley, G. R. Speaker, Brenda Ritchie, and J. O. Walker. The weather was fine from the week of my arrival. After several good days on the Engelhörner we took the poste over the Grimsel and the Furka to Tiefengletsch. The hotel was small and bare, and the food poor, and I remember that, in sharing a room, Brenda and I also shared one nail and a shelf on which to dispose our belongings.

Saturday was fine and we started by moonlight for the south ridge of the Gletschhorn. As we walked up the glacier below our peak the sun rose and the summit of the Galenstock on our left turned from a cold blue, through a pale rose, to become a mountain of pure gold. We arrived, after an easy glacier walk and a short but steep snow slope, at the foot of the rocks of the south ridge, where we breakfasted. We were in boots, and rather concerned to find the remnants here of many old kletterschuhe. We climbed on two ropes, Brenda leading Bradley and myself, and Speaker following with J. O. Walker and his guide. The rocks are sound granite and provide very good climbing throughout. Had we been wearing kletterschuhe we might have climbed the arête all the way, but in boots, this

proved too hard and we were forced to traverse below the ridge on the left side at one point, though even here the climbing was interesting and difficult. We reached the summit after three hours' rock-climbing. The view was very fine and we had leisure to enjoy it. Our descent was by easy rocks and a snow couloir on the west face to the level of our breakfast place, and thence back to the hotel by the same route as the ascent.

The hotel on our return was occupied (every inch of it) by a crowd of tourists who had arrived in charabancs, later discovered to be a 'Sangverein.' They may have had good voices; I felt unqualified to judge. Certainly they sang, but unfortunately under our windows, almost all night. I know my thoughts became more and more lurid and I vowed never again to come to the Tiefengletsch Hotel and certainly never on a Saturday night. Next day was spent lying in the sun and making up for lost sleep, the Verein having gone on its way, still vocally rejoicing, at 7 a.m.

Some of the party started that afternoon for the Rotondo Hut but Bradley and I stayed another night and crossed the Winterlücke next day to Göschener Alp and so down to Göschenen, where the rest of the party joined us after climbing Piz Rotondo. We all appreciated the comfort of the beautiful old Weisses Rössli. The Gaststube has a fine oak panelled ceiling over which grows a pale small-leaved ivy, rooted in a pot on the window sill and creating a pleasant effect of cool shade.

From here we walked up the long Voralp Valley to the hut for the Fleckistock. A good climb with no particular difficulty, as I remember we climbed unroped. The start is up a steep snow couloir to the Flulücke, and from thence by the south ridge which provided pleasant, sound rock-climbing and delighted me with its profusion of Alpine plants. I came across several species of gentian, pincushion silene, androcace, saxifrage, and primula, and, best of all, erytrichium nanum. The whole Voralp Valley is a wonderful place for flowers and I found many varieties on the way down from the climb which I did not see elsewhere.

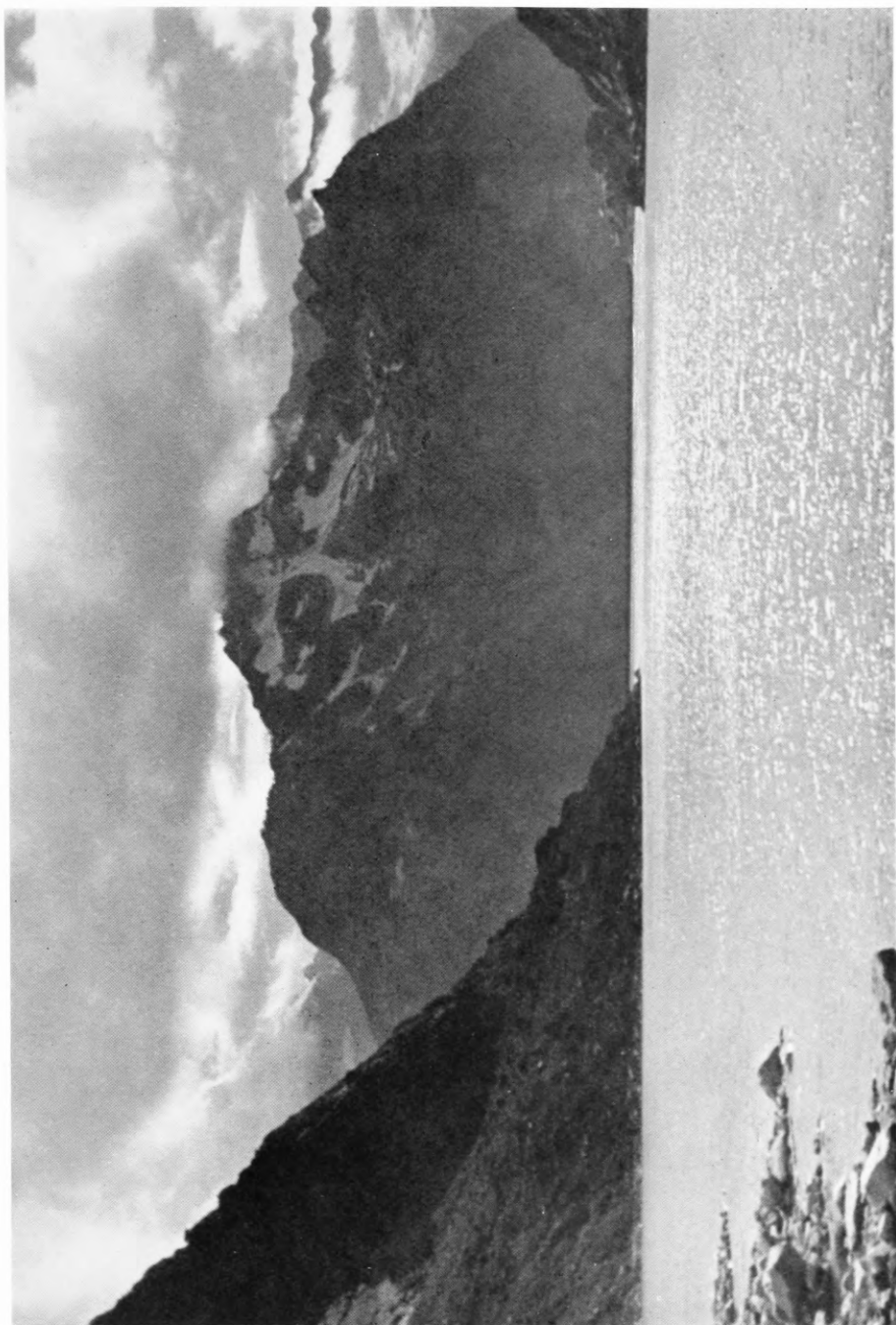
Brenda Ritchie and J. O. Walker were left at the Hut to make their way over to Stein and so home, while Speaker, Bradley and I walked up to Göschener Alp. We arrived just in time to shelter from a terrific thunderstorm which resulted in the destruction of several bridges. Fortunately, the one we

needed remained intact, and we crossed it next morning on our way to the Feldschyn. This is a delightful small peak of Heath Robinson aspect, reached by a small glacier which was, at this time of the year, rather denuded of snow and full of small hidden crevasses. The climb of the final peak is short, but difficult. I remember a hard pitch up a scoop with two alternative branches, and final summit blocks of granite, with a backing up pitch and a difficult finish up a vertical wall onto the summit itself, too high for my reach, and only achieved with help from above.

The next day was wet and we employed it in walking to Göschenen, and driving over the Furka to the Belvedere Hotel, but were lucky enough to climb the Galenstock next day in fine weather.

We started with lanterns to find a way up the much crevassed lower portion of the Rhone glacier. Had we realised the extent of the crevasses we should have chosen a somewhat dreary, but simple, moraine walk in preference. The crevasses were too wide to jump and too long to be easily turned. We were, however, rewarded by a magnificent view of the Valais peaks, first by moonlight, and later through all the changing colours of sunrise. After leaving the glacier the route is to the right up steep snow. The final slopes are very steep and necessitated cutting steps for the descent as the snow covering the ice was thin. The summit is heavily corniced, and the view from here magnificent in all directions, particularly towards the Valais and Oberland, and also East towards the Bernina. We did not stay long on the summit as we wanted to descend while the snow was still good, and the wind at 9-30 a.m. was very cold. We were back at the hotel by 2 p.m.

We took the Poste back next day over the Grimsel to Handegg, and then came the best climb of all, the Klein Gelmerhorn. This was a long cherished ambition, ever since I had heard it described as one of the hardest of the smaller rock peaks of the Alps. It is a fascinating expedition from start to finish. The start is by an astonishing steep rope railway, far more exciting than anything that has been seen at Earl's Court, and this saves one the drudgery of 1,500 feet of steep ascent for the modest sum of 1 franc 50. On arriving at the terminus of the railway one is immediately on the shores of the Gelmersee. This has been enlarged by a huge dam across



G. R. Speaker

GELMERSEE

one end, and the path to the hut now lies across the dam and round three sides of the lake. It is one of the most beautiful of lakes, of a deep jade green, reflecting the peaks on the opposite side of the Grimsel valley and fed by glacier streams. The Gelmer hut is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours' walk above the lake, a charming place with a fine view. We were lucky to have it to ourselves.

After a descent of 400 ft. from the hut the peak is approached by a traverse across smooth slabs cut by horizontal cracks. This is not easy to find and not altogether easy to accomplish. We discarded our boots in the first couloir and continued the traverse in kletterschuhe. At the end of the traverse we scrambled up a steep couloir full of vegetation and loose stones, to the col on the left of the peak. Here we left our rucksacks and kletterschuhe and continued unhampered and in rubbers. From the col the climbing would be considered severe by any English standard. There are exposed slabs, difficult chimneys, knife edge arêtes, and awkward corners. Finally, we emerged by a cave pitch at the foot of the summit block. This is a gigantic piece of granite with apparently holdless, vertical walls on all sides. Fortunately there is a leaning block close to one side, and, by bridging the gap thus formed, a tall man can reach to pull himself onto a small platform on the summit block itself. My ascent was made possible by standing on Bradley, who wedged himself across the gap to form a good, sound stance. From this platform the summit can be reached up a steep edge of granite but the holds are barely adequate, being small and scarce. It closely resembles the Eagle's Nest ridge. The angle is less steep but the holds are smaller. On one stretch near the top they give out completely. This is a dream summit with no easy back door, and affording space only for a very small climbing party. It might easily become a nightmare. I can imagine no worse fate than to drop one's rope accidentally over the edge and to be left gazing at the piton ring with no means of abseiling from it. Our descent went well. We abseiled on several of the difficult pitches and arrived at the foot in time to walk at an easy pace down to the Gelmersee, and round to the 'station,' where we kept the 'train' waiting while we quenched our thirst and fortified ourselves for the really nerve-racking descent to Handegg. So ended a delightful expedition and a good season's climbing.

A GREENHORN ON THE TRIFTHORN

By

MARJORIE SCOTT JOHNSTON

THE Trift Hotel above Zermatt is, as you know, one of the luxury climbing huts. You sleep between sheets, and your head rests on a real pillow. This makes it all the more difficult to leave at 3 o'clock in the morning, knowing as well you know that a three hours' plod up a moraine, which gets uncompromisingly steeper and steeper, lies ahead.

Besides myself, the party consisted of Norah and two guides, Heinrich Julen and Heinrich Biner. We do not always start on time, owing to Norah's fondness for washing her face and cleaning her teeth in ice cold water. But this morning we arrived in good order at the top of the moraine, just as the sun was touching the higher mountains with the olympic splendours of the dawn.

Our objective was the Trifthorn, a somewhat insignificant looking peak sandwiched between the Wellenkuppe and Zinal Rothorn. Most of the higher peaks were still too snowy to be climbed, but there was compensation in their shining beauty.

After a second breakfast, we roped up and began to cross the Trift glacier. The snow, in spite of heavy falls the previous week, was in fine condition, and we reached the Triftjoch in good time.

There is always something peculiarly thrilling in reaching the crest of a pass or an arête. For hours, it seems, you have been surrounded by laborious snow, confronted with boulders and ice, and the colossal feet of your guide. Suddenly, the too solid curtain drops, and the world lies brilliantly at your feet.

The Triftjoch is a magnificent viewpoint. It is so narrow that its high walls form a perfect frame for the infinitely graceful Dent Blanche, for the startling steep and white North face of the Ober-Gabelhorn, for the whole white basin that is the Rothorn and Durand glaciers.

A little later, on dry rocks, we had a third breakfast and shed some clothes. Above us towered the surprizingly steep and narrow arête of our mountain. In front of us the Trift glacier

dipped sharply into the darkness that was the Zermatt valley, and beyond—Monte Rosa, Lyskamm, Castor and Pollux, Breithorn, Kleine Matterhorn—indescribably lovely on this first fine day.

We continued to climb. The rock was excellent. There were no pitches of more than moderate difficulty, but there were very few that were easy, and many holds were filled with unaccustomed ice. And for me there is always something sensational and alarming in a drop each side of several thousand feet, even if the arête is as broad as a billiard table. This one wasn't.

But there was an amazing amount of comfort to be derived from our two Heinrichs, and we reached the summit after nearly two hours of extremely enjoyable climbing.

More food, and photographs. Norah tidied her impeccable hair and searched for a powder puff, remembered where she was, and applied *Sècheheye* instead.

We began the descent by a short snow arête. At the Col, the two Heinrichs went into committee. Lying on their tummies, they chipped happily at the corniche with their axes and kept up a running commentary on this and that. We listened dubiously to the tinkle of ice particles slipping musically into bottomless space.

One Heinrich then disappeared. Bits of patois were carried upwards at intervals by a gentle wind. The other Heinrich turned to me. 'Please. You go now,' he said.

Only confidence born of experience of this Heinrich made me obey. I clawed my way down 20 feet of perfectly vertical snow staircase—the result of the other Heinrich's industry and skill. Norah followed gracefully and silently. Norah when she is frightened is silent. I, on the contrary, sing. I was singing now.

Soon we were on rock, but of a very different kind. Every hold had to be tested, and the Heinrichs kept looking anxiously towards the couloirs for falling missiles.

The face of the Trifthorn, where the climbing consists mostly of little chimneys, couloirs and traverses, is not difficult, but it is almost vertical, and the looseness of the rock makes it somewhat anxious work. I am never really comfortable when I can see exactly how far I could fall.

There was one rather tricky pitch just before we reached the glacier. It involved climbing down a slippery and almost holdless boulder, and across a couloir.

‘Yump,’ said Heinrich to Norah. Norah hurried as much as she was able under rather trying circumstances, but she does not like ‘yumping.’

Immediately after she and her Heinrich had crossed the couloir, there was a detonation from above, and a boulder the size of a dog kennel, a St. Bernard dog kennel, slid down between us.

‘Hurry,’ said my Heinrich inexorably.

I took the pitch, mostly on the seat of my pants, and leapt across the couloir in record time. Soon we were safe on the glacier. Comparatively safe. I never like those grinning green mouths, though aesthetically there is much to be said for them.

The descent, in the glowing September afternoon, was pure pleasure alloyed only by our reluctance to leave that invigorating air, those celestial heights, that silent and divinely beautiful land.

Through fields of summer silence we have come,
When shadow is dark pilot to the sun.
Slow feet descending from the hills—
Dusky valleys—familiar chalets.

Glacier retreats, the snow is gone,
Far are the heights where splendour shone.
Troubadour lights shall guide our rights
And challenge another, finer song.

So to remember brilliant days,
And those celestial mountain ways,
Light beacons, pyramids to burn
Milestones in time—we shall return.



Marjorie Scott Johnston
OBERGABELHORN FROM TRIFTJOCH



Marjorie Scott Johnston
TRIFT GLACIER LOOKING TOWARDS THE MATTERHORN.
SEPTEMBER DAWN

MOUNTAINEERING IN CORSICA (1934)

By
JEAN ORR EWING.

I HAD for a long time thought vaguely about Corsica as a place of great beauty, where distinguished mountaineers performed severe rock climbs, and lesser mortals might walk pleasurably among the foothills. Only recently had I realised that the mountains might be as suitable a playground for the rabbit as for the tiger. Many of the bigger peaks, in fact, have slopes set at so easy an angle that the summer tourist may ride to the top, or very near to it, on mule back. Yet in spring when deep under snow, these are mountaineers' mountains. Moreover, they must then be climbed guideless, with pleasantly scanty directions as to route, and most are too remote from habitation to be climbed without first making a camp or bivouac. The height ranges up to nearly 9,000 feet.

Since all these attributes seemed attractive, plans were made during the winter, equipment assembled, and at last, on March 23rd, a party of four persons with much strange looking baggage landed at Ajaccio. The members of the party were Dr. D. Crook, B. Hume-Rothery, both of the O.U.W.M.C., C. Barratt and myself. We drove out on the morrow to the little hamlet of Tiuccia, on the coast north of Ajaccio, and here we spent the next few days bathing, sunning ourselves whenever possible, and exploring the maquis. Little villages perch upon the steep hillsides, and around each, mimosa, fruit and almond trees were in blossom, exquisite against a background of grey green olive trees or blue sea. Sweet scented cyclamen and jonquils grew wild in shady places with violets, crocus and other delights.

We left this paradise regretfully on March 28th and took train for Vizzavone, a summer resort set among pine trees at 3,000 feet, and lying at the foot of Monte d'Oro (7,800 feet). Here we entered another world, and our arrival was unpropitious. Rooms had been engaged at the Hotel Monte d'Oro, about 2 miles from the station and 500 feet above it. It was dark when we arrived, but the usual little crowd of

villagers had assembled to meet the train, and I inquired among them for the hotel porter. There was a pause, then, from various voices : 'The hotel is shut,' 'There is only a caretaker there,' 'The road is blocked,' 'Beaucoup de neige, beaucoup. . . .' We blustered, of course, and talked of letters received. The station master, pointing to a dark road overhung with pine trees and bordered with snow drifts, said that the road was still uncleared further up the pass, that we could try to reach the hotel if we wished, that he must now shut the station and would we immediately select what luggage we wanted for the night. We capitulated, seized rucksacks and were led away to the Hotel Modern nearby, our guide continuing the ' beaucoup de neige ' saga as we went : they had had a fall of snow in February, such as the oldest inhabitant could not remember, all the passes were still blocked with snow and fallen trees, telegraph lines down and (most impressive of all) the Post Office had no roof. (It had, however, as we later discovered, a letter box invitingly open for the posting of letters, but cemented up so that they could not be removed.) We waited disconsolately outside the dark house, while our guide roused the inhabitants, and were admitted to a large fireless dining-room, dimly lit by one oil lamp. But Madame was unperturbed by our arrival, a wood fire was soon burning, an excellent dinner appeared shortly afterwards, and our damp spirits revived.

The next two days were chiefly spent in attempts to reconnoitre Monte d'Oro in the orthodox manner from the opposite side of the valley. This was hardly successful for the mountain hid himself in cloud, giving, at best, glimpses of isolated portions of his anatomy. On the third day we decided to prospect a route up the south gully on the east face. This gully was selected partly because it appeared to fit Colonel J. D. Hills' description (taken from the *Climbers' Club Journal*) : 'a long wide couloir which directly faces the hotel'; partly because I had, from my bedroom window, once seen to its top ; partly because it led out on to the South Peak from which the main ridge would have to be traversed for about 500 yards to the true summit, and this traverse, if feasible, should be interesting. Preliminary reconnaissance of the lower slopes of a mountain is nearly always necessary in Corsica, for route finding here often constitutes the chief difficulty of a climb. On this occasion, owing

to a multitude of fallen trees, deep snow, inaccuracies of the map, and our own shortcomings, we spent a long and energetic day over the first 2,000 feet. The lower reaches of the gully would not go ; Barratt and I entered it with some difficulty higher up and found it filled with avalanche snow. Having told each other that this was the result of the big fall in February, that no more was now likely to come off the rocks, that the gully was, in fact, perfectly safe, we agreed, without further discussion, to avoid it if possible. Crook and Hume-Rothery, having in the meantime explored the South ridge on the true right of the gully, and reported favourably, we decided to make an attempt by that route.

Next day we rose at 2-30 and were away by 4-0. Barratt guided us skilfully through the initial difficulties in the forest ; the ridge was entertaining, and provided some steep snow climbing, and we arrived on the South Peak at 9-45. The west face and ridges, plastered with ice and snow, were a magnificent spectacle, but the ridge, from our point of view, looked far from hopeful ; immediately in front of us, beyond a little col, towered a great gendarme. He was steep, covered with 'snow feathers,' except where he overhung, and was clearly not to be climbed. Below him on the west was a precipice, on the east were steep snow slopes ending below in a cliff which ran across the upper part of the South Gully. The snow was now soft, and it seemed possible that our steps might suffice to loosen it from the slope and send it sliding down the cliff. Finally, the punctual arrival of the customary 10 o'clock blizzard settled all doubts, and we retreated by the way we had come. On the way down the approach to the central gully (undoubtedly the one intended in Hill's description) was reconnoitered, and an uneventful ascent of the main peak was made by this route five days later.

In the meantime, continued bad weather determined us temporarily to abandon Vizzavone, and an expedition was made to Ghisoni in a neighbouring valley to the S.E. The walk over, by a pass unnamed on the map, but known locally as the Col de Palmento, proved to be an entertaining expedition owing to very thick mist on the Col and to deep snow on the greater part of the way. The Hotel Cynnos at Ghisoni is extremely primitive, but altogether delightful. We were received as

heroes (a most refreshing experience) for access to the village, except from the coast, had been cut off some months; to come by the Col de Sorba (a road pass) was a feat, but to come over the trackless snow was almost incredible. In point of fact I doubt whether they really did believe us; Corsicans hardly ever walk, they ride on donkeys, and I think it is partly for this reason that '*beaucoup de neige*' means for them '*impassable*.' We were entertained in the kitchen, a delightfully warm room, and there feasted on the '*spécialités du pays*': little trout, honey, chestnut fritters, myrtle liqueur, and, almost best of all, real fresh milk (tinned varieties only elsewhere), while the village gossips dropped in to chat and to find out why we had come.

The ostensible object of the expedition was to 'look at' the rock peaks named Kyrie and Christe Eleison. The Christe was free from snow and is crowned by some magnificent cliffs which we were anxious to inspect, although they are probably far beyond our climbing standards. Our unsuccessful efforts to do so provide good material for a treatise on 'How not to Mountaineer' and may be summed up as follows: 'We intended to climb one mountain but were under the impression all day that we were on the slopes of another; we don't really know which hill we ascended, but we certainly came down the one we originally intended to go up.'

Both mountains lie on the right and Ghisoni on the left bank of the river Fium' Orbo, which was then running full and strong. Reconnaissance through field glasses on the previous afternoon having shown a log across the stream immediately below the village, we first tried to cross at this point, since we should then arrive on the slopes of the Christe. The log was actually down-stream of the point I had believed it to be, a side stream had to be crossed with some delay in order to reach it, and it proved, on inspection, to be an accidentally fallen trunk jammed in a position inaccessible from either bank. We therefore trekked about a mile down-stream, crossed by the bridge, which brought us out on the slopes of the Kyrie, and walked up-stream on a path along the right bank until we reached a tributary stream running in a deep steep sided ravine, impassable at that point. There was a mist which persisted all day and reduced visibility to about 200 yards in the valley, and to a much

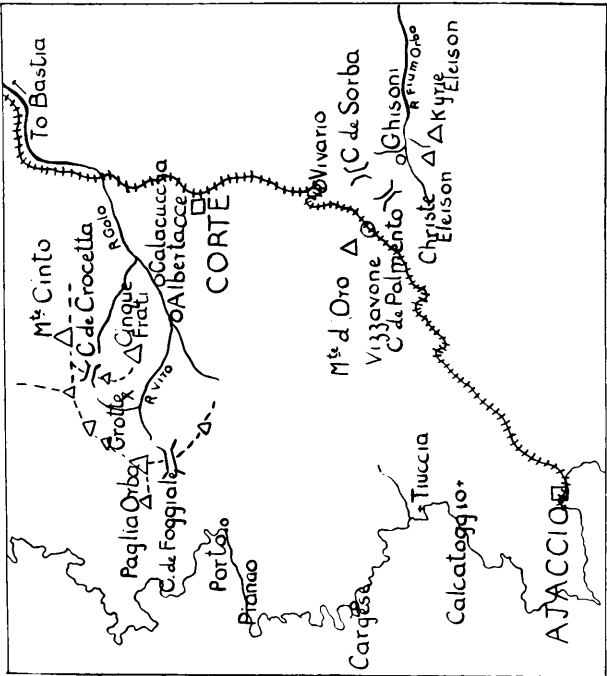
smaller range higher up. The tributary appeared, from the map, to separate Kyrie from Christe Eleison and, since the fates did not seem to intend us to climb on the Christe that day, we decided to go up the Kyrie instead. Accordingly we turned uphill and followed southwards along the crest of a ridge until this became a continuous rock arête. These rocks were extremely steep and should give some fine climbing. Efforts to make an ascent having failed, we turned back, intending to descend by the way we had come. No compass reading was taken at this point. All went fairly well till we reached the bank of the main river ; there was no path along the bank, and, since we had followed a continuous track from the bridge to the ravine, obviously something was wrong. With the help of the map it was shortly established that we were now on the slopes of the Christe Eleison, almost opposite Ghisoni, and up-stream from the deep ravine, which, therefore, separated us from the bridge. We had about an hour of daylight before us. Three lines of action were open to us : first, to go down-stream as far as the ravine and work up this until we found a crossing place ; this procedure would almost certainly entail a night out. Secondly, we could again inspect the log bridge, but no one was very optimistic about this crossing. Lastly, Barrett reminded us that we had, in the morning, inspected a place where the river widened out and might be shallow enough to ford. The chance seemed worth taking, and we made our best pace to the spot. The river here was about 25 yards broad, and, in mid-stream, waist deep. I tied on to the 100 feet rope and waded in, chose a bad line of country, and was soon overbalanced and swept off my feet. I was very glad of the rope. Barratt then tied on, chose a much better route, and, after an exciting moment, when she wavered in the mid-stream current, got across. Then we rigged a life-line for the middle men with the rope belayed round trees and the last man roped on. A final stroke of luck awaited us at Ghisoni : ' How it has rained all day ' they said, ' Your clothes *must* be wet.' So they were dried overnight in that delightful kitchen 'and no questions asked.' Supper that night was a jovial meal.

Next day, Thursday, April 5th, we returned to Vizzavone by a pleasant walk over the Col de Sorba to Vivario, and thence by train. On Friday we climbed Monte d'Oro, and on Saturday

travelled joyfully to Corte, where we bought camping provisions—not forgetting a bottle of rum. Our joy, however, was shortlived, for rain started in the afternoon and continued for three days almost without intermission. We drove over to Calacuccia that evening and spent the next few days in exploring the valley and making plans to abandon the mountains and do a walking tour on the coast. Crook had to leave on the Monday and we almost envied her. Tuesday, however, was fine, and Wednesday magnificent, so we set off at 8 a.m. with Dominique Negropoli and a laden mule for the Grotte des Anges, the bivouac site in the Viro Valley. At last we were able to see the magnificent peaks at the head of the valley of which we had heard so much, to lunch basking happily among the crocuses that grew all around the Grotte, to get gloriously hot as we pitched tents and chopped wood and gloriously cool again by a plunge in the stream. Altogether it was a good day.

Next morning we were away at 4 a.m., bound for Paglia Orba by the Col de Foggiale. Barratt, who had prospected the day before, led us skilfully through the intricate lower slopes, among the trees, and we reached the Col at 7-o. Here it began to rain, but we had time to go further and get a bearing on the line of cliffs across the route before thick mist came down. Rain turned to snow as we reached the cliff, but we were at least lucky in finding, almost immediately, a couloir which would go. This is the only part of the climb for which a rope is needed. The gully, after about 200 feet, led out on to easy snow slopes up which we walked till we came to a place with magnificent precipices on three sides. Aneroid, map and compass led us to suppose that this was the top of the mountain. Visibility was about 20 yards, there was a cold wind, and we were wet through. We scuttled down, and, with the help of the usual sitting glissade from the Col de Foggiale, were in camp for lunch at midday. Paglia is so fine a mountain to look upon that one feels almost ashamed to have climbed him in so grim and peak-bagging a spirit.

The following day was too wet for climbing, and was devoted to camp chores and reconnoitring the route to the Col de Crocetta. On Saturday we climbed the five peaks of the Cinque Frati. These are usually traversed from south to north, or low to high. The direct routes on the two lowest



D. Collier



B. Hume-Rother

“THEY WERE REWARDED . . . BY THE ONLY SUMMIT VIEW OBTAINED ON THE WHOLE TOUR.”

LOOKING S.W. FROM MONTE CINTO

(Nos. 5 and 4) are steep and, so far as we could ascertain, devoid of belays. The rock is granite and the holds typically smooth and rounded; kletterschuhe are a great advantage. We eventually climbed both peaks by the easy slopes on the east side and descended No. 4 by a short, but sensational, abseil to the Col. Nos. 3, 2, and 1 were climbed direct, and gave pleasant climbing of moderate standard on good rock. We did not complete the traverse by descending No. 1, as we had spent much time in attempts on the direct route on No. 5 and were uncertain about the way home. It had been a good day, and, though we may not have learned much about judging angles on rock, we had at least learnt how hard they are to judge; routes which looked easy had proved impossible (at least for us) and those judged impossible had turned into 'moderate' climbs—a humbling and no doubt salutary experience.

This was my last climb, but Barratt and Hume-Rothery, undeterred by a 13-hour outing on the Frati in addition to camp chores and some packing, determined to do Monte Cinto (8,900 feet) next day, going up by the Col de Crocetta and returning to Calacuccia. This was a long expedition, since they had to climb about 5,000 feet, and cover a great deal of ground as well. They were rewarded by a magnificently fine day, too hot and sunny for comfort, in fact, and by the only summit view obtained on the whole tour. Two tired, sunburnt, but successful climbers arrived at Calacuccia at 7 p.m.—to face packing for a 4 a.m. start on the homeward journey next day.

Of the beauty of the island and of its charming courteous people, I have neither space nor skill to write, yet it is of these things that, perhaps, one's more enduring memories remain. It is true that we passed much of our time in mist, damp and unseeing, yet mountaineers know that beauty seized in a fleeting glance among the shifting clouds may stay long after the hour long views are lost and forgotten. Some day, if good fortune wills, I shall return.

Practical Notes.

Maps. Ministre de l'Intérieur 1:100,000 in colours. Inaccurate in detail, but useful for the general planning of a tour and for carrying when extended views are expected.

(2) Etat Major 1:50,000 must be used for mountaineering.

Reasonably accurate but almost unreadable. May be improved by marking the paths with waterproof red ink. Neither map has contour lines.

Guide Books. Guide Bleu (Hachette) is very useful for general planning. There are no climbers' guides. Information about the climbs is to be gathered from numerous scattered articles in the various climbing journals. A list of those we found most useful is given below.

Camping. The Grotte des Anges, $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours from Calacuccia, is an enormous boulder, of which one side overhangs, forming a sort of cave. We used it as kitchen and store room and slept in tents. The greater part of the Grotte is exposed to drips from the roof in wet weather, but there is, besides the 'kitchen,' a space, which kept quite dry during our stay, where three or four might sleep. The Grotte is used by shepherds and woodmen during the summer. Wood and water are plentiful.

There is no need to import provisions. Tinned foods, fruit, vegetables, butter and cheese should be bought at Corte or at one of the coastal towns. Bread (much nicer than we were led to expect) and eggs are best obtained at Calacuccia.

General. It is not customary for a woman to go about alone and it is preferable to avoid doing so.

The spring was very late this year, and we had exceptionally bad weather. March, however, is normally a wet month and is best avoided altogether. Mid-April to mid-May would probably be the ideal season for climbing, and also for seeing birds and flowers.

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FOOT SLOGGING IN THE PYRENEES

By
LILIAN E. BRAY.

FOOT sloggng in the Pyrenees, how dull and unenterprising compared to climbing ; but then Corbett and I have reached a stage in our lives when we say in the words of the song ' I'm not a climber now,' and we have both learnt that there are other joys in life besides scrambling up rocks, wading through snow, trembling on ice steps, or even conquering great peaks. There is the joy of walking over high passes in the early summer when paths are obliterated, where maps are inadequate, and where travellers there are none ; of passing backwards and forwards from one country to another by such unfrequented ways that there are no Customs, and they do not even ask for passports.

So in June, 1933, we visited the Pyrenees. By train to Luz, where Thomas Cook told us we should find a motor bus to take us to Gavarnie. We were a little annoyed to find that there was only one service a day and that was early in the morning before any train could arrive. It meant hiring a car and cars in France are expensive. There was a French lady stranded like ourselves, and we tried to persuade her to share a car, but I suppose she did not like the look of us, as she decided to stay the night and go up in the morning.

Our first few days were cold and wet and we spent our time exploring and gathering information. There was a Frenchman in the Hotel who appeared to know the district well, he had been over all the passes and up all the peaks (at least so he said). According to him most of the passes we wished to do were impossible without a guide, there was too much snow, and not only should we inevitably lose our way, but we should also be swallowed up by avalanches if we swerved so much as a hand's breadth from the exact route.

We did condescend to take a guide one foggy day to the Brèche de Roland. I admit that on that particular day we could never have found the pass, as we could hardly see 50 yards ahead.. The Brèche de Roland is the highest pass from Gavarnie into Spain, a small gap between huge rocks, with a very sharp descent

on the Spanish side. We went up by a long snow route, starting from the path leading to the Port de Gavarnie and over the Glacier de Taillon, and made the descent by L'Echelle, a rocky staircase leading directly into the Cirque. To those who have not visited the Pyrenees, the word 'Cirque' will convey nothing. These huge semi-circles, generally of most precipitous rock, down which pour waterfalls of every size and description, seem peculiar to these mountains. The Cirque de Gavarnie is one of the grandest, and for the most part, unclimbable, but in one corner hidden away is this perfectly easy rock staircase.

Soon after the weather cleared, and we started off on our first tour, rucksack on back. Along the mule path to the easy pass of the Port de Gavarnie, and over into Spain. To those who know nothing of winter conditions, it is difficult to imagine that this pass could ever be the formidable and dangerous thing described by Pilley in her article in our first Journal, so simple and plainly marked is it. The Spanish side is much steeper and wilder, and the gorge of the Gave du Tour gave the most wonderful scenery, until we reached the fork where one path branches South to Torla and the other leads to Ordesa. At this point, alas! a motoring road was being built, and the rest of our walk along the famous Val d' Arazas to Ordesa was ruined by a half finished road, peopled with workmen. We found two tiny inns, the one we stopped at was spotlessly clean and very comfortable, especially as we were the only guests, the season being early. There were rumours that a big Hotel was soon to be built to accommodate the motorist. An unfortunate episode occurred here, Corbett found a species of guide book, richly illustrated, into which she dipped. She became absorbed in the description of an ancient monastery which she insisted that we should visit. Such sightseeing rather disturbed our plans, but she seemed so set on it that with my usual good nature, I gave way.

The next morning we loitered up the valley of the Ordesa river, which at present, is desecrated by no road, and had views passing description of Mt Perdu and the Cirque, we bathed in a pool and returned to our inn for déjeuner. In the afternoon we walked to Torla, a good sized village with a wonderful old inn.

Our sightseeing trip necessitated walking from Torla to Biescas over the Col de Cotefablo. From the map it should have been quite a pleasant walk, but alas! long before we reached the Pass we again came upon workmen making a road intended to connect Torla with Biescas, and for the rest of our journey we were on this half made road. The heat was overpowering, as the pass was a low one, and owing to the presence of workmen, we were unable to get a bathe.

Our night at Biescas was somewhat amusing, we went to the inn that had been recommended to us, it was kept by a mother and two daughters, none of whom could speak a word except Spanish. We were treated like babies that had to be taken care of, the daughters hovered around—tempting us with every possible sort of food and drink, and when these wants were supplied they led us into the town to a shop where a man was produced who spoke French, to whom we explained that we wanted to get to the town of Jaca. We learnt there was a motor bus in the morning, and the girls made sure that we were up in time, one of them fetched the bus to the door and the whole family pushed us into it and waved a farewell with characteristic Spanish kindness.

Jaca proved to be a fair sized town on the main road between Spain and France with good Hotels. We selected one and made arrangements to hire a car for the drive to the monastery of San Juan de la Pena. An immensely long drive into the mountains cost a minute sum, and I will do Corbett the justice to say that the monastery was worth a visit, and the drive delightful. The old monastery, now no longer inhabited, is built under a huge overhanging rock which formed not only one side, but also the roof, and the light was introduced not through windows but through a gap left between the overhanging roof and the wall. An original and effective idea. The interior of the monastery was highly decorated, and contained a beautiful chapel.

After this interlude we continued our tour, but had to spend one more day of travelling before arriving at Panticosa. On consultation with the landlady we learnt that if we caught an early train at 7-30 a.m. to Sabinanigo (only a short distance) we could catch the bus to Panticosa as the bus met the train. She was quite correct that we should *catch* the bus, for we arrived

at Sabinanigo about 9 a.m. to find that the bus left at 1-30 p.m. —a truly Spanish connection! Sabinanigo consists of an ugly little street in an arid plain and the heat even at that early hour was overwhelming. We looked in vain for trees, there were none. A little distance away, beyond a muddy river, there was a hill with some good sized rocks. Our instincts led us to the rocks, we waded across the river and cowered beside the rocks with at least our heads in the shade, but as the sun got higher the glare and heat were intolerable and we crawled back to the village and took refuge in a cafe.

At last the moment of departure arrived, and in a couple of hours time heat had changed to cold as we drove up and up the zig-zag road into the mountains, till at last we seemed to come to the end of everything, and were deposited at the most desolate looking place on earth, a cold bare lake surrounded on all sides, except the narrow entrance of the road, by mountains, their peaks enveloped in gathering clouds and thunder rolling in the distance. A few inhabitants wrapped in thick clothing were trying to keep warm by walking rapidly round the lake. Panticosa consists of nothing but Hotels and their appendages, in the shape of Bazaars where everything can be bought except the thing one wants. The hotels are all under one management and on arrival one goes to the office, chooses the price one wishes to pay for a room, and then is allotted to an Hotel. At that date July 3rd, there seemed hardly a dozen people in the place, but we were told that later it would be packed, and then, no doubt, it would look cheerful, full of Spaniards in bright clothing, the sun shining, the lake of a brilliant blue under the mountains tipped with snow. But on that evening in the cold and pouring rain we did not have a happy impression of Panticosa. We tried to buy an adequate map and to find out about the route over the Port de Marcadou into France. We could obtain neither map nor information, except that people certainly did walk over the pass and that they started up by the waterfall, and that if we wished we could obtain a guide, but that was the last thing we wished.

The morning was fine, and we set off at 7-30 up by the waterfall. We had a map of sorts and also a description in a guide book, and both map and description told us to follow the left bank of the river. There was a path on either side, and we

naturally took the one on the left bank. For half an hour all went well, and then the path petered out, it only led to some water works, and we could see a good path across the valley on the other side of the river. We were both agreed (and I think it was the only time on that walk that we were agreed) that nothing would induce us to turn back, we could be plainly seen from Panticosa, and we were not going to let the guides think that we were not on the route we intended, so we went on over very rough ground, always keeping fairly close to the river, and at length joined the true path at the head of the valley. The path led past a wonderful chain of lakes to a Hut ; we were now fairly high up. The snow lay thick in places, and the path was covered. We tried to find the correct direction by means of map and compass, but to put it mildly, we were not very successful, nor did we agree on anything. After much casting around, we lit upon a good path and followed it, only to find that it merely led to a lake. At last (I will not say after how long, or how many paths we followed, or how much we disputed) we espied a minute heap of stones (perhaps 12 inches high) which looked as if erected by human hands. It directed us to cross the river, we did so, and eventually reached the Port de Marcadou, 8,546 feet. The descent was plain, and we reached the Pont d' Espagne about 5-30, where we were able to do justice to tea. We had intended to sleep there at the fair sized Inn, but unfortunately spring cleaning was going on, and it proved impossible to get a bed. Another hour's walk down to Cauterets.

Being foot sloggers, but not road sloggers, we hired a car the next morning to take us up the road back to the Pont d' Espagne, where the glorious walk began to the Col de Vignemale, 9,126 feet. We had no difficulty in finding the way that day, but I fear we can take no credit for it. Though there was thick snow for the last 2,000 feet, we were not the first to cross the pass, and the track was plainly marked ! The descent was along the wonderful Gave d' Ossoue, we had plenty of time and lingered by the way bathing again and again.

Our next tour was unfortunately cut short. Corbett received news from home which necessitated an early departure. We motored down the valley to Luz, dropped our luggage at Gêdre, and walked eastward to Barège where we slept. The

next day we motored to the Pont de la Gaubie, where we left the road and took a fine walk over the Col d' Aubert to Lac d'Orédon, and so by a good mule path to Aragnouet. Nothing happened on this walk except pure enjoyment among a succession of lakes, the way was easy to find with little snow. At Aragnouet, we put up at the only inn, a small and primitive place. Almost immediately on arrival Corbett fell ill, upset by the heat or the food.

Our next walk was to be a fairly easy one over the Port de Cambeil to Gêdre, but it was soon obvious that she would not be up to it. Aragnouet is an awkward position for any save walkers, it is situated at the end of a valley, and to get to Gêdre by road meant going for many miles in completely the opposite direction, however, there was nothing else for it, and I began enquiring about buses. That was quite simple, there was only one, and it left at 4 a.m. I saw no reason to accompany Corbett, the innkeeper assured me the pass was quite straightforward, so I decided to walk alone.

We rose long before dawn and I saw Corbett into the bus. There was a thick fog, but the glass was high and the innkeeper and I decided it would soon clear off, so I sat down to wait. I tried to find a book to read, but such a thing was not to be had, not even a daily paper ; at length a pamphlet was produced with an article on snakes. If there is one thing I hate it is snakes, but by 6 a.m. I knew that article by heart. It was then raining ; at 7 a.m. it was pouring. The clearing shower of course ! 8 a.m. It really looked like clearing, I had another breakfast, the clouds were lifting, and by 9 a.m. I was off. The innkeeper scoffed at the idea that the way might be difficult to find, he even drew a little map showing three passes, ' the one on the right,' he said ' is the lowest, but it leads nowhere, the one on the left is of no use—so there only remains the middle one with a little glacier on the left. What could be plainer ? ' And no doubt it would have been plain had it been plain to see.

All went well for a couple of hours, the path was adequately marked and visibility fair, then I plunged into a dense fog. While on the rock the path could be picked out, but on the grass it vanished, or rather there were an infinity of cow paths, I could see from the map that there was a point where the track left the bank of the river (which was flowing South) and proceeded

due West. But the problem was, where did it leave the river, and which, among the myriads of streams, was the real river? For two hours I wandered about in thick mist, I frankly admit I am a fool at finding my way (I have known this failing of mine for years) but I think this was excusable, and at least I was not such a fool that I had not insured knowing my way back. Soon after 1 o'clock I sadly came to the conclusion I must retrace my steps and face the contempt of the innkeeper, and, if still foggy, hire a guide the next day. I now had my one stroke of luck, I had not turned back for more than 10 minutes when I heard voices, I tracked them down and came upon a couple of shepherds, with one of whom I soon made an arrangement to take me to the top of the pass.

A couple of hundred feet below the pass we broke into sunlight, and had one of those glorious views so well known to mountaineers, peaks, sharp, clear and steadfast, standing up from a restless sea of clouds, tossing and tumbling and whirling. It was clear for some 2,000 feet on the other side, and I parted from my guide and shot down, glissading on the snow and reveling in the sunshine. It seemed barely 10 minutes before I again entered the fog. I had paid no attention to any path, it was anyhow probably covered with snow, and I made no attempt to find one, I knew I had to go due West, I held my compass in my hand and went due West. I plunged through streams, I jumped from rock to rock in the rivers, I slipped from the rocks into the water, but I continued to go due West, and my perseverance was rewarded as by degrees the valley narrowed and I came across a well marked path running along the course of the main river, and I arrived at Gêdre in time for a late tea.

Corbett arrived about lunch time the next day, quite recovered, and having much enjoyed her trip by buses and trains over the high Col du Tourmalet. In the afternoon we walked to Héas, a most fascinating little place which should be a good centre for walks, at the end of its valley is the magnificent Cirque de Troumouse.

The next day by train to Lourdes where we spent the night. Many people have written of Lourdes, and to all, no doubt, it leaves some impression, it can hardly fail to do that. The impression it left on my mind was one of artificiality. Narrow streets with shops on either side, almost every shop packed with

images and mementoes, the streets packed with ‘pélerins’ of every nationality, nominally come to worship at the sacred grotto, but actually, so it seemed to me, out to enjoy themselves. At the edge of the town a hill, with a path winding up it, which might have been beautiful if there had not been images at every turn, before which the pilgrims crossed themselves, and said a hasty prayer. Then the garden with the sacred grotto and its buildings and churches, white and gold, everything designed to catch the eye. How different from the stately grace of our cathedrals, with their peace and quietness. Lastly, saddest of all, twice a day, the melancholy procession of the sick on wheeled stretchers, the sightseers standing around and gazing on them as they waited outside the grotto for their turn to be immersed in the sacred water, and throughout the never ending chanting of the priests and choirs. We were both thankful to leave the town.

IN THE HIGH TATRAS

By

RUTH HALE.

THE High Tatra group of the Carpathian mountains is situated on the borders of Poland and Czechoslovakia, rises to a height of roughly 6,000 to 10,000 feet, and forms a happy hunting-ground for the rock-climber. There is no permanent snow, though some may be found in the gullies and depressions on sunless slopes even at midsummer.

The intending visitor can approach from either side of the range ; via Prague from the south, or Krakow on the north. The possession of a properly endorsed British Passport is sufficient for admittance into Czechoslovakia, but a visa is necessary in Poland ; these, however, are given free to tourists. The boundary line can be crossed almost anywhere on the mountains without any questions being asked, but on the roads a passport must be produced at the frontier.

English people will find the rate of living very low in Poland, in spite of the adverse exchange. Forgotten articles of equipment can be bought quite cheaply, but it is advisable to take one's own rope, and it is the custom here to allow at least 120 feet per person. First-class professional guides are paid 14 Zloty, about 10/- a day, but it is pleasanter if one can obtain the services of an amateur guide, or, if a strong enough party, go guideless.

Zakopane is a good place to start from, and excellent accommodation in a pension can be had for 6/- a day. At first it may be difficult to get used to the hours of meals. Breakfast is served between eight and nine o'clock, and it is a long while to wait until two o'clock dinner, unless one adopts the Polish habit of a second breakfast in the middle of the morning. Supper will probably be about 8 p.m., and possibly a glass of tea and a piece of cake will be served in the afternoon.

In Poland dinner always begins with soup, frequently made of beetroots or cabbage, and nearly always good. One needs to get used to caraway seeds, as they are added to flavour the most unlikely viands, such as soup, salad and bread. This last is often made with rye flour and sprinkled with caraway or poppy seeds. Tea would appear to be the national beverage. Served

in glasses, very weak, with or without lemon, it can be obtained anywhere and at any time. Whilst up in the mountains one soon learns to appreciate the drink of cold sour milk to be obtained at nearly every cow-herd's hut.

The Tatra Association has built and controls numerous tourist shelters in the mountain valleys; sleeping accommodation and food can be obtained at all of them, while some of them are really small hotels. Many of the paths and tracks have been marked with colours, and a list of those in the vicinity is to be found in each Hut.

I went to Zakopane in the middle of August, in what was, unfortunately, the wettest summer on record, to climb with Witold Paryski, a Polish medical student, who had undertaken to act as my guide and interpreter, for he spoke excellent English. We made our first climb on a ridge, some four hours' walk from Zakopane, rather a long way for a first day. The climb itself was little more than a hard scramble, but rewarded us with a fine view, and the sight of our shadows surrounded by an aura, thrown on the mist which rose from time to time.

The next day we were joined by Gladys Scott, of the Ladies' Alpine Club, and, our party complete, we left the town and went to the lake of Morskie Oko. We were blessed with a perfect day, so dumping most of our gear at the shelter, we set out for the Mnich (the Monk), a baby peak conveniently near at hand. The heat of the day and our lamentable lack of training, added to the beauty of our surroundings, made for a loitering walk up to the foot of the climb, which was short, but on lovely sound rock with one quite difficult step. We lay on the summit for a long while before descending by another route. This was the only occasion on which we met another party on a mountain, and even then we were unroping before they started the ascent. Then down to the lake and dinner. We planned to make an early start next morning, but fate ruled otherwise; 4-30 a.m. found me in the grip of an attack of food poisoning, so sadly we had to return to Zakopane, where we wasted two days of fine weather, incidentally almost the last we were to have.

Our next journey took us over the Czech border to Javorina, which we reached by the ever useful auto-bus, and then we wandered up the valley till we reached a Forester's Hut set in



Ruth Hale
VIEW FROM THE STOLARCZYK PASS SHOWING THE SUDDEN DROP TO THE LOW COUNTRY TYPICAL OF THE HIGH TATRAS

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1. Little Peak.
2. Middle Peak.
3. Big Peak.
4. Cleft through ridge.
5. Where we spent the night.



Ruth Hale

‘SNEEJNIE TURNIA. THE NIGHT WAS SPENT JUST TO THE RIGHT OF THE PRINCIPAL SUMMIT.

one of the most beautiful spots imaginable. This was to be our home for several days. That evening another party arrived, all friends of Witold, and I imagine it had been pre-arranged so that one of them could climb with us. Although we were introduced, I never knew the name of this particular young man ; Polish names are not easy for English ears to catch, so I can only refer to him as Friend. Fortunately he knew French, so we were able to talk to him direct, instead of relying on Witold's interpreting. We were pleased also at the prospect of being able to climb in pairs instead of having to go three on one rope.

Soon after our evening meal we retired to our beds on mattresses stuffed with sweet-smelling hay with coverlets filled with feathers. It was raining hard, but we hoped for the best and planned to start at 4-30 a.m., but it was still pouring when we awoke. At 9-30 we decided to make a start, and set out in a thick mist and drizzling rain. We walked for five hours but saw little of the very beautiful surroundings, although Witold and Friend assured us of the beauty, until at last a breeze parted the clouds and we became aware of the proximity of steep cliffs on either side. Soon the sun came through and we sat and ate whilst debating our prospects. It was late, and the weather far from settled, but all voted for making an attempt at climbing now that we had reached the end of our long walk.

We left most of our burdens under a boulder, then an easy scramble took us to a depression in the ridge, whence we started an enjoyable climb up a stretch of fine sound rock ; but the fates were against us and when, after a tricky bit of work, Witold had succeeded in leading up an almost holdless pitch, the weather broke again. It had looked threatening for some time and had treated us to thunder and lightning, now it began to shower sleet on us as well, so we had perforce to retreat. It was too late in the day to think of waiting until the storm had passed. Hurriedly we retraced our steps, but of course by the time we had regained our sacks the sun was shining once more. Regretfully we started our long trek down the valley, but, as it was, darkness had fallen before we reached the Forester's Hut.

Once again we planned to leave at half-past four in the morning, and this time it refrained from raining although the

weather did not look too promising. The four of us set out in great spirits, though Scott and I had very little notion of what we were going to do. Witold was never very communicative and hated to give a definite answer to any question, so I am still rather vague as to whether the traverse of the three peaks of the Sniejnie Turnia, or Snow mountain, was his original objective or not.

This time we had only to walk for two hours and a half to reach what should have been the foot of our climb, but the mountain declared war on us at the very outset. According to the guide book we ought to have found snow, old and hard-packed, in a certain gully, up which it would have been possible to cut or kick steps to reach a species of hanging valley leading up to the main ridge. Owing to the exceptionally wet summer there was no snow left, in its place a waterfall leaped over the polished and holdless rocks. To the left rose an unclimbable cliff, to the right it looked more hopeful. For an hour Witold strove to find a way to circumvent the obstacle. He might have succeeded, but the rocks were so rotten that it was impossible to find a sound belay anywhere, or even a rock firm enough to hold a piton, and it was not worth risking a long and unsecured traverse across such treacherous ground. We often found this decaying rock side by side with good sound granite.

We turned up a side valley and eventually reached another point of attack. Here Friend decided not to climb as he had strained a muscle in the calf of his leg the previous day. It was now 9-30, and knowing that we had a long and arduous climb ahead of us, we rashly decided to let him carry as many of our extras as possible back with him, keeping only the bare necessities. We kept his rope, a horribly thick and heavy thing. This gave us two lengths of 120 feet each, which was what Witold considered necessary.

Witold led, and I followed as number two. The climb up to the first and lowest peak offered no technical difficulties, but the climb subsequently proved to be one of those in which the standard of severity increases progressively. Our way was made more difficult by the clouds, which engulfed us from time to time.

Up and down, moving one at the time, we crept along the ridge, the thick mist making route-finding a matter of great

difficulty ; until at half-past two in the afternoon, when near the final notch separating us from the main peak, we were overtaken by a thunderstorm. Luckily there was shelter of sorts to be had, and we huddled under overhanging rocks until it had passed. We could ill spare the time, as it was already so late, and were discussing our chances of getting back by midnight. We were optimistic ! Difficulties followed one upon another, as we slowly pushed our way upward. Then came the severest pitch of all, a problem which took a very long time to solve. The mountain had a cleft right through it, as though a high garden wall had been set close up to a house. Later Scott proved that it was possible to climb up a corner of the main block with the assistance of a rope from above, but for the leader the route lay up the crack. It was a pitch which would have ranked as very severe at any time, but to a tired party, who had already been out for nearly 14 hours, it came very near to the limit of possibility. Choosing the end where the wall was lowest, Witold climbed on to my shoulders, then my head, until finally he stood on my upstretched hands as I pressed his feet against the wall, and made effort after effort to get a purchase on the slippery rock. Finally—‘ Can I rest here, I’m so tired ? ’ Poor Number Two said ‘ Yes,’ and smothered her groans of agony. A final heave and he was straddled across the wall and managed to haul himself to its highest point. Then followed an anxious time, as out of our sight, he crept slowly up the ‘ roof ’ of the mountain. At long last came the call to come on. Alas ! my rope hung slackly down from the very highest point of the crack. It had caught firmly round a flake up on the roof, and although Witold could hold the rope to prevent it slipping down he could not pull it in as I mounted. How I got up that 20 feet between smooth and slimy walls I do not know. I found no hold the whole way up except that afforded by sideways pressure of the palms against the rock and a clutch at the dangling rope, in a crack too narrow for foot, or knee and back methods, and too wide for jamming. However, much to my surprise, I reached the top eventually without having fallen down again, and hung gasping on the wall. Hauling up my sack I proceeded first across, and then up the very exposed slabs above ; and glad I was when I could free my rope and have it pulled in above me, till at last I reached Witold and a comfortably wide ledge.

Dusk was falling rapidly, and it was quite dark before we were joined by Scott, who, from the first, had declared her inability to get up the crack. We had thrown her the ends of both ropes, and after much pulling and struggling, she made her way up what must have been the very unpleasant corner mentioned before. Not only was she burdened by Witold's enormous frame sack as well as her own, but also we could not hear what she said, and several times we nearly jerked her off under the impression that she was calling 'Pull.' It was now obvious that we must find a resting place for the night, but Witold was reluctant to leave the rather troublesome pitch still ahead of us until the morning when we should be cold and stiff. So hanging an electric torch round his neck by a piece of string, he started upwards once more, by its rather feeble illumination, but he was perfectly calm about it as though he was quite used to nocturnal climbing.

I now had the doubtful pleasure of carrying Witold's sack as well as my own, though they were really forbodingly light. Eventually we gathered on a somewhat inadequate looking ledge which was pronounced suitable for our bedroom. We hammered pitons into the rock and tied ourselves on, then tried to settle down. Scott had a groove to herself, inconveniently mattressed with stones, but she could actually lie down. Witold and I shared a small depression, the idea being that human contact would help to keep us warm. That was impossible, and the doubtful advantage was out-weighed by the fact that only one at the time could lean back, and our feet were up hill. We had but one light sweater apiece, and for supper a very few bits of biscuit and some sugar, for we heroically left a miniature tin of sardines for the morning. As for thirst, we had had one half-pint of water for the three of us since 9-30 a.m., and were saving the last precious mouthful for the morning! That was the coldest night of my life. We all shivered so violently that none of us could sleep. In the early hours we burnt a small newspaper sheet by sheet in the hope of getting a little warmth. We were really fortunate, for it neither froze nor rained, but we found it rather difficult to appreciate the unearthly beauty of the scene which was revealed by the rising of the full moon.

At dawn we rose and with numbed fingers and in grim silence untied ourselves and extracted the pitons. Two

short pitches led us to the summit. We were too tired and hungry to feel much elation, but I felt full of admiration for the way in which Witold had led those long and difficult pitches over slippery rock, in very exposed positions, often unable to see through the mist for more than a few yards ahead, up a climb which he had never done before. In fact the Sniežnie Turnia had only been traversed previously by two or three parties, and we were probably the first women to reach the summit, at any rate by that route.

By seven o'clock we had crept slowly, and for me rather painfully, along to a notch whence the valley could be reached easily. Luckily there had been no difficulties, as my right wrist was aching rather badly and was not of much use. Down by the side of a stream we breakfasted off three sardines, one portion of cheese, a little jam and much water! Incidentally, out of six tins bought, that was the only one containing three sardines, the rest held but two apiece. At half-past eleven three tired and hungry people arrived back at the Forester's Hut eager to fall to on the meal which was soon ready for us. The good Frau Gespard had been very anxious about us, but Witold's friends had taken our prolonged absence as no unusual occurrence, and had departed home before our arrival.

Scott and I vetoed any idea of climbing next day, so Witold went back to Zakopane to fetch more food and our letters, while we slept and ate the hours away in this idyllic spot. Unfortunately, by the time Witold rejoined us, my hand was quite useless, and very painful, diagnosing a damaged tendon he put it in a splint. Thus ended my climbing, though I spent some very happy hours wandering from shelter to shelter whilst the others climbed; until bad weather once more drove us back to Zakopane.

Though by some standards our climbing efforts met with little success, the High Tatras have cast their spell over me, and I am fully determined to return to Poland next summer to answer the challenge of these very attractive rock peaks, hoping that fortune will smile on me so that I shall be the winner in the next round.

THE CLUB

Since the last publication of the Journal, three years ago, membership has increased from 56 to 85. With this progress in numbers has come a corresponding growth of activity and enthusiasm in the Club's life, marked by a higher average attendance at Meets, and, what is more significant still, a higher quality of climbing. The rise in Full Membership from 23 to 44 is a gratifying sign surely of the Club's increased strength and ability. Its activities have ranged over all the Alps, Corsica, Carpathians, Iceland, Canada, and even the Atlas mountains, whilst our home crags, the Lake District, Wales, Skye, and the many Gritstone climbing grounds, have been laid under contribution. North Wales has played the most prominent part in this progress, a fact, no doubt, due to the opening of the Club Hut in Cwm Dyli, on the 5th November, 1932. Naturally Lliwedd, Tryfaen, Idwal Slabs, etc., now wear more familiar faces (if also more worn), with the result that courses like Paradise, Avalanche, Terrace Wall, Tennis Shoe, Holly Tree Wall, as well as the Direct Route on Glyder Fach, have been undertaken. Nevertheless, the standard was little lower in the other districts, though the places were not so frequently visited.

An innovation was the change of venue of the Annual Dinner. It was found that as the membership grew it tapped a wider area. Manchester, where the Dinner was formerly held, became unsuited for a representative gathering of the Club. A strong pointer was the necessity to cancel the Dinner fixed for the 16th January, 1932, owing to lack of support. Really this proved to be a blessing in disguise, for someone hit upon the happy idea of holding the Dinner amongst the hills at some holiday time. Consequently December, 1932, saw us at the Guest House, Capel Curig. That each of the three Annual Dinners held there have been largely attended is testimony to the success of the change, to which the admirable arrangements made by our Secretary, and the personal interest shown by Mr. and Mrs. Hughes contributed in no small measure. A unique feature was the musical entertainment (by the Seth Hughes and Lowe) illustrating some of the obstacles daily encountered and bravely overcome by the Pinnacle Club; shown in song, recitation, mime and Negro spirituals. 'What other climbing club can rival the Pinnacle Charwomen?'

THE CLUB

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MARRIAGE.

Edith M. Dalglish to Frank George Bennett, at Bury,
28th July, 1934.

We wish our member all happiness.

NEW YEAR HONOUR.

1st January, 1935. C.B.E.

Catharine Chrisholm, M.D., in recognition of her work as
Consulting Physician at the Manchester Northern Hospital for
women and children.

We offer our heartiest congratulations.

IN MEMORIAM.

Mrs. R. H. Isherwood.

It is with deep regret that we record the death, on 19th
June, 1932, of Mrs. Isherwood. Joining the Club one month
after its inception, she just missed being an original member.
From the beginning she took a keen interest in the life of the
Club, serving on the Committee and later as Librarian. The
Club misses her sympathetic help ; and her loss is felt deeply
by the many members who were her friends.

REVIEWS

The volume of our review section reflects the output of three of the most prolific years in the history of mountaineering literature.

EVEREST, 1933. BY HUGH RUTTLEDGE. Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd. 25s. net.

It is perhaps consoling that there are still certain as yet unvisited points on the earth, to hold out hope and eternal prospects to the mountain-minded man, even though these hopes are at times necessarily faint and fearful. Such points are Nanga Parbat and Mount Everest, the latter peculiarly surrounded by superstitions of the most fervid character.

A strange pair to contemplate. Nanga Parbat and Mount Everest both have to their credit notable and bold expeditions, both have caused loss of valuable human life. Of both we might say that with attack they become no less formidable. The battle comes near being a personal affair. Everest is the more tantalising, in that it stands near to the plains.

Armed with the very latest devices that science and business men, explorers and mountaineers of all ages can suggest, another attack has been made on Everest, another noble failure has to be recorded. To gauge the real effects on the mountaineers, or to try and grasp for ourselves the salient features of heroic endeavour, we must read this book carefully.

An Everest expedition will always be a great adventure. Not always is the resulting chronicle on so large and dignified a scale. All praise then to Mr. Ruttledge, who has been able to reassemble so strong a party for the telling of the tale.

First then, Mr. Ruttledge himself. We are grateful to him, not only for so complete a history, but also for revealing, unconsciously perhaps, an exceedingly true picture of the leader himself, his relations to his party, his inmost hopes and fears, doubts and discoveries.

Although he is known to have been an admirable Indian administrator, an experienced Alpine as well as Himalayan mountaineer, and a man of affairs, his own words would try to make us believe him to be quite a humble person until he confesses with almost a smile of returning confidence to be seen through the lines, 'I had had the good fortune to serve for nearly five years in the Himalayan district of Almora and had climbed a good deal with Gurkhas and Sherpas.' As long ago as 1906 he had been fired to enthusiasm by a meeting with the great Whymper himself in Switzerland.

Having introduced us extremely thoroughly to his new party (of an average age of thirty-four) he describes comprehensively the different stages of preparation for adventure and discourses charmingly on the subject even of medical examination. 'Of malice prepense, Dr. Wilson gave us a magnificent lobster lunch and examined us immediately afterwards. If a man could stand that he could stand anything . . .' It is plain these men COULD, and did. I need hardly remark that this particular examination was not the only one, but rather one of those additional and extra precautions that are contributed by kindly and disinterested friends on great occasions such as these.

He preserves such picturesque details as the wording of the Tibetan passport.

Sealed with the official seal of the Tibetan Government, it reads : ' Be it known to the Dzongpens and head men of Phari Kampa ' etc., etc. . . . ' a total of fourteen British officers with about ninety servants, to ascend the snowy mountain Chamalung, which is in Tibetan territory, in the first month of the Water Bird Year. '

Much of the story is, of course, similar to other stories of the journey to Mount Everest. Names like Kalimpong, the Tista River, the dramatic Kampa Dzong and Rongbuk are becoming if not ' household ' at all events Club words. Mr. Ruttledge never wastes his energies in the tiresome reiterating of truisms, and old stories. At the same time he does not hesitate to make us pause and admire by the way what is proper, bringing us on always at the most correct Tibetan pace afterwards. The unattractive and depressing features of Tibet are here given just the right amount of attention ; good humour rather than over critical commentary is the characteristic. And through it all we behold Mr. Ruttledge himself encouraging, advising, weighing evidences for and against this or that particular measure or proposition, withdrawing himself often, and yet always at hand to give warning or commands when needed. The inner developments in the party are absorbingly interesting. The picture holds us more and more in its intensity, and its occupation with matters so near to life and sometimes death itself. The story is well sustained and the ' close ups ' (I needs must use that word here) become inevitable. But they never keep the centre of the picture a moment longer than is artistically right. Good humour then, good breeding, good organisation and always good courage to take them on.

We read sympathetically of the life led between the various camps, of the up and down work between these camps, of the care of the porters and the daily absorbing relation with the mountain itself. At the right moment, Mr. Ruttledge hands over the pen to Mr. Smythe, who tells the story of his and Mr. Shipton's advance and retirement in a more than usually good vein. Much of the story of failure is due to the worst element in this peculiar warfare—the weather. So much is known before hand, a great deal is hoped from this or that particular characteristic ; but it is the *uncertain* nature of this opponent that makes for the greatest difficulty of all.

And one by one, the last ' steps ' in the great campaign are agreed to be impossible. First, Mallory's skyline of the North ridge is abandoned. Then the route by the slabs below the crest of the North ridge is shown to be always perilous and sometimes really difficult. Finally the ' Flaw ' in the band of cliff below the summit is pronounced all but hopeless. These mountaineers would not turn back without an admission however that there was still a probable access by a tributary chimney, and, if not, a faint chance from the West Rongbuk Glacier.

Some of the best reading is to be found in the ' Extracts from an Everest Diary. ' Here we get more than ever to the heart of the matter and learn what was passing in the minds and tempers of certain members of the party—a human and very illuminating addition.

Dr. Raymond Greene, wise and experienced in Himalayan matters, the chief doctor of the expedition, takes a leading part now in discussing the medical aspects in retrospect. Mr. Shebbare took a lion's share in the

campaign—that all important question of transport—and tells us many of his experiences and difficulties.

Mr. Longland, an advance-party mountaineer with much of the leader's instinct is yet a man of profound common sense. In his chapter on Quartermastering no detail seems too trivial to mention as I understand it was never too insignificant to undertake. Messrs. Shebbeare and Wager in their valuable contributions on Natural History, Botany and Geology, manage to induce the least scientific of us to read and mark with enthusiasm if not inwardly digest. And that mysterious Himalayan Meteorology is treated with due decorum by Messrs. Sen and Chatterjee.

The illustrations are of indescribable beauty. To sum up in the leader's words, one cannot do better at this point : 'It was not a question of a single act of hot blooded courage, but of slow dour long continued advance, against the tremendous defences of the mountain. I felt very proud of my companions.'

E.W.Y.

ALPINE PILGRIMAGE. JULIUS KUGY. Translated by H. E. G. TYNDALE. John Murray. 12/-.

This is a book in the great style, challenging comparison with the mountaineering classics ; it differs not only in degree, but also in kind, from the ordinary book of Alpine adventure. With Dr. Kugy we go back to the heroic age. When he began the exploration of the Julian Alps, huts were few and primitive, and guides still to make. Dr. Kugy climbed with hunters and poachers, who had learned mountain craft from the chamois ; bivouacked without tent or sleeping-bag or even a blanket ; and lived on polenta. When rocks were too slippery and holdless for boots, he went barefoot. In these primitive conditions he absorbed mountain and folk-lore, and came to know the people and the rocks at the same time.

But it was not the accident that he was a pioneer that makes Dr. Kugy's book unusual, he is himself a very unusual person ; a poet and a botanist, as well as a mountaineer, his portraits of mountains are both precise and sensitive, and his descriptions of natural beauty compel the imagination. When, for instance, he compares the Julians with the great Alps, the contrast is instantly alive.

'It was my first bivouac in the Western Alps, and I was quick to note the contrast with Julian bivouacs, no constant column of flame and smoke, only a meagre blaze at mealtime, for it is a labour to carry up wood ; no scented couch on recumbent pine or rhododendron ; hard granite boulders and cold glacier air ! None of the soft dreamy magic stillness of the night. The glaciers talk in their sleep, threatening, groaning, muttering, roaring aloud, to the terror of attentive creation. . . . The whole tone is different. We are no longer in the southern limestone Alps, we are in a world of ice. You do not come here for dreaming, but to exercise yourself in great matters.'

Any man with gift of words may give an impression of a mountain, as a facile painter may produce a likeness. A great painter reveals not a mood but a character, and Dr. Kugy not only sketches, he gives us great portraits. These are not the result of a mere trick of style, but of intimate knowledge.

His climbing methods were leisurely. He did not go to the mountains to perform feats—though difficult climbing was all in the day's work—but 'to see his friends.' We hear of days too lovely to be spent in climbing. 'We lay down among the dwarf pines of the Planica glen, and remained there in blissful enjoyment till evening.' There is never any haste. He can bivouac anywhere, eat anything or nothing; he has ample time to absorb and to enjoy.

It would be easy to quote indefinitely from the section which deals with the Julian Alps. Dr. Kugy had a practically virgin field, and he made the most of it, not in a competitive spirit, but easily and generously, urging others to come and share it with him. He explored the Julians in the seventies and eighties, then in 1885 he went further west, to make the acquaintance of the great Alps. Snow and ice fascinated him at once. The absorption in the essentials of a mountain or of a range, the instinct to ignore the merely incidental, which is already plain in his account of Julian climbing, manifests itself as clearly when he reaches the great Alps. It is not the Aiguilles, it is the massif of Mount Blanc that fascinates the man who learned his technique on rock. Again and again he goes back to Courmayeur to cross the great passes, and when he makes a new route it is on ice—on the west face of the Dôme du Gouter. He never returns—unless he is defeated—by the route by which he has ascended; he traverses and moves from centre to centre, even though this means fewer peaks in a season. Leisurely as ever, he still bivouacs high up. A blanket or so is his only concession to greater height and more advanced years—and he notes with the same minute and loving observation the beauty and savagery of the mountain world.

To friends, guides and mountains, Dr. Kugy is courteous and generous. He resents anything that may detract from the dignity of mountains. To talk of 'conquering' them is unworthy and absurd; to fix chains and ropes and then describe them as easy and uninteresting—as in the case of the Matterhorn—is contemptible. He resents the paint-splash and the chains and pitons which make mountains climbable by the incompetent. He dislikes the competitive spirit, and the kind of recklessness that takes unjustifiable risks. He himself was always prudent. He climbed only with the most competent guides, and while he admits frankly that the objective danger on such climbs as the Dufourspitze and Nordend from Macugnaga is very great, at least it was minimized by every precaution of prudence. When he was overpersuaded on the Grandes Jorasses, and narrowly escaped disaster in the Guttinger Couloir, owing to an almost inevitable avalanche, he is bitterly ashamed.

The book ends charmingly, with an epilogue on the little hills near Dr. Kugy's home in Carinthia, where a man too old for the great mountains, may find the companionship which all his life has been given him by the hills.

To translate a book by a mountaineer, who is also a poet, cannot have been easy, and Dr. Kugy has been fortunate in his translator. Mr. Tyndale has produced a book which is literature in its own right, and which preserves the energy and character of the original. A book to buy. It repays close reading and re-reading.

S.R.H.

AN EPITOME OF FIFTY YEARS CLIMBING. BY CLAUDE WILSON. 1933.

This condensed record of a guideless Alpine career, which is probably unique in British annals, is dedicated to J. H. Wicks, G. H. Morse, and W. A. Wills, Dr. Wilson's companions on 'ropes' whose doings will not soon be forgotten. They possessed, he says, 'le vrai instinct des montagnes et des glaciers,' 'that rare elusive quality which instantly spots a route and finds a way down through fog or blizzard,' 'that genius for mountaineering which, superimposed on sound technique and judgment, constitutes the vital distinction between the goodly number of first-rate guides and the small number of great ones.' With them 200 of his 360 expeditions were made.

He was the only one of a large family to 'suffer from chronic and incurable "Mountain Madness"' and he pleasantly cites Miss Helen Hamilton, the author of the book of that title, as saying: 'Gladly would I recover me of it, for I hate to go up hill, to be tired and hungry, too hot, too cold.' But the madness has held him all life through, since sand-dune days at Stockport and 'looking back, one is thankful that it overcame the frailty.'

What a record this is of grand expeditions and great companions! But more fulness of treatment would be welcome from a pen which can tell us how Alexander Burgener, walking down from Zermatt, 'fell on our necks weeping, and kissing our hands, "How glad he was he had met some of his friends. He would never see them or his dear home again." Why? "He was on his way to the Andes. He would never come back." Why? "No, it was not the mountains he was afraid of, nor the sea. It was the natives. They would kill him and eat him."' "

Of the ladies he climbed with, Dr. Wilson significantly says, 'Most of them were very good, especially on rock.' Dr. Wilson would probably admit that more will be good on ice and snow, too, when opportunities to lead have been available longer. D.E.P.—R.

EPISODES IN A VARIED LIFE. BY LORD CONWAY OF ALLINGTON. Country Life Ltd. 15/-.

The passion caught Lord Conway when he was a boy of sixteen, after an ascent of the Breithorn, on which he had 'seen little but wetting clouds.' Having slept the clock round, he woke to find himself 'helplessly entangled in the love of mountains.' Far has it carried him. The Alps have felt his tread from end to end; the Himalayas, The Andes, Tierra del Fuego, Spitzbergen, every sort of range in every out of the way place has known him among its earliest attackers. With his Zermatt Pocket Book, he started off the whole swarm of Climbers' Guides, and he was perhaps the first man to take ski to Grindelwald!

Less than this would have been a lifetime's occupation for many. But as we turn his racy, rambling pages, there is no knowing what may not turn up. Anecdotes of the most recondite varieties—academical, alpine, archeological, collector's, political, literary—are interspersed with shrewd hints on how to do everything at once, and seemingly be everything as well. He managed to be Slade Professor at Cambridge while running a busy office in Wall Street, New York, concerned in exploiting the Amazon Basin, for example. How

to acquire a Castle, to take an Old Master through the Sandy Hook Customs House, to lecture when the slide of Mt. Blanc turns out to be K2, and, not least, how to describe an alpine cloud effect, are among the lessons he can teach us. Few, indeed, have described mountain scenes so well, or recounted incidents of the glaciers so lightly and firmly; the climbing world is greatly indebted to him for the models he long ago provided. He has not lost the knack, and he gives us here a thunderstorm on the Grandes Murailles with all the old ease and fulness of feeling. It is a pity, however, that he did not omit some dark and unnecessary hints about the Matterhorn disaster.

D.E.P.—R.

HIMALAYAN WANDERER. BY BRIG.-GENERAL C. G. BRUCE, C.B. Alexander Maclehose & Co. 12/6.

The reminiscences of that intrepid leader, Brig.-General Bruce, would make the best reading, even if the gap between the tale of his adventures and the skill of his pen were much greater than it is. The only serious criticism one can bring forward is that modesty forbids him too much that history would demand. However, there are other sources of historical information, and this document is a good photograph of the man.

General Bruce's energy as a boy must have made him a fearful nuisance to overworked schoolmasters, and indeed, one at least of them would recognize him anywhere—though not by his face.

Later, regimental beans and excursions with his beloved Gurkhas absorbed most of his physical energies, and he became champion leave-getter of the army in India.

But it was not all play. Young Bruce was developing those powers which made him, in later years, not only the best informed of the Himalayan climbers, but the man who was best fitted to deal with native porters and conduct the delicate negotiations prior to the attacks on Everest. Today his name is a legend in those parts, and that is achievement indeed.

His career has been somewhat obstinate. As a very young officer, he was advised to collect butterflies, to give him an interest outside his professional life. After the war he was forbidden to walk uphill. He collected 20,000 feet peaks, instead of butterflies, and led two Everest expeditions, after being told that a flight of stairs would probably kill him.

Besides climbing, shooting, soldiering, training Gurkhas and Sherpas on the Indian, European and British hills, General Bruce has found time for a multitude of other interests, and his book includes remarkably interesting chapters on Indian wrestlers and the forbidden Paradise—Nepal.

It is full of vitality and good stories, of which the following is a typical sample :

On the Dhauli Dhar ridge, after a hurricane, and a stampede of porters, which resulted in Bruce, Minchington and two stalwart Gurkhas carrying one and a half hundredweight each, they reached camp. 'Digging through our boxes of stores I found to my delight, a bottle of ginger wine. I poured out a large glass of it for Minchington, remarking, "Drink hearty, Maria, drink merry nigh 'alf." Which he did, and promptly blew up—it was kerosene oil.'

He ends on a note that every mountaineer will recognize.

“In a hundred days of the good I could not tell
The glories of Himachal,
As the dew is dried up in the morning
So are the sins of mankind
By the sight of Himachal.”

Many, many years have I worshipped at this shrine. Can it be that my
sins are too great to have profited by it ? M.S.J.

THE ROMANCE OF MOUNTAINEERING. BY R. L. G. IRVING. J. M. Dent & Sons. 18/-.

This book has only been out three days and it is obvious from even so short a sampling that three weeks would be too little for its reading. A neat article in the British Ski Year Book supplies us with the metres for centime rates of the leading funiculars. On a pages-per-penny estimate Mr. Irving wins easily ; his pages are vast, and his quality is as outstanding as his quantity. No book on climbing will provide occasion for more happy or furious evenings. For he writes with that seriousness which leads to persecutions and wars, as well as to sainthood and heroism. His sentences have a snarl and a bite as well as exaltation. And those who in their *hubris* have exposed themselves to charges of climbing vanity need to beware of his scorns. He has a pageant from the 15th century onwards to point his homily. His own immense mountain experience is kept sternly in the background. He uses it all in telling the great story right up to Nanga Parbat, with always a firm eye on the moral implications.

Such an account, animated with such a deep understanding of the less discussed motives which lead people to climb, is immensely valuable. A sense of proportion cannot be won without reflection, and Mr. Irving provides both matter to reflect upon and a very challenging and bold lead of his own as to the reflections which are due. Whether they agree with him or not the thanks of all mountaineers will be his. D.E.P.—R.

AN ALPINE JOURNEY. BY F. S. SMYTHE. Victor Gollancz Ltd. 16/-.

Mr. Smythe, having left those Himalayan heights behind him, takes to the more familiar Alps again, in a holiday mood this time, and on Ski.

On this occasion he consciously approaches with a touch of the classic sentimental traveller wishing to take things in his stride, and in his own way ; to revisit past scenes in a new manner and to note all things of interest human and elemental by the way.

He arrives, therefore, in the Vorarlberg country in March at Bludenz, equipped with a more than usually competent camera as recording angel in chief, with a mass of energy in himself, and above all, a thoroughly open mind.

The journey thus begun, and it is a long track from Bludenz in the Vorarlberg in March to Les Avants and the narcissi in May, turns into a truly romantic adventure. He meets with reverses of weather by the way,

in particular on the Clariden Pass (this is the author really at his best again) with a curious medley of people about whom he comments in his own semi-detached and yet pointed way. He is a looker on more than a partaker in the doings of others, whether the other person be an odorous old woman on a Motor Coach, a pair of blatantly ignorant honeymooners about to drive their competent guide at a feverish and ridiculous pace up their first eleven thousand foot mountain, or the couples seen from the gallery of a night club in Berne solemnly prancing to a band 'which was more used to the playing of classical music.' He is himself primarily a man of action, at the height of his powers when tackling a difficult ascent in the worst of circumstances, and unlike many men of action, he can write his impressions of these times really well.

Of the four dozen and more photographs which ornament and supplement his story, quite a score are really exquisite and extremely individual in character. Even the water pipes at Amsteg, in the clever designing of the picture have their own particular appeal. The rare lighting which belongs to Mr. Smythe's Alpine scenes is here again.

This book should certainly appeal to Ski runners who are not merely stunters, to all mountaineers, and particularly those who can appreciate their mountains seen, not so much on 'off days,' but rather in odd seasons. And to all adventurers who love to take a chance with Nature in her various moods, and perhaps to many of those who, through no fault of their own, are condemned to spend overmuch time by their own firesides, inactive only in body, but with minds ready to embrace visions of wild crocuses in early spring, unexpected avalanches on the way to high passes, and laughing sunshine turning often into the most unconscionable of blizzards. E.W.Y.

MOUNTAINEERING. BY SYDNEY SPENCER (Editor), E. R. BLANCHET, OLAF BLOCH, P. BORCHERS, T. GRAHAM BROWN, E. J. GARWOOD, P. WYN HARRIS, W. P. HASKETT-SMITH, HENRY HOEK, G. N. HUMPHREYS, T. G. LONGSTAFF, C. F. MEADE, H. E. L. PORTER, W. RICKMER RICKMERS, HUGH ROGER-SMITH, G. R. SPEAKER, J. MONROE THORINGTON, A. M. WAKEFIELD, WILLIAM WEST, WALTER WESTON, CLAUDE WILSON, J. M. WORDIE, G. WINTHROP YOUNG. The Lonsdale Library. Seeley, Service & Co. 21/-.

The most important book of the year dealing with this subject. A large volume after the style of the Badminton Library, containing twenty-nine chapters (each written by an acknowledged expert), a list of all the principal mountaineering clubs of the world, a glossary, bibliography, and index. Admirably edited by Sydney Spencer, secretary of the Alpine Club.

The excellently written chapters on the mountain regions of other countries and continents will save us from being too insular about our mountains. These are comprehensive articles imparting any information the intending climber may need as to what there is to climb, where to start from, climatic conditions, relevant maps and literature, and sometimes even approximate expense. Of course, the mountaineer who really wants to do things—even in the Alps—must work his climbs out for himself; even the best of guides are apt to be unimaginative at times. As Dr.

Rickmers says in his admirably planned chapter on *The Mountains of Europe*—‘All I can really do is to hand the reader the ends of a thread or two . . . I raise corners of curtains in order to suggest what lies behind—.’ There are useful chapters on *First Aid*, *Alpine Flora*, *Photography*, *Geological Structure*, *Reconnoitring*, *Snow and Ice Craft*, and *Equipment*. Dr. Henry Hoek deals with *Winter Mountaineering* from the view of the competent ski-runner who wishes to climb peaks. Graham Brown gives a well written and illuminating account of *Early Mountaineering*. G. R. Speaker writes vividly of the Dolomites and gives first-hand information of the difficulties and dangers encountered by British guideless parties.

G. Winthrop Young writes on *General Principles*. As a rule, climbers pay too little attention to developing their climbing psychologically, as well as physically. An accident often means that the sense of proportion is not working properly. Our margin of safety—which is sometimes entirely an affair of the mind—has been drawn too fine, and, owing to our own fault, we fall. Mr. Young has some interesting things to say on this subject.

The chapter on rock-climbing is in the capable hands of E. R. Blanchet. It would seem impertinent to question M. Blanchet on the subject of *rappel* (abseil, roping down)—he has done some of the most hair raising of these rope descents in the Alps—but perhaps memories of the horrors of our own first half-dozen will be sufficient excuse. To the expert there are many ways of using an abseil rope, but for the beginner it is safer and more comfortable to pass the rope from the front of the right shoulder down the back and bring it out under the left arm, instead of round the nape of the neck, p. 99, Fig. 6. This is more secure (especially in a free abseil when one is in space), and the rope is not so liable to slip on to the neck.

Mention might have been made of the Prusik knot, also of the system of leaving an end of the leader's waist rope hanging with a loop at ankle length, when forced to cross a bad or untrodden glacier when only two on the rope. The ice-axes made by Grivel, of Courmayeur, and the small ‘G.H.M.’ axe designed by that club for use on difficult rock climbs, and obtainable in Chamonix, although among the best made, are not mentioned. In the bibliography section fuller particulars might have been given of the excellent guides published by the S.A.C.—Conway and Coolidge are a trifle out of date—and of the Siegfried maps of Switzerland, and the Barbey map of Mt. Blanc. Also that these can be obtained through Sandfords. The new and important Engelhörnerführer is not mentioned at all.

At first sight the reader may feel that the writers mostly belong to the older generation, but after all, who is better qualified to write about mountaineering than these older mountaineers? Alpine convention is changing as it always has done, but the general principles remain the same; ‘modern mountaineering’ is more a case of a change in mental attitude, and of applying this attitude to existing principles and experience. ‘Modern expert climbers have not perfected their mountaineering to a degree comparable with their rock craft . . .’ p. 50. When 50% of accidents are due to incompetence, and 49% to carelessness, a work of this kind—written intentionally for the beginner—is a valuable addition to the library of every-one interested in mountaineering.

M.R.F.G.

A GOOD LINE. BY UNA CAMERON. Made and printed by Hunt, Barnard & Co. Ltd.

There is a kind of crackle and snap about Una Cameron's phraseology which makes her trip to the Caucasus as enjoyable to read about as it must have been exasperating to perform. By a peculiar personal metamorphosis she turns troubles with passports, officials, interpreters, Russian tobacco, lice, frightened horses, murderer-dogs into a spirited farce. "Starting up Kasbek I tried to ride the grey horse, he turned downhill, and as that was forbidden, he sat down. For a change he was given a load; that was too heavy, and he soon caught his foot in his rein and rolled over. Niko was just coughing with rage, 'An egg costs 30 Kopeks, that is good,' he said, 'but 10 Kopeks for this horse is too much.' Later he broke my ice-axe on one of the horses. 'I only gave it a little knock,' he moaned. Elisee, 'the Guide,' says that no good mountaineer is separated from his ice-axe, so although it caused some inconvenience in getting into the saddle, at least he kept his ice-axe intact."

She and her two Italian guides had 'a good value party' with the Georgians. Poor, and in need of most things, they never touched a thing during the trip. 'But when it came to money, which, after all, in that part of the country has far less value than goods, they were prepared to talk until the crack of doom to try and cheat us into paying as much as possible. Queer.' So it is, equally, in China, Spain and other bewitching and really rural countries.

'Seven peaks in all, and not more than six fine days. What an expenditure of time, patience and money!' It was hell-fire hot, often smelt like a million sewers, grass went so far up that there was no feeling of height, the mountains were loose and a whacking great rock broke Edouard's head. But what of all that? There was enough and more than enough return in human contacts. And the Seven were virgin summits! Above the roses and birches, beyond the spot where two eagles were eating a fox, they arrived finally at a beautiful place beside a glacier stream in the shadow of three rock towers never attempted before. Fine flat grass for the tent, 'no one will slide through the door here, and plenty of water. This is a good line.'

Una Cameron's sentences are as taut and light as the drawings in the corners of her pages, or her red little spotted fawn at bay on the yellow cover.

D.E.P.-R.

UNHARBOURED HEATHS. BY KATHERINE GÖTSCH-TREVELYAN. Selwyn and Blount. 8/6.

The most interesting part of this book to Pinnacle readers will be Miss Trevelyan's account of her first big mountain, Mount Edith Cavell, 11,000 feet. She very happily recaptures the freshness of early days on the snow. The collapse of a cornice, for example, which carried one of her footprints 5,000 feet away down a precipice, seems to strike her as all in the day's sport, and hardly more exciting than the sitting glissade with which they went down. The same freshness marks the rest of her book.

She left England to escape examination torments, and the social round, and took a tent with her and travelled, nominally on foot, but, as everyone

who knows Canada understands, in all kinds of conveyances, trucks, freight steamers, trains, to Vancouver, after which she visited Jasper and the Calgary Stampede. The trip is one which can be heartily recommended to all members of the Pinnacle Club, who must not let themselves be deterred by the rather glamorous tone in which the author adumbrates its perils! Naturally, there were commercial travellers, ship's officers, cowboys, and others who showed a desire to kiss her! Naturally too, when she repulsed them they were discomfited. A cultivated English voice and manner are, in Canada, very heavy guns indeed, and any English girl, with her wits about her, can have a glorious time with as much security as in an English lane.

As for the other dangers, the local people seem to have helped her to enjoy them—'The police say the bears and the huge timber wolves are very bad this time of year because of the cold.' What fun the police must have had, for neither beast will molest the harmless traveller on Canada's main highway! 'At Lake Louise they were pessimistic and said, I wouldn't possibly get through to the coast. They took up the same attitude towards it as the Mounted Police at Ottawa, who said that even a man wouldn't attempt it alone.' This of a perfectly normal piece of travel by rail and road which hundreds of women do every year.

Up the Windermere Valley, which is almost densely settled with English, she seems to overlook all the homesteads. 'In Golden there was only one sign post and that said Windermere was 72 miles away.' However, a 40 mile lift from the policeman took her to a comfortable bed at the Thatcher's Ranch—a very well known place—and 'when I took the road again I got a lift almost at once.' Getting lifts is, in fact, what tramping across Canada amounts to, and the kindness and hospitality, which any adaptable women will receive in the country districts is overwhelming. I feel that it is a pity Miss Trevelyan did not get into closer touch with the Canadians and learn something of their outlook on life.

On the credit side there is a keen, youthful enthusiasm—a passion for the night sky, the stars, the dawning, the camp fire, and for freedom—with which every mountaineer will sympathize. D.E.P.—R.

MODERN MOUNTAINEERING. BY GEORGE D. ABRAHAM. Methuen. 7/6.

Mr. Abraham covers a vast amount of ground in this little book, and it would be unfair to expect him to display the latest inside knowledge on every part of the mountains. No one will look for it here. He is addressing a very large and a very mixed audience, and shows no less skill than of old in somehow suiting his pages to those utterly opposed demands, and reconciling what seem mutually destructive aims. The uninitiated will read with awe the latest expert perhaps with snorts, but the fact remains that Mr. Abraham is eminently readable. Perhaps memories of the days when *The Complete Mountaineer* seemed a guide to behaviour in Heaven cast a glow for me upon these pages. The climbing world owes far more to the author than it will ever acknowledge. How one's heart used to quicken as one surveyed for the nth time, under his guidance, the possibilities of Saas Fée, or Skye! And here again to read that 'The Craggy battlements of the Ecrins have sorely dashed the hopes and the frail bodies of many a would-be conqueror,' starts

the dream anew. Even the specialist, detecting something not as he would wish it in the account of his own pet climb is not nearly as displeased as he supposes by his discovery.

When we consider what a fabulous maze of detail modern mountain lore is, the wonder is not that there should be a few errors in these pages, or that stories now being written down for the first time should sometimes be distorted (cf. the miraculous fall on the Far East Crack, p. 121), but that so much should be right, told so clearly, instructively, and yet with such gusto. No one else addresses the same huge public on mountaineering with equal success.

D.E.P.-R.

MOUNTAIN DAYS IN THE ISLE OF SKYE. BY J. E. B. WRIGHT. The Moray Press. 12/6.

This book is written by a professional guide, who, if climbing had not been his business, would have been an enthusiastic amateur. Mr. Wright has a keen appreciation of natural beauty, especially of the beauty of mountain scenery, and he has enjoyed his climbs. He has written a lively book, which should appeal to the general public, for which it seems primarily intended.

For the climber the book halts between two alternatives. The appendices claim for it a place in the guide-book class, which the popular and personal character of the text claims. Apart from this defect, which is probably inherent in a book intended for two very different classes of reader, it is a pity that the editing was not a great deal more severe. Some of the conversations and personal references would be completely in place among friends round the fire in the evening, but give the reader the uncomfortable feeling of eavesdropping on a private party.

As a Scotswoman, your reviewer would add one further protest. The majority of southerners will by nature mispronounce Gaelic names precisely as directed by Mr. Wright. Is it not then superfluous to urge them to do so?

S.R.H.

NORTH WALES. BY PATRICK MONKHOUSE. Alexander Macklehose. 5/-.

I enjoyed every page of this book, including the informative Preface, with its 'geology without tears,' and its disarming plea that the writer only knows Wales as a holiday country, and, therefore, incompletely.

There are word-pictures here of the places I know which bring those places so vividly before me that I am there again; notably that of Tal-y-llyn. There are descriptions of days spent in walking where I have often walked that make me look forward eagerly to going that way again; there are descriptions of paths I have never trodden that make me long to pull on my boots immediately and sally forth; and if that is not the work of a most excellent guide book, what is?

Mr. Monkhouse covers the whole of North Wales, as visible (on a clear day!) from Snowdon's summit. From Harlech round the lovely peninsula of Lley, through Caernarvon and as far north as Flint; then from Flint draw your line inland to Mold and Llangollen and south of Llannarmon and Bala to Harlech again.

There are seven illustrations, of which only two seem to me to be really satisfying, those of Rhinog Fach and Tryfan and Foel Goch ; and there is a map of Snowdonia. The book has rounded corners, to fit it for its rightful place, which is a pocket of the rucksack of any walker in North Wales. E.W.L.

WALKING IN THE LAKE DISTRICT. BY H. H. SYMONDS. Alexander Maclehose. 7/6.

Mr. H. H. Symonds takes us—a pleasant, discriminating guide and commentator—through from Shap to Ennerdale, returning at more leisure to wander in most of the other dales and over most of the summits. He is informative, detailed, and thorough. The shade of Mr. Belloc sometimes looms darkly but Mr. Symonds for the most part avoids whimsy as he avoids forcing his appreciations upon us. He knows the country, and this tracking of it almost yard by yard has been a labour of love. D.E.P.—R.

TRAMPING IN LAKELAND. BY W. T. PALMER. Country Life Ltd. 3/6.

It is only right that a true native of Lakeland, a climber for many years of all its mountains and crags, and a writer by profession, should produce another book on this Lake Country.

Mr. Palmer has all the attributes for this work, and, moreover, he knows his Lakeland up and down, and when we wander with him, knowing always less than he does, from cover to cover of this friendly little book, we know that we are indeed fortunate that he is to be our guide on this journey. He takes us over every conceivable pass, and points out with a knowing hand every really effective view. He knows the sheep on this hill and the very look of the loose stones in that wall on the next one. Above all he TRAMPS—Note the number of times this word recurs in Mr. Palmer's book. It is evidently his method to tramp throughout, and the word becomes necessarily involved in the style. One pictures Mr. Palmer in his all efficient climbing boots, with his amazing knowledge of every corner of Lakeland—tramping. He scorns to walk, we know he climbs, but not on this occasion, that is not his duty. He could not stroll, but he can and will TRAMP.

Having, therefore, crossed all the well known passes, and paused and looked at the most wondrous views, and ascended all the Lakeland hills with this arch tramp, he allows us to become acquainted with the most attractive bridle paths and sheep tracks, or no tracks at all, up hill and down dale. At each corner he sees with the eye of a true nature lover some good object, in each valley he dallies with some piece of local history.

Mr. Palmer, having tramped his Lakeland from East to West, and swept the whole of North Westmorland and most of Cumberland, takes us along in his vigorous strides, to the Lancastrian end and helps us to enjoy the subtle beauties of Duddon Dale and the glories of the Conistone Fells.

Also he does not neglect that peculiarly beautiful corner of South Westmorland with its limestone crags and peat mosses, its almost West Irish appeal and the adjoining Furness fells and lands that go down to the sea.

This is a Guide Book, which by virtue of its topographical and historical knowledge, its entire and comfortable familiarity, with all its scenes, on mountain tops, by wooded lake shores and in homely valleys, should attract any person who wishes to know his Lakeland. E.W.Y.

MOORLAND TRAMPING IN WEST YORKSHIRE. BY ALFRED J. BROWN.
Country Life Ltd. 3/6.

'Moorland Tramping in West Yorkshire,' is concerned with the West Riding and that upland and dale country which lies West of the Pennines, less known, perhaps, to the outside world than the 'Yorkshire Moors' of the East Riding or the city of York, and the Yorkshire wolds. This West Yorkshire, however, has always been most passionately loved and remembered by its own natives.

Mr. Brown gives much good advice to those about to start on their, cross-country tramping in this country, particularly as regards lodgings, maps, surveys, and local customs. But when he seriously advocates SHOES, instead of good, comfortable boots for these long tramps, I for one cannot agree with him, having tried both, and in this country too. Like other West Riding men before him, he has discovered that one of the best games one can play in these surroundings is the tracking of rivers to their sources. In one chapter he leads us so far on in this game, that we become delightedly aware that we are beholding the infant Aire (a grubby enough fellow at a later stage) crawling out from below Malham Cove.

We travel with Mr. Brown in and out of most of the Dales, and he is ever determined that we shall realise to the full the peculiar characteristics of each. Thus Wharfedale, though entrancingly beautiful, cannot compare in stateliness and grandeur with her more Northern sister, Swaledale; and Wensleydale, with her particularly historic and pastoral associations, is a thing unto herself. Ribblesdale, Mr. Brown will not permit to carry her beauty into Lancashire, and here I stoutly disagree, remembering Southern Ribblesdale as still unspoiled in her earlier contact with an alien county. And as for Teesdale, most northerly of all dales, we can fancy on reading Mr. Brown's descriptions, that we can hear again the roar of High Force, or that we are being blown wildly from our feet on Cross Fell, or that we are somewhere in the wake of that most desolate of Inns, Tan Hill, once more.

And up on the high hills of Craven and West Yorkshire, Mr. Brown gives of his best. He knows their character and feels their might and even remembers to cast friendly glances downwards towards the mysterious 'Pots' that lie below Wharfedale, Pen-y-ghent and Ingleborough. He has walked all the hills and linked up all the dales in his time. About those famous Craven stone walls, he speculates: 'the walls—amazing, struggling limestone walls, that go swarming from the deep valley to the top of the fells, to the top of the world and beyond.'

There are explanations given of the subtle differences between a 'sike,' a 'beck' and a 'ghyll,' which last I prefer to spell according to what I believe, as a West Yorkshire person myself, is the only spelling for what Mr. Brown would write as 'Gill.'

Mr. Brown is essentially West Yorkshire, in that he expects and KNOWS that every innkeeper and householder in this corner of the world will come up to the scratch, and with the genial Mr. Brown as guest, they invariably do. The more lonely the district, the more the inhabitants are glad to welcome the stranger, to let him talk till the small hours over his pot of ale

or his steaming cups of tea. He mentions several inns at the end of the book where the greatest hospitality is to be found and the most likely company to be enjoyed. There are several sensible and most 'readable' maps, and as the frontispiece, there is a magnificent picture of Gordale Skar, which might here be taken to represent the West Yorkshireman's spiritual gateway to the best of the uplands.

TRAMPING IN YORKSHIRE, NORTH AND EAST. BY ALFRED J. BROWN.
Country Life Ltd. 3/6.

From East to West is often a far cry, particularly in this small Island. In Yorkshire at times it becomes most notable, but Mr. Brown sets out bravely to discountenance this well worn fact. Also, he courteously upholds the character of the East Riding by reminding readers that it is NOT 'largely a monotonously flat plain.' Dealing with the East and West question, he asserts 'Of several legends that I hope to disprove, one is that East Yorkshire is too remote for West Riding people to explore.' He does remind us also that, as opposed to her pastoral and often bleak and unfruitful neighbour, the East Riding is 'a sort of granary and treasure house' for the main country.

And here we enter upon another of those fascinating cross-country rambles with the author, the mellow city of York being his starting point, and his first goal the mouth of the great river Ouse at Kingston-upon-Hull. The Wold is the distinguishing feature as opposed to the Fell of the West. The Dyke is common and the Ghyll practically unknown. The Delphi appears instead of the Beck. The people themselves are more docile as becomes the dwellers in plains and amongst more civilised agricultural surroundings. They are none the less hospitable too, and Mr. Brown spends many hours playing darts and discoursing pleasantly in inns which bear such romantic names as 'The Angel,' the 'Cod and Lobster,' 'The Jolly Sailor,' the 'Pigeon Pie,' and, even, yes—the 'Land of Nod,'—one of the few places, it would appear, where the author failed to get a drink, but instead he admits that he 'did have the luck to see a kingfisher flash across the green banks as I approached.' At Farndale he encounters the real legends of the local 'Lob lie by the Fire' one of the most pleasing remnants no doubt of our Danish forebears.

On his way along the foot and bridle paths, he meets with enough adventures to make his time a happy one. There are anglers to be watched discreetly at this turn of the River Ouse and a ferry man to be roused at long last on 'a dark and windy night with a black river rushing past your feet' The Ouse becomes elusive in the dusk, but turns round surprisingly at the traveller a mile or so after he has given up all hope of tracing it again. As is due to the East Riding, Mr. Brown most properly remembers and visits the numerous castles, abbeys, (whole and ruined) and villages with their 'inevitable duck ponds' known to the readers of 'Jackanapes.'

He is equally at home, of course, up on the ridges and ravines of the North Eastern moors, and all along the rolling wolds.

A stimulating Guide Book with an excellent Appendix of suggested routes and an interesting bibliography. E.W.Y.

ALPINE DAYS AND NIGHTS. BY W. T. KIRKPATRICK. With a paper by the late R. PHILIP HOPE. George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 7/6.

This modest but diverting account of one of the most enterprising of guideless Alpine partnerships is likely to be overlooked by many who would relish it keenly. The titles of some of the chapters, 'Ten years without guides', 'A day and a night on the Nesthorn' and 'Nights out in the Alps' suggest already that Hope and Kirkpatrick (it seems impossible to mention them apart) were not too orthodox in their proceedings. Their nights out were no Zdarsky encampments though well-found in other respects. For the most part they just sat down, wherever it was, when they could go no further in the darkness, feasted and waited for the return of daylight. They were famous throughout the Alpine world not only for their achievements—but for their cuisine, their spick and span turn-out and, above all the perfection of their weight-saving technique. Those to whom ways and means of lightening the mountain load are of interest must read Chapter III. Hut sacks for one night at 143 $\frac{3}{4}$ ozs. for each man is the wondrous figure they arrived at, and with this, they seem to have been better provided than most parties.

Colonel Strutt in his preface mentions their four course hot dinner on the summit of the Meije, which they were the first British guideless party to traverse, and the author's 'spare collar stud is aluminium.' So equipped they wandered the Alps, largely off all beaten tracks, frequently making excellent new ascents just because the route chosen seemed to them the most sporting way. Those who want lively and truthful accounts of guideless adventures on unfrequented mountains—interspersed with many technical suggestions—should note how cheap this book is and acquire it.

D.E.P.—R.

ALPINE JOURNAL, No. 248. MAY, 1934.

This is a fairly representative journal. Opening with a most dignified tribute to the late Mountaineer King Albert of Belgium, a true and touching picture this, we pass on to Mr. Steven's comments on, and quotations from Dr. Paccard's Diary, that now historic document, relating to the Alps in the eighteenth century, and harking away back to the epic days of Jacques Balmat and de Saussure. Sir Claud Schuster utilises an invalid period in a Swiss hospital—ski casualty again—to pursue his studies in comparative mountaineering. This pleasing abstraction covers many of the well known pure Ski-Runner versus Mountaineer problems, and touches on mountaineering ethics as seen by a climber of long and firm standing—also on Ski. Mr. Odell takes us to North East Labrador, North East Greenland, and Northern Norway. He writes knowledgeably as a mountaineer and comprehensively as a geologist. Mr. Basil Goodfellow gives account of his energetic season with Professor Graham Brown in the Dauphiné, and illustrates these first class traverses with a more than usually excellent bevy of photographs taken by himself.

To run on—too hastily, alas, there is a paper on the Picos de Europa, by Mr. G. F. Abercrombie, of which he, with another 'Barts' mountaineer,

ascended several. 'If anyone who delights in cloud forms wishes to explore a new country, and day after day to have a whole mountain range to himself, he cannot do better than visit the Picos.'

We are indebted to a woman for one of the best articles in this number, Mrs. Miriam Underhill (née O'Brien) still glowing with her manifold adventures in the Alps and elsewhere, tells us of her further experiences under the heading of 'Sampling the Eastern Alps.' Mrs. Underhill is well worth studying carefully. She writes, as she climbs, with a certain vigorous grace. She knows her methods as she knows her mountains, and she is always ready to give one a new glimpse over old scenes. This present story, describes how a fast two seater Buick took herself and her husband to and from their centres of activity, allowing them to sample peaks in such groups as the Allgau, the Valluga and the Kaisergebirge. Written with her usual verve, it is further illumined by a beautiful photograph taken by another leading woman mountaineer, Miss Ursula Corning.

To cross now the Atlantic, Mr. Binnie tells of Western Canada and of some of Our President's doings there in the Yoho Valley. Mr. F. P. Farquhar gives wonderful camera and pen pictures of the Sierra Nevada of California, alas, only a glamorous name to most of us. A longish climbing season gives the devotees of these mountains opportunities for intensive culture of their peaks and plenty of choice in their times of attack. Happy folk to have a dependable climate.

Passing to Asia we can enjoy some lively passages between that bonny fighter, Dr. Longstaff—of the pseudo-modern, but at the same time necessarily more mature school of Himalayan climbers—and such technical experts of the wholly modern, but not too adolescent school, as Mr. Crawford and Dr. Raymond Greene. It seems there is much right on both sides. These notes by two experienced doctors, with the diary extracts of Messrs. Crawford and Shipton are worthy of very close study, even for non-Himalayan climbers.

We wind up with 'The Lashar Plain' by Mr. Shipton, a description of his brilliant post-Everest campaign with Mr. Wager—a worthy finish to their Himalayan adventures of that year. There are short, but interesting contributions by Mr. Schomberg on 'The Bar and Daintar Glaciers' well illustrated, by Mr. P. R. Oliver on Trisul, and as often occurs, some of the most impressive reading is towards the end of the Journal in the Expeditions and Alpine Notes.

E.W.Y.

ALPINE JOURNAL, NOVEMBER, No. 249, 1934.

This Journal opens with a further tribute to the late King Albert, giving a list of climbs made by that most unusual and daring of monarchs.

Again a woman occupies one of the central positions in this number. Miss Ursula Corning, an excellent mountaineer and photographer, provides us with a delightful dissertation on the mountains of South Tyrol 'or thereabouts.' Her pithy comments on how to behave as a climber on Dolomite peaks should be welcome to many who suffer from neglect of these rules on the part of others. On her return from the Western Alps, after stirring days amongst these Dolomites, she admits her affection for

those lesser hills and 'the evening glow on Cristallo, the hayfields of Val Fassa, and for the charming courteous inhabitants of the Dolomite country.'

If the first regular article of this journal were not dealing with so solemn a topic I should have suspected the writer to be playing a joke. In effect he is—I find. 'From Titlis to Bitlis'—too good an opportunity to miss in a moment of levity, but the matter is sensible enough. The use of the word 'wuthering' to describe these particular heights I should sternly challenge, this being a purely localized West Yorkshire term (see Charlotte Bronte on Emily's masterpiece), I read on and see 'Armenia' for Bitlis, and so the tour takes shape. More 'alps from end to end'—but reading on again I see, 'I have never been near the Titlis,' and further 'nor did I ever reach Bitlis,' From Batum to the Balkans in fact over a period of thirty-nine years. He mentions Ararat en route, which takes us historically back to the Ark.

Again the Gangotri Glacier, and this time the chronicler is Mr. C. Warren, and more pleasing episodes come to light of that Pallis Himalayan tour. This was an extremely creditable performance from start to finish, new ground was covered, most pertinent observations in the realms of acclimatisation were made.

Mr. Schomberg reappears in this number to tell us this time of the Glaciers of Upper Ishkoman and here I confess to having to resort to an atlas. Pure curiosity leads me on. I find we are at all events in the neighbourhood, if far enough off, on a small scale affair, but at least in *some* relation to Nanga Parbat.

Backed by the enterprise and funds of the Anglo Persian Oil Company, the next writer, Mr. Falcon, who travelled to Persia to climb some little known ranges there, tells us of his adventures, some of which were not of an entirely sublime nature. We read, for instance, that there were 'Hours spent on the edges of vast precipices with the great vultures, whose thoughts are always of death, wheeling hopefully.'

Of the Caucasus we read in Herr W. Weckert's translated paper, after a robbery in the New Hotel, Moscow, when his trousers and much needed cash were the principal victims, the travellers proceeded to Naltshik. This is a curious account of mountain adventure, which includes an accident, resulting in loss of life to one of their party, and benightments of the most uncomfortable order.

The assault on Mount Tronador reads almost like a minor Everest saga. The height of this South American peak is nothing in comparison with Everest, but the weather problems are insoluble, at present, and the final climb is known to be difficult, even on its 'easy side.'

The Hon. Editor lets fly in his own spirited, yet dignified fashion, on subject of the Germans' 'Blue Ribbon of the Alps' complex. Colonel Strutt endeavours and succeeds in gently putting these boasters into their proper place, which is on a parallel line perhaps, but never in a superior circle to our own. There are many pages quite rightly devoted later in this volume, to the accidents in 1934, a heavy toll, NOT due merely to inexperienced youth, but also, mysteriously enough, to some of these aforementioned superior over-Nationalised Teuton experts. E.W.Y.

LADIES' ALPINE CLUB YEAR BOOK. 1933 & 1934.

These two numbers cover a period of economic confusion and suffering purses. The Swiss beer or postcard, the French patisserie, the Italian *objet d'art* or tourist tickler, all so attractive on rest days, were for most people as remote of achievement as the windows of the Place Vendome. Nevertheless many members of this club have succeeded in going far afield and the diary of climbs achieved retains a fine level.

In 1932, for example, Dr. Maud Cairney was climbing in the jungle-infested hills of Pahang, Miss Una Cameron made new ascents in the Caucasus, Miss Ida Corry made first class ascents in the New Zealand Alps, continued in 1933, Miss Cumming traversed the Grand Clocher de Planeureusc ascending by what is probably a new face route, and Mrs. Tromp-Tromp achieved the remaining four-thousanders which were not already in her rucksack.

In 1933 Miss H. I. Buck climbed 14 peaks in the Colorado mountains; Mrs. Morin (Nea Barnard) made the first woman's traverse of the Meije (with Mme. Alice Damesme and Mlle. Micheline Morin); Mrs. Richards (Dorothy Pilley) made the first ascent of the highest point in the Bobbie Burns Range, 10,500 feet; Mrs. Odell climbed in Norway and Greenland; Miss D. E. Thompson traversed Mont Blanc by the Bionassay and Peuteret ridges. In addition, many members made first class ascents without guides.

There are particularly interesting accounts of climbing in Japan by Mrs. Armstrong Richards who escaped death by volcanic eruption owing to the fact that her alarm clock's best efforts failed to wake her on the morning in question; a pioneer expedition to Georgia and the Caucasus by Miss Una Cameron, and accounts of the Bionassay-Peuteret climb by Miss Thompson; the Greenland expedition by Mrs. Odell; and climbing in the Franz Joseph district by Miss Corry, whose remarkable feat of bringing down her guide after he had broken his leg near the summit of Mount Goldsmith makes exciting reading.

Those who are interested in the activities of this club will find in these journals everything in miniature. All mountaineers can read between such modest lines, and visualize the photographs as they must have been in the splendid originals. M.S.J.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK-CLIMBING CLUB. No. 26. 1932.

The 1932 number contains several excellent papers. There is a vivid impression of *A Ride in Iceland*, by E. W. Hodge, who has found beauty and interest in what to many would be a barren country. 'A trip to Iceland is worth while alone for the keenness which it gives to one's appreciation of common English landscape; indeed, one admires with an almost too grateful humility,' Dorothy Pilley, in her versatile entertaining way, describes the *Diamond Mountains* of Korea, a fairyland of granite peaks which any climber bound for the Far East certainly cannot afford to miss. She shares with E. W. Hodge the photographic honours in this number. Mrs. Chorley writes brilliantly of that lovely Norwegian valley *The Romsdal*. Miss K. M. Boothroyd makes us long for hot summer days in her article on Lakeland becks, and A. E. Storr has spent two most profitable summers in the

Pyrenees. C. Astley Cooper describes five new climbs in Skye; A. T. Hargreaves tells us about his first ascent of the already famous Nor' Nor' West on Pillar, and of a new climb which he did on Bowfell Buttress. There are also notes on new climbs on the East Buttress of Scawfell, and on Esk Buttress.

Other interesting papers, reviews of prominent books of a mountaineering interest, and of other club journals, complete a good number. An improvement is the larger lettering on the backstrip. M.R.F.G.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK-CLIMBING CLUB, No. 27. 1933.

A fat number which is very interesting owing to the different points of view about climbing which the Editor has gathered together. We have J. A. Musgrave, who has done most of the super severes, yet finds much pleasure in the all too neglected gully climbs. . . . 'In novelty, and not in excessive difficulty, in fresh external expression, and not in exaggerated personal sensation, lies the real romance of mountaineering adventure.' Then there is C. F. Holland—who gets more than most of us out of climbing—wise and delightful as usual. (By the way, when are we to have a 'collected' Holland; it would be nice to have him all under one roof; can't the Fell and Rock do something about it?)

A perhaps intentionally provocative article by A. B. Hargreaves tells us of the advance in climbing of a high order which has taken place in Wales during the past eight years. Many will not agree with Mr. Hargreaves, but everyone will be interested in hearing the views of the Modern School of climbers. J. L. Longland, in a brilliant paper on Everest, 1933, offers some tentative conclusions on how the highest mountain in the world may eventually be climbed, and remarks on the breaking down of established Alpine convention. No Modern Mountaineer is better qualified than Mr. Longland to do this, and he has provided us with much food for thought and argument.

It is always interesting to read of the older generation of climbers, and Mrs. Winthrop Young, in a delightful paper, gives her early impressions of many famous mountaineers. Brigadier-General Bruce tells us inimitably of recent British enterprise in the Himalayas. E. W. Hodge writes amusingly and well of an expedition to Canna and Rum. A. T. Hargreaves has written up the new Lake District climbs, notably Hadrian's Wall on Pillar, and the East Buttress of Scawfell—illuminating to those who think that Lakeland is worked out.

W. T. Elmslie gives an imposing list of The Two Thousand Footers of England, which he has now conquered; this is indispensable to anyone who has that Munro feeling. C. J. Astley Cooper tells of the troubles of guide writing, and there are plenty of really beautiful photographs. G. R. Speaker, the new Editor, is to be congratulated on an excellent first number.

M.R.F.G.

CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL. New Series. Vol. V., No. 1. 1934.

After a sabbatical interval, this Journal has returned to active life again, and is full of lively matter, both domestic and adventurous.

On the domestic side we are treated to full accounts of the new and reformed Helyg. We read of the opening ceremony when many notable members, a silver key, and a champagne bottle were all present. We are given a most technical description of the interior of this spiritual, as well as earthly home, of the 'Climbers.' There are lists of stores to be found there, and indications of all other amenities, there are also two large-sized caricature portraits—none too flattering—of the President and Vice-President.

There is allusion to Helyg in several of the other articles in this Journal. Even Dr. Edwards owns to making descents, from his almost inaccessible cliffs, to the Helyg hearth. He seems also, by the way, to be developing a style all his own, of describing the more strictly modern ascents. It is often good reading, and would seem to be sufficiently convincing as well, though I own to floundering myself in a state of puzzlement over the sentence which contains this statement: 'It would be a discussion of the physical conveniences of what, in essence, was a type of lesson of inconvenience for the mind and resulting from the mind, and it would be so very beside the point.' He sums up for us very pleasantly, giving to them all their peculiar characteristics, the more terrific of the new climbs in the Devil's Kitchen group, ignores the traffic jammed Idwal slabs, describes new developments on the Glyder Fach, and takes us gradually round to the Castle Columnar Cliff, one of his own particular resorts. He keeps us 'au fait' with the 'Rises' on Clogwyn d'ur Arddu, and closes with a mysterious declaration which shows him to be a man of doubts, if not fears.

Mr. Hicks writes with a balanced common sense about their expedition to the Gangotri Glacier, all the more interesting reading after we have tackled our Everest and other Himalayan big scale works. In his first sentence he gives us the keynote of this most enterprising form of mountaineering. 'In reality our idea was to try to show that it was possible to climb in those mountains without such rather odious appendages (viz., "vast trains of mules, newspaper reporters, and a general martial spirit") in other words we wished to climb in much the same way as one climbs in the Alps.'

Mr. Brocklebank provides a short, but essentially clear comment on altitude problems in relation to the last Everest Expedition—almost the most important question yet to be handled should further parties attempt the mountain. He gives us his own and other impressions of the different values of food, acclimatisation and deterioration—an admirable summary.

Mr. Andrews who lives alongside his Cornish cliffs, over which he still loves to wander, presents us with his most up-to-date hints and reminders as to how to enjoy ourselves in the Duchy, and shows some typical pictures of these unique rock faces of which he, above all others, is fitted to be the custodian and guide.

On reading Colonel J. D. Hills' 'One Hundred Per Cent.,' we are reminded quite forcibly not only of Colonel Hills himself, but also of those Rocky Mountains of Canada to which so many people return in talk and in reality in these days. It seems one requires more than the normal (one hundred per cent. in fact) energy, a real and growing determination to

succeed, power to suffer very unpleasing forms of fatigue, and suitable protection from extremes of heat and cold to conquer these mountains. Colonel Hills is one of those who are genuinely suited to the campaign.

An article on the Coolins, one on the Dauphiné by Mr. Poole, and an account of the further doings of the Cambridge Mountaineering Club in Scotland, Norway, Wales and in the Alps. In its matter, its occasional quite remarkably good photographs and its general tone, this Journal promises well, and we hope will not take too many Rip van Winkle 'times off' in future.

E.W.Y.

RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL, Vol. 7, No. 4. 1934.

None of those people who have enjoyed the excellence of the *Rucksack Club Journal*, under Mr. Doughty's editorship, can refrain from a sigh, however worthy his successor, when they read that this is the last number that he will edit. In his final editorial he gives us some food for thought, for he raises the question of the responsibility of the older mountaineer, and of the Clubs, to the inexperienced youngsters who are crowding onto the hills in yearly increasing numbers. It is a thing that needs thinking about if accidents are not to increase in direct ratio to these numbers.

This Club is most fortunate in its photographers; in this volume all the photographs are good, and some are particularly so; two of Konigspitze by Mr. Moss; one of Reichenbach by Mr. Brown with an Engelhorner peak in the background; and one by Mr. Coats, of Loch Etive, all seemed to me beautiful, and Mr. McPhee's photograph is the best I have seen of Lot's Groove.

We have in this Journal informative articles on various climbing grounds, notable among them that by Maurice Linnell on Scawfell, and one on The Narrow Slab, Clogwyn d'ur Arddu by Mr. Piggott. Then there are imaginative articles of unusual interest, that of Mr. Wilson Heys on 'Fear,' and Mr. Priestly Phillips' intriguing 'Three Penguins' Eggs.' Mr. Stewart's description of an ascent of Parnassus charmed me right away from a Welsh winter into the fragrant airs of a Grecian spring.

But the thing that touched me most nearly was the tribute to Morley Wood, with the accompanying photograph which had caught so happily the geniality that I remember. It recalled my very first climb. I have always had an impression that the sun was shining, but my diary tells me that the day was grey and cloudy, so the sunshine must have been his. Whenever I met him I felt that the world was, after all, a warm and friendly place.

E.W.L.

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. Vol. XX., No. 118 November, 1934.

According to this number, Scotland seems to have been wet—even for Scotland—in 1934, and the S.M.C. members, too, have climbed with heroic disregard of scandalous weather. 'Notes and Excursions' record a good bag of new or partly new climbs; Mr. G. Graham McPhee describes a series on Ben Nevis, as well as a first ascent of the 'Bannoch' wall of the Crowberry Ridge. The tale of the Wall should begin with 'Once upon a Time,' for they tried three times, being baffled first by a blizzard and then by a

deluge, while the third time was lucky, too late for the climb to take its rightful place in the new Guide. Mr. Wedderburn introduced two strangers from the Eastern Alps to a new climb on Ben Nevis, during which 'the whole cliff was pouring with water.' Mr. J. Y. Macdonald enjoyed a light-hearted week in the Charles Inglis Clark Memorial Hut, conditions, apparently, putting very serious climbing out of the question. (Conditions include sardines and a butter shortage.) In other articles Mr. G. Gall Inglis writes of the Highlands in the good days before the railways. Mr. J. H. B. Bell chronicles the routes of Dumyat, and Mr. A. Harrison reminds us, in an article on Scottish mountaineering accidents, that mountaineering as well as rock-climbing skill is demanded by the Scottish hills of those who wish to climb in safety. The last ten pages or so record the doings of the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland. S.R.H.

YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL, Vol. VI., No. 21. 1934.

The members of this club are a most versatile company. Walking, climbing, pot-holing, archæology—all comes alike to them. And their geographical range is as wide as their range of interest. When one reads of the modest beginnings of the club, as described by G. T. Lowe in his historical article, and then proceeds to glance at the articles that follow, the contrast is striking. The next article is by G. S. Gowing, and his climbing field is the Drakensberg; next comes G. H. Lowe on Mount Ophir in southern Malaya, and F. Oakes Smith with six days in Dauphiné; follows G. T. Lowe again, on Hadrian's Wall; D. L. Reed on a week-end in Cumberland; W. E. Evans on a similar expedition to Buttermere. Then comes a group of articles with very impressive maps on caving and pot-holing, surely the most gloomy and sinister of all varieties of climbing. Its devotees write with passion of the joys of exploring chambers 'with water dripping from the roof,' and recesses with ominous names like Mud Pot and Silcock's Pool. All climbers are, I suppose, slightly mad, and should regard each other's lunacies with indulgence, but still—

'You enter the rabbit hole feet first, and after one yard you slide as gently as possible down a precipitous face, coated with mud, hanging on to a leaf of rock, and then climb back about eight feet of muddy overhang into a second hole on the other side of the leaf. The rest is a crawl and you finish in New Stream Passage.' It sounds like directions for earth worms!

S.R.H.

CAMBRIDGE MOUNTAINEERING, 1934.

A companionable spirit breathes throughout this number—not only from the agreeable and instructive accounts of the doings and diversions at the Meets, which fill its second half, but from all its articles. Some of them are but three pages, but they all attempt and manage to recapture the feelings which make a good day in the hills memorable. From L. R. Wager on Chumunko, or N. E. Odell up Beerenberg, or H. J. H. Drummond at the Refuge d'Arrémoulit, or D. C. Powell, knee deep in the Gabelhorn alike, we are given a spice of that peculiar joy—no slight feat of editing.

But the glory of this number is in *The Big Broadcast*, by E. C. Allberry, and in a grand burlesque narrative poem, *The Conquest of Buachaille Etive*

(complete with critical apparatus), by Aodh MacBaph (I feel ashamed to admit I have no idea who he can be). Of either, I can only say that the Number is worth ordering by telephone for it alone ; and of the second, that it is certain of a permanent place in that rare kind, mountain poetry. I.A.R.

THE BRITISH SKI YEAR BOOK, 1934. Vol. 7, No. 15.

The British Ski Year Book is always a triumph of photography and production. This impressive number, moreover, is indispensable to any member who wants to mountaineer on ski with a reasonable and intelligent regard for her safety. She must read carefully Gerald Seligman's monumental study of avalanche conditions and P. H. Unna's notes on wind-slabs.

The spread of ski to tropical Africa and to the Himalaya may be remarked here. In contrast to these individualist tours we have, too, a revelation of 2,000 ski for hire at Sokolniki, Moscow's model base for 56 ski stations.

About a week's varied reading is included, and Arnold Lunn contributes a well-balanced comment, illustrated from his immense knowledge of Alpine history, on the very important question of the duty of a party aware that an accident has occurred. D.E.P.—R.

MOUNTAINEERING JOURNAL, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Sept.-Oct.-Nov., 1934), and Vol 3, No. 1 (Dec.-Jan.-Feb., 1935).

It is disarming to find the Journals under review printed in such lucid type and on such pleasing paper. One is inclined to consider the contents more digestible because of the excellent way in which the meal is served.

The photographs in these two volumes are, as usual, fine, particularly the cover photograph of Loch Linnhe, and that of the Madloch Pass, where the snow values are beautiful.

The guides to Burbage, Windgather, and Brassington Rocks seem to be admirably clear, and must be most useful to the dwellers and sojourners in those districts.

Of articles on Alpine flowers I am no judge, but I have no doubt that these are all that such articles should be. They are more soothing, certainly, than the fantasia on falling. I am doubtful whether this is a happy choice for a mountaineering journal, if the time comes when we must fall, then fall we must, but before that time comes it is one of the morbid nightmares in which I personally prefer not to indulge.

E. W. Hodge's article on Arran introduces us to delightful new country for a climbing holiday, and gives us such carefully detailed descriptions of the newest routes that with their help combined with that of the S.M.C. Guide, recently published, we should miss nothing when we go there.

The ski-ing ground of the Oetzal sounds most alluring, with its fine school for those of us who need lessons, and want them at a moderate cost, and its lack of those other forms of Winter Sport which draw the crowd.

Vol. 2 has an interesting and useful article on tents, complete with photographs, diagrams, and prices, and the articles on Arran, Bavaria and Bulgaria leave us with many choices as to where we may pitch them.

Vol. 3 contains the account by J. D. Pascoe of the first ascent and traverse of Mount Evans in the New Zealand Alps. A fine conquest after two years of waiting. E.W.L.

Pinnacle Club Journal.

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