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New Series.

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JOURNAL

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THE DEVIL'S THUMB.

By T. G. LONGSTAFF.

ICE conditions in 1934 off the north-west coast of Greenland were very bad, and J. M. Wordie's party spent seven weeks fruitlessly attempting to get through Melville Bay in order to round Cape York and enter Smith Sound. We hardly attained 75° North. Eventually we turned south and failing to get through the main pack of Baffin Bay had to go down to the Arctic Circle before we could make Baffinland. But these delays gave us the opportunity of visiting parts of north-west Greenland for which we should otherwise have had no time.

One of our difficulties in navigating through the ice was that we never had a single gale between rounding Cape Farewell on June 4th and bumping Baffinland on August 11th. This was one of the causes why the winter ice between the main pack and the shores of Melville Bay never broke up till the middle of August. July 12th was one of these perfect days, still and without a cloud in the sky. Our small Norwegian sealer, the *Heimen*, only 129 tons gross and 50 tons burthen, was secured to a level sheet of unbroken winter ice, six to ten feet thick, which separated us from the old, heavy-rafterd polar pack of Baffin Bay, amongst which numerous very large icebergs were entangled. The surface was melting and studded with many seal-holes, so that skis were the safest foot-gear. I was attracted by one particularly monstrous berg on the very edge of the main pack and skied out to it a mile or so over the level land-fast ice. This little venture miles out at sea recalled to my mind an old vivid dream of my childhood in which I used to start out fearlessly walking away over the sea to some undiscovered land. These old bergs acquire with age a peculiar grain of crystallisation, each cube being the size of a small grape, and I found that my edge nails enabled me to walk up at an angle where irons or stepcutting would have been necessary in any other ice I have met. For practice I took the steepest side at the top and had considerable difficulty in cutting up the last



THE DEVIL'S THUMB FROM THE SOUTH
Our route on the left skyline

M. H. W. Ritchie

vertical six or eight feet. Both hand and footholds constantly disintegrated because of the gradual giving way of the large crystals of which the surface was composed, and I had twice to descend in order to remake the steps and handholds below me. In spite of its steepness it was possible to run down the berg by a somewhat easier route without cutting steps, the very coarse granular structure of the ice giving a good grip so long as speed was maintained. I was on the edge of the heavy pack and the ice scenery was magnificent. One could hear the silence and the scarcely dipping, almost unperceived wheeling of the sun seemed to suspend time itself: withal a light of such delicate perfection as to give the palm of memory to the arctic for all travellers wherever else they may have been.

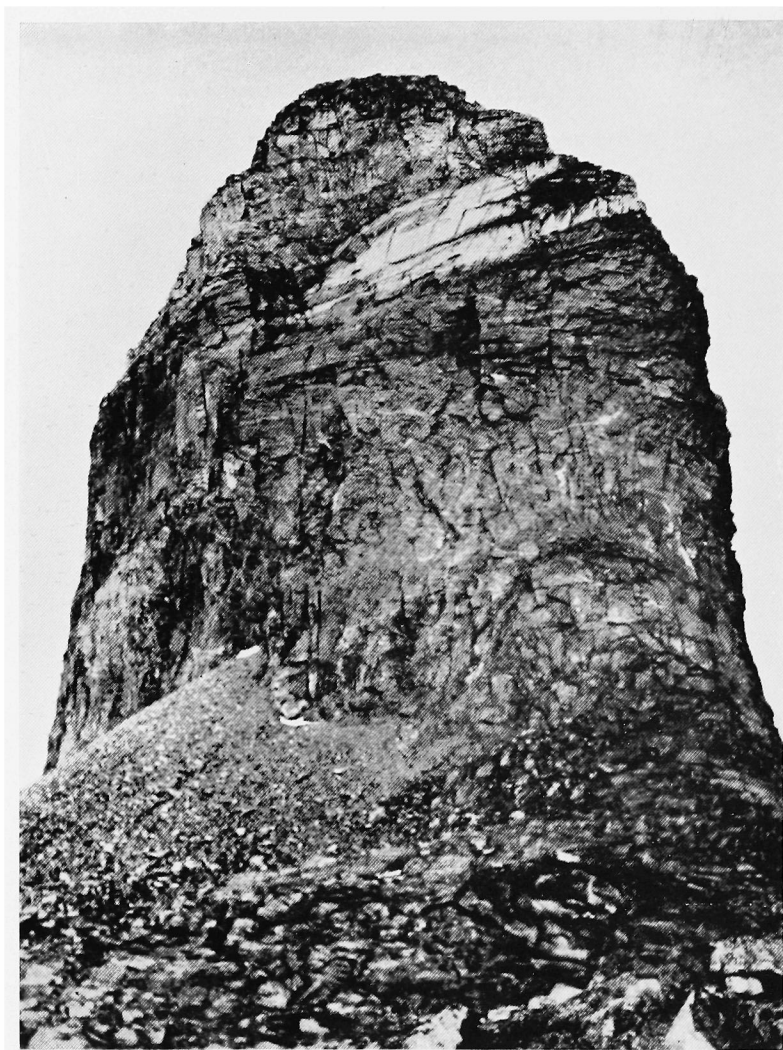
The Devil's Thumb is the most remarkable land mark on this part of the Greenland coast. It is visible far out at sea, and was well known to the whaling fleets which frequented these waters during rather more than the first half of the last century. It is a wall sided thumb sticking up from the backbone of Qudlugs-suak Island, which lies a few miles off the mainland. For the last dozen years or so there has been a small Eskimo settlement on it, but the Thumb is not visible from the village itself. The Greenlanders were positive that not only had it never been climbed, but that it never would be.

With P. D. Baird I had often looked longingly at the Thumb and carefully examined it with glasses on numerous occasions since we had first seen it during our ascent of Wilcox Head on July 3rd. Constant disappointments and delays in the ice had produced a certain feeling of desperation to be up and doing, so that when at 10.00 on July 22nd we anchored opposite the settlement, Baird and I set out by boat immediately, to "look at it" only, owing to the somewhat sceptical chaffing of some of our companions. Snaking through open pack, we landed at its south-eastern foot at noon. The day was perfect. In bright sunlight we walked up a flowery slope dotted with six-inch bushes of dwarf rhododendron, the equally tall white bell-heather of the arctic and many other flowers, enlivened by a few fritillary butterflies and Greenland wheatears. Coasting round the peak from the south by east to the north side, we looked for a possible line of attack. Nowhere have I seen more uncompromising cliffs than the sheer 900 foot south face of the Devil's Thumb. The narrow eastern front also appeared vertical, and was overhung at the top by splintered and unstable looking towers. Distant inspection by telescope had prepared us for a gully on the invisible northern face, but we found access to it hopelessly cut off from below by a smooth, greasy wall at least 200 feet high that would repulse any but the most persevering of

ironmongers. Finally we scrambled up (13.00) on to the hog's back, from which the thumb rises at about 1,200 feet above the sea, facing the west end of the thumb where the climb is shorter, some 600 feet only, than from any of the other sides. This looked quite impossible owing to a series of most forbidding little overhangs, and we duly sympathised with each other over our disappointment. But climbers know that rock cannot be pronounced impossible until it is fingered. So we lunched and went for it (13.45).

Baird had the lead and politely consented to shorten the rope to half the length he wanted. The first pitch was not so bad, with decent footing above it, but no handhold or belay for the rope. I then took the lead, as light weight (Baird is over 6 ft. and 13 stone), and managed the second pitch all right. To our left or straight upwards progress was now impossible, but there seemed a way of reaching the south-west edge of the southern cliffs by an upward slanting traverse to our right. The peak at this end has the form of an almost square-sided block. I gloomily consented to Baird lengthening the rope to 60 feet clear and he again took the lead. By neat climbing he made the next 60 feet and I joined him where there were two stances but no holds. We now saw that it would go, but this next fourth pitch was still more delicate: we had to continue slanting upwards to our right, dodging small but troublesome overhangs. Another 60 foot lead took Baird to our first secure stance, on the actual corner or edge of the southern precipice: from above, this face seemed to overhang, and a stone dropped an impressively long time before the sound of its striking returned to us. The trouble had been that there was no good holding between the first and fourth pitches, so that if one of us had slipped the other must inevitably follow, and the climb might be classed as technically "unjustifiable" by the more orthodox. But it is arguable whether any climb is in itself unjustifiable; that must depend on the "conditions" and on the party; conditions were perfect and we were both fully prepared to turn back at any moment, and quite sure that we could climb down anything we climbed up. Pitons above the second and third pitches would have made the climb "safe," and I must confess to a regret that through my prejudiced conservatism we had not brought any. I must add that Baird assured me afterwards that this climb would not be considered "severe" according to modern British standards—a nasty dig for me and a lurid light on modern accomplishment.

Once on the edge of the southern face the climbing, though still steep and very sensational, became easy, and we reached the top at 15.15, after 1½ hours' climbing. It had been a glorious



WEST FACE OF THE DEVIL'S THUMB

Route lies up right third of face to right hand skyline

P. D. Baird

climb and a most unexpected success ; none other done merely for the sake of achievement, as this was, ever gave me so much pleasure. Indeed I can never hope to repay my companion for this day. The weather was perfect and the view in every direction marvellous. The top was a flowery platform made for basking. After some time Baird noticed an insignificant pile of stones, very old and lichen covered, perhaps 18 inches high, which we thought must be artificial. It was placed at the south-east corner of the summit platform and not on the highest spot, nor well placed for visibility from the sea. Since we had managed the climb, obviously others could do so, but considering how impossible it had *looked* to two experienced climbers it seemed incredible that we were not the first comers. We really felt little personal disappointment, being quite overcome by admiration for the unknown seaman who, we supposed, had climbed it last century, for this was a common place of assembly for the whaling fleets from about 1820 to 1860. We carefully took this little cairn to pieces, but found no trace of a record. There is no record of any visit by mountaineers. For various reasons we cannot entertain the possibility that it was built by an Eskimo. At the settlement, whence the Thumb is invisible, so that our own cairn had not been seen, they quite refused to believe in our ascent, thinking that we were joking. Under the cairn was a layer of nearly an inch of fine soil resting on the living rock, a further indication of age. Wordie is inclined to believe that what we took for a low cairn was simply a frost-shattered rock. Since our return, either he or I have got in touch with the authors of every Danish reference to this ascent ; and in every case we got the answer that it was the Devil's Thumb "mountain" and not the Thumb itself that Danish parties had visited. Dr. Lauge Koch and Peter Freuchen, the companions of Knud Rasmussen, and Dr. Hans Bryder are united in the opinion that the actual Thumb had never been climbed before. Indeed this cairn business is such a mystery that it is far easier not to believe in it at all. At the time we accepted it as human, and our disappointment was very slight ; the climb itself was the thing that mattered to us.

We used these old stones and the few new sharply splintered ones we could collect from the top to make a new cairn about 3-feet high on the highest point, in which we put a sardine tin, recording our ascent as the second. An hour and a quarter passed all too quickly, for the view was incredibly beautiful in every direction. The solidity of the sea—berg, pack and floe—seemed to invite exploration on foot, though it looked quite hopeless for the northward passage of a ship ; it was even more impressive than the rolling immensity of the inland ice which

filled the entire eastern horizon. Most unwillingly we tore ourselves away and commenced the descent at 16.30.

During Baird's lead up I had stipulated for last place on the way down, and so descended the first 200 feet. But watching Baird below me I saw that he was in great form and climbing better than I was, therefore when we came to the difficult part I felt I must give way to youth: youth could not conceal his pleasure, and age admits that he felt comfort from the moral support of the rope, though personally I found it rather easier going down than coming up. All went well and we unroped at 17.26, within the hour. After a dip in a shallow sun-warmed pool of snow-water we walked back over steep hills of bare ice-worn rock in the bright sunlight of the arctic "evening," and reached the ship at 20.00.

A MEMORABLE VIEW.

By E. F. BOZMAN.

Schwer sind die Berge, schwer sind die Meere,
Aber die Lüfte . . . aber die Räume . . .

RAINER MARIA RILKE.

[Our contributor complains that the retiring editor lost an MS. which he sent in some years ago, when this number of the "Journal" was due to appear. Distance, he urges, while lending enchantment to, has borrowed definition from, his view.—ED.]

I HAVE not a good memory, but one particular alpine panorama lives in what there is of it—a summit view which, as far as I remember, was unforgettable. The mountain, whose name I cannot recall, was a 4,000-metre peak, and the party consisted of myself, some friend or other (possibly my wife), and, I think, a guide. We made an early start from the . . . hut after a hurried breakfast of either tea or coffee, and I remember saying to the guide, as is my usual practice, "Have you got the rope with you?" He did not reply. These men are not talkative in the early morning.

We made our way steadily upward in the light of our lantern, and reached the top of the *moraine* while the freshness of dawn was still clinging to the hillsides. There we again breakfasted (*seconde service*), and a long trudge up the glacier (or *glaisher*, as my companion called it) brought us to the *schrund* in time for another breakfast (*troisième service*). While we were on our way the sun had risen, as is its custom, somewhere in the east, touching peak after peak with its magic, transforming sullen white into soft pink and shining gold. It was a wonderful scene. There they stood, these peaks, in a ring round us, all lit up like guests at a cocktail party—how I wished I could remember some of their names!

Without further delay we pitted ourselves against the serious problems of our ascent, the *couloir*, the *névé*, the slabs, the *verglas*, the fixed ropes, the *cornice* (see glossary), and not until these difficulties were overcome and the final *arête* climbed did we

pause to eat our lunch and to assimilate the full glory of the scene. Then what a sight met our eyes!

Immediately facing us was the enormous *massif* of some mountain whose name escapes me, with its appalling precipices plunging to the glacier of the same name below; to our right the glorious . . . group (I have forgotten the name) with its castellated snow-towers and glistening *seracs*—I thought of Byron's (or is it Wordsworth's?) "thousand years of snow"; to our left a huge upward shrug of striking shape reminded us of San Sophia or the Chrysler building, I cannot remember which; between our legs as we looked down we saw first the lunch in our rucksacks and then, lower down, the hotels and tennis courts of the village where we had bought it; behind us (we had to turn round, of course) billow upon billow of snowscape—illimitable snow-ways calling to us snow-men—stretching as far as the eye could see to the distant Bernese Oberland (or possibly Dolomites) to the north (or south, I am not sure). It seemed that the whole map of Switzerland—or it may have been Austria—was unrolled beneath our feet. And in all the panorama one mountain stood out dominant, King, it must have been one of the well-known ones, the Matterhorn, perhaps, though my wife thought it was the Cervin. The sky was a cloudless yellow (we were wearing our glasses), except for one little cluster of rain-storm over what would be England if we could see it. It was interesting to speculate that over there, but for that rain-cloud, a test-match would have been in progress at Old Trafford. We could almost see the tarpaulins . . .

My companion was not ordinarily talkative on a mountain, but I shall never forget the effect it had on her. She turned to me and said:

"You don't often see a view like this?"

"No," I said.

Our guide was peeling a banana, but he too was under the spell, I think. I passed him my flask, and he said quite simply: "Merci, eh?" or possibly "prosit."

"I will give you a toast," I said to my wife, quickly taking my flask back again.

"A la très belle, a la très bonne,

Qui fait ma joie et ma santé. . . ."

adding modestly, "Of course, you know the beautiful lines of Verlaine, or are they Baudelaire?"

My wife's eyes were shining with pleasure.

"I refer," I added, "to mountaineering in the abstract, to the goddess of the hills, if you like."

She looked unaccountably dashed, I remember.

It was not a moment for idle chatter, and it was significant

that the instant our lunch was finished the guide said in his queer English :

“Now we will go down.”

Idly, loth to go, I kicked at the ball of snow under my instep. It sped down the precipice, gathering speed alarmingly.

“That,” said the guide, pointing at my snowball, “is our way.”

Soon the descent was accomplished, and the snows, the rocks, the glacier were left behind us. The hut-guardian welcomed us warmly, and presented his bill. In a luxury of physical well-being we lounged down the zig-zag paths, through the pine trees and the meadows. As I handed our guide the entire contents of my note-case he said :

“To-morrow we will do Matterhorn.”

Peace and the scent of pines enveloped me. “To-morrow,” I replied, “we will not do Matterhorn.”

In the lengthening shadows we turned for a last look at our peak aloof in the evening sun.

“We ought to have a souvenir,” my wife said, “of our expedition. Why not take a photograph from here?”

It was only then that I realised that I had forgotten my camera ; had left it, if I remember rightly, on the top of the mountain.

END OF A CLIMB.

By J. M. EDWARDS.

IT was an easy route, but I made a mess of it. My friend had to rub my middle for me, and that more than once all over, before I could get up the bad pitch. Even so I trembled violently all the way up.

Courage comes and goes so stupidly. I have never been able to discover the way of it myself, nor whether it was a good or a bad thing. Some people seem to get firmly into the habit of it and then it seems usually a bad thing. Perhaps it is that bravery is an accident, something to be explained away, or deprecated, or at the very least something to be kept very secretly to oneself, to use for one's own personal admiration. One can use it too instead of wisdom and so on in one's decisions, and it can then make life much easier, both to live and to take a pride in. As for the question of how to get this courage, I am myself convinced that here again it must almost always be accidentally come by: either it is put upon one because the world has left one too empty here and too full there, or else one catches it as one might a cold, from some odd circumstance, a friend rubbing one's middle for instance, in just the correct manner.

Anyhow, be the reason what it may, we did get up the climb, standard probably easy V.D., and at the top I was so exhausted with the conflicting emotions of fear and pride that, instead of thanking my friend for his kindly ministrations, I lay down full length in the heather and fell straight away into a deep sleep. The chief reward of virtue had come to me; but unfortunately my happiness was not complete, for out of the depths of an otherwise princely portion of unconsciousness there came to me a dream, a long and a difficult dream.

Perhaps it was due to the inner conflict of feeling I had been through, or perhaps it was that while laying my upper half carefully on the heather I had left the lower half to fend for itself on the rocks; one way or the other I dreamt that I was in two parts, and that each was frankly annoyed with the other. For some time indeed they glared at each other without a word

spoken. Then the legs could hold back no further. "Look here," they said, "we've been doing this all up the climb; it's about time we had it all out." And to my alarm and disgust they began to pull yard after yard of the most unpleasant looking material from their insides. It was plain enough that the wretched halves were simply doing this to annoy each other. The atmosphere of hate was in it, and they were showing how rotten the inside of a person can be when brought unexpectedly outside. I could do nothing to prevent it, and the cliff was rapidly getting into very nasty condition. They went on shouting and cursing and throwing out half-digested material on either side until the climbs were no longer worth doing: excellent routes covered with this, as I say, half-digested stuff that one usually prefers to stow away and take for granted.

In sheer disgust at the sight they made I took to flight, and floated off into the fastnesses of the Alps. But, alas, speed as I might, they were there before me standing there still, for I might as well be honest, strewing their guts all over the mountains. I rushed rapidly on through the air towards the Himalayas. I never got there. Whether it was my hurry, or perhaps that the lower part of my bed was not only hard but a little slippery, I suddenly felt myself drop. Down I fell into the sea, then a sick, heavy tremor crept along the marrow of my bones and I sank slowly through the dull water. What sea it was I do not know, but it was quite warm and may well have been the Persian Gulf. It must have been deep too, for I seemed to sink for a long time before subsiding on the bottom. That may have been deceptive though, for I certainly remember that even the last few feet took ages to go by. I hated it, and as I sank I cried out my fears. "It is no earthly use trying to get to the Himalayas," I cried. "What shall I do now?" Then with a sudden dead calm I stopped breathing.

You may think that was a highly satisfactory ending for a man's more fine desires, but it was never to be consummated, for, soon after I had stopped breathing, I was surprised to find that by far the greater part of me was still perfectly well alive. Either it did not require air at all, or it could get it from some internal source. The apparent necessity of logic was being dispensed with, and as I realised this I began to rouse myself from the mud of the sea-floor in which I was being already systematically fossilised. I struggled hard, but the words were still floating about above me and it required a terrible effort to grasp them. "Er—er—Oxygen's a farce"; and as I gasped it out I rose at once to the surface of the water. "I need air?" I went on, "but dash it I'm full of all sorts of air, and anyhow you know nothing about it." Apparently, for without the

slightest sign of breathing or anything that might support its further existence, my love detached itself and sailed strongly down the wind to the cliff where it had started, flicked off the mess and began climbing again without a qualm.

I was pleased at this, and not hesitating to put my mind at rest, I seized the chance as it came and rose half a mile into the full heat of the sun. There, from that elevated and pleasant position, I was able to survey the operations below me at a proper distance and with a proper detachment.

It seems wrong to pass straight from dream to reality, yet, as this is what actually happened, I do not wish to falsify the truth in any way and will stick to the facts. I fancy I slept on undisturbed until I finally awoke. Awoke, but it was with a not very definite awakening. I became conscious first of a calmness in the air, then of faint sounds of the hillside. One might wake up a little more.

It was indeed a warm day and a good spot. The cliff was below us and its height carried us up above the rest of the steep valley side in a little castle of rock. On this was our patch of heather, dry and thick. The other side of the valley stood over against us in a ridge, hard and dark, for beyond and behind it the sun was declining into the faint mists of a still further horizon, somewhere over the flatlands beyond our range. Its rays lit the hillside round us, and down the pass we could see their straight lines slant across with the light in their arms. There was no need to move. The comfortable heather pressed into my back, filling out its angles of restlessness.

The sunset. The grinding of atom against its neighbour atom, force against its neighbour force. Fortuitous perhaps, but moulded now into this by its necessities and its long chain of use. Moulded into a colour of paradise, then driven away again along illimitable change. And a little figure looks up out of his own preoccupation and catches perhaps something of the size. He, too, is nature. He knows the change, the decay and long births, the mills grinding, and he too standing aside at the end of his climb can see, spread in his eyes, a terror and a glory within him. That his poor feelings are nature, but are no aim for nature. They are incidents, instruments, to be excited in him and caught up in him, dazzled and torn by him and used as goads upon him fully while there is any power left in them and until they are quite done. Use and not satisfaction with nature, except that we can imagine ourselves dead a little.

Yet my mind would not gather together its profundities in that pause at the end of our climb. There was some tune that turned round and round in front of me, and my mind refused

to recognise the silly jazz and put a stop to it. Poor, sleepy mind. The energy in us has always been like that. It kicked on and on inside of us until it was tired, and then only it let us stand aside. For once it gave leisure to look around us at the end of the climb in suitable perspective, but—the mind too had finished its climb, and was gone to sleep. When we pause it is because we have truly come to a pause, and that is often a pity.

My mind was in fact vaguely on the subject of climbing. Fancy lying about on the heather like this, after a single short climb half way up the pass. This is not what they used to do in the old days. The heights for them; and some good solid foot-slogging, to work the city life out of stale muscles. We have it in the matter of standard though, and quality of what we do; and presumably they will get better still later on. The next generation would be quite exciting in the Helyg log, if we could see it now. Think of the efficiency required.

" . . . From this ledge a small sod is detached (6" x 4") and placed on the extreme edge at a point marked by a little scratched arrow. Stand on this and slide over the overhang. 110 feet below there is a small ledge, and here, with careful attention to balance, the climber will come to rest. The sod will fit the ledge exactly and is necessary for friction. Those not familiar with the technique may find it wise to fasten the turf to their feet with a loop of rope. Now the route becomes more obvious. A layback leads slightly left for 180 feet to a small nail stance. . . ."

And

" . . . Found some new scrambles on Clogwyn Du-r'Arddu. The rock is seldom even perpendicular for any distance and is literally covered with small holds. Yet novices may like it."

Then a note by that ambitious young party of rock-gymnasts.

"Repeated Outward Bound Route. Three falls, only two fatal. A.B.C.,* X.Y.Z.,* F.W.B., O.K.

(Signed)

(Signed) Ferdinand Bounce

* R.I.P."

Yes, but perhaps, one never knows. For oneself it is nice to be a bit old-fashioned. There were those awkward moments one had on Charity. Besides that dry efficiency above one's own level is more depressing to the marrow than the bottom of the sea in the Persian Gulf. Baron Munchausen is more to taste. He would have been a hot lad on the rocks, and he would have told them all about it afterwards.

"Then, judge of my surprise, there I was hanging stuck by my coat collar in a position whence there was no possible

means of escape. Neither above me nor below me was there anything to which I could hold, and for a moment I was at some loss as to the proper course to pursue. My mind has become accustomed however to work at an unusual speed under the stimulus of instant danger, and after casting about a little I hit upon a plan. I rubbed the nail of my forefinger against the rock and pared it carefully down to a fine point. This I was then just able to insert into a small hole high above my head and, thereupon, rotating about this as an axis, I brought my feet close to the summit, and with a last supreme effort leapt up feet first to safety."

That is better, one can afford to laugh at that.

We certainly do crave to excel, however little we may be prepared to give to the more difficult question of putting that into practice. But why should we always think like that about standards? Alternately thinking that the standard of climbing has risen so rapidly that it must necessarily go on rising fast, and then that the standard is already so dangerously near the limit that for sane men it can go no further. And if one turns up the table-cloth and looks beneath, behold, both these ideas rest on the delightful notion that we ourselves are such extremely fine climbers and so immeasurably better than those others. No wonder we keep such ideas going. It satisfies our craving for height and with a minimum of effort, so long as we keep our eyes shut. The standard progresses towards the infinite of what is ideally possible to our physique, and we add a little or a lot or nothing to the advance, but concentrating on personal achievement, we credit ourselves with the excellence of the whole attained. A path is being steadily lengthened, but it is something definite in the way of success that we wish to add to ourselves when we climb and we do it by walking along the path and stamping it in when we get as near as we reasonably can to the end of it, then we credit ourselves with the whole again. The path has undoubtedly lengthened, but as for whether we, the particular people, are better than those before, it should be judged on quality, intensity or something, rather than on the precise position and amount of the stamping. In any case in climbing the aim and direction must be a thing to consider, and in climbing there is the complication that the aim is, we hope, not climbing.

I remember once, years ago, in Skye, I was talking, happy and excited. "Sir," I said to the weather-beaten old man with his iron grey hair, "Sir, we have discovered a New Route. It lies up the Northern Buttress of Sgurr-a-Gumain, and starting at a point 12 feet to the left of a little dagger crack it goes up, though both steeply and awkwardly, to a point on the summit

ridge just half way between two very obvious stones. A large one on the right shaped just like a baby, and a small one on the left shaped like nothing on earth. We climbed, Sir, in rubbers, but it seemed to each one of us to be very, very severe."

He sipped slowly at his whisky, and the thin runnels of heat swelled out among the vessels of his throat. "Young man," he said, "in the winter of '83 I remember cutting my way up that very buttress in ice and snow. We experienced considerable difficulty in the ascent and there have been one or two points about it graved on my memory ever since. I can see it now. A yard or two to the right of where we started I stood and put a match to my old pipe in the shelter of a small, dark crack formed like a dagger. It was growing dusk when we came out onto the ridge, but looking around me I could discern dimly through the driving snow, a large stone, and it looked ugly like a babe new-born. We turned away to the left, and as I strode forward my foot caught, I fell full length, and my old briar lay on the ground, smashed to atoms. It was a small stone, young man, and it looked like nothing on earth."

Yes, but perhaps I have stressed it all the wrong way. It seemed to make it nicer for ourselves. We allowed that some of them might perhaps by some accident have been in some ways as good as ourselves, but we did it by way of a joke, and then only as if some of those elders must have been quite incomprehensible supermen.

What twistings we make in our minds: and on these rocks too; pulling them and pushing them as if we wanted to make some difference to them, as if it had results beyond those of our own manifest contortions. It is just as we pull and push all the rest of the circumstances in our lives; as if it were they that had to be re-arranged and not ourselves. Yet circumstances would hardly make so bold as to laugh at us, nor would the cliffs, for we are giving ourselves good exercise and giving them little trouble. We are avoiding unpleasantnesses such as getting stiff and dying, and since it is all very real to us there is no harm surely in allowing ourselves the conceit that it is equally real to the rest of the universe. Imagination makes our game of life seem so much more noble and we so important, and that in turn helps us to help ourselves to more of this living. If we had to wait on reality to show us our importance we would never get any thrill at all. Besides we will drop each conceit when it has served its turn. When it no longer directly deceives us enough to help we will keep it near for a time for the odour of its sanctity, and when that is forgotten—well, it was never more than figment of the brain, so it should go easily.

We draw ourselves out and educate, and climbing has come to be part of our education. We naturally make a mess of the things we educate ourselves on, and that thing is naturally the world. It is not easy for a limited number of people to make a mess of things so comparatively large as cliffs and hills, for instance, but we do our best, and the mountains are likely sooner or later to be placed on the altar of man's education. Meanwhile we had better cling tight to the old that we love, the grandeur, the isolation, the things untouched as yet by this man, aesthete at one end and vulgarian at the other, a species to which we are unpleasantly accustomed. Those things, things from outside, help us to keep our little spark glowing. A spark of readiness for something further and different; for one must keep clear of the crowd even to be in touch with it. That little spark will indeed move heaven and earth before it is done, all to keep itself as clear away as possible. To consider it, it is just this struggle for individuality that is the greatest necessity of the greatest affection, as well as perhaps its only prize. It is the necessity of all mountains, whether of the earth or of the mind, if they are to remain mountains. And education? Education in its turn will not worry its head much in practice about the high places of our feelings. The two certainly work to the same end, but they are only powerful while they oppose each other, each wanting the full mastery over us. To be alike and then to be different, and dreams must always be at war with reality. For the time being the mountains are still the mountains, and we can keep our heads well away on their slopes. We will each make a little image from what we like to see of ourselves in the mirror of the hills. One will laugh at the image, so one-sided. One will make it into a grey god and will then fall down and worship himself. Another will set it up for the great spirit of Man, and will lay down his life to his own image.

The eyes could close themselves that night and miss nothing, for there was a mood of waiting in the air; the evening was waiting: the heather still moulded round me, and there was a diffused glow over the whole surface of the sky. The sun's rays fell higher up the hillside now: like narrow arms carrying the weight of the evening warmth across the valley. Above them the air was deep with colours. There were many blues and there was silver down towards the sea. There was gold on the slope above us, and the hillside opposite was sheeted in fold upon fold of the emperor's purple.

We were small to that. So many generations has man been lifting the stones, little stones, big stones, to clear a small pasture: stones of all sizes, lifting, carrying them, pushing them out of the way. Those men who years ago worked and

made their walls, and fought and cursed each other down the secrecy of the pass. Then strolled out into the evening and the door banged to behind them for a minute.

Dreams of a little people. I remember a boy we saw climbing two or three times, on the Idwal Slabs. He would stand and gaze at the foot of the rocks, scanning them to right and to left for some path in their expanse that the foot of man had not yet utilised. Then he went to the foot of the Ordinary Route. As he ascended, however, it was clear enough that he was no ordinary climber, for every now and then he stood, and looked around him, with that air of expectancy that is the true explorer's heritage. We realised that at any moment, may be without the least warning, he might break out onto fresh ground. Rather to our surprise he did actually continue up the Ordinary Route. Perhaps there was something in store for us now, for there he was, gazing with a wide purview above, below and to either side. The preliminaries were over. Clearly he knew these cliffs well, but was now eager above all things for fresh endeavour, new pasture. Sure enough he made no pause for rest, but turned round and with every appearance of one whose mind is set to conquer or to die, he made his way laboriously down the Ordinary Route. We laughed at him at the time and called him the Idwal Slab. He looked queer too, and just fitted a rhyme we had then in our heads—

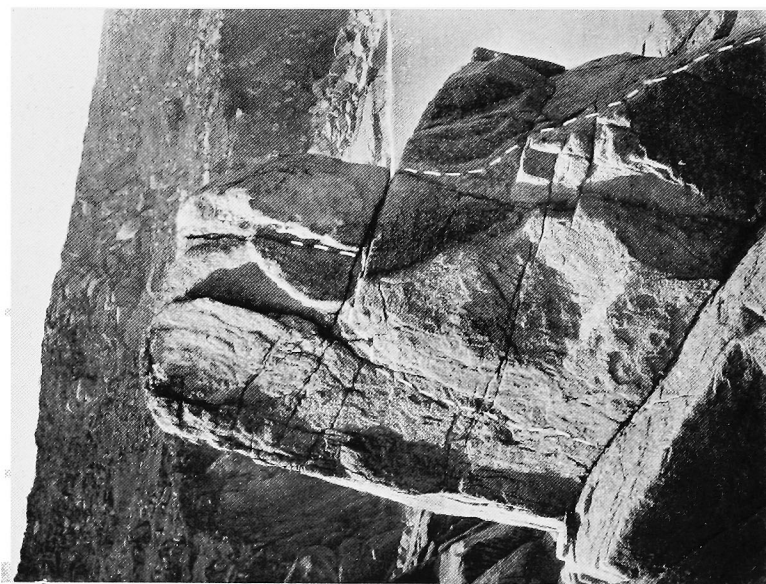
“What a wonderful thing your face is
That its nose can begin without basis.”

Yet he was an excellent youth, and we would have been dull indeed not to admire something at least in that devilish abandon with which our slot machine culminated time and again in that grand finale of liquorice all-sorts. Indeed we had gone through just the same antics ourselves, only a few yards higher up. We both found mirrors in the cliff like that. Perhaps it is really just that look of his that is the true explorer's heritage : man's heritage : the man lifting stones, little stones and rather larger stones, clearing a small space round him for pasture, and dreaming that they are all very big.

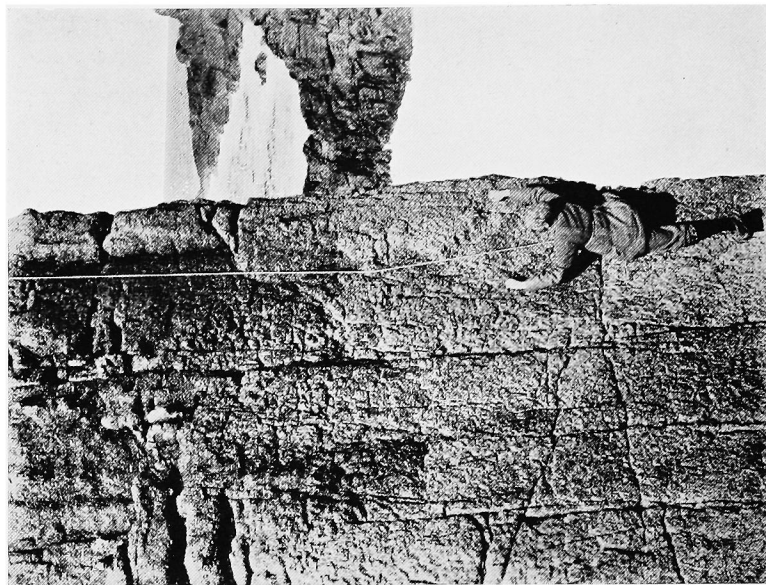
We got up and shook ourselves, for the warmth had left our rock now, and the thin arms of the sun were rising steadily as their burden grew lighter. The colours, however, went still deeper, and then, as if the liquid of the sky became oversaturated with its intensity, it seemed suddenly to sigh and as it did so, it shed a slight, greyish precipitate, that gathered and clung nervously together in a thin strip down the centre of the blue. As it formed, the earth seemed to come out a little and its detail began to rise coldly up the sides of the hill. The arms of the

sun, as if driven up into quick motion, lifted their beams clear of the earth, and the particles of their warmth, despairing, concentrated their last effort in a soft rose light along the Western aspect of the strip of cloud. Down on the rocks a squat yew tree, clinging to the face, shivered and drew itself up. The shadows came together and lay cramped stiffly over it.

We turned our backs finally to the hills and began to chatter : setting about to make our minds easy. But behind us, fighting their slow wars, the forces of nature also shifted steadily on.



(Fig. 1) THE WICCA PILLAR



(Fig. 2) A CORNER

THE CORNISH CLIFFS.

By A. W. ANDREWS.

"And an Highway shall be there and a Way. The Wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

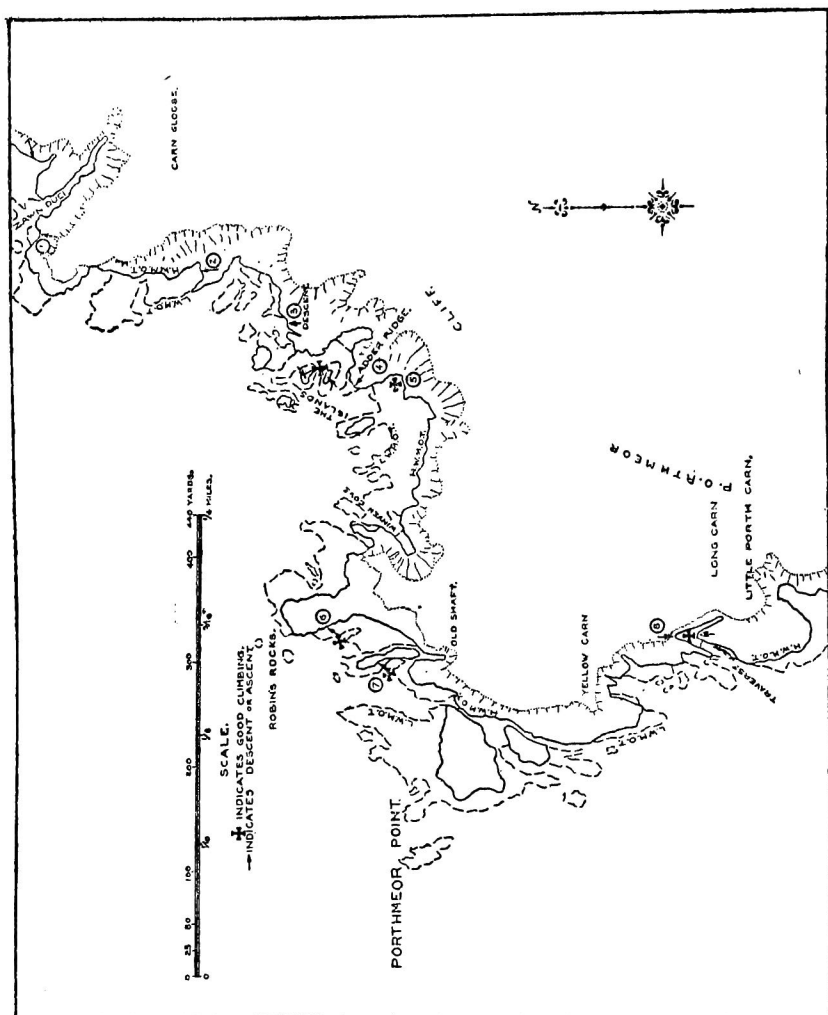
A SMALL inexpensive guide to these climbs would be a great help to those who can only afford a short visit. With a view of making this possible in the future it has been suggested that three articles should be published in guide form in the *Journal*.

Article (1) deals with the coast from Wicca to Bosigran. One route map has been included to indicate the way to climbs not easily found from the One Inch Ordnance. There are inns at the Gurnard's Head, and at Zennor, and lodgings can be obtained at Boswednack and Zennor or close by. Omnibuses run from St. Ives and Penzance.

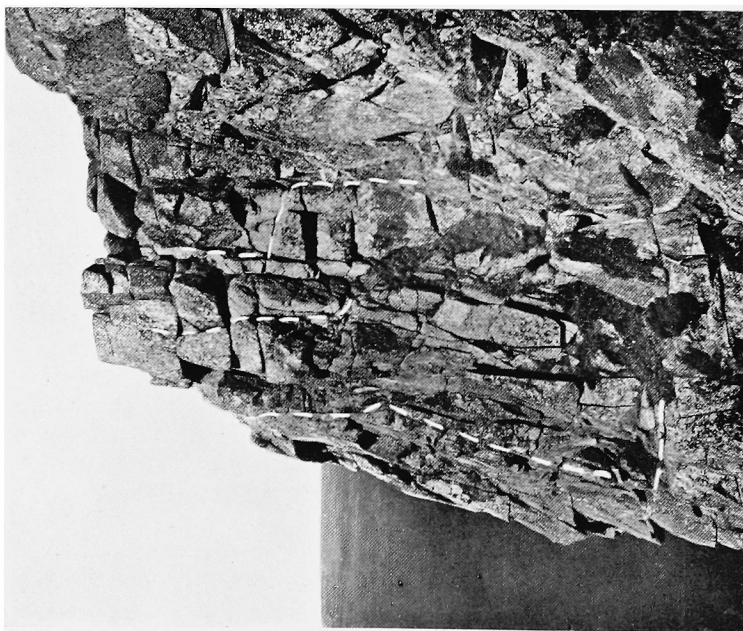
There are no thousand feet precipices in West Penwith or even hundred foot pitches, and in most cases it is almost as easy to escape from one climb to another as it is on the side of Tryfaen. But there are compensations. The sea is always with us, and though not so permanently blue as on the Riviera placards is often still more intense in colour. Besides its artistic value it has a psychological influence on climbing, and the difference between a traverse above an unruffled mill pond and a foaming surf is not easily forgotten.

To the author certain climbs under the less favourable of these conditions call back memories of struggles and discomforts quite as vivid as those of occasional Alpine peaks in bad weather or of Lliwedd in a cold and wet Easter.

These adventures were not sought, but came unheralded, like the seventh wave that rolls out of a relatively calm sea and sweeps the cliff for twenty feet or more above the normal level, just as it does on a larger scale at Ascension Island. On one occasion the leader received a shock on finding a past president of the Climber's Club on a ledge well above him, when he



(Fig. 3) THE ISLANDS AND PORTHMEOR



(Fig. 5) THE FACE OF BOSIGRAN



(Fig. 6) THE ISLANDS

expected to be hauling him in from the depths. The rest of the party finally emerged from the abyss. For this reason alone a rope is desirable.

Again the fact that certain parts of the coast can only be traversed, between the high and low tide mark, at Low Tide or even a low Spring Tide, and that the margin for reaching a point where the cliff can be reasonably ascended is often extremely small, imposes a time limit on the operations. The actual steps are not, except in a few cases, of great difficulty, but they have to be taken with a certain freedom and speed, "touch and pass," over rocks which are liable to be wet and slippery. Here you really do find "A wetter water, slimier slime." But the appeal of climbing on the Cornish Coast is not, on the whole, one of severity. There is good scrambling in delightful surroundings and a few pitches which reach the "severe" standard of modern rock climbing.

Variety, however, does exist. Granite has its faces, ridges and chimneys. The faces are seamed with ledges and cracks, broad and deep or minute, but the general roughness, due to the disintegration of the felspar crystals, allows great variation of route as finger holds can often effect a hand traverse at seemingly impossible places.

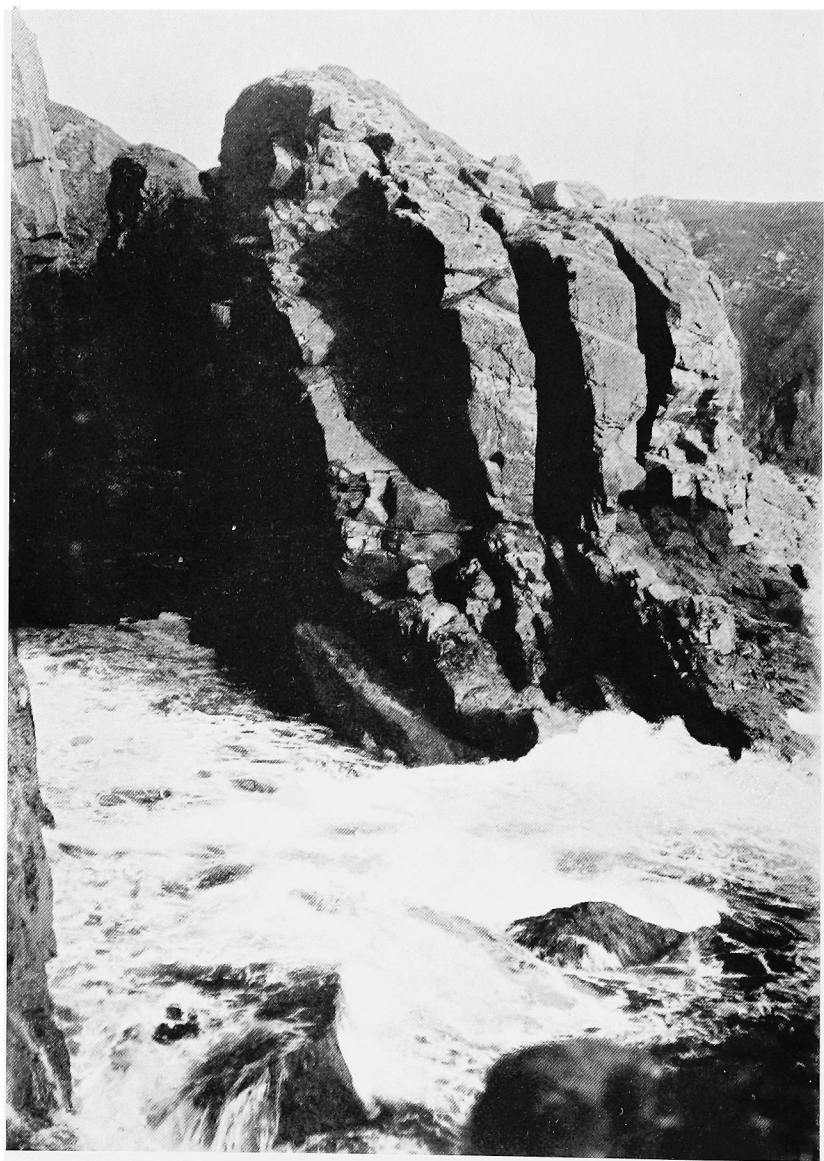
The ridges are broken into pinnacles (cf. Fig. 11), and the elevation is sometimes almost vertical (cf. Fig. 2, "severe"). The chimneys are deep or shallow, and afford practice in different styles of workmanship.

There are two other types of rock met with in climbing on this coast. There is a stratified rock, locally called "killas," which often resembles ruined masonry. A good example is at Zennor Head. This has been hardened by the heat and chemical action of the molten granite so that it is actually harder than the granite and resists weathering. Consequently it stands out as points and headlands in many cases, while the granite is recessed into bays. Where the granite has not had the same influence on the "killas," as in Mount's Bay, St. Michael's Mount remains an isolated island because the granite is harder than the unaltered "killas." The lower cliffs of this material are often smoother than the granite, though generally it is not more difficult to climb on owing to the reliable nature of the holds, which in granite require testing.

Another rock is greenstone, often, near sea level, black and uncompromisingly smooth with massive joints. Cf. Fig. 7. The Horse's Back. This is a rock which was developed in joints in the granite.

A more detailed description of the geology of the coast was given in the *C.J. Journal*, Vol. VII, 1905, No. 26.

Face page 107.



(Fig. 7) THE HORSE'S BACK

COAST TRAVERSING FROM TREVEAL TO BOSIGRAN.

Easy and moderate scrambling, with some difficult passages. No risk of being cut off by the tide as the cliff can be ascended at many points. Best climbing at the Horse's Back and Carnelloe (greenstone) and Boswednack and Porthmeor.

Cf. One Inch Ordnance and Fig. 4. Though the climbing on this stretch of coast is not of the uniformly high standard which is to be found between Bosigran and Portheras Cove, it deserves a short description as most visitors will probably be able to spare an off-day to walk along the cliffs.

From Treveal Cove to Bosigran there are only four places where it is impossible to keep on the shore between high and low water mark. (1) A zawn just east of Wicca. (2) Carnelloe zawn. (3) A stretch west of The Gurnard's Head. (4) A rift east of Halldrine Cove. Treveal is well worth a visit. It has beautiful pools and an enclosed natural bathing basin, quite fifteen feet deep, and available at half tide, if not too rough. As a rule swimming on the open coast must be treated with caution on account of the unexpected undertow. The Carracks, opposite Treveal, have been reached by swimming, but seaweed and currents make this unsafe. Seals to the number of a dozen together are sometimes seen on these rocks.

From Treveal to Wicca, the traverse can be made up to an hour or so after low tide. There is one interesting pitch in the middle, the crossing of a deep rift on a natural bridge.

Omitting the Wicca Pillar and its immediate surroundings, described separately, there is good scrambling round Wicca Cove and on the headland west of the stream. From here to the Horse's Back the coast is low but singularly beautiful, especially at Porth Zennor, where fishing boats were once kept. A very low tide is essential for crossing the zawn of the Horse's Back. Even then some wading will almost certainly be necessary. Both chimneys at the end of the Horse's Back can be climbed. The right chimney is *very severe*.

Cf. Figs. 3 and 4. Small ledges lead into Pendour Cove and an easy shore to Carnelloe Headland. On this cliff a prominent landmark is the Cat's House, so called because the occupier is supposed to have desired to stock it with a "pride" of lion cubs, but owing to difficulties of transport had to put up with cats. No accurate account can be given of their number, but there must have been at least a score. The famous red cats of Zennor may owe their origin to this source.

The traverse round Carnelloe Head is very impressive. A

deep cave (9) can be entered at low tide and left by a ledge on the wall. Deep rifts of black rock lead to the cliff opposite Carnelloe Island, which is not accessible at any tide from the land. Here there is a remarkable blowhole. Round Carnelloe Zawn it will be necessary to keep higher, as the cliff is undercut in the zawn and cannot be safely traversed without a fixed rope. The rock is very rough, and there is some delightful scrambling above high water mark on the west of the zawn (10).

Just west of Porthglaze Cove is Boswednack Cliff. The coast is a little similar to Carnelloe from the point of view of climbing. There are slabs, chimneys, and pinnacles, and the rock is very reliable and rough and is a little like gabbro (11, 12, 13). West of the Gurnard's Head the cliffs are very fine, but though it is easy to descend in a number of places no continuous traverse is possible till just before The Islands.

West of the Gurnard's Head is an island, Pedn Kei, always thronged with sea birds. This is worth climbing. The approach is by a deep gully, Zawn Pedn Kei, and the access by a shallow open chimney on the east. The author remembers this gully on one occasion when it was so slippery, on account of the accumulation of bird lime, that even bare feet hardly provided cohesion. There are several other routes at a very low tide.

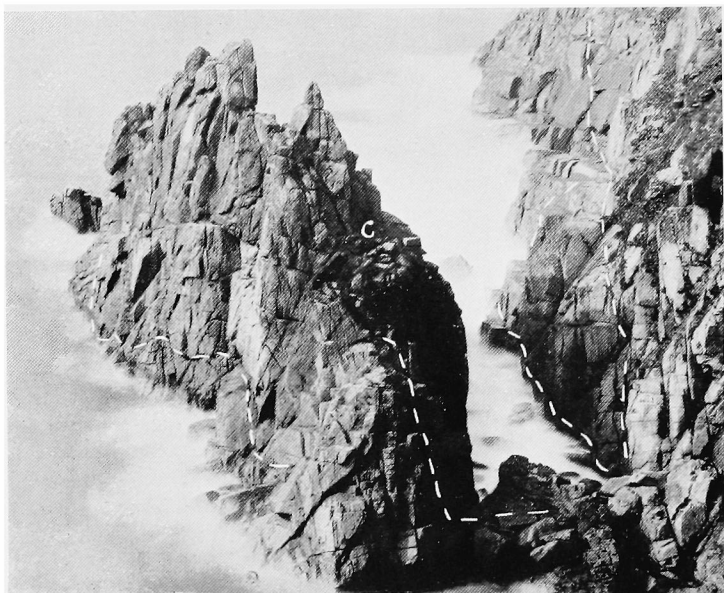
Passing Zawn Duel a deep and narrow rift of some two hundred feet, the prominent notch of Carn Gloose is seen in front. There is good scrambling on the headland (1), and it is well worth while to descend at (2). The Islands are seen from this point (cf. Fig. 6). These are of altered or hardened "killas." They can be reached from the east by a chimney below a prominent knob of rock on the cliff (3), or by the heather covered Adder Ridge (4). The east island is climbed by a shallow chimney or the east face. The other sides are largely undercut. The west island is climbed from the north-west corner following a ledge which leads seaward. The rock is very hard and reliable though smooth, and many interesting variations can be made. *Difficult to severe* routes lead up the edge of the west island, which faces the land. From the Adder Ridge, Winven Cove can be traversed at low tide, though the first step is not easy if there is any sea (5).

Porthmeor has some interesting climbing below the old mine shaft (6 and 7) and below Long Carn (8). The traverse (cf. Fig. 3) should on no account be omitted, as it consists of a slab with no visible holds. The consequences of a slip would not be serious. There is good scrambling into Porthmeor Cove.

From here to Halldrine Cove the coast is low and easy. A narrow rift just before the cove is not passable. There is a low peninsula at Halldrine Cove with good scrambling on the cliff.



(Fig. 8) THE PINNACLE FROM THE EAST



(Fig. 9) THE PINNACLE FROM THE WEST

The traverse of Bosigran Head should not be omitted. It is not difficult at low tide with a calm sea. The scenery is some of the finest in Cornwall. A blowhole is passed and a *moderate* route at low tide leads to the ledges below Bosigran Face.

THE WICCA PILLAR.

A granite pillar about sixty feet high. Smooth faces and small finger holds, cracks, and ledges. Chimneys, easy and strenuous. Except in rough weather accessible at all states of the tide. An ideal practice boulder.

The Pillar can be reached in about three-quarters of an hour from Zennor. The Church Path should be followed to Tregerthen Farm. From this point turn north, and keep on the left bank of the stream which flows to Wicca Cove. Cross this near the sea and traverse the hillside immediately above the cliff till the Pillar is seen in front round a corner of rock. The most interesting approach, if the tide is low, is to descend a steep chimney of about forty feet somewhat to the west of the Pillar and separated from it by two deep rifts. The chimney is smooth but broken by a series of steps which form the key to the problem, as anyone who possesses an effective reach of about seven feet will find no difficulty in lowering himself down. At the bottom is a somewhat slippery rock on to which the climber must step. The rift is crossed and a crack followed to the summit of the rock which stands like Pisgah in the Lake District, immediately in front of the Pillar. From this point descend into a square recess, at the left corner of which is a well marked rift which gives interesting back and knee work. The climber is now at the bottom of the Pillar and he has to climb another chimney straight in front. An easy option lies on the right through a hole. Both this chimney and the one which has just been descended can be traversed at the bottom by a really slim climber.

The chimney is not above twenty-five feet in height, but its technical difficulties are considerable. Some fifteen feet inside it gradually narrows and should be commenced about half-way from the entrance. For the first seven or eight feet back and knee will suffice; above that a strenuous wriggle is necessary to reach a platform half-way up the Pillar.

Here several routes diverge. An easy chimney in front or a traverse to the right on a ledge. From this ledge there are various ways up the corner, and on the south-east face several cracks lead to the top. These are only about three inches wide or less, and there is very little hold on the wall. Good finger hold and balance are necessary. In the corner (Fig. 2) a route

is just possible (*severe*) up the left edge of Fig. 1. Until the condition of the small felspar crystals has been tested it is suggested that the moral support of a rope would be a comfort.

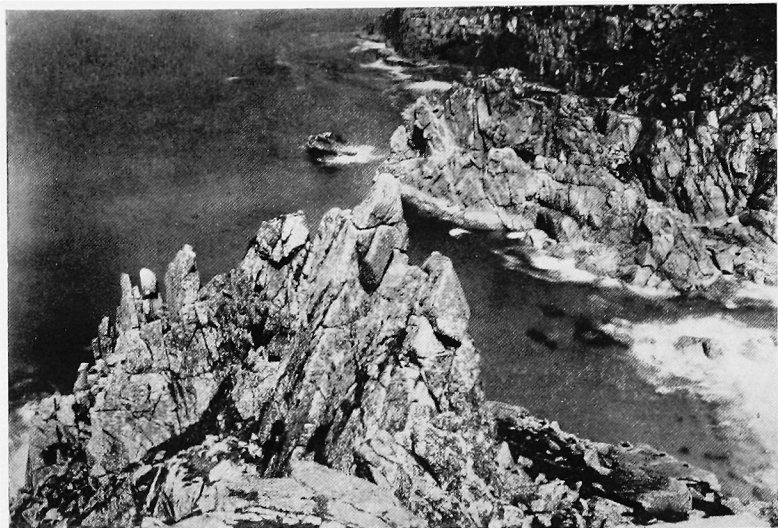
The most sensational route, though by no means the most difficult, faces east. Owing to the fact that the waves deluge it with spray when the sea is stormy it has been named "The Sea Route." The first few feet are not easy, but higher up a ledge leads to the right-hand top corner. There is another route from the sea on the extreme right-hand edge. There are some good scrambles near the Pillar, especially in a chimney facing the Sea Route and a cave under the rock bridge which connects the Pillar to the land on the east.

THE FACE OF BOSIGRAN.

Two short interesting chimneys and a slab. A difficult climb on the nose with a sensational and exposed ledge.

(Cf. Fig. 5.) The face of Bosigran is cut, a little above the level of the Pinnacle, by a broad shelf descending on the left (looking down), by steep grass and cliffs to the sea, and by a narrower shelf on the right with broad sloping ledges (cf. Fig. 10), connected by chimneys and cracks. Descent to the shelf is easy on the south and moderately easy on the north to the right (looking up) of the white patch on the head. This was kept whitewashed at one time to help the keepers of the Pendeen Lighthouse. When not clearly visible they were instructed to sound the foghorn.

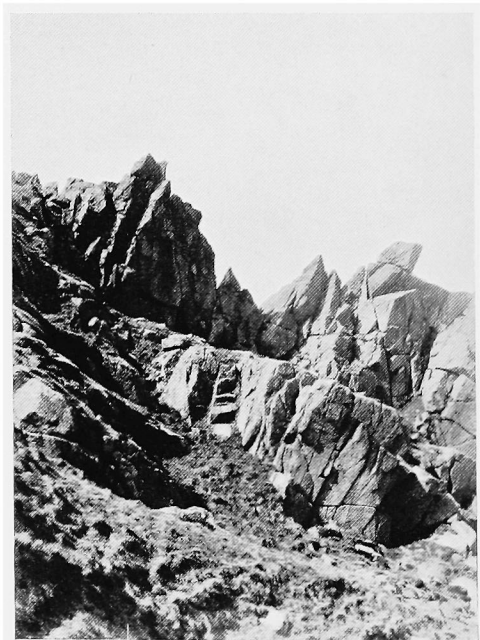
The centre of the upper cliff overhangs for some distance, and though a climb in the middle might be possible, it would end near the top over lichen-covered and rounded slabs at a steep angle. At the end nearest the sea there is a climb up a narrow crack which is quite interesting. The two short climbs are not especially difficult, but the rib on the left gives perhaps the best climb in Cornwall (*one difficult ledge*). An easy traverse leads into it half-way up. The bottom can be climbed from the broad shelf by small ledges and slabs. Some of the rock is a little loose. From the upper ledge a thorn bush marks the beginning of the climb. A rib is followed and then a curving ledge to the skyline. Cf. also Fig. 14, where the cliff is seen from the front. The ledge is exposed and lies at a high angle, and resembles a narrow and shallow trough, slightly inclined outwards towards the overhang below. At the time of the first ascent the leader, J. B. Farmer, walked up this. The second, A. W. Andrews, squirmed inside it and found it very awkward.



(Fig. 10) THE RIDGE FROM ABOVE



(Fig. 11) ON THE RIDGE



(Fig. 12) THE RIDGE

THE BOSIGRAN PINNACLE (PORTHMOINA ISLAND).

A granite pinnacle of one hundred and fifty feet, with ridges, chimneys, and ledges of all kinds. Moderately easy. A number of more difficult variations can be made.

This can be reached in various ways. The shortest approach is by a grass gully ending in a steep rib of about twenty feet with some loose earth. This is not the deep gully immediately below the old mine buildings to the right of the stream, which ends in an overhang. The most interesting route is to descend the upper cliff of Bosigran on the south. At the point where the shelf (mentioned before) narrows an amusing descent by chimneys and ledges leads to the rock bridge which connects the Pinnacle with the mainland. At a low tide it is possible to descend almost to sea level and follow ledges to the same place (cf. Fig. 9).

The climb begins with an easy scramble to a notch on the skyline between the two towers, or the first of these is traversed. The second tower, The Great Gendarme, is climbed by a crack on the face. It is a little tricky to get a knee into the bottom of this. A traverse can also be made round an exposed ledge on the left with perfect handholds. From the top of the tower the ridge is followed over a second tooth. A descent is then made down a short chimney at the bottom of which the climber can reach the east side without going to sea-level by a narrow ledge on the face (cf. Fig. 8). This is sensational, but quite safe, and forms a good alternative in rough weather. The descent is continued to the nose where a small platform, often wet and slippery, leads to the east side. A gully has to be crossed at its head, and ledges are followed to a chimney which cuts the bottom of the face. It is necessary to go up slightly before entering this, and it is sometimes, if wet, a little difficult to balance into it. A strenuous struggle leads to a wide platform. It is not possible to traverse further along the bottom of the east face as the rocks are smooth and undercut. An alternative finish, instead of the easy scramble to the notch, is to reach a ledge behind a large flake almost separated from the main rock.

It will be noted that the C on Figs. 8-9 stands for The Cabbage Patch, a well-known picnic spot, so called apparently from the prevalence of a kind of seakale. On Fig. 8 a route from this garden to the notch is marked which passes through a hole of rather narrow dimensions.

On the west side (cf. Fig. 10) there is an interesting traverse near sea-level. A broad slab is reached, the end of which is

immediately below the notch, and ledges and cracks are followed on delightfully rough rock till the route seems to dip into the sea. Here a slippery slab is crossed almost at low tide level, a wall ascended and a shelf gained which shows prominently in the centre of the face. Several routes from difficult to severe could probably be made up the west face from this traverse. The Pinnacle is a great haunt of sea birds, gulls, cormorants, and guillemots, and climbing in May is a little congested. Collective security is effectively maintained by the united action of the community, not against genuine climbers, but the pirate Black Backed Gull who is not allowed to land on the island.

From the Pinnacle the Ridge can be reached across Porthmoina Cove at low tide. Follow the cliff as far seaward as possible and climb a short but steep chimney to a large platform. Traverse to the right and follow ledges till a way up is obvious. One horizontal crack just above the sea is interesting. The climb is on good rock the whole way, and there is no need to follow steep grass or earth variations. Near the top is a knife edge ridge of a few feet with an impressive deep cut zawn on the right.

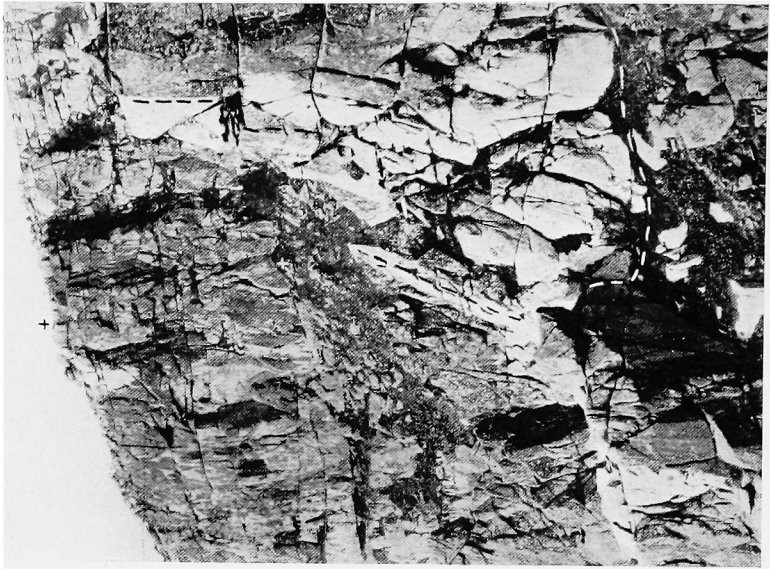
It should be noted that to the true left of the stream, which forms a waterfall, in Porthmoina Cove there is the mouth of an adit which is said to come out far inland under the old workings near Bosigran mine, of which only part of the chimneys are now standing. This has been followed for some distance, but it is probably not very safe.

THE RIDGE.

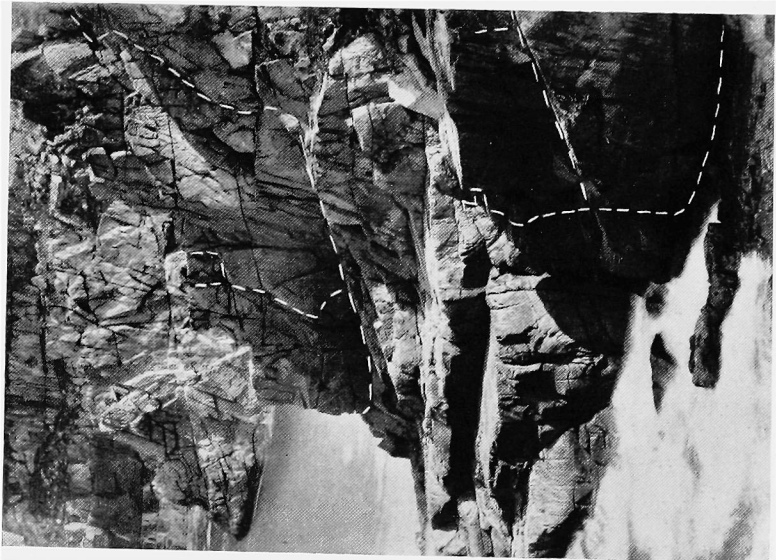
Ridge and face climbing. A sensational chimney at the bottom. Two difficult pitches near the top.

The most impressive view of the Ridge is from above about where the actual climbing ends.

(Cf. Fig. 10.) A fan-shaped line of pinnacles leads down to the sea. The flat stone in the foreground lies above a gap from which an easy descent can be made into the Hanging Valley west of the Ridge. To reach this slab there are ten feet of *difficult* climbing, either by a pull up over the end or a tricky traverse. This is the finish of the climb. It is most interesting to descend the Ridge. A downward sloping terrace is followed on the east side and the Ridge crossed at the lowest distinct notch (cf. Fig. 13). A grassy gully is descended for a few feet and a leaf of rock crossed on the right. A rock gully is then followed to the slabs below the Ridge on the west. A shelf leads to the nose and a traverse made above a deep zawn.



(Fig. 14) THE WESTERN RIDGE



(Fig. 13) THE RIDGE FROM THE WEST

This is swept by the waves in stormy weather. A narrow sensational chimney is followed to the flat platform on the nose. An alternative route to this point, which is slightly more difficult, is suitable for a higher tide (cf. Fig. 13). A sloping crack leads to a corner from which there is a face climb with good holds, to a square recess. From the platform a broad chimney is ascended which ends between the two towers prominently shown on Figs. 11 and 12.

The next interesting pitch is where the two figures are shown. This is climbed either directly over a difficult edge or by a ledge and short chimney on the east. A further stretch of teeth are traversed till the Ridge drops to a distinct notch. Here it is not easy to get up the final crest.

The Ridge forms a unique playground for less experienced climbers, and in this resembles the Pinnacle and the Pillar. Difficult stretches can be avoided. The rock is firm and rough.

On Fig. 13 a deep cleft called the Cave Zawn is marked with a (Z). This is traversed above the Cave and a descent made by a narrow ledge, which requires care, sloping down the side of the Cave Zawn. A ledge is then reached which can be continued by a traverse (*severe*) or left at an earlier point (*difficult*). The descent to the sea is *severe* but very interesting, as it leads to a platform which provides an admirable view of the Great Zawn and the overhanging ribs above, the unclimbable start of the Western Ridge. A rib of fifteen feet (*severe*) to the left of an unclimbable square recess is descended to a long and narrow green shelf, covered with seaweed and sloping uncomfortably towards a cleft on the right. This is of a super sliminess, and the leader on the first traverse only just managed to stay on it. The second took to the water, by choice. Except in very calm weather this climb is impracticable, as the rise and fall in these narrow openings is considerable. The shelf is submerged within half an hour of low tide. A large and spacious platform is now reached.

In front is a small platform below the ledge of the Green Cormorant, so called from the untiring sentinel who resents intrusion above. A narrow rift has to be crossed which is however too wide to bridge at the mouth. Descend a square-cut cleft, back and knee, as near to the cliff as possible and then work outwards, and at the sea end upwards, till the extended legs and arms form a bridge at the widest point. "Happening" on a good fingerhold, swing on to the wall in front and draw up on to a small mantelshelf (*difficult*). There is a good belay on a knob of rock a little above. A doubled rope must be used to reach the Great Zawn, as the wall has practically no holds for a few feet.

It should be noted that the mouth of the Great Zawn where the climber now finds himself has been waded at an exceptionally low tide of twenty feet. The interior of this zawn slopes steeply upwards and is steep grass, but there is no exit above. To escape, it is necessary to use a shoulder at the mouth. Easy rock and grass terraces lead to a very steep grass cliff which can be circumvented by a chimney of good rock. Even if there is no time to continue the traverse to the west this traverse from the Bosigran ledges is well worth doing, as it is possibly unique, at any rate on these cliffs. It is also perfectly safe, as a doubled rope can be used for security where thought desirable.

The description of the traverse from this point to the west will be continued in Article 2.

THE WESTERN RIDGE.

A difficult descent of ten feet. A broad chimney. A pinnacle. A severe face climb with easy alternative.

(Cf. Fig. 14.) The Hanging Valley is held up by a ridge on the west as well as the east. The two ridges merge higher up, a little above the place from which Fig. 8 was taken. From the Hanging Valley cross the west ridge at its lowest practicable point, descend a *difficult* ten feet into a broad gully, and ascend a deep recess to a gap where the valley is entered from the west. The pinnacle which can be distinguished in front of the distant face of Bosigran is traversed to a notch from which a few feet of climbing lead to a shelf trending upwards to the left, an easy alternative. The direct climb is *severe*. A small crack and very small holds lead to a platform with a square recess. A *difficult* corner is climbed to the more level crest of the ridge.

HELYG RHYMES.

CLIMBING of old meant "hardy Scouting";
a rural misanthropic outing,
where each might move alone at will
upon some never-mentioned hill,
and rend the nails from hands and boots
on bastions barren of all "routes."

But times have changed. Young nature stoops
to amiable Gangs and Groups.
In companies our climbers roll—
roisterous-wise from Pole to Pole,
saluting with a braying "honk"
The Presidential car of . . . (Mr. Donkin, of course).

They leave their Liverpool betimes:
at night they're back; with twenty climbs
scored on their knees—a score of scalps
torn from the pates of Cymrian alps.
Of yore, Cimmeriam darkness hid
the secrets of the Wal of Id,
and cloaked discreetly in a fog
face-wrinkles near the Wen of Og;
yet now they're turned, by leaps and hops,
to junior jaunts and Sunday "Pops,"
and every novice eats his grub
on "Faith," by dint of scrape and . . . (rubber, of course).

Some flee bright air; and batlike flit
to hang, in clusters, on a . . . (piton, of course).
Some beat their axes into rings,
carabines and char-a-banc-like things,
and rope on roundabouts and swings.

What Climbers' Eve but now belongs
to a "community" of songs?
Bees, rhythmically bombinant,
ruled by their Chorus, or their . . . (Chantrell, of course).

And still the forms of what-has-been
 pass in their turn across the screen :
 the age of gîtes, the age of tents,
 the age of sleeping-bag-rag gents,
 the age of gully, and of face,
 the age of "grab," and (last) of grace,
 the age of stunts, the age of speed,
 and the—eternal youth of . . . (W. R. Reade, of course).

Till HELYG burst upon our view,
 ancient of build, of purpose new.
 Swift in establishing its claims
 as hostel for the King of Games,
 it changed the stern Rule of the Club
 to ways more suited to . . . (its Public, of course).
 A garden Paradise, men tell,
 surrounds these porticoes of . . . (Helyg, of course) :
 Piazzas, pergolas rise ranked
 about its precincts sacrosanct.
 Within the sensuous inner shrine,
 on houri-divans there recline
 suggestions of the form divine.
 At morn, dim shapes of whiteness break
 the cold repulse of stream and lake :
 at night, it fills its sleepers' dreams
 with Tryfan, under starlight gleams,
 a Pillar of silver Fire, to show
 the path our dream-ascents should go.

Again our old-world-order changes :
 upon our obscurantist ranges
 we need more LIGHT. Our Pagan fires
 must teach their flames to dance on "wires" :
 that Virgin Age, with Foolish Lamps,
 must flower into bulbs and "amps" ;
 and Helyg-radiance flash or fail
 at touching of one finger-nail.
 Switch on ! Switch off ! The shepherd now
 benighted upon Carnedd's brow,
 shall mark that guiding blink, and thank
 the flame-eyed Dragon of the . . . (Nant Francon, of course).
 A "shorter circuit" soon shall bring
 Lliwedd as near as anything ;
 and "switches" lend propulsive shocks
 to hurl us headlong up the rocks.

A few more years ; and we shall see
no reason for return to Tea ;
for climbers, plodding up the track,
no need for provender or sack.
We feel a void—We prod a button—
and there's all Helyg, with the hut on,
spread by the next well-gardened crack,
with toast all buttered on the rack,
and our kind Guardian's beaming face
to grace our meal—and say *his* "grace" !

For these, and for all coming mercies,
we've blessings, and no Balaam-curses
(for Balaam *rode, and* on an ass,
and turned back from an easy "pass").
We welcome Light ! We welcome Space !—
and Garages about the place :
fires that dry us without smoke ;
and stoves that need no Primus poke.
We look that home-like Helyg times
shall, soon, go with us *on* our climbs !—
Such Helygs are no Travellers' Tales,
nor the sole privilege of Snails,—
Jonah's went with him, in *his* . . . (Wales, of course).

GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG.

NANDA DEVI

By N. E. ODELL.

NANDA DEVI, rising 25,640 feet, is claimed to be the highest mountain in the British Empire in virtue of the fact that its base, unlike a few other rivals in altitude in the Himalaya, stands wholly in British territory. Many have been the aspirants to its honours, notably T. G. Longstaff, but its remarkable inaccessibility has held it for fifty years inviolate to the foot of man. Ringed around by a great 70-mile rampart of mountains, most of which are over 20,000 feet high, this sacred mountain of Nanda, wife of the third Person of the Hindu Triad, Siva, had until 1934 defied all attempts to reach her foot. Following many unsuccessful attempts on the part of notable mountaineers, E. E. Shipton and H. W. Tilman during that year forced a passage up the terrific gorge of the Rishi Ganga, by which the waters of the basin make their exit, and explored the remarkable cauldron of the so-called Inner Sanctuary. This exploit is well described and beautifully illustrated by these able mountaineers in their book *Nanda Devi*, which appeared last year.

Our Anglo-American party last summer consisted of eight members, equally divided internationally. The original objective was Sikkim in quite another part of the Himalaya, where the writer had hoped to glean information of a geological nature for the solution of certain research problems, which he had in hand. But, being refused permission to visit that region, we turned our attention to the district of Garhwal in the central Himalaya. There we knew we had a magnificent alternative in what was reputed to be one of the most beautiful parts of the whole range: and not only a region as yet scientifically unexamined but one that held the lure of such a great unclimbed peak as Nanda Devi, if we could only reach her. We were well aware, moreover, that the difficulties of approach would be greatly enhanced owing to the necessity of carrying out our operations during the rains of the monsoon season. The great gorges through which we must pass to gain the interior of the Nanda Devi basin might be impossibly flooded; and the known

difficulties and obscurities of the way might be too much, if not for ourselves, at any rate for our porters.

Our first piece of good fortune consisted in one of our number being H. W. Tilman, who from his experience in 1934 held the key to the intricacies of the upper gorge. He was willing to go to India ahead of the main party and secure a small group of Sherpa porters for high altitude work from the Darjeeling district, and make other preparations and arrangements in advance. In addition he recruited 37 local Dotial coolies, from the hill districts of Kumaon and western Nepal, as well as 10 men from the mountain community of Mana, to carry for us, if possible, as far as our intended base camp in the basin.

Our rendezvous was Ranikhet, the beautiful hill-station and military centre in Almora in the northern United Provinces, and we departed thence on July 10th in torrential rain on our long trek through the mountains. What delightful resorts these hill-stations are in fine weather, with their invigorating air and astounding views of the distant snows, is known to most people, but few who have never experienced it can realise the appalling dampness and penetrating humidity of a tropical hill-station in the rains; our British moisture cannot hold a candle to it! For many days our route lay across a medley of forested mountain ridges and deep river valleys, and one had frequent opportunity of observing the ways, and indeed the friendliness, of a most attractive mountain people. The Garhwali, although not Mongoloid by race like his neighbour in Nepal, has nevertheless a number of characteristics that differentiate him from his kinsman of the Indian plains. A varied and vigorous past seems to have given him amongst other things a greater openmindedness and independence, and a cheerfulness withal, not so evident in the lowlander of Peninsular India. And in this country of Garhwal one has ample opportunity for comparison, for thousands of pilgrims annually pass to and fro on their lengthy pilgrimages from all over India to the sacred sources of the River Ganges in upper Garhwal. On our return journey, some of us made a point of visiting the shrine of the god Vishnu, at Badrinath, situated in a remote upper valley at 10,000 feet, and its presiding high priest evinced great interest in our "pilgrimage" to the "shrine" of Nanda, and gave us a most hospitable reception.

But the last contact with human culture had to be severed at the entrance to the great gorges which guard the approach to the mountain "shrine" of our objective. The lower gorge having turned back a determined onslaught by W. W. Graham and his Swiss guides, the first aspirants to Nanda Devi honours, as long ago as 1883, it was necessary to make a way over rugged mountain land, as well as a pass, high on the north side. This

led us past a couple of "kharaks," or alpine pastures, that are wont to be used by local sheep- and goat-herds: beautiful spots in themselves, and in one case so remarkably girt about with towering heights, that it had called forth from Tilman, on the occasion of his earlier reconnaissance with Shipton, the appropriate appellation, "a horizontal oasis in a vertical desert!"

The last "oasis" gave out in amazing verticality along the sides of the middle gorge, over which we had to scramble not without faith that apparent impasses would not at some places cut off all further progress. At one obstacle, however, our Dotial coolies had altogether insufficient faith for our liking. This was where a large side torrent plunged down in a minor cañon to the main river, and made the necessity of such an apparently hazardous and unpleasant crossing that 32 of the coolies refused to proceed and returned home. Encouraged, however, by means of a rope, the remainder of our porters and ourselves negotiated the crossing, and thence onward lay our chief potential and actual difficulties. The upper gorge by which the waters of the Rishi Ganga pour forth from the Nanda Devi basin had now to be tackled, and tackled carrying loads of 60 lbs., which had to be relayed along the sides of a cañon which is built in the proportion of the Grand Cañon of the Colorado River. Anchored to such a load my geological activities had of course to be somewhat curtailed. Nevertheless, and in spite of the qualms of my companions, I managed to collect sufficient data for a continuous geological section through the region. A week of difficult and strenuous work brought us at last within the basin itself at about an altitude of 14,000 feet. Here we found ourselves encamped upon extensive alpine meadows with numerous kinds of beautiful flowers including the blue poppy and edelweiss, etc., and surrounding us the lofty mountains of the "rim" of the basin, from which Nanda Devi itself rose supreme to towering heights. Grazing peacefully, or scrambling on rocky ledges, unapproached and unmolested by man, were seen flocks of mountain sheep and goats, barhel and thar respectively. It is pleasing to think that this natural sanctuary will soon be established as a definite preserve by the Government of India.

We made our way over several miles of this delightful meadow land, thankful in no small measure to have left the "terrors" of the gorges behind. At 15,000 feet on August 4th, we established a lower base camp on a high shelf of moraine above the chief glacier (South-east Glacier) that sweeps by the southern foot of Nanda Devi. Several more miles of toilsome moraine and a steep "couloir" brought us at about 17,000 feet to our



UPPER RISHI GANGA AND BADRINATH PEAKS FROM 24,000 FEET ON
NANDA DEVI

upper base camp on the lowest southern slopes of the mountain. All the locally enlisted porters remaining were sent back, and before we could make further progress a heavy snow-storm held us in our tents for two days. Our obvious route now lay up the great southern ridge of Nanda Devi, uncompromising though a great deal of the upper part of the mountain looked from this point. At a little over 19,000 feet Camp I was pitched on such an inadequate ledge that much quarrying had to be resorted to to provide sufficient space for the tents. From here one obtained an extensive and most impressive view over the great mountains composing a considerable part of the "rim" of the Nanda Devi basin.

Above us, though very fore-shortened, rose the upper crags of Nanda Devi itself, which dropped with terrific steepness through many thousands of feet to the head of a small glacier-cwm sculptured from the southern face of the mountain. It was at this camp that we were faced with what threatened to be a minor tragedy in that four of six Sherpa porters, selected for work at high altitudes, became indisposed on account of high altitude conditions, and were unable to proceed. At Camp II at about 20,000 feet, perched on another rock-ledge below an overhang, our two remaining Sherpas were *hors de combat*, one through snow-blindness and the other on account of general debility. We felt it possible, and indeed probable, that a contributing factor to this debility in nearly every case might be the not inconsiderable difficulty of the climbing; for our route involved technical difficulty at places of a high order, comparable to the harder and steeper climbs of the Alps, and we were at times reminded of the ascent of the Dent Blanche, near Zermatt, by one of its stiffer ridges. At 21,000 feet the angle eased and gave place to a snowy shoulder on which good sites were found for Camps III and IV.

At III a fierce blizzard blew for two whole days and held us in our tents, threatening at times to uproot the latter and roll us and them down the mountainside. Above IV the face steepened and it was only with the greatest difficulty that Houston and myself, who were selected to make the first assault on the summit, could find a site for Camp V at 23,500 feet. Our reconnaissance next day over a magnificent ridge, which provided all the sporting characters of a first-class climb, carried us to the foot of the final crags below the summit. But that night at Camp V Houston was taken violently ill, and next morning was so weak that I was obliged to signal down to IV, 2,000 feet below, for help. Tilman and Lloyd arrived in the afternoon, and the three of us assisted the weak and disappointed Houston down the steep ice-slopes to Camp IV, where in a day

or two he had fortunately recovered from what seemed uncommonly like an attack of ptomaine poisoning. Tilman returned with me to Camp V, and the following day was spent in twice relaying loads under appalling snow conditions to 24,000 feet, where we found an opportune snowy shelf for Camp VI. Our evening there will long be memorable for one of the most magnificent sunset scenes it had been our privilege to witness at high altitudes: dark masses of threatening cloud lay amongst the distant peaks, in strong contrast to vivid scarlet, gold, and greenish tints of the western sky, giving us some fears for the weather of the morrow. A cold night, however, with a minimum temperature of 12° F., broke to a promising morning, and we congratulated ourselves at setting out from our tent as early as 6.15 a.m.: at high altitudes early starting is the virtue and practice of few! We quickly made our way over the first part of the narrow ridge above Camp VI, which had been traversed by Houston and me three days previously. Above it, as on the latter occasion, the snow was just as vilely soft, and we sank in thigh- and sometimes waist-deep. By 8.30 a.m. the sun had struck the slope up which we were toiling and made it even worse. We took turns at kicking steps, and as we approached 25,000 feet, we found it best to take about eight respirations per step, and halt for a rest every ten or twenty steps. A broken rock face and an extremely steep snow-gully eventually led over an exceptionally rotten cornice to easier slopes leading to the summit. Thinking our difficulties were over, and looking round for a suitable halting place, we were startled by a sharp report. A sudden break had occurred in the snow surface on which we were standing, along the very line of our feet, and the whole mass avalanched off and poured with a roar down the gully up which we had just climbed. We had, however, little inclination to contemplate too deeply this remarkably impressive occurrence, and turned our attention to the final snow slopes leading to the summit of Nanda Devi. These were quickly covered, and at 3 o'clock we had accomplished what, under the generally adverse circumstances and contingencies, we had scarcely believed possible, and stood on the culminating point of British India. As we arrived there was a low internal rumble and the snow reverberated beneath our feet: a settlement of the snow dome on which we stood, giving the effect of a minor earthquake, had apparently taken place. The air-temperature was determined as 19° F., but as it was sunny and the air still it did not seem cold. Looking out from our high position everything seemed very distant. Round about most of the peaks on the "rim" of the basin, and from the valleys beyond, were rising beautiful columns and towering

masses of cumulus clouds. To the northward was a cloud-clear avenue, and the elevated plateau of Tibet was indicated by its characteristically blue atmosphere above a brownish landscape. Neither the local conditions nor yet the summer-like clouds on the horizon suggested the occurrence on that very day of the tremendous rainfall of 19 inches at Mussoorie to the westward, and elsewhere in the neighbourhood, causing huge floods and great loss of life amongst the native villagers. Our observations, and a round of photographs, occupied three-quarters of an hour on the summit, and collecting geological specimens from the highest outcrops of rock, we commenced our descent by the same route. Although great care was necessary in the steep soft snow, we knew that the avalanche would have swept clear the more treacherous parts, and rendered them safer than on our ascent. Finding one or two détours round awkward stretches possible, we quickly descended, and in spite of the rather exhausting deep snow were able to make sufficient pace to be back at our camp (VI) by 5.45. After a refreshing drink of tea, for which we always had a mad craving on these occasions, and an ample ration of pemmican, we turned in early.

The following day, in bitterly cold though fine conditions, we made our long descent, past the remains of Camp V, and rejoined our awaiting companions at IV. The vacating of the lower camps was completed in often appalling conditions of weather and snow, and we were a thankful and contented party that eventually reunited at the base camp. During our long trek back to Ranikhet we experienced the last effects of what must be a record monsoon both for length and intensity, satisfied that in spite of it we had reached our objective, and accomplished a measure of scientific investigation otherwise.

[Mr. Odell regrets that time did not permit him to rewrite this article more fully; it has already appeared in the 'Lady Clare' at Cambridge, and is reprinted here with acknowledgements.—ED.]

DAYS IN THE ROCKIES, 1936.

By S. R. C. WALMSLEY.

WHEN travelling out to the East in a westerly direction it must always be a pleasant diversion, even to the most unmountain-minded, to break one's journey and stay in Canada's Rocky Mountains for a while. But for a mountaineer so situated, as I was, such a diversion becomes an event of tremendous importance. This for several reasons. The Rockies are a part of the world much talked about and heard of and whose beauties are extolled by everyone who has been there; they are an immense tract of country much still virgin with many peaks yet unclimbed and even unnamed; also they instil a sense of adventure now no longer to be captured in the Alps or other similarly frequented ranges. But probably the greatest reason is that comparatively few English mountaineers are fortunate enough to visit these regions, and when one does go there and even climbs he involuntarily acquires an inward feeling of satisfaction in having done something most of his friends will never be able to do. He can talk as long as his friends will allow him about his experiences, adding a little here and there for interest's sake without the least possible chance of being pulled up or questioned on the grounds of inaccuracy; no one can disprove his carefully chosen facts. It is a glorious situation.

It was in such a situation as this and with similar thoughts running through my mind when I got out of the train at Banff on July 19th. The weather was glorious and looked as settled as any mountain weather could look, and I rejoiced in being alone and in my fortune. But my silent meditation was rudely shattered on arriving at the Banff Springs Hotel, one of the Empire's largest, smartest, and most expensive establishments, for I immediately ran into a hot, noisy swirling mob of American shriners, a masonic convention of sorts, all loudly dressed with Turkish fezes on their heads and covered with their lodge emblazonry. What a hideous desecration! I learned here that *all* the Swiss guides, actually they number five, were stationed

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LAKE O'HARA AND MOUNT CATHEDRAL

S. R. C. Walmsley

at Lake Louise, so after meeting a friend here and having a most delicious lunch on him, I departed in his car as quickly as possible for the Château.

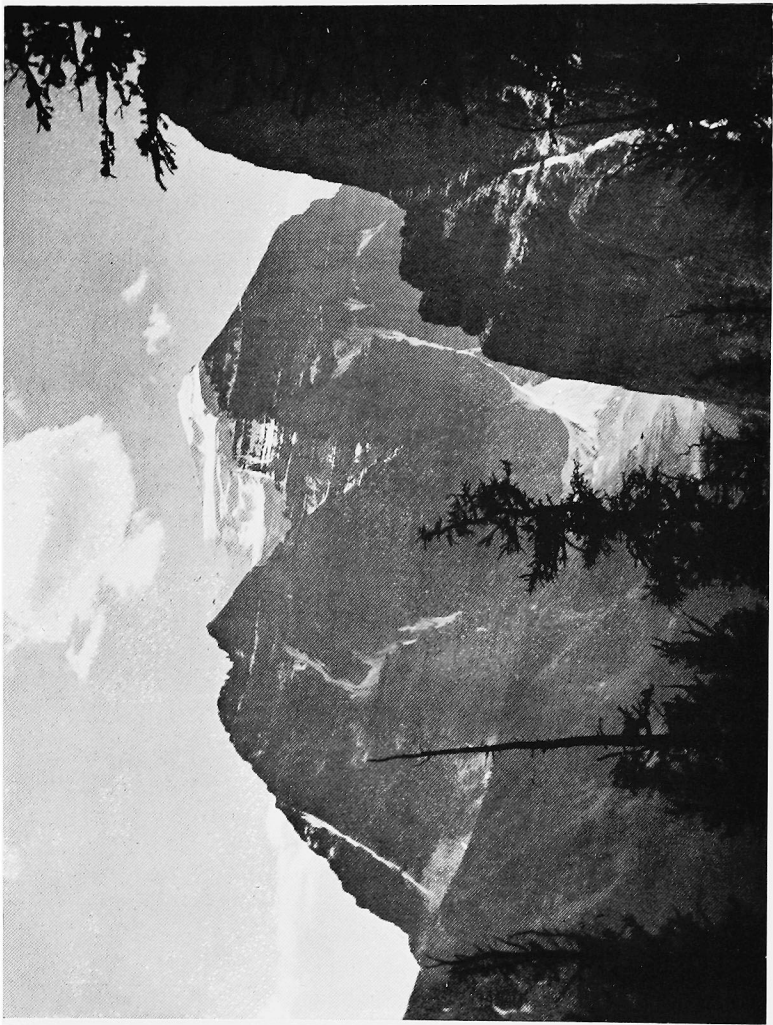
Here two further shocks awaited me. First and by far the less important, there were even more shriners and hundreds of other trippers besides, all Americans, or at least they sounded like it, they are so hard to distinguish. And the second, amounting almost to a tragedy, was my letter engaging a guide for the fortnight I intended to remain had apparently gone astray and no guide was then available. My annoyance was profound, but there was nothing for it but to hang around this magnificent but appalling Château until one became free. Solitary mountaineering is very much to be deprecated, so bearing this in mind I resolved to get into training by walking and riding, which I did.

My first day was actually a particularly heavy one, entirely through my own fault. My intention was to climb Mount Fairview, 9,020 feet, up which I was assured there was a path all the way. But misunderstanding the direction, I got caught in the forest. What a forest! Fallen trees and rotting logs lying in all directions, thick undergrowth concealing great boulders, mosquitoes, bull-frogs, and other insects which torment incessantly; bogs, swamps, and hidden pitfalls, all kept me floundering for hours. It got worse as I mounted and the heat was intense. Eventually, quite exhausted and quite by accident, I struck the trail, a beautiful wide bridle path all the way. From here on I proceeded, breathing with great difficulty, and all but collapsed on the summit after as hard labour as I have experienced on the mountains for many years. It is amazing how out of training one can get. The ascent took me five hours to do what should normally take little more than two. Considerably more time elapsed before I regained breath and composure and was at last able to appreciate my first view of the Rockies. How totally unlike the Alps was inevitably my first observation; how rocky they are and so aptly named. The steepness of their ridges and faces is terrific, a feature only surpassed by the incredibly and universally poor condition of the rock itself. One can only fully realise this on coming to grips with the mountains themselves. The descent only needed two hours, and I felt I had had quite enough for the first day.

July 21st and still no prospect of a guide, so riding, the second method of training was resorted to. Strangely enough I met an English fellow and we rode most of the day together up the O'Hara trail. It was most pleasant and cool along the splendid trails through the forest. Riding, as opposed to climbing, tunes up quite a different part of the anatomy, and is therefore always to be thoroughly recommended.

Fortune awaited me on my return, a guide had turned up, one Walter Feuz. We quickly came to terms—the C.P.R.'s terms—and decided to climb Victoria, 11,355 feet, which is the predominating mountain in the world-famous view seen from the Château. Actually the view is really quite beautiful! I immediately got ready as it was necessary to spend the night at the Plains Teahouse up the valley. Two hours after leaving the Château and its hordes we arrived at a beautifully situated chalet, quite Swiss in appearance, so much so that I was not in the least surprised to hear a softly mumbled "danke schön" from the good lady as she removed a dirty plate. The Plains Teahouse is an astonishing misnomer for the surrounding country is as far from being flat as could well be imagined. The terrific precipices of Lefroy and the hanging glaciers of Victoria are mountain features that literally take the breath away and will for ever be a source of wonder to the countless thousands who will in the future have the fortune to see them.

The same good lady knocked us at 4.15 a.m., and after feasting on porridge and bacon and eggs, in fact all the luxuries obtainable at the Château, we departed promptly at five. The sun had just arisen as we set off over the usual moraine and easy glacier slopes, until after about an hour's going we got to grips with the steep snow leading to Abbot's Pass, 9,600 feet. The route lay up a narrow gorge barely three hundred yards wide between the massifs of Lefroy and Victoria. This is indeed a veritable death-trap when the sun's rays gain power on the glaciers above. Even at this early hour the rumble of avalanches could frequently be heard, and the seracs immediately above seemed to lean most precariously over our heads. However, Abbot's Pass had to be reached, and the gauntlet had to be run. Speed was essential, and but for the cutting of an odd step here and there the pass was safely reached in the excellent time of two and a half hours. A nasty cold wind greeted us, a wind in keeping with the view. Immediately in front of us rose the tottering pinnacled masses of Hungabee and Deltaform while further to the S.W. rose Biddle and the Goodsirs, two glorious towers of rock, grim and forbidding at this cold early hour. Time was not wasted here for the sunny east ridge of Victoria invited us forward. Steep and rotten but easy rocks kept the two of us busy for half an hour or so. (What a nuisance an ice-axe is on rotten rocks!) A sharp snow arete provided a welcome change, but giving way to ice higher up the rotten rocks were afterwards quite a pleasure. Snow, ice, and rock alternated with delightful irregularity, and so engrossed was I in keeping my balance on a narrow snow ridge that I was quite surprised to find we were suddenly on the summit, six hours



S. R. C. Wainsley

MOUNT TEMPLE FROM THE SADDLE

from the Plains. Considering the lack of sufficient training the time was quite fair. It was beautifully warm on the summit cairn, and the view was wonderfully clear and extensive. Smoke could be seen to the N.W. emanating from a great forest fire near Golden in the Columbia Valley. For this reason the distant peaks of Forbes and Columbia were hard to distinguish, but to the west rose the snowy Selkirk range with the magnificent mass of Sir Donald very prominent forty miles off, while away to the S.E. the sharp pyramid of Assiniboine was unmistakable.

An hour was quickly spent on the top and the panorama barely half digested when it was time to descend. We retraced our steps along the Great Divide one foot in B.C. the other in Alberta, and repeated the balancing feats along the east ridge for half an hour before plunging down a steep gully in the south face, bringing many tons of the mountain down in the effort. After negotiating a slippery bergschrund all was plain sailing across névé and down several thousand feet of scree to Lake O'Hara Bungalow Camp, which was reached by 4.30 p.m. Later in the evening the wind veered due west and brought up columns of smoke from the great fire. The sun turned deep copper colour, and the whole surroundings assumed a weird unearthly purple tint. I have never beheld a scene so beautiful nor a colour so delicate. Towards sundown the breeze dropped and everything became normal again; the higher snows passing through their accustomed kaleidoscope of colour until nothing but a deathly pallor remained throughout the night.

Next day, the 23rd, a later start was made, as an easier day was intended. Our peak was mount Oderay, 10,147 feet, rising superbly due westwards, from which we were told a magnificent view was to be had. An easy trail through spruce and larch forests gave on to a meadowland strewn with wild flowers of all descriptions—a rock gardener's paradise! As we mounted, small lakes of a dazzling crystal blue colour appeared in all directions, so calm that they reflected the surrounding snowcaps in perfect detail; all gems of nature's handiwork. The scree gave way to snow just when we began to wish it would do so, and the snow in its turn to rock, just when another change was desirable, making the whole climb a sheer delight in its untiring variety. A long, fairly level ridge with one or two steep pitches necessitating the rope, led to a broad summit in just four hours and a quarter from the camp. The view, as promised, was superb. Oderay is the central point of a veritable cirque of peaks and jagged ridges. Again smoke interfered with the view over the Columbia and Lyell icefields, but the clarity of the atmosphere in all other directions more than compensated

for this. Again outstanding was Assiniboine quite fifty miles off, king of its domain, so black and irresistible in its steepness. I resolved to go there, I simply had to.

Again the allotted hour on the top passed all too quickly, so with lunches safely lodged in a better place the descent was begun. Without incident, except for a little stupidity on my part, descending rocks covered with powdered scree, we reached camp in good time, far less tired than the previous evening. This earlier return gave me a better opportunity of admiring more fully the grandeur of Lake O'Hara, whose intrinsic beauty lies rather in the fact that it can only be approached by a three hours' trail ride or walk from Hector or by the difficult Abbot's Pass, and is therefore moderately sacred from Yankee hikers, those charlatans of peace and quiet. Only those who are genuinely interested in things of beauty ever seem to go to the trouble of moving off the beaten highway to see them. Thank goodness!

Next morning I was disappointed to discover that my guide, Walter Feuz, had in the night contracted a fresh attack of goitre, from which he was really only convalescing when he joined up with me in the first place. He simply could not do any climbing again for a day or two, so I was forced, admittedly against all principles, to act upon freely given advice and climb alone.

I was told by one apparently of considerable authority on the district that Mount Temple, 11,636 feet, though the highest, was easy and could be done without much trouble by anyone in good training. Therefore packing my belongings I set off alone for Moraine Lake, the starting point. In order to get there two high passes had to be crossed, Opabin Pass, a narrow neck joining the gaunt cliffs of Hungabee and Biddle, well over 8,000 feet, and Wenkchemna Pass. Towards the top of the former on its northern side the snow had melted far more than usual and laid bare hard black ice. Trying to cut several steps without making much headway, but with considerable danger of slipping into a horrid crevasse many feet below, I deemed it more prudent to take to the tiresome but far safer moraine slopes to the left. After floundering among the tottering boulders for an eternity of minutes the pass was gained. An easy snow slope on the south side led me down rapidly into the bed of Desolation Valley. Turning a corner I beheld with bated breath Wenkchemna Pass immediately above on the left. What a prospect! 1,800 feet of the steepest, loosest, finely divided scree imaginable. However, there was nothing for it but to set the teeth and set about it. Without stopping and without looking up, and by taking big strides, the height disappeared below me. The top was reached in an hour and a quarter from



MOUNT VICTORIA FROM MOUNT FAIRVIEW

S. R. C. Walmsley

the bottom with breath to spare! What a joy to be in training at last! From the summit a three hours' walk gently downhill, with glorious views on all sides, brought me slowly down the Valley of the Ten Peaks to Moraine Lake Chalet. What a treat on arriving there to hear perfect English spoken once again from the lips of the proprietress and her number one. Charming ladies both, and they do you well—so they ought for the price, which is exorbitant.

Prompt at 5.30 a.m. came the knock at my cabin door. A nasty cold wind was southing through the pine trees, and getting up was difficult. However, hot coffee and the attendant luxuries soon restored me to a normal frame of mind. Before leaving I was informed that earlier in the season two schoolboys had made the ascent from Moraine Lake in four and a quarter hours, which was then thought to be a record. To-day being a somewhat chilly morning, and not in the least conducive to halts en route, I saw no reason why, under such circumstances, this newly set up "record" should not go by the board. Setting off with a swing I mounted rapidly through the trees and reached the Sentinel Pass, ordinarily scheduled to take three hours, in an hour and a quarter. The route from here on turned sharply right up a well-defined ridge composed of the most dreadful shale and loose boulders imaginable. Two ugly perpendicular towers were passed on the right by means of a series of easy slabs which improved the going enormously. A bitter wind was cutting across the ridge hereabouts, and halting was out of the question. For the most part walking, but with a short pitch here and there where hands were needed, I mounted resolutely and rapidly, always with that four and a quarter hours uppermost in my mind. Although cold, the conditions were wonderfully clear and the prospect of a glorious view from the summit kept me going. I must say I felt very lonely all by myself in these wild mountain solitudes; it is a peculiar feeling quite unnoticeable when wandering alone in Wales or Scotland. Eventually the route resolved itself into a regular trail up steep scree slopes on to the final narrow ridge. A snow cornice hung over a tremendous precipice on the right and glimpses down here and there made me shudder. On reaching the summit cairn I glanced at my watch for the first time since leaving Sentinel Pass. I had taken precisely three hours thirty-seven minutes to mount the five thousand four hundred-odd feet from Moraine Lake, not having stopped once on the way! On returning no one would believe me—"Oh, your watch must have stopped" or "you must have missed out an hour"—that sort of thing, but the point really was not worth arguing about, and I refrained from arguing it. The guides estimate an

average time of five to six hours, but the ascent is very direct and pretty steep, and I simply cannot see anything to prevent anybody in good training taking more than four and a half hours as a very conservative maximum.

It was bitter on the summit and freezing hard. A good half-hour was occupied in eating and photography, then a hasty descent to warmer levels appealed strongly. A leisurely jog down soon brought me back to the meadows where, finding a warm spot in the sun sheltered from the wind, I soon continued my sleep which was so rudely shattered at 5.30. I cannot have slept long before my slumbers were again disturbed by footsteps on the trail. They turned out to be those of Edward Feuz, Walter's brother, and a portly gentleman who had been spending the morning literally shinning up and down the fixed ropes on Pinnacle Mountain. I accompanied them back to the camp and exchanged experiences. Their failure to believe my time story brought about a quick parting of company, both on our respective ways to Lake Louise in entirely different 'buses.

The advent of a parent and other relations on the morrow, which also being Sunday put a temporary stop to mountaineering activities, and a few auto runs were indulged in. Yoho Valley, Emerald Lake, and the usual sights were quickly disposed of. All this was very pleasant, very beautiful, but, oh! so lazy and so much traffic and people.

Between this galaxy of eating and motoring I managed to squeeze in a very jolly little climb—the Mitre, 9,680 feet. Sadly overshadowed by the terrific mass of Lefroy, it nestles almost unnoticed at its foot, an attractive little pinnacle of rock flanked by snow couloirs and formidable icefalls. The present season has been apparently abnormally hot, and practically no snow exists on the steeper glacial slopes, revealing bare ice and the hideous thought, for the guide, of prolonged stepcutting. In this instance, however, we were just in time, much to the relief of Walter, for sufficient snow still lay on the slopes to allow kicking, only an occasional chop with the axe being necessary. Once the little col on the left of the peak was gained the serious part of the climb began. It is not always the big mountains which give the greatest kick, and the Mitre proved the rule. Right from the start an awkward chock-stone in a dirty chimney had to be passed on the inside. We had this time left our ice-axes behind on the col, thank goodness. With them my efforts at least would doubtless have been somewhat comic wriggling up this chimney. It is on such a climb as this where the guide becomes so essential; the route twisted and turned until I was almost giddy, and due to the loose stones the former traces of boot scratches were entirely obliterated. It was only when

we eventually emerged on the final arete that the route became at all obvious. The view from the top was sadly restricted owing to the mountain's position, so there was little point in dawdling there. The descent was begun almost immediately; great care being always needed because of the loose holds.

The condition of the rock in the Rocky Mountains is generally far worse than any I have experienced in the Alps. All the peaks seem to be just tottering masses of boulders needing but a strong wind to blow them over. I am told the reason for this exceptional instability is because of the tremendous range of temperature to which these mountains are subjected during the course of the year. The Canadian chain is much higher in latitude than the Alps, and in winter the temperature drops as low as 60 degrees below zero and soars over 90 in the summer. These extremes are not known in the Alps. Whether this is the real reason or not is hard to say, but nevertheless it is an interesting observation and no doubt has some bearing on the point.

From the Mitre I rejoined my relations in Banff, consoled and comforted by one great thought—Banff is the starting point for Mount Assiniboine, the ambition of every mountaineer visiting the Rockies.

Another day wasted in beer parlours and billiard halls made me restless. Fortunately the relations had decided to pass on west, and as eight days still remained before I was due to sail from Vancouver, how better could they be spent than by making the trip to Assiniboine?

Walter Feuz was hastily summoned from Lake Louise, and I spent the rest of the day, the 29th, in visiting horse men and bargaining. At last terms were settled, hardly satisfactory ones, but no terms in Canada are satisfactory to an Englishman with limited means; everything is frightfully expensive. It was decided to start early on the morrow, July 30th.

Mount Assiniboine lies thirty-five miles rather west of south from Banff, and is approached by a choice of three trails, that by way of Brewster Creek being the shortest and the most used, but by no means the most beautiful. The second via Healey Creek and the Golden Valley lies further to the west and is by far the most attractive, and the third is the easternmost by the Spray Valley and Lake Marvel, by far the longest. All three trails require two good days' ride by pack horse, the night in each case being spent in well appointed cabins or, rather, in cabins advertised as such if not in actuality. These cabins and the Assiniboine Lodge and camp itself were originally built by the C.P.R., but are now leased to Erling Strom, a Norwegian of Mount McKinley and Lake Placid fame. Everything in

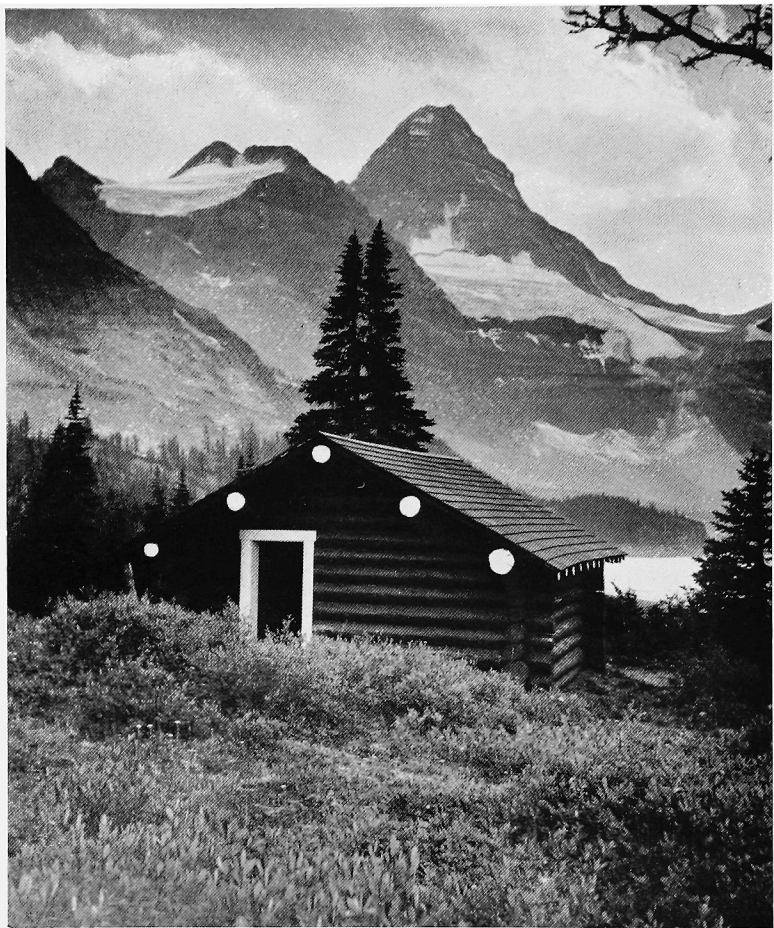
Canada seems to have been originally built by the C.P.R., and the economic development of the Dominion to-day undoubtedly owes whatever prosperity it has ever possessed to the enterprise of that amazing travel system.

Walter's train was three-quarters of an hour late arriving at Banff. So, as our early start was thus knocked on the head, the shortest route, that by Brewster Creek, was decided upon. No amount of thrashing, kicking, nor a copious flow of abusive language could persuade the two horses to vary their speed one iota from a very slow but admittedly sure *adagio funebre*. Soon tiring of our efforts in this direction, we resigned ourselves to this snail's pace, realising that doubtless we should get there sometime and rode on in silence. The Brewster cabin is twenty-four miles from Banff over an exceedingly rough trail through forest, boulders, torrents, and shingle flats. For hour after hour one sits, barely conscious, upon one's horse, giving oneself automatically to the motion of the animal as it surely picks out its way. There is nothing special about the scenery of Brewster Creek. For the most part the trail leads along the bottom of the valley and no peaks of any interest are visible, only the very dried up hillsides and moraine slopes.

It took us nine and a half hours to cover the twenty-four miles, and when the cabin appeared round a clearing in the forest it was indeed a welcome sight.

Next morning, fine as usual, the trail began to mount upwards immediately. There remained only eleven miles of actual distance to cover to Erling Strom's, but in this stretch were two passes both well over 8,000 feet, so our average speed fell to only just two miles per hour. Slow going, but what a change from the day before! The scenery was now magnificent; in all directions as far as the smoke permitted, jagged peaks and tumbling icefields could be seen in utter profusion. The hours passed like magic and we were straining our necks for that promised glorious first view of Assiniboine which suddenly bursts upon you in its towering magnificence just as does the Matterhorn when approaching Zermatt. Its first appearance fairly takes the breath away; alone it stands, dark, steep, and forbidding. It sends a thrill down the spine which is quite indescribable and equally unforgettable; this vision creates an indelible impression upon the mind, of awe, of something quite beyond the powers of our understanding. The steepness of its precipices from this angle is fearful.

We arrived at the Lodge about 2 p.m. I dismounted as in a trance; I simply could not take my eyes off the mountain. Only the sudden realisation that I was hungry and the fact that an attractive lunch was ready waiting brought me to earth.



MOUNT ASSINIBOINE

S. R. C. Walmsley

The afternoon and evening were spent in impatience for the morrow, which seemed an eternity in arriving. Due no doubt to excitement, sleep was a rare and evasive thing, and the knock on the cabin door at 4.15 a.m. was a welcome sound.

The morning dawned fine and clear, just as all the other mornings had done in this most remarkable of summers. Eager to get going, I dressed rapidly, washing being very much of a lick and a promise, and moved over to the main cabin for breakfast. On arriving I was surprised to find another man already there busily eating. He also was going to climb Assiniboine. Two parties on this mountain on the same day must surely be a record.

After eating sumptuously and filling our rucksacks with lunch, oranges, chocolates, and other delicacies provided by Mrs. Strom, we departed at 5.15, the sun barely having risen. For the first hour or so the trail led over flat meadowland along the north shore of Lake Magog, until a halt was called at the bottom of the first scree slope. Resuming after this breather the slope was tackled with determination and soon passed below us. One or two steep wet gullies required care through loose holds, but generally the going was easy. After mounting directly upwards for 500 feet or so a long traverse to the left for half a mile or more had to be made along narrow ledges covered with loose scree. This passage demanded great care, as the ground was most insecure and one had a nasty feeling that at any moment the whole mountainside would slide away. In normal years this part is covered with snow, which makes the going far easier and quicker, but this season the whole mountain was almost entirely clear of the usual snow. Higher up on the main north ridge this proved to be a blessing, but here on this traverse it was quite the opposite. By this time the sun had arisen above the surrounding hills, and with it came the warmth which restored the circulation to fast freezing digits.

The traverse safely accomplished and the second party safely behind and underneath, quicker progress was made. Again due to the lack of snow the glacier had to be abandoned and the uncomfortable moraine resorted to. The angle steepened appreciably as the north ridge was approached and the boulders of the moraine proved most tiresome. We avoided the loose stones on the ridge proper by keeping to small rocky ribs running vertically up the face. These ribs provided very steep but easy and altogether delightful climbing for two hours or more. Looking upwards the first summit could be seen still a long way off immediately above our heads. However, we kept going at a steady pace, the hands always necessary; but we were fully half-way up before we put on the rope.

Until now we had been climbing slightly away from the main ridge on the north face, but some smooth holdless slabs forced us on to the very edge of the arete. On the east side the edge was slightly undercut at the top, then fell away sheer for quite 2,000 feet to the glacier below. The guide shattered the tenseness of the situation by vulgarly observing that at this very spot one could literally spit a mile—arithmetically a gross exaggeration, but nevertheless bearing rather more than a mere scintilla of truth.

At this airy spot a little premature lunch was disposed of and a little extra clothing donned. The conspicuous red band was soon under hand, and a perpendicular chimney proved easier than it looked. Again the ridge was followed, this time on beautifully firm rock, so different from the usual texture of Rocky Mountain ridges, and after our previous experiences was a delight to handle. The climbing was always steep, often perpendicular, but nowhere could it be classed as anything but moderate, judging by British standards, as holds are always plentiful in spite of the exposure. One peculiar feature of the climb which might render it dangerous, and when under snow even hazardous, is the fact there is not a single belay on the whole mountain; nothing can be relied upon. This applies apparently not only to Assiniboine but to practically all the peaks in the Rockies.

A final steep crack brought us suddenly to the north summit. From here a knife-like but almost level ridge quickly led us to the highest point (11,870 feet) which was still heavily corniced. The climb had taken six hours and a quarter.

The view, although very extensive, is a little disappointing; Assiniboine is so considerably higher than any of its neighbours that from the summit they are hardly noticed. Smoke again spoiled the view to the N.W., but the Lake Louise mountains stood out clearly enough, as did the Selkirk range to the westward. The Royal group to the south appealed strongly, especially with the knowledge that many of their summits are still virgin. But apart from these few ranges the whole district is merely a jumbled mass of rocks and snow, with few clearly defined peaks which could be classed as such.

The second party arrived twenty minutes later and a communal lunch was taken and photography dispensed with. It was beautifully warm in the sunshine and little wind was noticeable, but as the descent was long, time could not be wasted. After leaving our cards in the tin provided and taking a final look round we departed, leaving the second party to their solitary meditation.

Except for a most nerve-racking moment when we were

beseiged by a battery of falling stones dislodged carelessly by the party above, the descent was without incident. When once out of danger of a repetition of the stones, and having run the remainder of the gauntlet as quickly as possible, we then took things very leisurely and wiled away the rest of the glorious afternoon in many stops to admire the scenery and to look back at the peak we had just conquered. We arrived back in camp at 5.30, tired but very satisfied. This certainly had been one of the most enjoyable and successful days I have ever spent in the higher mountain ranges, and I shall never forget it.

Next morning, having slept the sleep of the just, I awoke to find the whole district absolutely enveloped in smoke; Assiniboine simply was not to be seen. This made us realise more than ever how fortunate we had been in making the climb immediately instead of waiting a day or two to get into training again after the few days' inactivity. Actually this same pall of smoke hung over the mountains for days afterwards, and rendered any further ascents futile had they been contemplated.

I wished to return to Banff this morning and possibly move on to Glacier and climb Sir Donald in the Selkirks before sailing, but as our horses simply could not be found, another day at the Lodge was therefore our involuntary decision. The day was spent very happily by all the camp guests fishing in that aptly named stretch of water, Lake Marvel. Fishing here is just a massacre and skill is not required, but fishermen will no doubt agree it is far more fun to catch lots of fish rather than none at all. Assiniboine could just be discerned towards the end of the day, just as bold and commanding as ever from this fresh angle. We feasted on steak and peas on the shores of the lake, and then returned to camp by moonlight, arriving close on midnight.

In the morning the horses were this time quickly captured and the homeward journey begun in respectable time. We returned via the Golden Valley and Healey Creek, an altogether more satisfactory route scenically, but hardly so from the point of view of cabins. Brewster cabin on the way out is up-to-date and well stocked with food and blankets, while Sunshine cabin turned out to be somewhat of a myth; it could not be found at all. There was nothing for it but to spend the night in the open round a log fire; really the true Canadian way, so what could be more thrilling? Unfortunately towards midnight the most terrific thunderstorm I ever remember broke with alarming suddenness, drenching us to the skin, and pelting us with hail as big as marbles. It passed off after a two hours' relentless visitation, leaving a field of ice and a scene of desolation. The fire was rekindled with great difficulty, and a meagre

breakfast prepared. We changed what few clothes we could and thankfully got under way again about 5 a.m., as soon as it became light enough to see the trail. The undergrowth was sopping wet, and the wretched horses seemed to take a delight in leading us through the thickest and wettest bushes they could see. At last the sun appeared, and with it some measure of cheer, and we finally ambled into Banff at 10.30 a.m. on August 3rd, little the worse—in fact, immeasurably the better off for our experiences.

Next morning, the 4th, I once again boarded the Dominion westward bound, and after passing through countless ranges of mountains, and seeing at close quarters the forest fire at Golden, the one that had been causing all the smoke, I arrived in Vancouver on the morning of the 5th, attired again as for the city. I left the Rockies behind with great reluctance, but with a firm resolve to return again at the very first opportunity.

‘PROSPICE.’

By WILFRID NOYCE.

WE feel that another Golden Age has gone before us. And we worship the heroes of verticality even as the young and tender of a generation ago worshipped the pioneers of the then virgin rock. Our first efforts, quite naturally, were on the Pinnacle Rib; and as we spread-eagled desperately in that awful first attempt to find a foothold our preceptors would whisper to us the names of the great ones, and their achievements, maybe, on that wall opposite. At which we took heart.

And they have given us a breathing space in which to worship them. The wave of exploration, temporarily shattered by the war, seemed to burst out afresh around 1927. It was discovered that even Tryfan had possibilities, on the Terrace Wall; that one could scale the Holly Tree Wall without recourse to the Holly Tree; in fact, in cases of excess traffic several parallel lines could be struck. And the East Wall of the Slabs became in succession the “expert’s playground,” rivalled only by the strange things concocted around the Devil’s Kitchen. We heard of Lot’s Groove—occasionally. And Clogwyn d’ur Arddu seemed to come as a fitting crown to the achievements of that second Golden Age. “The writer would urge—,” and now there are some ten routes here, two of which at least have been led by a lady. So surely we are not at the end of our resources yet.

But the flood having temporarily subsided, we can look with, at any rate, an appearance of objectivity at what has been done, to decide the important question, what can yet be done in the future. The years of reflection after the earlier pioneers had rested from exploration decided, not that they wanted no more, but that there was no more left for them. Even an explorer like C. F. Holland thought that possibilities were almost exhausted; and we look back and can laugh. Though we are as likely to think that ourselves; at any rate, to tread literally in the paths of those we admire, not follow in their

footsteps. Assume, then, that we want to do something fresh, besides familiarising what has been little done, and want to do it in Wales (both large assumptions, but my own), what is there that has been left untouched, not necessarily as too hard, which we may do?

A good deal. And most of it not by any particular rise in technique, but simply increased familiarity with the surroundings. At present one feels thoroughly uncomfortable on small holds without the knowledge of a good jug-handle not too far away. A great increase could come simply by gradual experience of long steady leads, and the knowledge of how far one can travel on seemingly small holds. Most of the better new routes would be long run-outs like this, with more and longer lay-backs. Rope work may improve, rather as an auxiliary help, enabling smoother things to be overcome. Not only the safeguarding of the leader, but engineering as on the Central Buttress of Scafell. And possibly the greatest number of routes will be opened up on rotten rock. Its technique is at present little understood, though it is admitted now that it has a technique. While unlikely to become popular, the Devil's Kitchen and other cliffs cannot remain taboo as they used to.

Armed with this knowledge the younger generation looks round, and, ambitious, it first looks at the hard things. There are plenty of them. Even Tryfan is not exhausted, though it needed the German party last spring to show that, on the South Buttress. Something of difficulty may yet be found by grubbing further round on the dirtier parts of the Terrace Wall, and elsewhere. And for dirtiness, the Milestone Buttress has more grassy corners that need cleaning. The ordinary routes are deservedly popular, perhaps, but they can grow tedious. Pitches of very much the same technical difficulty and more variety can be found all over the cliff; and in suitable line. One is impressed by the greatness of the unknown through which the few known routes push their way. Ridge after ridge, buttress upon buttress, is the impression.

The Carneddls have been left more untouched than most, partly for want of looks on their part, partly of energy on the climber's. So there are only two climbs at all well known on Craig yr Ysfa. Some of those before have looked at it, climbed it, but unattended. That wall on the right of the Amphitheatre must hold good things. But why not more than one half route? Grassy overhangs seem numerous all over Craig yr Isfa, but there are other good spots, and we might as well look. And if only it wasn't such a way to Ysgolion Duon there are some steep smooth rocks waiting there.

I must confess here that I started with the idea of taking

most of the Welsh cliffs and looking at their possibilities. But that seems now rather absurd, for on every cliff there is a good deal of exploration still to be done. Idwal is probably the most exhausted, Clogwyn d'ur Arddu holds still the most obvious big possibilities. If the undercut base could be surmounted, more might be done to the right of the Great Slab. And if we could get going more with the lay-back, there are good things awaiting on the upper part of the East Buttress.

But while these and other big cliffs attract, there are plenty of small ones which need attention. One of the charms of Welsh climbing, as against the Lakes, seems to lie in greater variety and range, opposed to the minute exhaustion of a limited number of popular cliffs. Wales possesses so many of these, and so many that still to a large extent await discovery. The Llanberis Pass, with Dinas Mot and Cyn Las, the Carnedd cliffs already mentioned, and many others, are at present the quarry of a small band which enjoys their irregularities and even remoteness. And then exploration must be followed by their throwing open, so to speak, to the public (a defence of guide-books), that joys discovered may be shared by others. That public must ultimately be disappointed. Discoveries, in the ensuing excitement, are overrated; and inevitably. Quite apart from individual revaluations, standards change, and depressingly enough posterity must find our severes but moderately interesting. Familiarity will have removed terror; but perhaps they will be kind to us.

That, however, does not impede the work of the explorer with the interconnected labours of familiarising discovery. Nor does the other thought on futurity discourage, that some day every climbable possibility will be climbed, and that there will then be nothing left to do but follow the individual hand and footholds prescribed as routine. By that time sufficiency will exhaust itself elsewhere. For us there still remains the pleasure of novelty and broadening of experience in one of its simplest forms. More cliffs, novel views, and emotions of movement in which one can be struck by existing differences and pleased by feelings of similarity. However the powers of individuals may vary, they can but be stimulated by experiences on rocks containing different and sometimes finer situations than those to which we so tenaciously cling.

The prospect for us, then, is not gloomy. Having received, it is also possible to give. And to give where at one time it seemed that there was little chance of giving. And once the chance is granted most of the other ideas expressed here must follow very obviously. Most people, if asked, would admit to a desire at one time or another of doing something new.

The only value any conglomeration of ideas like this may have lies in the expression of thoughts that have occurred to others before, but formless. The only plea they contain is that opportunity such as this should not be wasted through want of energy and originality on the part of those that come after.

BRAVE NEW HELYG.

By C. H. FRENCH.

With apologies to a well-known Author.

I WAS standing 'neath the portals of the "New Helyg," gazing up in profound admiration at the Club's "Coat of Arms," when the voice of the custodian made me glance down the white tiled passage leading from the main hall, baths, and sun-bathing cubicles. He approached with a gliding yet graceful hip rythm, in short, the stride of the "super-alpha mountaineer." His Yo-Yo kept pace with his measured tread as it rose and fell between the white-tiled floor and the hand which controlled it. Close to heel was his tame leopard, a magnificent creature, and a gift from one of the Himalayan custodians. The spotless one-piece rubberised suit which he wore appeared even whiter than the glazed tiles covering the walls and floors of the passage along which he was so rapidly approaching. "Staying long?" he enquired, as we shook hands. Considerable discomfort by that vice-like grip reminded me that I had for many moons somewhat neglected the Club's training and physical fitness centre established in the heart of the city from whence I had so recently fled. 'Ere I could stammer a reply he cast an enquiring eye towards the masonry upon which I had just been gazing—a creditable piece of work, what! "Marvellous," I replied. "And," he continued, "all the 'relief work' carried out in the latest anti-rust and everglisten metal too." Together our eyes wandered over the masterpiece of figure sculpture, executed in a boldness of line belonging only to the master craftsman. "Wonderful, truly wonderful," I again murmured. "Surely, though," I exclaimed, "that right-hand panel. Supposing that the figures 'do' represent super-alpha rock gymnasts as indicated by the inscription, they could hardly have attained, let alone 'retain,' those impossible positions on that more than vertical and perfectly smooth face!" These comments, I observed, brought forth a somewhat cynical smile on his otherwise severe countenance.

"Of course," he replied, after a moment's hesitation, "you have not been down here for some considerable time, otherwise you would readily realise that what we gaze upon is no exaggeration. That particular panel you will observe is of more recent date, and was presented to the Club by the Board of Directors to commemorate the production in our experimental laboratory of the type of climber you see represented, in other words, the Class A 'Super-Rock Suctionist.' This attainment was the result of many years' experiment and cross fertilisation. The Hatchory Director's work was so successful that he eventually produced a type which possessed suction pads on the tips of every finger and reinforced eyebrows which extend at will with sufficient strength to support the full weight of the body. We found all the 'supers' child's play to these rock suctionists, and have found it necessary to intensify the standard of difficulty by detailing large parties of odd week-end climbers equipped with nailed boots, preferably No. 6 Tricounis, to climb with the aid of fixed ropes up and down such climbs as were classed 'almost impossible,' bringing their standard under normal conditions to 'impossible' by smoothing off any available rugosity.

"Other climbs are being treated with grass seed to fill in any possible cracks and crevices. However, we will continue our chat later, as I expect you are in form by now for a 'Pemmo Gramme Tablet.'" This, he informed me, was one of the latest concentrations, containing all the vitamins from A to X, and was the outcome of a secret formula presented to the Club laboratory by the late President.

The conversation continued as he led the way to his private quarters. He appeared interested as to my journey down, and was anxious to know whether I had tried out the latest thing in "Aero Motor Cars," and about whose speed, both on the ground and in the air, he waxed enthusiastic.

Sundry inscriptions on doors came to my notice as we walked along. The sound of many voices could be heard coming from one described as "Baths and Vibro-vacuum Massage," and intermingled with the noise of human voices was the ever constant drone of a huge electric generating plant controlled by enormous switchboards, which in turn carried a hundred-and-one buttons and levers, truly objects of awe to those passing into the main entrance hall for the first time. A moment or so later we passed another door labelled "Helyg Conditioning Rooms." On making enquiries my companion informed me that all the high altitude climbers and custodians of summit huts concluded their intensive training there.

We had now reached the custodian's quarters in the east

wing. Access to his private room was by means of a vertical ladder which we both ascended. When the trap-door was finally lowered my host proceeded to remove his rubber gloves, carefully placing same along with his Yo-Yo in a small locker, and explaining that prior to my arrival he had been superintending a new sanitary scheme recently passed by the Committee. His next action was to walk over to a switchboard, perhaps a little less bewildering than the others I had seen below, and on his pressing a button marked with a large "A" the ceiling swung back in two sections, disclosing a vita glass roof, through which the hot rays of the June sun came pouring uninterruptedly into the room. On pressing a button indicated by an equally large "B" twin beds sprung out from the wall, the white linen covers of same producing a smile of approval and satisfaction. Now for a pipe and a sun-bathe, he remarked, and seizing the tag of his zipper, the one-piece suit gravitated to the floor as the result of the downward pull, revealing a magnificent specimen of athletic manhood, whose sun-bronzed skin rippled over his well developed muscles as he strolled about the room, gathering up his pipe, pouch, and lighter. I did not take much pressing to do likewise, and was soon lying on the second bed stretched out in the full glory of the sun's rays.

He explained that all the bunks were arranged in this manner in the large dormitory, where there was accommodation for two hundred and fifty members. As we reclined in this atmosphere of luxury, I was told about the latest exploit in peak snatching, Everest, Kanchenjunga, Kabru, and Jannu, under ten days. My informant said he had flown over recently and spent several days with the custodian on Everest, and commented on the go-ahead management of the summit hut.

We chatted on in this manner for some considerable time, until finally our gossip drifted back to the subject of our present surroundings, and amongst other things to the rock garden recently constructed round the building by one of the members who took a keen interest in the lesser forms of plant life, and whose record card had unfortunately been lost by some careless assistant, when temporarily employed on clerical work at the time of his "group" determination. This member, he explained, had been under the observation of the "Controller of Records" for some considerable time, but up to the present he had been unable to come to any logical conclusions regarding his classification. Some days his climbing ability was equal to that of a Super-Alpha, but on others he possessed the habits and ideas of a Delta or Epsilon, this trait showing more forcibly during the hours of darkness. "In his quieter moments," continued the custodian—but it was at this point that the sun's rays,

coupled with the newest thing in spring mattresses, and the now rather distant drone of the electrical generators, brought on considerable drowsiness, and I very readily, and perhaps rudely, went sound asleep—but, then, custodians will talk!

What a dream of dreams. There was I, a “Super-Suctionist,” complete with suction pads and extending eyebrows, ropes a thing of the past. The sheer joy of literally running up and down smooth vertical faces was a thrill beyond description. What a buttress! For years I had gazed upon this particular one and ranked it as a “super-impossible.” Seven hundred feet of the best, and what a start! Two hundred feet of holdless and almost vertical slab! Just a pause on this overhanging wall before the next effort and—but would my suction pads suction? Would my steel-like eyebrows extend? Down and down into space I went, over and over—then the gods of the mountain be praised, I woke up, true with my heart palpitating and a pain in the small of my back. What a resurrection! The knees of the occupant of the lower bunk were in violent contact with my vertebræ, and the morning light was fighting its way through the impenetrable fug. Then I remembered the owner of those knees in the lower bunk—the horticulturist, and the cause of the undulations which confronted my upward gaze in the bunk above me—the custodian. Crib, gosh, what a night! What a mix up! What a . . .!!

THE DEVIL'S ROCK.

THE Devil's Rock is one of a series of granite cliffs situated on the south-east flank of a wooded hill called the Dewerstone, on the south-west edge of Dartmoor, at the junction of the rivers Meavy and Plym. The Dewerstone, which is about six miles N.N.E. of Plymouth, is marked on the one-inch Ordnance Survey Map, but the Devil's Rock itself is not. The latter is about 15 minutes' walk up the Plym from the junction of the two rivers, a path leading along the left bank of the Plym to the foot of the rock. It should be unmistakable, as the two cliffs with which it might be confused are further upstream and are not close to the river. There are also two arêtes immediately adjacent to it on the downstream side, both of which give interesting climbs of about 100 feet.

The rock itself is nearly 200 feet in height and extremely steep, the lower half being practically vertical. It gives two good climbs of great character with good rock and fine situations all the way. A pitch description of the routes follows, as owing to the trees at its foot it is difficult to get a clear view of the face from below.

ORIGINAL ROUTE :

Starts at the right-hand corner of the face.

I. 20 feet. Easy muddy scramble up projecting rocks on the right.

II. 35 feet. Rising traverse left into a groove—piton.

III. 35 feet. Up groove for 10 feet, then move across with difficulty into a smaller groove on the right. Ascend this to good stance with belays.

IV. 40 feet. Up on to bollard and traverse left along brambly ledge to good belay.

V. 55 feet. Follow an obvious line diagonally up to the right ; good belay.

VI. 35 feet. Turn the overhang by a short chimney on the left. From here one can go up easy rocks to a crack on the left or continue straight ahead by a short slab to the top.

Standard (rubbers): very difficult, with one severe pitch (No. 3).

DIRECT ROUTE :

The Direct coincides with the Original for one pitch, and touches it again at the last stance below the top.

Starts under the overhang at the centre of the face.

I. 40 feet. Combined tactics are necessary to get into the crack above the overhang. Continue up the crack until a long stride can be made to a groove on the right. The groove contains some small trees and leads easily to the piton.

II. 35 feet. This is pitch 3 of the original route.

III. 40 feet. A steep groove, overhung at the top, continues up on the right. Below the overhang pull out on good hand-holds to a small ledge ; from here step back into the crack on the left, and ascend it to a small stance and good belay. There are some loose blocks near the top.

IV. 30 feet. Continue up for 8 feet, then traverse left across the vertical wall into a recess, and thence up to a big stance on the left (stance 5 of the original route).

V. 25 feet. A delicate slab on the right leads to the top.

Standard : sustained severe ; first pitch very severe.

A. D. M. C.

REVIEWS.

The last two years have shown a great increase in climbing literature of one sort and another, a fact which fairly represents the generally growing interest in the sport. Nevertheless the press in general remains impervious to all but its sensational aspects, and few of these books are reviewed; space does not allow more than a proportion to be reviewed here, but a list of some of the remainder which might interest members is added at the end.

Another reflection of this increased interest is the greater care now given to the production of these books. The new series of Fell and Rock guides are a great improvement on their predecessors (though one reader at least almost regrets the passing of the scarlet hands and magenta sandwiches which were formerly the inevitable result of a wet day on Pillar). Now they are sensible in size, better illustrated, more legible, and though the head and foot bands are an unnecessary luxury, the rounded corners are a great improvement.

Most mountaineering books must be tested by their illustrations. The half-tone plate, unless carefully reproduced, tends to look shabby; heavy snow scenes glare from art paper, giving such a "realistic" effect that publishers will soon have to consider issuing snow glasses *gratis* with the book. It is extremely interesting to compare the same photo of Nanga Parbat on p. 270 of "Mountaineering" (half-tone) with the same plate reproduced in photogravure on p. 3 of "Nanga Parbat Adventure." Again, compare p. 80 of the new Blackwell edition of "My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus" with the same illustration of the Aiguille de Plan on p. 113 of the "Romance of Mountaineering"; the first is photogravure, the second collotype. Generally photogravure seems more suitable for illustrations, collotype better still. The closest comparison I can find of all three processes is of three separate photos of one face of the Grandes Jorasses; they occur on p. 192 of "Climbing Days," p. 113 of the new edition of the "Playground of Europe," and on p. 137 of the "Romance of Mountaineering." Certainly there has been no finer all-round climbing book than the latter for many years; it is a pleasure to look at, to handle, and to read.

THE ROMANCE OF MOUNTAINEERING. By R. L. G. Irving. (J. M. Dent. 1935. 18/-.)

CLIMBING DAYS. By Dorothy Pilley. (G. Bell. 1935. 15/-.)

Apart from their simultaneous publication there is little in common between these two very good books. It is their differences which suit them to a joint review. There is a great deal in Mr. Irving's 300 pages; there is a lot one did not know, unless one had read

all the Alpine Journals; there are quite a few points one disagrees with, unless one had also climbed for over thirty years; the illustrations are plentiful, and the best collection in any book of this type. "The Romance of Mountaineering" is not one of a type, it is essentially apart. It is a bird's-eye view of mountaineering as a whole. As such it is able to quote large sections of the finest mountaineering literature and some of the worst. Quotations from accounts of unjustifiable continental climbs figure rather too largely, with the result that one tends to draw conclusions that might not be fair to continental mountaineers as a whole. The sense of nationality is too strong throughout, but Mr. Irving realises that it is nationality and rivalry, as much as "mechanisation and the cult of danger," which are the largest morbid growths on the tree of mountaineering. He realises, too, that these developments, which he likens to the branches on the tree, may, "in order to show the blossoms more easily be pulled down till they break . . . but this would not kill the tree." Mr. Irving is at his best when describing the early development of mountaineering. His picture of Luc Meynet and the Abbé Gorret, who, in the history of the Matterhorn, "stand out, free from the slightest trace of jealousy," is delightful. There are dozens of similar portraits which make much of the book a most pleasant anthology of mountaineering episode.

"Climbing Days" is quite different. It is a purely personal account of a very good climbing life. I like reading this book because its detail is so good. The little points which make climbing so vivid are skilfully and humorously brought out: the man who got stuck on the Glyder Fach hand traverse and couldn't think of anything better to say than "find me a rugosity"; or their Pyrenean guide, "flopping like a frog on the billowy surface, that old man seemed to belong to a race of giants." One of the best features of the book is the way in which it makes one sympathise with the author's experiences. Her "initiation" must have been that of thousands, but it is recorded in a style more real than can be found in any of the numerous first chapters of mountaineering literature. All the way through, except, of course, when she goes to Japan or climbs the north ridge of the Dent Blanche, it might be an account of any of hundreds of climbing histories, as far as some of the experiences go. But as far as skill in recording these experiences is concerned, Mrs. I. A. Richards has succeeded where everyone else would have failed.

"Climbing Days" is about climbers, and days, and vivid minutes. "The Romance of Mountaineering" is more objective, concerned more with movements than the characters of those who make movements. The former is more worth reading, the latter is more worth having.

R. A. H.

MOUNTAINEERING. (Volume XVIII of the Lonsdale Library.) Many authorities. Edited by Sydney Spencer. (Seeley Service. 1934. 21/-.)

This is an attempt by various authors to outline mountaineering in its widest sense. The initial third of the book contains sections

on the major features of climbing technique, each by the pen of an expert. A chapter by Winthrop Young expresses tersely the ethical outlook of good mountaineering. Sections by Blanchet on rock climbing, and by Meade on snow and ice craft, give sound general advice to those whose practical experience has not taught them on the mountainside what these chapters outline for them in theory.

Other sections deal with the history of mountaineering, equipment, geological structure of mountains, reconnoitring, winter mountaineering, first aid, Alpine flora and photography, each written by an authority and each illustrated by photographs and sketches.

On reading the first part one gets the impression that there is a diversity of outlook, so that the volume as a whole lacks enthusiasm. This is unfortunate, because such a book on mountaineering ought above all to inspire the novice with the desire to become a competent mountaineer. The information given is hardly sufficiently detailed to be of use to old hands, and is therefore presumably written for beginners.

The latter two-thirds of the book should prove very useful to climbers. They consist of a series of chapters describing every mountain range of the Globe, where there is opportunity for climbing adventure. Again, each region is described by an authority.

The sections are, of course, far from exhaustive, and give only the barest minimum of essential information. Sketch-maps are included of most of the chief districts, which, though small in scale, are an asset. The book is well produced, having a dignified appearance as befits an unofficial A.C. production; despite its bulk it is light to handle, but the proof-reading has been carelessly done in places, and some chapters have been unnecessarily sub-divided.

Because of its comprehensive nature it is a volume which a mountaineer ought to have on his shelves. Considering the difficulties involved we should be very grateful both to the editor and to the team of distinguished authorities whose combined efforts have made this book an invaluable addition to mountaineering literature.

W. D.

AFFORESTATION IN THE LAKE DISTRICT. By H. H. Symonds. (J. M. Dent. 1936. 2/6.)

This is a most excellent half-crown's worth, doubly well spent in a cause with which all climbers must sympathise. It is a reasoned and eloquent plea for the preservation of some of the most beautiful valleys of the Lake District from the unimaginative and regimented incursions of the Forestry Commissioners; it gains in value in that it is no vituperative polemic, but a closely reasoned answer to the various claims the Commissioners make in support of their policy. Mr. Symonds shows that the barrack square planting of coniferous trees, apart from being an eyesore in itself, is causing also the closing down of valley head farms and the end of their Herdwick sheep; access to the fells is being restricted—as in Ennerdale—whilst the claim that unemployment is being relieved in West Cumberland is shown to be very slight.

As anyone who has read his excellent guide-book to the district knows, Mr. Symonds can write in a most invigorating manner, and here he makes even his statistics live. The impressive list of signatories to the 1935 petition to the Commissioners goes to prove that this is not a local affair only, but part of a nation-wide campaign for the preservation, not only of our hills, but of the fast disappearing countryside as well; and as such it deserves the support of every climber.

E. V.

ROCK CLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING. By Carl Brunning. (Open Air Publications. No date. 2/6.)

This book is cheap. I do not use the adjective commonly associated with "cheap," as the book is not so bad as all that. It costs only half-a-crown and consists of 108 pages in a paper cover. It is illustrated (but not very well) by drawings. The author (who is the editor of the *Mountaineering Journal*) puts it forward as an intention to "convey simply and clearly to the novice exactly what he is intended to do and to learn in connection with this pastime." I am not sure that he succeeds, but he has no doubt been hampered by the desire to keep the book cheap. In that he has succeeded only too well. The whole thing savours of cheapness. The literary style is very unattractive. The author makes a number of confident assertions which cannot all be accepted. Some of his generalisations are far too sweeping, as, for instance, in a chapter on mountaineering (not rock-climbing), where he says that descending is always a much more fatiguing operation than ascending. I think I know what he means, but I challenge the accuracy of his statement as put in this way. He also says that the climber is frequently called upon to camp at the foot of his climb. I doubt it. What kind of slabs are "scap slabs" (p. 56), and isn't it a little unusual to spell Lliwedd as L'lwedd (p. 57)? I think the book is too cheap.

J. P.

BEN NEVIS: the Scottish Mountaineering Club Guide. Second Edition. Edited by G. Graham Macphee. (Douglas & Foulis. Edinburgh. 1936. 5/-.)

In bringing up to date the edition of 1920 of the guide-book to Ben Nevis the S.M.C. has more than doubled its size, adding a new chapter on the Geology of Ben Nevis and many new photographs and plans, including four excellent sketch panoramas of the view from the summit; and, of course, since the guide-book is primarily for climbers, there are descriptions of many new climbs of all varieties of difficulty; in fine, here is a guide-book well worthy of the finest all-round climbing ground in the British Isles.

It is particularly pleasing in a modern climbers' guide to find that the tastes of all are alike considered, that easy routes are as carefully described as difficult ones, and that when the writer occasionally pronounces judgment and recommends a route as being especially fine it is not always the severest routes that are so honoured. In fact the mountaineer, in the opinion of the S.M.C., is someone

who, in addition to a joy in levering himself up difficult rocks, takes a delight in the scenery and an interest in the rocks, birds, beasts, and plants around him.

To dismiss in a few words the easier climbs at the expense of the severe, a method open to criticism in any case, would be indefensible in the case of Ben Nevis, where for six months of the year it is quite probable that anything above a "difficult" (gullies excluded) may be rendered impossible by conditions. The author therefore spends considerable time describing under winter conditions those routes which lend themselves to winter climbing, not omitting notes as to where one may hope to get step-cutting and where one may expect to be seriously obstructed by cornices, warnings of places where there is peculiar danger of avalanches, descriptions of useful escapes and short cuts for those racing darkness, and hints on where to glissade and where, if one would avoid sudden shocks, not to glissade.

The climbing routes themselves are broadly described, and in few places are individual holds mentioned, for on Ben Nevis one may still stray a few feet without encroaching on another climb; nor does the author recommend any particular method of surmounting the difficulties, as—to the amusement if not the assistance of other climbers—did the writers of the old guide-books. Any slight variations of an original route are ignored, which certainly prevents confusion, and the routes are generally described by reference to one or more of the excellent photos with which the book abounds. This method should make it impossible for a climber to miss his route in clear weather, but one would have liked a few landmarks at or near the foot of the cliffs to have been mentioned, for guidance in misty weather.

To sum up; it ought to be possible by means of this guide-book to select a route suitable to the weather conditions or to your mood or to your capabilities; to follow that route and know roughly what to expect and where; to escape from it if necessary and find the quickest or the most pleasant way down to wherever you want to get to; to pronounce the local names so as not to be laughed at; and if your tastes run to geology, ornithology, botany or meteorology you will find much to interest you in this book.

There are few things, moreover, to carp at: you will find a few inconsistencies, such as in the description of the Castle Ridge where the climber should ascend several steep pitches, two of which are almost severe, though the climb has previously been designated moderate. And surely it does not take half an hour longer from Achintee, by the ordinary route, to the C.I.C. hut than to the foot of the Tower Ridge? A more serious omission is the failure when referring, as so often, to the photos, to give the page which they face. Instead we are given the name of the photographer, which is little help until the book is well known, since the name does not appear in the list of illustrations at the beginning, nor are the photographs themselves indexed. The result is much unnecessary turning of pages.

A. M. G.

THE NORTHERN HIGHLANDS: the Scottish Mountaineering Club Guide. Second Edition. Edited by W. N. Ling and J. Rooke Corbett. (Douglas & Foulis. Edinburgh. 1936. 4/-.)

This is a second and revised edition of the Northern Highlands guide originally written by Mr. Ling, and is uniform with the excellent series of guides produced by the S.M.C. for all parts of Scotland.

It was with considerable relief that I opened this book to find that the beautiful faces of An Teallach and the Torridon hills are still unblemished by "X's overhang finish to the holdless crack" or "Y's external overlap variant"; somehow the mountains in this district seem to stand apart from an age insistent on meticulous detail. In any case the rock formation does not lend itself to climbing, book in hand, and in winter snow and ice are ever changeable. The S.M.C. have adopted the admirable policy of leading us in the paths of righteousness and indicating where truth may be found, but allowing us the final initiative in the choice of route. I always feel a great sense of gratitude, for this is one of those scarce regions in these overpopulated islands where, in winter at any rate, it is possible to keep up the stimulating pretence of pioneering. It is always a straight fight between you and the mountain, and not between you and the man who wrote up the climb in the guide-book.

If the description of ridge walks and the like seem to err on the side of caution, it must be remembered that this is essentially a guide for all types of mountaineer, walker, and climber alike. Again, in the morning, one might be inclined to criticise the space granted to description of paths, but, in the evening, there are few who would scorn to use them.

The photographs certainly do justice to a district which contains much of the grandest and most beautiful scenery in the British Isles. Several excellent new illustrations have been added to this edition, but the revisers might have omitted the one of A' Mhaighdeam, which has obviously slipped in the making.

Now that cows, pigs, and their products are safely tucked away in tins, the Scottish mountaineering camper has to make little allowance for the distribution of fauna, but midges and deer remain. Midges know no law, but deer are less fortunate. The rights, rules, and regulations to be observed for the "protection" of deer brood like a threatening storm over the Northern Highlands, and we are even treated to a homily on proprietary and sporting rights. Fortunately, however, by far the best mountaineering weather occurs well before the shooting season commences, and those whose livelihood depends on deer will be found most courteous and hospitable.

F. A. P.

SCAFELL. No. 2 of the Group Climbing Guides to the English Lake District. By A. T. Hargreaves. (1936. 2/6.)

This guide is an honest piece of work. There are between 80 and 90 climbs in it, with some very exact details about each. The descriptions are concise, neatly tabulated, clean and accurate, pitch

by pitch. It is No. 2 of the Lakes series—there are going to be five—and, they tell me, they are all going to be exactly alike, these guides, as like as pins.

And it is very difficult to think of things to say about it, for the sight of it does not stir me that way, but only to memories. How I hadn't climbed on the cliff at the time; was a beginner, not allowed out on such things; but I read it, read it again, poured myself over it, and photos and diagrams; later on used to get lost on the cliffs, among its buttresses.

There is not much to be said about detail. I have only been to Scaffell half a dozen times, but I am sure of that, that everything is as right as makes no matter. And apart from detail there is nothing in the guide; even the historical note is stuffy with detail. So I may as well say straight off that I think it excellent, a very great improvement on the previous edition, and on Kelly's Pillar guide too; that it gives me a headache to have to read it; and that I wish to attack it.

Firstly, on the score of use. It seems to me to be wrong in plan. The description is a tiny, narrow spotlight moving in a single line, "a chimney," "a little slab," then it travels on, "a crack," "20'," "a grass ledge"; and that is all; the rocks might be any rocks, and the conformation of cliff and climb might be any conformation, might be in mid-air, for the spotlight sheds no rays aside, and gives no light on such matters. So, strictly speaking, you do not know where you are. If, for instance, you once lost the track, it would be no good looking round at how the rocks stood, you would have to go down and start again. But for the diagrams the method would again and again be useless. The diagrams are luckily fairly adequate and do give quite a good idea of the main areas. I have heard others praise them more highly. There is also an excellent frontispiece drawing much better than the Pillar one, but there are no photographs, no relief. I admired the terse engineering touch that made the best of a bad method: it gives more grip than there is in the Pillar guide. But, even so, the network on these cliffs is not portrayed by it.

Then the headache. Just as there is not a scrap of visual power in the guide, so, among these 80 to 90 individual tracks, there is not one type brought out, and not one character. The history is prep. school history, epics, crowns, best days still to come, just as much as the classificatory scheme is a stupid, prep. school, straight up-and-down scheme, with the old kings treated in charity. You can see nothing, and you can feel nothing. You can read it, the dry print, but only with headache.

I do not know. To write a guide like this takes a great amount of trouble, and to write one as well on the larger scale would take more. It may not be worth while for a man to spend so much effort on a climbing guide. But at present we are considering only the point, how good is this one. And for that I have laboured these as my opinions and can stop there: that progress is a thing of ups and downs, but mostly also of desire; that this guide is best yet of

its kind; that there is danger of standardisation at this low level; and that, as for stultification, the method has gone far enough, being sufficient already to cause pain.

J. M. E.

ROCK CLIMBS ROUND LONDON: A Guide. By H. Courtney Bryson. (Privately printed. 1936.)

This little work by a member of the club is useful for those living in Kent and Surrey, but does not venture north of the Thames (Tower Bridge would provide an appropriate crossing-place), thus ignoring the Chiltern chalk quarries, the Law Courts, and the fast-disappearing Leicester Square Alhambra. Otherwise within its limits it is a good and amusing description of the various outcrops of which Harrison is the chief; it is clearly tabulated and sets forth the various attendant pitfalls. It also includes an involved and rather facetious map, and an introductory note by Mr. Young, who refers to the book as a "missing link"; we must admit that for one fleeting moment we thought he referred to the frontispiece . . .

E. V.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT. Vol. 10. No. 2. (1935. 4/-.)

When is a journal not a journal? The Fell and Rock has always given good measure, but this last number, with its 120 pages and nearly fifty plates, is nearer a year-book than a club journal; it is fine value as such, but what does the humble fell walker think of it? For the Lake District is conspicuous by its absence amongst the plates, and is poorly represented in the text except by C. Douglas Milner's "Gimmer Climb," an amusing article which is calculated, by its backhanded aspersions on "another place," to bring a retort from some Welsh enthusiast in the next number. ". . . where they have tin huts on hills and mountain railways, and every twenty years or so a new guide book!" Still, if C. J. Astley Cooper's "Welsh Wiles" is the Club's only reply to A. B. Hargreaves' memorable article of two years ago, Wales has not much to fear.

E. W. Hodge writes of the eighteenth century view of the mountains in a fascinating way. A. T. Hargreaves is most practical on rope management, and John Hunt tells of bad weather and a gallant failure on K36 in the Karakoram. There are other articles on Scotland, Ireland, the Dauphinée and the Pyrenees, but for his contribution on a Dolomite holiday C. F. Holland has to delve into the back files of a kindred club's publications! We must, then, congratulate the Editor on this number, so full and so well produced; and we wonder, a little wistfully, how he affords those fifty plates—and look forward eagerly to his forthcoming "Lakes" number.

E. V.

THE RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL. Vol. VIII. No. 2. (1936. 4/-.)

This Journal is always good reading, and the current number is no exception; all the articles make their various points clearly and with a commendable brevity—there is no "padding." They cover the

ground, too, with authoritative articles on glacier ski-ing, rope management, and mountain accidents. Mr. Doughty is always good reading, and on Aneroids he is witty as ever, though he will probably cause more than one reader to be less glib in his assertions next summer. There are others too: F. M. Little discovers his rather too hazy Samarkand in Galloway, and, on the other extreme, J. R. Jenkins is abrupt but convincing, whilst performing a very static "Tiger Rag." John Wilding's "Munrovitis" is excellent, as he raises our hopes by bravely stating the peak-bagger's point of view only to put it politely, but firmly, back into its proper perspective. The Journal is elegantly produced, though the Editor rightly has misgivings about some of the illustrations. One more point: the Club Notes manage to be both interesting and amusing to non-members, and go to show why this Club is so active and alive.

E. V.

OXFORD MOUNTAINEERING. (Basil Blackwell. 1935. 3/6.)

CAMBRIDGE MOUNTAINEERING. (R. I. SEVERS. 1936. 3/6.)

Time was when University club journals boasted an imposing array of first ascents anywhere in the world, from Laddow to Labrador or King's Chapel to Kilimanjaro. Now that day seems to have passed, and although both clubs range still far afield the attitude is changed. The Cambridge editor speaks: "... you will find accounts of many pleasant days (and nights) in various parts of the world." Then Oxford: "... gives some account of good and bad days in several parts of the world." Otherwise they run on the expected lines; Cambridge is matter-of-fact, technical at times, slightly savouring of Baedeker in the articles on the Balkans and Scotland, but immensely efficient, with meets every vacation and a journal without a misprint. Oxford cannot compete in such matters as "High Altitude Research," but J. D. Hoyland's article puts across at least one man's climbing personality; their journal is oddly produced in the matter of illustrations, the editor evidently having passed the proofs of the illustrations the morning after a Bump Supper.*

Both break into verse, and E. C. Allberry's Ballade is a neat piece of work; both, too, find parties climbing under the midnight sun in Norway—an obvious reaction from the frequent Easter benightments. But both show what comparatively small but keen clubs can accomplish; the "first ascent" mania is passing, and if these two journals inspire others to go farther afield they will have served some purpose.

TRICOUNI.

[* Our reviewer does well to remain anonymous. We regret to hear that "Oxford Mountaineering, 1935" has since been remaindered at 6d.—Ed.]

We acknowledge with gratitude the following publications :

SONGS OF A CRAGSMAN. By George Basterfield. (Published by the Author at 31, Anzac Avenue, Walney Island, Barrow-in-Furness. 1935. 2/-.)

JOURNAL OF THE MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA : No. 38. (1935.) (Published by the Cape Town section. 2/6.)

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The following is a list of some of the mountaineering literature published since the last issue of the Journal :—

MEN AGAINST THE CLOUDS. By R. L. Burdsall and A. B. Emmons, Jr. (John Lane. 1935. 15/-.)

NANGA PARBAT ADVENTURE. By Fritz Bechtold, translated by H. E. G. Tyndale. (John Murray. 1935. 10/6.)

THE SPIRIT OF THE HILLS. By F. S. Smythe. (Hodder and Stoughton. 1935. 20/-.)

NANDA DEVI. By E. E. Shipton. (Hodder and Stoughton. 1936. 15/-.)

OVER TYROLESE HILLS. By F. S. Smythe. (Hodder and Stoughton. 1936. 12/6.)

SNOW STRUCTURE AND SKI FIELDS. By G. Seligman. (Macmillan. 1936. 25/-.)

ALPINE WONDERLAND. By J. J. Scharz. (Chapman and Hall. 1936. 18/-.)

The following cheap editions have been issued :—

EVEREST, 1933. By Hugh Ruttledge. (Hodder and Stoughton. 1935. 5/-.)

MY CLIMBS IN THE ALPS AND CAUCASUS. By A. F. Mummery. (Basil Blackwell. 1936. 5/-.)

THE PLAYGROUND OF EUROPE. By Leslie Stephen. (Basil Blackwell. 1936. 5/-.)

* * * *

We regret that the review of Geoffrey Winthrop Young's "Collected Poems" (Methuen, 1936, 12/6) has not arrived in time for inclusion in this number.

WELSH GUIDES.

We would also draw attention to the first of the new series of guides to the rock climbing in north Wales and issued by the Club. It is to replace the familiar trio of blue volumes, the first two volumes of which were the pioneers of English climbing guides, and have remained unsurpassed since as models of unhackneyed description and leisurely wit. The Ogwen guide by J. M. Archer Thompson has been out of print for some years though a few copies still remain of the same author's Lliwedd guide (with A. W. Andrews) and of H. R. C. Carr's post-war Snowden guide.

The first of the new series, edited by G. R. Speaker, is the Cwm Idwal group, which covers the Idwal slabs, the Holly-tree wall, the upper cliffs of Glyder Fawr, and the climbs round the Devil's Kitchen, and is by Dr. J. M. Edwards. This first volume of what will be a uniform series is a small volume with rounded corners which makes it very handy for the pocket; it is clearly printed and strongly bound. The price is 3/8, including postage, from the Assistant Editor, A. D. Malcolm, 23, Cranley Gardens, London, S.W.7. The second volume, which will cover the Tryfan group, is by Dr. Edwards and C. W. F. Noyce and will be issued very shortly; the third—the Glyder Fach group by C. F. Kirkus—is expected in the summer, whilst a Lliwedd guide is also in preparation.

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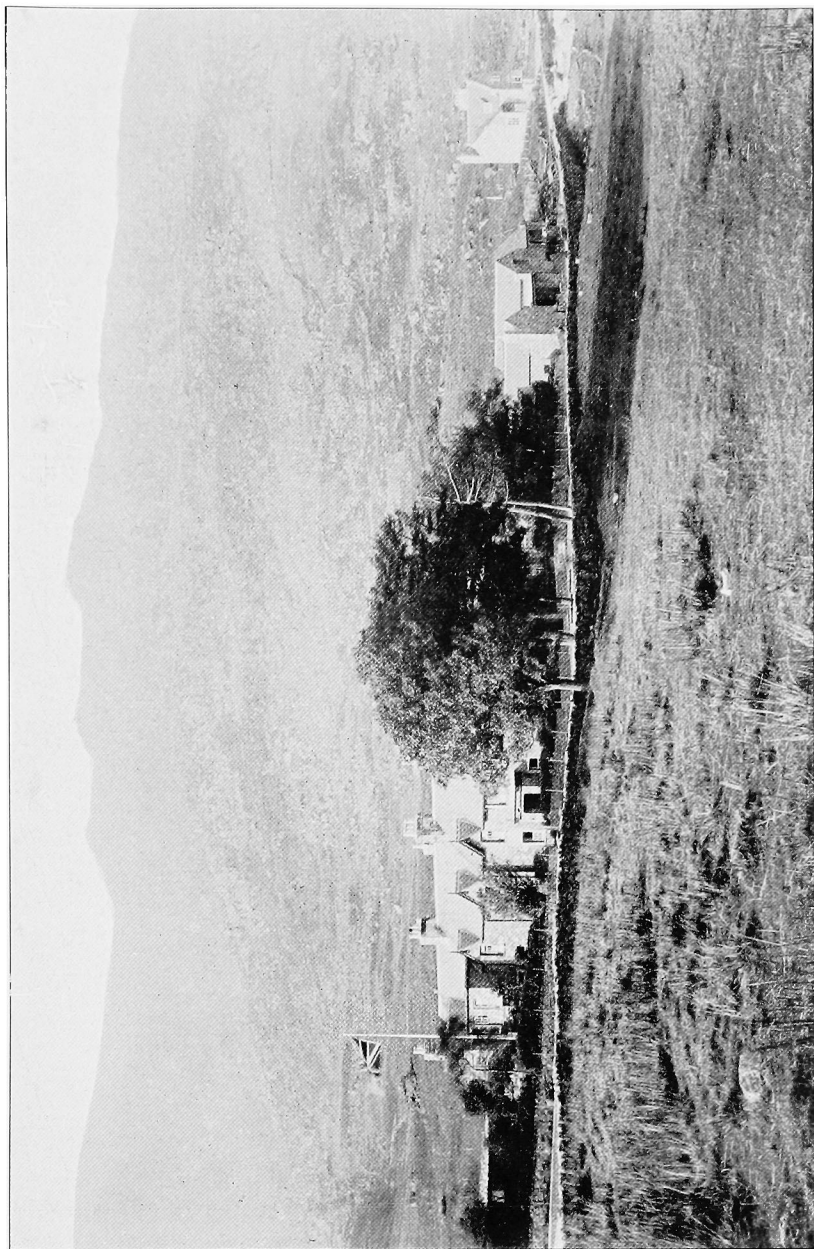
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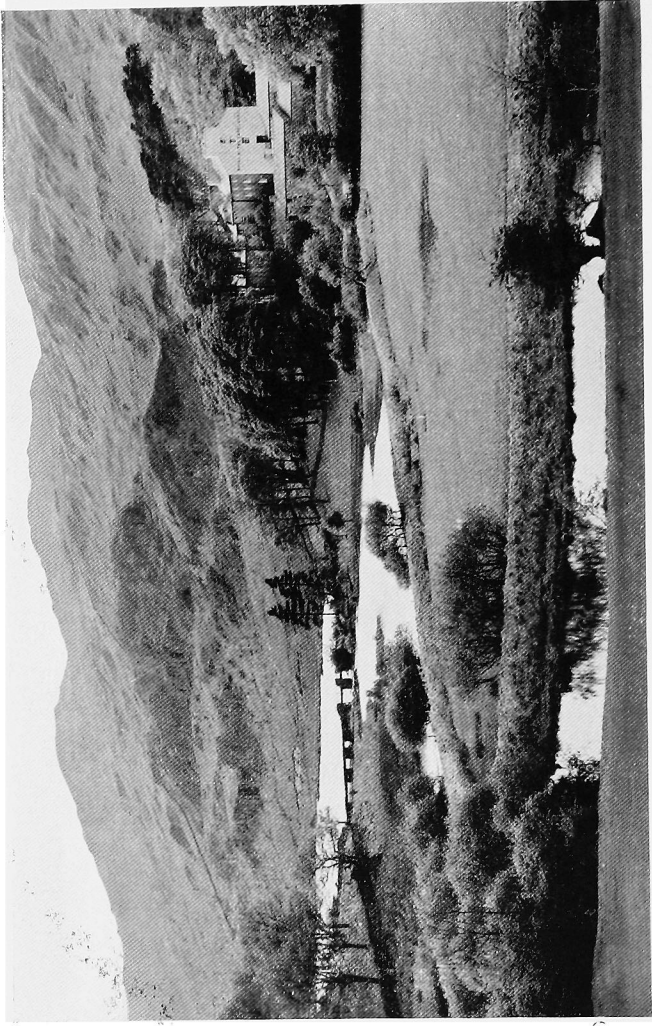
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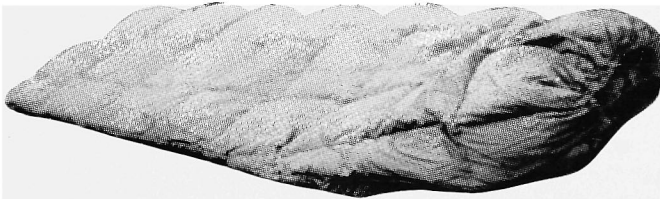
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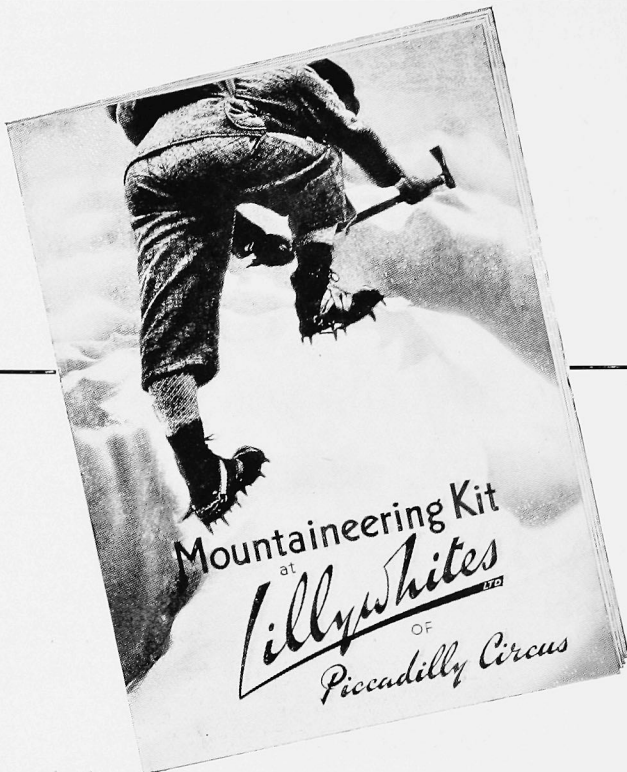
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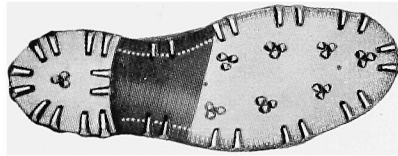
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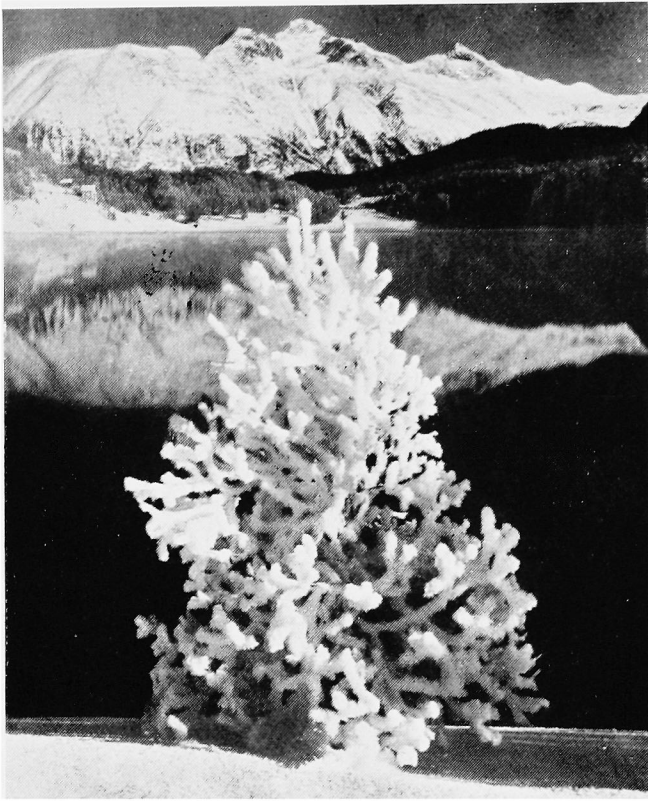
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