

# THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

[COPYRIGHT.]

---

 Edited by ARNOLD LUNN.
 

---

## CONTENTS.

|   | PAGE                             |
|---|----------------------------------|
| I. Some Climbs in Norway. ( <i>Illus.</i> ) . . . . .                             | By A. C. PIGOU 1                 |
| II. The Early Victorian Attitude . . . . .  | By H. V. READE 15                |
| III. New Expeditions in the Coolin. ( <i>Illus.</i> ) . . . . .                   | By E. W. STEEPLE 21              |
| IV. The Accident on the Pic du Midi d'Ossau. ( <i>Illus.</i> ) . . . . .          | 32                               |
| V. A New Climb on the Dent B'anche . . . . .                                      | By H. E. L. PORTER 40            |
| VI. A Climbing Alphabet . . . . .   | By N. T. HUXLEY 43               |
| VII. Home Exploration . . . . .   | By CONOR O'BRIEN 47              |
| VIII. Concerning the Admission of Hill-Walkers . . . . .                          | By CLAUDE E. BENSON 51           |
| IX. Some Notes on the Manifold Valley, Staffordshire. ( <i>Illus.</i> ) . . . . . | By F. A. WINDER 56               |
| X. In Memoriam—J. M. Archer Thomson. ( <i>Illus.</i> ) . . . . .                  | By PROFESSOR ORTON 65            |
| Humphrey Owen Jones. ( <i>Illus.</i> ) . . . . .                                  | By G. W. Y. 72                   |
| Hugh Rose Pope. ( <i>Illus.</i> ) . . . . .                                       | By C. A. E. 75                   |
| XI. In Defence of Popular Writing. A Reply to Mr. Myles Matthews. . . . .         | By ARNOLD LUNN 79                |
| XII. On Fine Writing. An Answer to Mr. Lunn . . . . .                             | By C. MYLES MATHEWS 92           |
| XIII. Reviews . . . . .   | 97                               |
| Among the Hills . . . . .   | Alpine Studies                   |
| Ski-ing . . . . .   | Oxford Mountaineering Essays     |
| Walking Essays . . . . .  | Switzerland in Sunshine and Snow |
| Alpine Anthologies . . . . .  | The Building of the Alps         |
| The Pyrenees . . . . .  | Ski Runs in the High Alps        |

---

 PUBLISHED BY HORACE MARSHALL & SONS,  
125, FLEET STREET, E.C.
 

---

*Copies can also be obtained from*

GEORGE PHILIP & SON, 32, FLEET STREET, LONDON.

W. HEFFER & SONS,  
CAMBRIDGE,

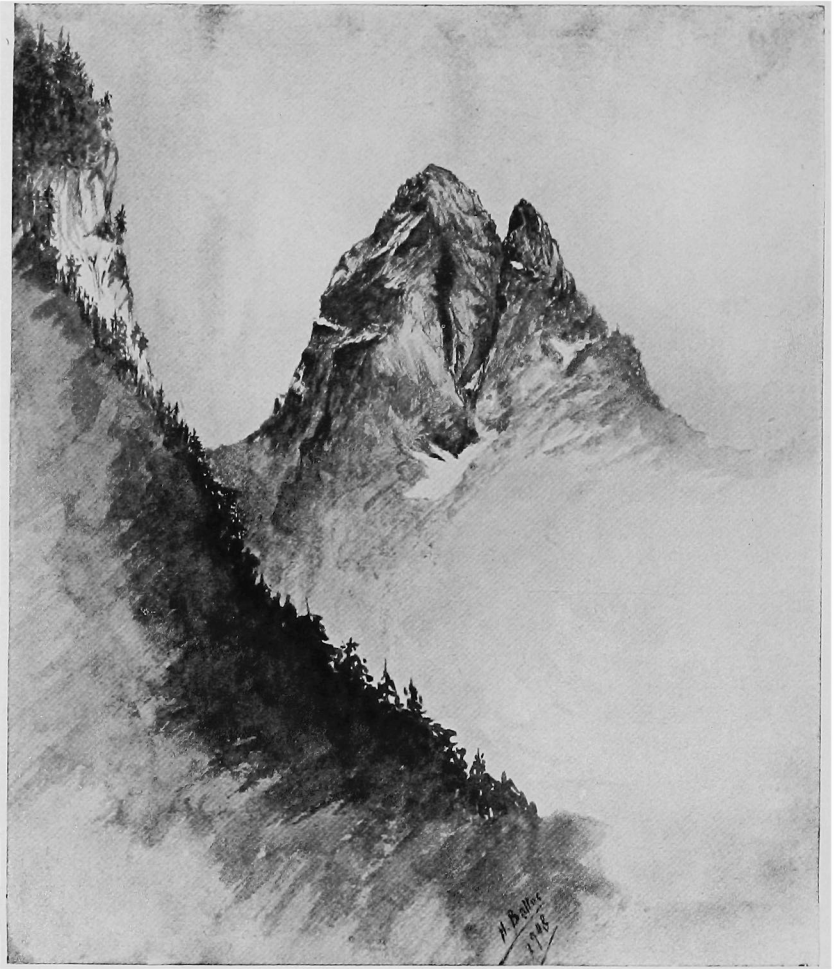
FRANK MURRAY, MORAY HOUSE,  
DERBY.

HENRY YOUNG & SONS,  
SOUTH CASTLE STREET, LIVERPOOL.









*From a drawing by]*

**THE PIC DU MIDI D'OSSAU.**

*[H. Belloc.*

*(Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. Methuen & Co.)*

THE

# CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

---

NO. 2.

FEBRUARY, 1913.

NEW SERIES.

---

## SOME CLIMBS IN NORWAY.

BY A. C. PIGOU.

MY friend Philip Baker was coming from Olympic contests in Stockholm, and I from reading proofs in Cambridge. We were to meet at Christiania and proceed somehow to the Horunger Mountains. I may mention in passing that, as has happened before on such occasions, I was entrusted with the arduous task of exporting the main body of Philip's luggage. At Christiania our meeting was duly accomplished, various purchases were made, and a taxi-cab drive of an "exceptionally severe," not to say dangerous, character was taken to a neighbouring bathing-place. This drive, including a particularly thrilling contest with a rival taxi-cab, cost us the sum of six shillings; the return journey by steamer involved much less expenditure of nervous energy, and cost sixpence. In the evening we took train to Myrdal, on the Bergen line, and, on arrival, drove in great comfort to Fretheim, where a boat was to take us as far as Aardal. In the afternoon the boat arrived, and, after transshipment in mid-fjord, we reached Aardal at 5.30 a.m. on the morning of Wednesday, July 17th. I, who had travelled a long way, occupied the day principally in sleep, while Philip made heroic and totally unsuccessful efforts to capture certain local fish. In the evening we formulated a plan to carry our rucksacs, containing many clothes, over a series of mountains, whose names I forbear to mention, and, after a week of such work, to establish ourselves at Turtegrö as a centre. With this purpose in view, we despatched our baggage and set out on Thursday afternoon, rowed by two

strong oarsmen, through a series of looped lakes, to Farnaes. We had been told that from that place the greater part of the way to Vetti, our goal for the evening, could be accomplished in a carriage, and we fully intended to adopt this attractive method of progress. Unfortunately, however, after we had dismissed our rowers and with great difficulty discovered what payment they required, our stock of Norwegian became exhausted, and the desire for a carriage consumed itself in a wholly ineffective manner within our own breasts. After sundry unsuccessful efforts to make ourselves understood, we shouldered our sacs and set out to walk. Philip, who has a great affection for children and was especially impressed by the Norwegian variety of the species, discovered a group occupied upon important mud-works, and threw off his sac with the purpose of photography. The children, however, mistook his peaceable intentions, and, with loud cries, fled in every direction. This was a bad beginning, but Philip was not to be beaten. A little further along the road we encountered a small girl transporting a still smaller one on her back. This time Philip did nothing sudden, but gently requested the child to stand still, and produced the camera. Everything seemed to be going well till the camera was opened, but, at the sound of this, terror descended on our victim.

“Fast, fast, with heels wild spurning,  
The dark grey charger fled,”

to the infinite peril of the horseman baby. In vain we cried out soothing words. The mad flight continued till the fugitives were lost to sight round a bend in the road. Shocked and distressed at our evident unpopularity, we continued our way. After a while the road became a path, and, after yet another while, the châteaux of Vetti came into view. A smiling mädchen stood at the door of the tiny hotel, and welcomed us to a comfortable room. But before supper there were rites to perform, for Philip had observed, just below the hotel and well within sight of the windows, an erection, which he declared was, beyond doubt, the local bathing-place. The erection consisted of an inverted cocoa tin with several holes punched in the bottom, which was applied to the end of a

small pipe some distance from the ground, and thus created a shower bath of much excellence. In these northern climes, Philip said, people did not mind your bathing in public, and bathe accordingly we did. Then followed supper, bed, breakfast at 6.30 a.m., and the start for our first climb, the Stölsnaastind. Armed with a map, one pair of crampons and many provisions we set out. We climbed a long path to a certain Fleckidalssaeter, but, as ill-luck would have it, at no point could we obtain a clear view of our mountain. Consequently, when we got into the long valley beyond this saeter, the map was our only guide, and the map was a particularly bad one. After much walking up the valley and many councils of war, we finally turned up towards an extensive glacier on the right, and, by negotiating innumerable crevasses and some steep ice, attained a ridge separating our valley from the Morkedoldedal, and leading up at each end into a mountain. The question before the House was which, if either, of these was the Stölsnaastind. To the eye of the mere plain man, the one on our right seemed clearly the higher, but, if the map was to be believed, this appearance was delusive. Philip preferred the witness of our eyes, I that of science embodied in the map. Eventually my arguments prevailed, and we scrambled up the peak on the left. Then doubt was no longer possible. Philip's mountain considerably overtopped mine, and certain ore, lately wagered on the point, were doomed to change hands. Still, being on a summit, we were plainly called upon to make soup. This operation, owing to the idiosyncrasies of the cooking apparatus, occupied a long time. The hour was evidently late—how late the unfortunate demise of my watch made it impossible to say. We had walked already, and must perforce walk again, along an immense glacier and an interminable valley, and it was our first day. What wonder that scepticism as to the true style and title of the alternative peak stole upon us, and that, observing the obvious and easy route leading to its summit, we explained to each other how heinous was the sin of mere peak-bagging? Our ingenious arguments were successful, and the word was given to descend without further conquests. Upon the steeper part of the glacier I, who alone wore crampons, had the satisfaction of

gently patronising my companion, and, as I averred and he stoutly denied, saving him from an involuntary descent to the bottom at a pace too great even for his Olympic tastes. On leaving the glacier we tried to improve on our upward route of the morning, and, consequently, wasted much time in getting back into the valley. Thereafter, a long walk, alleviated by copious milk at Vettismark, brought us to the final run-down to Vetti, the delights of the bathing-place, the detriment to these delights in certain over-active mosquitoes, and the bliss unalloyed of supper. Philip's consumption of liquid refreshment worked out as follows:—Three glasses of water, four glasses of milk, four cups of tea, three glasses of lemonade. The assistance which I lent him in this work of destruction modestly forbids me to relate.

A first day of some fifteen hours seemed to warrant what I have learnt in Switzerland to call a *Schlaf-tag*, and we devoted ourselves on the morrow to an inspection of the tremendous falls of Vettisfos. I added a bathe in the stream that flowed away from these, but Philip was not to be tempted into unfaithfulness to his cocoa-tin shower-bath, and his doctrine of the northern climes. In the intervals of idling and making first ascents of certain boulders we also revised our plans. To climb mountains with the rucksacs we had carried from Aardal would, we now decided, be indecorous and uncomplimentary to the country. We would therefore proceed direct to the Skagastolstind hut above Turtegrö, and the next day leave the bulk of our possessions there, climb the Midtmaradalstind by the north ridge, pick up these possessions, and descend in the evening to the Turtegrö hotel. The brilliance of this conception filled us with anticipatory pleasure.

We were told that our projected expedition to the hut would occupy about eight hours. Partly for this reason, and partly—shall I say it?—because of Philip's resolve not to leave without farewell to certain two Norwegian ladies, who had arrived the night before, our start was delayed till nine o'clock. What with our large sacs, a terrific sun and the prolonged absence of water, we soon paid the penalty. A photograph was taken, though, sad to say, it failed to develop, of Philip shirtless, and rapidly dissolving, in the "enjoyment" of a fine

morning's walk. After our sufferings had continued for, perhaps, two and a half hours, we arrived at the Stolsmaradalssaeter, where mourning was turned into joy by the rapid appearance of an enormous bowl of milk. When we had consumed this and were feeling not a little proud of the feat, a second enormous bowl, this time containing cream, was brought before us, but against that perverter of the energies of man we still had the will to stand firm.

Beyond the Stolsmaradalssaeter, our path became exceedingly vague, and progress was made not in knowledge but in faith. Eventually, after much ingenious route-finding, we emerged on slopes leading to the Midtmaradalstind, far above the stream whose banks we should long previously have been following. This discovery gave us pause. To get back to the proper route a long descent would evidently be necessary, while ahead of us the southern ridge of the Midtmaradalstind stood out invitingly, not apparently at a great distance away. Why not reach the hut by traversing the mountain? During the long process of boiling soup the question was debated. We knew nothing about the south side of the mountain, our watches had stopped, so we were ignorant of the time, we had lost our compass, and we had many clothes in our rucksacs. On the other hand, to descend again to the stream would be irksome, the weather was perfect, and we were not at all tired. In the end a forward policy was unanimously adopted, and we started up broken rock towards what appeared to be a small glacier separating us from our peak. The ascent of the rocks did not take long, and we reached the border of the glacier, which stretched out before us exactly in the manner of the sea washing a stony shore. Some rocks rose out of it at the far side, and between us and them a troop of ten reindeer was moving. From this point, by crossing the glacier, we expected to arrive immediately at the foot of the Midtmaradalstind, but, on reaching the rocks beyond the glacier, we found that our expedition was to be a longer one than we had expected. More rocks and a second larger glacier, rather steep in parts, had still to be traversed. The surface of this proved good, and the crevasses easy to avoid. We passed on our left a shapely mountain, which appears to

have been the Stolsmaradalstind, and looked with admiration on our right at the great Skagastolstind ridges. Arrived at the foot of our peak, we soon decided that no great difficulty would be found in climbing the rocks; and, indeed, it proved a perfectly simple scramble to the summit. At this point we should much have liked to know the time, but had, perforce, to rest in ignorance. None the less, we had resort again to the cooking apparatus, and made unto ourselves some water out of snow. Then, with the sun sinking lower and lower, we began the descent of the north ridge. The climbing was harder than hitherto, but still quite easy till the ridge narrowed and a knife-edge of 40 feet or so had to be descended with care. This was followed by a broad portion of the ridge, and we walked forward, confident of victory, till suddenly an overhanging break in the ridge barred further progress. In the account given to us of the north ridge, we had been told of an impossible place, which, on the ascent, had to be turned on the right. We retraced our steps, repassing the knife-edge pitch, till we came to the top of a couloir, which we imagined probably had a part to play in the turning process. By this time it was getting decidedly dark, and the return journey uphill had reminded us that we had had a long day. Still, we started down the couloir, at first easily, and then with increasing difficulty. After a while, the difficulty became extreme—at all events to a tired climber with a heavy rucksac. A long struggle persuaded us that the direct descent of the couloir could not form part of the ordinary way—we afterwards learned that this direct descent has once been accomplished—and that the proper route must take the form of a traverse out of the couloir above the difficult section. By this time, however, it was too dark, and one member at least of the party was too weary to make a new start. Therefore, we climbed up the couloir again, to camp upon the ridge. It must now have been past midnight, and I, thoroughly tired out, made no further contributions to the common good. Philip, however, rose to the occasion, and assumed at once the joint offices of camp outfitter and bedroom discoverer. The cooking apparatus was called into play to create soup from a patch of dirty snow, and after many refusals and some assistance, it



reluctantly consented to undertake the task. Clouds were descending on the higher mountains, but our portion of the ridge fortunately remained below them. At first we chose separate berths and achieved a little sleep; but it was not till we discovered the device of lying close together that the cold of the mountain night was really defeated. Then we were comfortable, and slept till the sun, breaking, rather late in the day, through clouds, thoroughly awakened us. As we were eating our modest meal, jödelling from a neighbouring peak recalled to us the existence of man, and also suggested that the hour was none too early—afterwards we discovered from the jödellers that it was twelve o'clock. So the descent was begun. This time, with the help of daylight, we found the point at which to traverse from the couloir, and, by an interesting climb, turned the impossible place and got back upon the ridge beyond it. The only difficulty we met with on this traverse was a chimney with a cave immediately under the overhanging chockstone. As it was so constructed that it was difficult to see one's destination from above, I suggested to Philip, who was coming down last, that he should pass the rope round the upper end of the chockstone. He trustfully acquiesced, but, as always happens on these occasions, the rope became jammed, and he was compelled to climb up again to release it. As soon as we were back upon the ridge progress was very easy, and the only problem that remained was to discover the gap at which the ridge should be left and a descent made to the Midtmaradals glacier on our right. We had been told that this gap was situated at the lowest point between the Midtmaradalstind and a small peak to the north of it. After a while we came to a point at which the ridge rose again towards what was certainly a small peak. We could see, in the couloir below, a steep stretch of snow, and on the stones at the top of it what appeared to be nail marks; so we started on what we expected to be a perfectly easy scramble. After a little while, however, we were surprised to encounter a decidedly stiff, short chimney, the descent of which required great care. And we were surprised again at the extreme steepness and icy tendencies of the stretch of snow, which had to be avoided in parts by rocks on the left;

but still we never seriously doubted that we were on the ordinary route. Meanwhile the weather had grown bad, and heavy rain began to fall. As a result, small stones fell down the couloir, followed by larger stones, threatening serious danger. We escaped to the shelter of rocks on the left, to wait there till the couloir should again become tenantable.

At this point in the gloom and wet there was vouchsafed to us an instance of the kindness of fate. I was carrying crampons, soups and the cooking apparatus, so, at the start of our journey, Philip had been laden with the bread, cheese and other such foods. Unfortunately, in traversing round the impossible place on the ridge, he, having the responsible post of last man, had at one point sent down his rucksac on the rope, and, in attempting to resume it, dropped it and, as at the time we believed, all our remaining provisions on to the Stolsmaradals glacier. Now, as we waited in the rain outside our couloir, great was the grief of the party at their inability to while away the time and restore their energies with food.

"So they thought nor dreamt from whence  
Their celestial recompense."

For some purpose or other I opened my rucksac; and, lo! there at the top of it was a loaf of bread, butter and a lordly piece of cheese, evidently packed by accident into the wrong sac in the morning. A festive meal followed, the rain stopped, the stones ceased to fall, and, with strength renewed, we once more entered the couloir. But our difficulties were not yet over. An obstacle appeared in the shape of a slab made slippery by the rain, extending for some fifty feet at an angle too steep to be treated lightly. On a dry day there would probably be no great difficulty here, but, with the adhering moss loosened by the rain, this slab must have afforded anything but a pleasant descent for the last man. However, he accomplished it uncomplainingly, and we were above a succession of steep chimneys, which appeared to lead down to the glacier some 150 feet below. Would the chimneys go, and, what was equally important, would they go quickly enough to enable us to get off the rocks before the rain, which was evidently returning, again started stones falling from above? The chimneys went well; the climbing was like lake-district

climbing of moderate difficulty, and we reached the glacier just in time. Here again was the kindly hand of Fate, for, had Philip retained his sac, he must have sent it down several times on the rope, and the delay would have enabled the rain to beat us in the race. Once on the glacier, though thunder pealed and torrential hail fell, all was easy. Climbing up to the spur of rock on which the hut stands, we saw waiting for us a kindly figure summoning us to share a cup of tea. Rejoicing, we followed him, found in the hut an Englishman and a Norwegian lady, drank excellent tea, made some more soup, and discovered that the time was eight p.m. For two hours we stayed in the hut, hoping that the rain would stop. Then our new-found friends decided that a move must be made. They led us down the path to Turtegrö—a path which by ourselves in the dark we might easily have missed, and brought us, precisely at midnight, to the welcome warmth of Ola Berge's hotel. From our host we then discovered that the proper method of climbing from the ridge to the glacier was by a gap some way further to the north, and that the couloir by which we descended had never been climbed before. Fate again had been kind to us. There might so easily have been no exit at the bottom!

On the following day, as was not unnatural, the fleshpots of Turtegrö and a delightful bathing-pool constructed in a neighbouring stream claimed our exclusive attention. On Wednesday morning, however, in garments still only partially recovered from the effects of Monday's rain, we set out to traverse the Oestler Ringstind. Walking up the path by which we had lately descended, we again visited the hut, and inspected its sleeping accommodation, with a view to future use. Then, crossing the glacier, we climbed on to the Midtmaradals ridge by the easy ordinary route—a route which we unanimously agreed was much inferior to our own recent invention. The way then lay along the ridge in the direction away from the Midtmaradalstind, partly over and partly on the left side of some entertaining pinnacles. After passing these, we had partially to ascend a small peak, so as to obtain access to another ridge leading transversely to the base of the Oestler Ringstind. Here we were unexpectedly stopped by a slabby

frontage. What appeared to be the natural way began as an upward traverse to the right, but the traverse ended, and the upper part of the slab was wet. I tried two other ways without getting up, and only succeeded on a fourth by throwing the rope forward over a small knob of rock. There was no standing place at the top of the slab, so I went on some thirty feet further up an adjoining chimney. Philip, during my evolutions on the slab, had made frequent and pointed references to a left hand-hold, which was wholly invisible to me, but whose proffered assistance I was alleged to be wantonly neglecting. Having sent up the sac and ice-axes on the rope, he now proceeded to put his theories into practice, and climbed up to me with the greatest ease and the most graceful air of patronage. After this passage we had an easy walk over a stony ridge to the base of the Ringstind itself. The ascent of this began with a peculiar traverse, in the middle of which it was necessary, with the help of a partially jammed stone, to pass to a kind of inner traverse behind a large flake of rock. I invented a manœuvre by which this movement could be effected fairly easily, and my *amour propre*, which had suffered shipwreck on the slab, was partly restored, when Philip, following, condescended to ask for an explanation of the processes involved. Thereafter, steep but firm flaky rocks with excellent holds led us suddenly to the top, long before we realised our proximity to it.

At this point a digression is called for. Already several times I have had occasion to refer to the eccentricities of our cooking apparatus. The foundation of this apparatus was a lamp with a wire top and a mass of wick within, designed to consume the vapour of methylated spirit. Unfortunately, in Aardal the only form of fuel obtainable was oil, and this refused to adapt itself to the uses of our machine. Hence the innumerable delays in soup-making. On the present occasion nearly two hours must have been consumed in efforts that were only partially successful. We were now, it is true, provided with methylated spirit, but the attacks with knives that we had made upon the lamp in the evil days of oil had so damaged it that its efficiency as a vapour lamp was destroyed. After much thought, therefore, we decided that a transmuta-





**The Ringstinder.**

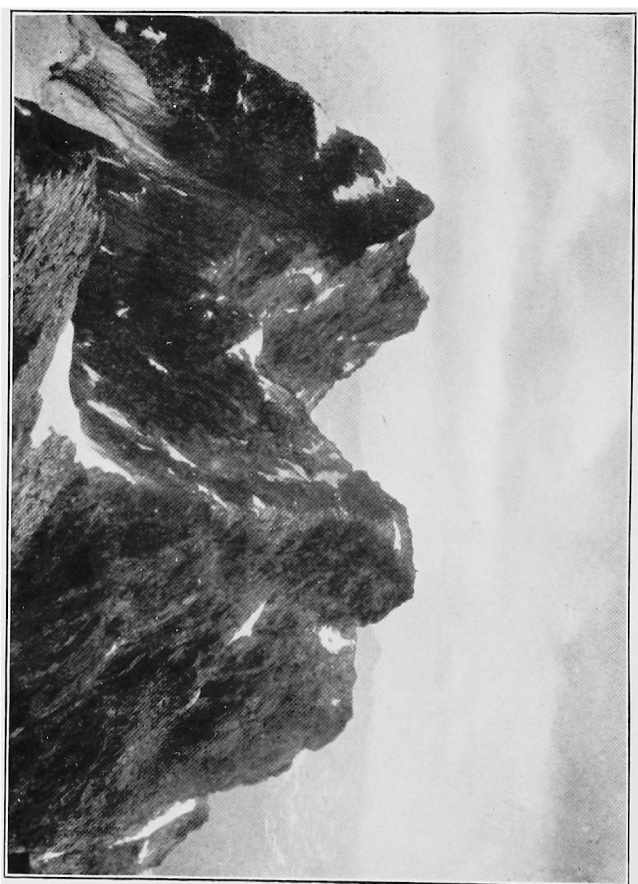
tion of species must occur. The wire top was completely removed, a piece of ice-axe sling was converted into a standing wick, a methylated spirit lamp of the ordinary non-vaporous type sprang triumphant from our brains, and culinary disasters troubled us no more.

The descent on the western side of the Oestler Ringstind is very easy. We soon reached the glacier, and crossed it to a cairned track marking the Turtegrö side of the ordinary route to Vetti. Once at this point, with memories of Swiss paths in mind, we had reckoned our expedition over. But this so-called track was of a character so evil that we were moved to fierce indignation: one of us even proposed a secret expedition, in which all the cairns along the route should be battered down and destroyed. At last, however, the region of stones was left for a land of grass and undergrowth. Here Philip became restless, and developed the alarming theory that, if we were more than half an hour late for supper, the solid portions of the meal would not be forthcoming, and hope need soar no further than a single fried egg. Thereupon—and this was the alarming part—he began to counsel speed. Fortunately, the path was narrow, and I had the lead, so that, by judicious “track tactics,” it was possible for me to keep down the pace of the party to something not wholly unbecoming to members of a learned and pious foundation. My companion, however, was not to be denied. He innocently suggested to me a variation route, which was obviously wrong, himself stayed on the proper route, and so ousted me from the premier position. We were then only a mile from home, but the memory of that mile lives with me yet; for part of it was uphill, and Philip’s theory is that uphill travelling, being more irksome than downhill travelling, ought, therefore, to be accomplished at a greater pace. While I was still recovering at the hotel door from truly desperate exertions, he proceeded to *run* the 300 yards to the bathing place. After a more dignified arrival and a bathe of supreme splendour, I equalised matters by superior skill in dress adjustment. We returned to the hotel in a spirit of such charity that even the Vetti track was almost forgiven, and supped the supper of kings.

Our next expedition on Friday was the traverse of the Skagastolstind ridge, and for this we were advised that, unless another night on the mountain was to our liking, we had better seek the guidance of our host. Ola Berge willingly agreed, and so we had the honour of assisting at his eightieth ascent of the chief peak of the district. The climb is interesting and affords splendid views, but there is no great difficulty, nor, so far as I could see, much opportunity for an unguided party to lose the way. The only point at which this might happen is at the beginning of the descent from the Store Skagastolstind towards the hut, and I do not think that even here one could well be lost for long. We descended by Hefty's chimney, a cleft that closely resembles Slingsby's chimney on Scawfell Pinnacle, and were considerably delayed by Ola's careful coaching of a party behind us under the lead of a guide unacquainted with the route. From this, our only guided expedition, we returned, of course, in scheduled time, and were ready at the ordinary supper hour.

Our experiences on the Skagastolstind ridge had suggested to us that a "difficult place" in Norway does not mean the same thing as a "difficult place" in the Lake district. To test our impression, we decided next day to try what was reported to be the hardest of the regular local rock-climbs—the ascent of the Dyrhausstind by the south ridge; for, we thought, if we can manage this, we need not hesitate at any other local reputations. Once more we walked up towards the hut and breakfasted. But Philip was discontented with the weather, declared that it was cold and unpleasant, and, when we reached the foot of the rock-climb proper, decreed that, though it was his turn for the post of honour, I should act as leader. This unprecedented evidence of indigestion or other evil fortune in my friend was not a little disturbing, but, having got so far, we might at least, I thought, begin the climb. It started with a succession of three exceedingly exposed and rather difficult chimneys, which led out, after considerable effort had been expended, on to a broad ledge. We had been told that the climb bore away gradually to the right, and our informant had omitted to mention that, from the ledge to which we had come, a concealed traverse should first





Centralind and Vesle Skagastolind.



be made round a corner to the left. Consequently, we turned to the right, and got off the proper route. A number of fruitless experiments on rocks not always secure occupied us for a long time. At last, I discovered what appeared to be a practicable chimney, starting some way to the right of a ledge which we had reached, and leading upward for a considerable distance. To attain the foot of the chimney, however, it was necessary to cross a steep slab under an overhanging block of rock, the stability of which was open to doubt. I did not like to trust the block, and we were driven to a kind of hand traverse on some inferior holds across the slab beneath it. The standing ground reached in this way had no belay, and it seemed best, therefore, that I should try to climb into the chimney before Philip left his place of security beyond the traverse. The entry to the chimney was not, however, at all easy, especially as some of the rocks which might have served as holds looked insecure. Eventually, however, I managed to find a hitch close below me for the rope, and, with the moral support of this, got up and into the chimney. Philip then had to come across the traverse, and it became desirable to pull the rope off the hitch. To our great indignation, however, though it would come through, it would not come off. Consequently it had to be pulled in via the hitch, instead of direct—a most uncomfortable and unsatisfactory process for all parties concerned. At length, however, even this was accomplished, the chimney was scaled, and we both assembled on a broad higher ledge. By means of a curious detached flake of rock and a passage reminiscent of the *Stomach Traverse* on the Pillar we climbed yet higher, and, after contemplating longingly, but with diffidence, a possible finish up the face, turned to the left and descended by a small chimney into what was now obviously the ordinary way. Some scrambling and easy chimneys then brought us to the top of the rock face—500 feet in some five hours, instead of the customary two.

After a worthy meal, we unroped and proceeded along the ridge, which constitutes the usual easy traverse of the Dyrhaugstind. Philip's health was restored, and he again began to exhibit alarming symptoms of a desire for speed. This time the

excuse was, not the constitution of supper, but the importance of some preparatory training to establish that perfect physical fitness, which was essential for success in the Olympic Games of 1916. However, he had "that grace of courtesy in him left" that he would not leave me alone upon the ridge, and waited resignedly at each of the successive pinnacles which rose from it. The ridge was followed by some steep patches of snow, convenient and excellent grass, and finally a path, the successful hitting off of which in the approaching darkness filled Philip's soul with vanity. We reached the hotel at 10.30 after a descent the speed of which was quite insufficient to afford adequate Olympic training, but thoroughly adequate to warrant an enormous and prolonged meal.

Our ascent of the Southern Dyrhaugstind by a new, even if unintentional, variant, gave us confidence, and we began to plan great things. But, alas! the weather, hitherto so satisfactory, broke down hopelessly. Twice we sallied forth with rope and provisions, twice sat disconsolately under a stone, and twice returned in time for luncheon at the hotel. For a whole week we endured, playing cards and reading inferior novels. But there were no signs of improvement, and even Ola Berge held out no hopes. On Saturday, the 3rd of August, therefore, we surrendered to fate, leaving the now snow-covered mountains behind us, and walking down in torrential rain to the Skjolden boat-landing. Philip went to Bergen to catch the steamer for Newcastle, and I left him in mid-fjord to travel to Myrdal, and thence home by an overland route. On Sunday morning I reached Fretheim, and, no carriage being available, walked to Myrdal. All the morning the weather had been improving, and by noon the sun shone in a clear sky. As my train steamed out of Myrdal Station, there settled down, I doubt not, a fortnight of unbroken weather upon Turtegrö and the Horunger Mountains.

## THE EARLY VICTORIAN ATTITUDE.

BY H. V. READE.

ALL books may be divided into four classes. There are books which one buys and reads, books which one reads but does not buy, books which one buys but does not read, and books which one neither buys nor reads. I may safely say that for every human being except myself, it is in the fourth class that the work of John Edmund Reade (1800-1870) *sedet æternumque sedebit*. The morbid sentiment about family relics, from which few of us, perhaps, are entirely free, has induced me to purchase and deposit in the darkest corner of my bookshelves the four volumes of his "Poetical Works"; but as to their contents I have felt justified in accepting the short and sharp verdict pronounced by the "Dictionary of National Biography," to wit, that they display a truly remarkable capacity for plagiarism. These, therefore, remain in the third class, beyond doubt the most honourable of the four, since it consists mainly of those works which no gentleman's library should be without. When I came across "Prose from the South," by the same author, in a bookseller's catalogue, and ordered it, I conferred on it the same distinction even before I had opened the parcel. But a glance through it revealed several chapters on Switzerland, and the result is that, even more certainly for me alone among all living men, it has moved into the first class. For these chapters, published in 1846, display something which is of much more interest sixty-seven years later than it was at the time—that is to say, the early-Victorian attitude towards the Alps—and display it all the more clearly because the author is as unoriginal in prose as, on the evidence aforesaid, he is in verse. If he does not, like the coal-merchant's wife in Mr. Bernard Shaw's play, when she went into trances, speak as if it was the whole human race giving you a bit of its mind, he will at any rate, in describing his own emotions, reflect the impressions made by mountains on the

average cultivated man of the period. The emotions themselves are genuine enough. It is no case of a man carefully finding out beforehand what he ought to feel on each occasion, and expressing himself accordingly. But it is just because both the feelings, and the way in which they are expressed, are typical, that they are of some historical interest.

The general attitude of "Prose from the South" towards mountains may be described as midway between the eighteenth century view that they were ugly and inconvenient excrescences, and the view which may perhaps be traced partly to the influence of Ruskin, partly to the growth of modern mountaineering, that mountains contain by far the finest type of natural scenery. Our author undoubtedly admires the Alps with his whole heart, and offers no apology for doing so; indeed, he takes it as a matter of course that he should. But he does not admire them simply for their own sakes. "It would be difficult," he says in his preface, "to dwell too strongly on the moral effects which mountain scenery impresses on the character." It may be difficult, but the difficulty has been gallantly faced and overcome by the persevering author, for whom every stone has its sermon. Perhaps, however, this attitude is not in itself early-Victorian, and it is more interesting to note that, much as he admires mountain scenery, he does not regard it as "beautiful." He finds there "sublimity," "grandeur," "power," "majesty," "nobility"; he feels wonder, admiration, "awe mixed with fear," but he says in so many words that as he went upwards "all beauty was left behind." Nor is this a purely verbal distinction, based on Burke's "Sublime and Beautiful," or the other essays of that period, which did useful work in attaching more precise meanings to the terms of the æsthetic vocabulary. It expresses a real difference in the writer's feelings. Beauty, if beauty implies that which gives us the greatest enjoyment and most completely satisfies our æsthetic instincts, is for him essentially "of the valley." It is not that he is content to remain there, and gape at the heights from a distance. He ascends the Rigi, Pilatus, the Faulhorn, the Männlichen, sees sunrise from the Brévent, visits the Montanvert and goes up the Mer de Glace to the Jardin, and somewhere above the Montanvert

scrambles alone for an hour up "a ridge nearly inaccessible to any," which may have been the Crête des Charmoz. All these expeditions he seems to have enjoyed thoroughly, and he says nothing of fatigue, inferior food, or any of the other inconveniences which are usually recorded by the "thal-bummeler." But he does not find beauty there. On the way to the Montanvert he observes, "I stood looking on this scene of savage desolation until I felt startled as I recalled the green and lovely fields which lay but a few hours' walk behind: I almost thought I was forgotten by Nature in a chaos whereon she had never smiled." His most rapturous description is reserved for a little lake (the Lake of Chedde), to which the higher mountains form only a distant background. It is only in the valleys that he feels at home. The Alps themselves are "palaces in ruins, the wrecks of what Nature was in her prime." And in one artless observation he seems to show what he would really like. "As we approach the heights," he says, "the uniformity which pleased from below gradually vanishes." The uniformity which pleased from below! Now we have it. It is in pattern, order, symmetry, that his soul finds rest. His ideal Alps are the Alps of a wallpaper. Quite in keeping with this is the remark, "The *peculiar* name of Jungfrau (the maiden) is given to the highest point." He naturally thought it odd that anyone should compare to a maiden an object which, though in many ways admirable, is entirely devoid of beauty and regularity.

Yet I confess that I find it difficult to reconcile this smug domesticity, this repose among green fields and "rounded elevations," with the genuine enthusiasm that the author displays about the scenery of the higher Alps. It would appear that his mind is really in a state of transition. By 1846 the "romantic revival" had run its full course. Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Scott, and Byron were dead, Wordsworth was an old man, whose best work had been produced almost half a century earlier. But the new spirit had not yet been fully assimilated, even by versifiers such as our author, who himself complains that, although "no people in the world are so alive to poetry as the English, . . . poetry has become an obsolete term;" the publishers will not issue it, and the public will not

read it. For him, mountains are still in the background, and it is significant that, while he quotes poetry on all occasions, it is usually Milton, and of modern authors (save for one line from the "Ancient Mariner") only Byron, who appears to be his own model.\* If he had been really familiar with the work of Wordsworth and Shelley, passages would have flowed from his pen over and over again. There is a paragraph in his rhapsodies on the Lake of Chedde, which reads almost like a bald prose version of the "Stanzas Written in Dejection," and must inevitably have led him to quote the lines if he had known them; and when he writes, "It is before the mountains that man renews all his innate though forgotten impressions," or again, in a long passage on the poet's vocation, "He perceives the animating soul within Nature, he recognises the everlasting intelligence that pervades her every line." . . . "If the faculty be not born within him, if the fountain welled not from his earliest being, . . . all art, all after-effort . . . will be in vain," Wordsworth is irresistibly suggested. Of three possible explanations, the *Zeitgeist*, unconscious reminiscence, and deliberate plagiarism, I incline to the second. He must have read Wordsworth and Shelley, and had been influenced by them far more than he realised; but his conscious mental outlook was largely that of an earlier period, dashed with the rather tawdry romanticism of Byron.

The only other feature of interest in our author is the truly remarkable banality of his language. "Why," he asks at the Montanvert, "why dwell on that which has been so often told? I answer, because it will be described ten thousand times more. . . . Is there one single object of Nature . . . that has not been described millions of times, and is not novelty still to be extracted from them?" True enough, and if evidence had been wanted, the first volume of "Modern Painters," which appeared in 1843, would have proved that there were many things both new and true to be said about the Alps. But for our author no epithet is too conventional,

---

\* It is significant of his taste that he quotes as "the finest couplet Gray ever wrote" the commonplace lines—

Hark, how each giant oak and desert cave  
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!



no phrase too hackneyed, no simile too obvious. Streams hurl themselves headlong into tranquil depths, or rave in vain round the rocks; clouds assume fantastic and ever-changing shapes; a lovely valley is sown with a galaxy of attractions; trees half veil among their twining branches grey moss-covered fragments of rock hurled from the amphitheatre of encircling mountains, which are clothed to their summits with dark pines; a lake trembles like a floating veil or the rainbow robe of Iris; the silvery clouds sleep on the water in the day, and the evening star raises her crystal lamp over all, while folding in the curtains of night; mists resemble a silent ocean heaving its waves over the craggy summits—such is the stuff of which his Swiss chapters are almost entirely composed. It is hard to believe that fresh and vivid emotions aroused by a first visit to the Alps can have been content thus to clothe themselves from the rag-bag. How much more expressive is the “simply ripping” of the schoolboy, or the asterisk of Baedeker, which at least leave something to the imagination! But is this wallowing in the obvious a special feature of the Early Victorian? I fear that it may be common to third-rate books of travel in all ages; but “I sink back, shuddering, from the quest.” On the rare occasions when our author does produce a fresh image, it is prosaic or even comic. He may have been the first, and I hope he is the last, to speak of a village lessening, as one rises above it, “like a pack of cards carelessly scattered on a table,” of clouds hanging round mountains “like a toga round the broad breast of some ancient Roman,” and of glaciers “like robes of ermine floating from the shoulders of mountain kings.”

Two more quotations, and I have done with him. The first, at any rate, is a *cri du cœur*. “How thoroughly do I detest and despise the Swiss character! I firmly believe that a Swiss would sell his own soul (if he has one) as he has ever done his services, if anyone would bid for it high enough,” and so on for half a page of abuse, though he gives no particular reason for his sentiments. Perhaps that too was an early-Victorian idea. The second is rather surprisingly modern. In a dissertation on the English character, he declares that “weakening, enervating tea-slops are the source of half our

effeminacy," for all the world as if he were Mr. Belloc or Mr. Chesterton.

And now let this typical early-Victorian rest in peace. If I have disturbed his slumbers, it is not to make a Roman holiday, but to point a moral, an object which himself must have approved; and it is in my mind to make him ample amends. He shall receive a modified immortality. "Prose from the South" shall be presented, with the compliments of the author's twenty-fifth cousin, to the library of the Alpine Club, there to repose undisturbed until that great day prophesied by Lord Rosebery, when all the worthless books in all the libraries shall be solemnly burned.

## NEW EXPEDITIONS IN THE COOLIN.

BY E. W. STEEPLE.

TOWARDS the end of the summer of 1912—or, rather, of that period of the year when, under normal conditions, summer weather should prevail—the gabbro hills of Skye suffered invasion by numerous parties, including several members of this Club. Our own party consisted of Messrs. G. Barlow, T. H. Seaton, A. H. Doughty, and myself. Barlow and Seaton reached Sligachan in the middle of August, and, after a day on Sgurr nan Gillean, crossed over to Glen Brittle. Here one more climb was vouchsafed them, followed by five days of enforced idleness. The resulting state of depression was slightly relieved by the arrival of Doughty and myself. We reached the island by way of Coruisk, and crossed the Bealach Coire Lagan with heavy sacks in mixed weather.

During a fine interval several very enjoyable hours were spent on the North-West Ridge of Sgurr Alasdair, and we also ascended the South Buttress of Sgurr Dearg by an interesting route of moderate difficulty at its west end. (This buttress had been previously ascended by a party in 1909.)

Another bad break necessitated two off-days, after which Seaton was obliged to leave. His departure synchronised with the commencement of a short spell of tolerably fine but very cold weather, during which the three remaining members of the party made two new climbs, and did a certain amount of exploring. The results of these explorations were, in some cases, of a negative character, but our failures led to the clearing up of a number of points which had hitherto been to us matters of conjecture.

At the end of the fine spell Doughty also departed, in a gale of some magnitude, but Barlow and I stayed on for a few days, and succeeded in working out two more new routes on Sron na Ciche, and sundry minor variations, including a second route on the South Buttress of Sgurr Dearg. This follows the eastern corner; it is rather indefinite, and not so interesting as the former route. In either case, the ridge may be followed

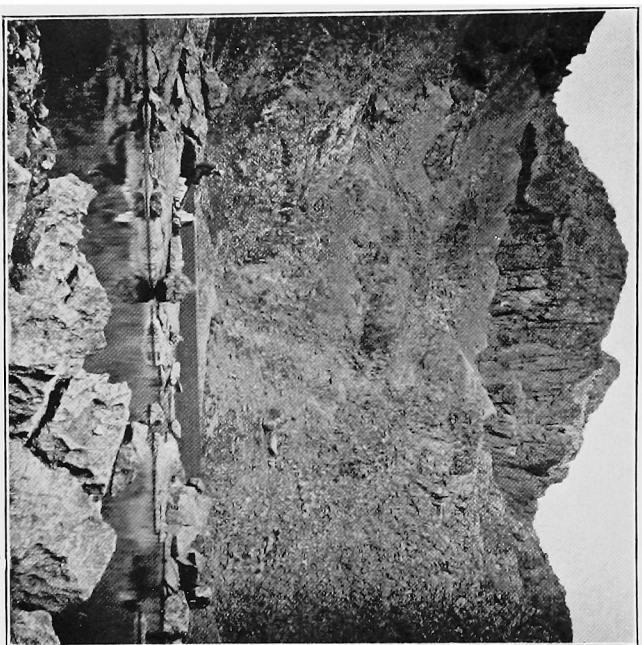
almost to the summit of Sgurr Dearg, and the buttress thus forms a good approach to the Inaccessible Pinnacle from Coire Lagan.

During our stay at Glen Brittle the wind blew with great vigour from all points of the compass, and brought rain from every quarter. Nevertheless, in addition to the expeditions here mentioned, some delightful ridge-wandering was indulged in. Most of the summits between Sgurr a' Mhadaidh and Gars-Bheinn were visited, and a memorable afternoon was spent on Sgurr Coire an Lochain—surely one of the finest view-points in the Coolin. From the south-west end of this little ridge a very simple route can be followed to the top of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich, along a grassy corridor, leading to a short scree gully.

#### **South Face of Sgurr Alasdair: The West Gully.**

On the south side of Sgurr Alasdair, at the head of Coir' a' Ghrunnda, there is a line of cliff of forbidding appearance, some 300 to 400 feet in height, which runs right across the face of the peak to its junction with Sgurr Tearlach, below the head of the Great Stone Shoot. This Stone Shoot, which divides Alasdair and Tearlach on the north, is part of a dyke-like band of a rare type of intrusive rock, consisting largely of orthoclase felspar, with occasional amygdules of quartz, quite different from the basalt dykes which cut the gabbro in every part of the Coolin. The scree, a pale grey in colour, runs down on the south side of the Alasdair-Tearlach gap for perhaps fifty yards, but stops short at the above-mentioned cliff. (The band trends south-east, and, running through the Tearlach ridge, crops out again near Bealach Coir' an Lochain.) Consequently, anyone attempting to make a pass between these two peaks from Coire Lagan is cut off on the south, the rocks immediately below being of an extremely unpleasant nature, having a strongly marked outward dip.

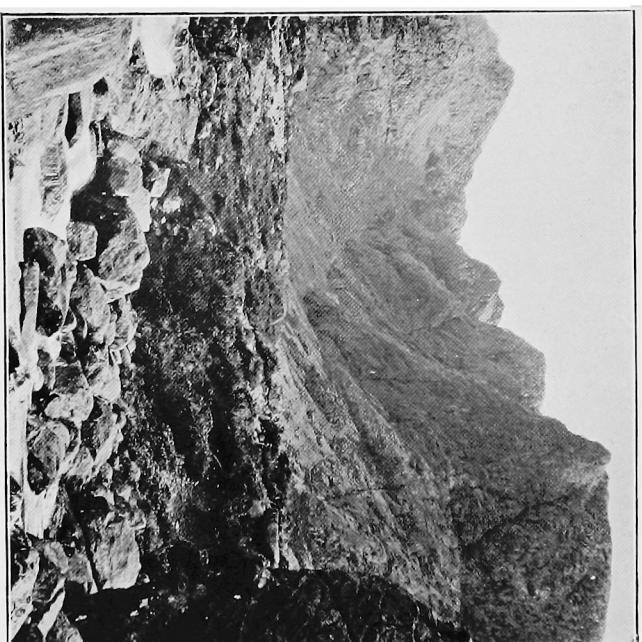
During an inspection of this hitherto unclimbed cliff, a narrow gully on the left, which may be identified as being the first definite gully met with in traversing under the rocks from the west, attracted our attention, and seemed to offer a feasible route up the face. It starts just to the right of a small grass



*Photo]*

**Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr Tearlach.** [G. BARLOW,

From Loch Coir' a' Ghruimda.



*Photo]*

**Sron na Ciche.**

[G. BARLOW,

From the Allt Coire Iasgaidh.



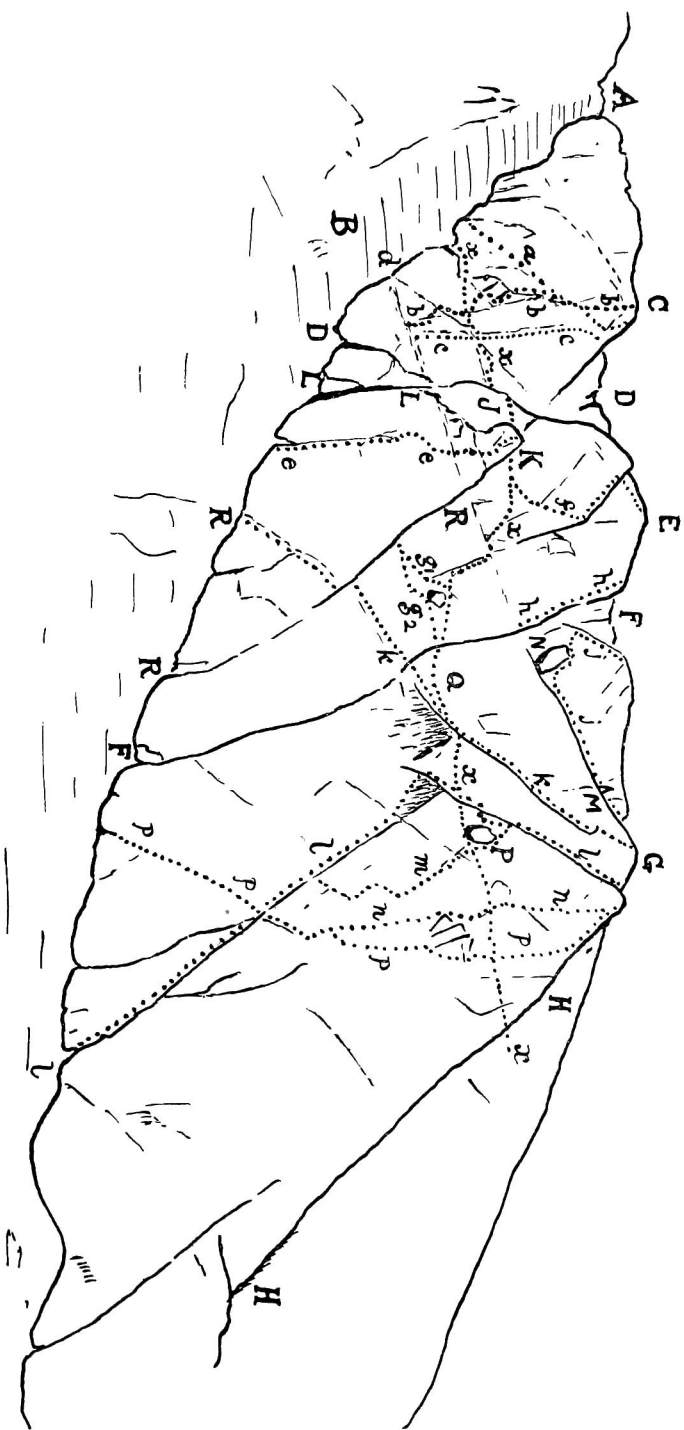
patch. It is clean-cut and practically vertical for about 200 feet, above which it loses itself in the more broken basalt, of which the summit of Alasdair is composed. Any attempt to break out on either side would be more difficult than to continue upwards.

The gully contains eight pitches, all short but strenuous. Six of these were climbed by straightforward chimney-work, but the second and fourth were rather more complicated. The second pitch is in two sections. After a stiff pull over the first obstacle, I found myself in a cramped position on a slippery shelf, with a protruding block above. An ungainly squirm and a prodigious heave followed, the absence of definite holds constituting the chief difficulty. The fourth pitch contained an overhanging boss of living rock, which choked the gully bed. This was passed by backing up with the face to the left for a few feet, and then striding across to the right wall, and ascending by small finger and toe holds to the top of a smooth rib, from which a short traverse led to the top of the bulge.

This little gully is remarkable for its extreme steepness—a stone tossed a foot or so outwards from the top pitch fell on the scree below, quite clear of the cairn at the foot—and also for the number of short pitches of nearly equal height, divided only by small stances, suggesting the quaint idea that a gully of respectable length has been telescoped by some convulsion of nature. It is also noteworthy as an instance of the comparatively rare occurrence of sound rock on a face having a south aspect.

#### **Eastern Buttress, Sron na Ciche: The Direct Route.**

Barlow, Doughty, and I assaulted this magnificent buttress during one of the temporary lulls in the August cyclone. The climb runs directly up the front of the buttress, commencing on the scree terrace which connects the Sgumain Stone Shoot with the Eastern Gully above its first pitch, or, if desired, the broken rocks below the terrace may be taken from a point lower down the Stone Shoot. For a few feet above the terrace the ridge-line is composed of crumbling gabbro, the only bit of unsound rock on the climb. Possibly it is due to the same demoralising influence which produced the terrace. We there-



THE PRECIPICE OF SRON NA CICHE.

- A Bealach Coir 'a' Ghrunda.
- A-B Sgumain Stone Shoot.
- C Eastern Buttress.
- D Eastern Gully.
- E Central Buttress.
- F Central Gully.
- G Western Buttress.
- H Western Gully.
- J Cioch Slab.

- K Cioch.
- L Little Gully (leading to Cioch Slab).
- M The Finger.
- N The Flake.
- P The Great Boulder.
- Q The Amphitheatre.
- R Cioch Gully.
- a Zig-zag Route.

- b Direct Route.
- c Chimney Route.
- d Terrace leading to Cioch.
- e Cioch Direct Route.
- f Cioch Upper Buttress Route.
- g, g2 Traverses from Cioch Gully to Amphitheatre, above and below the Sgumain Block.
- h East Wall of Central Gully.

- i Flake Traverse.
- k Amphitheatre Arête Route (Dr. Norman Collier).
- l West Central Gully and Buttress Route.
- m Zig-zag Variation.
- n Crack and Chimney Route.
- p West Route.
- x Circle Traverse.



fore started up very rough slabs a little to the left, working gradually round to the right, and then upwards for ten feet to a slope of splendidly sound rock. We then traversed to the left for about 50 feet to a flat ledge, on which rests a large projecting block. Just beyond this block a little recess was reached, from which a narrow, oblique chimney was climbed, passing a vertical branch at a height of 20 feet. The chimney gave an interesting stretch of climbing. A few feet higher a platform of broken rock was reached, overlooking the Eastern Gully. A horizontal ledge leading to the right suggested a possible variation, but the direct line was adhered to, and a right-angled niche, resembling the corner of a room, was climbed with some difficulty to a rock ledge, which led eastward for ten yards. From the end of this ledge steep rocks were ascended to a curious recess, caused by a fallen flake of rock blocking the entrance to a square-cut chimney. The situation was superb, and the suggestion that the place might be named the "Area Railings" created a painful impression, which, however, was soon forgotten in the interest taken in the next move. A finger-traverse was made to the right across steep slabs for 15 feet, slightly ascending, to the foot of another chimney, narrow and deeply cut. A large flat foothold on its left wall about half-way up provided each of the party in turn with a welcome rest, as the rough rocks of the chimney held us in a vice-like grip, from which we escaped only by a stupendous muscular effort. We then scrambled up steep, broken slabs to the top of a split-off mass, the position of which resembles the "Crevasse" on the face of Scafell Pinnacle.

With the second man well fixed in the Crevasse, I crawled, fly-like, up a slab with a rough surface, but entirely devoid of holds, to a small stance on the right, under a vertical wall. The slabs to the left of the wall formed a shallow scoop, set at a much steeper angle. This was ascended for 40 feet, with the aid of a rudimentary crack and sundry diminutive toe-holds to an outstanding beak of rock (cairn). We then traversed a narrow horizontal ledge to the right for 20 feet, and up a rough slab to a knife-edge, from which we had a remarkable view down the tremendous left wall of the Eastern Gully. A few feet of ascent up a little arête on the corner of the buttress

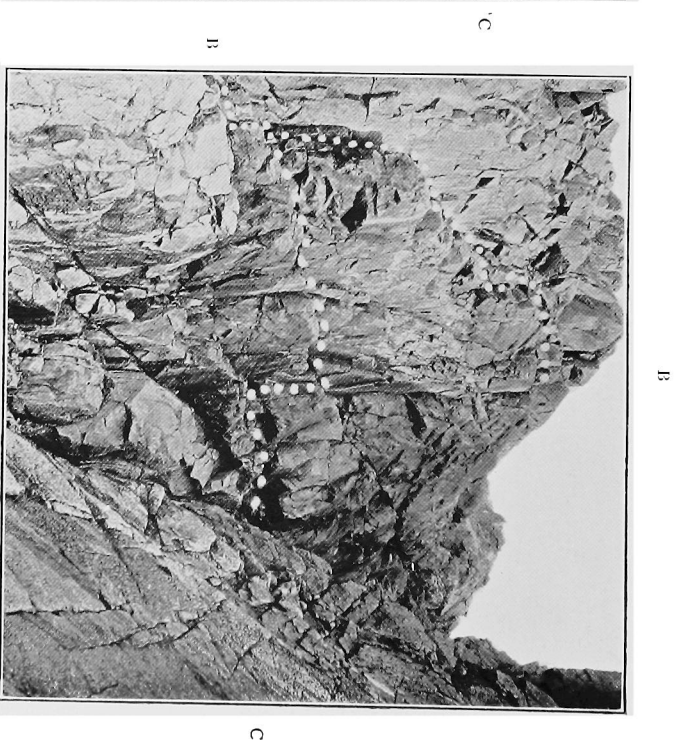
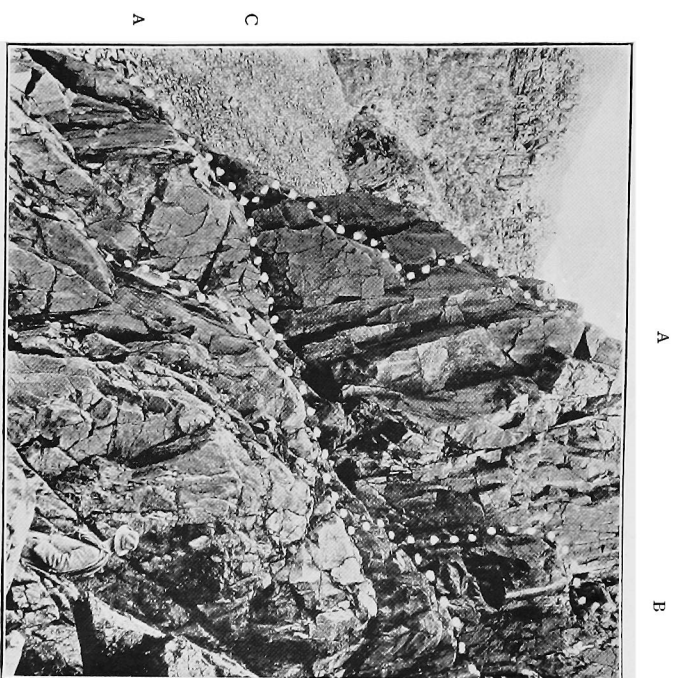
led to a large flat platform. From its eastern end a rock scoop was climbed, above which what is doubtless Dr. Collie's Zig-Zag Route comes up on the left. A turn towards the right was made, and the edge of the buttress again reached. A little tower was then traversed, and a thin horizontal arête crossed, *à cheval*, to a clean-cut mass of rock, which was climbed by the slabs on its right side. Beyond this a short, broken arête led to the foot of a fine vertical wall, with the remains of a crooked basalt dyke, minus one retaining wall, wandering away to a corner on the left. On the right a narrow ledge runs round the buttress, and, after passing under a tremendous expanse of slabs, ends in the left branch of the Eastern Gully.

The wall referred to is about 60 feet in height, and should on no account be missed, as it gives a very distinctive finish to the climb. It bears some resemblance to the little wall below the Tennis Court Ledge in Moss Ghyll, but is three times as high and more exposed. It was ascended with the aid of a thin crack, trending at first slightly to the left, which provided fairly good finger-holds. A tiny "Eagle's Nest" was reached at a height of 30 feet, a delightfully breezy position, from which the remainder of the wall was climbed straight up to a rocky saddle—the "Low Man" of the buttress. A cairn was built, and a scramble of 60 feet or so took us to the summit, after  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours of climbing on the finest rock we have yet met with in the Coolin. The total height of the climb is 600 feet from the terrace, or about 700 feet from the foot of the broken rocks below.

The route is one of absorbing interest, as few of the pitches can be seen from those which precede them, and there is a constant feeling of glorious uncertainty as to the nature of the difficulties ahead. The superlative quality of the rock and the many fine situations lend a charm to the climb, which is only tempered by regret that the buttress is not as high as its more westerly neighbour.

#### **Eastern Buttress, Sron na Ciche: The Chimney Route.**

Two days after Doughty had left us, Barlow and I made a second route up this buttress, following a well-defined series



*Photos]*

B

# **Eastern Buttress of Sron na Ciche.**

A Direct Route. B Chimney Route. C Part of Girdle Traverse. The first 50 feet of A and B are not visible.

[G. BARLOW.



of chimneys and right-angled corners slightly on the Eastern Gully side of the ridge-line. We built our cairn about 30 feet to the west of the commencement of the Direct Route, and at nearly the same level.

A few feet of easy rock led to a wet crack, partly choked by a projecting block. A wide scoop on the right, with few holds, was ascended until a microscopic toe-hold on its left wall made it just possible to regain the crack above the block. We then climbed 30 feet of easier chimney to a rock-slope. Here the angle became steeper, and formed a difficult pitch, which began awkwardly. No holds were found in the next 25 feet, with the exception of a solitary hand-hold high up on the left wall. We now reached a fairly large grassy terrace. This can be gained from the foot of the "Right-angled Corner" on the Direct Route, as we had surmised—a vulnerable point, which was duly noted for possible use on a traverse of the face which we had in view. A short slope of easy rock then led to a stance, with two large bollards on the left. Above, a fine chimney rose vertically for 60 feet, nearly filled with upright flakes of gabbro. It gave delightful climbing, with two through routes in the upper part, from which we emerged on a commodious scree platform, with a high, clean-cut wall on the left. Before us rose a short perpendicular wall, cut by two slender cracks. This was turned by slabs on the right. From a juniper-covered ledge above, a 25-foot chimney, with the same absence of holds which characterises the third pitch, led to a steep corner, with two impending blocks overhead. A trap-dyke on the right was ascended to a green platform. Here the dyke had lost its left wall, and formed a kind of shaky staircase, with several steps missing. (It is the same dyke which, in its upper continuation, crosses below the 60-foot wall at the top of the Direct Route.) It was overcome by using a trough on the right, and then pulling over on to the trap, and following this to the impending blocks, 25 feet above the platform. Care was required, as the climbing was rather exposed.

A final cairn was built above the blocks, and after a few feet of scrambling we reached the rock ledge, which runs from the foot of the above-mentioned terminal wall of the Direct Route into the Eastern Gully. We followed this ledge under

the tremendous sweep of slabs, and climbed the left branch of the gully to the summit ridge.

This climb, though less difficult than the Direct Route, is full of interest, the situation, on the outer edge of the great left wall of the gully, being very striking. It should be noted that the route follows a very definite line, which rarely admits of variation.

#### **Girdle Traverse of Sron na Ciche.**

Barlow and I had both been very keen on attempting this traverse, but unfortunately left it until our last week, when the weather was so bad that we eventually decided to remain for a few days beyond the date fixed for our departure, in the hope that the gale would exhaust itself. High wind was our chief trouble. One gets accustomed to wet and greasy rocks ; but when, in addition, the rocks are cold and the fingers lose all sensation, and a 100 mile-an-hour wind is sweeping across the cliff, with the thermometer somewhere below 40, exposed traverses are not altogether desirable.

The tempestuous weather continued for five days and nights without cessation. On the sixth day, however, the wind dropped, and we made a dash for the traverse. It was accomplished in steady rain—I believe more than half an inch fell during the expedition—but the rocks were comparatively warm. We had previously done a little prospecting during visits to the Cioch and the Central Gully, but the formidable appearance of several sections had left us in a state of delightful uncertainty.

We started at 1.30 from the Sgumain Stone Shoot at a large recess, the first obvious opening in the wall of the Eastern Buttress above the terrace, marked by a tower of rock on the left (cairn 2,240 feet). We ascended 20 feet of slabs to a stance behind a loose block. A horizontal hand-traverse was then made on flat hand-holds for 18 feet to a platform on the sky-line. The operation was not so exciting as might be supposed, as a certain amount of friction was obtained on the rough slab. We then walked along a little rock terrace to a corner, and dropped over a 6-foot wall to a sloping ledge. A horizontal traverse along the ledge for 25 feet ended at a projecting rib. Beyond this, 15 feet of steep slabs, with small

but sound holds, were crossed to the top of the Oblique Chimney of the Direct Route. From the "Right-angled Corner" the narrow ledge or mantelshelf on the right, which we had previously noted, was taken, and followed without difficulty to the Graßs Terrace on the Chimney Route. A continuation of this ledge on the wall of the Eastern Gully was tried, but, after a few yards, was found to be cut away. We therefore returned and scrambled up to the stance below the 60-foot Chimney, and took the long, slanting crack which had always attracted our attention when viewing the wall from the Cioch. We wormed our way carefully along this, and, passing behind a spike of rock and screwing ourselves round a little overhang, reached the top of a thin, vertical chimney, at about 100 feet from the stance. A short distance further on we came to a bulging corner which was much exposed, and rendered unpleasant by some loosely wedged blocks. Doubtless it might have been forced, but the crack was taking us higher than the limits of our girdle permitted, so we returned to the vertical chimney. We peered over the top, but could see no feasible route beyond. Nevertheless, this chimney proved to be the key to the traverse of the wall. Barlow descended it for 30 feet to the roof of a cave pitch, and with some difficulty reached a platform below. He then tied on our spare rope and disappeared round the corner towards the gully. Here he found a very sporting little ledge on the perpendicular wall. I then descended to the cave, and we built a cairn (2,320 feet). The name, "Serpentine Chimney," was suggested by the presence of some blocks of serpentine rock in the cave, and not by the method of descent.

The narrow ledge took us to the top of the chockstone in the second or unclimbed pitch of the gully, and provided some excitement. The last 15 feet, starting from a satisfactory stance, were passed by means of a delicate hand-traverse across a steep and smooth slab. A pocket, large enough to admit the toe of one boot, at about half the distance, made the traverse quite safe, and with a final swing we landed on the chockstone (2,340 feet). We then crossed the gully-bed, and followed the well-scratched ledge which leads to the middle of the Cioch Slab. This was crossed, and the top of the Cioch

Gully reached at 4.15 (2,350 feet). After halting for a belated lunch, we traversed along a ledge explored by Barlow some years ago, the first part of which is also used as the commencement of the Cioch Upper Buttress Route. Climbing over a shaky pinnacle and crossing some slabs, we reached the top of an oblique chimney running diagonally down a fine, clean-cut wall, which plunges steeply into the lower part of the Cioch Gully. We descended this chimney for 50 feet to the broad terrace or rake, which, with several interruptions, runs in a slanting direction across the face of the cliff. A few yards westward, a narrow gully, with several short pitches, was descended for 100 feet, and we reached the large bank of moss above the "Hexagon Block," a projecting mass, which forms a conspicuous feature of this part of the face (2,180 feet). Crossing the bank, we climbed a short distance down the ridge which forms the eastern boundary of the Central Gully, and entered this just below the first long chimney pitch above the Amphitheatre. The splashing of a considerable jet of water which fell over this pitch was treated with indifference, as moisture had long since pervaded everything except a useless camera, which was secreted in a waterproof sack.

From the Amphitheatre, which was the lowest point reached (2,130 feet), we traversed the slabs to the top of the "nose," or vertical buttress, which springs up at the western extremity of the great recess, leaving a pointed cairn on the sky-line. The prominent slab above the nose, which had been marked from below as being likely to give us trouble, was found to be less steep than we had expected, and furnished with a line of small but sufficient holds. From its further end, a few feet of descent led to a wide trap depression, which was crossed to a cairn on a grass shelf, marking a point on the arête of the West Central Route (2,160 feet). It was now 6.45, and the light was beginning to fail, but as the remainder of the route led across well-broken rock, we were able to move more rapidly. Just beyond the cairn the "Great Boulder" was passed, and we crossed the Zig-Zag Route, near a second basaltic depression, and, rising slightly, reached the top of the "Crack" on the Crack and Chimney Route. A little later a 12-foot chimney was ascended; and, after passing the upper



part of the Western Route, more horizontal traversing led to the ridge forming the left wall of the Western Gully. We crossed this to the broken rocks beyond (2,240 feet). The traverse thus ended at the same level as the starting-point. (The heights given should, of course, be considered as approximate only.) We took  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hours, exclusive of the short halt for lunch. A good deal of time was spent in exploration, and I have no doubt that in fine weather future parties will accomplish the distance, which we estimated at upwards of 2,000 feet, in a much shorter time. The expedition is a very fine one, and requires some skill in the art of route-finding, in order to link up the series of landmarks on the various routes passed, without unduly extending the width of the Girdle. Though difficult, the course is safe and sound throughout. It would, of course, be possible to vary the route to some extent, but I do not think that a more direct line could be taken without including very hazardous climbing.

This north face of Sron na Ciche is a wonderful cliff. Its three-peaked appearance is very striking when viewed from the lower corrie, as will be seen from the photograph; and although the Cioch Buttress is the most prominent section between the Eastern and Central Gullies, it would perhaps be more convenient to style the whole of this section the "Central Buttress." The cliff is, for the most part, composed of very sound gabbro, and basalt is much less in evidence here than on the neighbouring peaks. Barlow and I have visited it on many occasions during recent years, and consequently the success of our long-cherished project—the knitting together, as it were, of the various routes of ascent—gave us keen satisfaction, and amply atoned for the days on which our efforts were mocked by the force and persistence of the Atlantic gale.

## THE ACCIDENT ON THE PIC DU MIDI D'OSSAU.

TOWARDS the end of September Hugh Pope went to Orthez to learn French. He took with him a sleeping bag, with a view to week-ends in the Pyrenees. He left Orthez without his sleeping bag on Sunday, October 6th. The same evening he arrived at Gabas, a small hamlet in the glen that descends from the Col de Pourtalet. He stayed that night in the local inn. Next morning he set out early with a day's provisions, intending to climb the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, a fine, isolated peak some 9,400 feet high. He did not return.

On Thursday, 10th, some native in Gabas commented on his absence. The innkeeper admitted that he was missing. He then disappeared into Spain, and only appeared at the very end of our stay to present his bill.

Mrs. Pope was telegraphed for on Friday. On Saturday, by a happy inspiration, she wired to Young. Young was handed the telegram as he came out of the memorial service at Cambridge to H. O. Jones. He recognised the seriousness of the situation, and threw his whole energies into the organisation of a search-party. To him is due the remarkable despatch with which the task was undertaken and completed after the local men had abandoned the search as hopeless. Within a week of his receiving the telegram we had returned to England, our search at an end.

Claude Elliott lost no moment in postponing his lectures at Jesus College, Cambridge, and left by an early train on Sunday. Young telegraphed to Joseph Pollinger, Franz Lochmatter, and Joseph Knubel to meet us at Pau. Mallory came up to London and arranged to start later in the week. Young rang me up on the telephone on Sunday morning. I succeeded in collecting my kit from Harrow, and managed to get away by the 2.20 train. I arrived in Pau midday on Monday, a few hours after Elliott, who had already done valuable work. Mrs. Pope, Miss Bloxam, and Mr. Snowden had arrived the night before.

Elliott and I soon found that the local torpor and inefficiency would multiply the difficulties of our task. There were, of course, exceptions, and among these we must mention Monsieur Falisse, a member of the French Alpine Club, who gave us ungrudging assistance. Elsewhere we had to begin by convincing the authorities that we came to Pau on a serious mission. We succeeded, however, in forcing the sluggish mendacity of the Gendarmerie and Douanniers into some unwilling activity.

We left Pau by motor early in the afternoon, and drove to Laruns. The drive was strangely beautiful, and as the pine-burdened hills closed in upon us we felt that we had fairly got into touch with the problem before us. At Laruns the motor broke down. We spent the time interviewing the local Mayor. We telegraphed again to Spain, and urged a thorough search of the Spanish valleys. We had already organised a beat of the lower French valleys, and offered a large reward. We were warned that we ought to offer more if Pope was found alive, because the local peasantry would not waste valuable time in bringing a wounded man down a mountain unless there was a special inducement. So, at least, we were told. The guides, previous to our arrival, seem to have spent their time shooting in the forest. A definite alibi was proved against one of them, and there is little doubt that many who claimed payment did not go near the peak. Monsieur Falisse had to state expressly in writing that no guide would be paid who searched with a gun. There are other stories connected with our search that shall not be told. The Pyrenees are no place for lonely exploration.

We had finished tea, and stepped outside to see if the motor was ready. Suddenly a cyclist appeared at the end of the road. He was soon surrounded by a curious crowd. We forced our way through, and found Falisse, who had cycled down from Gabas. He told us that the guides were about to abandon the search, and that no trace, save a sardine tin, had been found on the peak. The local experts were apparently convinced that Pope had lost himself in the forest. We picked up a guide armed with a vast Alpine stock, and somehow squeezed the whole party into the motor.

We slept that night at the little inn from which Pope had started. Elliott and I retired early; but, though neither of us had slept in the train, sleep was denied. This was unfortunate, for I was badly out of training, and unfitted for the task before us.

We breakfasted at 3.15. At 4 a.m. we started. Falisse came with us, and the two local guides completed the party. One of these was credited with a rudimentary knowledge of mountaineering.

The night was cloudless, and the cruel teeth of the Pic du Midi blotted out the stars behind a wooded ridge. Our way led up a shadowed ravine. Below the road a river disturbed the stillness with dreary music. Our road led through dark pines, and opened, just as dawn came in from the east, on to a level glade between the mountain and a tributary ridge. We breakfasted in a little *châlet* below the peak. Above us the Pic du Midi rose in terrace upon terrace of precipitous rock. We examined its slopes through a glass, but could find no trace of Pope. Against the steadfast sky of the early morning its cliffs seemed terribly sinister, but somehow it was impossible to believe in the tragic possibilities of our search. The Alpine start was so ordinary, the whole setting so conventional. The usual mountain breakfast and the usual pipe recalled a hundred uneventful days. It was startling to find that ordinary talk and casual laughter seemed quite natural. We had always pictured a search as a time of unrelieved tension and gloom, and we learned with surprise that when muscle and nerve are engaged in active work there is no natural occasion for the sorrow that comes with reflection.

The misstatement about the sleeping sack complicated our task. We feared that our search might later include all the hills within a two-day radius of Gabas. As we climbed higher, we examined the ranges that opened out on to every side. There was nothing to tempt a pure cragsman. But Pope was not only a rock climber; he loved the long ridge walk, with its opening prospects into unsuspected glens. He had never been to Spain, and the solitude of the Spanish valleys might well have tempted him across the frontier.

The Pic du Midi was the first obvious region to search,



*Photo]*

**The Pic du Midi d'Ossau.**

(No. 5.)

[H. R. POPE.



*Photo]*

**The Little Peak.**

(No. 17.)

[H. R. POPE.



and search at once. There was still the very faint chance that an injured man, with a sack of provisions, might have survived for the intervening days. It seemed probable that Pope would have been tempted by the fine-looking traverse of the two peaks. The guides assured us that the north face (on which he was afterwards found) had been thoroughly searched. It had never even been visited, except by Falisse moving along the base of the cliffs. The obvious course remained to search the traverse between the two peaks, and along the great west face. We made our way accordingly to the easy, broken ridge running down from the Little Peak. As we rose, the ranges of Spain climbed ever higher into the sky. The day was cloudless, and barrier after barrier of faintly pencilled hills swept southward to the low horizon. But we were in no mood to enjoy the delicate beauty of these southern ranges. A tiresome scramble brought us at length on to a gap which opened out into a desolate circle of forbidding cliffs overshadowing a chaos of broken rocks. The place was indescribably gloomy, relieved by no hint of snow or stream. The same lines, curiously enough, occurred simultaneously to Elliott and myself :

The hills like giants at a hunting lay  
Chin upon hand to watch their game at prey.

As we stumbled across the broken ground, we seemed to hear

Names in our ears  
Of all the lost adventurers, our peers :  
How such a one was strong, and such was brave,  
And such was fortunate, yet each of old  
Lost ! lost ! one moment knelled the woe of years.

We heard at intervals the cries of crows wheeling round the cliffs, as they wheel for days before they dare approach a human being. An eagle sailed by, and swept down on to the evil cliffs. The whole tradition of mountain worship seemed a piece of fantastic nonsense.

The "guides" went on to search the traverse between the peaks. Elliott and I determined to explore the west face. The desire for sleep now became irresistible. An hour later Elliott woke me, and declared that he heard the search-party calling that they had found him. In fact, throughout that

day our tired senses heard and saw a great deal more than actually happened. The cliffs were formed of yellow streaks, and again and again we believed we saw a figure lying on the grey rocks. The broken nature of the ground added to the difficulty of the search. At every corner we feared as much as hoped to find him.

We explored the scree and two small rock summits that might have attracted a climber, and then turned homewards. It was a depressing return. When we reached the woods a loud cry disturbed us. We looked at each other anxiously, and after an interval Elliott remarked nervously, "I suppose I'm not dreaming. That is a shout, isn't it?" I replied, with evident relief, that a shout it certainly was. We exhausted our lungs by way of response, until suddenly it dawned on us that these human cries proceeded from an owl. We returned home very late, and neither of us will forget the long, dark road winding through the sombre forest. For many reasons we were glad that we were not alone.

After sixteen hours of search we reached Gabas. Mrs. Pope and Snowden had just returned from Spain, where they had organised a search of the lower valleys. Young had arrived, and seemed a tower of strength. With him were Lochmatter and Pollinger. Knubel turned up during the course of the night.

Next morning Young and the three Swiss guides set out to reconstruct the probable course of a stranger and a mountaineer approaching the Pic for the first time. They decided to disregard the statement that the north face had been searched. The Little Peak and the traverse between the two peaks had been searched on the previous day. Pope might have been tempted by this latter route, as it provided the best climbing on the mountain; but the more ordinary way still remained to be explored by a party more reliable than the local guides.

Elliott and I motored to the frontier. I went on a little way into Spain, to discover any possible rock peaks that might have tempted Pope. The others climbed the neighbouring hills to prospect. I returned to Gabas about midday. As I walked up to the house I saw Young standing just outside.





*Photo]*

**North Ridge and Col de Mondeils.**  
(No. 13.)

[H. R. POPE.



*Photo]*

**Rising Mist.**  
(No. 18.)

[H. R. POPE.



There was only one possible explanation for his early return. I knew at once that Pope had been found by friends.

"Young and the Swiss had gone straight to the base of the north ridge, one rarely, if ever, ascended; but following the instinct that told them this was the line that would attract a mountaineer. At the base of the ridge they separated; Lochmatter and Pollinger ascending to make small, difficult traverses back and across the western edge of the south-east face, while the local men were sent round on to the easy eastern face. Young and Knubel traversed up, at different levels, along the eastern face of the north ridge.

"Both were convinced, as soon as they started on the ridge, that the rock was just of a character to be dangerous for a rapid climber, however good; granite, seemingly sound, that flaked off in masses at a touch.

"After barely two hours' search, Knubel first sighted him 200 feet below. As the photographs, found in his sack and since developed, show, he had started about 7 a.m., and ascended easily through the forest, to the base of the west face; after resting and prospecting along the foot of the crags to north and south, he had probably decided, in view of the late hour and rising mists (11-12 o'clock?), to traverse round the south end of the peak, crossing the north ridge on the way, and so to ascend by the easy route on the east face. A great rocky, water-worn couloir, up large, smooth, but sound slabs, near the base of which he was found, and which leads up on to the north ridge, was the first accessible route that presented itself, and would have appeared to save a long detour, part of it downwards, on to the low grass col at the end of the north ridge.

"It is known that he did not intend to climb anything difficult while alone. But the top of the couloir, just below the crest, gets gradually more difficult, and for some distance has short, overhanging sections. To avoid the long descent, he probably tried this, a passage on sound-looking rock, well within his power, and reasonable for him to attempt. A hold, foot or hand, on the deceptively firm-looking slabs seems to have given way, only a few feet from the crest. He fell first on his head 60 feet below, and was instantly killed, the skull

•

and spinal cord being crushed. He was found some 300-400 feet lower, on a bracket of level rock, in the centre and cold shadow of the huge semicircle of dark precipices. His watch had stopped at 1.5 p.m. He was lying with his arms above his head, as if resting quietly after a bathe, the splendid lines of his body showing no visible injury. His axe, which he had probably had in his hand, indicating that he was climbing easily, was beside him. His sack had caught higher in the couloir.

"Young climbed down to him alone, and covered him—he was not again uncovered—and then summoned the other guides with his revolver. He left the Swiss friends to bring him down the remaining 200 feet of steep slabs, and descended with the two local men, who had returned at the shots, to the wood-sheds in the valley, despatching them up again with material to facilitate the passage down through the forest. Then he descended alone to Gabas.

"He was brought down in the evening, in a cart covered with pine branches. The next day, after the few necessary formalities, he was brought to Pau, and thence, on Friday, to Orthez, a place of which he had grown very fond. Here, in a high-lying ground, sheltered by trees, and looking out at the line of the Pyrenees, he was buried, and his grave left in charge of the friendly Monniers, the Pasteur's family, with whom he had lived.

"Besides members of his family, and those who had assisted in the search, Madan and Findlay, who arrived from England to help us, were present at the quiet ceremony, on a warm day of autumn sunshine. We left behind us a man of exceptional promise in many lines. Of inspiring enthusiasm, equable temperament, cultivated intellect, and phenomenal physique, he was also the greatest climber and potentially the greatest mountaineer of his own or any time."

#### HUGH POPE'S PHOTOGRAPHS.

Pope's photographs were developed on the return to England. They throw considerable light on his movements. The first photograph reproduced is a view of the Pic du Midi from a point about an hour's walk from Gabas. Shortly after taking this photograph Pope must have reached a point where

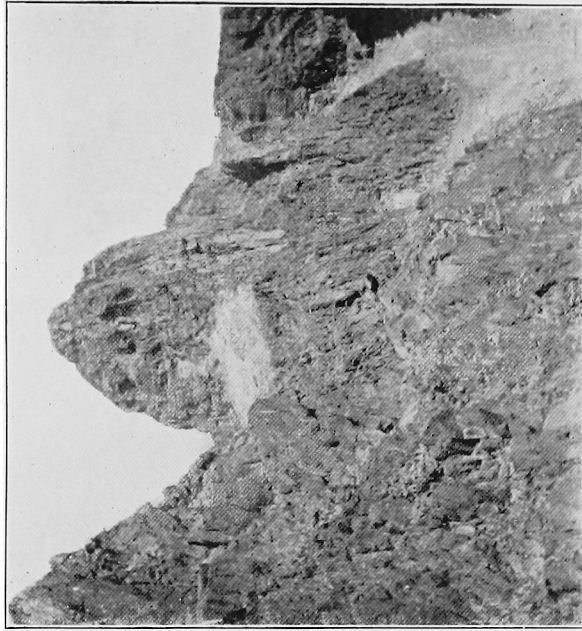
•



*Photo]*

[C. A. ELLIOTT.

**The Base of the Little Peak.**



*Photo]*

[A. H. M. LUNN.

**The Higher Peak from the Ridge of the Lower.**



two paths diverge. That to the left leads round to the Col de Mondeils, the little gap at the beginning of the north ridge towards the left side of the photograph. Pope must have taken the path to the right, which leads up through the wood to the point at the foot of the central buttress where the dotted line on the illustration begins. He took two photographs from this point—Nos. 12 and 16. Nos. 13, 14, and 15 are not taken from this point. The deduction is clear. Pope probably left his sack at the bottom of the central buttress, where he may well have lunched, and scrambled about prospecting and photographing (Nos. 13 [illustration, page 36], 14, and 15). He returned, picked up his sack, and took Nos. 16 and 17 (illustration, page 34). His subsequent movements are explained above. No. 18 (page 36) was the last photograph he took, and was probably taken very near the north ridge a few minutes before he fell. It is interesting, in view of the fact that the guides had suggested that he had lost his way in the mist, an absurd theory completely disproved by this photograph, in which the mists are still on the lower hills.

## A NEW CLIMB ON THE DENT BLANCHE

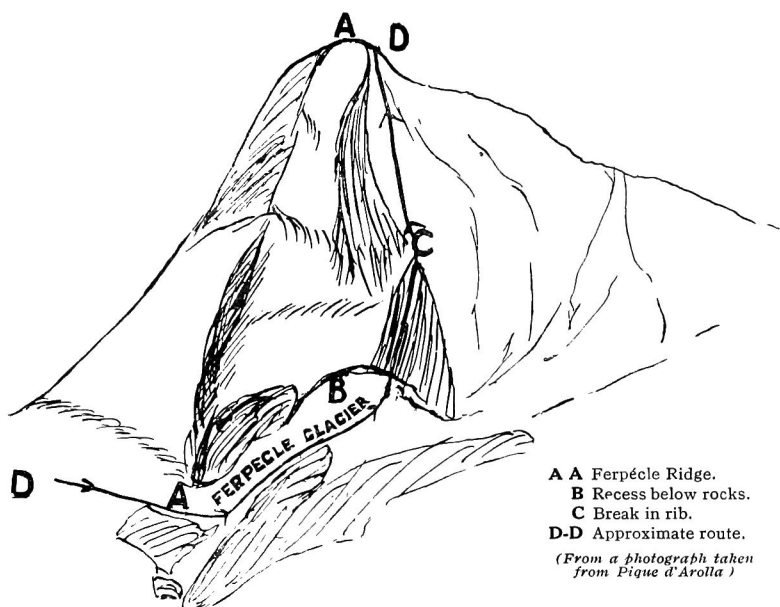
BY H. E. L. PORTER

AFTER some days of partial success at Arolla, our party, consisting of G. H. L. Mallory, H. R. Pope, and myself, was faced with the necessity of getting back to Zermatt. In a previous year Mallory had prospected a new route up the Dent Blanche, which appeared feasible through the glass, and we decided, at any rate, to make an attempt on it in preference to a tame return by the Col d'Hérens.

On Friday, August 16th, we left Arolla, and trudged under a hot sun down the valley and up to the Alpe Bricolla. The weather prospects were not hopeless, though our peak was hidden all day. Just as dark came on, however, we were granted momentary glimpses of the summit, sufficient to silence the croakings of the pessimist of the party. We were up at two, to find a cloudless sky and a night such as must have been the rule on Olympus, calm and undisturbed by any wind. There seemed little fear now of defeat by storm or tempest, but there remained the anxiety whether the rocks would go, and whether the snow would be in fit condition so soon—a real anxiety, for no first-class peak near Zermatt had been climbed for a fortnight. We were off at 2.30, and the *infandus dolor* of the next two hours may be passed over in silence—*forsitan haec olim*. At length we found ourselves at the foot of the little offshoot of the Ferpécle glacier, directly underneath the Ferpécle ridge. This had to be ascended as far as a large recess (B), above which the rock wall rose steeply. It was a weird sensation, threading a way among crevasses by lantern light, but nothing untoward occurred. The snow bridges were sufficient and well frozen. There might well be difficulty, however, here in different conditions. We were at the foot of the rocks at 4.30. Our first meal was taken just as the world awoke to a perfect dawn, not of the firework variety, but one where the hills paled unnoticed till the sun lit the peaks.



We now saw what was before us. Confronting us rose a steep wall of rock, perhaps 600 or 700 feet high. Beyond that, we knew, the angle eased off considerably. The wall was cleft by a series of chimneys on the left side, almost free from snow. Up these Pope led us, skilfully and gracefully as ever. At first we moved singly. The rock was of no exceptional difficulty, but thoroughly cold, and in some places iced. No stones fell while we were on the rocks, and we saw no reason to think



there would ever be danger from that source. Higher up the going was faster, and at the top of the steep part another meal was taken. At this point (C) we were forced to leave the rib proper by an intervening couloir, which would have taken some time to cross. The rib diverged to the left, and we kept straight on. The rest of the climb was up patches of rock, standing out from or partially masked by snow or snow-covered ice. While engaged on this we sighted another party coming from the Wandfluh below the first gendarme, by which we discovered later they were defeated. We had no fear of being anticipated, and proceeded at a steady pace, the rock

eventually disappearing and giving place to steep, hard snow. About ten we struck the corniced summit ridge, rather south of the summit, and soon after were sitting on the top, with a glow of satisfaction sufficient to thwart the attacks of the cold wind blowing up from the east. A whiff of tobacco and we were off again, slightly uneasy as to the state of the gendarmes and the snow below. All went well. The first gendarme took time, but was vanquished by Mallory's skill and a plentiful supply of spare rope, and then the other party's thoughtfully cut steps led us quickly and pleasurably down to the Wandfluh. Zermatt was reached at 7.30, after seventeen hours, but seventeen hours had compensated us for seventeen days of gloom.

## A CLIMBING ALPHABET.

By N. T. HUXLEY.

### *Apology.*

WHEN I suggested rhymes from A to G,  
The learned Editor instructed me\*  
To make some introductory remarks  
To frighten other literary sharks—  
I quote his words:—"For better or for worse,  
This journal sets an interdict on verse;  
While every other reader, I believe,  
Has some unpublished fragments up his sleeve,  
Which he would shower on us soon enough  
If we would let him. If we take your stuff,  
It's just because, as everybody knows,  
You're quite incapable of writing prose.  
Oh! by the way, you'd better not be late;  
I start for Switzerland to-night at eight."  
And, oh, good lord! there's half-past seven struck.  
I'll catch him at the station yet, with luck.  
And yet I wonder whose will be the loss  
If he escapes my search at Charing Cross

---

**A** for the Author, naturally first,  
If not the best of men—still, not the worst.

### *Moral.*

He makes a splash before the public eye  
That knows just where to draw the line, and why.

**B** for Belays, or little bits of rock,  
Which climbers fondly think will stand a shock.  
They therefore search them out, and hitch their rope  
Around them carefully, with fatuous hope.  
I knew a climber once, whose Christian names  
Were Cyrus Montmorency James,  
His surname Honeybun, who rashly led  
Up the Unwholesome Chimney, on route Z.  
He read the guide out loudly to himself.  
He "jammed the knee above a little shelf,

\* A fact.—ED.

Then, by a tricky traverse past some rocks  
 Shaped like a teapot, reached the pillar-box,  
 A slight embrasure in the right-hand wall,  
 Which has not any decent holds at all.  
 The leader waits here, having firmly collared,  
 And fixed his rope around, a handsome bollard."  
 The second started ; but he did not love  
 The loud instructions shouted from above—  
 Failed to negotiate the teapot-spout,  
 Yelled, "Hi, there!—pull," and then swung gaily out.  
 The bollard, marked in diagram with crosses,  
 Proved to have been, more strictly, a proboscis.  
 The rope slid off! Had not the nose been broken,  
 There had been broken heads, by that same token.  
 There was another climber, too,  
 Who had a different plan in view.  
 He hunted out projecting rocks  
 And placed them in a little box  
 (Constructed from his own design  
 And sold in shops for one and nine).  
 These, when he reached a decent height,  
 Were cast into the Ewigkeit—  
 As he supposed ; but often stones  
 Alighted on the temporal bones  
 Of other climbers. Some were ended,  
 And all were more or less offended.

*Moral.*

Whether you trust yourself or trust tradition,  
 Your merits fail of proper recognition.

**C** for the Civil Servant, who remains  
 In bondage in the cities of the plains,  
 While sun and skies, even at home, are summery,  
 And all his friends ascend the Aiguille Mummery ;  
 Who yet, in action, as in title, civil,  
 Refuses to consign them to the Divil,  
 But merely gives his desk a little slam,  
 And gently murmurs  
**D**, which stands for Damn.

*Moral.*

I think this person's action highly moral :  
Perhaps you don't—let us avoid a quarrel.

**E** stands for Edelweiss—avaunt the odium  
Of calling it Gnaphalium Leontopodium—  
A plantlet which, at least in theory, grows  
Only among the everlasting snows,  
Or clinging to the beetling precipice.  
Conceive, then, reader, my intense surprise  
At seeing with my own untravelled eyes  
A large plantation in the Vale of Dee  
Ten feet above the level of the sea.  
The gardener, a Pole, was highly paid,  
And did a very thriving export trade,  
Which every year continually swells,  
With all the most exclusive Swiss hotels ;  
And, more especially, with Schnupf, the host,  
Hotel de l'Univers et de la Poste,  
Freisinnen, Schweiz, who had evolved a plan  
Combining gain to self with good to man.  
He planted shoots beside the forest ways,  
And rows of finger-posts, with glowing praise  
Of the Hochedelweissverpflückungsort  
(Blue upon red, five crosses and a nought)—  
Assuaging thus man's passion for the hills,  
While leaving him unharmed to pay his bills.  
But he neglects, some reader here protests,  
The spirit of adventure in his guests.  
It may be so ; but still, O doubting Thomas,  
Think not to have exhausted modern commerce—  
A precipice will be forthcoming, plus  
A row of springs for stouter folk than us ;  
The posts will be embellished with a distich,  
Ending with something like "höchst realistisch."  
The guest will clamber, pluck and fall ; but still  
He will emerge alive to pay his bill,  
Which, as befits this great establishment,  
Has risen by some 33 per cent.

*Moral.*

O who can view without a certain vanity  
The civilising progress of humanity?

**F** the Funicular, which takes  
The Germans from the Italian Lakes,  
Avoiding laboured pant or snuffle,  
Up to the Jungfrau or the Riffel.  
Have I not heard a German say—  
He's quite a climber in his way—  
"Aber bergauf doch überhaupt nicht:  
So was mein Magen mir erlaubt nicht:  
Ich geh 'caput so bald ich schwitz,  
Gewiss" ?\*—Yet, notwithstanding, Fritz  
Has been as high as me or you,  
And seen the famous Alpenglüh  
Upon the Jungfrau and the Eiger,  
And is "ein sehr berühmter Steiger."

*Moral.*

If you invent short cuts to glory,  
Remember, there's another storey.

**C** for the glacier, into whose crevasses  
Are cast sardine-tins by the vulgar masses.  
After a varied period of years  
Each lubric casket undecayed appears,  
And, on the Alpine valley's verdant plains,  
Helps to build up the most immense moraines—  
(The tin, we learn from the geologist,  
Is metamorphosed into igneous schist).

*Moral.*

This should give rise to many lofty thoughts  
About eternity and Alpine sports.

\* Which is in English, paying due attention  
To little differences of convention,  
"But all the same, uphill he does not go—  
These last few years his chest has grown so low,  
And heat affects his nerves so much, you know."

## HOME EXPLORATION.

BY CONOR O'BRIEN.

IN all the arts, in all the activities of mankind, there is a period which is pre-eminently the age of experiment and discovery. Documentary evidence proves that in days remote from the present generation, the age of discovery affected the mountaineer so intensely that every ascent was an exploration. The spirit of the giants of those days still lives in many of us. True, in a census of the climbing fraternity, it may appear to be somewhat diluted by gymnasticism and discouraged by increasing income-tax. Yet, the exploring instinct is as strong in us to-day, even if the outlet for its exercise is rarer. The necessary means for an expedition to the Himalayas, or even the Caucasus, are not possessed by many of the Irish members, at any rate, of the Climbers' Club. It is vain to regret this; as well might we regret that we could not gaze on the granite pinnacles of Kippure through the *Lepidodendron* jungle of Dublin, or marvel, with the creature which was to become Man, at the great ice-fall of the Llydaw Glacier. We are born out of time, and our birthright has already been sold for a Cook's ticket on the Jungfrau Railway.

The opportunities of our fathers lay in the Alps. Though we exercise the adhesiveness of a fly on the wrong side of the Grepon—and that is as much beyond the powers of the majority as an assault on Karakoram—I doubt if we should feel the same as if we had made the first ascent by the right side of Mont Blanc. However this may be—and I can only conjecture the psychological effects of a first ascent—there is certainly a growing proportion of the younger generation, sighing for worlds to conquer, whose opportunities lie in the narrow limits of an Easter at Gorphwysfa or a few week-ends in Wastdale. By our ambition the face of Lliwedd is seamed with thirty routes and their proper variations—an unworthy aim, perhaps, but when I stand in front of the crags I also fall to scheming out Route Thirty-one, though I desert the

cleanest rock-face in Wales for a slimy chimney and a forest of birch trees. For our entertainment new mountains appear on the map, to be annexed to the Great Playground—less often, indeed, but with more satisfaction to the discoverer and more benefit to the community of mountaineers.

For this is the real joy of the explorer—not to prove the feasibility of a peak of repellent but well-known aspect, but to find a way—in fact, the easiest way—through an unknown country. That this higher pleasure can still be attained in Cambria, in spite of her thousand climbing devotees, is seen in recent numbers of the *Journal*, and yet more might we expect, among the unfrequented mountains of Ireland or Scotland, to discover that new face which we all wish to scale.

Nature, indeed, has but a limited supply of good things; in North Wales, Cumberland, Skye, and such familiar centres she has dealt them out with a liberal hand. But even there she has provided a large proportion of merely spectacular faces; to the strict business of climbing they are but painted scenery. Indeed, strip the glaciers from the Alps, and how few climbs will remain that satisfy the modern cragsman.

The conditions requisite to produce a climbable rock-face are many and hard to fill. We all, of course, look first for mountain form. Everyone likes his climb to finish on the top. The true mountain is brought forth by great labour, assisted by violent physical forces, which give to it the second quality for which we look—mountain structure. It is true that An Teallach or the Marmolata imitate the mountain form without its structure, but the climber will be the first to appreciate the difference.

We have at home no lack of gneiss or felsite, quartzite or gabbro, disposed in suitable folds and crushed into true mountain-stuff; but, alas, except in a few well-known instances, age has degraded their once soaring pinnacles to level bog-land, broken by escarpments of a few of the most resisting rocks. And if this is a loss to the æsthetic eye of varied skylines, still more is it a loss to the climber of his best opportunities; for the crags that remain too often represent only the most repellent parts of the original face, as to one who, a million years hence, might try to ascend the Wetterhorn



from the Scheidegg over the remaining few hundred feet of its great precipice.

But there is one place where the mountain face is always new. There is precedent for including in our ranks those that rush violently down a steep place into the sea, and, from the climber's point of view, much the same rules govern the nature of coastal and inland cliffs. There also we can see what an enormous extent of rock-face is to us absolute waste, and must in all circumstances be waste. And if we take the geologist into our confidence, he will explain why such cliffs are impossible. He may even be induced to write a book about mountain structure, as it affects the climber rather than the lover of scenery.

But whether he does this or not, he has given us beautiful coloured maps of the mountainous districts. The colours themselves do not matter so much to us. I have seen a pinnacle of conglomerate which was indistinguishable to the eye from a granite aiguille. It is their disposition that matters. The monochrome map, though tinted in the brightest of red, is not encouraging to the searcher for new climbs, unless the violent dip of the strata indicates that the rock-faces may lie at a favourable angle. For where the rock has been left too much undisturbed, it develops a fatal habit of splitting in vertical planes, while the flat hill-top tends to become a reservoir for the undue watering of the climber.

The unwise writer, flying in the face of experience, has been studying these vices in the Comeragh Mountains. There Coumshingaun sinks through a thousand feet of level strata of conglomerate. The joint planes are all vertical, and though on a smaller scale the beds would provide the climber with a series of highly sporting pitches; yet where they reach a thickness of a couple of hundred feet the average man will be driven to subaqueous gardening in a greasy gully, and thank his stars if such exists.

And so with the huge mass of granite in the County Wicklow. The several impressive crags in which it is exposed have yielded only one climb, and that hovers on the border of the justifiable. We do not, in fact, unless we have the prehensility of an octopus, climb on granite, gabbro, or massive

sandstone or limestone, developed on a large scale. Clogwyn yr Ddysgyl is made possible by an obsidian traverse half-way up, and the greater faces of the Cuillin are ascended by a liberal use of trap dykes.

But the geological map, which is striped and spotted, which shows a mountain to have suffered severe crushing and compound fracture, with a liberal injection of those rocks which are indicated by such jolly red lines, makes one pull the decanter towards one's chair and shout "Eureka." For it is the structure that matters: though we wriggle up the rugosities of augen-gneiss or conglomerate; though we test the coefficient of friction between tweed and trachyte; though we cramp our toes in the crannies of quartzite or obsidian; though the angle of climbability vary with the texture of the rock, and the vegetation with its chemical composition; it is the hidden forces within the mountain which have determined whether it shall present the sheer impossibility of the Wetterhorn precipice, the elusive boulder problems of Grey Matilda, or the many-pathed playground of Lliwedd.

The perfect mountains have, however, all been discovered, and our new finds will be non-mountain climbs; less satisfactory in the result, if no less strenuous in the achievement, but not to be judged too harshly. If they seem of somewhat eclectic character, with what labour do we not stick to the proper climb on Tryfaen? If their vertical walls are only accessible by somewhat dirty gullies, have we not also nursed grass-tufts on Lliwedd like a rotten snow-bridge? Grass on a crag is, indeed, matter out of place, but if ever I should discover a face which was all right but for grass, I should console myself with the thought that many of our most popular Welsh climbs were pioneered with agricultural implements.

This, the thoughtful reader will guess to be a preliminary to retracting part of my share of the article on Irish Mountaineering in the last Journal. I hope it may be so. The true estimate of a new climb lies half-way between the scoff of the onlooker and the enthusiasm of the discoverer, and, though an onlooker, I wish to say nothing which will prevent a new Age of Discovery from bursting with its records the covers of the Bulletin.

## CONCERNING THE ADMISSION OF HILL-WALKERS.

BY CLAUDE E. BENSON.

“Men with their mind on a rational basis  
Walk on the road as I'm sure that they should.”

THIS is not a pæan of revolt inspired by Mr. Hilton Young's “Counterblast to the Perpendicular.” Greatly though that article delighted me, I continue to regard a plain in nature much as I do a “flat” amongst my fellow-creatures—something weary, stale, and unprofitable.

Between the plain and the perpendicular there are, however, many gradations. Mr. Godley I have quoted at the beginning of this paper, and I cannot do better than quote him again:

“Though the hand of Time be heavy : though your ancient comrades  
fail :

Though the mountains you ascended be accessible by rail :  
Though your nerve begin to weaken, and you're gouty grown and fat,  
And prefer to walk in places which are reasonably flat.”

And in the next three lines he goes on to indicate that the Little Scheideck and the Gorner Grat come within the category of reasonably flat places.

To those who love such reasonably flat places, but are shy of the perpendicular, the decision of the General Meeting of 1910 should have afforded deep gratification. The “bond of union” amongst mountain-lovers, which was supposed to insist that a rock-climbing qualification was essential to admission to the Climbers' Club, was relaxed, and hill-walkers were thenceforth eligible. There are many and many mountain pilgrims whose affection and reverence for the hills is no whit inferior to the Fighting Brigade's, but who nevertheless do not care to climb, in the specialised \* sense of the word, and

---

\* The ascent of such precipices that the normal person only attempts in nightmares. (“F. and R.C. Journal,” vol. i., p. 52.)

their admission to the club should do nothing but good. There are many and excellent reasons why men should climb ; we hear them annually, after the Dinner ; also there are a good many why men should not. "A soldier married is a soldier marred," and a man who has given hostages to fortune can hardly be expected to "court suicide, his life within his hand," with the same airy light-heartedness as if he were irresponsible—more especially if the hostage-in-chief should be of a nervous disposition.

For the juniors there is often the Shadow of the Parent. "Mountaineering by skilled mountaineers" to quote an old *Cornhill* (republished in "Peaks and Pleasant Pastures," Claude Schuster) "is about as dangerous as hunting in a fair country, and requires about as much pluck as to cross from the Temple to the Law Courts at mid-day." (N.B.—This was written before the days of motors.) In spite, however, of the assurance of the A.C. expert, many persist in believing that the climber has "oak and triple brass round his chest," and would regard such an exploit as the storming of Badajoz as a mere holiday romp compared with his pastime, and, as the Breach of Badajoz would not generally enjoy high repute as a health resort, they are chary of their children climbing. Even when permission is reluctantly given, there are few more cheerful send-offs than a tearful entreaty to get yourself insured at an Accident Company. The "peasant's last good-night" is feeble in comparison.

In very many cases, however, temperament is the responsible factor. I have not the pleasure of knowing Mr. H. S. Salt, but I should judge from his works that affection for the mountains is dominant in his nature, and that enthusiasm for rock-work is not. That is my impression. I may be wrong ; but with regard to my friend, the late Mr. Baddeley, who, incidentally, was a member of the Climbers' Club, there is no possibility of mistake. His devotion to and reverence for the great world's altar stairs was unbounded ; the name of rock-climbing was to him anathema. He used to tell me some home-truths about my intelligence, which I daresay were applicable to any other pursuit or habit of

mine except rock-climbing. On that point I continue to differ.

I recollect once, after the Annual Dinner of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, in one of the customary you-scratch-my-back-I'll-scratch-yours-what-fine-fellows-we-all-are speeches, a notable guest saying that he admired the Ramblers most because they were ramblers first and climbers afterwards. There was enthusiastic applause, but I very much question whether each individual would have been quite pleased if such a compliment had been applied to himself before dinner. All the same, I am not certain that the notable guest was not right.

Nevertheless, mountain pilgrims who are admitted should remember that the Climbers' Club is primarily a climbing club, and should endeavour to justify their membership. It may be consoling to reflect that Doctor Baker has written that plodding up a steep mountain side is enormously more fatiguing than rock-climbing. That is as may be, but it must be remembered that on a steep mountain side one can sit down and rest almost anywhere, and that almost anywhere on a rock-climb such a proceeding would be attended by most inconvenient results, especially if adopted by the leader. If one belongs to a club one ought certainly to try to promote its objects.

Not many years ago Mr. Oppenheimer fired our blood by the announcement of the existence of a new field of climbing near Buttermere, and since then our brothers of the Fell and Rock have been doing good work in Lakeland, and have been abundantly rewarded. Quite recently the late Mr. Archer Thomson has, I think I am justified in saying, electrified us by his magnificent discoveries and exploits in North Wales. To the mind on a rational basis the question naturally suggests itself: How is it that these crags were not, at any rate, tackled years ago? If tackled, their existence ought to have been published. Any reticence with regard to a new playground indicates either negligence or selfishness wholly unworthy of the spirit of mountaineering.

Quoting by memory from a speech of Mr. C. E. Mathews, I think our first President once observed that we are most of us hard worked, some of us overworked, for the greater part

of the year. It is only to be expected, then, that the climber, when he escapes for a brief holiday, should make a bee-line for a place where he is certain, weather permitting, of getting a run for his money. It is here that the non-climbing member comes in. He can explore and report, and may perhaps earn the gratitude of generations, born and unborn. If I had, for instance, discovered Craig yr Ysfa I should "strike the stars with my sublime head."

I made the attempt this year. I went on a complete round of the hills between the Carneddys and Llanfairfechan in high hope, but did not pick up a bit of climbing worth the name. All I got was a long grind, a rare ducking, and a most unpleasant time with a beast of a hawk, which, I suppose, had its disgusting offspring somewhere handy, in the broken crags above Cwm Dulyn. All the same, I had a grand ramble, and came back feeling much fitter than when I started.

Such disappointments have abundant compensations. Others have few. There exist certain nameless climbs which time and again I have attempted to persuade certain nameless persons to visit with me. I seem to think I have written somewhere or other, at some time, about them. All was of no avail. They were much too much for me to tackle single handed—one, in fact, I believe remains impregnable in its upper storey—and the consequence is that the laurels which should have adorned my more or less venerable pate have been wrested from me by the new generation—good luck to them!—and garland other brows. The compensation for such disappointments is distinctly altruistic.

The pilgrim may quite possibly feel want of confidence in his own ability to judge a climb when he sees one. It would be a disappointment, without any compensation at all, to trot off a party of clubmates to a new discovery and find one had let them down. He must be educated. Of course, the obvious curriculum is to take him up a climb. Equally, of course, the result would almost certainly be to make a climber of him, and send him into the sheep-trod of graduates. No! If he cannot find a tutor, he ought to accompany men to the crags, forbear climbing, ask questions, digest answers, and then, if he has eyes in his head to see and a camera on his

back to convince withal, he ought not to be afraid of announcing a new discovery. Not that he is safe, even then. I know of a nameless man who induced certain nameless ones to accompany him to a nameless climb. The earlier pitches were all that could be desired, so was the finish, but as for the middle portion, which no amount of skill could have analysed, Kinglake, in his account of Inkerman, speaks of a much be-damned French regiment. That climber resembled that regiment.

## SOME NOTES ON THE MANIFOLD VALLEY, STAFFORDSHIRE.

BY F. A. WINDER.

OF the many thousands of tourists who annually visit the well-known valley of the Dove, or Dovedale, as it is called, probably not 1 per cent. have even heard of the existence of its sister valley, the Manifold. This runs, roughly speaking, parallel to the Dove for some miles, and then, converging, joins forces at Ilam, one of the most beautiful spots in the neighbourhood.

There are several ways of reaching the Manifold Valley. From Buxton the easiest is to take the High Peak Railway to Hartington Station, and drive thence through Hartington to Hulme End, where the terminus of the Leek and Manifold Light Railway is situated.

This line (which is of narrow gauge, and reminds one affectionately of the trains purchased in childhood's days, packed in cardboard boxes) runs down the Manifold Valley as far as Beeston Tor, and then turns off to Sparrow Lee and Waterhouses. At the latter place the narrow gauge ends, and passengers are transferred to the adjoining line, which connects up with the North Staffordshire Railway. This company also exercises control of the light railway, and many of us are indebted to the courtesy of its officials for facilities when staying in the valley.

In following the line from Hulme End the first place passed of any importance is Ecton, once famous for its copper mines, which are now shut down.

The records of these workings date back many centuries, and are evidence of the fluctuations which always attend mining ventures. Amongst some of the earlier attempts to work them is recorded that of Prince Rupert, but his specula-





*Photo]*

**Entrance to Beeston Tor Cave.**

[F. A. WINDER.



tion does not appear to have been very profitable. It is of interest, however, as marking the first time gunpowder was employed in England for blasting purposes. This was done by some German miners brought over to England for the work by the Prince. Early in the eighteenth century a company was formed, which, although unsuccessful at first, afterwards struck a very rich vein.

Their lease was not renewed, the mines being then worked by the Duke of Devonshire, who, it is said, built the Crescent at Buxton with the profits of one year's work.

Owing to their great age and historic interest, exploration of the older workings would most certainly have given valuable results, but unfortunately this is one of the very few cases where special circumstances have rendered it impossible to obtain permission.

Leaving Ecton, the line follows the course of the river, passes Butterton, and, after another two miles, reaches Wetton Mill.

This place is of interest to those who inquire into underground matters, for it is here that the Manifold "sinks" or disappears underground, to reappear at Ilam, five miles lower down the valley.

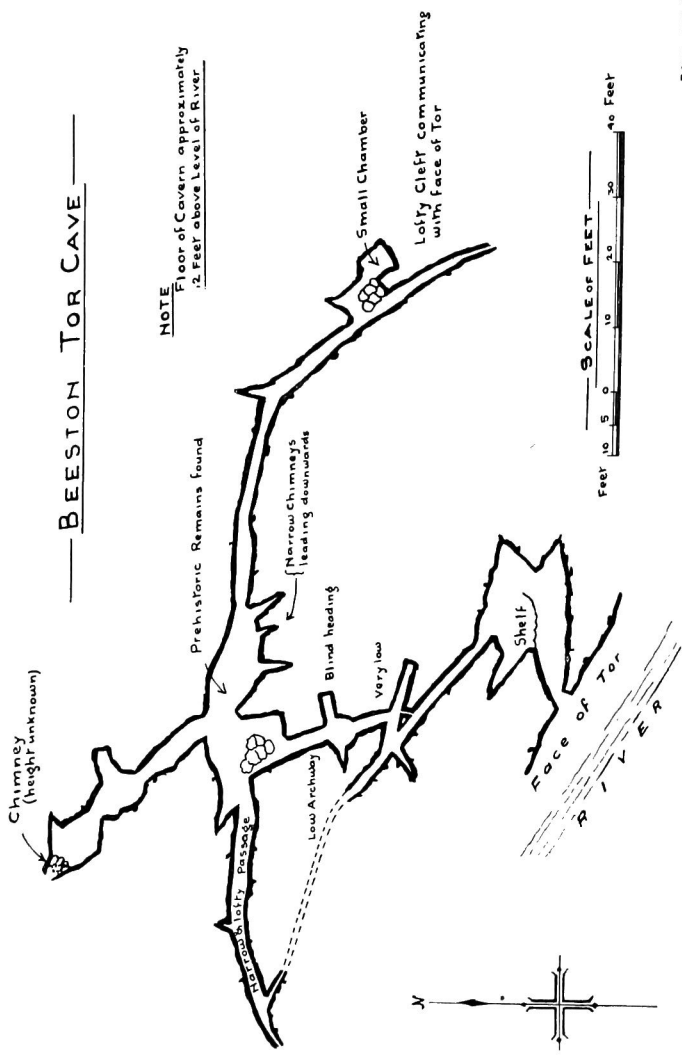
Until comparatively few years ago the river appeared to be of an ordinary character, but, then, owing to the tapping of underground passages, the water disappeared for a period, and has done so every dry season since with unfortunate regularity.

None of the "sinks" are of sufficient size to follow, and though large sums have been spent in concreting the bed of the river, the results have not been of a very satisfactory character.

It is evident that the subterranean channels are not of a consistently large size, for during the winter and at times of heavy rain the stream rises in its natural bed, proving that the underground passages can only cope with a certain volume of water.

The "sinks" are not confined to one area, but are spread down the river, the largest being the ones near Wetton Mill and that opposite the large rock known as Beeston Tor, at the junction of the Rivers Hamps and Manifold.

# BEESTON TOR CAVE



**NOTE**  
 Floor of Cavern approximately  
 2 Feet above level of River



EA. WILKINS ESQ.  
 1911. SHEFFIELD.

Beeston Tor Cave

To reach the latter place from Wetton Mill the line must be followed past Thor's Cave Station, the cave being famous as the one in which Mr. Carrington, the local antiquarian, carried on important researches in the sixties. Though not of large size, the entrance to Thor's Cave is very imposing, situated as it is on the hillside 250 feet above the river, and facing up the valley. From the investigations made, the cavern must have been inhabited for long periods in pre-historic times, and it is probable that even yet further discoveries could be made by systematic excavation.

Beeston Tor may be considered as the best centre in the valley for exploration work, and some of us have spent much time working from there in the hope of forcing some of the channels of the Manifold.

Unfortunately, as previously mentioned, the "sinks" are too narrow to admit even the slimmest of explorers, and the river and railway line are in too close proximity to allow the use of dynamite. The bed of the stream is, however, always changing, and at any time a heavy spate may open out a way to the caverns which, in ordinary probability, exist beneath the surface.

If that work is closed for the present, there is plenty to do in the neighbourhood, as two of us found when spending a few days there at the New Year of 1909.

The object of our visit was to excavate in St. Bertram's Cave, situated under Beeston Tor, for evidence of early occupation.

Mr. Holmes, a fellow-member of the Derbyshire Pennine Club, had previously done so with marked success, and it was now intended to make a more systematic search.

This investigation has already been described by Mr. Holmes in *THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL* for June, 1909, but a short description, treating the work in a non-scientific manner, may not be out of place.

To commence with, it must be mentioned that the party should have been a much larger one, but a hard frost, snow, and the chance of having to camp in a barn caused several would-be starters to reconsider the conflicting claims of discretion and valour.

My companion (J. W. Puttrell) and I slept at Buxton on the Wednesday night, and next morning, with Mr. Holmes, went forward *via* Hartington and Hulme End to Beeston Tor.

We arrived just in time to witness a rather imposing spectacle. The ice on the frozen river had been "banking up" for several days, and as we got to the edge the jam burst, sending a wall of ice some six feet high racing down the river.

Our appreciation of this dramatic spectacle was somewhat damped when we found that we should have to cross the flooded stream on a couple of scaffold poles, the bridge suffering from a temporary indisposition.

Mr. Holmes introduced us to Mr. Wood at the farm, who was putting us up for the time being, and we found some comfortable bunks of hay and blankets rigged up for us in a large refreshment-room. They were very short of accommodation at the farm, so could not provide bedrooms, but they were able to feed us from the homestead. We had changed at Buxton ready for the cave, so, after a second breakfast, we crossed the improvised bridge and reached the cavern about eleven o'clock.

It is entered by a narrow traverse just above flood level of the river, a scramble through a V-shaped cleft bringing one to the first chamber. The floor is of mud and pebbles, and leads one to believe that at some date it must have coincided with the level of the stream-bed, thus giving a vague idea of the age of any deposit found there.

From this chamber a narrow cleft breaks back parallel to the face of the Tor, then turns sharply to the right, then to the left, and a crawl under a low arch brings one to the cave proper.

This is small, being only twelve feet wide, and from it branch various passages. Some of these are very lofty, a very narrow chimney allowing one to climb to a height of eighty feet. By using the writer's head as a seat and his fingers as footholds, Puttrell climbed practically to the top of it, and there found signs of outside life in the shape of some bones of birds and the leg-bone of a lamb. There was a strong upward draught, and it looked as if there were communication

with one of the upper holes in the rock, in which jackdaws and other birds nest.

We spent the whole of the first day in digging, and at a depth of about two feet came across the blackened soil and charcoal which denote the ancient hearths. Amongst this material we found numerous broken bones, pointing apparently to the fact that, even in those unenlightened days, the fire-back formed a convenient receptacle for rubbish. Once or twice we found bits of broken pots, and the delight of my companions made me wish that someone had planted for them a few broken flower-pots or similar treasures. Mr. Holmes left us that night, and we spent the following days in continuing the programme, except for a short interval utilised for the scramble up the cleft mentioned previously.

By the end of the third day I must confess that one member of the party had had enough. There are few more exciting experiences than following a cavern when the end is an unknown quantity, and there are few occupations less exciting than rooting up a mud floor when there is nothing to be found.

We returned to Sheffield, and it was not until the following summer that I again visited the valley, with Sissons as my companion. This time it was frankly a voyage of discovery, with digging strictly barred, and we spent a most interesting time following the old levels which abound in the hillsides above the river.

In one of these we found a tin box containing an addressed postcard, and a request that it might be forwarded by the finder, with the date of discovery. On returning home, Sissons did this, and received a letter stating that the box had been deposited nine months previously. In several of these drifts cave-pearls abound, and in one of the levels the far end swarmed with bats. They hung in clusters from the roof, and reminded one of an incident during the exploration of the Jug Hole, when a climber tried to use a dormant bat as a hand-hold, and his yell of surprise when it slid from beneath his fingers.

There is one old level, known as the Water Hole, which is said to penetrate two miles into the hillside and to contain a

river of terrible depth. We hoped for some excitement from this fascinating place, but were disappointed to find the total length under a mile, and the "river," although very muddy, only nine inches deep.

On the other side of the valley there are small natural caverns, one of which, for a most convincing reason, was left unexplored. We were strolling along above the river, and noticed a natural arch partially blocked with stones. These we moved, and then started to crawl in to see what was inside. Mr. Wood's eldest son was out with us at the time, but had stopped to mend a hole in a fence, and consequently did not come up until I was well down the passage. Sissons was following, and his feet were just disappearing when our guide arrived, and I heard the following conversation:—

"That you, Mr. Sissons?"

"Yes."

"Where's Mr. Winder?"

"Down the hole, in front of me."

"Well, tell him to go carefully; there's a vixen and cubs at the far end."

I fancy my exit from that cave created a record.

Whilst on this visit we walked over to Throwley Hall, and heard rumours of a secret passage said to exist between the Hall and the ruins of a monastery near to.

The Hall must have been a glorious place in its time, and has an historic interest as being one of the places garrisoned by Cromwell during the civil wars.

It is now absolutely in ruins, and reduced to the remains of one small wing, much of the material having been carted away for building purposes.

It looked a most likely place for a secret passage, according to conventional ideas, and when we heard of a mysterious hole half a mile away, and just where the passage was said to be, the matter appeared worth investigating.

Taking a couple of sixty-foot ropes, we walked over and viewed the place. It was not large, perhaps three feet across, and ran down nearly vertically. Nothing could be seen, except that the size increased below the surface, so a flare was made of greased paper and thrown down. Two white forms



appeared on a ledge about fifteen feet below, and inquiries elicited the information that a couple of dead sheep had been thrown down some weeks previously. We decided to postpone operations.

There was, however, a strong desire in the district to know what was at the bottom, so arrangements were made for a load of quicklime to be tipped down, no more burials to take place, and an exploration to be carried out on our next visit. This occurred a few months later, when we were walking through the valley, and might have ended rather disastrously. The place looked all right, and, as usual, the spin of a coin decided "the first man down." I won (or lost), and went down on a rope to where the sheep had been.

From here the passage doubled back, and sloped downwards very steeply, so Sissons came down to me. He was on the other end of my rope, with a second loose end from the surface. There was no room to change places, but I could take him from where I stood, and he led down the second pitch. It was more like a slide than a climb, and he came to a halt twenty feet lower. I followed, for the place, once tested, was safe without a rope, and as I went down I heard him coughing violently. Then I started to cough, and realised the reason. The lime and the flesh of the dead animals had formed an impalpable dust, which, disturbed by our passage, was catching throat and lungs, nearly choking us.

We stayed long enough to make sure that the place was a mass of loose blocks, with absolutely no through route, and then got out somehow.

The contents of a flask which happened to be in our possession, together with the fresh air, put matters right, but it is a place neither of us would care to try and force again.

What the cavity really is it would be difficult to say. The passage is evidently of natural formation, but does not appear to be a water-course, and the condition of the bottom portion points more to a settlement underneath, causing a fall of blocks, which now form the floor. It is within the bounds of probability that a passage has been excavated from Throwley, which, passing underneath this spot, caused a fall, allowing drainage from the surface to complete the work by washing

the dirt from the chinks in the limestone. This, however, is purely a matter of conjecture.

The incidents mentioned in this paper have barely touched the fringe of the underground work to be done in the valley.

The hillsides are riddled with shafts and workings, any of which, if opened, might point the way to work of a most interesting character. They are all worth exploring, preferably by a party who can make the district their headquarters for a stay of some duration ; and it is to be hoped that later investigations may result in finds equal in interest to those at Thor's Cave.

## IN MEMORIAM.

---

J. M. ARCHER THOMSON.

BY PROFESSOR ORTON.

OF the losses which the Cambrian section of the Climbers' Club has suffered this year, none will be felt more than that of J. M. Archer Thomson, the "Captain" of the small group with whom he usually climbed.

James Merriman Archer Thomson, son of the Rev James Thomson, late Senior Classical Master at Christ's Hospital, was born in 1863. He was educated at Aldenham School and at Clare College, where he held an Exhibition for Classics, graduating in the Classical Tripos. He was Captain of the Football Club, and also represented his College in Lawn Tennis. He was something more than a good skater, quite the best in his time in North Wales. He was in the habit of skating on the mountain lakes, and it is told of him that on one occasion his skating on Sunday led to his being stoned by quarrymen, who took offence at such exercise on the Sabbath, but, becoming fascinated by his skill, dropped their stones in order to applaud.

He came directly to Wales from Cambridge, as a Master at Friar's School, Bangor, in 1884. In January, 1896, he was appointed Head Master of Llandudno County School, a post which he held until his death.

It is very remarkable that, in spite of his general athletic excellence, his exceptional aptitude for climbing, and his delight in mountains, he had lived in Bangor for ten years before he made his first attempts on the Cymric crags, a delay which he has been heard in recent years to regret. His attention was originally directed to the possibilities of rock-climbing by his friendship with two men (H. Hughes and H. Edwards), whose interest in the sport had already been

aroused. In 1894, when the three made their first attempts, only twelve climbs had been made in the mountains of Arvon. The three friends learnt their climbing whilst making original explorations. To this period belong the first ascents of the gullies of the Glyder Fawr and Glyder Fach and Clogwyn Du, the Tryfan Buttresses, South and Central, and two routes—the third and fourth to be discovered (the Intermediate and Bilberry Terrace)—on the west peak of Lliwedd, besides the forcing of the Devil's Kitchen over ice and snow in March, 1895. Moreover, much exploration of the mountain faces of the Crib Goch and Crib y Ddysgl, Cynr Las, and the Ysgolion Duon was carried out. The ardour of this party of beginners, of which Thomson soon emerged as the leader, recognised no limitations of season, weather, or daylight. Leaving Bangor at midday on Saturday, they aimed at climbing during the late afternoon or evening. After spending the next day on the crags, they walked back to Bangor from Pen-y-gwryd or from Ogwen during Sunday night. The fourteen new climbs which were added before the end of 1895, when Thomson left Bangor, appear all to have been discovered on Sundays.

Thomson's career as a climber entered now on a new phase. He met, first at Pen-y-gwryd, mountaineers of great experience, and thus he learnt at first hand the proper craft of the rock climber. He has often acknowledged to the writer of these lines the debt he owed in particular to one instructor. The forcing in 1900 of the Great Gully of the Craig-yr-Ysfa, a precipice which he only discovered by chance on the previous day, perhaps marks the end of his novitiate and the close of the "Gully Epoch." The first ascent (Route 1) of the East Peak of Lliwedd, which was made with Mr. Oscar Eckenstein, in April, 1903, materially changed Thomson's view of what was feasible on steep rocks. He had long believed in the inviolability of the eastern section of this precipice, and was only convinced that ascent was possible after viewing it with its ledges emphasised by snow from Crib Goch. The next few years were mainly devoted to the exploration of Lliwedd, generally in company with A. E. Elias or E. S. Reynolds. What are, perhaps, his two most

original routes, the Girdle Traverse of Lliwedd and the Avalanche Route (East Peak), were the outcome of this prolonged study of the mountain.

Thomson's meeting, in 1907, with the late H. O. Jones, who was taken out by him on his first serious climbs, may be regarded as the beginning of another phase.

These two men formed an ideal combination. Thomson's large experience of the actual rock and great technical skill, when fortified by Jones's decisive judgment and keen observation, led to some remarkable additions to the Cambrian climbs. The Creigiau Gleision, so named by Jones, on the Ogwen side of the range were explored in 1910. The Clogwyn yr Ddysgl, one of the walls of Cwm Glas, was first climbed by Thomson in 1902, when two lines of ascent were marked out. On this fine precipice four new climbs, one of them of high merit, the Gambit Route, were discovered in September, 1910. During the next year the crags which have Quellyn for a centre were explored; much excellent climbing was found on the Craig Cwm Du, the north face of the Mynedd Mawr, and on the Llechog ridge of Snowdon. In the same year Thomson and Jones paid a short visit to the Coolin, and made a number of very notable first ascents. By Thomson the mountaineering of that twelve months was held to be the best of his life. To the fascination of exploration, to which he was particularly susceptible, was added the consciousness that he could climb as well, or even better, than at any previous time.

In the Easter vacation of this year the pair climbed together in the Quellyn district for the last time.

Thomson's manner on the rocks had some distinctive characteristics. From his very first attempts he had always "led"; the independence of his movements, when in the second place, were disconcerting to a professional Alpine guide. He was not accustomed to take into account another's method in essaying any given step, a procedure which did not tend to speed.

He never had even a slight accident, although on one occasion he had a narrow escape. On his first visit to the Ysgolion Duon, in 1895, he descended the Western Gully,

which had not been climbed. About 130 feet of rope had been run out; Thomson was attempting to get somewhat further down, when he slipped off; but he managed to catch the end of the rope to which he was not tied. His strong conviction that the investigation of a climb from above was not the game—"experiments with ropes and reliance on retentiveness of memory," as he has written—may not be unconnected with this incident. He lost interest in a climb which had been so made, and would not repeat it. He held that such a method imposed on a second party a harder task than faced the first.

He disliked climbing with untried people, possibly the result of an unpleasant experience. He inquired precisely into the capacity of anyone who might be suggested as a companion on a new route. On hearing of the performance of some parties somewhat unequally composed, he remarked that some men would take risks that he would not. The daring or courage of rock-climbers is not easy to measure; "on sound rock the risk varies only with the capability of the individual."

Thomson's three attempts on the Slanting Gully (Lliwedd) before the rock fall which made ascent possible, in the winter after Mitchell's accident (1894), should be evidence of daring. In his final attempt he got somewhat further up the slab than the hold reached by Mitchell. But he had the greatest difficulty in retreating, spending more than two hours on the slab.

His experience on Welsh rock had led him for many years to discard side-nails, but in the last twelve months he had begun to use them again. His boots were studded and nailed by himself with great precision, probably with a view to the idiosyncrasies of Lliwedd. He made very little use of his knees, and hence wore no additional protection.

Thomson was not a prolific writer. He contributed some twelve papers to this journal and one to the Alpine Club and to the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journals, in the two latter describing his climbs on the Coolin. In earlier days a book of Cambrian climbs was planned and several chapters were written; but, as is shown by a letter still extant, his

sense that the mountains deserve appropriate literary treatment, and should not merely act as pegs whereon to hang stories of rollicking adventures, led him to give up the task. The two books which he wrote, several years later, for the Editorial Committee of the Climbers' Club, "The Climbs on Lliwedd," with A. W. Andrews (1909), and "Climbing in the Ogwen District" (1910), have been universally judged as of outstanding quality. As concise and accurate guides to climbs they are unsurpassed, although the details of topography did not come easily to him. His writings have a highly individualised style. His phrasing arrests attention; his descriptive expressions remain in the memory. His sentences are suggestive rather than explanatory, and bring the reader to the clearer, cleaner atmosphere of the mountains. At times a cryptic sentence may puzzle one who wishes to read at a glance. He often falls back on a classical quotation to attain a subtle distinction or fuller meaning. It has been suggested that the rhythm of his writings was an echo of his gait, which was highly characteristic. He took great pains to find appropriate names for new climbs and for the prominent "sancta" of the crags. The Welsh place-names of the mountains and cwms interested him. His suggestion that the name "Glydr" is merely a Welsh spelling of the local English "glider" has been confirmed by the discovery that the mountains did not bear that name a century and a half ago.

Thomson was one of the original members of the Climbers' Club, and served on its Committee and as Vice-President. He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1900, and visited the Alps regularly every summer, frequently as a member of guideless parties; but the journal of the Club contains little record of his doings.

During the last few years Thomson was the leader of a small party, which he and Jones gathered together at Easter, Whitsun, and in September, mainly with the object of developing new climbs. His fascinating if elusive personality exercised much the same attraction over this party as on the assistant masters and boys, whom he would occasionally take for a day's climbing on a Tryfan buttress or gully; in his leadership there was nothing which suggested the school-

master. He was reticent, and belonged to the more silent half of humanity ; rarely anecdotal himself, he was always a sympathetic and stimulating listener, endowed with the faculty of bringing out the conversational powers of others. The real Thomson was perhaps only seen on some summit or ledge reached after a severe effort by a new and delectable route, when he "rejoiced in an environment of boldly sculptured crags, and inhaled the influences of rare and beautiful mountain scenery." Then one saw how largely in the "element of romance," of "the glory and gloom of the mountains," lay the attraction.

---

He was among the originators of the modern school of rock-climbing in Britain. Beginning as a walker and explorer of the hills round his home, he was one of the first to shake off the early tradition of "the line of least resistance." At a later stage he led the escape from the "gully epoch" that so long maintained in both England and Wales, and headed the venture on to the ridges and steep slabs. Adapting his style to the Snowdon cliffs, he evolved the somewhat specialised type of climbing which has been principally responsible for the extraordinary advance made in the standard of difficulty during recent years ; the slow controlled movements, depending on a fine balance rather than grip, and identical in pace and security upon easy crags or on the hardest passages. To follow him on a climb was an education in itself ; and a rare privilege, for he shunned any form of acknowledgment, and only recently and unwillingly came to believe that anybody but himself could be really interested in the British mountains or in his achievements upon them.

It would be impossible to enumerate his explorations. They include practically every first ascent of importance made in North Wales during the last two decades. And it is worthy of more than passing mention, as a record of unrivalled athletic performance, that, in spite of the immense advance made in the standard of rock climbing, especially during the last ten years, he remained to the end admittedly among the finest, if not the finest, as well as the most imaginative crags-



man of his time, with whom younger men might be compared, but whom none could be said to surpass.

The Alps he visited frequently, and made many guideless ascents, but his specialised style allowed him less scope for original work in their larger field. Perhaps the most remarkable illustration of what can be accomplished by the perfecting and adaptation of a climbing technique might be discovered in his last season in the Alps, when, at a time when he was already approaching his fiftieth year, he made some ascents, including two crossings of the Matterhorn in three days, with Josef Knubel and H. O. Jones, and was so much impressed by the possibility of combining speed with climbing grace and security, that, when he subsequently led a notable series of first ascents in Skye, he was able to alter his whole tradition, and climbed at a pace, and with a finish and safety that his companions maintain they have never seen approached upon difficult rock.

J. M. A. T. was more than the most consistent rock-climber of his time. He was a man of wide and cultivated interests, and, as his writing revealed, of considerable literary gifts. He was familiar with every legend that related to his peculiar hills; he perfected his climbing skill primarily as a means to reach the most intimate recesses, and he loved every stone, bird and flower with an artistic absorption as silent as it was profound. Its presence was only discoverable in the sudden lightening of his eyes at some sympathetic reference to his beloved precipices and valleys. Many of us knew him only as a recluse and a poet, a romantic and occasional appearance, with an unrivalled skill in performance and a generous sympathy and store of knowledge always ready for younger climbers. He led the era of exploration in North Wales from start to finish, and he did not long survive its completion. It is difficult to imagine the district without his presence or without the opportunity of reference to his appreciative judgment. For a number of us the cliffs of Snowdon, and more especially the incomparable precipices of Lliwedd, of which he knew every ledge and cranny, will be haunted, and almost consecrated, by the memory of a figure, solitary and smoking, crouched on some picturesque and inaccessible shelf, or moving

with extraordinary lightness of foot along the screes, the grey curls drifting from the Rossetti-like head, or, most characteristic of all, leaning easily outward, with half his body free, in the middle of some gaunt and holdless slab, his feet and knees attached to the rock on some principle of balance all his own, and gazing upward with a smiling intentness that seemed half critical examination and half remote and contemplative pleasure.

G. W. Y.

[This notice was originally written for the *Alpine Journal*, in which it will appear in due course. For permission to quote it the Editor is much indebted to the Editor of the *Alpine Journal*. The following notice is also in part the same as one written for the *Alpine Journal*.]

### HUMPHREY OWEN JONES.

SOME losses are irremediable. It was only after his death that some of us learned what a world-wide reputation H. O. Jones possessed as a scientist. He has been described as among the greatest, if not the greatest, of the chemists whom England has produced. Those of us who were in touch with Cambridge knew of his commanding reputation as a teacher and as a research student, as well of something of his manifold activities, both in his College and on behalf of his University. The munificent tributes which are now being offered to his memory by a number of the most influential firms and business corporations have come as an overwhelming additional evidence of the value placed, not only upon his training, but also upon his judgment of the students in his charge. He filled the rare double part of a great educator who was also in touch with the outside world and with all spheres of practical life. In this, as in his other capacities, he spared no time or labour, and threw himself with equal energy and tact into the large question of the adjustment of the whole relation of the University to the London educational system, and into the smaller but no less exacting problems of the administration of the Donald Robertson Fund, a trust established to send a number of undergraduates annually for a holiday to the mountains.

Those who have read his mountaineering record will have realised what his loss meant to mountaineering; but possibly only those who worked with him in the practical administra-



*Photo*]

**H. O. Jones.**

[G. W. Young.



tion of our Club can fully measure all that his enthusiasm and profound interest in its welfare might have meant for it in the future, and the extent of the loss incurred in his early death.

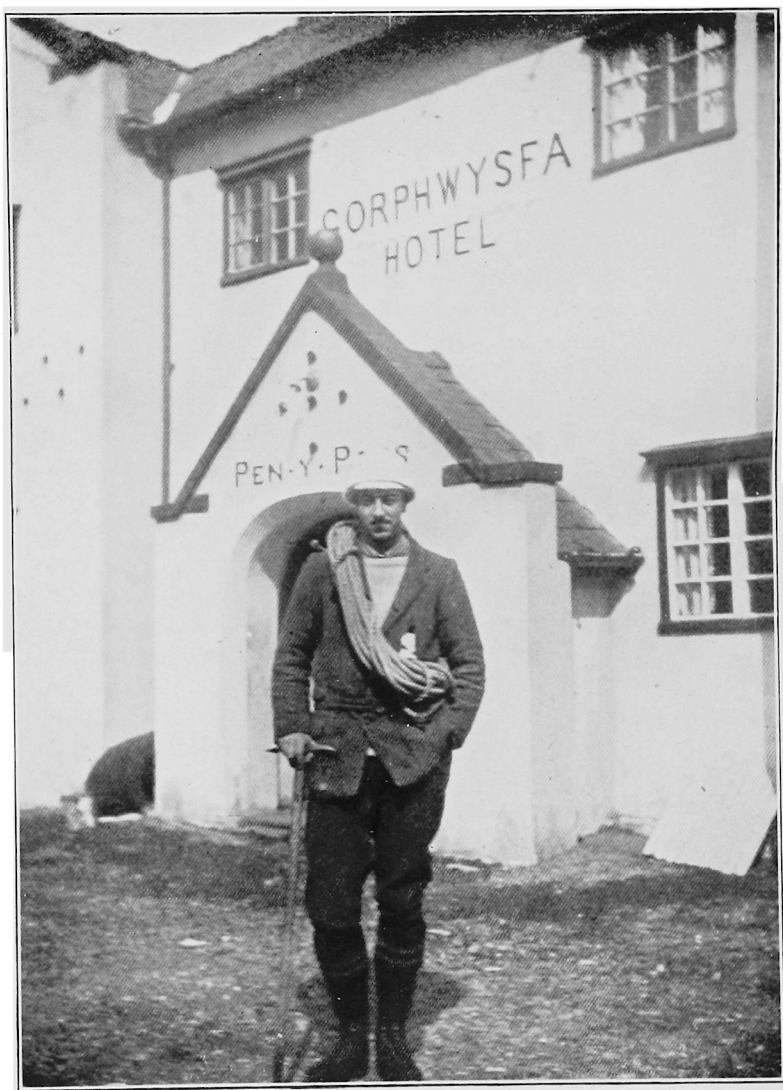
His mountaineering qualification was unique in character. He was what might be termed a mountaineer by intellect and by force of personality. Commencing his climbing somewhat late, he set himself, with the thoroughness of a highly trained mind and the enthusiasm of a Celtic nature, to master every detail and aspect of mountaineering, and in the space of only a few seasons had won his way, by force of sheer intellect, helped by remarkable powers of endurance, technical skill, and an inexhaustible vitality, into the very front rank of mountaineers. His first season or so in the Alps was without special distinction. It was primarily in his own mountains of Wales that he discovered his peculiar powers, and took up the study of mountains and climbing as a science. He is responsible for much original exploration on the Welsh cliffs, and was the leader on what is now considered the severest of all the great Lliwedd climbs, the "Paradise Route." With J. M. Archer Thomson, whose death only preceded his own by a few weeks, he practically discovered and explored the great Clogwyn y Ddysgl cliffs, those also on Craigiau Gleision, on Llechog, and elsewhere. He combined a fine gift for exploration and discovery with a masterly and improving technique and an indefatigable courage in execution. His enthusiasm and appreciation of every form of beauty had much in it of the artist, and even something of the poet; but he never allowed his critical and highly trained judgment to be affected by his love of adventure, and he treated every detail that could make for the success of an expedition with the utmost seriousness. His sense of humour held the balance between the two extremes, and without a moment's lessening of his concentration he could enjoy a laugh, with himself, at his own devotion and absorption.

The Alps offered a wide field for his many-sided enthusiasm. With the Italian face of Mont Blanc his name will always be associated. From 1908 until the year of his death he spent his vacation time, with an occasional excursus on to the Chamonix Aiguilles or the Zermatt peaks, in this region of

fascinating exploration. Of his climbs, most of them new, full notes have already appeared. In 1907 he climbed the little Dru, the Charmoz, etc.; in 1908, the Aig. de la Brenva, the Aig. Noire de Peuteret, and a long exploration of the Brouillard Ridge of Mont Blanc, including a guideless ascent of the Col Emil Rey. In 1909 he traversed Mont Blanc, by Mont Maudit and Mont Blanc de Tacul, did some further exploration of the south face, and made the first ascent of the Aig. Blanche de Peuteret from the west, this last a brilliant piece of route-finding. In 1910 he made ascents of the Dent du Géant, Grépon, Tour Ronde, etc., and some new ascents on the Rochers de Mont Blanc, on the Rouges de Triolet, etc. 1911 was his greatest season. It included a new ascent of the Dôme de Neige, with traverse of the Ecrins; a record traverse of the Meije; the culmination of his explorations on Mont Blanc in the first ascent of the Brouillard Ridge; the first ascent of the Grandes Jorasses by the west ridge, and the first descent of the east ridge; another traverse of Mont Blanc by the Dôme route, and the first ascent to the summit of the Grépon by the west face. He finished the season by ascending the Täschhorn, and by twice crossing the Matterhorn in three days, with Archer Thomson, the second time by the Zmutt Ridge. This was followed, in the autumn, by a series of fine first ascents, with the same companion, in the Island of Skye. In 1912 his programme was almost as considerable, and he took especial pleasure in the prospect of introducing his bride of a few days to Courmayeur and his own chosen region. After crossing the Col du Géant, his party went up at once to the new hut under the Innominata, where, in spite of the unfavourable weather, they stayed for their four remaining days of very complete happiness. On the first of these he made the first ascent of the Isolated Peak of the Dames Anglaises, a splendid climb on which all his mountaineering qualities had full scope, and on the last he started for a comparatively easy traverse of the Mont Rouge de Peuteret, and was killed, together with his wife, as the result of a slip on the part of his guide.

As a mountaineer in the widest sense of the term, his endurance, skill, and calculating courage were only equalled by his sound judgment of rock, ice, or weather, by his cool





H. R. Pope.



decision in every variety of emergency, and by his self-control and unfailing sense of humour.

The exhaustive study of mountains and their craft and the reasoned devotion of his best energies to this somewhat remote form of self-realisation were in his considered opinion more than repaid. He recognised the risks involved. He faced them, and the effort, with all caution but full assurance; not only because he had learned to love the mountains and their study as much as life itself, but also because he was aware that they served to develop and refine in himself powers of observation, enthusiasm, and sympathy which lent to his life's work as teacher, student, and administrator anything that, in his own modest estimate, it possessed of force or individual value.

He believed that life, to be worth living by the race or by the individual, must be lived, both as an example and as personal realisation, at the fullest exercise of vitality and manhood. He accepted, for himself as for others, the necessity involved in so stringent a code of the occasional sacrifice of the individual life.

No notice would be complete without some mention of his wife, who shared his work, his enthusiasms, and his death. His follower, if not his equal in scientific research—she was the only woman as yet elected a Fellow of the University of Wales—she was also his rival and companion in love of the mountains, and was as consciously determined to live their joint life only on the same unrelenting terms. That death should not have separated them, at a moment when every form of public recognition and success and every promise of private happiness seemed to have combined to celebrate the beginning of a very perfect comradeship, is the consolation that remains for their friends.

G. W. Y.

### HUGH ROSE POPE.

HUGH POPE was only in his twenty-third year when he lost his life last October in the Pyrenees. He went to Eton in 1902, and then went on to New College in 1908, and last year he took a second in Greats, and played lawn tennis for Oxford against Cambridge. His acquaintance with serious climbing

dates back only to 1909; before that he had only once been on a rope, when, the previous year, he was spending a month in the Tirol.

But on his first visit to Wastdale, in the summer of 1909, starting from the very beginning with companions as inexperienced as himself, he soon revealed the intuitive skill and the adventurousness, tempered by judgment, which marked him as a unique climber. In 1910 he led such courses as Walker's Gully, and the second ascent of Piers Ghyll, and in 1911 and 1912 almost every climb round Ogwen and Pen-y-Pass, including the Far East Cracks and the second ascents of the Paradise Route and the Red Wall, and a new route to the Horned Crag, on Lliwedd, a difficult new route on Creigiun Gleision, and the East Gully of Glyder Fach, when it was so coated with ice that its one pitch cost a party of three  $2\frac{3}{4}$  hours. He also returned to Cumberland, where perhaps his most notable climbs were the first ascent of the south-west slabs of the Pillar and a brilliant repulse on his second visit to Walker's Gully, when a phenomenal storm of rain of a sudden made the top pitch impossible, and the whole climb, as he himself thought, the severest in his experience. He also knew Glencoe, where he had climbed the Crowbury Ridge and the Church Door Buttress, Ben Nevis, and the Cairngorm. The record is completed by one visit to Switzerland last August, and it is remarkable that in his first season—and that a season of so many disappointments—his party should have achieved one of the great guideless first ascents in the Alps by forcing a new route up the west face of the Dent Blanche.

Last autumn he went to Orthez, near Pau, to learn French, and on October 7th he was killed while scrambling alone on the north face of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau. It is almost certain that his death was caused by a fall of rotten rock.

It is impossible to give anything but a vague and unsatisfactory account of a nature so rare, so withdrawn, and so pure. No one can read what he has written on climbing in the Oxford Mountaineering Essays without seeing that he was much more than a climber. He had the joy of life and of beautiful movement, which found a partial realisation in his love of skating and bathing, and its most complete fulfilment

in the hills. Especially he knew and could tell of the mystery of mountain solitudes and the romance of the struggle with the rocks.

It was, in fact, in his attitude towards the mountains that the man himself was best expressed. To many, the mountains merely provide attractive scenery, and a convenient form of gymnastics ; but to Hugh Pope they meant very much more than this. It was among the mountains that he could best realise himself ; that he found his highest development, spiritual and physical. He appreciated to the full the beauties of form and colour which are only to be found in their inmost folds ; the graceful curves and soft colouring of the English heather-clad hills ; the "great brown slabs bending over into immeasurable space" ; the ice-clad spires of the Alps, and all "the treasures of the snow." And, in addition to this, it was only in the hills that he could satisfy the fighting instinct usually dormant in most men.

There are perils of knightly zest  
Fit for the warrior's craft,  
Pitiless giants with rock-bound crest,  
Mystical wells for the midnight rest,  
Ice-crowned castles and halls, to test  
Steel with the ashen shaft ;  
Realms to be won by the well swung blow,  
Rest to be earned from the yielding foe.

It is no exaggeration to say that he was already among the finest English rock climbers, and he showed every promise of being the finest mountaineer of our time. He possessed wonderful natural instinct, combined with great physical strength and perfect balance, and he climbed the hardest rocks with the steadiness and grace that come of great skill. Yet in climbing, as elsewhere, he was modest, retiring, unselfish. On days of wind, and sleet, and cold, when darkness was chasing his party down some grim precipice, he climbed with the same cheerfulness, coolness, and resource as when the sun shone on warm rocks, and pitch after pitch yielded to his skill.

It was in a certain mystical communion with and conflict with the hills that he found himself lifted above the pettinesses and vulgarities of the plains, that he found his faculties stretched to their utmost, and his ideals raised to their highest.

With the Psalmist, he said to his soul that "she should flee as a bird unto the hill." And now the hills have claimed him. It was no reckless folly, but the chance which he knew he must face, that led him to his grave. He recognised fully the dangers of climbing alone, but in his eyes it was only the solitary climber who entered wholly into the spirit of the hills. He knew that he might one day be called on to make the sacrifice, and we must believe that it was not unwillingly that he made it.

C. A. E.

## IN DEFENCE OF POPULAR WRITING.

A REPLY TO MR. MYLES MATHEWS.

BY ARNOLD LUNN.

THE last issue of this Journal was enlivened by a witty attack on climbing literature. Like most *ex cathedra* utterances, this indictment seemed to carry its own proof. Mr. Mathews asks, "Why do people write mountain books when it is so much easier not to write them?" He dismisses the hope of gain as improbable, and finds the careless rapture of figuring in the British Museum catalogue inadequate as an explanation.

Let me remark in passing that the masters of language have not always been free from vanity nor indifferent to the gross problem of royalties, but there are other motives which are responsible for Alpine literature. Why, then, do people write mountain books? One obvious answer is that self-expression is an instinct as old as the rude forefather that first carved in some primeval cave the crude image of a mammoth. It is not only the great for whom expression is a necessary function. Even the humblest and most incompetent craftsman feels at times the need for expressing himself in the most natural medium. This perhaps explains rather than excuses much work. Another motive which Mr. Mathews has overlooked is the fact that mere expression of past joys enables the writer very thoroughly to forget the disagreeable present. Idle reflection has not the same power to beget again the golden hours. The labour of crystallising into language the frail hill memories creates an illusion in which the present is forgotten and the past reborn. Mr. Mathews will reply, "Very well. I'm glad your articles give you pleasure. I congratulate you on your sunny disposition. Go on writing by all means, if it amuses you. But don't publish."

But there is another motive, which explains both the matter and its publication. We have seen something that is very good to see. We do not want our friends to miss this pleasure. We can't make them see it with the eyes of the

body, but we dare to hope that some chance phrase may bring the hills as we saw them before the eyes of their mind. We are writing for a small, sympathetic circle, and we want to share with them the intimate beauty of high places. And some of our best literature is largely due to the desire to make converts. We feel sure that there are among our readers those who have only to hear the call, and to join us. To some folk, this missionary spirit may be anathema. They climb for themselves alone, and do not wish to vulgarise the Alps by crowds of converts. Such literature smacks of a revival meeting, urges the critic. Let us be courageous, and assert boldly that such literature does give pleasure to the readers. Mr. Mathews tells us that his Alpine shelf consists of two books, "The Playground of Europe" and "Peaks and Pleasant Pastures." Some of us would not envy Mr. Mathews his esoteric taste. We may admire it, of course, just as we may admire the cultivated person who can only listen with enjoyment to Wagner. But our admiration is unalloyed with envy if we can enjoy not only Wagner but "vulgar and tavern musick."

The Alpine shelf should consist of not two, but at least a hundred, books. There is hardly a book on my own shelves in which I cannot find some echo of the hill voices. There is much in them that may offend the laws of taste, a failing not absent from the plays of Shakespeare, or the poems of Milton. Many of them display a spirit of self-assertiveness; a number of them are tedious, if taken in anything but small doses; some are unpleasantly ridiculous. But though many motives, not all praiseworthy, may have combined to produce these works, there is hardly a writer among them without some spark of genuine enthusiasm for the hills. Their literary sins are forgiven because they loved the mountains and assumed the same of their readers. And incoherence is not incompatible with sincerity. Too often those of us who feel intensely "mar our mortal melodies with broken stammer of the skies." The critic has a right to condemn wilful misrepresentation and vulgar self-assertion. But let us beware lest with the conventions of academic criticism we stifle the free expression of feeling and experience.

Good work is too often spoiled by tiresome affectations fashionable in Alpine circles. Certain conventions invaded our literature shortly after the pioneers had done their work. We shall never recover the vigour and sincerity of the older books. The freshness of the early writing was partly due to the romance of unexplored and unknown mountains, but even more to the absence of that pedantic affectation which makes a later and more self-conscious generation ashamed to write as it feels. The pioneers were writing not for an esoteric circle that discounted as "fine writing" any attempt to convey worthily the commonplaces of every climb, the morning tramp, the joy of some windy bivouac. The effectiveness of their work is largely due to the enthusiasm with which they enlarged on the simple issues of the craft, to their delight in their own achievements, and to their unaffected ambition to make converts to a good cause. These men were founding a new sect, and the new creed was on trial. And it is to this that their deliverance owes its vigour. At the council of the Church it is the heretic who makes the one vital speech. In the controversy it is the Papal Bull that is dull, and the Modernist reply that is lively. The heretic is burnt, and dies a protest. His successors inherit a Protestant Church, which soon becomes more intolerant than that of the persecutors. So in literature, the rebel is first denounced, then patronised, and finally appropriated. Every vigorous personality begins as a protest against contemporary taste, and often ends by becoming a classic.

The pioneers of the Alps were heretics, denounced by Ruskin and by the *Times*. And because they were rebels their writings are still alive. Their successors founded the inevitable Academy, and "the little laws that lacqueys make" became the accepted literary canons. The founders were schismatics; their successors basked in the odour of sanctity. They had a pleasant reputation as being daring beyond the common, and they took good care that those who overstepped the limits of their discreet adventure should be, in turn, discredited.

A protest should be made against the tradition that

condemns as "popular" any work that does not conform to critical tastes.

It is much easier to write a dull book than a popular book. That is why the average writer whose work is not popular sets a premium on dull correctness.

Mountaineering has become a science with an appropriate jargon. Mountain literature is too often written only for a select circle that are interested, not in the commonplace glories of every climb, but in technical details that differentiate one route from another. Popular writing makes a wider appeal, and so popular writing is condemned by the few right-minded folk. Worse still is the case of those who write for the magazines. There is something strangely sinful to the average Alpine mind in the thought of a magazine article, and it takes a hardened devil's advocate to defend them. There is a certain type of article which no sane man desires to vindicate. The author who chooses this medium to caricature a fine sport by concentrating on sensational incidents is deserving of severe censure. I do not urge that no man should describe, even in a magazine, some stirring adventure on the heights. It would be pedantic to insist that a magazine article should only consist of a temperate account of a fine-weather ascent unvaried by incident. But those who have seen something of the darker side of the sport will not willingly forgive the man who traffics in the saddest memories of the craft to tickle the ears of the groundlings. A bad article is bad wherever it appears; but good work is good work between the sober covers of the *Alpine Journal* or in the pages of the *Wide World Magazine*. After all, the magazine is the best medium for reaching the unconverted public. If you feel that the number of mountaineers is large enough, you may criticise this attitude; but it is a churl's part to shut out others from the rewards of the climber. The pioneers who made Alpine literature had none of this contempt for all articles which did not appear in the pages of some climbing journal. Leslie Stephen wrote some of his best work for the *Cornhill*; Whymper wrote frequently in the Press. Mr. Douglas Freshfield, only the other day, contributed a most interesting article on the Himalayas to the *Daily Express*. Sir Martin



Conway has written for the *Strand*, and, finally, Mr. Lloyd has sanctified the practice by contributing an account of a climb to the *Morning Post*. Perhaps we may also remind Mr. Mathews that the two Alpine books he condescends to read are largely reprints of articles that delighted the readers of the *Cornhill* and the *Times*. There is, moreover, a prevalent suspicion that all magazine and "popular" writers are condemned, and that they are supposed to be bent on advertising themselves. There are three things for which the average Briton has a fine nose. He is a regular sleuth-hound at detecting a pose, unconscious that the stupidest of all poses is the affectation of being natural. But he is really happy when he can smell out a financial motive, or accuse his neighbour of advertising himself. Most folk are quite pleased when somebody else advertises them, but are justly indignant with the franker adventurer who acts as his own advertising agent. The situation is intensified in Alpine circles because there is no recognised rivalry. Theoretically, we all climb just for the love of the sport. There are, of course, a number of mountaineers who are unfeignedly modest, and as indifferent as mortal men can be to the credit of achievement. But I have often thought that for the rank and file some recognised rivalry in competition would be better than the bitter jealousies that divide the Alpine world. In other sports the papers advertise and tabulate success. If Brown's average is a decimal point better than Smith's, he has beaten him, and there the matter ends. Why not apply the same principle to mountaineering. Let us award marks, but let us be fair and mark the guides too. In no sport is it easier for a man to get the credit of other men's work. *Qui facit per alium facit per se* is the motto of a good many who are conveyed up difficult climbs by powerful guides. Well, here is a scheme for tabulating our rival climbers. Mr. Brown is the first to be lowered down the north ridge of the Shoehorn. Mr. Brown shall have five marks. Mr. Brown, inspired by this success, tries to lead up an easy Welsh gully, and collapses at the first pitch. Give him two marks as consolation prize. At the end of the season let the marks be added up, and let a putty medal be awarded to the winner.

All decent climbers honestly despise the adventurers who are supposed to have forced their way into the craft, men whose "pens are in our magazines, and whose contributions should be placed among the advertisements." But, conceding this, I think that we folk built of humbler clay should admit that we are not wholly indifferent to the vanity of finding our names associated with some unconquered ridge. We love the mountains for themselves, and amongst them we know the most ideal joy that is given to mortal men ; but, none the less, it is mere ignorant presumption for most of us to claim immunity from the kindly failing of humanity. The heroes of exploration have striven to associate their names with some virgin corner of the earth. It is only the mountaineer who has the hardihood to claim that he is aloof from this characteristic of humanity. Providence invented vanity to soften the priggishness of the natural man, and to inspire him with ambition. We, as a nation, are quite remarkable for our powers of self-deception, and we have managed to convince ourselves that we combine heroic pluck and perseverance with a complete ignorance of our own astounding virtues. One can just understand a man with no powers of self-analysis accepting the traditional tenets, but one cannot understand anybody mortal persisting in such theories when once they have been challenged. Some such simple vanity is certainly a very small factor in our passion. It is almost negligible in contrast to the appeal of the hills ; but we would do well if we admitted that we were not positively ashamed of having made, shall we say, the first ascent of the North arête of the Aiguille de Difficulté.

There is a certain attitude for which I have nothing but sympathy. Mountaineers form, or should do, but for cliques and envy, a very close freemasonry. Ours is a secret religion, and the moments of initiation are too intimate to be profaned by speech with those outside the shrine. A young man does not bring his first love into the market ; and we who have found a love deeper and more noble than any earthly passion cannot lightly tell the world of our reward. We are half diffident, and half afraid of laughter. There would be more to be said for this sentiment if the average mountaineer

had any emotions to conceal. When someone tries to tell of the deeper romance of our calling, laughter is just as likely to come from the healthy Philistine at Zermat as from the outside public. Mountaineering spells for many climbers nothing more than a healthy blend of exercise, tobacco, friends, and good scenery. There is a very real difference between reserve that conceals potential emotion and the reserve that is a convenient mask for an absence of sentiment. Many Alpine writers are proud of their objection to gush when they have only succeeded in being tedious. We all, of course, object to a superfluity of colour and emotion. It is easy enough to pick out passages which make one feel hot with shame, but we all know the average Alpine article that bores us by its lack of sentiment. Somewhere between these extremes must the line be fixed. A decent reserve is a happy mean between gush and dullness.

But reserve does not imply an absence of feeling. Personality is impatient of barriers, and, in literature as in life, personality is the only thing that counts. Academic traditions have always striven to emasculate personality. The canons of taste that govern Alpine literature are becoming more and more academic, and it is only a pity that they are not more often violated. One may argue that all emotion is too sacred to turn into copy, and we reply that if this law had been followed there would not be a single masterpiece in any form of art. The books that have lived are the books whose authors were not ashamed of their emotions, and who have believed that those emotions would interest other people. It may be a shameful thing to use one's most sacred emotions as the peg on which to hang a sonnet. A man, you will say, does not translate his first love into rhyme, or some shattering bereavement into balanced prose. But the fact remains that we find most pleasure, most conviction, in poetry and prose that have been shaped in the furnace of delight, passion, or sorrow, and we do not condemn the authors. It is only when a man fails to convince us of his sincerity that we cry out against his lack of reserve.

It is sincerity that discriminates gush from good writing. The critic implies failure when he uses the phrase, "fine

writing." He detects, and condemns a conscious effort to write for effect. The greatest masters have perhaps been those who found the statue sleeping in marble, for whom expression has been a spontaneous release, a function as natural as life. But the mere fact that a piece of prose is carefully planned and worked up does not imply that it is not good art. Ruskin and Stevenson and Walter Pater were in a sense highly artificial writers. Art conceals art, and the good craftsman can give to laboured work that appearance of spontaneity which is essential. It is not careful working for effect—if skilfully concealed—but only the appearance of effort that we really dislike. The real touchstone is sincerity. If a man strives to write fine prose and uses for his subject any emotion that seems adaptable, the result will usually be pure wordiness. But if the writer wishes to express some emotion in worthy language, if he wishes to catch in words some echo of the hills, if he honestly tries to write what he feels, and not what he thinks he ought to feel, then, no matter how laboured the graving, or how loose the structure, he deserves something better than hypercriticism. And fortunately there are still some left who refuse to be dull merely to placate British reserve.

Leslie Stephen is the king of Alpine writers. He was full of sentiment, the best sentiment. But he spoils some of his finest work by the affectation of bluffness. "Tall talk is luckily an object of suspicion to Englishmen." "But I am verging on the sentimental." This jars in the midst of some of the most authentic revelations of mountain worship. Odd that the Englishman should pride himself on an absence of feeling. You never hear a Frenchman thank God that he is a bluff, downright fellow. You never hear an Irishman thank God that he doesn't care for music and poetry. Perhaps it is just as well; and it is a wise Providence that makes the Philistine contented with his lot.

Leslie Stephen incidentally has supplied a good definition of sentimentalism: "Indulging in sentiment for its own sake." It sums up my last paragraph. Fine writing for the sake of fine writing is sentimentalism. Fine writing as a medium for

fine emotion is sentiment, and without sentiment literature is lifeless.

One last protest, and I may leave Mr. Mathews to demolish this article at his leisure. I cull the following from his review of a certain book. I make no comments on the context, but as I understand Mr. Mathews to be laying down a general truth I shall criticise it apart from its setting.

"No sane man goes into a dangerous place just because it is a dangerous place, or would be in a dangerous place if there were any reasonable alternative route. Climbers, like other people, have had accidents or have narrowly escaped them; have been in situations under circumstances which they would have given a good deal to avoid. Such experiences they are not anxious to repeat, and they owe it not only to themselves but to their sport to hide them with a decent reticence. That one should deliberately publish descriptions of such matters is inconceivable."

Mr. Mathews must really fill out that select little library of his. He will then find that it is quite conceivable that men "should deliberately publish descriptions of such matters." In fact, it has been done more than once. Let us appeal only to the two authors whom Mr. Mathews deigns to read. Leslie Stephen wrote "a bad five minutes in the Alps," and a fine account of a party caught in a winter storm. Mr. Schuster, in the best chapter of a notable book, describes "circumstances which he would have given a great deal to avoid," and experiences which I am sure he is "not anxious to repeat." It is easy to multiply classic examples.

If a man sits down to write a sensational account of some mountain adventure simply to pose as a reckless fellow, or in order to amuse magazine readers, we may light our pipe with the product. It will be bad not because it describes sensational incidents, but because it is bad psychology. But, on the other hand, if he tries to reveal the true inwardness of fear and danger, his work will probably be interesting. There are many bypaths in the psychology of fear and weariness on which the mountaineer can supply valuable evidence. Such writing may be sensational; but I for one am interested in other people's sensations, provided that they are analysed with

a loyalty to scientific truth, and not merely piled up with an eye for the reader. Sensational writing is bad when it is written in order to create a sensation ; good when its object is to analyse a sensation.

Mr. Mathews argues that a climber who has been in unpleasant situations should hide the fact with decent reticence. Mr. Mathews, no doubt, makes this statement in all good faith, but it is surprising to find a man of his critical insight accepting conventional assumptions without analysing their singular foundations. We are tired of the affectation that a man who climbs in bad weather should feign shame. We are very tired of the chit-chat sanctified by tradition, those tedious opening gambits of a climber just returned from a dangerous expedition. "Yes, I know we shouldn't have done it. It wasn't playing the game. No, it wasn't really plucky. The really courageous thing would have been to turn back. Ah! but I must crave absolution. It would have been hard to stop within a hundred feet of the top. It's a weakness of mine, but I do like getting to the top." He sighs complacently, and reflects that he has given the impression that he is no end of a dog without seeming conceited. A weary business this conventional modesty! No climber who has carried through a daring and unjustifiable expedition is really ashamed of himself. It may be wrong. It may be a breach of "the best Alpine traditions," invented by age as a harness for youth ; but so long as romance endures, every man who has risked death for a useless prize will secretly be proud of the fact. Mr. Mathews might feel ashamed if he had climbed the Brenva Mont Blanc in a snowstorm, but others would admire his courage, and be glad to read of such signal proof of his endurance.

"No sane man goes into a dangerous place just because it is dangerous." Perhaps not, and yet I wonder whether this bold *ipse dixit* cannot be challenged. Mountaineering is something more than a domestic scramble between two good guides. The mountains have a nobler function. They provide the discipline of danger, without which the fullest of lives are incomplete. They shake our self-assurance, and force us to realise that Nature has still the last word, though we

harness her cataracts and tunnel her mountains. In an age all too secure against danger and even against pain, they provide a rough school for those lessons which our forefathers found in the common lot of an adventurous life. It is well if we can learn steadfastly to face danger, if we can train ourselves to reason and to act coolly when life may depend on the harmonious working of brain and muscle. That is why men whose lives are naturally exposed to grave risks have some fine element which cannot be gained in the battles of the Stock Exchange or the campaigns of Westminster. And that is why we whose lives are otherwise uneventful may rightly seek among the mountains an artificial strengthening of the moral fibre, and may even wittingly place ourselves in dangerous situations.

This may seem bravado. As one who has a healthy objection to unnecessary danger, I may be allowed to defend those who are free from "knee-dissolving fear." Come now, Mr. Mathews! When last you carried through some reckless climb in foul weather, did you really slink back into the hotel like a felon detected in the act?

Why in the world should such climbs, once accomplished, not be described? Mountain literature is dull enough. Let us be thankful if some writer can vary the monotony with a rousing chapter of adventure. One thinks of that great Elizabethan age, when every seaman's log was an epic. One thinks of certain classics that the age inspired, the Homeric tales of those old navigators that went down to the uncharted sea in unseaworthy ships. On Mr. Mathews's theory, their books should not have been written. They should have been heartily ashamed of violating the best sea-going traditions. But let us be thankful that they did not then know of "British reserve," that they saw the wonders of the troubled deep, and could recapture the romance of their perilous journeys.

We have been taught to accept as axiomatic the theory that moral courage is finer than mere commonplace pluck. I once met a man who had more than his share of moral courage. It degenerated into mere moral recklessness. He always retraced his steps if rain threatened, except when, for

other reasons, he had already begun to beat a retreat. Let us not degrade "the honourable style" of courage by mating it to such base bedfellows. I am not advocating bad-weather climbing. Life is too valuable to throw away for one peak more or less. Allow that a man shows a sense of responsibility, a loyal consideration for his friends on and off the rope when he refuses to climb in bad weather. But let us keep the word "courage" for the real thing. And don't let us pretend that there is anything difficult about turning back in the teeth of a gale. There may be heroes in our rough island story who advance with a glad, ringing laugh into the jaws of a hurricane. I am not one of them, and I am sure that many of those who claim moral courage for turning back under such circumstances assume too easily this very facile virtue.

I can now perorate with the pleasing assurance that nobody but the printer, proof-reader, and Mr. Mathews have read so far. I am not altogether sure of Mr. Mathews. Let me, then, address myself to the proof-reader in the hopes that he may be a mountaineer. Let me tell him that the real risk for mountaineering lies in its attempted control by those who are no longer active. In other sports the aged retire into the pavilion, and the younger generation organise the sport. Occasionally they weary us with tales of the good old times, when men played in top-hats; but, on the whole, they accept the changing traditions, and have a proper "hesitation in contradicting people younger than themselves." Mountaineering, by reason of the constitution of our clubs, is directed, in so far as its literature and traditions are concerned, by the past climbers, and the older a mountaineer grows, the more convinced he becomes that what is too difficult and dangerous for himself must be highly improper for a younger man. It is essential to a proper development of a great sport that the younger men had their say, unhampered by what Young calls "the privileged impertinence of club criticism."

Let them write if they want to, and if their passages are puce and their perorations purple, no matter, so long as their work is not insincere or dull.

A mountain article is only justified by objective or sub-



jective. It may exist as the record of exploration or as the raw material for the historian or the maker of guide-books. But literature, properly so called, must contain subjective novelty. It must reveal a personality. In a sense, the mountains are the same for all. The Climbers' Guide assumes that Brown and Smith will grasp the same handholds and see the same ridges. But there is the mountain that we climb, the mountain whose rough granite is woven into the very tissue of our skin, and there is the mountain that we dream of. The Universe only exists in the brain of sentient beings, and each of us creates in our image the hills that we love. The hills will never be exhausted so long as there remains one climber to seek them out anew. We may leave the realist and idealist to discover whether the mountains would exist if there were none to perceive them. This at least is true. The mountains are created anew whenever some new worshipper brings some new tribute to their altars.

When we climb we carry a climbers' guide. *That* is a mere matter of facts. But in the emptiness of a lowland evening we are not concerned with objective truth, and we turn not to the Gardiners, but to the Froudes of Alpine history. We do not yearn to know when Brown breakfasted, or the time he took to reach the first gendarme. We want to know what Mr. Brown felt like when the earth opened out below him like a scroll, and the blue dome of heaven crept a little nearer. If Mr. Brown is too self-conscious to believe that his views on this crisis are of interest, he has no right to assume that we shall read with pleasure a mere *précis* of his times and route.

There is, believe me, Mr. Proof-reader, an opening for a school of Alpine writers untrammelled by conventional criticism, unbiased by the sterile laws of the Academies. Remember that literature is emasculated by two forms of cowardice. And the first of these is the fear that some prosaic Philistine will murmur, "Fine writing!" And the second of these is the suspicion that some envious nonentity will murmur "Self-advertisement!"

## ON FINE WRITING.

AN ANSWER TO MR. LUNN.

BY C. MYLES MATHEWS.

I CANNOT speak for the proof-reader. But so far as the printer and I are concerned let me assure Mr. Lunn we have been at pains to read him to the uttermost comma. His manuscript arrived from Switzerland on forty-one sheets of paper of various sizes, erased, interlineated, statted, and revised. He was clearly interested in his theme and careful in its presentation. We, the printer and I, hope we have got it right. If in any passage the argument appear to halt, or the logic seem something short of convincing, the reader must lay the blame on us, and not on Mr. Lunn.

Mr. Lunn, if I rightly understand him, would set us all to writing. An excellent thing in an Editor, and the cause of the conspicuous success of our Journal under his direction. Long may he hold to his opinion. So long will our Journal flourish and I have no quarrel with him. For nothing in the article that has so finely moved his wrath was concerned with what a man may write for his own club journal. It was wholly directed to what a man may give in books to the unappreciative world at large.

With much that Mr. Lunn has to say I am unconcerned. It does not touch the issue between us, and I have therefore no occasion to follow him into his disquisition upon our national characteristics, or his discourse upon the uses of advertisement. I pause but to remove two misconceptions. He seeks to remind me that parts of a book I liked appeared in the *Times* and the *Cornhill*. The reminder was unnecessary. I was one of the readers who were delighted with the initial publication. He enjoys "vulgar and tavern musick." So, most heartily, do I. In folk songs and drinking catches you have some of the finest tunes in the world. He says that

mountaineering has become a science with an appropriate jargon. I agree. A book treating of the scientific aspect of mountaineering rightly employs the appropriate jargon, just as does any text-book dealing with any technical subject, be it surgery, philosophy, chemistry, or what you will. With such books neither Mr. Lunn nor I are for the moment concerned.

Where I differ from Mr. Lunn is this, that, granted a man may have enthusiasm for his mountaineering, granted that he may feel all that Mr. Lunn desires him to feel, when he sets himself to the writing of a book he starts to work at an art, craft or mystery wherein high technical skill is a necessary preliminary to success. I use the word preliminary advisedly, since in this, as in all crafts, in music, in painting, in singing no less than in writing mere technique and nothing else is an intolerably tedious business. But technique you must have as a basis.

"It is not only the great for whom expression is a necessary function," says Mr. Lunn, and none will gainsay him. But the power and the means of expression are necessary before understandable expression can be made. To speak with the tongue of men and of angels is admittedly not everything, but it at least is an assistance in enabling your hearers to appreciate what you may have to say. "Incoherence," says Mr. Lunn, "is not incompatible with sincerity." But neither does it help to convey your meaning. "Their literary sins are forgiven because they loved the mountains." Here Mr. Lunn and I differ. This reason seems to me to be inadequate and irrelevant. It is as though he would listen with pleasure to an execrable violinist, because he was kind to his mother. In each case the characteristic is doubtless admirable and even endearing, but what possible effect it is supposed to have upon the quality of the performance I am quite unable to appreciate. A man may have an intense passion for the mountains, and yet, if he have not the skill, if he be not handy in an exceedingly difficult craft, if he have not served an arduous and often dusty apprenticeship, he may write an intolerably tedious symphony upon them. "The freshness of the early writing" was due, according to Mr. Lunn, to a variety

of causes. To my mind, where it exists it was due to one: the fact that the early writers happened to be able to write.

Mr. Lunn seeks to dismiss all such considerations by calling them the conventions of academic criticism. Considerations are not removed merely by being labelled. Hard put to it for a commendation, he tries to find a psychological value for what he defends. But the things are put forward as books, not as notes for the study of the psychology of incoherence. "Their successors," he says, "founded the inevitable Academy, and 'the little laws that lacqueys make' became the accepted literary canons." In my view this passage is compact of misconceptions, with some of which I propose to deal.

The laws to which Mr. Lunn appears to refer are not little, they were not made by lacqueys, and they did not then become literary canons. The laws—to use Mr. Lunn's label—are nothing more or less than an expression of the methods of composition adopted by those who, by general consent, have been skilled in writing the English Language.\* Indeed, many of them were made, expressed, discussed, and broken long ago, and are inherent to effective literary expression in any tongue. They were literary canons long before anyone began, in the modern sense, to write about Mountains or Mountaineering. They are not inevitable; effective breach of them is always splendidly possible. The *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent.*, sets itself of malice prepense to break more of them than perhaps any other single work, and breaks them with triumphant success. They resemble the laws of harmony in this, that if you are big enough to break them, you are at all times welcome to do so, but if you are not big enough, your breaking of them breaks you. They are neither the be all nor the end all, but they are a most effective method of working in a particular medium. "Every sport," writes Mr. Lunn elsewhere, "gets the literature it deserves." I regret to be unable

\* I hold no brief for split infinitives, and the laws I condemn are not those which govern grammar. "The early writers happened to be able to write." In a sense they could, but "*Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers*" lives less as literature than as the unaffected narrative of adventure, and as the sincere expression of sentiments. With more literary talent at our disposal we seldom produce anything as readable. The explanation may be sought for in the academic tradition which I have tried to analyse.—A. H. M. L.

to agree with him. We both think nobly of the sport. We differ as to the nobility of its literature.

This brings me to the gist of the whole matter. "The critic," he says, "implies failure when he uses the phrase fine writing." For my part, were I to employ the expression, it would be for a measure of exceeding praise. The opinion of Mr. Lunn concerning fine writing seems to be that the soul of the writer might happily inhabit a bird. I think nobly of fine writing, and in no way approve his opinion. He would use it as a term of reproach. I would to Heaven we had more of it. Conceivably by fine writing we may not mean the same thing. As a familiar example of what I mean by fine writing I give the following passage. Incidentally it is a great many things besides which are not pertinent to my present purpose, but emphatically it is fine writing :

"Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility ; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever."

Mark the cunning of the thing. The author could, so far as mere meaning goes, just as well have written "put on us." He could have urged chapter and verse for writing "the whole armour," but his rhythm would have been the loser and his words have lingered the less in the memory.

It may well be that a man must love the mountains before he can write adequately of them. But love of the mountains alone will not of itself enable him to write of them at all. Properly to judge of a work it must be judged by the standard of the greatest works of a like nature. One judges a Mass by comparing it with Bach in B minor, not with Stainer in A flat, of an oratorio by comparing it with the Matthew Passion, not with the Elijah, of a book by comparing with the best one knows of the type, not with the stillborn of Paternoster Row or the overlaid of Mudies.

And, after all, what does Mr. Lunn's passionate and able

defence of mediocrity come to? He maintains that it is easier to write a dull book than a popular book. He finds that the one too often is synonymous for the other. He is driven to confess that the greater part of his Alpine library is "tedious" and "unpleasantly ridiculous," and that "mountain literature is dull enough." And, in its defence, skilled pleader though he be, he is confessedly reduced to addressing himself to the solitary audience of the proof-reader.

## REVIEWS.

*Among the Hills.* A Book of Joy in High Places. By Reginald Farrer. (London: Headley Brothers.)

MANY people who never think of visiting the Alps have fallen victims to the modern craze of the Alpine garden. And, truth to tell, the Alpine plants well repay their votaries for the trouble they give, for many of these mountain ferns are better than all the garish rubbish that fills the border with all its summer splendour.

Luckily there is no royal road to success, and it may well happen that an unpretentious heap of soil, cunningly adjusted with a barrow-load of stone, will enable its possessor to overcome the aloofness of the most reticent of those altogether desirable mountain children. But this success is born of knowledge, and though it is not to be bought from books alone much can, nevertheless, be learnt from the man who has eyes to see and a tongue to tell.

Mr. Farrer is not only one of the most successful of the Alpine gardeners, but he has the pen of the ready (albeit, also of the whimsical) writer, and he has now added to his other works a really delightful account of his journeyings through the Alps in search of the treasures which are his heart's desire.

"Among the Hills" literally describes his travels. He is not out for first ascents or new routes; but, with a mind fixed on a particular object, he has travelled through the length and breadth of the Central European chain. The story is well told, and even the man to whom the yellow primrose is nothing more than a primrose will hardly refuse his meed of praise to a book of wanderings in which the wayside incidents are so well told. There is not a dull page in it, and, even if there were, one would owe some indulgence on the score of the excellent illustrations—at least, most of them—which are interspersed through the text. One of these, Blue Hepaticas, lying amongst fallen beech-leaves, cannot be passed over. It is a specially beautiful study in colour, by Mrs. Addington Symonds.

Of course, the book won't appeal to the man whose only idea is to bag a peak, and rush down so that he may be ready to repeat the process on the next day. He wants the bald information of a climber's guide, and therein will find an all-sufficient liturgy to help him through his devotions. But to those—and, after all, perhaps they form the majority—who have souls as well as bodies, Mr. Farrer's book will not appeal in vain. If they are already lovers of flowers, so much the better. If not, it may show them how the hills may be made still more wholly delightful than before.

*Ski-ing.* By Arnold Lunn. Illustrated. 3s. 6d. net. (London: Eveleigh Nash. 1913.)

ALTHOUGH there is no lack of printed advice to the ski-runner, Mr. Lunn's little book will become the friend of many an old hand, not to speak of the beginner, to whom it mainly offers itself. The writer has hit upon the rather happy thought of adding literary description to the business of teaching by allowing us to join him in his slide over the snows of many lands. While we others have wasted our adjectives in order to tell the uninitiated that the sport of the swift plank is supremely beautiful, Mr. Lunn makes him the silent companion of many adventures, rousing that strongest of all beliefs which is born from the reader's own unconscious inferences. It is wonderful how much useful knowledge, and the application thereof, he can convey on 250 pages. Short of the wintry Alps themselves, there is no treatise more likely of winning new enthusiasts for the noble art. Owing to their wealth of detail, most ski-ing manuals should not be placed into the hands of the "young" (especially when they are already somewhat middle-aged) before they have had a taste of the white world, whereas the present volume will not create the somewhat uncomfortable feeling that an endless drill has to be gone through before enjoyment begins. In reality, all thirst for learning only begins after the first sip from the cup of pleasure.

The introduction supplies us with some very elementary hints, which, if strictly obeyed, will save us from making a false start, in spite of our ignorance of all things connected with



ski-ing. There must be quite a number of English town-bred people who do not even know the look of genuine snow. The chapters on outfit and practice are short and sweet, calling for no comment, while the advice on touring betrays the pen of the sound mountaineer. Due stress is laid on the dangers of the heights, especially the avalanche. Further on we receive suggestions as to the best places where snow and suitable ground may be met with in various parts of Europe. In "Ski-ing Routes Through the High Alps" Mr. Lunn treads his own special ground, describing the joys as well as the difficulties of expeditions across glaciers, passes and peaks, so desolate, yet so beautiful.

Much that is original, together with a few strong words, he finds to say on the matter of clubs, competitions and tests, wherein we may also discover a short and amusing history of club wars. His opinion that downhill races (uphill races are to be avoided altogether, for hygienic reasons) should be run without a stick, and that style should not be judged separately (*i.e.*, time only to decide), is supported by the best arguments I have heard so far, and with which I heartily agree.

The volume is wound up with a humorous tale of travel in Norway and some other recollections of winter mountaineering, all of them delightful reading. Faults may be found if one wishes to find them, but I do not see why a reviewer should go out of his way for doing so when the work is good as a whole. As to the author's criticism of myself, I have no reasonable objection to make; but a short personal remark may be allowed here. Since we last met, in word or print, my own style of running has been somewhat modified in the Bilgeri-Norwegian direction, and that almost unconsciously. This experience entitles me to the statement that this gradual change is not difficult, or, rather, that it comes naturally, if one has learned never to lean heavily on the stick, a rule I have always insisted upon. I still use a single bamboo pole, about four feet long, which I hold in *one* hand on good snow, but which I "apply" when the snow is bad or the slope very steep (above thirty degrees) and studded with obstacles necessitating sharp turns.

W. RICKMER RICKMERS.

*Walking Essays.* By A. H. Sidgwick. 5s. net. (London: Edward Arnold. 1912.)

MR. SIDGWICK is a most agreeable rattle. To judge by internal evidence—a dangerous pastime—he is an Oxford man, curious in his knowledge of home-county walks, familiar with his Jane Austen, intimate with his Meredith, a chess player, a reader of Darbshire on waltzing mice, knowing his 'Enry Straker, a frequenter of the Follies, favouring the Lakes rather than Wales (which is a matter of taste), contented with but a single quotation, and that an indirect one, from Omar (which is a matter of discretion), well read in his Dickens, learned in his Beethoven, of whose symphonies the seventh is his favourite, probably in a Government office, certainly in receipt of an income (derived from other than real property) in excess of £160 per annum, and possessed of a throaty tenor voice. All of which attributes, except the first and the last, should commend him to the discerning.

On the question of beer he is, alas! a schismatic, being affected by a heresy induced through too nice a study of unauthorised substitutes. Calverly, as a deserter from his own University, will probably not move him; but a rhymer who did not choose Athens in his riper age should point him towards orthodoxy, and the more directly as he is a walker over Mr. Sidgwick's own county.

They sell good beer at Haslemere  
And under Guildford Hill;  
At little Cowfold, as I've been told,  
A beggar may drink his fill.  
There is a good brew in Amberley too,  
And by the Bridge also; . . .

He has an essay on Walking and Conversation, in which he rightly contends that the one is destructive of the other.

“At the end of such a day, what have they profited? Their gross and perishable physical frames may have been refreshed; their less gross but equally perishable minds may have been exercised; but what of their immortal being? It has been starved between the blind swing of the legs below and the fruitless flickering of the mind above, instead of receiving through the agency of a quiet mind and a co-ordinated body the gentle nutriment which is its due.”

He points the walker to the more excellent way, whereby his progress may acquire a rippling and appropriate counter-

point of words, and hence, I hope, he will forgive my calling him an agreeable rattle. Though this is to give, perhaps, an unfair impression of his position. Let him speak for himself.

"The outline of the eternal hills stands before you, hard and high as the call of duty : once more the soft rain enwraps you or the clean wind whips you into ecstasy. For a moment, in the midst of our dividing and abstracting civilisation, you are again a man whole and concrete. This is something better than sympathetic conversation : it is the colloquy of two beings joined by a real bond : it is common talk."

He acknowledges the two masters who have written of his subject, Hazlitt and Stevenson, and his book is a pleasant and informing complement to their essays. He has a keen scent for a fellow-wanderer in the most unlikely surroundings.

"Recently, on a Saturday night, I happened to remark, in company, that as I walked to the house the wind was swinging round to the north, the sky was clear, the streets were dry, and there was promise of a brilliant Sunday. My host, who wished to discuss the merits of Zoroastrianism as a working creed for urban civilisations, became rather restive, and mentally I saw the blue pencil going through my name in his wife's *rota umbrarum* ; but across the room I observed a man fixing an eager eye on me, in total disregard of his neighbours. One look was enough. As soon as I had rebuffed the Zoroastrian with a few firmly enunciated prejudices, I moved across to my man and said, 'Do you know the track above Pickett's Hole?' He answered, 'Yes ; but it's just been ploughed up and wants marking out again.' So, as Touchstone says, we swore brothers."

There is a potency in the air which, combined with walking, intoxicates beyond all alcohol. I have known men apparently in the full possession of their faculties swing over the north shoulder of the Crib and down into Cwm Glas chanting the Magnificat and the Te Deum the while. Even Hazlitt, staid and sober man if ever there was one, was drunk of it with the greenest. "It is hard if I cannot start some game on those lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy." Mr. Sidgwick, with twenty miles before him, is sparing of running or leaping, but sing he does, either aloud or to himself, with some compelling rhythm for his feet. And in his choice of melody he is catholic ; he does not restrict himself to the genteelst of tunes—Water Parted, or the minuet in Ariadne. He will go up Leith Hill in a galliard and come home in a coranto. His very walk will be a jig.

He has the courage to confess a weakness of which we have many of us been guilty: when alone he falls to conducting imaginary orchestras with his stick. He discusses with affectionate minuteness the tunes proper to his several occasions, from John Brown's Body to the Ninth Symphony, and gives you a very satisfying variety of choice. To follow him would lead to vistas of reminiscent digression, of long grass hills to the tune of the slow movement of the Unfinished, or to the funeral march of the German Requiem, of roads down sloping homewards to a Sarabande of Corelli's or a movement from one of the Brandenburg Concertos. One aspect of the matter he does not touch on—the joy of progress in syncopation to your tune. The andante of the Tenth Sonata is no bad one to begin on. In one thing I cannot follow him. He professes that five-four time is a walkable measure. If this rhythm be really observed, undrunken progress is not possible.

He has an essay on Walking in Literature, opening up an inquiry of singular fascination, and his readers will share the desire, borrowed from Grove, that such investigations had been pursued further. It leads him to an interesting analysis of the walking times of several of the characters in the *Egoist*, and to a conclusion as to Vernon's pace from the internal evidence of chapter 25 that agrees exactly with the actual walking pace of the man on whom that character is commonly supposed to have been founded.

He knows one of the most subtle pleasures of which the body is capable.

“That complete and satisfying state of exhaustion, that sense of having come to the end of the tether, which uplifts the soul like death or exile or any other finality.”

I, for one of the readers of his book, ask nothing better than to have him for guide on one of his Sunday walks—say, for choice, up Leith Hill, combining the Walker Miles' route by Pickett's Hole to Ranmore Common (read backwards), with the diversion from the way down through Deerleap Wood (also read backwards). He could then tell me what he means when he talks of the tune of the Seventh Symphony, which

possesses at least twelve, several and distinct, and the name of the song in which the souls of the young ladies despised few topics.

C. M. M.

### ALPINE ANTHOLOGIES.

*In Praise of Switzerland.* Being the Alps in Prose and Verse. By Harold Spender. 5s. net. (Constable and Company, Ltd., London. 1912.)

*The Englishman in the Alps.* Being a Collection of English Prose and Poetry relating to Switzerland. Edited by Arnold H. M. Lunn. (Oxford: The University Press. 1913.)

THERE is much to be said in favour of an anthology of verse, particularly of lyric verse. Such poems are, as a rule, short and complete in themselves, and it is sometimes a convenience to have collected together in a handy form what various authors may have to say upon any given subject. Verse anthologies possess, too, a pleasant and invariable characteristic. They always afford you opportunity for a healthy and vigorous disagreement with the selection of the compiler. How came the fellow to omit this, and what can have possessed him to include that? A prose anthology is another matter. A chapter of a man's prose work is seldom complete in itself. It is commonly but one of many constituent parts, leading to the presentation of some larger whole. Taken by itself it may be but a lob-sided and fragmentary episode. And the length of a chapter forbids its being even taken by itself. All that your anthologist can do is, with such discretion as he possess, to tear from the chapter one or more of its more prominent and purpler patches, necessarily regardless of their context, and to hang them out to dry upon his line; half a garment to represent the author's clothing. Few would care to be judged by their socks alone. Mr. Lunn realises this difficulty, and in one case he gives—regardless of the space involved—the whole of one of Leslie Stephen's lesser known articles: A Bye-day in the Alps. And many will desire to possess his anthology for this.

It is a pity that the two volumes should have been published at the same time, since it is inevitable from their subject matter that they should contain much that is identical. In both

from Monte Motterone you survey the Lombard plain. In both you contemplate thy bald, awful head, O sovran Blanc! In both I come, O ye mountains! Ye torrents, I come! In neither has the compiler felt unduly restrained by the strict logical comprehension of his title. The Englishman includes the Himalayas and the Caucasus in his definition of the Alps, while the Praise of Switzerland embraces Excelsior and the Death of Bennen, and extends to the Apennines.

Mr. Lunn's collection will commend itself to the climber. With this volume in his pocket he will take to the hills selections from almost all of worth that has been written about them. It contains hardly a passage of really bad writing, and is proof of the care and judgment that the compiler must have given to reading the mass of Alpine books, journals, pamphlets and the like from which it is composed.

As to format, both anthologists have had to follow precedent, as each anthology is one of a series. Mr. Spender's bulks for the library shelf. Mr. Lunn's will slip lightly into the pocket. Mr. Spender lacks a list of contents, a list of authors, and a list of first lines. Mr. Lunn lacks an index and a list of authors. Mr. Lunn lets his authors speak for themselves. Mr. Spender is at pains to introduce them to the reader, and his introductions are obvious rather than illuminating. "This great poem was written by the author of 'The Ancient Mariner,'" "'Childe Harold' is the most famous poem of England's stormiest poet," "Shelley loved mountains and lived much abroad," "Tennyson, the most illustrious of the Victorian poets," and the like. Kindly meant, of course, but perhaps scarcely worth while.

Both volumes are well printed ; neither is wholly free from misprints.

C. M. M.

### THE PYRENEES.

*The Pyrenees.* By H. Belloc. 7s. 6d. net. (London: Methuen and Co. N.D.)

*Rambles in the Pyrenees and the Adjacent Districts.* By F. Hamilton Jackson, R.B.A. 21s. net. (London: John Murray. 1912.)

DESPITE their title, neither of these books is addressed to the climber. Mr. Belloc, indeed, takes water and washes his

hands of him. "Of climbing I can write nothing; it is an amusement or a gamble that I have had no opportunity of enjoying." And again, "Remember that nothing I am saying has to do with the fantastic exercise of climbing, but only with straightforward walking and scrambling." And if Mr. Belloc confine himself to walking, Mr. Jackson never leaves the main roads of the foothills, and travels them for the most part in a carriage.

What Mr. Belloc sets himself out for to do is to provide a general knowledge of the district for such as propose to travel in it as he did, and to tell what he himself would like to have been told before he first set out. He deals with the physical nature of the Pyrenees, with their political character, their road systems, their maps, their inns, their approaches, and with travel on foot upon them both generally, and also particularly, district by district. His book therefore of necessity becomes too bulky to carry in the pocket, a fact which he recognises with regret. It is more than this. It is too bulky and too heavy (its weight is 2 lb. 4 oz.) at all conveniently to carry in the rucksac, and must needs be left behind when one camps out. This is, however, of less moment, since it is not so much a guide-book that one consults on the march as to a particular division of the way as a general account of the whole district, which one can read with profit before one sets out, and leave behind one at one's base.

Mr. Belloc for the most part confines himself to the beaten track, be it broad high road or faint mule path, and does not seek to lead one over the uncharted. His chapter on maps gives useful information. His chapter on equipment is more open to controversy. He carries a haversack rather than a rucksac, and goes shod in sandals (remember he abjures climbing) instead of boots. His chapter on inns is welcome. He complains of British guide-books that, be they never so detailed in hotel information, they always fail to speak good or evil of the people, the cooking and the wine; and he sets himself to be informing as to all three.

Mr. Jackson confines himself to the French side of the chain. Indeed, he never at all nearly approaches the watershed. His district includes such cities of

the plain as Bordeaux and Toulouse. Between these and the hills he rambles, confining himself to the high roads, and concerning himself with the architecture of the towns through which he passes. And his district is rich for his purpose, containing, as it does, the choir of St. Bertrand de Comminges, the cathedral at Elne, the walls of Carcassonne, and the cathedral at Auch. The book is profusely illustrated with photographs, plans, and drawings, the latter mainly by the author. Of the various architectural features with which he deals, Mr. Jackson gives detailed and technical descriptions. He is not so happy in recording, as he frequently does, the irrelevant and uninteresting incidents of his travel.

"At Autevielle the train stayed for twenty-five minutes, apparently to allow the country fellows to solace themselves with drinking wine. Subsequently a little dancing and horse-play developed, which was rather amusing. Meanwhile it got dark, and began to rain again (for we had had a couple of hours' respite), so that I was glad to get into the omnibus at the station and drive to the hotel without troubling about anything else. After dinner I wanted to post a card, and sallied out to find the post-box, following instructions given by the waitress as well as I could."

It would seem that Mr. Jackson's papers have been sorted with too little care, and that some of his private correspondence has, by mistake, been sent to the printer. C. M. M.

*Alpine Studies.* By W. A. B. Coolidge. (London : Longmans, Green and Co. 1912.)

"ALPINE STUDIES" consists in the main of certain reprints from the *Alpine Journal*. They have been republished in their original form. There is something to be said for this plan when the essay owes its main interest to contemporary associations. We should miss half the charm of "Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers" if some enterprising publisher brought their contents up to date, replacing "perpendicular" by "fifty degrees," and "inaccessible precipices" by "steep slopes of broken but easy rock." But Mr. Coolidge is far too careful a writer to entertain his readers with archaisms. He began to climb after the pioneers had exhausted the great prizes of the Alps, and his articles are not sufficiently remote from to-day to justify their unedited publication on historic



or literary grounds. They are sufficiently near to be inaccurate. It is tiresome to refer constantly to the date of each article in order to explain some misstatement by the fact that recent knowledge was then undiscovered. The Meije may have been "the longest continuously difficult climb in the Alps" when Mr. Coolidge described its ascent in the *Alpine Journal*, but it gives one something of a shock to find this statement in the present tense.

In other ways these articles might well have been combed out before they reappeared in book form. The style is often laboured. The Senior Fellow of Magdalen should have revised such sentences as this:

"Now while yielding to none in my admiration of the giants of the Pennine and of various groups of the Swiss Alps, I confess I have a hankering after mountaineering as it must have been in the early days of the Alpine Club, when one might hope to enjoy the grand scenes scattered so profusely through the Alps, without finding the way made dangerous by fragments of broken bottles, and to descend in the evening after a well-spent day, to rest in some village inn, or in the cabane of some 'Aelper,' or 'berger,' sure of a hearty welcome, and a genuine cry at the moment of leaving of 'au revoir,' or 'auf Wiedersehen,' far from the magnificence and tediousness of a table d'hôte in a Grand Hotel."

Mr. Coolidge's chapters on winter mountaineering are interesting as coming from a pioneer of this branch of the sport. His sketches of Alpine life below the snow-line are among the best things in the book. His reminiscences of Almer and the wonderful mountaineer, his dog Tschingel, are also of more than passing interest. We are glad to learn that Mr. Coolidge did not forget the best Alpine Club traditions when making ascents with Tschingel, and ensured that he was duly roped on snow-covered glaciers.

Carelessness is the last thing we expect from Mr. Coolidge, and yet the pronouns in the following allusion to his dog Tschingel need careful rearrangement:—

"She would have made a purse out of these ears, but she died (1875) before Tschingel (1879). Her voice was deep

and musical. She was very intelligent, but too old when we got her to learn new tricks."

The Alps are Mr. Coolidge's hobby, and, as often happens, he is apt to concentrate on the minutiae of his hobby.

No one who loves literature cares for the minor issues which provide the academies with an excuse for much learning, and no one who really cares for the mountains could follow with enthusiasm the dreary evidence which Mr. Coolidge marshals to decide which summit of Monte Rosa was climbed in 1848. This chapter reads like a parody of Bishop Stubbs on some obscure point in the charters.

This book is rather disappointing after "The Alps." In the latter work Mr. Coolidge gave us a very thorough and interesting account of all phases of the Alps. His gifts as historian had full scope, and he did not descend into minutiae of little importance. The present work contains the gleanings of his historical knowledge and his own climbing reminiscence. He will be remembered rather for his research into Alpine history than for his descriptions of Alpine adventure. When we wish to be instructed, we shall turn to his books. When we wish to climb we shall turn to his guide-books. But when we merely desire to "beget the golden time again," we shall leave the historian for those who are not ashamed of an occasional purple patch, a fault for which Mr. Coolidge has hearty contempt. We shall leave the historian for the genial romantic writer, whose topography is misleading, whose facts are stranger than fiction, but who somehow contrives to convey some hint of forgotten joys, some distant memory of good days among the hills.

*Oxford Mountaineering Essays.* Edited by Arnold H. M. Lunn. 5s. net. (London: Edward Arnold. 1912.)

"THE CLIMBER," says Mr. Tyndale, "is notoriously an unsatisfactory person, not only to the uninitiated, but to his fellow-enthusiasts." This collection of essays, nine in number, gives his statement satisfactorily enough the lie. They have been inspired, the Editor tells us, by Donald Robertson's claim that there is still room for a man to tell freely and without false shame the simple story of a day among the mountains.

And, in so far as the various authors have set themselves to do this, their essays have no occasion for the sheltering plea of youth editorially urged on their behalf.

Two papers of the nine stand out conspicuous: *A Journey*, by Mr. Hugh Kingsmill Lunn, and *British Hills*, by Mr. H. R. Pope. The former is at once the shortest and the completest essay in the volume. In substance it is an account of how the author journeyed from Oberkreuzberg to Saas Fee; in effect, it is one aspect of the call of the hills told with simplicity and charm. The latter is an examination and a refutation of the suggestion that our British hills are becoming exhausted in the sense that the Alps have been said to have become exhausted.

It is a refutation, but a refutation with reservations.

"If even the high Alps are in danger of vulgarisation, what may not be the fate of our British hills? The great god Pan is very gracious to his worshippers, but not when they come in crowds. One by one his haunts are discovered and laid bare, his chosen sanctuaries are called by uncouth names, even his beloved fennel is catalogued in the list of mountain flora. . . . Some of our hills have been turned into a sort of suburban playground of our northern towns, and there are times when we seem to detect the staleness of the suburbs even in the windy heights. The very easiness of access becomes a snare. . . . Men come with the atmosphere of the towns they have left behind still clinging to them. . . . Instead of sloughing the crust of habit as they slough their city clothes, they let it overlay their sensibilities."

Mr. Pope bases his refutation in some respects on the healing pleasure of pain.

"The first jet of icy water down his back will wash away the affectations and rouse the primitive man. There is no pleasure here in the feel of the wet rocks, no æsthetic delight in waterfalls or misty depths, nothing but the satisfaction of the fighting instinct which lies dormant in every one of us. The falling water attacks him like a living thing; it numbs his hands, confuses his senses, tries to take the very heart out of him. For once in his life at least he is face to face with the forces of Nature—cold, wind, and rain. . . . Man enters as an intruder, and has to make good his footing."

But, in spite of all, Mr. Pope feels the strength of the case he has to meet, and he is at last driven further into the wild, and driven alone.

"The climber should sometimes go alone. . . . Let him make his bed in the heather undisturbed by any sign of the presence

of man or of his handiwork. The cold wind that comes with dawn will waken him as the first thin mists are gathering round the peaks three thousand feet above. As he climbs the steep slopes of heather in the half-light the mists roll down to meet him, till he is the only living, moving thing in a world of whiteness and silence. The heather dwindles, here and there black rock-ridges show for a moment and disappear. As in a dream he takes no count of time or distance, till at last he steps out upon the summit and the sun meets him, showing level with his eyes."

A hard doctrine, a perilous doctrine, but if at times Pan terribly stamp his foot, he also speaks to the climber face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.

Mr. Michael T. H. Sadler writes of an artist of mountains. His observation with extensive view surveys mankind, from China to Peru. He discusses Giotto, Benozzo Gozzoli, Dürer, Claude, Constable, Monet, Kuo Hsi, Cézanne, Hokusai, and incidentally, Mr. C. J. Holmes, who is professedly his subject. He is a little discursive, a little ponderous, and a little dull.

"Mountains, more than any other of the features of nature, are fundamental, synthetic. They present, untrammelled and without elaboration, the great basic principles on which they are built; their structure has absolute unity, their monumental architecture is simple."

Mr. Julian S. Huxley gives an extension lecture on elementary geology without tears. The Editor's essay is on The Mountains of Youth, and only misses complete success in being too diffuse. Its account of his early initiation into the craft is delightful. His childhood was spent at Grindelwald. The hero of his youth was an old guide. Where other children devise great games of trains or wild Indians, his pastime was to make terrific ascents, and he tells you of his first attacks on the grass bank behind the chalet in which he lived, with a pick-axe to cut the necessary steps upon its dizzy slopes, and forty feet of clothes-line to belay him over its tremendous traverses.

C. M. M.

*Switzerland in Sunshine and Snow.* By Edmund B. D'Auvergne. (London: T. Werner Laurie. N.D.)

THE method of this volume is to take the various cantons one by one and to give some account of the history and legend appropriate to each—William Tell and Uri, Lucerne and the

Swiss Guards, Winkelried and Unterwalden, and the like. There are excursions on such subjects as the prisoner of Chillon, much idealised by Byron, on Geneva and the Calvinists, on guides, on St. Bernard dogs, on winter sports, and similar subjects. Mr. D'Auvergne is occasionally betrayed into the banal. "While staying at Neuchatel I walked out to a little place on the lake called Auvernier, where I had an excellent tea at an inn called the Poisson," and at times tends towards the aphoristic. "In a world composed of electricians, engineers, biologists, vivisectioners, waterworks directors, and what not, we shall sadly miss the unselfish, emotional, noble-hearted dog."

He seems to have visited the Märjelen See only in winter, as he talks of the snow-crowned peak of the Eggishorn. And he would appear to imagine that at Oxford a blue is awarded for yachting. "The lake-dweller must have had the skill of an Oxford blue to sail so frail a craft in safety." His book has many illustrations, inserted to a great part by kind permission of Continental Travel, Limited. In some cases they seem to have been strewn over the pages without too nice a reference to their context. The rink, Kandersteg, appears in a chapter devoted to the land of Tell, the Lüscherne is pictured in a chapter on Einsiedeln, a photograph of curling at Murren illustrates a chapter on Geneva and Calvin. C. M. M.

*The Building of the Alps.* By T. G. Bonney, Sc.D., F.R.S., etc., etc. (London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1912.)

THIS book, Professor Bonney says, is written on the lines of his former work on *The Alpine Regions of Switzerland and the Neighbouring Countries*, and he has endeavoured to write from the point of view of one who is a lover of the Alps, somewhat of a geologist, and a little of a naturalist. No one will gainsay him these qualifications. Somewhat of a geologist, in the author's deprecating phrase, means, in fact, a doctor of science, a fellow of the Royal Society, an honorary doctor of three Universities, an emeritus professor of a fourth, a past president of the British Association and of the Geological Society, and the other two qualifications may be read in the same light. The volume divides itself into three parts—

technical, descriptive, and discursive. Under the first heading fall such chapters as The Geographical Distribution of Alpine Rocks, The Materials of the Alps, How the Alps Grew, and the like; under the second the chapters on Avalanches and Floods, Alpine Meteorology, and The Vegetation of the Alps; and under the third the final chapters dealing with The Alps in Relation to Man and Fifty Years of Change.\*

Every mountaineer should have some knowledge of geology. So far as concerns the Alps, he will learn from Professor Bonney that they form a group neither simple nor single, but the result of two epochs of successive movement, separated by an interval of repose, that the Pennine range had its beginnings before the Oberland, that the Rhone glacier formerly rested on the flanks of the Jura and reached the neighbourhood of Lyons, that there is an upward movement of the ice in a glacier beyond an ice-fall, just as of water after a waterfall, of the comparative unimportance of glaciers, as compared with unfrozen water, in the fashioning of valleys, and of how a valley draining a watershed in one direction can be robbed of its water by the eating back across its path of another valley which may carry the water to some other and far distant sea.

The chapters that fall under the head of the discursive will prove of particular interest to the mountaineer.

The first two chapters are the most technical in the book, and to the non-geologist will be hard reading, with their necessary discussion of the sporadic association of serpentines and hornblendic and chloritic rocks, dolerites and basalts, with beds of mica-schist, quartz-schist, and crystalline limestone. Such a reader should begin at Chapter III. He will be led warily from material to form, from form to forming causes, from forming causes to resultant Switzerland as it is to-day, and will return to the first two chapters and read them with interest, and even with understanding. C. M. M.

*Ski Runs in the High Alps.* By Professor Roget. 10s. 6d. nett. (Fisher Unwin.)

SKI-RUNNERS will welcome this account of personal experiences in the noblest branch of their sport—mountaineering.

Professor Roget is a true lover of the mountains, and not only enjoys every hour of his expeditions, but has the gift of expressing that enjoyment in black and white. He is not a young man, and in fact only began ski-ing in middle life, an example which should encourage that numerous clan who consider themselves too old at fifty to take up ski-ing. Aiguille du Chardonnet, Grand Combin, Finsteraarhorn, Dent Blanche, Traverse of the Bernese Oberland, and the High-Level Route from Bourg St. Pierre to Zermatt, is a ski-ing record equalled by a few good Continental runners, but who has ever dreamed of spending a winter night on a glacier, as the Professor did on the Plaine Morte, merely out of a sporting curiosity? Popular tradition has it that a night on the mountains in winter has every chance of proving one's last, but now we know that, given favourable conditions, it need not only not prove fatal, but can be positively enjoyed. We think, however, the Professor's example is hardly one to be lightly followed. Should a wind spring up in the night, the position would immediately become serious, and even very dangerous; also the risk of frost-bite is great.

There are some points in which many ski mountaineers will not agree with the Professor. In comparing winter and summer mountaineering, the following passage occurs with reference to the former:—

"The start is made much later in the morning, but, on the other hand, one need not be over-anxious as to getting to one's night quarters by sunset. Running on ski at night over a course that has been travelled over in the morning, and, therefore, perfectly recognisable and familiar, is, in clear weather, as pleasant as it is easy."

In our experience this is rather the exception than the rule, and involves climbing in the heat of the sun, with the run down spoilt by the uncertainty of the gradient in the dusk.

Another debatable\* point is the advisability of discarding the rope while ski-ing down glaciers, a custom adopted by the Professor. The writer has on more than one occasion seen a gaping crevasse suddenly appear where no sign on the surface indicated its presence even to the experienced local guides.

---

\* Scarcely a debatable point. To ski unroped on a glacier is always dangerous.—EDITOR.

Roped running only needs a little practice and a knowledge of the ski-ing efficiency of the various members of the same rope. Experienced mountaineer though the Professor be, we cannot but think that it is chiefly owing to good luck that none of his parties have broken through a snow bridge while unroped. It is far pleasanter to ski unhampered by the rope, but is the risk justifiable on a crevassed glacier?

There is one passage we should like to quote which is too often true:—

"When a climbing party comes to grief, it is as an additional course for the menu of the 'table d'hôtes'; a dainty morsel for busy-bodies, quidnuncs, and experts alike. The critical spirit grows ungenerous in that atmosphere. The victims of the Alps were tempting Fate; one knows exactly what mistake they made; So-and-so was altogether foolish in—, and so forth."

How can the fireside critic know the exact conditions under which an accident happened? In his comfortable arm-chair a man of the most fertile imagination cannot place himself in the position of the survivors, perhaps shivering in the bitter wind, tortured by the tragedy and by the thought that it might have been avoided.

There is an account by Mr. Marcel Kurz of an expedition in the Bernina group which affords pleasant reading, a chapter on ski bindings which will meet with some criticism, and some useful information on winter sport centres.

The illustrations are an improvement on most of the photographs from which they are taken, and the frontispiece gives an excellent idea of the magnificent sunset colours seen in winter. We should think, however, that the Professor will not be altogether flattered by the portrait of himself on the cover. The artist need not have felt obliged to draw in the feet when he found they would naturally have come below the limit of the picture.

We can recommend all mountaineers to read this book. The experienced, the inexperienced, those who are contemplating tours of the nature described, and those who are not, all will find pleasure in Professor Roget's delightful style, and some very sound lessons in his varied experiences.

W. A. MOORE.