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R. J. Collinson

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CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL
1938

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ELLIOTT VINEY

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“ROPE TO PLAY WITH”

J. E. Q. BARFORD

IN general, 1937 has been a sober year in Wales, much consolidation has been done with the aid of the new guide-books but few new climbs of any merit have been found, and none that have gone beyond the mild severe classification. Although I have visited only one of them, I believe that the new climbs of Creigiau Gleision (the younger), on Ysgolion Duon and the Sunset Chimney on Clogwyn du'r-Arddu represent the best efforts of the year. Perhaps it is because the books have shown us how many good climbs there are, which have been previously neglected for want of convenient information. In fact, to express a contrary view to that of the general editor of the guides, little will be lost by the obliteration of some of the more popular routes by the nail shod climber. The pioneers of the last few years have both developed new cliffs and shown that the well-known playgrounds still have secrets. It will be a long time before we are faced with a shortage of unscratched climbs in North Wales, indeed, some cliffs like Craig yr Cwm Du, Craig Cwm Beudy-Mawr, Gyrn Lâs, and to a lesser extent Craig Cwm-Silin, which were explored a long time ago, have not even now gained the appreciation they deserve, in spite of greatly improved transport facilities. It seems that the modern climber would rather get soaked on Lliwedd or the Glyders than drive twenty miles to what is usually considerably better weather in Cwm-Silin or Cwm Du.

The Great Gully of Gyrn Lâs has been strangely neglected lately in spite of several recommendations in the Helyg Log. This climb must rank among the best in Wales, and is also an excellent approach to Clogwyn-y-Ddisgl. It is unfortunate that the writer of the Snowdon guide should have given such a grim description of it, a description which is certainly not merited, moreover it is much the driest gully in the district.

The nose of Craig yr Ogof (Cwm-Silin) remains untried, although it was mentioned in a general review of Welsh climbing

several years ago, among the outstanding possibilities remaining ; perhaps it has been left for the engineers. Undoubtedly the route when made will be forced to go rather to the left after the prominent ledge. The experts will go there only when Clogwyn du'r-Arddu is worked out, I expect, and when the doctrine of verticality has changed to that of overhangs. Incidentally, Clogwyn du'r-Arddu is quite remarkably exposed, not in the technical sense, however, for Longlands has been called only mildly severe by those who create our standards, but to the vast crowds and mechanical monstrosities which, fitting company for each other, make the cwm hideous with their row. As A. B. Hargreaves wrote many years ago, Longlands is really remarkably similar in general arrangement to Moss Ghyll Grooves on Scafell, but I do not consider that there is a very wide difference in severity between the two. Moss Ghyll Grooves is sounder rock and not so long, but its hardest move—the first twelve feet of the third pitch—is harder than anything on Longlands, and its longest lead is considerably longer than any lead on the latter, if all the available belays are used. These two climbs may form a useful focus for a correlation between Welsh and Lakes climbs in the severe class.

Lliwedd seems to remain uniquely unaffected by changing values, most of its climbs seem to retain their popularity, chiefly, perhaps, because of their length and their mountaineering character, indeed "it is a good cliff, and friendly," the greatest danger about it, of being accosted by enthusiastic hikers on the top who want to know if climbing Lliwedd is "difficult." It will be interesting to see what will result from the close measurement and inspection to which it is now being subjected for the sake of the new guidebooks. Large areas of the West Peak, and some of the East, will probably be reduced to the category of good scrambling rock. The intricate character and shape of its detail will at any rate provide the author with useful exercise. The chief impression that Lliwedd made on one novice, who was led up Route II on his first visit to Wales, was of uniformity—a series of standardised details repeated in changing order, and the most predominant features shallow chimneys and grooves, which were always doing their level best to upset his rather unstable equilibrium. Until he realised the merits of a crabwise motion he enjoyed few of the climbs to the extent they deserve. By the time most novices have reached this stage, they have discovered some of the little slabs and walls in which Lliwedd abounds ; the wall above the Recess on the Roof Route, or the Red Wall, or the most delightful of all slabs, on Paradise, which in summer faces the setting sun. This turns the mind to those other areas where the rhyolitic tuffs blush pink, and the holds are

small and rough.* Perhaps in these areas the Terrace Walls of Lliwedd will be found. Technically much of the climbing done here before 1910 was quite in the spirit of the modern mud and slag-heap climbs, and it seems that future exploration will be confined to the detailed development of comparatively small areas of steep rock. The technique of climbing vegetation has been developed to the limit on Lliwedd and elsewhere, and there is little point in deliberately looking for steep grass. On the Rope Wall (Milestone), for instance, there is a grass landing so fierce that the leader normally has to use his teeth to maintain his balance, and his faith in the tenacity of Celtic turf to its native rock to give him enough confidence to go up the climb at all.

This year has shown to many climbers the possibilities of additional mechanical devices, other than nails and the rope. Snap rings and pitons have been exhibited, even flaunted, in Helyg, and the ring of ironmongery has joined with the scrape of nails on Tryfan's crags. Perhaps it is rather unnecessary now to defend the use of these devices. Most climbers, even among the most orthodox, will admit their merit and even grow enthusiastic after a few hours' acquaintance with their uses. For instance, on the Terrace Wall Variant, a leader may use a piton as a belay on the second shelf, put a running belay (using a karabiner) on the spike in Long Chimney, another similar belay on the rather shaky block at the edge of the Bollard slab and lead through to the good belays on Belle Vue Terrace. There are several alternatives to this method, of course.

(i) A really good climber would probably not consider this climb as more than a pleasant scramble.

(ii) The party could wear rubbers or kletterschuhe and "not fuss about belays" at all.

(iii) The second could belay at the extreme eastern end of the shelf, on an inferior belay, or unsatisfactorily on the spike in Long Chimney. Suspicions have been cast by some Jonahs on the firmness of this spike.

(iv) The second could belay at the good spike on the first shelf, and the lead lengthened to about 100 feet, with quite a difficult step some 80 feet up it. This is the only way in which the strict classical tradition could be followed.

It must be remembered that when running belays are used by the leader, the second must expect to be jerked upwards in the event of his leader falling off. His belays must,

* Or as the authority on the geology of Snowdonia writes:—"A very characteristic pink coloration sometimes with purple or bright red is given to the cleaved tuffs by the separation of iron and manganese hydroxides along the cleavage planes."

HOWEL WILLIAMS "The Geology of Snowdon." Q.J.G.S. lxxviii, p. 180

therefore, be able to accommodate an upward pull, if he is to avoid the sad fate of Eduard Rainer.

Rope technique is still crude in this country, but attention is again being given to its development. The bowline will probably disappear from mountain practice in the not far distant future, and the various forms of knot for the middleman with it. A new scheme which at the moment has only been partially tried out, but which will have been thoroughly tested by the time this appears in print, is the following.

Each member of the climbing party has a rope loop, doubled and tied reasonably tightly round his waist. The main rope has an eye spliced on each end, the eyes being preferably reinforced with metal thimbles of the type generally used in engineering rope practice. The rope is then clipped on the waist loop by means of a karabiner. If there has to be a middleman he can be attached by means of a Prusik knot, tied in a small additional loop, to the middle of the rope.

All this sounds rather complicated and unnecessary, but anyone who actually uses such a scheme will be surprised at the way in which time and irritation is saved on the crags by this means. As far as safety is concerned, there can be no objection to the scheme as the rope is the weakest link ; for shock loads, a splice, if properly made, is stronger than the rope in which it is made, because of this fact the scheme is definitely superior, as a knot decreases the strength of the system by about 25 per cent. There is also a great increase in the comfort of the climbers, which in itself is a positive contribution to safety. The karabiner, with which the main rope is attached to the waist loop, moves easily round the waist, so ensuring that the rope always lies in the most natural position and impedes the movement the least. However numb the hands are, or stiff the rope with ice or rain, roping up and unroping can be accomplished easily and quickly. Even members of the Climbers' Club have been found unable to tie bowlines. The use of karabiners demands two warnings, firstly, they should be kept well lubricated, secondly, care should be taken to avoid fraying the rope with their sharp edges when fastening them on.

With the publication of the Tryfan guide the question of lassoing has been resurrected by the descriptions of those entertaining climbs, the Rope Wall (Milestone) and the Chalkren Stairs (Gallt yr Ogof). Although the practice has been fairly widespread in exploratory work for safeguarding the leader, these accounts are unprecedented in guides to British rocks. It should be pointed out that the use of lassoing on these climbs alone makes them possible, it is not just a question of the leader safeguarding himself. On the Rope Wall the leader lassoes a

spike some distance above and away from him and then proceeds to pendulum across to a point on the wall directly below the bollard and climb up the rope until he reaches good holds. The whole movement is reminiscent of an account of a climb by a de Lépiney. On the Chalkren Stairs the loop is used as an additional handhold only, to steady the leader as he makes an exceedingly awkward move. Neither of these two routes is classed as severe, certainly they should not be, as the moderate leader, if his mental approach is sufficiently flexible, can lead them quite easily.

The other question of technique which is also developing quite rapidly is that of footwear. The clinker is noticed less often, among the ubiquitous Tricouni family, the No. 6 gains most in popularity. Rubbers are used on fine days, on the steeper rocks, but for most conditions, kletterschuhe seem to be more suitable. They do not wilt to the same extent on small incut holds, and grip better on wet rocks than dry. On the East Wall of Idwal Slabs, where the rock is generally damp and the holds small, I would rather climb in kletterschuhe than anything else, although the finer points of technique on these really delightful climbs are only enjoyed by the man who wears boots. For the poor climber kletterschuhe are not so good a proposition; about a dozen days of hard climbing will wear a pair out, while rubbers costing one tenth of the price will last a year.

It is apparent that "pure" rock climbing as far as this country is concerned reached its zenith when the great routes on Clogwyn du'r-Arddu and the East Buttress routes on Scafell were first climbed, but it is certain that more detailed exploration, and the change in technique and spirit of the climbers, will keep us well enough occupied for the next few years. As well as these, there is the constant pleasure to be derived from climbing the old climbs in winter conditions, climbs which often tax the muscles and the mind to the limit, and the avoidance of benightment becomes the main object. The gullies in winter give many people greater satisfaction than the steep face climbs in summer. Certainly one party will always remember Good Friday in the Slanting Gully of Lliwedd, when an ascent was forced in spite of a steady stream of soft snow over the rocks, and more particularly an occasion a few days later when the Great Gully of Craig-yr-Ysfa threatened the scoffers with an enforced bivouac in the great cave. As it was the lead had to be shared; the tussle with the hanging curtain of ice in the pitch above the Door Jamb, had sapped the morale of its conqueror. His successor to the position of honour fell off from the top of the Great Chimney, but fell through thin air and was gently brought to a halt on the smooth névé below. Although judging from their

bilious appearance, this had sapped the morale of the others even more, it had also confirmed his faith in his second, and he went to the attack again with a light heart, and finished the rest of the climb quite easily, reaching the top as dusk began to fall.

These climbs were expeditions which were and are completely satisfying to their participants; from entering the gully at the bottom to emerging triumphant at the top (and the leaders on these occasions are irritatingly triumphant) every action and thought had been devoted to pushing the issue to a successful conclusion, to avoid bivouacs and officious rescue parties. They rather emphasise the fact that most of our climbing is merely gymnastic, a practising of technique, rather than an end in itself. Only very occasionally does the climb demand the exercise of all our skill, but when it does we realise how much we miss by being unable to reach easily the bigger mountains. To be really worth doing the climb should last at least a day—to demand a continuous exercise of what skill of body and mind that we have, and to present obstacles of as varied a nature as possible.

TWO CAUCASUS CLIMBS

1. By R. A. HODGKIN

SITTING in a field in the Cotswolds the Caucasus seemed infinitely remote as we made our plans for the summer. There were four of us—Beaumont, Jenkins, Taylor and I. We called ourselves an Expedition of the O.U.M.C., though only Beaumont and I were members; we elected ourselves to important executive posts, but had no leader; we had an impressive note-paper which was sometimes useful and always a source of amusement; we found out what we could about the mountains; and with the assistance of Intourist we made our plans and eventually found ourselves with some bulky sacks of equipment and bulkier boxes of food crossing the plains of Germany and Poland. In crowded but comfortable Russian trains we went monotonously eastwards across the Ukraine, along the edge of the sea of Azof, until after five days travelling we reached the sunny Russian health resort of Naltchik.

After 80 miles in an ancient 'bus we entered the Caucasus by a great limestone gorge and were dumped at a small Intourist hotel at Tegenekli at the foot of Elbruz. It took us three days to get our first base camp pitched in the midst of the Jailik group, one of the finest of the several spurs which buttress the Caucasus on their northern side. Those three days gave us an idea of the real difficulties and pleasures of Caucasian travel: the barren valleys of the north; their fine wild-eyed inhabitants who, despite their dash, are never in a hurry; the squalid villages whose smiling children stare incessantly at one; the numerous young Russians who come to the mountains, not so much for the climbing as for air and friendship; and the trials of transport . . . the unreliable donkeys and the exquisite misery of 80-lb. loads.

* * * * *

Beaumont and I returned to camp across the moraines in the hot afternoon sun, having spent a day climbing Junomkara, whose steep and shattered final pyramid had offered a fine route and a finer view. A bathe in a blue pool and some cocoa at the

camp put us in an ideal frame of mind for sunny relaxation. We had had eight days of continuous climbing, each of which had provided a fine new route or a virgin aiguille, and I felt that a rest in our sunny hollow for a day was justified.

But this was not to be. There was one great peak, Adyrsu Bashi, which remained to be climbed. On our side it presented nothing but steep and menacing ice-slopes, and an extremely long ridge consisting of a screen of ice and rock crowned by a row of jagged teeth and buttressed by three great towers which fell away to the Orubashi pass. It offered little encouragement, but Jenkins, who had spent the day mentally minimising its difficulties, and visualising its possibilities, was convinced that the whole ridge could be climbed in a day by a fast moving party of two. With a lot of encouragement and persuasion I agreed, with a bad grace, to make the attempt with him on the following day. After making the usual preparations for an early start and a possible forced bivouac, we went to bed as the sun set with that vaguely tense and slightly depressed feeling which comes before a big climb.

At 3.30 after a hot breakfast we started off over the moraines and out on to the open glacier. We were accompanied by Beaumont, who was going to make a solitary and exceedingly rapid ascent of Orubashi. The full moon which had made pleasant our plod up the glacier was dipping down to the east as we approached the Orubashi pass. Beaumont left us and started up the steep nevé towards his summit. The red light of the sun was creeping down the great upper snow slopes as we arrived at the foot of the ridge.

A short halt and we were off along the first of the many snow arêtes of that day. Then we came to the first tower where on loose scree ledges we climbed up into the sunshine of its summit. Here after a quick sardine we were off again. We knew the next item would be one of the many little snow sickles. We came on it suddenly, and there it was 20 feet away, below a little overhang. A jump was necessary on to the narrow crest of brick-hard snow. It wasn't difficult, but was frightening because of the extreme steepness of the slopes on each side. Throughout the whole climb this was its chief fascination: one climbed along a ridge . . . often hard, sometimes loose and icy, but never desperate; and all the time one was on the edge of immense sweeps of ice and rock of the most impressive and impregnable angle.

The second tower we climbed by a slippery slaty groove which brought us up on to another little snow sickle, steep and corniced. The rhythm of the climb was beginning to establish itself; tower and snow arête regularly followed each other and

seemed to slip away beneath our feet ; we were well ahead of schedule, but knew that the chief obstacles still lay ahead. The third tower was the most formidable feature of the ridge. It was over 1,000 feet high, very steep, and cut from top to bottom by an evil couloir of black ice. The rocks on the far side of the latter tempted us across. So Jenkins went ahead and for half an hour he hacked a line of buckets across the tough and extremely steep ice. Once across, on the fine grained granite of the other side, the climbing became superb. It was always hard, but always there were just sufficient holds to provide steady and rapid upward progress. It was like an everlasting Tryfan buttress, but instead of the dark and friendly gulleys on either hand there were those incredible sweeps of blue-black ice forcing one to keep to the jagged crest of the ridge. We reached the top of this third tower and saw before us the horizontal section with its line of towers, notches and gendarmes. Our progress became less regular ; sometimes we climbed over the towers, more often we climbed along their icy skirtings and shattered bases ; once we were involved in a difficult pitch in search of running water ; once we dislodged a mass of black and wobbly blocks which echoed and re-echoed as they crashed suggestively down to the glaciers far below. Tooth after tooth was left behind till at last after a short and ill-advised excursion off the ridge we reached the final rocks where they merged upwards into the snow and ice of the face above. Our first acquaintance with the snow was unpleasant : a woolly mass of slush which I had passed slithered away from under my feet and separated me by twenty feet of bare ice from Jenkins. The conditions improved slightly above, but the snow remained soft and wearisome to body and nerves. We were beginning to feel the effects of the pace at which we had been going, and there was still a large obstacle to be overcome, a huge bergschrund which cut across the whole face. We took it direct by a wall of crumbling crusty snow and ice. Then followed a final steep section guarded by what looked like a cornice, but wasn't. It was a pleasant snow crest which led easily to the rocky summit 100 yards away.

We were in good time, and were surprised to find that so far we had taken under nine hours. We made a long halt on the summit and lounged among the boulders admiring the view and brewing some tea in our emergency cooker. To the east clouds were piling up behind the great Bezingi Horseshoe, 16-17,000 feet high ; southwards Ushba stood out blunt, black and vertical above its neighbours ; while to the west was Elbruz, whose gentle bulky cone formed a striking contrast detached from the general scene.

In the hope of finding somewhere to sleep in the main Adyrsu Valley we commenced the descent of the original route towards the south, leaving the summit at 1.30. A steep slope of deep snow led downwards to a ridge running westwards. Here we met a slow-moving party of Russian climbers who were making heavy weather of what seemed to be easy rocks. They were a bit perplexed by the absence of our tracks of ascent and they indicated all the local places where rash climbers were liable to fall off. We continued, finding that the rocks below justified a certain amount of heavy weather, being steep and more or less holdless slabs for about 150 feet. These were followed by some slopes of hard ice leading down to a long steep névé which took us to the upper glacier. A long glissade was followed by two little ice falls which we descended in crampons and reached the first moraines. Patches of grass and clumps of gentians began to lull us into the satisfaction of a nearly finished day but we soon found that we were being deceived, for we reached one of the most desolate of valleys, where the recently retreated glaciers had left behind huge dumps of dust and boulders. Here we plodded, slithered and swore for about two or three hours, until eventually we reached the greener and more open valley beyond. Just as the long-threatened and habitual evening thunderstorm was breaking, we presented ourselves at a camp of Russian students and begged the hospitality so rarely refused in Russia. We were entertained to large bowls of prunes and rice by future Soviet architects. Next morning, after being made to do physical jerks and wash with distressing thoroughness, we went on our way to break the old Junoykara camp and rejoin the others in the valley.

2. USHBA. By R. L. BEAUMONT

THE Svanetian sun was hot on the afternoon of August 5th as we plodded up the path from squalid Tetrash towards the Gul glacier and Ushba. But the clouds were banking up behind Elbruz and big drops of rain splashed down intermittently to mock our thirst. After two hours or more it became obvious that the horse-owner with whom I had covenanted for a journey to the glacier had lost the way. He finally confessed it as we fell to blundering about among the luxuriant weeds and dwarf rhododendrons which at other times we admired.

The storm broke, and the fact that the rain would be falling alike on the Svanetian and ourselves was some comfort as we put up the Itisa and crowded into it. The 6th was spent in back-packing the loads for which we had hoped to have animal-

transport ; yet the beauty of the site on which we eventually pitched our camp made us forget the dust and sweat of the valleys, the Svanetians and all their ways.

On the 8th we left Jenkins, who had been hurt by a fall of stones on Gulba the day before, and set out towards Ushba.

We knew where we wanted to go ; we had committed to memory the stately prose of Afanasieff* during the weary days on the Betsho Pass, and had studied the east face of the mountain from Gulba on the 7th. We had identified the three couloirs separating the two peaks of the Great Couloir, up which Cockin and Almer had made a route to the north peak in 1888 ; the South-east Couloir, and the Upper South-east Couloir, which, connected by a convenient ledge, gave access to the south-east ridge and the lower snowfield. We knew that the route used in the first ascent lay up the south-east couloirs to the ridge south-east of the south peak, down on to and up the lower snowfield, south of the girdle of rock which divides it from the upper snowfield and is the south peak's most formidable defence. We knew that to get to the Red Corner we had to cross the lower snowfield to its upper western edge. But we did not want to do this ; for Hodgkin thought that the south-east ridge would go ; if it would, we could cut out the lower snowfield, and put a bivouack up at the point where the south-east ridge ended in the girdle of rock called the Red Wall.

We left camp at 5.15. Taylor picked a fastidious way up the south-east couloir, we traversed out right and north-east where Afanasieff bade us, and Hodgkin went ahead up the second. We took off crampons before the traverse, and as there was soft snow or ice in the second did not put them on again. The couloir ended with a pitch. At 10.30 we were on the ridge, eating fruitcake and noting, for future reference, that someone had bivouacked behind a little wall of stones on the ledge to the left of the point where the couloir cut the ridge.

On our right as we looked towards the lower snowfield the ridge rose steeply in a series of small overlapping slabs, which promised that all holds would slope the wrong way. But Hodgkin found a way which, while never very severe, yet provided good climbing for about 250 feet, after which the angle eased off, and we peered forward through the swirling mist towards the Red Wall. There was a threat of snow which made us eager to push on to a place where we could bivouack without delay. But, wisely as it turned out, we cairned the route and increased our knowledge of the mountain by following the ridge up to the point where it merged into the Red Wall. Thence we peered suspiciously at the lower snowfield, which fell steeply

* *Hundert Kaukasusgipfel.* pp. 37-46

away beneath us as far as we could see, and hoped that the east of the Red Wall would go; otherwise there was the prospect of traversing the snowfield towards the western end and the Red Corner. In the other direction we saw a small snowfield and beyond a gaunt tower, joined to the Red Wall by a tiny ridge of snow through which a sporadic rock obtruded itself. We dropped down across the little snowfield, and at 2.15 began to prepare for the night. The work of enlarging the rock-platform to take the Marco gave me a peculiar straw-without-bricks feeling, and I was not sorry to creep into the tent two hours later. Pemmican and porridge were good, pemmican and cocoa less so.

At 4.15 a.m. we considered that the tent had not been seriously damaged by the violence of the storm which had made sleep impossible during the night; at 6.15 we considered that retreat was inevitable. Hodgkin's cairns and a perched bollard kept us to the ridge, but the climbing was grim in the snow-storm, and we were glad to find that we could double-rope the toughest pitches. It was a relief to reach the comparative warmth of the couloir, and a still greater one to reach the base-camp at 1 p.m.

The afternoon passed in sewing, drying and investigating the food situation; for I think that we were all resolved to try to make a new route not only up to the Red Wall but over it to the summit. The result was that Taylor, in charge of food, and myself, interpreter, were condemned to visit Tetnash and Betsho on the morrow. My gloomy forebodings that it would be a bad day were justified. Tape is red in Russia, and even the good-will of a benevolent Georgian master-builder, won over to our cause by my judicious praise of his country, could not cut it. Yet we staggered up to camp again with bread, potatoes and half a glacier-smockful of raspberries. The 11th was a dirty-looking sort of day, and we got off at 7.20 without enthusiasm. We reached the bivouack at 4.30, and Hodgkin went ahead with Taylor to reconnoitre, while I tried to improve the tent-platform. The result of their hour and a half in the evening mists was that when we got off at 6 next morning we knew that, after climbing a couloir for about 120 feet, we could investigate two possible lines of weakness up the Red Wall, or rather round it, for it was our hope to get into a re-entrant on the east face which had looked less smooth from Gulba than the rest of the cliff. The first line of weakness proved too strong; it was a gangway leading across a holdless face, with nothing on the right. I was relieved to hear Hodgkin say that it would not go. So after an hour and a half we turned about and climbed some broken rocks above the couloir. We were stopped dead by the Red Wall after 50 feet, and, as we

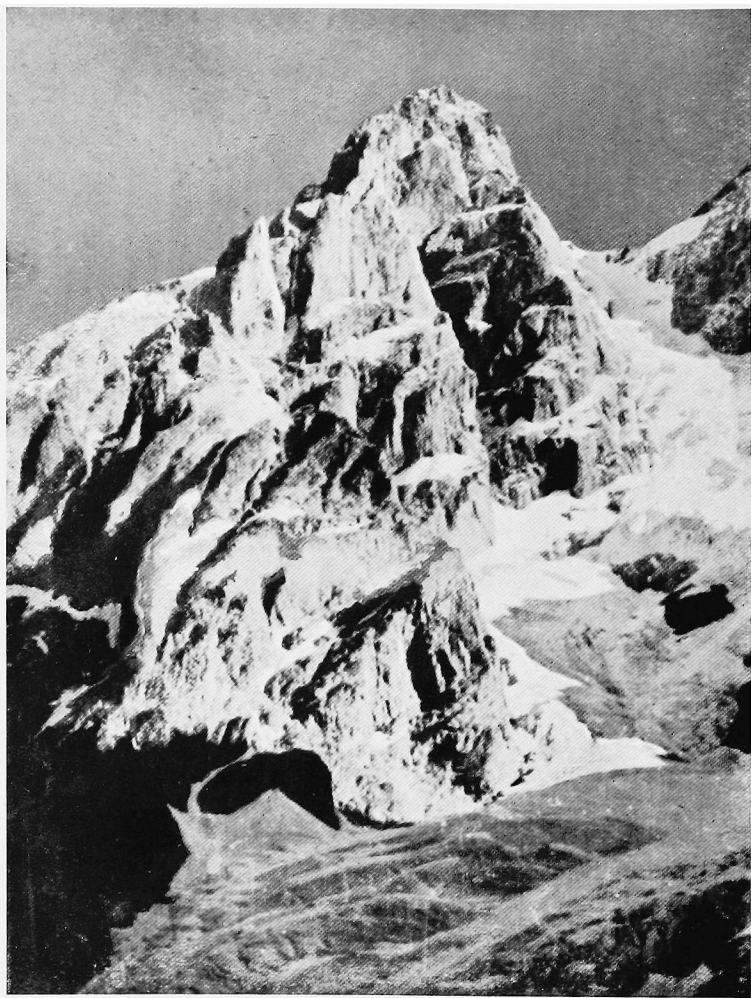


HODGKIN, BEAUMONT, JENKINS, TAYLOR



HODGKIN ON THE TRAVERSE ROUND THE RED WALL ON USHBA

M. S. Taylor



USHBA FROM THE EAST

M. S. Taylor

knew we must, turned to a traverse, leading off right towards our re-entrant.

There was a platform, narrowing to a ledge, which the face overhung, to form a horizontal groove, with the open side about one foot six inches wide at its widest, the outside. But it became narrower and narrower, until it finally petered out after 10 feet into the merest crack, grasping a minute chockstone, Hodgkin wriggled along until finally half his body was over the edge; I heard a muttered remark to the effect that if we got round here we would be somewhere. He put a rope-loop round the chockstone and swung round the corner. Two minutes later he was on a stance inside the re-entrant. Taylor followed, and, after a wait during which in my emotion I swallowed a sweet whole which I had been hoarding for days, I went after him, with ice-axes and impedimenta dangling on my right.

About 350 feet of hard, but not desperate, climbing followed. The most trying feature of the re-entrant was the apparent looseness of the rock. Occasionally a key hold would give a nasty snigger and let one down, though this did not happen very often; not so often as the appearance of the rock would have implied. The angle was vertical within one meaning of that word; the opposite wall of the re-entrant was steeper still and not broken. Intermittent swishings reminded us of the icicles which fell from its ledges, and went their way to the Gul glacier.

At 11.45 we were surprised to reach a ridge running horizontally. A couloir took us to the upper snowfield. At 1 p.m. we were on the summit. As the view was familiar, we had little to eat and were very thirsty, we did not linger. Just after we had regained the ridge below the upper snowfield we were delighted by a magnificent Brokenspectre. But we were all, I think, a little nervous of the prospect of doing the morning's traverse again. Three times we slid down 100 feet of doubled rope, and then, as we picked our way a few feet lower, we saw that what Hodgkin had said was true: that we were at the top of the gangway which would not go in the morning, and by double-roping down this we could cut out the traverse. We rammed in a second piton (the first had been used for a previous double-roping), and regained the foot of the gangway. As we reached the bivouac the night was falling over Laila, and the black smudges beyond on the southern horizon could not but be Ararat.

AN ASCENT OF SNOWDON IN THE SEVENTIES

E. G. MALLETT

IN the interests of future climbers it may be worth while to give an account, collated from a diary written at the time, and from the recollections of a member of the expedition, of an ascent of Snowdon by three generations of the Fitz-Gerald family, the mother, brother, nephew and niece of the poet.

Well, it took place in the late '70's, and the party set forth from Llanberis on a wild and snowy day; in those days it was invariably wild and snowy. The party were equipped with ulsters, haversacks, a hold-all, and a guide. The start was auspicious, except that Gerald wanted to ride a donkey and carry his white mice, Nesta had a screaming fit on not being allowed to lead her little dog and take a clay pipe that she was furtively but industriously colouring for her brother, Grannie was annoyed with Maurice because he would not allow two hold-alls, and Maurice was consumed with manly irritation at family life.

The ascent was slow, not unnaturally as the guide had to carry everything. Half way up a little disagreement occurred as Grannie insisted that the children should be roped to their father, as it was found that if the children were allowed to ramble Gerald made his little sister eat moss and other mountain vegetation and Grannie feared that this would occasion sickness, as indeed it did, in the dead of night. The way was fraught with dangers and troubles. Nesta had another screaming fit on not being allowed to catch a sheep and ride it, and Gerald was anxious to kill a lamb in order to take it home and roast it whole. The dangers indeed were almost too manifold to recount. Grannie was attacked by giddiness and feared that she would fall from the path, Maurice was so busy drinking in the panorama (in lieu of whisky) that he omitted to look where he was going and frequently tripped, thus causing the children to fall flat on their faces, as they were still roped to him. The guide walked a few paces in front, and was trying to obey Grannie's commands to remove the stones

from the path. He also pointed out objects of interest, such as Anglesey and Crib Goch, but Maurice, as befits a true Irishman, contradicted him, and heated words were exchanged before the summit was reached.

The children had been untied some little way back, owing to the fact that they both rushed different ways round their father at once and met with a sounding impact, thus causing some slight injury to his stomach. But for Grannie's bustle having worked round back to front she had stood the ascent well.

The hut came in view. Hope sprang anew in the breast of the guide, as he was anxious to delay the return of the party until it was late enough for them to wear their ulsters. Gerald in a playful fashion tried to push Nesta over the precipice, and she retaliated by biting him severely in the fleshy part of the leg. Maurice separated them, and they entered the hut. Present day excursionists know its quaint characteristics, which have ever been the same. As the day was fine it was possible to obtain refreshment. Grannie had a cup of tea, Gerald some very effervescent lemonade, Nesta had an unripe banana, and Maurice contented himself with whisky. It is not known what the guide ate. This little meal did not pass as tranquilly as might be supposed. Nesta, a very spirited child, had, on entering the hut, enquired where the coffee room was, and considered the accommodation very inferior on being told that there was no coffee room. Gerald was more easily pleased, and contented himself with putting a good deal of sherbet in his lemonade. The hiccoughs that this occasioned were severe, and Grannie insisted on his having a few sips of whisky. Gerald's wit has always been very keen, and when Maurice handed him the flask with a strict command not to take more than two sips, he managed to take what would vulgarly be described a good gulp, and before returning the flask to his father he contrived to put some sherbet into it.

By this time the guide was in a positive fever to get started; he did not approve of Maurice's action in giving Gerald whisky; he felt that they were indeed started on the downward path in more ways than one. Off they set down the track; the day was drawing in, the rain was falling down, and so was Gerald. Progress was very slow as Grannie had by this time tied Nesta to her, while the guide was instructed to look after Gerald. There was not much conversation, as is always the case on family excursions. Maurice was occupied with his thoughts and his whisky, while Grannie was in a ferment to reach Llanberis. Such was her anxiety that the guide decided to take a short cut home. As the present narrator has never been down the Llanberis path she is quite unable to say where the short cut was and in

any case this happened sixty years ago and times have changed and so have paths.

By this time it was quite dusk, and the path was narrow and stony—a sheer drop one side, a grassy mountain slope the other. A sharp bend had to be negotiated, when suddenly Gerald lay flat on his face and announced himself unable to go a step further. The guide laid hold of his hands, Maurice seized his feet, Gerald started to scream, Grannie upbraided Maurice furiously for daring to bring her to such a place, Nesta was sick and then started to scream as well. A truly domestic scene; let it be a warning to all married men of this generation who take their families up Snowdon. Maurice was feeling rather unwell himself, owing to the sherbet that Gerald had put into his whisky, but he realised that the situation was desperate. Gerald was dragged to his feet, and instantly opened his mouth to scream again, whereon Nesta thoughtfully stuffed in a handful of moss she had been taking home to their white mice, and by the time Gerald had finished choking he also was ready to be sick. Grannie then remembered that in the hold-all was some rum, put there for emergencies, so the guide got it out, and some was immediately given to Gerald.

The effect was miraculous. His screaming turned to mirth, and he light-heartedly walked backwards down the path he had feared to venture on a short time before.

Reaching Llanberis just as dark fell the party entered the Royal Oak Hotel and sat down to a good high tea. This is the end of the account given in the diary, and what's more it is all true, which shows what a remarkable family they were.

ON LOSING THE WAY

A. M. GREENWOOD

UNCERTAINTY is the spice of mountaineering. And in the Alps (to which this article is mainly confined) the prime uncertainty—whether your route is possible or not—is gone for all save the very elect, or, as some prefer it, insane. Even the average guideless climbers, those smug readers of detailed guidebooks, followers of scratches and sardine-tins and snowtracks who feel themselves so immensely superior to those who merely engage professional assistance (I speak as an inveterate guideless climber) might run the risk of missing the aforesaid uncertainty, did they not err occasionally from the strait and narrow path.

The occasions when a guideless climber, despite his guidebooks and his broken bouvier bottles, takes a route which, as he subsequently learns, was not the best, are very numerous ; and the consequences of these divagations range from mild irritation to benightment, a new ascent, or death, the third of these when it occurs almost invariably involving considerable risk of the fourth.

The futile meanderings which are about to be described all have this much in common, that they took place on easy routes, on easy and well-known mountains, in sight of, if not actually on, tracks. Sometimes we had the slight excuse of mist or darkness, but not always. It may be that my party has been exceptionally stupid oftener than other parties, but I think it more probable that the account of some of these wanderings will evoke in others similar memories of their own experience when, like all good mountaineers, they sit round the blazing fire on a cold winter's evening and muse over their past feats.

Sometimes, of course, we suffer nothing worse than the loss of a little time, as when on the first day of our holiday we emerge from our hotel at Arolla in the semi-dawn, bound for the face of the Za and within a few minutes are wandering disconsolately along the side of the torrent wondering where the bridge is.

A typical episode of this category happened to us on a cloudy day on the Beich Pass on our descent into the Lötschental, through following the tracks of chamois instead of the directions of our compass. Cutting steps down an ice-slope where those sure-footed beasts had slid, we arrived in due course at a bergschrund and admired the instinct which had led them to the narrowest point. A jump landed us on a small glacier, which soon curled over into an exceptionally steep snout, apparently impossible to descend. During the next half-hour I can safely say that we left no avenues unexplored in our efforts to get off that glacier, otherwise than by the way we had got there. Eventually, seeing our fruitless tracks radiating in all directions, we became overcome by mirth and abandon, and began to walk in circles, ellipses and possibly even isosceles triangles, the more thoroughly to revenge ourselves on any subsequent chamois which should pass that way. At this scurvy and unusual treatment the glacier threw in its hand and deposited us within five minutes on a lateral moraine, whence we had a magnificent glissade of about 2,000 feet which we should have missed had we followed the correct route.

On that occasion, admittedly, we were embarrassed by mist, but I can put forward no excuse—anyone who knows the place will certainly expect one—for having missed the way in clear weather on the Crowberry ridge no less than three times—or more strictly twice, since once we missed the ridge altogether.

You could not have an easier ascent than that of the Stubaier Wildspitze via the Bildstockjoch from the Dresdener hut. There is, it is true, near the summit a slab liberally supplied with holds, from which it would be unpleasant to fall off, but as it is easily avoided no one in his senses would go near it, and the Austrian climbing authorities have made assurance doubly sure by barricading it off by a positive network of wire—I mention this by the way, for it was not here that we lost the way, nor strictly did we lose it at all; only a blind man could have strayed from those deeply furrowed tracks and red splashes. It was the quest of adventure that caused us to diverge, low down on the Schaufel Glacier, from the well-trodden track and attempt a short cut to the summit.

After crawling on all fours (the only possible method of progress) up some fiendishly soft snow slopes and cutting steps across some hard ones we reached a subsidiary ridge of very rotten rock and almost at once came upon a 15 feet gendarme consisting of one enormous block poised precariously on the ridge. When we approached it it distinctly quivered. Now such a sight, were it seen on a frequented ridge, would not provoke much emotion in the intrepid breast of a climber—such

is our faith in our predecessors' good sense. But on a ridge which we had no reason to believe that anyone had ever before been so foolish as to climb it was decisive. It was the well-trodden track for us—every time! Scorning to retrace our steps we let ourselves down the equally loose other side of our subsidiary ridge in a series of abseils, in which the rope always stuck, and reached the tracks again after an absence of about two hours, having made a nett gain of some three or four hundred yards in distance and 50 feet in height.

The next scene is the Wetterhorn. We had made the ascent under rather bad conditions by the ordinary route, up the great couloir to the Wettersattel and duly arrived on top at 10.30 a.m. The whole face of the mountain above the Krinne Glacier was rather heavily covered with snow, solid and compact in the early hours, but what would it be like later in the day? Not good, we thought, especially the great couloir. So in the descent we embarked on a lightning route straight down the face, well to the right of the couloir. Of course it was much worse than the correct route could ever have been. For four hours we dodged from rock rib to rock rib, each rottener if possible than the last, racing across and down the intervening couloirs with the greatest speed consistent with safety, a weather eye always open for stone falls. Eventually, at about the hour when everything is said to stop for tea, we reached the bergschrund at the foot of the face and of necessity followed that general custom; for below us gaped a colossal bergschrund, impassable even by the time-honoured method of jumping. The upper lip overhung the lower lip by at least 30 feet everywhere except in the very middle of a large couloir, down which stones hummed continually. To stop where we were until the stones should cease would have involved us in a second night out (for we had made our ascent direct from the Grindelwald, starting at 8 p.m. the previous evening). To ascend about 2,500 feet to the Wettersattel for the second time at this hour in the day in order to descend to the Dossen hut would have been not only very distasteful but also very dangerous. The only alternative was to abseil over the bergschrund, and as the upper lip was inconsiderately composed of hard snow and not of ice we were unable to hew out the traditional bollard of ice. It was clear that an axe had to be sacrificed, and after a brief discussion it was equally clear that it must be my somewhat unconventional though much beloved ten-mark model, rather than my companion's venerable relic of the past, which he assured me belonged to his renowned great uncle, "Der Tuckett." We reached Grindelwald after an expedition of precisely twenty-four hours, probably a record for the Wetterhorn.

No article on losing the way would be complete without including some nocturnal meanderings. Guideless climbers are rightly recommended in all the text books to reconnoitre the first part of their route the night before. Even so it is only too easy to miss the way, especially if it is over large moraines and crosses several streams. Who, for instance, has found his way at the first attempt up the abominable Trift moraines to the Zinal Rothorn? We take such vagaries for granted and merely swear automatically.

On the Shreckhorn it all began because we had too much lunch. We did not start from Grindelwald for the Strahlegg hut till 4 p.m., and it was dark when we got there. Therefore we could make no reconnaissance of our route to the upper reaches of the Shreckfirn and the foot of the South ridge of the Shreckhorn.

There were 67 people that night in the Strahlegg hut, which holds about 25 comfortably, and as it was a perfect night with an almost full moon we decided to start as soon as we had had a meal and climb as far as possible by moonlight, and when it went in, sit down until dawn. It would have been better had we done so. The hut guardian, however, one of the finest of his sort, would have none of it. I think he took our desire to start without any sleep as a slur on his capabilities as a sardine packer; he was evidently so determined that none should turn away, willingly or unwillingly, bedless from his hut that we had to yield. He found us a blanket apiece and I had a very nice doze on the bench in front of the hut.

We started at 1.15 and thus had just 13 hours before the departure of my companion's train for England. In these circumstances it was particularly annoying to waste 3 hours on a false trail, which was what we proceeded to do. Admittedly the route from the Gagg to the upper part of the Shreckfirn is by no means obvious in the dark to a stranger to the place, but there were tracks. That we diverged from them was silly, but excusable, but that we persisted with our own route long after it had led us into difficulties most improbable on the ordinary route from the Strahlegg hut to the Shreckfirn was inexcusable obstinacy on my part. Our mistake was to try to descend to the Shreckfirn too low down, below the great ice-fall. We strayed from the tracks somewhere on the extraordinary slope of ice and gravel which leads from Gagg to the Shreckfirn, and at once had to begin step-cutting. It seemed unlikely that prolonged step-cutting should be necessary on a part of the route which is usually done in the dark, so we made for the nearest rocks and descended them to the level of the Shreckfirn. They were very rotten rocks, and to attain the glacier from them entailed some tricky ice

work. At least, so it seemed to us, who were not used to cutting steps, torches in mouths, across frail ice-bridges and up, down and around seracs.

It was all in vain. There was, as we later saw, just one possible route up the ice-fall to the flat part of the glacier above, but it would have been extraordinary luck to find it knowing nothing whatever of the ground. We were soon involved in a system of vast crevasses, and after trying several times to get through we reluctantly decided that the only thing to do was to retrace our route entirely to the point where we had missed the tracks.

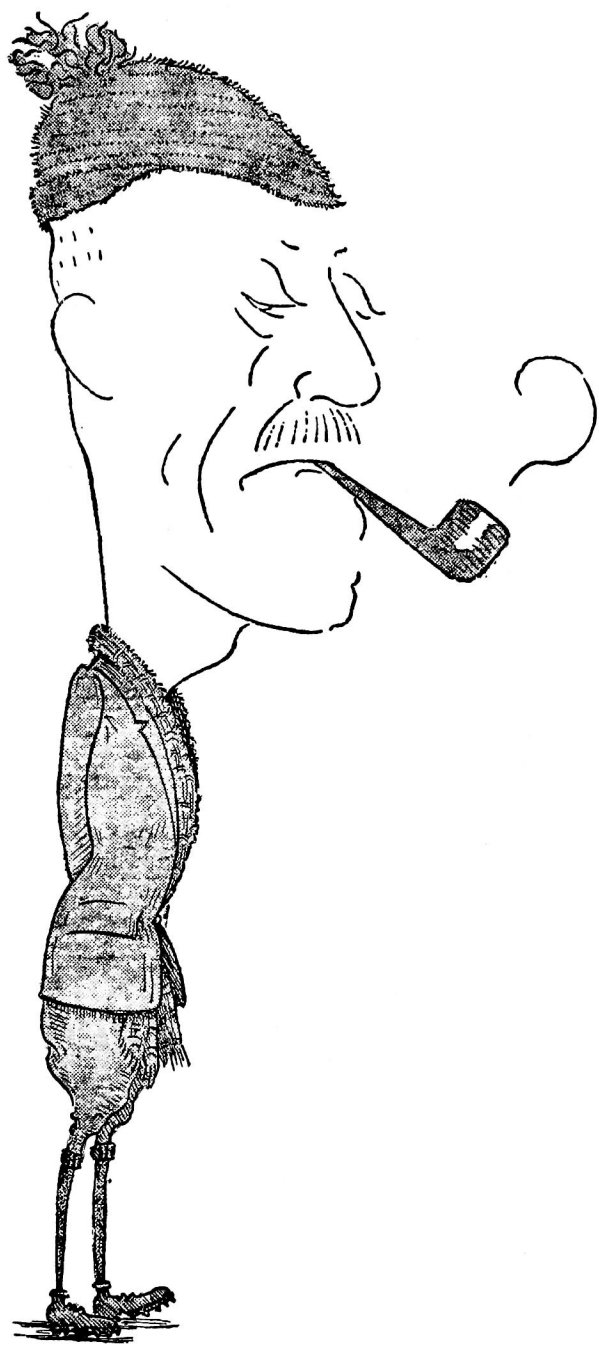
Unappreciative of our romantic surroundings my companion was very indignant with me for my stupidity, but in the unreasonable frame of mind which is induced by such early morning trials I thought he carried his indignation too far, and retaliated. And so we spent the next half hour in mutual mud slinging, each telling the other what a damned rotten and dangerous climber he was and bringing up examples from the last three weeks to support his contentions. In this manner the time passed quickly until we got back on the correct route. Whether it was owing to the excellence of our training or to the absorbing nature of this conversation that we were able to talk so continuously and so animatedly while ascending such steep and rotten slopes, I have never been able to decide. At about 5 o'clock we were back on the tracks, and the uncertainty—except as to whether my companion would catch his train—was over for the day. The ascent continued . . .

I end up with the description of an ascent of the Grand Combin, probably a new ascent and certainly not one to be voluntarily repeated.

We started from the Valsorey hut on a perfect morning after three days of bad weather, never having seen our mountain from close to and having lost from our "Abraham" the pages which described it. We had, however, as was our practice, a postcard. On reaching the semi-col at the foot of the Valsorey arete we sat down and breakfasted and discussed the prospects of the day. The Valsorey arete was covered with fresh snow and there was a cold wind, so we decided to traverse round the north face hoping to get to the "Corridor." It was obvious that we could get to the "Corridor" by descending to the Col des Maisons Blanches, which we could see, but we were lazy. We had not long embarked on the traverse when we found ourselves below some very threatening seracs far above us. There were signs below too that these had fallen in the past. I immediately suggested a return, but my remarks from the rear of the rope were unheard or ignored, and we continued to traverse slowly, often cutting steps, all the time in the line

of fire of seracs. In such a situation the uneasiness of the first few minutes (and I cannot pretend that I was not almost sizzling at first) soon gives way to a calm resignation, and my own feeling, like that of the famous Christian Almer in similar spots, was of indignation that a respectable party such as ours should be in such a position. After about three quarters of an hour we came to a slight ridge which stood out from the face and appeared to afford safety. But it also barred further advance, as it fell away on the other side in a precipice. Either we must return the way we had come and march under the seracs again or else descend the ridge, a slabby and difficult affair, for about a thousand feet. At least those ought to have been the only alternatives. But the Gods smiled on us, little though we deserved it. Above us the ridge merged into the steep snow slopes which formed the face of the mountain, at the very point where those slopes abutted against the line of seracs, and just there, as chance would have it, was the only possible break we had seen in the seracs. Probably in most seasons such a break would not exist, and in any case except after fresh snow and a hard frost the route would entail hours of step-cutting. But on that day it went without much trouble, and within an hour we stepped out into the sun on the vast summit plateau.

The descent by the corridor we followed perfectly, thanks partly to our postcard, which was not a good one, and partly to the good sense of my companions who refused to listen to me when I began to mutter about the better and clearer postcard which I remembered having seen at Arolla the previous summer, and which showed that we were off the correct route, which obviously went



EASTER 1936

H. H. H.

HELYG WEEK-END

J. S. T. GIBSON

THE car stopped outside Helyg at 4 a.m. It was a perfect example of a June night. Apart from the battering of the rain and the howling of the gale, silence reigned. After a pause John woke up and said: "Why have you turned off the engine?" Then Hugh woke up and said: "Good Lord, we haven't got there have we?"

We stumbled and slid down the path to Helyg with our suitcases, entered, and after much fumbling and blind manipulation of levers the light came on. We turned on all the fires we could find and went to bed.

In the morning the gale continued with unabated fury, and so did the rain. We had intended to do Route 2 on Lliwedd, but as none of us wanted to lead it in this weather, we gave up the idea. Anyway, the guide book says it is unsuitable in wet conditions and that was a good enough excuse for us. Doubtless when the new Lliwedd Guide comes out Route 2 will be "a pleasant scramble suitable for beginners who have forgotten the rope."

Anyway, we bundled into the car, and went down to Ogwen. When we started to put our boots on it transpired that Hugh had left his at Helyg, so we had to go straight back for them. At last we set off up the path to the Slabs. We climbed Hope and the Central Buttress of Glyder Fawr, and the rope was new, and all around was wetness unrelieved. The rope tied itself into every conceivable knot it could think of, belaying itself round every rock it was meant to run over, and unbelaying itself from every rock it was tied round on purpose. When we reached the top we compassed our way rapidly back to the car, and Helyg, where we turned on all the amps at our disposal.

All night long the tempest raged (what *is* that a quotation from?) and next morning it was just as bad. We unanimously decided to try a climb on Cader Idris, where it might be finer, and then go straight home from there: we had to be back at Oxford that evening anyway. So we packed up our things and set out for Cader. At Capel we asked the A.A. man how long

the weather had been like this ; he replied that he had only been there three months. We went on by Blaenau Ffestiniog, and the road had a permanent wave which made the car wheel wobble, so we stopped at a garage somewhere the other side of Blaenau Ffestiniog. There we made the amusing discovery that we had left most of our food, most of our money, and a few of our clothes at Helyg. There was nothing for it but to go back, which was infuriating, for it looked slightly finer over Cader. After collecting the left behinds, we just had time for a short climb on the Milestone Buttress before starting home.

The next day our friends at Oxford all said : " You must have had a wonderful week-end in Wales ; it was so hot here that we hardly knew what to do with ourselves."

In fairness to Wales I must add that the next time we visited Helyg was in November, and the sun shone down with hardly a break, the rocks were dry, and the views extended as far as the curvature of the earth would allow.

TRAVERSE OF LES ECRINS

J. C. RYLE

WE called it a training climb. It took us ten hours, and we were back at la Bérarde by lunch time. The Frenchman who had joined us was in very good form; it was the fastest time recorded. My guide, no longer in his prime, was slightly winded. I was absolutely flat out. And then, just as we were enjoying our wine on the sunny terrace in front of Rodier's Hotel, the accursed Frenchman suggested Les Ecrins for the next day. I believe it was offered as a challenge; anyway, I accepted it, because the weather did not look as though it would last beyond one day. We spent the afternoon sleeping, and at 8 p.m. left for the Temple-Ecrins hut. The first part of the way was pleasant, because it was quite flat. Then, at Plan de Carrelet, we weighted ourselves down with firewood from the thickets of juniper and birch, and began the weary climb up to the hut. The wretched Frenchman (who had been ski-ing for the last two months) got in front and set the pace. My lungs, still full of London smoke, nearly burst, and my fingers went blue with the low oxygen tension of my blood. However at 10 p.m. we reached the hut. We seemed to be the first visitors of the year, which was not surprising as it was still early in June and nobody had tried Les Ecrins yet. We drank a lot of tea with kirsch, which was very good, and went to bed.

Next morning the unaccustomed luxury of a guide showed itself in the hot tea that was ready when I woke at 2.30 a.m. At 3 a.m. we left by starlight, with a clear sky, but a sea of mist in the valley. We had a long strenuous slog up to the col des Avalanches, which we reached at 5.30 a.m. The clouds were gaining all the time, rising up the valley like a flood tide, so that we had to go as fast as possible. From col des Avalanches, we took the central of three obvious couloirs that lead up on to the south face of Les Ecrins; this was full of ice and took us an hour and a half for a hundred metres. The Frenchman, who wanted to try a variation of the ordinary south face route, was leading. There was no shelter from the ruthless fire of ice chips that he sent down, and the guide and I had a miserable time:

"Voici le sport!" said the Frenchman. After the couloir we ascended a little, and then traversed east. I remember something rather like a strip of Idwal slabs hanging a few thousand feet above the glacier Noir, and then an awkward overhang. Here I had the unique pleasure of hauling my guide up on the rope. We were now on the crest of a rib that stood out a little from the face of the mountain; in every direction, upwards, downwards and sideways, there seemed to be nothing but expanses of the same yellowish rock, forming a whole series of minor ribs and buttresses which sooner or later faded into the general face of the mountain. We climbed up our rib a little way, took to a couloir on its eastern side, and then, moving still more to the east, we gained the crest of a second rib by means of an exhausting crack (the Frenchman was climbing splendidly), and passing through a gap at last found ourselves in the sun. It was 8.15 a.m., and we stopped—for the first time—for breakfast. A shallow snow couloir dropped away at our feet and faded out on the face below; our empty tins took one bounce down it, and were gone; the general angle was very steep. Meanwhile the sea of cloud was still gaining on us; away to the east the black mass of Monte Viso was slowly drowning, and impassive waves broke in slow motion against Mont Pelvoux.

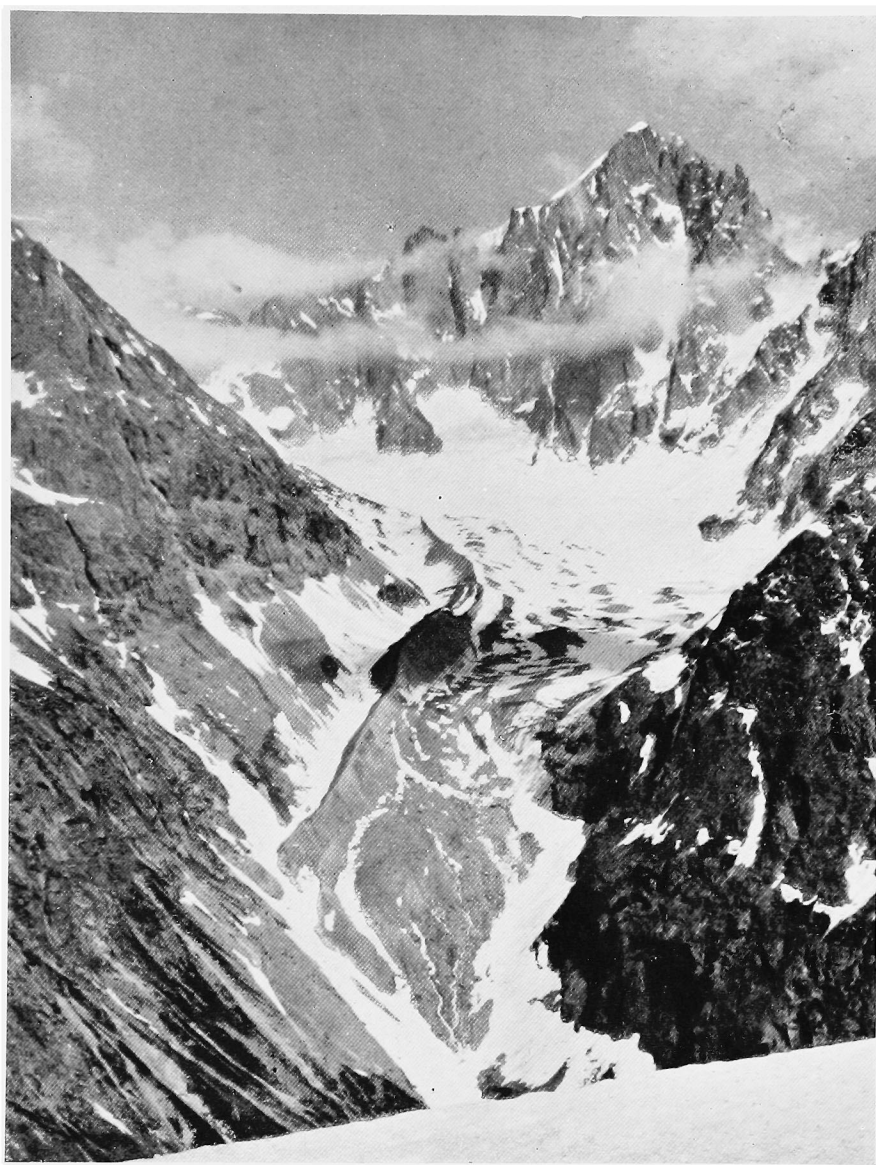
After ten minutes we went on. We still moved diagonally upwards and to the east, crossing another couloir and another rib. From there we had a short rappel into a large couloir full of snow, which stretched up to merge into the little hanging glacier on the upper part of the south face. We followed the couloir, and then the western edge of the glacier, until we reached the west ridge of Pic Lory. The idea was to gain this, and follow it up to the Pic. My guide did not like the look of it, and wanted to cut steps right across the hanging glacier and gain the normal south face route; however, the Frenchman thought that it would go. There was a grateful halt for argument, in which I did not waste much breath. I just had time to absorb a few impressions of the great cloud-filled gulf between us and the Pelvoux, and then we attacked the ridge, whose crest was only gained with difficulty. Once on it, we had a couple of hundred feet of splendid climbing; it was difficult, and we had to move singly. On one side the ridge dropped over on to the south face—the hanging glacier dazzling white in the mid-day sun; on the other it fell sheer into a deep shadowy cwm whose bottom was filled with cloud. From Pic Lory we reached with ease the Barre des Ecrins, the highest point of the summit ridge, at 12 mid-day, and simultaneously the sea of cloud closed over us.

We rested a few minutes, and then returned as far as Pic Lory. The snow of the north face at this point was soft and resting on

ice, so we followed the north-west ridge down as far as brèche Lory, which we gained with a rappel of thirty or forty feet. It was a dreary spot, with cold wet mist eddying up through the brèche. We were able to cross the first bergshrund here, but there were still left two more of them, and visibility was limited to about twenty feet. We wandered eastwards right across the north face, kicking steps in snow that was firmer than above, in a vain attempt to find a break in the cliff of ice that dropped away below us. We had even been reduced to talking of a bivouac, when a lucky break in the mist showed us a route down from the col de Barre. We hurried across to this, and then zig-zagged back again to cross the third line of crevasses by an old avalanche shoot, and emerge at last below the clouds. We eventually reached the col des Ecrins at 3.15 p.m.

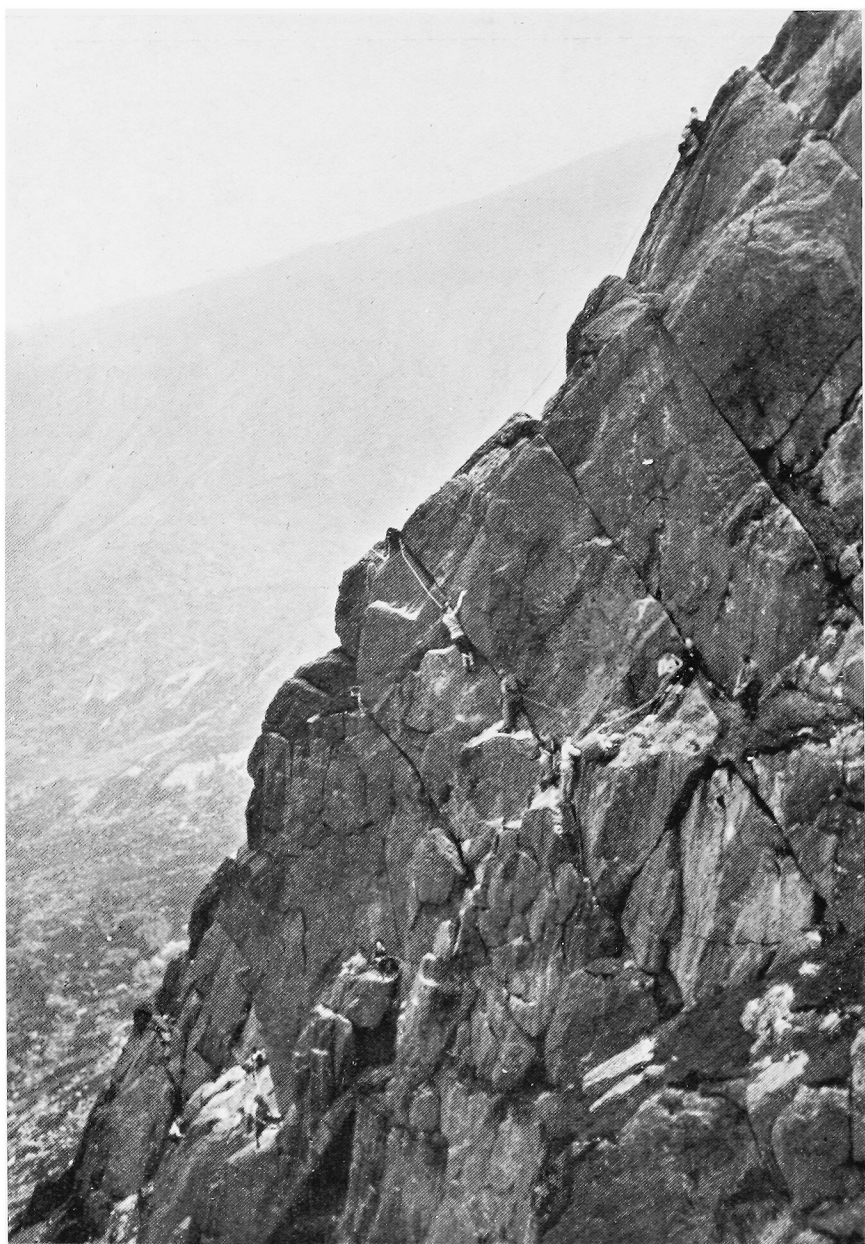
Here we rested for a quarter of an hour, and then set about the descent of the col, which proved more difficult than we had expected, as the rocks and fixed ropes were completely hidden under an extremely steep slope of snow. We did a couple of "rappels en pendule," and gained some rocks to the north of the col. These eventually led down to easier slopes, and we reached the level glacier at 6 p.m. We unroped, twelve hours after roping up, and ran down to La Bérarde in another hour—just as the first drops of rain were falling.

"Voici le sport !"



DOMES DE NEIGE DES ECRINS (FROM TÊTE DE LA NEIGE)

J. C. Ryle



GASHED CRAG—TRYFAN, WHITSUN 1937

A. D. Malcolm

“NOCTURNAL INTRUDERS”

ELLIOTT VINEY

THE recent publication of a full-dress book* on “Roof-climbing” raises many debatable points which the book itself does not set out to solve; it is a description, usually in narrative form, of the chief climbs on five of the Cambridge colleges, together with a few on the main University buildings and a preliminary chapter on roof-climbing in general. It can be said at once that from the ordinary climber’s point of view—be he roof-climber or not—it is first-class entertainment; roof-climbing always has a double excitement, that of the climb itself and of the continual possibility of being caught with its resultant penalties (the only parallels that come to mind are an ascent of the Church Door Buttress in the deer-stalking season or of Kinderscout at any time). This excitement the necessarily anonymous author does convey in full measure; his narrative is always alive; he has a nice turn of humour and a sense of proportion; on the other hand the illustrations are so good that—paradoxically—they almost succeed in spoiling the atmosphere that the author builds up in his text; for the very excellence of the flashlight work destroys the sense of furtiveness which the author has conveyed. Of course, technically, these photographs are marvels of efficiency, whilst those facing pages 51, 156, and 171 are as hair-raising as some of the others are amusing. It is then a book well worth buying for it is excellent entertainment.

At a price. A price Cambridge roof-climbers will have to pay; it is a typically Cambridge production in its matter-of-fact efficiency (Oxford could never have stirred itself to produce anything like it; nor would the photos have come out), but it seems it must destroy for some time, if not for ever, the mystery and excitement of roof-climbing there. Surely the roof-climber shirks publicity more than anything else or, if at all, only in the visible proofs he leaves behind him (there is an amusing story of

* THE NIGHT CLIMBERS OF CAMBRIDGE. By ‘Whipplesnaith.’ (Chatto & Windus. 1937. 7/6.)

a patriotic undergraduate who, having helped the college authorities to remove an umbrella on King's Chapel by shooting it down, refused to employ the same methods when a Union Jack appeared in the same place a few days later). Curiously enough the author admits this almost in his first sentence :—

“The blanket of the dark hides each group of climbers from its neighbours, muffles up a thousand deeds of valour, and almost entirely prevents the existence of dangerous rivalry.”

Does not that exactly state the true roof-climbers attitude? And is not the author doing his best to disperse the blanket, to record the deeds and to start the ‘dangerous’ rivalries? He may have done his work all too thoroughly, that rests with the college authorities to decide, although it is true as he later points out that for the latter seriously to set out to prevent all roof-climbing would be an impossible task; but there will be a price.

Roof-climbing is a uniquely fascinating sport to those who have once felt the urge, but it does raise a number of attendant problems from which the ordinary climber is free. There is primarily the question of trespassing and it is here that the Universities have such an advantage for the climber there has an unlimited number of buildings, all of which come under the same ultimate authority and as a rule he can get all he wants without going on to private roof-tops; Whipplesnaith is involved in an exciting but instructive series of adventures on the only occasion he strays from ‘Gown’ to ‘Town.’ At Oxford, Laurence of Arabia is credited with being the originator of the legendary traverse from Balliol to Keble, which involves crossing the roofs of several private houses; Laurence’s love of the unexpected can be the only explanation for making the roofs of Keble his objective. Oxford has nothing as spectacular as King’s Chapel, but it can hold its own in curious adventures—the dramatic disappearance of the Indian Elephant (a large and prominent gilded weather-vane*), the unusual hour at which Trinity were once called to chapel due to the mysterious lack of unanimity between the hands and chimes of the college clock, as well as the usual rash of domestic articles on the Martyrs Memorial and other pinnacles on bump supper nights. Issuing into the quad at Magdalen after the annual dinner the president of the Mountaineering Club was horrified to discover he could see but six of the diners where a moment before there had been thirty; it was not for nothing that the dinner of that club was always held on Ascension Day.

* This adventure figured in the annual report from the Institute to the University, as “a visit from nocturnal intruders”; hence the title.

There was once too a statue that vanished from a niche in St. John's; in its place a future Archbishop left a brief note to the Dean exhorting him to read and mark Matthew vi, 20. The same climber who removed the statue from St. John's to Balliol once was making a traverse from his rooms in King Edward Street; he got into difficulties and was desperately trying to enter the nearest window when the owner appeared and instead of beginning the usual altercation promptly hit him on the head—it was a long way down to the street but still, as the Bank manager, he was probably justified. The intruder in that case was climbing alone; Whipplesnaith condemns this but it is far more justifiable to climb roofs alone than difficult rock climbs, especially if traversing. Roof wandering on a summer night under a moon at Oxford is not an experience to be forgotten easily; the already lovely buildings are transformed and even the more unfortunate ones are improved . . . even the Museum.

Whether the authorities can or cannot curb roof-climbing by edicts and revolving spikes is doubtful; the omens are not hopeful now that the Swiss cantonal authority which put the North face of the Eiger out of bounds has reversed its decision. It is true that barbed wire has not yet appeared on Clogwyn d'ur Arddu, though you can meet iron bedsteads in the gullies of Snowdon and buckets on Ben Nevis. No. It seems they are now trying more subtle methods; at both Universities buildings arise which do not show a modicum of consideration for the roof-climbers; it is true that the latter is probably one of the few left who has any love for the Gothic Revival, but however functional and architecturally impeccable these new buildings may be their stark and hygienic lines are as much an eyesore to the roof-climber as they are to the University sky-line. The crowning insult is the sudden and ominous appearance of incut drainpipes lying snug and smug on their blank façades; these monstrosities are built into the wall and give no semblance of a hold, very different from the glorious uncertainty of the older ones which, if they were made of iron, might snap suddenly in two or if they were lead come quietly apart and the climber hanging on their tip would be lowered in a graceful parabola on to the tiles below; they had the invigorating quality bad rock can have at times, but the new method is all too final.

There being little hope for the future, the climber who has worked out the gothic is tending to examine the fewer but most substantial classical buildings; from their very nature these have always been less popular because the gothic is not only easier (although not safer) but has so much more variety and interest. But 'Whipplesnaith's' photos of the Fitzwilliam Museum and 'Gibbs' show what can be done, whilst Coronation

day was both the excuse and occasion for the finest climb done in Oxford for many years, when four members of this club made the first ascent of the Radcliffe Camera and left a Union Jack on top ; and Oxford honoured this feat by summoning neither steeplejack, fire-brigade, nor even a rifleman to remove it.

Roof-climbing shows every sign of flourishing and that last climb was a fitting retort to incut drainpipes. 'Whipplesnaith's' book should inspire others to start—they will be well rewarded.

ROCK-CLIMBING PHOTOGRAPHY

RALPH J. COLLINSON

EVER since I first possessed a camera, I have endeavoured to record the moods of mountains and to reproduce them to the best of my ability by means of the various photographic processes. I would much rather have been able to paint, but that gift was denied me and I therefore turned to the camera as being the next best thing. I would prefer to attempt to write about my experiences in the realms of mountain photography rather than of rock-climbing photography, but the former has been done by so many more gifted writers, who are, incidentally, more successful photographers. I have, therefore, decided to concentrate on the taking of photographs of actual rock climbs, but for those who are interested in straightforward picture making, I would recommend them to read Smythe's recently published "Mountain Scene." They will find especially interesting the description, at the beginning of the book, of the art of photographing the hills, which is the most lucid and instructive piece of writing about pictorial mountain photography that I have ever read.

Now I want to make it quite clear that whilst rock climbing I have carried my camera in the hope of making pictures from suitable viewpoints on the top of the mountains or on the way up and down, but I have on many occasions wasted many feet of film as the third member of a climbing party, taking views of the nether regions of the other two. To put it mildly, and with all due respect to the said nether regions, these photographs are not worth the paper they are ultimately printed on, either artistically or topographically! Out of every hundred negatives I have exposed only a very few are at all satisfactory, and it is in order to help other climbers to increase their percentage of good photographs that I venture to write these thoughts.

Now there are four main rules to follow :—

- (1) Make sure you are very nearly on the same level horizontally as the person to be photographed.



can be truthfully reproduced. I am afraid that plate 5 does not conform very successfully to all these principles but this photograph has actually been reproduced for another reason, with which I will deal later.

The third rule concerning exposure is also very important and often the most difficult problem to overcome. The majority of good precipices face towards the North, where the surface of the rock is in better condition, due to the absence of severe climatic conditions in the form of constant variations in temperature. Unfortunately, however, this automatically means that on the majority of climbs there is an absence of sun, except perhaps during mid-day in May, June, and July, when it will shine almost vertically downwards. It is well known by artists that with a few exceptions the best lighting for a picture is when the sun is not directly overhead but when it casts long shadows, which help to make a more attractive composition. The consequence is that one either has no sunshine at all or if there is any, its angle is at a most difficult position from the photographic point of view. This top-lighting, however, is generally preferable to unrelieved shade and will lead to a better picture if a viewpoint is carefully selected.

The problem of exposure, however, is most acute when a large part of the foreground is in shade, but having once mastered this, a view bathed in sunshine will present no difficulty. To obtain the best results, a full exposure must be given to obtain all possible detail in the rocks which the climber is surmounting. On the other hand it must not be so great as to over-expose the more distant planes, which will almost certainly have a higher degree of brilliance than the nearby rocks. It should also be borne in mind that the nearer an object is to the photographer, the more exposure is necessary. I have always found it best in these circumstances to use a not too heavy filter, which reduces the effect on the negative emulsion of the more brilliant actinic rays in the distant planes. I then give as much exposure as possible, fully to expose the foreground, and develop the negative with not too much contrast. There is a well-known photographic maxim, which is most apt for rock-climbing photographs—"Expose for the shadows and let the high lights look after themselves." If this is faithfully carried out with the use of a filter, and development carried out in the manner I have mentioned, negatives should result with plenty of detail and reasonable density in the highlights. In passing I should like to mention that I find panchromatic films the most suitable for all landscape and mountain photography.

Finally there is the very important point of exposing at the correct moment. I have had to reject numbers of photographs

which were very satisfactory in all respects, except that the climber looked as if he was posing. It must not be thought that to click the shutter when the climber is fully engrossed in moving will automatically overcome this difficulty, because a posed position is often very similar to a natural one. You should, therefore, try to arrange it that he is not showing any awareness of the presence of the photographer and that his limbs are in such a position as to suggest action. A really good rock-climbing photograph should convey a feeling of movement and in order to attain this attribute, rule 4 should be actively borne in mind. If you are the third member of a party it is also essential to make sure that the second is conforming with sound rock-climbing principles. If he is belayed whilst No. 1 is climbing, he ought to be shown sitting or standing in a safe position and paying out the rope in the correct manner. I have one very good picture which I dare not reproduce because the second is holding the rope above his head and it is not over his shoulders to safeguard No. 1 if he were to fall. When I took this photograph I did not give any thought to his position and I regret to say that he looks more like a bell-ringer than a climber!

So much for the rules, which I have tried to explain as briefly as possible and for illustration I have already mentioned one or two details concerning plate 2. The other photographs shown all illustrate these points further, although plate 3 is taken from a position slightly higher than the climber (probably about 20 degrees) and this is about the limit to which one can deviate from the horizontal. No. 4 illustrates the great advantage of sunshine as it gives more life to the rocks and infuses a far more pleasing atmosphere to the picture. An almost better picture of mine of this particular cliff appeared in the 1934 Journal and the reason for its superiority is because there is more background and the exposed nature of the cliff is better captured.

Illustration 5 already referred to is one of the only photographs I have taken for any other reason than the endeavour to try to make a good picture. R. S. Wood had led me up the Javelin Buttress, while A. R. Edge was climbing the Piton Crack in order to fix a new piton. For those who climb this route nowadays and find no piton, it may be interesting to record its history. On the 17th December, 1928, F. H. Hicks explored this particular part of the wall above the Idwal Slabs and whilst making the first ascent found a rusty piton, as a result of which he subsequently named the climb "Piton Route." An earlier record of the history of this piton is given by Dorothy Pilley (Mrs. I. A. Richards) in her book "Climbing Days" whilst describing the first ascent of "Other Kingdom."



MILESTONE BUTTRESS—IVY CHIMNEY (FINAL PITCH)

R. J. Collinson



COLUMNAR CLIFF—THE SPIRAL STAIRS

R. J. Collinson

"All went well. At the foot of the climb an uncanny thing happened. Tucked in a cranny an iron piton just showed. What mysterious person had left it there, and for what purpose? It seemed, on that haunted morning, a hint too clear to be ignored. Up above, where belays are lacking, and the climbing is delicate, I. A. R. sought out a crack for this iron Finger of Fate, and hammered it in securely with a stone carried up for the purpose. So placed, it was of no assistance to the leader of the pitch, but with my rope belayed about it, I could guarantee that, whatever happened, no serious harm could come."

It was this piton, therefore, that Hicks found during his first ascent of the Piton Route, and, as predicted, it was used by many subsequent climbers as a belay. Owing to the fact that after much use it worked loose, someone removed it and, I believe, brought it back to Helyg. It was reported missing in the Helyg Log Book on the 27th March, 1934, and a few months later A. R. Edge arrived at Helyg with a new piton, which he announced he intended fixing in place of the old one. I thought it would be rather interesting to make a record of this event and duly presented Edge with a print which is now pasted in the Log Book opposite the following entry:—

11th June, 1934.

The original piton at the head of the Piton Crack, which was removed by an act of vandalism some months ago by person or persons unknown, has now been replaced by a very graceful handforged one (price 1s. 3d.). This has been inserted about seven feet above the site of the original piton, where it is possible to stand in reasonable comfort. It is hoped that the new piton (which is surely not an impurity) on a part of the wall so lacking in belays will be more kindly treated.

A. R. E. J. A. M., non-mem.

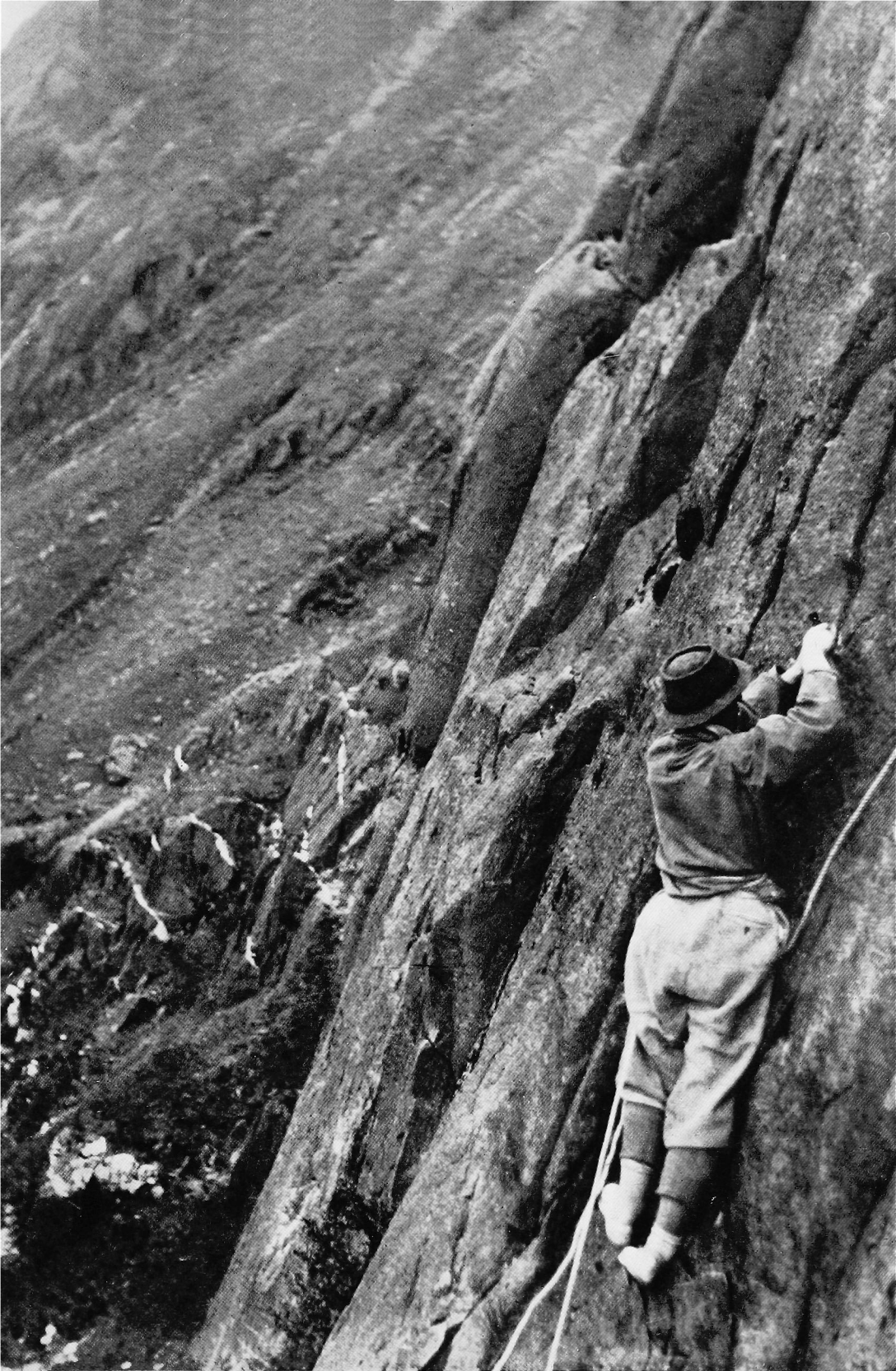
The ultimate history of this piton is veiled in a certain amount of mystery and it has again been removed. The last word would evidently appear to rest with Dr. J. M. Edwards, who has placed an arrow against the photograph pointing to a spot about two feet above Edge's hand, with the words "Note big belay!"

As regards the actual photograph, it is always very difficult to obtain a satisfactory result in Cwm Idwal as it is semi-circular in shape, and to obtain a background of lighter or darker shade than the rock, one has to rely chiefly on either sunshine or snow, which I was not successful in finding in this instance. Nor was I able to reach a position horizontal to Edge, for I was lowered on a rope until I found myself at the top of an overhang which prevented further descent.

As regards the general aspect of rock-climbing photography, I do not suggest that the photographs illustrated with this article have any claim to pictorial excellence, but I do feel that there is much good work to be done in the future. Among the best pictures created annually, and which are hung in the various photographic exhibitions throughout the country, will be found some beautiful mountain pictures, but I have not yet seen a rock-climbing picture accepted by one of them. Is it possible that someone will someday incorporate a climber in such a manner that he blends with and adds interest to a mountain landscape, without attracting all the attention to his own figure? I feel that it can be done, especially where climbs are made in sunshine. The great disadvantage from a pictorial standpoint is, firstly, the very strong line of a cliff running diagonally across the picture and also that a climber will have his back to the distant landscape. Normally it is essential that a figure in a landscape should be looking *into* the picture in order to strengthen the composition.

The unsatisfactory aspect of rock-climbing photography is that in order to obtain good photographs, it is necessary to disobey some of the rules of rock-climbing. When there are only two on the rope it is not right that the second should do anything other than safeguard the leader whilst he is climbing. If there are three on the rope, it is possible for the third member of the party to traverse to one side or the other without endangering the other two, but it is quite possible that he might have to unrope and thereby endanger himself. Also on a very difficult climb there are usually no traverses available and consequently no satisfactory photographs obtainable. I can imagine, therefore, that some climbers may condemn the taking of rock-climbing photographs on these grounds, but in my opinion there is justification for such lapses from the good canons of rock-climbing if the photographer takes every possible precaution, both for himself and his companions and if the photographs obtained are worthy of the effort.

Rock-climbing photographs similar to those illustrated here can be interesting to the person who takes them or even to others who have done the particular climbs, but my ambition, at any rate, is to make pictures which can be hung adjacent to other landscapes and give pleasure to those who are not rock-climbers.



5. IDWAL—THE PITON ROUTE

R. J. Collinson



DINAS BACH (LLANBERIS)—FLAKE CRACK

R. J. Collinson

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

THE following information is issued by the First Aid Committee of Mountaineering Clubs, and is given to enable friends of the injured, or those assisting the injured, to communicate with whatever source of help is available. The Committee cannot accept any financial obligation other than the provision of equipment in the first instance.

The cost of replacing or repairing any of the equipment following an accident is expected to be borne by the injured climber or his relatives. It must also be remembered that the services of a doctor and ambulance should be paid for. Any quarrymen, farmhands, etc., who may be called out should receive not less than 7s. 6d. each.

The Committee will very gratefully accept any donations towards the maintenance and improvement of this equipment.

Equipment consisting of a Thomas Stretcher and a full First Aid Outfit, encased in two rucksacks, has been installed at the three following points in the Snowdon area :—

YOUTH HOSTEL AT OGWEN. (Installed by Rucksack Club.)

HELYG. (Installed by Climbers' Club.)

PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL. (Installed by Midland Association of Mountaineers.)

In the case of any accident where it is evident that the injured climber will need a stretcher or additional helpers it is of the greatest importance that a messenger should be despatched *immediately* to the nearest first aid post. This messenger should be the swiftest member of the party, and one who can be relied upon to reach the valley in safety.

If possible, he should be given written directions stating the name of the climb and pitch on which the accident has occurred and briefly the nature of the climber's injuries. Four people at least are required for stretcher, with relays of a further four if distance is great.

ASSISTANCE

In addition to the three places mentioned, where First Aid Equipment is installed, it may be possible to get in touch with climbers at the following :—

TAL-Y-BRAICH. (Rucksack Club's Hut.) About 2 miles from Capel Curig Junction on the main Holyhead Road in the direction of Ogwen, about 300 yards from the road, on the right.

GUEST HOUSE, CAPEL CURIG (Mr. Hughes). Tel. : Capel 25.

BRYN TYRCH HOTEL (Mr. Smith). Tel. : Capel 23.

SIABOD VILLA (Mrs. Roberts). Tel. : Capel 29.

TYN-Y-COED HOTEL. Tel. : Capel 31.

ROYAL HOTEL. Tel. : Capel 30.

BEDDGELEERT. Mr. David Hewitt, "The Firs," Caernarvon Road, Beddgelert. Tel. : Beddgelert 46.

CWM IDWAL, GLYDER FACH, AND MILESTONE BUTTRESS, TRYFAN
Nearest First-Aid Post.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :—

YOUTH HOSTEL, adjoining car park, OGWEN Cottage. Miss Alexander will take charge and organise rescue party.

Public Telephone Box, on main Holyhead Road, about 200 yards below Ogwen Cottage in the direction of Bethesda (Tel. : Bethesda 88) from which calls may be made for doctor, or ambulance ; or for additional stretcher and equipment.

Places at which Ambulance should wait.

For accidents in Cwm Idwal and Glyder Fach.—Car Park, Ogwen.

For accidents on Milestone Buttress.—By tenth milestone on main Holyhead Road.

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :—

1. Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel. (Tel. : Llanberis 249.)

2. Helyg (Climbers' Club Hut).

Doctor : Dr. I. G. Williams. Tel. : Bethesda 18 (Ogwen Terr., Bethesda.)

Ambulance : Tel. : Bangor 490.

Police : Bethesda, Tel. : Bethesda 20.

Hospital : St. David's Hospital, Bangor. Tel. : Bangor 159.

EAST FACE OF TRYFAN

Nearest First-Aid Post.

Two Thomas Stretchers and 1 Army Stretcher, and complete equipment at :—

CLIMBERS' CLUB HUT, HELYG, which is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the point where the North Ridge of Tryfan comes down to the Holyhead Road, in the direction of Capel Curig. The hut is about 70 yards below the road on right-hand side. (Power lines leading to it across main Holyhead Road.) If locked, key is obtainable from GWERN-Y-GOF ISAF FARM.

Nearest Telephone.

To Tryfan: 200 yards below Ogwen Cottage in direction of Bethesda on main Holyhead Road.

To Helyg: Endeavour to obtain car to send someone else on from Helyg to the A.A. Box at Capel Junction, Tel.: Capel 36, or, if this box is shut, to the public telephone box which is situated about 200 yards beyond it on the right-hand side of the Bettws-y-Coed Road.

Important.

If accident involves more than one person, or occurs at a time when it is unlikely that climbers would be staying at Helyg, it would be as well to send for further assistance to the Youth Hostel, adjoining Ogwen Cottage. (See directions for Idwal and Glyder Fach area.)

Place at which ambulance should wait.

Gwern-y-Gof Uchaf Farm.

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at:—

1. Youth Hostel, Ogwen.
2. Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel. Tel.: Llanberis 249.

Doctor: Dr. I. G. Williams. Tel.: Bethesda 18. (Ogwen Terrace, Bethesda.)

Ambulance: Tel.: Bangor 490.

Police: Bethesda. Tel.: Bethesda 20.

Capel Curig. Tel.: Capel Curig 22.

Hospital: St. David's Hospital, Bangor. Tel.: Bangor 159.

LLIWEDD, CWM GLAS, AND GRIB GOCH.

Nearest First-Aid Post.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at:—

PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL. Tel.: Llanberis 249.

If possible, obtain car at Pen-y-Pass Hotel and drive down to Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel.

Mr. Lockwood, the proprietor, will take charge and organise rescue party.

NOTE.—In regard to Lliwedd, drive a small car to Lynn Llydaw, first making sure that road is clear of rock falls.

Place at which ambulance should wait.

Pen-y-Pass Hotel.

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :—

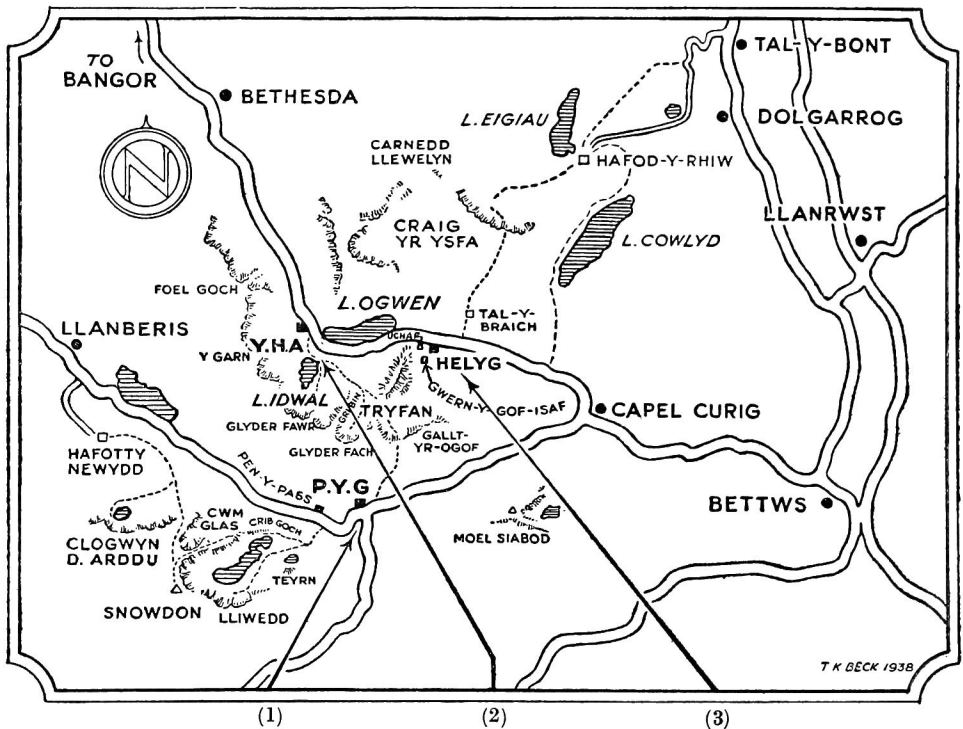
1. Youth Hostel, Ogwen.
2. Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut.

Doctor : Dr. I. Wynn Jones. Tel. : Llanberis 208. Bodafon & Plas Coch, Llanberis.

Ambulance : Tel. : Llanberis 202.

Police : Llanberis. Tel. : Llanberis 222.

Hospital : St. David's Hospital, Bangor. Tel. : Bangor 159.



- (1) PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL (Tel. : Llanberis 249).—Serving all climbs on Snowdon massif, also Craig-yr-Ysfa.
- (2) YOUTH HOSTEL, OGWEN (Public Telephone Box within 300 yards on main Holyhead Road).—Serving all climbs in Cwm Idwal, Glyder Fach, Milestone.
- (3) HELYG, CLIMBERS' CLUB HUT.—Serving all climbs on East Face of Tryfan.

Thomas Stretcher and Complete First-Aid Equipment in Rucksacks installed at each of these three places.

CRAIG-YR-YSFA.

Most accessible First-Aid Post.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :—

PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL. Tel. : Llanberis 249.

Mr. Lockwood will take charge and organise rescue party.

Procedure.

Send one of party down Cwm Eigiau to house on east side of Eigiau Lake, marked Hafod-y-Rhiw, on 1-in. Ordnance Survey Map. If a second messenger is available, he should be sent over Helyg Ridge, and on to Tal-y-Braich or Helyg Hut, for further assistance and a car.

Hafod-y-Rhiw is occupied by a Mr. Jones and family, whose duty it is to look after the control of the water-supply to the North Wales Electric Power Station at Dolgarrog. There is a private telephone connecting his house with the Power Station at Dolgarrog, which Station is on the G.P.O. Telephone, Number Dolgarrog 207. By this means messages for assistance may be passed on.

A narrow road, practicable for a car, leads from Hafod-y-Rhiw down to Tal-y-Bont near Dolgarrog, in the Conway Valley. If first-aid equipment and stretcher are required, transmit a telephone message to the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel (Llanberis 249), where such equipment is installed, and arrange for it to be sent up by the route indicated above. Detailed instructions for obtaining full assistance are available at Hafod-y-Rhiw.

If the climber is not too badly hurt, and is able to get along slowly, it is an easy walk down to Hafod-y-Rhiw and it would be possible to leave him there until a car was obtained. From Hafod-y-Rhiw one or more of the party could then walk back to Capel via Llyn Cowlyd.

Place at which ambulance should wait.

Hafod-y-Rhiw (if road conditions permit).

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :—

1. Youth Hostel, Ogwen.
2. Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut.

Doctor : Dr. Meurig Williams, Tel. : Llanrwst 36. Station Road, Llanrwst.

Ambulance : Police, Llanrwst. Tel. : Llanrwst 32.

Police : Dolgarrog. Tel. : Dolgarrog 222.

Hospital : Llandudno and District (Cottage) Hospital, Trinity Avenue, Llandudno. Tel. : Llandudno 7039.

CLOGWYN DU'R-ARDDU

Nearest First Aid Post (via LLANBERIS).

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at:—

PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL. Tel.: Llanberis 249.

Mr. Lockwood will take charge and organise rescue party.

Procedure.

Send one or more of party down to Llanberis and inform police. (Tel.: Llanberis 222.)

Depending upon circumstances, it may be advisable to telephone from Llanberis to Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel (Llanberis 249) and arrange for the stretcher and first aid equipment installed there to be sent down, and also for the assistance of any climbers who may be staying there.

Nearest Telephone.

Victoria Hotel, Llanberis. Tel.: Llanberis 9.

On main road almost facing Mountain Railway Station.

Place at which ambulance should wait.

Hafotty-Newydd Farm, which is an easy hour from Clogwyn-du'r-Arddu. To get there from Llanberis, fork right from the Snowdon path after third gate at a point where a signpost points the way to Snowdon.

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at:—

1. Youth Hostel, Ogwen.

2. Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut.

Doctor: Dr. I. Wynn Jones. Tel.: Llanberis 208. Bodafon & Plas Coch, Llanberis.

Ambulance: Tel.: Llanberis 202.

Police: Llanberis. Tel.: Llanberis 222.

Hospital: St. David's Hospital, Bangor. Tel.: Bangor 159.

LIST OF CONTENTS OF RUCKSACKS 1 AND 2.

Rucksack 1.

List of contents and instructions:—

1 eiderdown bag with detachable waterproof cover and tie tapes.

1 toilet bottle.

1 hinged, iron Thomas leg splint with spat for attachment to boot, to be kept tied to rucksack.

1 case for medical appliances, containing:—

6 Demette bandages, 6 ins.; 3 triangular bandages;
1 roll 18 x 36 Infirmary plaster; 1 roll 1 in. 10 yds.
Zopla plaster; 1 roll 2½ ins. 1 yard Elastoplast J. & P.
dressing; ball of string or tape; 2 straight arm splints;

1 angular arm splint; Iodine; 2 first field dressings; Gauze; Cotton wool; Small Sponge; Scissors; Safety pins; 1 small hand towel; Sotol disinfectant tablets; 1 pair 5 in. dressing forceps; 1 pair Spencer Wells clamp forceps.

2 TUBUNIC AMPOULE Syringes each containing $\frac{1}{4}$ grain OMNOPON (Morphia) in solution ready for injection.

Cube sugar in jar.

Flask of Brandy.

Meat Extract.

Rucksack 2.

Folding Glacier Lantern.

6 Candles.

2 Kettles.

3 Hot Waterbottles.

3 Cups (2 drinking cups and 1 feeding cup).

1 Monitor stove to be kept filled with paraffin.

Meta Fuel.

Spare Jet and jet key.

Small spoon.

Jug.

FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

OUTFIT consists of a stretcher, and 2 rucksacks of equipment with directions for first aid.

BEFORE LEAVING BASE, ADD STIMULANTS, MEAT EXTRACTS, SUGAR (if not in rucksack), and HOT DRINKS. TAKE PLENTY OF SOUND ROPE.

"Thomas" Stretcher.

Never take stretcher to pieces; keep and carry assembled. Prospect route. Appoint a leader and direction finder.

Place eiderdown, in waterproof cover (or blanket) opened out on stretcher. If equipment includes the DOUBLE THIGH SUPPORT, this should be opened out and placed on top of the eiderdown, making sure that it is securely held by leather hinge. Lay patient on stretcher. Adjust in splint. Apply hot water bottles. Wrap cover over all and strap with 4 straps provided.

Support may be needed at feet, fork, and armpits if lowering vertically. Test comfort before beginning to lower. No weight on injured limbs. Make a sling for an uninjured leg to take part of the weight.

After use reassemble parts of outfit, and make note of any part sent away and to where sent. Drying and cleaning and reassembling very important for next accident.

Telescopic handles allow view of feet for carriers who may find it easier to walk with the stretcher held sideways between them if downhill. Put the head *through* the yoke straps which then distribute the weight. Keep stretcher as level as possible. Extra helpers can steady and take weight by the straps.

If a man has to be lowered on a rope, use the three-looped bowline. To tie this knot, double the rope for 4 or 5 yards at one end. Tie an ordinary bowline on the double portion, which will give three loops and a spare end. Use a loop for each thigh and one for the waist.

If conditions for adjustment are awkward, make the waist loop long, pass over man's head, and take up excessive slack by overhand knot. If there is any danger of unconsciousness, the spare end may be used to pass over the man's shoulder, round his back and under the other arm, and then tie at front. But lower patient on stretcher if at all possible.

INSTRUCTIONS.

Organise relief measures at the nearest base, such as choice of leader, doctor, food, lights, drinks, helpers, ambulance, bed.
Warmth.

Keep injured warm. Relays en route with Primus, warming water for bottles, drinks, etc. Use coverings underneath as well as over the patient. Mackintosh cover over all.

Pain.

Make injured comfortable. If pain unbearable, inject contents of ampoule (for persons under age of 12 only one-quarter to one-half ampoule). Two hours later a second ampoule may be injected if pain continues. Inject under pinched up skin on the outer part of forearm (avoiding any obvious vein) after cleaning or painting with spirit, if available.

Wounds.

Paint with spirit, or iodine. Apply gauze, wool and bandage. Don't plug non-bleeding wounds. If dried and clean leave for attention at base.

Hæmorrhage.

If hæmorrhage is occurring do not give stimulants. Inject contents of ampoule. If in a limb, and excessive, tie a rope or scarf tightly, with protective handkerchiefs beneath it, above the hæmorrhage until bleeding stops, or plug the wound and bandage tightly.

Fractures.

With all fractures the ideal is to splint the limb so that moving it does not hurt the patient. This ideal should be aimed at in applying whatever apparatus is available.

BROKEN LIMBS.

Arm.

Broken arm angular splint on inside. Short straight splint on the outside. Clothes or cotton wool intervening, bandage firmly from shoulder to wrist. If the chest is not injured bandage the whole arm and splint to the chest.

Collar bone.

Place hand near opposite collar bone and bind injured shoulder, arm and hand firmly to chest.

Leg.

If any part of the leg is fractured, use the folding iron splint, insert the boot through the circle (short iron on the inside), pass the leg down until the patient is sitting on the ring, fasten firmly by the attached gaiter or rope loops to the boot; then pass a piece of climbing rope through the gaiter strap or rope loops, and, pulling strongly on the boot, fasten this rope to the bottom end of the splint under considerable tension. Then pass a continuous bandage, puttees, scarves, or rope, round the leg and splint from the upper ring to the bottom of the boot so that the leg and splint are in one solid piece.

Spine.

If pain is in back, suggesting fractured spine, if legs weak or paralysed, patient should be very gently rolled over on to his face and lifted slowly and with infinite gentleness on to the stretcher and carried always face downwards. He must then be roped securely to the stretcher.

TRANSPORT OF INJURED.

Don't carry if movement causes pain. Try to remedy. This usually means roping him more firmly to the stretcher. Warmth and freedom from pain, if obtainable, are of more importance than speed.

If he is fit, it is better to arrange for transport direct to a good general hospital, however distant, where he can remain until he has completely recovered. Recovery may take months.

IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE, AFTER USE OF THE "TUBUNIC" (AMPOULE) SYRINGES, THAT FULL DETAILS, STATING DATE OF USE, NAME OF PERSON ON WHOM USED, AND PLACE, BE SENT IMMEDIATELY TO:—

W. H. HEY, 16, ST. JOHN STREET, MANCHESTER, 3.

It is requested that, after an accident, a report which includes the name and address of patient be sent to:—

A. S. PIGOTT, HILL HOUSE, CHEADLE HULME, STOCKPORT.
(Tel. : Cheadle Hulme 257.)

Criticisms of the equipment and suggestions are welcomed.

THE CORNISH CLIFFS

Article II—By A. W. ANDREWS

THE most interesting climbing between Bosigran and Pendeen consists of traverses. A series of ledges, some of which are exposed only at a dead low tide, afford a straight and narrow way. There is often no alternate route or escape up the cliffs if the sea does not allow the passage. Consequently a party trained in "touch and pass" has a distinct advantage.

As a long continuous traverse is often impossible, very good climbing can be found by descending at the most interesting places and traversing as far as possible in either direction.

The rock is mainly granite and its formation is quite different from that on the South Coast, owing to the fact that the floor joint slopes slightly towards the sea with resultant ledge weathering (cf. Fig. 1, p. 103, *C.J.*, Vol. V, 2), in striking contrast to the absence of shelves where the joints are nearly horizontal.

TRAVERSE FROM THE GREAT ZAWN TO BRANDYS ZAWN. (Cf. Fig. 18.)

It is best to take this from the east (cf. Fig. 13 in the last Journal). A steep grooved face (2). A difficult gully (3). A shallow and severe chimney (4). A doubled rope descent (5). A tricky traverse at sea level (6). On the whole difficult, with one severe pitch which cannot be avoided. Of surpassing interest. About one and a half hours for quick climbers. Begin one hour before low tide. Ascents can be made in case of need at a number of places.

(1) on Fig. 18 refers to the descent to the Great Zawn.

At the west of the Great Zawn descend the short rock chimney mentioned in Article I. Traverse sloping ledges and climb a wall on the cliff side by one of its grooves (2). Descend into Rosemergy Cove and follow a ledge to the cave. In view of what is coming it is better not to wait till the ledge is quite dry if the sea is not too rough. Follow slabs to a chimney (cf. Fig. 15)



FIG. 15—WINDOW RIDGE

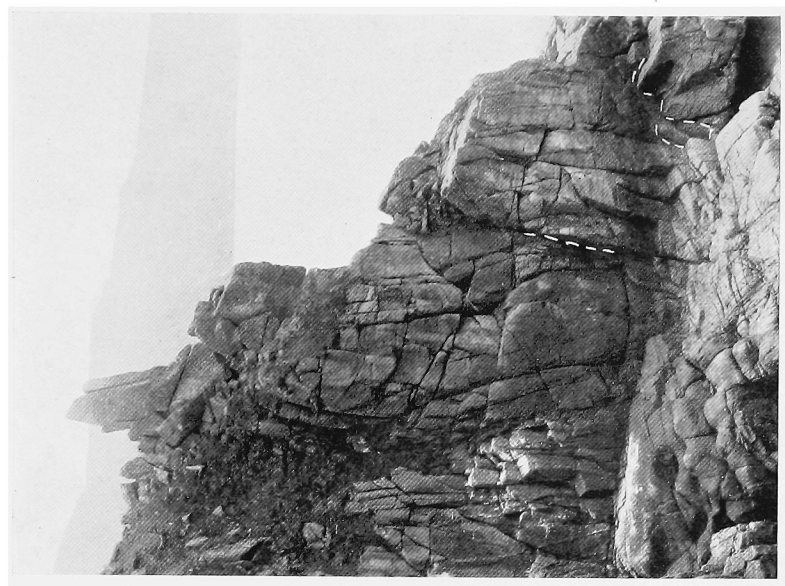


FIG. 16—WALL OF ROSEMERGY PILLAR

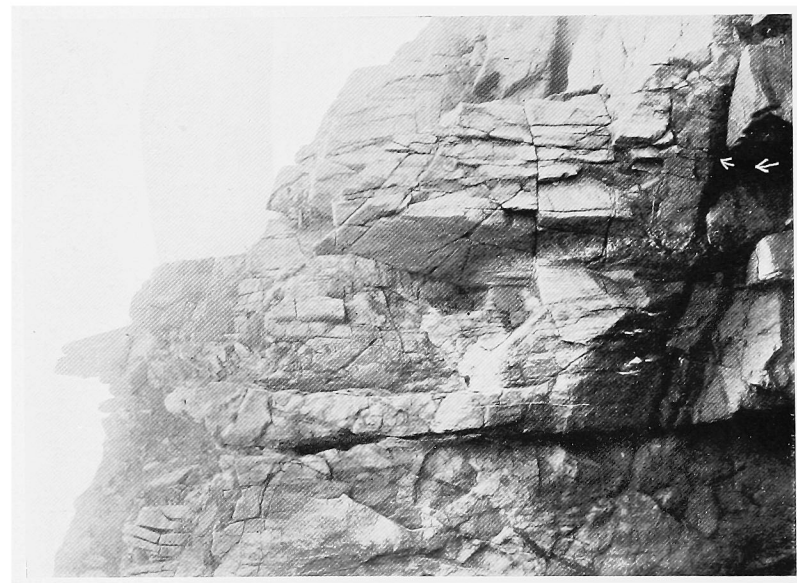
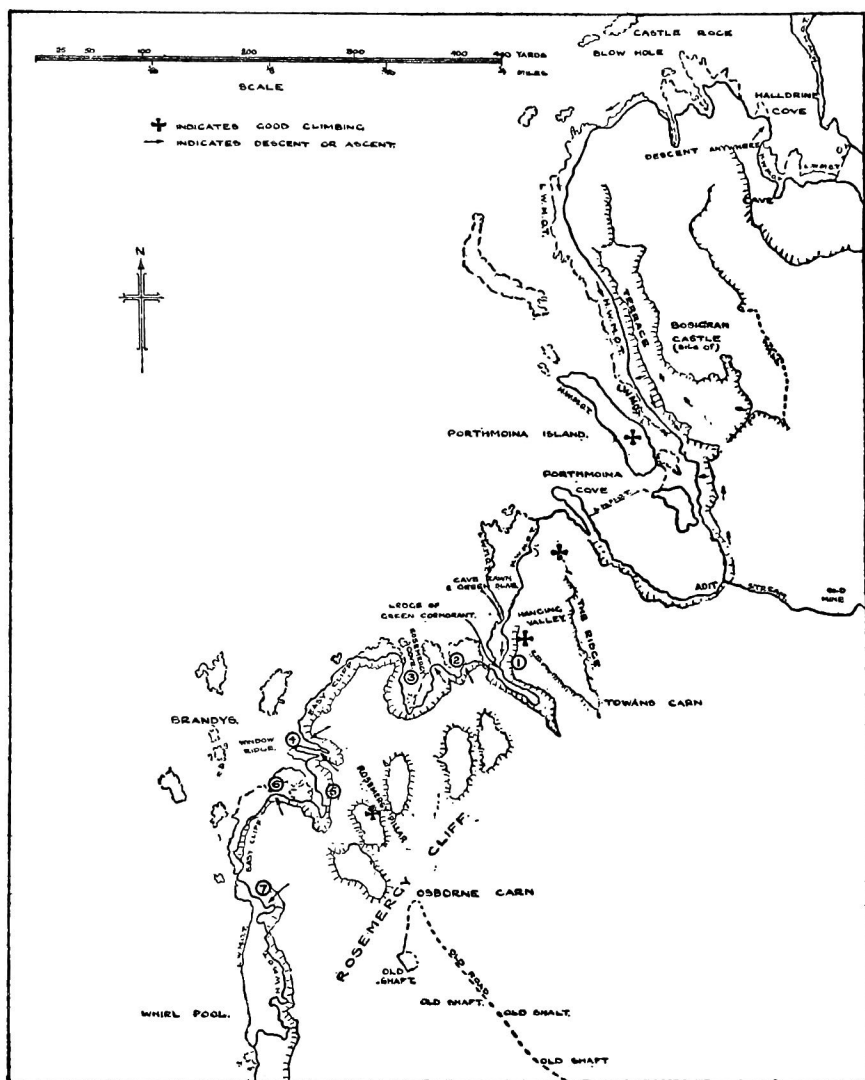


FIG. 17—BRANDYS ZAWN



FIG. 21—TRAVERSE FROM NEW COVE TO TREVOWHAN HEAD



(Fig. 18) BOSIGRAN TO BRANDYS ZAWN

which is climbed for a few feet (*difficult*) until it is possible to get on to the wall on the right. (3) The chimney can be climbed directly or narrow ledges followed on the wall. The nose (on the right sky line) can be ascended or a traverse followed near the sea.

From this point an easy sloping cliff leads to the Window Ridge Zawn (4) (cf. Fig. 16). A sloping slab with good holds is descended to a square cut recess on the left of a large granite block which is visible at the bottom of the photograph. There is no alternative as the cliff overhangs. An awkward ten feet (*severe*) have to be climbed on a slippery slab with very small wrinkles till a good hold can be reached. A shoulder could be used.

Scrambling round the end of the Window Ridge a stiff problem is found in Brandys Zawn (5) (cf. Fig. 17). A square cut platform ends in a cut off of about fifteen feet above a sloping ledge which, if it could be reached, could possibly be followed to the cave. In view of the tide it is better to try a higher route. An ascent and a broad ledge on the cliff lead to a point where a gully forms a possible descent.

This has not yet been climbed and a doubled rope is probably necessary. There are good belays.

A steep rib leads away from the cave to a broad shelf from the seaward end of which a tricky traverse (6), at sea level or a little above, brings the climber to easy ground.

A steep chimney (cf. Fig. 17) might form an alternative route, but this has not been climbed without a doubled rope.

THE ROSEMERGY PILLAR. (Cf. Fig. 22.)

A steep chimney with difficult exit. An interesting back and knee climb in a cleft. A ridge traverse. A moderately easy climb if the leader is secured by a rope at the exit of the first chimney from inside the cleft. This is easily reached from the west.

The Pillar is the largest isolated rock, not an island or on the face of the cliff, to be found in the district. A huge monolith forming a sixty-foot slab faces the sea and is joined to the main rock by a natural arch.

The climb begins on the east. Backing up a cave it is necessary to turn to get on to a platform on the left. An awkward rib of ten feet (*difficult*) leads into the cleft. Here a chimney has to be backed up to get up the rift. Easy scrambling leads to the top and a descent is made on the wall to a gap (passing a Peregrine

Falcon's nest, now disused, where a young bird was once seen by the author). A rib of rock and a shallow chimney is followed to the crest and various teeth traversed to the top.

TRAVERSE FROM BRANDYS TO TREVEAN HEAD.

Trevean Head is not marked on the one inch Ordnance Map. It lies three hundred yards from the main road just below the second O in Whirlpool. Descent at (7) Fig. 18.

An interesting but easy traverse. A low tide is necessary for the traverse east of Trevean Head. Easy slabs, ledges and boulders. Possible with more sea than the others.

TRAVERSE FROM TREVEAN HEAD TO NEW COVE. (Cf. Fig. 19.)

Only suited for a quick party as B's Bath and the inlet before New Cove must be taken within an hour or less of low tide. There is however an easy descent west of B's Bath so that this can if necessary be omitted.

A *severe* face out of a zawn. An island and narrow ledges. Small stretches of sand. Except at B's Bath not difficult.

Descend at Trevean Head over easy rocks (1). Follow a wide shelf to the first inlet on the west. Cross this on sand or wade and follow a shelf on the cliff near the sea to the west of B's Bath. When the shelf gives out the leader must find a step three feet below and climb over a boulder to reach the lower part of the zawn above the sea. A *severe* route leads up a slimy open crack for twenty feet. If the leader cannot manage this he must return to the seaward end of B's Bath, and wade or swim to the end where he can easily reach a point above his party.

The origin of the name of this zawn is somewhat obscure. It is suggested that this is one of the places associated with the passage of the giant Bolster. But why the Bath?

Bolster was in love with St. Agnes, who rejected his suit, and in his despair he is said to have opened a vein. The author cannot guarantee this story and has his own explanation of the name. Anyhow, it is a pleasant place and a pleasing fancy. From here an easy traverse over broad platforms with some deep rock pools leads to a corner (2). A shallow inlet is reached between an island and the west cliff of Great Moor Zawn.

Traverse between the island and the land and cross sand to the next point. Here an interesting series of ribs and gullies have to be crossed in the neighbourhood of the "Curtain," a sharp rib of rock that stands out prominently from the cliff. The Curtain can be ascended and a *severe* climb made to a grass ridge above (3). Some of the rock here is a little loose. A narrow

shelf is followed to the west and more ribs are crossed. A gallery not much above low tide leads round the head into New Cove. If the tide is too high to manage this dry-shod it will be better to wade than to return as it will not be easy to repass Great Moor Zawn.

TRAVERSE FROM NEW COVE TO ZAWN ALLEY ISLAND. (Cf. Fig. 19.)

An awkward traverse on a slab. A hand traverse. Easy ascent here at Trevowhan Head. If the traverse from New Cove is commenced about an hour before low tide and the rocks below the slab at (4) reached by wading, if necessary, there should be time to do the next stretch from Trevowhan Head.

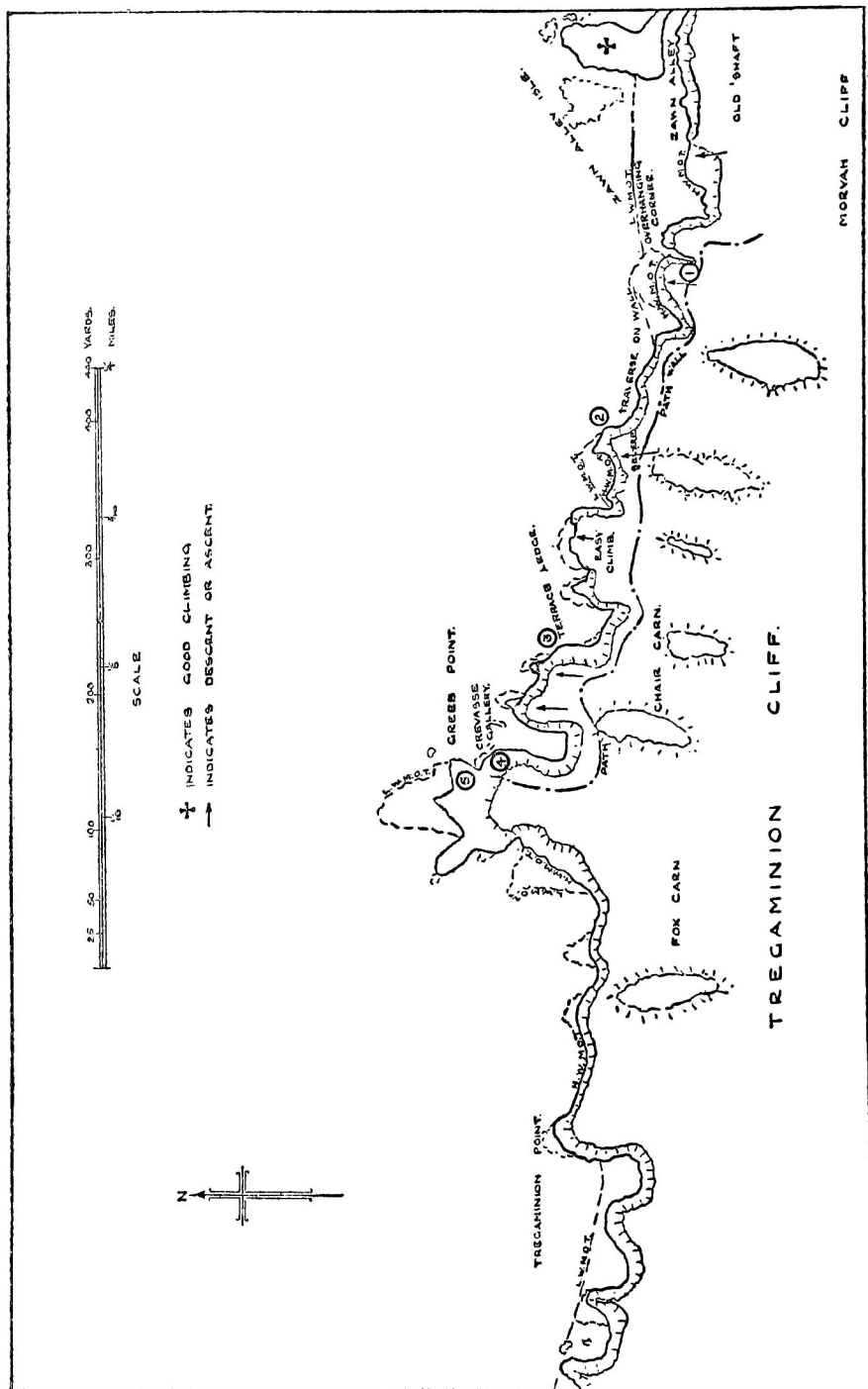
Cf. Fig. 21 (4) is at the bottom. (5) can be clearly seen on the undercut cliff in the centre. Trevowhan Head is the prominent point beyond this.

New Cove is easily reached from the road, at the junction of the Penzance road, by following the stream course. A better route in wet weather is to strike off across the fields a little to the east. At the cliff the right-hand gully of the stream is descended to a small cove shut in by very steep walls.

At low tide the wall on the right can be ascended without wading (4). A steep pull up of some fifteen feet leads to a sloping slab which is usually slippery and requires care.

A cove is then reached between the west rib of New Cove and the ridge ending in the "Hand Traverse." This can be also entered at its head on the east by a short gully. The "Hand Traverse" is about ten feet in length and slopes slightly upwards with good holds. Beyond it there is no difficulty in reaching Trevowhan Head (5).

Skirt the western side of the head and descend a slippery chimney into a deep inlet. Cross a green and slimy slab. Follow a stretch of beach, the widest found on this expedition, and climb over or round a series of projecting ribs. Three of these reach nearly to the top of the cliff, and the central rib affords a *difficult* ascent over steep grass (6). A small inlet (Wolf Zawn) with a cave and sand at low tide is reached just before Zawn Alley Cove. The party should reach this near low tide. From a point (7), as far seaward as it is possible to get, climb a shallow chimney (*severe*) with the partial help of a shoulder at the bottom. At about thirty feet up a good shelf is reached. There is a good belay. A path leads down to this headland. A broad beach with rough boulders is crossed to Zawn Alley Island. There is another path, in somewhat bad repair, near the west of Zawn Valley Cove which allows the Island to be reached at a much higher tide.



(Fig. 20) ZAWN ALLEY ISLAND TO TREGAMINION POINT

Zawn Alley Island affords a considerable variety of interesting scrambles suitable for moderate climbers. An easy sloping chimney and quartz vein are ascended on the east side. There are more difficult chimneys on this side nearer the sea. The island can be traversed by a difficult climb on the cove side.

On the summit ridge there is a narrow rib with a sloping wall on the west. This has splendid holds, and leads to a cave that can be followed throughout, and a traverse to the right round the island through clefts and over ribs brings the party to a steep wall. This is ascended by a crack forming a rough staircase (*difficult*). The continuation of the route leads over the top of the island to Zawn Alley Cove. This island is a special haunt of the Great Black-backed Gull.

TRAVERSE FROM ZAWN ALLEY ISLAND TO GRIEB POINT.

(Cf. Fig. 20.)

A safe and very interesting traverse for moderate climbers. Full of variety. At low tide, outside the series of characteristic ribs, there is a clear passage which avoids most of the obstacles. In calm weather the traverse can be made nearly up to half tide.

A short overhang (*difficult*) which can be avoided by a traverse and crack on the seaward side at low tide.

A steep chimney (*difficult*) with an alternative traverse near the sea. A ledge on the cliff. The Crevasse, a deep rift which is amusing to cross.

From Zawn Alley Island a boulder strewn shore leads to the first rib. The rocks at the sea end can be traversed up to one hour from low tide, but the overhanging corner should not be left out. There is a strenuous pull up on to a shelf (1).

A traverse on a ledge near the cliff follows. A wall facing east overhangs for about eight feet at the bottom, but if taken at the left corner a shoulder will give the leader access to climbable rock above the overhang. Nearer the cliff is an unclimbable chimney, also overhanging, at the top of which is a large poised boulder.

A route lies up the cliff at this point (*severe*) (2). It was taken by the author on a stormy December evening at a time when he was in ignorance of the easy exit on the west and could not pass point (2) owing to waves. A steep slope of grass of forty feet leads to a nearly vertical grass cliff of some ten feet. Above this is a small earth platform sloping to the sea below the twenty feet grass and earth overhang at the top of the cliff. The only belay is a small wedged boulder. The solution is to traverse to the left over a loose grass and earth wall which leads to an easier

slope. On the first and probably the only ascent of this emergency exit the second declared that the whole cliff trembled as the leader stepped round the corner. But the terrors of the transit were probably much exaggerated owing to the stress of battling with a cold south-west gale and the approach of darkness.

(3 and 4) are amusing galleries on the side of the cliff and (5) is a narrow rift called "The Crevasse."

A small foothold on the opposite wall can be reached by a long step or a descent made into the Crevasse and the other side gained by the ascent of a rudimentary chimney.

Grieb Point has some good scrambles and on the west there is a striking cave which can be partly climbed into but cannot be crossed.

TRAVERSE FROM GRIEB POINT TO PORTHERAS COVE.

(Cf. Figs. 20 and 23.)

From Grieb Point no continuous traverse is possible so far as Tregaminion Head, though a descent can be made at one place. At the head a chimney on the west of the nose leads to a narrow curving ledge which can be followed at low tide. The cliffs to the next headland before Blinker's Bed are very steep, and the traverse lies over rough boulders on the shore. Blinker's Bed can be reached by a short chimney but a deep channel prevents further progress. The head of this is undercut.

The origin of the name Blinker's Bed is unknown, but the shape of the reef in the cove is very suggestive of the tail of a dragon lying with its nose in the cave, and the term Blinker may have been applied to the animal as a term of affection by some prehistoric race.

Beyond the cave is a fine tower with good scrambling in a chimney, and a little further a steep-sided rib. From this point an easy traverse over large square blocks leads to the cove just before Carn Clough. This can be crossed by a boulder with some slight difficulty. From the headland now reached to Portheras Cove there is a delightful cliff of rough rock with chimneys and ledges suitable for a practice ground. Portheras Cove has fine stretches of sand and safe bathing and is easily reached from the main road. From here to Pendeen the cliff is low, but just below the lighthouse is one of the steep-sided and square cut zawns which are so noticeable on the north-west corner of West Penwith. It has not yet been crossed. There is good scrambling on the point among some very fine rock scenery.

The West Coast so far as Cape Cornwall is not very suitable for climbing as deep-cut zawns make traversing impossible near sea level, while higher up the debris of old mining operations make it unpleasant. There are isolated patches of excellent rock but not continuous enough to make it possible to describe climbs.

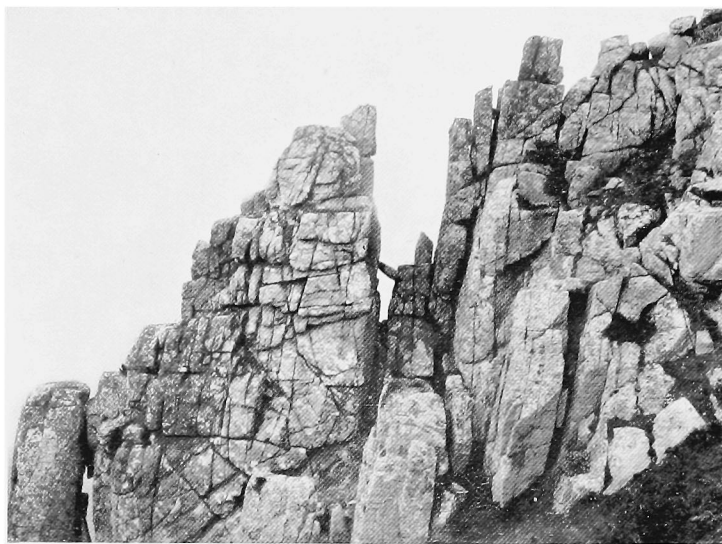


FIG. 22—ROSEMERGY PILLAR



FIG. 23—TRAVERSE FROM ZAWN ALLEY ISLAND TO GRIEB POINT



HENRY CANDLER

IN MEMORIAM

HENRY CANDLER, who died on November 23rd, 1937, at the age of 73, was born at Harleston, Norfolk, in 1864. He entered the War Office in 1882 and at the outbreak of the Boer War was sent to establish stationary depots at Durban and Pietermaritzburg for the Transvaal campaign.

He returned to England in 1903 and continued at the War Office until after the Great War. In 1918 he was presented with the 5th Class Order of the British Empire. Long hours and inadequate lighting at the War Office during the Great War caused the loss of sight of his left eye, which precipitated his retirement in 1919.

From his boyhood he was accustomed to tramp in wild country, and on visits to Wales, Ireland, Brittany, the west coast of Scotland, the Orkneys and Shetlands, he laid the foundations of a love for mountainous places, which later drew him inevitably into the company of climbers, and gave him a lasting appreciation of mountaineering.

From the age of 27 until his death it was his habit to go to the Welsh Hills for Christmas or Easter gatherings, and, save for the war years, to spend most of his annual summer holidays in the Alps.

He was an original member of the Climbers' Club, served on its Committee from 1909 to 1912, and again from 1920 to 1924 ; was its Hon. Librarian from 1911-1928, and its Vice-President from 1913 to 1920. He was elected a member of the Alpine Club in 1905.

He covered considerable ground in the Alps, climbing most of the major summits of the Oberland and Dolomites and developed an attachment to Kandersteg and the Tarentaise, to both of which he returned again and again. He climbed also in the Pennine Alps, Oetstal, and Ortler groups. In Norway also he scrambled among the peaks of the Jostedalsbrae and Horungertinde, and shortly after the Great War he spent some months in the Pyrenees.

Although his first love was for the mountains he was also an excellent field naturalist, being particularly interested in ornithology and botany, and, in his latter years, in mycology.

His knowledge, not only of the mountains and of nature, but also of music, languages and literature made him at all times a brilliant and inspiring companion. His charm and gentleness, and, above all, his deep sincerity will always remain a cherished memory to those who had the fortune to know him.

W. D.

S. B. D.

NOTES AND NEW CLIMBS

THE RECLASSIFICATION OF SKYE CLIMBS

Is it not time that some definite move was made towards a thorough readjustment of the rating of rock-climbs in Skye?

At the moment the method of classification is so hopelessly inconsistent as to be at the same time dangerous and boring.

Boring to the climber of average ability, who, shall we say, arrives in Skye for the first time and relying on the S.M.C. guide thinks to get himself fit by the ascent of a few "Difficults" and finds himself condemned to what is either an uninspiring moderate or even to an ascent for which a mere novice would disdain to use a rope.

Dangerous to the party—possibly with some novices in it—which, assuming, as it is entitled to assume, that any two climbs given the same classification will be of roughly the same standard of difficulty, actually discovers that there is as much as a class and a half of difference between them.

In the Appendix to the S.M.C. guide the question of reclassification is discussed at some length and the problem is set aside for the future on two main grounds, one that "Skye is on a different footing. There is a tradition of spaciousness to be observed when dealing with rock-climbing in Scotland, an idea that something should be left to the spirit of exploration and adventure which is characteristic of the true mountaineer," and, two, that such reclassification should be preceded by "a more considerable degree of unanimity of climbing opinion, and a greater extension of national leisure . . ." To these arguments I make the following answers:

(1) Whether there has been any extension of national leisure since the publication of the guide I do not know, but certainly there has been a nation-wide increase in the popularity of rock-climbing. More and more people are coming to the hills for their holidays, and a greater number of comparatively inexperienced enthusiasts than ever are in need of expert guidance.

(2) It is the manifest duty of the recognised clubs to give that guidance by all possible means and especially by their published handbooks.

(3) While it is still true that the Cuillin can claim to be on a separate footing by reason of the "spirit of exploration and adventure" which the magnificent ridges, bealachs, and corries readily inspire in the true mountaineer, yet when the purely technical aspect of rock-climbing comes into consideration a climber responsible for the

safety of his own life or the lives of others in his party has the right to possess an accurate and consistent classification of climbs.

(4) In days when, more than ever before, a man may very likely climb on Lliwedd at Christmas, Gimmer at Easter and Sron na Ciche in the summer, it is highly desirable that he should be able to go from one place to the other able to apply to each roughly the same method of valuation. But this he cannot do while the restricted and narrow numerical method is still applied to Scottish rock-climbs, or once he has discovered that " $3 = \text{Difficult}$ " is not necessarily a proper equation.

The following are a few examples which came to my notice in the course of a recent holiday at Glen Brittle and suggest the possibilities of both danger and boredom.

1. Sgurr Mhic Coinnich. Collie's Ledge: Easiest route is 2. West Buttress is 2, *but* Collie's Ledge (direct finish), i.e., by the top of the West Buttress is 3. Why?

2. (a) Sron na Ciche. Amphitheatre Arete is 3. (b) Sgurr Mhic Coinnich. King's Chimney is 3. But as Dr. Collie himself says of (a) "there is only one place near the top that is not easy," and in fact an average party would find at no point any need for the rope, whereas King's Chimney, though short is steep, exposed, and has some difficulty. In Wales (a) would be an Easy Moderate, (b) a Middle Difficult. (a) by itself is merely dull, but (b) climbed on the assumption that as it was rated equally with (a) it must be almost of the same standard, could be dangerous.

3. (a) Sgurr Alasdair, Collie's route is 3. (b) Sgurr Dearg, Window Buttress is 3. (a) contains one difficult move (the Slab) in wet weather and is probably easier than the Parson's Nose on Crib-y-Ddisgl, with rather more scrambling, (b) has two difficult pitches and is harder than the North Buttress of Tryfan.

4. As a general pointer what reason is there that a climber should believe that Collie's (on Alasdair), the Amphitheatre Arete on Sron na Ciche, and other " 3 " climbs which are really scrambles of the standard of the easy way up the Idwal Slabs are only half a class less difficult than the Cioch West which one might compare with the Grooved Arete on Tryfan, or a class less difficult than the Cioch Direct, the equivalent of the Rectangular Excursion variation of the Glyder Fach Direct? To take such classifications literally would lead us to such equations as "Ordinary Route, Idwal Slabs = Gashed Crag"—which is absurd.

For these sad inconsistencies there is only one remedy—reclassification; and while a job is being done, it may as well be done properly, so I suggest that the numerical method be dropped and the system more generally in use adopted. Words are ever more flexible than figures, and in days when climbing has become so complex a sport, there is need of all available flexibility in describing the natures of various climbs.

And let us have a valuation consistent with itself and one which is in tune with the systems of classification in use in the other climbing centres in Great Britain.

L. S. POWELL

CLOGWYN DU'R-ARDDU

June, 1937.

Party : R.A.H., A.D.M.C., Miss Clare Mallory, Miss Beridge Mallory.

June 19. The CHIMNEY CLIMB. This must have been considerably easier through being climbed more frequently ; there is nothing on the first three pitches as hard as the chimneying on the Curving crack. It is only on the fourth pitch (the "rickety innards") which is really hard, and we had to use a shoulder at rather an awkward stance.

June 20. LONGLAND'S CLIMB. This was in perfect condition.

June 21. We failed on the BIRTHDAY CRACK, the last pitch of which was greasy and had no holds where they were wanted, on the left wall. After this we did the GREAT SLAB, the crux of which turned out to be the traverse from the edge of the Bow-shaped slab to the right-hand corner of the Great Slab itself. Some turf had recently disappeared, and we could not see how the normal downward-trending traverse was possible. As high as one can reasonably get up the edge of the Bow-shaped slab there is quite a good high belay above a stance, and from here the leader made a slightly rising traverse, starting along a line of quartz weakness and containing one extraordinarily hard step for which he had to take the protection of a piton (later removed). This traverse, about seventy feet altogether, landed us on the two prominent grass triangles in the corner of the slab. The next pitch, up the corner, also has a very thin step out on to the left, but did not seem quite so hard as the previous one.

June 22. The CURVING CRACK, with a new final pitch, direct up the gully instead of on to the arete. This involved some gardening, but it is easier than the other pitches below, and, although rather harder than the arete, is far less attractive.

June 23. PIGOTT'S CLIMB, with a new finish :—

(i) At the foot of the Crack traverse right, under the Nose, and up to a belay. (20 feet.)

(ii) Across right for 10 feet, then straight up an extremely exposed wall to a good belay (35 feet). This pitch is very severe.

(iii) Traverse right to join Linnell's variation to pitch 4 of the Chimney and finish up the Chimney. (To the top, 80 feet.)

From here, we did the two extra pitches of the Chimney, which one generally avoids, and then finished up Kirkus' Direct Finish above the Green Gallery. This continuation of Pigott's—the Chimney and the Direct Finish—provides a very long and varied way up the East Buttress.

June 24. SUNSET CRACK. This is the most prominent crack to the left of Pigott's, facing rather towards Clogwyn station, and so not seen very strikingly from the lake, which is probably why no one had inspected it before. The start is just left of the lowest point of the Buttress.

(i) 80 feet. Scrambling.

- (ii) 40 feet. Turf ledges, etc., up to a stance on the left.
- (iii) 30 feet. Traverse right to a rather cramped stance in the crack.
- (iv) 20 feet. Up crack to small stance on the left wall; thread belay.
- (v) 20 feet. Running thread 10 feet up if wanted. Again small stance and thread belay.
- (vi) 40 feet. Continue up crack; slightly awkward exit on to terrace on left. (Way off if desired.) Inserted chockstone belay.
- (vii) 60 feet. Back into overhanging crack, here wider; strenuous at first. Easy ground after 40 feet; belay 20 feet up grass.
- (viii) 20 feet. Chimney, leading to the Green Gallery.

This climb is possibly severe, but much the easiest route on the East Buttress. It has short pitches and numerous thread belays, and is rather marred by the escape at pitch 6. However, it is steep all the way up the stances are small, it is quite like the other East Buttress climbs in general character, although so much easier.

A. D. M. C.

THE OLD MAN OF STORR

The Old Man was visited in September, 1937, by a party who intended to use mechanised methods to overcome it. A brief description may be of interest.

The pinnacle is 160 feet high and about 50 feet square at the base. Its sides face NW, SW, SE, and NE. As near as one can judge the SW face is vertical for three-quarters of its height, the SE and NE faces are protected by continuous overhangs along their bases; the SE face can be ruled out for practical purposes as it overhangs for at least half its height. The NW face is the least repelling of the four; the rock at its base is friable and soft but there are occasional seams of good hard trap. The would-be engineers were defeated because they could find no crack to put their pitons in. Short of a rock drill and cement, or possibly a rocket, there seems no hope that a route will be forced except by extremely courageous and skilful rock-climbing. As far as one can judge by their other achievements, the modern experts would find this pinnacle quite practicable.

Two breaches have been found in the lower defences of the pinnacle.

(i) On the SW face, towards its southerly end there is a small projecting buttress about twenty feet high. The top of this can be gained quite easily. From this point another ledge is seen above and to the right. The wall protecting it would "go" with combined tactics and a bold enough leader. From that ledge, however, only an inspired opportunism would carry the climber up, as the wall above is vertical, and route-finding from below is a waste of time.

(ii) The North Arete offers a better chance. After 15 feet an overhang stops progress directly upwards, but a rising traverse can be made to the left, over awkward ledges on to the North face. The pioneer was here faced by another overhang with a small ledge below. Unfortunately there was no belay here, as the overhang would possibly have yielded to combined tactics. The rest of the route could be made either up the arete, or by traversing round to the NW face.

It seems curious that this group of pinnacles (for the Old Man is only one of several) has not received more attention. Admittedly the rock is not very good, but is no worse than some that has been climbed elsewhere in these islands. Also it forms a pleasant change from gabbro. As the only virgin summits remaining to us, perhaps there is a secret conspiracy amongst our elders to hush them up and so prevent others from tasting the joys of first ascents.

J. E. Q. B.

CRAIG-YR-YSAFA

ARCH GROOVE AND WALL.

A new route on the buttress to the right of Arch Gulley. *Standard*: very severe when wet. H.E.K., A.D.M.C., J. R. Jenkins (Rucksack Club).

Arch Gully (scrambling) until it forks right at foot of buttress (Cairn). Above and to right is a shiny groove dotted with tufts.

(1) 35 feet. Climb up angle between the slab and the wall on the left. A difficult wall leads to a grass ledge. Stance and belay.

(2) 80 feet. Continue on the same line. After 20 feet, with layback holds, steep grass leads over corner to left to a severe groove. Finally, grass leads to the left to the foot of a deep crack. Belay.

(3) 50 feet. Ascend the crack. Get out of the groove to the main buttress. Traverse to the left and scramble to the foot of the wall.

(4) Ascend the corner on the right to an awkward landing on the heather above. Continue to the foot of the final main wall.

(5) 20 feet. From the broad grass ledge climb up the face of large detached block. Traverse right on to grass rake.

(6) 20 feet. Very severe mantelshelf pitch, followed by steep difficult slab.

(7) 100 feet. From ledge above climb up from the detached block on the left. Continue on narrowing slab to landing on grass tuft. The secondary slab above is steeper, and this is traversed to the grass stand at its left edge. Traverse obliquely to right. Continue on wall above on good holds. (Severe.) Climb steep heather to final pitch.

(8) 20 feet. The huge block on the left forms a pedestal for the final overhang.

H.E.K.

SKYE

SGURR A' GHREADAIDH. CORUIK FACE.

L. S. P. and A. H. Page (C.U.M.C.), bored with the S.E. ridge route, decided on reaching the Terrace to make a way straight up, and chose for this effort a prominently marked buttress between two deep-cut watercourses. On the plan on page 78 in the S.M.C. guide it is clearly shown by the two parallel lines to the right of D (Summit of Ghreadaidh), and stands out in the accompanying photograph below a light patch of scree.

Begin up a steep overhang on the right corner, and make your way up direct until forced by a steeper overhang to the left. The buttress rises in a series of steps, each of which overhangs and grows progressively more rotten and unsatisfactory. *Standard*: Difficult, chiefly because of rotten rock.

SRON NA CICHE: Coir' a' Ghrunnda face.

The White Slab route: Direct Start. The same party made a direct start to this fine climb. It goes up the deep trough immediately to the right of the ordinary start. (This trough is shaded in the plan, p. 105 of the S.M.C. guide, and is in shadow in the accompanying photograph and is immediately beneath the White Slab itself.)

The climb should be taken in two pitches: the first leads up the centre of the deep trough, using a thin crack on the left of a steep smooth slab. Cross on to this slab and up easy mantelshelves to a rock platform. 50 feet.

The second pitch goes up a vertical leaf of rock from the left edge of the platform on very small holds with an awkward and exposed swing to the top. 20 feet.

The route here joins the ordinary route at the foot of the rock-wall described in the S.M.C. guide (p. 106).

Standard: Up to the standard of the rest of the climb, which is probably overestimated as a4. Hard very difficult. Rock very sound.

L. S. P.

REVIEWS

PINK, MAUVE, BUT NO PURPLE.

THE ASCENT OF F6. By Christopher Isherwood and W. H. Auden.
(Faber & Faber. 1936. 6/-.)

THE ASCENT OF NANDA DEVI. By H. W. Tilman. (Cambridge
University Press. 1937. 12/6.)

COLLECTED POEMS OF GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG. (Methuen.
1936. 12/6.)

I read "The Ascent of Nanda Devi" and "The Ascent of F6" at the same time, the humorous account of a great climb in all its stolid simplicity, and the dramatic satire of the modern world in a sometimes fantastic setting of climbers, capitalists, bored petits-bourgeois and the monks and phantoms of a pseudo-Tibet. They formed an odd and interesting contrast between the real and the imaginary, the straightforward and the symbolic.

The first reading of "F6" gives one a pleasant impression of rapid and interesting changes, of good prose and some fine poetry, but this impression is slightly marred for the mountaineer by howlers which cannot all have the excuse of poetic license. One can allow the pleasant and ingenious conception of "The Summit of Pillar Rock above Wastdale" but some of the climbing chat and detail on the mountain itself is rather fatuous. Then the symbolism is difficult to grasp; but I suppose symbolism always is. I can understand some of it and therefore feel that if I was clever enough it would all be clear, but in any case it gives food for thought. There are two main characters—hero and villain—Michael and James Ransome, a retiring saintly mountaineer and his worldly influential brother. The latter having failed to tempt him into making a noble climb for a base (i.e., political) motive, eventually succeeds in making him accept the leadership of an expedition through the intervention of their mother, a powerful hazy personage who had been the psychological influence determining their contrasted characters. During the ascent the climbers gradually die or get killed in looking for rare plants, committing suicide or getting tired, until Michael crawls towards the summit in an orgy of symbolism and good verse. The best parts of the play are the commentaries given by Mr. and Mrs. A, the poor ordinary people for whom Michael is an ideal. When

mourning the death of the botanist they supply a fine contrast to the banal Press Lords and politicians :

"Death like this is right and splendid
That is how life should be ended !
He can not calculate nor dread
The mortifying in the bed . . .
. . . Beauty sliding from the bone
Leaves the rigid skeleton."

This is pleasant in its simplicity when it follows such platitudes as . . . "He died as he had lived : in the service of his austere mistress . . . and no man can do more." I enjoyed reading this play, even the parts I didn't understand.

Reading "The Ascent of Nanda Devi" after this, one half expects all the time to find Odell being mown down by an avalanche when looking for a fossil, or to find Tilman confronted with a medley of strange spirits on the summit. Odell does get lost once ; and they do see the spirit of the departing goddess, a snow pigeon flying from the summit. Though Houston is cheated of the final climb, he surprisingly enough does not fling himself over a precipice in a fit of disappointed rage. The account of Nanda Devi is shorn of most of that purple glamour in which non-climbers revel, but which climbing authors so naturally replace with a screen of humour. Beyond the matter-of-fact modesty of the story one can catch glimpses of the real grandeur of the achievement, which seem to attain the vague and magnified dimensions of a hill seen through mist . . . the mist of modesty and humour. There is an excellent short account of the mythology and history of the mountain. The descriptions of the various journeys in and out of the sanctuary are also excellent in the witty direct manner of their telling. It is a good and convincing climbing book. Though a debatable point, I feel that the addition of a few mauve not (purple) patches here and there might have been justified, though possibly the author is afraid of this insidious and subtle colour ; and he may be right.

We look at the mountains from an infinity of ever-changing points of view. A mountain or a climb will take on different forms and colours and give one different feelings depending entirely on one's physical whereabouts and mental condition. There are two points of view which we know best : that from the armchair and that from the mountain itself. Each seems desirable when the other is occupied but both are equally important for our mountain happiness. Climbing books are written largely for the man in the armchair and they should make him happy with armchair emotions . . . the feelings of how much he would enjoy that bivouac or that ice ridge if he were the hero he was reading about (though, of course, if he was that hero, he would probably be surprised to find himself longing for an armchair instead of an inadequate ice-step). Climbing literature should therefore be written largely in the reflective armchair mood, where misery becomes masked in a faint veil of purple and where views become more beautiful than the author had realised at the time, when he had been prejudiced by other feelings . . . fatigue, anxiety, and hunger. It is difficult to be purple in print without turning the stomachs

of the public, and especially the sensitive stomachs of mountaineers; but to be subtly mauve is the difficult key to writing good mountain literature.

Winthrop Young to my mind gets nearest to the correct use of "mauve," though I know people who cannot stand even his fairly mild shade; they like nothing but black and white. In "On High Hills" he has found for most of us the perfect shade . . . a mauve which rarely irritates but can touch, stimulate, and move us with the delicate reflective pleasures of mountaineering.

In his "Collected Poems" there is great variety. There are a number of songs for children and light gay ballads which are nothing very special. Better than these are the country poems which bring us the feeling of chalk downs or the wild sea coasts and the feeling of wind, rain, and sky. But best of all are a number of mountain lyrics, some of which I knew before and some which came as a surprise. These awaken and express those vague emotions which sometimes stir us when we are alone in the hills and which are always there ready to be stirred when we are living the dull un-mountain life and which make us return always . . .

"Yet I will come to thee,
and be thy silence, and thy sound that fills
the great waters and grey wastes and sunless hills."

R. A. H.

EVEREST: THE UNFINISHED ADVENTURE. By Hugh Ruttledge.
(Hodder & Stoughton. 1937. 25/-.)

This volume has the appearance of a scientific text-book, which is largely justified by the fact that 100 out of the 288 pages are occupied by a learned analysis of the various technical aspects of the expedition, written by the experts concerned. Mr. Ruttledge's task was a difficult one: he had previously written a similar book about a more successful expedition. Owing simply to the irregular behaviour of the monsoon in 1936 the party that year had to turn back at the point where readers are now accustomed for the chief excitements to begin, not that this expedition was without excitements below the North Col. In spite of these handicaps Mr. Ruttledge has written a lively and amusing account of all the events between Calcutta and the North Col. In fact, the lightness of his touch probably makes the reader underestimate the labour of the day to day organisation of the march, and the effort involved in any activity at more than 20,000 feet. By contrast to this modesty there is one passage which is all the more striking, and which reflects something of the ideas which members of these expeditions must have in the backs of their minds all the time: "My choice will always be the man who has nursed his strength and avoided unnecessary strain. On the final pyramid of Everest he will have to give everything, once and for all, and to be given it must exist."

The scientific chapters are most clearly written. Most of the major problems of weather, oxygen, acclimatisation, and deterioration still remain, but much additional evidence has been collected towards

their ultimate solution. All these chapters should be intelligible to the lay reader, except perhaps that on wireless where "a modulator pentode is used as a choke-coupled modulator in a grid circuit." Nevertheless, we can enjoy with Smijth-Windham the excitement of "getting" Darjeeling from the wrong side of the North Peak on a set which was only guaranteed to transmit over five miles.

For many, however, the greatest pleasure in this book will be found after the last page of text. Cartophils will buy it solely for the joy of looking at the beautiful reproduction of Spender's map of the North Face of Everest. To them the picture is clearer than any photograph, and they will get a special thrill from recognising the various rocky features where they have accompanied Norton, Smythe, and others in imaginary climbs. Finally, there is a superb portfolio of 63 photographs, each with a little text. It is impossible to pick and choose between them. Taken together they retell more vividly the story of the whole expedition and particularly give reality to the long Tibetan journey which is more difficult for us to share with the author than the days on the mountain itself. A. D. M.

THE ASCENT OF MOUNT STALIN. By Michael Romm, translated by Alec Brown. (Laurence & Wishart. 1936. 7/6.)

We had always thought that since the days of de Saussure the advancement of science had become obsolete as an excuse for mountaineering, but this book tells us that this is not so. Here we have the 49th unit of the T.K.E. (Tadjikistan Complex Expedition), which itself is a part of the T.P.E. (Tadjikistan Pamirs Expedition), climbing Mount Stalin, not because they like mountaineering, but just in order to put up "The Instrument" on the summit. "The Instrument" hovers over the whole book like a vast and nebulous totalitarian symbol; it is never made clear what it is for or who is going to climb the mountain again to note its results. It appears though, that the mysterious metal structure was in fact placed on the summit even though the climber moved over the last lap on all fours. Actually we suspect it of being a hammer and sickle.

The expedition was run in semi-military style on an industrial scale. Up to the last minute all sorts of "experts" keep joining the party, and when a young man in a Montague Burton suit strolls into the Base Camp and "announces that he is also going to climb Mount Stalin" (as a cine-operator) nobody is in the least surprised; he does not reach the top—indeed he develops an acute dislike of all snow and ice—but does, against his better judgment, get a very fine picture of an avalanche. Incidentally the photographs are numerous, but rather hazily reproduced.

All the members of the expedition were shock-workers—except Harlampiev; he lay in the sun toasting his feet all day, and is pretty severely dealt with in the book.

Nevertheless the climbing was difficult, and the high camps involved some heavy carrying by both porters and climbers; Mount Stalin is over 23,000 feet and the highest peak in the U.S.S.R., and

although weather conditions were good almost up to the summit two climbers were marooned in a storm at over 21,000 feet without food for some days. The book is well translated, though the original appears to have been written in a rather dramatic and journalistic style; we are left with an intense admiration for the Siberian, Abolakov, who reached the summit, much amusing and interesting reading, and a gnawing curiosity to hear some more about "The Instrument."

H. E. K.

HILL-WRITINGS OF J. H. DOUGHTY. Collected by H. M. Kelly. (The Rucksack Club, Manchester. 1937. 4/-.)

Anyone who has been fortunate enough to attend one of the Rucksack Club Dinners of recent years will not easily forget that moment when the President announced: "I call on Mr. Doughty to respond." He then settled down in his chair in pleasant anticipation of being delightfully entertained for the next twenty minutes—and he was rarely, if ever, disappointed.

In this book Mr. Kelly has succeeded in almost bringing back those moments. Apart from a short personal memoir in the first chapter, the Editor leaves Mr. Doughty to speak for himself—and how well he does it.

From the many contributions which J. H. D. made to mountaineering literature it must have been very difficult to decide which to exclude. The choice is excellent. Whether you journey with him to the Dolomites, go "on trek" with him to Switzerland, or wander on our home mountains, you enjoy his unique companionship. Those who were fortunate enough to have been in his party will relive their adventures while the others will realise how much they missed by not knowing him.

With his experience as a mountaineer and a writer, it is to be expected that he would have some light to throw on some of the subjects interminably discussed whenever climbers forgather. In "Nomenclature" he studies the problem of the naming of new climbs. One must agree that some have been christened without much inspiration, but his suggestion to leave the choice to the Committees of the Fell and Rock and Climbers' Clubs is hardly likely to appeal. Surely those who make the first ascents should have the honour of naming them, but they might be exhorted to use a little more ingenuity. He would seem to be right in favouring the descriptive method even if it has produced "Soap Gut" from "Squint Start."

It was a happy thought to reprint the "Short History of Lakeland Climbing," in which the Editor collaborated. This is of particular interest to the young climber.

So many books on the subject of mountaineering are of inordinate length. This is essentially a volume to be kept in one's bookcase and to be picked up at odd moments of leisure.

The Rucksack Club could have produced no more worthy memorial of a man whose loss is great.

E. S. C.

HIMALAYAN CAMPAIGN. By Paul Bauer; translated by Sumner Austin. (Basil Blackwell. 1937. 8/6.)

This book is the story of the attempts in 1929 and 1931 of parties from the Akademischer Alpenverein of Munich to climb Kangchenjunga. It is an important addition to the literature of the Himalayas, and is of interest on two distinct grounds.

In the first place the mountaineering is of the very highest possible standard. The north-east ridge of Kangchenjunga is a desperate ice problem which few would attempt in the Alps: Herr Bauer's parties spent weeks struggling on it at a height of over 20,000 feet, living in ice-caves or minute camps perched on the edge of colossal precipices. The author has had to compress the story so that the duration of this part of the "campaign" tends to be obscured, but sentences such as "We hacked and dug for two more days, till at last we had conquered the three towers on the horizontal ridge," give the reader some clue. But that is not all: in 1929, after a four days' storm, the party withdrew down that appalling ridge in extremely bad conditions with complete success. The weather entirely dislocated the carefully organised relay system between camps, splitting the expedition into a number of isolated units, yet all descended safely, in spite of the struggle in previous weeks. That seems to be the greatest mountaineering attainment.

The second feature of particular interest is the spirit in which the expedition was conducted and which inspired its members, especially when this book is compared with accounts of British Himalayan expeditions. This is not meant to imply that a similar spirit is not present in British expeditions, but it is not our way to express it so forcibly in print. Personally and individually the German climbers show complete modesty, but as a party and as representatives of a nation a great pride is made evident. This is perhaps reflected in an exaggerated form in the statement, twice made, that "Mt. Everest became a national goal for the whole British Empire, and its conquest the heart's desire of every Briton." The reader cannot help being impressed by the organisation and thoroughness produced by this fervency, but he may feel more admiration than envy. The atmosphere of patriotism and team-spirit pervades the whole book, and differentiates it from most mountaineering stories, leaving the impression that the expeditions were undertaken more in order to give expression to those ideas, than in order to climb purely for mountaineering's sake.

There are many startling photographs showing details of the terrific ice gendarmes, and the amazing route which was carved out from them. The writing is clear, though in places the translator's difficulties are evident.

A. D. M.

CAMP SIX. By F. S. Smythe. (Hodder & Stoughton. 1937. 18/-.)

Appearing some four years after the events described, the book is intended to provide a more personal account of the 1933 Mount

Everest Expedition than Mr. Ruttledge could well provide in the official expedition book.

Its main interest naturally lies in the hundred pages that describe the conditions found above the North Col. These pages give a restrained yet vivid account of the difficulties involved. We can feel for ourselves the ups and downs of hope occasioned by the vagaries of the weather: and Mr. Smythe is at his best in describing the hard work of step-cutting up the North Col or the worries of route-finding in wind and storm over the treacherous slabs of the north face of the mountain. He is always generous in his appreciation of the work of his companions, and it is clear that his own enthusiasm must often have acted as a spur, when morale was low and prospects of success fading.

Some blemishes do, however, detract from the book. The use of the pathetic fallacy is far too frequent for at least one reader.

"We were beaten and Everest had no further use for us. Standing humbly on the summit of a peak nearly 23,000 feet high we could only admire the beauty and splendour of our adversary. Everest had been hostile towards us, and we had felt that there was something almost personal behind this hostility, in the bitter cold and sudden smiting storms. The thin air through which we had toiled so painfully had been imbued with some intangible quality opposing our progression, thwarting us with an insidious lethargy, blunting the fine edge of our first enthusiasm. We had felt we were unwanted; perhaps because we were unworthy."

Such writing and much of the detail of the journey through Tibet could well have been omitted. Altitude, too, has an unfortunate effect in that under its influence trivialities often assume undue proportions. Mr. Smythe quite rightly feels that there are many who would welcome an account of what it was *really* like. Such a demand cannot, however, be fully satisfied: the questioner usually harbours some romantic delusions about men who undergo such hardships. But when their humdrum reactions are set down in cold print, he feels that he is being cheated of what he would like to believe.

The book has a good selection of photographs. Particularly impressive is one showing the silhouettes of a climber and two porters ascending the steep snow-slopes of the North Col. Incidentally the very fine picture of Norton's traverse is tilted too much, as a comparison with the wider panorama in the 1933 book will show.

It is a pity that only the barest references to the expeditions of 1935 and 1936 are allowed, as a summary of the lessons to be learned from all the expeditions would be of the greatest interest, now that the 1938 expedition is well under way.

E. G. H. K.

GREAT GABLE, BORROWDALE, BUTTERMERE. (No. 3 of The Climbing Guides to the English Lake District.) By C. J. Astley-Cooper, E. Wood-Johnson, and L. H. Pollitt. (1937. 2/6.)

The F. and R.C.C. Guides are written so much to a definite plan that it is hard to criticise any one volume without reviewing the

whole system. And that system is to describe in minute detail every inch of rock that has ever been trodden by the foot of man. Such a method cannot fail to rob the majority of climbers of the thrill of exploration. Without the guide-book each climb could be an adventure of discovery not once but several times; successive parties could each be pioneers in their own eyes. But the guide-book spoils all that—a regrettable but inevitable result of evolution.

In the early days of climbing all details of routes were passed from mouth to mouth; vague instructions led to unknown routes and unexpected adventures. But a demand arose for greater detail. Books were written under pressure by climbers who had no belief in their necessity, but who salved their consciences by making their writings as vague as possible. These guides begat more climbers. More climbers begat more detailed guides. And so the vicious circle has produced the present-day text-books of scientific formulæ. A modern climbing-guide then must enable the cragsman, be he novice or expert, to find and follow any route within his powers, must give him an idea of its difficulty, and must estimate the merit, both æsthetic and technical, of every course. The volume under discussion, therefore, may be reviewed in the light of these conditions.

At the outset it must be said that the book is a model of its kind. The section on Great Gable is the high-light of the work on account of the superior interest of the terrain which it covers; there is little to choose, however, between the literary and technical merit of the three sections. There are, however, one or two points of criticism and remark.

From the General Note at the beginning one gathers that all "Severes" and "Very Severes" are classified and described as for rubbers. Is this altogether a good thing? Many are possible and some are definitely preferable in nails. Surely it would be better just to mention those climbs which need commonly to be done in rubbers and let the climber choose his own footwear for the rest, classifying them as for boots. It would be a pity if the art of using nails on small footholds were to die out in this country, though the warning anent the wearing away of holds is a point to be borne in mind.

On page 84 the Prefatory Note to the Borrowdale section mentions the omission of some climbs on account of their dangerous nature. This seems to be at variance with the general policy; for the sake of completeness in such a detailed work one feels that all climbs should be described, due warning being given where necessary. On consideration it seems superfluous to specify "stance and belay" at the top of each pitch. These conveniences might be assumed as a general rule and mentioned only when difficult to find or possessed of some peculiar features.

One regrets that no history is given of the Borrowdale section. It is pleasant, however, for one who has climbed the Innominate Crack and failed on Kern Knotts Crack to learn that the former is still classed as "Very Severe," whilst the latter is merely "Severe."

The illustrations by W. Heaton Cooper are, as usual, all that could be desired, and form an indispensable adjunct to the text.

The foregoing criticisms are all that could be formulated after an eager and microscopic search for flaws and weaknesses. Moreover they are all debatable points, depending on the individual point of view. The general impression is that this book is well up to the standard of its predecessors and does credit to the three authors.

But alas for the mystery that was once of the mountains!

C. F. K.

JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB. Vol. XI. Edited by G. R. Speaker. (Nos. 30-31. 1937. 5/-)

The Fell and Rock have taken the opportunity on their coming-of-age to produce a double number of their Journal, which is a notable contribution to British climbing literature. Apart from the twenty-one years, it also celebrates the jubilee of the acknowledged start of British rock-climbing which was, of course, W. P. Haskett-Smith's ascent of the Napes Needle in 1886; the first conqueror's jubilee ascent was a most pleasing and impressive ceremony. This, then, is no ordinary journal; in the first place, there is nothing in its odd two hundred pages of text that does not bear in some way or another on the Lake District. Secondly, there are no fewer than 60 plates.

The twenty-four articles cover the Lakes from almost every conceivable angle. The centrepiece is the short history of Lakeland climbing by J. H. Doughty and H. M. Kelly, surely a masterpiece in miniature; this is followed by the general articles. Of particular interest are W. T. McIntyre on Roman Lakeland, and Mrs. Chorley on Early Fell-walkers, but the Flora, Birdlife, Geology, and other aspects are also dealt with. W. P. Haskett-Smith's reminiscences leads off the less objective articles and several others follow; for the rock-climber the first descent of Central Buttress will prove most interesting, but Graham Sutton is amusing and Ashley Abraham contributes an excellent few pages which put a fundamental question which all mountaineers should read and devise their personal solutions.

The Editor, in his notes, evidently expects criticism of the illustrations he has reproduced on the grounds that there are too many, but we would criticise not the number but the selection; out of sixty there are only ten which deal with rock-climbing, and of these five are taken on the comparatively small outcrop of Kern Knotts. Surely in such a number this is disproportionate, for, although there is a good one of the Flake Crack, neither Pillar, Gimmer, or Dow Crag is represented. This disproportion continues to a certain extent in the remainder, Wasdale and its immediate surroundings having over half; as photographs many of them are superb, and they are splendidly reproduced.

It will be seen from these brief notes what a wealth of interest there is between the two covers; certainly every climber should procure a copy, as it has far more lasting interest than most journal numbers. Incidentally it can now be bought for 3/-, in paper covers, and 5/- cloth bound. We congratulate the Fell and Rock, and its Editor in particular.

E. V.

WAYFARERS' JOURNAL. No. 5. 1937. (Liverpool.)

This journal maintains a high standard with articles on mountaineering and travel throughout the world. It opens with an exceptionally good account by Marco Pallis of a visit to Likhir monastery on the borders of Tibet. He portrays vividly the Tibetan mentality and philosophy and we are rapidly absorbed in that elusive, spacious atmosphere of eternity which lingers in Tibet as nowhere else in the world. None but the most insensitive can feel anything but shame at the arrogant claims of Western "civilisation."

If one reads the journal at a sitting the next item is rather like comic relief, for we are treated to the niceties of Lakeland contours and ponder deeply on whether the dome-shaped excrescence North-east of the head of Piers Ghyll shall be considered a peak.

Following this short rest we fight our way with the trusty (?) Umtamathaca with his pangas through the podo to Campi ya Simba, and thence with H. J. Irens and E. C. Sladen to the noble summit of Mount Kenya. Having dashed round the world on a philatelic traverse with R. G. Plint we arrive just in time for the attempt on Simvu, described by R. C. Nicholson, on the Marco Pallis expedition, only to be foiled by that exasperating crevasse so tantalisingly near the summit. We are just about to return home when we are button-holed by F. B. Waldron and taken on a two-day trip to view Mount Everest. Breathlessly we follow him across the world to Aconcagua—"Are we nearly there?" Alice managed to pant at last. "Nearly there," repeated the Red Queen, "why, we passed it ten minutes ago! Faster!" Positively gasping for breath we race down Aconcagua and stumble across the Pacific to Mount Cook, and are frankly relieved that the weather is too bad to make the ascent.

After this trip with Waldron it is scarcely surprising that we are suffering from the effects of high altitudes, and following a learned dissertation on the subject by W. Cunningham Milroy we are packed off to the Lofoten Islands to convalesce. There, H. P. Spilsbury compiles a guide of Teutonic thoroughness. This article, which is illustrated with excellent photographs and several maps, will be found useful to any mountaineers intending to visit these islands. The guide resolves itself into two parts, the first forming an introduction with notes on how to travel, and what to expect, the second describing the peaks individually, with a list of first ascents.

In the first part, the introduction, the notes on character and location of the climbing, and other points of interest give a good and accurate account of the general features of the islands. The notes on travel, kit, and provisions, on the other hand lead me to believe a Swiss story which I had hitherto regarded as fable, that the English sporting pioneers in Switzerland used to bring their own sheep with them. However, it may be comforting for such people to know that Dutch Edam and Roquefort are obtainable at Bodö, while for those who wish to travel first class up the coast and to hire a sumptuous cruiser with all modern conveniences, much useful information is given. It will also be relieving to know that while the natives are apt to suffer from

that tiresome habit, so often found in foreigners, of not speaking English, they are "quite intelligent."

In the second part of the guide, the author has co-ordinated all the available information from the scattered literature on the subject (though he has obtained some of it from an unacknowledged source), and has added to it in the case of the peaks he has climbed. In general, the descriptions are accurate and useful; the author has performed a great service in summarising all the data. Certain minor details are open to criticism, e.g., it is quite unnecessary to "don rubbers" for the hand traverse on Stedind, some of the times given for ascents are apt to be a little misleading, and some peaks receive a disproportionate amount of attention; but these are only trifles which will doubtless be corrected in the course of time.

F. A. P.

OXFORD MOUNTAINEERING, 1937. Edited by R. A. Hodgkin and A. D. M. Cox. (Oliver & Son. Oxford. 2/6.)

University mountaineering clubs are subject, much more than other clubs, to ups and downs for, in an organisation in which virtually the whole membership changes in the course of every four years, it is remarkable how one or two brilliant climbers or personalities can make all the difference between a dead and a lively club. This Oxford Journal gives ample proof that the Oxford club is not stagnating. The Alps predominate, being the subject of eight out of the ten articles; of these T. A. H. Peacocke's two Mont Blanc traverses—the Brenva route in perfect conditions and the Drus—is the best, both as an expedition and as a straightforward piece of description, but B. S. Sullivan is also good. It is noteworthy that all these Alpine climbs, with one exception, were done guideless, though D. C. Bryson contributes a delightful sketch of an old guide.

Of the two remaining articles A. D. M. Cox is amusing and modest about Clogwyn d'ur Arddu, but the other suffers from what can only be called "undergraduate humour." There are four good illustrations, not too well reproduced.

RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL. Vol. viii., No. 3. Edited by Robin Grey. (Manchester. 1937. 4/-.)

Perhaps the most notable feature of this number is the section on new ascents; this includes several very severe variations by that fine and lamented climber R. V. M. Barry. There is also an account of the Munich climb on Tryfan done by the party of young Germans who came over here in July 1936, and climbed most of the noteworthy routes in Wales and the Lake District. Whilst congratulating them on the way in which they took to strange rock it is pleasant to learn that two English climbers subsequently led the Munich climb without the piton considered essential on the first ascent, and that the Germans were suitably impressed by the "Longlandweg" on Clogwyn d'ur-Arddu. There is a correlating article by H. Taylor on the return visit to Bavaria by several Rucksack club members, which gives an impressive picture of some "Standard 7" ascents.

There is of course something on one of those legendary walks one associated with this club—in this case most amusingly done by Frank Kiernan. Wilson Hey has a splendidly written article, "A Dream Climb," and there is too an account of an incident in Skye, strangely reminiscent of C. E. Montague's short story called "In Hanging Garden Gully." An interesting and successful innovation is the frontispiece, a colour-photo reproduction by the Editor.

E. V.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. (Vol. XXI, Nos. 123-4. 1937. 2/6 each.)

"The Hon. Treasurer noted a certain amount of over-expenditure which he attributed to the high cost of the Journal. He also alluded to heavy expenditure on Guide Books." This is an infallible tonic to any club editor, and is the invariable prelude to a better and even more expensive journal, followed by strings of guide books. The S.M.C. is no exception; these two journals make good reading, and a new guide to the Southern Highlands is promised. One might have wished that the editor would go further and produce the journal with a less fragile cover and binding.

The editor makes some important observations on "Initiative in Climbing" wherein he discusses rules of mountaineering in their proper perspective. He also refers to "another insidious threat to the true spirit of Scottish climbing in the growing mass of minute detail in the description of new climbing routes." While it is important to know what has and can be done, it seems that a new and parasitical type of mountaineer is developing, who is so little imbued with initiative, that a slight inaccuracy in classification will send him rocketing into print—or to the bottom of the cliff—while if an ambiguity of route occurs, his only hope is to send a swift runner to the nearest telephone to seek guidance from the editor.

The November journal contains an awe-inspiring account of a December night on the Crowberry Ridge. The participants overcame great difficulties under appalling conditions, though, as they would doubtless admit, their successful retreat was not without an element of chance. I can imagine a wealth of caustic comment beginning to seethe in the editorial breast of one of our more august journals, on reading this article.

E. W. Hodge describes a "sea-mountaineering" expedition to the Hebrides of the kind one often conceives but rarely puts into practice. "A Dog's Day" was amusing—what a pity one can't use place names in a "Spelling Bee," Camasfionnairidh would surely be a winner.

E. A. M. Wedderburn's useful article in the series comparing Scottish and Alpine climbing leads one to suppose that members are far more active abroad than they are allowed to admit in the journal.

F. A. P.

MOUNTAINEERING JOURNAL. Vol. v., No. 2. Edited by Carl K. Brunning and E. A. M. Wedderburn. Vol. v., Nos. 3-4, and vol. vi., No. 1. By J. M. Edwards. (Willmer Bros. Chester. 1/3 each.)

For five years the M.J. has pursued a rather erratic course, first as an ambitious "Central Journal," attempting to combine the best of the Alpine Journal and the various club annuals, but falling away from this laudable ambition and becoming an ordinary journal without any club to give direction and interest. Now, on Dr. J. M. Edwards assuming the Editorship, it has swung violently in another direction and taken up a policy with which some will disagree, but which does have the merit of some fixed purpose and direction.

So here we have virtually no original matter but the pick of the new ascents and big expeditions throughout the world, culled from kindred journals and newspaper accounts; in a word, getting back to the Journal's original intention by cutting out the general articles and concentrating on impersonal reports. Whether this will be successful remains to be seen, but such as it is it is well done with some good and informative illustrations.

ALPINE JOURNAL. Vol. xlix (Nos. 254-5). Edited by E. L. Strutt. (London. 1937. 10/6 each.)

It is no more possible to "review" the Alpine Journal than the Encyclopædia Britannica or Who's Who; all that can be done is to give an indication of any article of outstanding interest, for although some have plenty of scientific merit, the more obscure surveying parties in Central Asia and the finer points in the Paccard-Balmat controversy are of little interest to the ordinary climber and certainly not enough to induce him to lay down the stiff price demanded. In the May number there is Tilman's account of the ascent of Nanda Devi, which has since appeared in book form, and an interesting few pages on the conquest of Mount Waddington by an American party. The next number is a good one, especially notable being F. S. Chapman's story of his fine ascent of Chomulhari and an account of the second Nanga Parbat disaster; but pride of place rightly goes to R. L. G. Irving on "Relativity in Mountaineering," and anyone who has read his "Romance of Mountaineering" will not need to be told to expect balanced and witty writing.

E. V.

CHEAP EDITIONS

WANDERINGS IN THE HIGH ALPS. By Sir Alfred Wills. (Basil Blackwell. Oxford. 1937. 5/-.)

First published in 1856, this is the third in Mr. Blackwell's excellent Mountaineering Library, which consists of reprints of mountaineering classic with modern illustrations, selected by the Editor, H. E. G. Tyndale. Wills' ascent of the Wetterhorn in 1855 is often erroneously referred to as the first ascent which is incorrect (it first fell in 1844),

but Wills' account in the book did have a most far-reaching effect and reading it, it is not difficult to see why. He was the first of that band of leisured Englishmen who began the systematic conquest of the great peaks of the Valais, the Oberland, and Mont Blanc.

THE ITALIAN ALPS. By Douglas W. Freshfield.

Another volume in the same series. Freshfield, an indefatigable climber for fifty years (he was elected to the Alpine Club in 1864, and died only in 1934). He came into the field a decade later than Wills, when the majority of the peaks of the High Alps had fallen and the second generation were looking for new fields. Freshfield was a cultured and delightful writer and his descriptions of the then almost unvisited Italian valleys and passes are as fresh to-day as they were in 1875.

SCRAMBLES IN THE ALPS, 1861-69. By Edward Whymper. (John Murray. 1936. 10/6.)

This is a very fine re-issue (cheap in relative price only) of the most popular mountain classic; the original illustrations are reproduced.

THE SPIRIT OF THE HILLS. By F. S. Smythe. (Hodder and Stoughton. 1937. 2/-.)

CLIMBS ON MONT BLANC. By Jacques and Tom de Lépiney. (Edward Arnold. 1938. 3/6.)

This work, translated by Sidney Spencer, late secretary of the Alpine Club, describes the two brothers' splendid post-war series of new ascents, chiefly in the Mont Blanc group, both on the Italian face and amongst the Chamonix aiguilles. The chapters on the Col de la Brenva and on l'Aiguille du Plan are particularly good.

OTHER NEW BOOKS

BRITAIN AND THE BEAST. Edited by Clough Williams-Ellis. (J. M. Dent. 1937. 10/6.)

This is a collection of essays on different aspects of the important problem of preserving the fast-disappearing British countryside. The reader is left to draw his own conclusions from the material presented; the climber's reactions will not be difficult to guess, and as a scheme for making a National Park in North Wales is discussed it is of particular interest and importance to members of the Climbers' Club. It is magnificently produced and illustrated.

THE NEWS LETTER of the Friends of the Lake District has some bearing on the same subject; it is encouraging to read of the energy and vigilance which are being shown to prevent the ruin of this peculiar preserve of the walker and climber.

SNOW ON THE EQUATOR. By H. W. Tilman. (G. Bell. 1937. 12/6.)

THE MOUNTAIN SCENE. By F. S. Smythe. (A. & C. Black. 1937. 12/6.)

THE HILL LANDS OF BRITAIN. By R. G. Stapledon. (Faber. 1937. 6/-.)

We might also mention *X plus Y* (J. M. Dent, 6/-), by our member E. F. Bozman, a novel which combines music and mountains and which is quite free of the dramatics of most novels which introduce the latter theme. E. V.

We also acknowledge with gratitude:

AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL. (1937. \$1.50.)

APPALACHIA. Nos. 7 and 12. (June, December, 1937. .75 c. each.)

BULLETIN OF THE MIDLAND ASSOCIATION OF MOUNTAINEERS. No. 4. (June, 1937.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Annual Dinner which followed the General Meeting at the Connaught Rooms on February 12th was a notable occasion for the Club, as it celebrated the fortieth birthday of the Club. The most pleasant feature of the evening came after the speeches when the President presented the retiring treasurer with a silver salver as a memento of his great and whole-hearted services to the Club for many years ; Mr. Marler got a great reception when he rose to reply. Earlier C. T. Lehmann had proposed the health of the Club and President, to which Mr. Donkin replied, to be followed by Viscount Tiverton, who toasted the guests in a very witty speech ; Sir Claud Schuster and Sir Murdoch MacDonald replied.

* * *

Since the last issue of the journal two more guides have appeared which, it is generally agreed, worthily keep up the high standard which Dr. Edwards set in the first volume. *Tryfan*, which was needed very badly, was written by Dr. Edwards and C. W. F. Noyce, and published in the spring of last year, whilst C. F. Kirkus' *Glyder Fach* appeared in the autumn. Meanwhile, work is well advanced on *Llwydd*, although it has been delayed by the most unfortunate accident to Mr. Noyce whilst climbing in the Lakes last autumn ; it should, however, be ready this year. The last two of the series as at present projected will deal with *Snowdon* (Clogwyn du'r-Arddu, Dinas Mot, Clogwyn-y-Ddisgl, etc.) and all *Outlying Climbs* respectively ; the latter will include Craig-yr-Ysfa, Craig Cwm-Silin and the Black Ladders. The preparation of these guides entails a great deal of work, and the Club is very grateful to the authors and their helpers who are giving up so much of their leisure time to the benefit of their fellow members and the public ; the reception given to the first three volumes shows how much they are appreciated.

* * *

A member has written to say that he and a friend recently spent two hours cleaning up the summit of Tryfan and the neighbourhood of the East face climbs ; they brought down two sacks of litter containing bottles, tins, orange peel, and innumerable pieces of paper and string.

This is rather a new development; hitherto most Welsh hill-tops have been remarkably clean, with the exception of the two main tourist streams on Snowdon and Cader Idris, which have always been the most generally popular ascents; the climber has in the past prided himself on not leaving litter, and in the main he has, I think, been justified. This new development is symptomatic; it is one of the results of the increase in walking generally which is bringing greater numbers to Tryfan each year but, if evidence is true, the parallel increase in climbing is also partly responsible. In any party there is always one member with a rucksack, which can accommodate the paper and orange peel; to bury the remains is satisfactory if done efficiently, but the pernicious habit of stuffing paper into the crevices of summit cairns is useless, whilst if done on some summits only means that—if an empty crack can be located—another piece of orange peel will be pushed out on the far side.

* * *

Our member, J. S. Mills, wishes to thank all the members of this Club and others who assisted at the time of his accident on Scafell last August. It is pleasant to add that Mr. Mills has made a remarkable recovery from a serious accident.

* * *

The committee acknowledges with gratitude a set of the Club's journals from No. 1 to that of 1937 from Mr. L. K. Pagden, an original member. He has most generously presented these to the Club, and they form a most welcome addition to the Library.

* * *

An article in the press recently drew attention once again to the difficulty of access to so much of the hill lands of Great Britain—the Highlands and the Peak in particular; I hope in the next Journal to publish an article on the legal aspects of this question.

* * *

This number concludes Volume V. of the new series and Volume XVIII. in all; it is made up of the 1934, 1937, and current issues. For the start of the new volume next year I hope to make one or two improvements in layout, but I want particularly to publish not later than January; the fact that five of the chief club journals are printing in March and April means that an advertiser's block may be wanted by five harassed editors simultaneously. So I hope members will send their contributions to the 1939 number by Christmas at the latest.

E. V.

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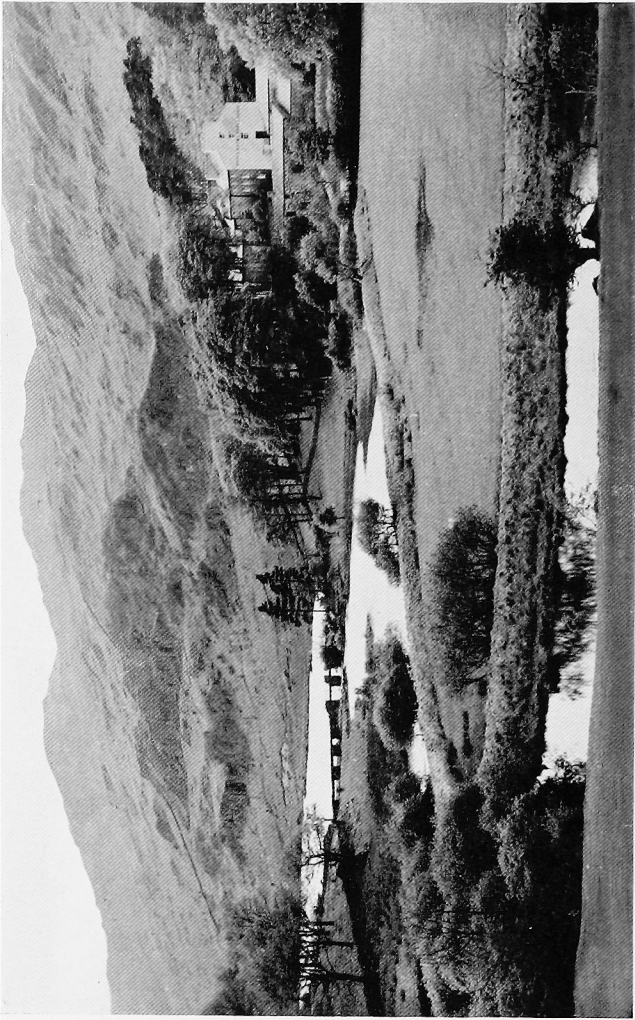
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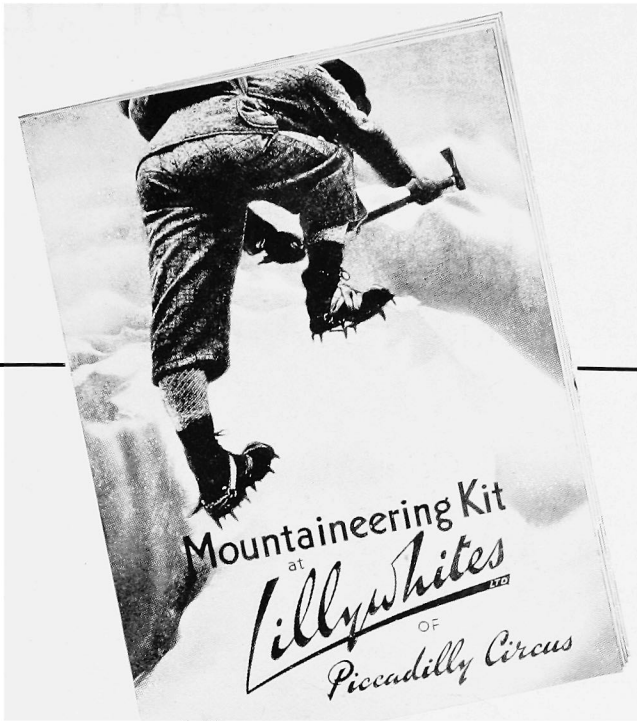
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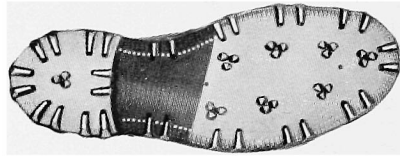
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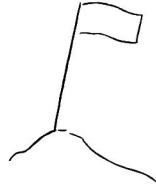
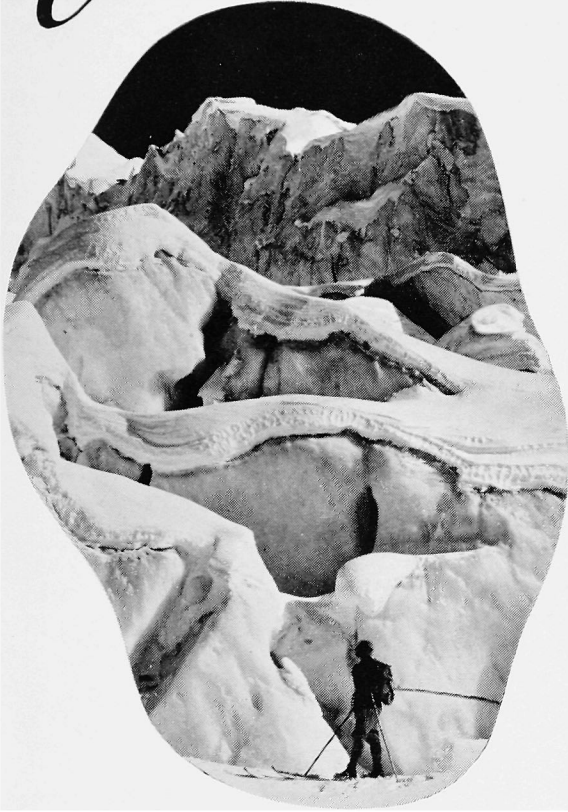


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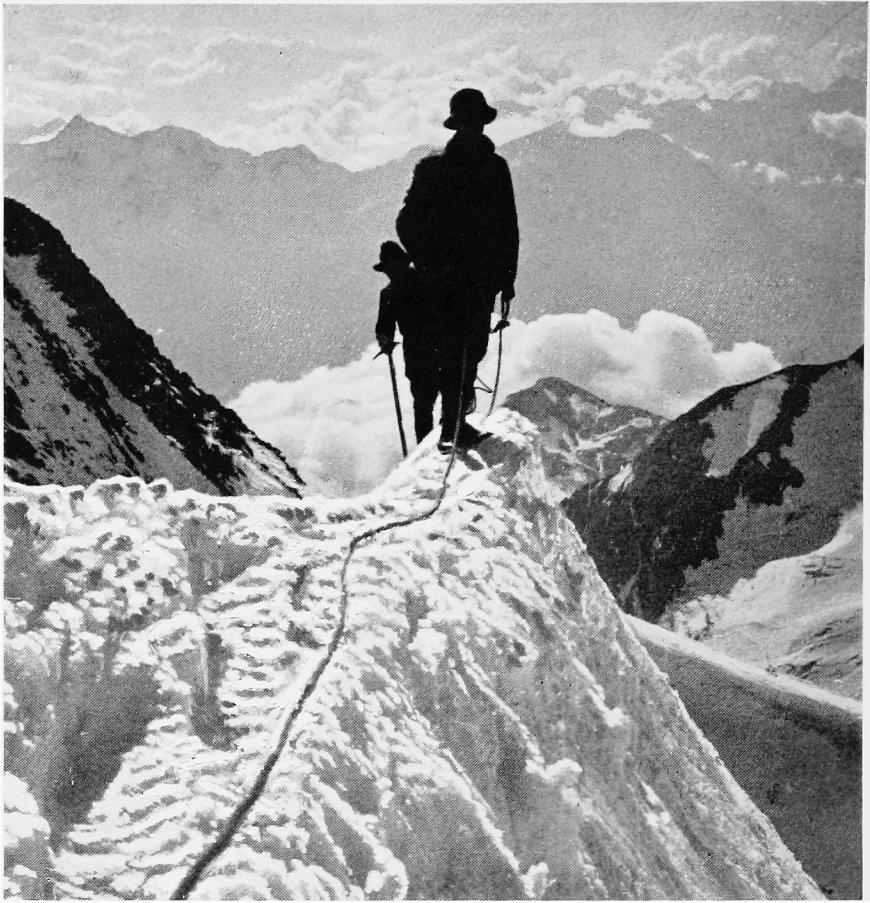


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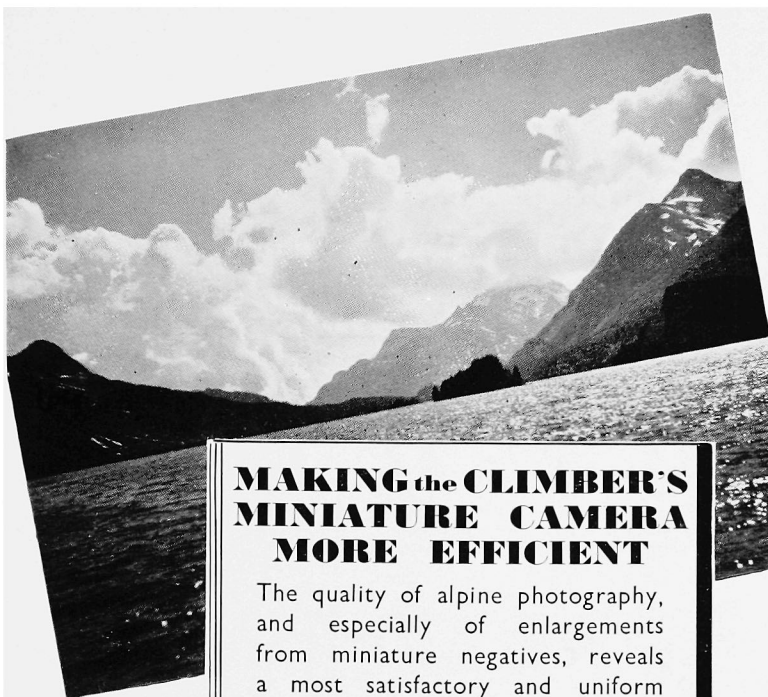


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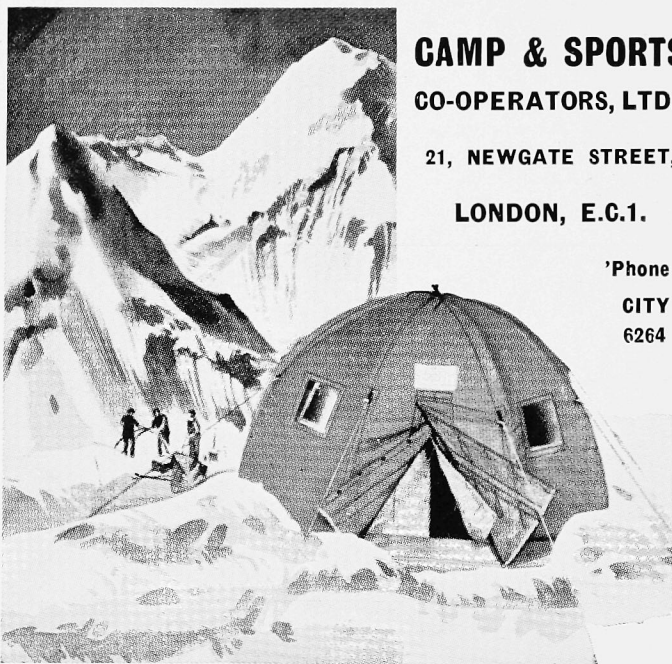
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