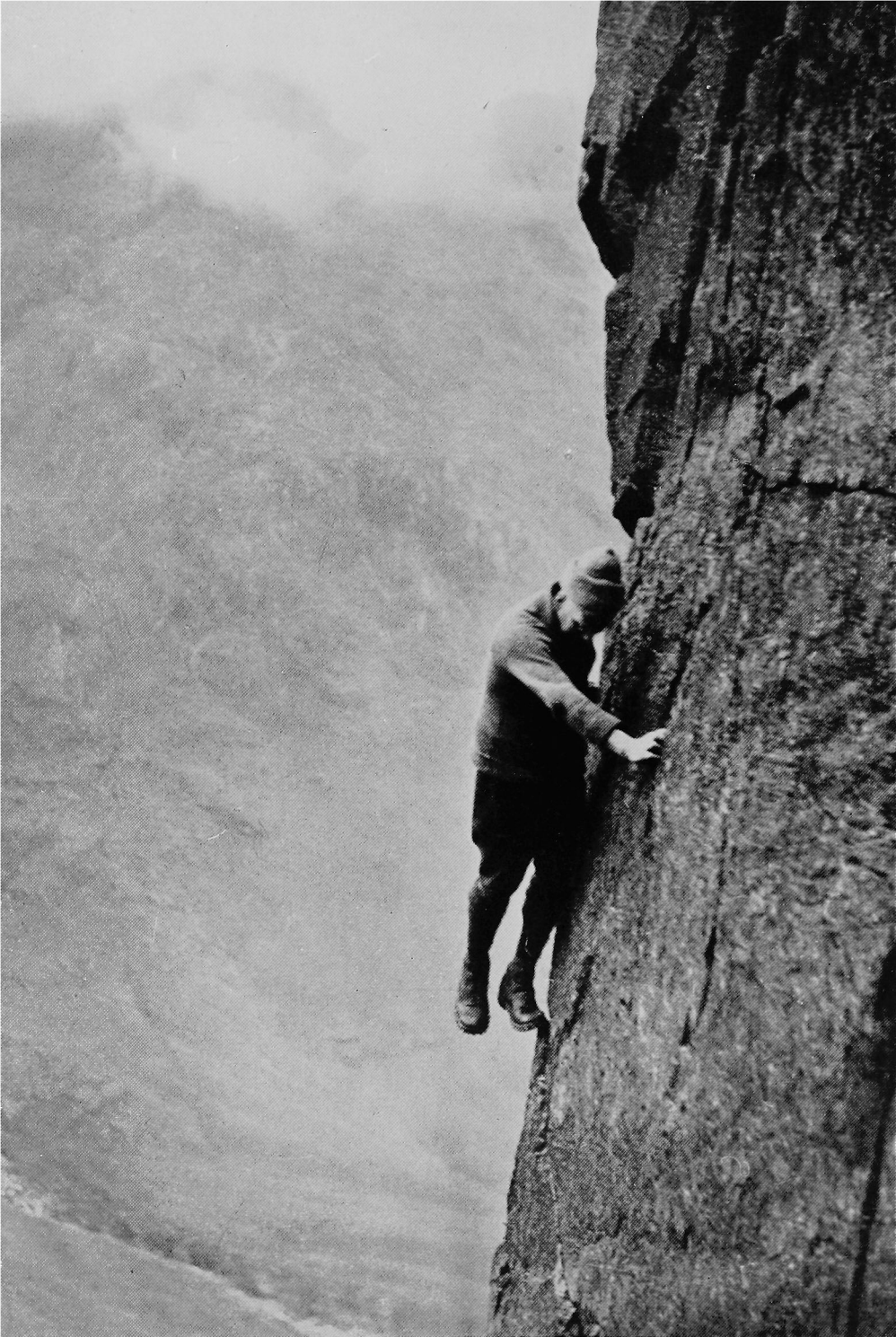


THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB
JOURNAL

1939

2
This is
a lovely
little
cave



THE CLIMBER

R. Gorbald

[Frontispiece]

THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL
1939

EDITED BY
ELLIOTT VINEY

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB, LONDON

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Masherbrum—Beyond Camp IV .. R. A. HODGKIN	5
Scenery for a Murder J. M. EDWARDS	10
Scheidegg Wetterhorn WILFRID NOYCE	20
Welsh Rarebits BALDWIN SHAW	22
Notes from a Lofoten Log, 1938 .. A. D. MALCOLM	28
The First Aiguille J. E. Q. BARFORD	32
On the Requisite Strength of a Rock Climber's Rope B. L. GOODSSELL	38
"Armchair Mountaineering" J. N. MILLS	44
Bosigran Count House.	51
Ynys Ettws	53
In Memoriam	55
New Climbs	59
Reviews	62
Editor's Notes	73
Correspondence.	77
Officers of the Club	79

MASHERBRUM—BEYOND CAMP IV

R. A. HODGKIN

WE had crossed the steep-walled snowy pass of the Zoji-la. For a week we had travelled beneath the amazing red granite walls of the Shingo and Indus gorges, sometimes luxuriating in the occasional green patches of cultivation which hang to their walls or feeling rather subdued by the magnificent steepness which was all about us. We had come up the Shyok river and up the branch valley of the Hushe to the village of that name which stands at the foot of Masherbrum (25,660 feet). For a week or two we had explored round the glaciers which flow southwards from the peak, and we had found the only way through its lower defences of sheer rock walls and hanging glaciers. We had pushed our way laboriously up steep and broken glaciers branching from the Masherbrum glacier, and found our way by one of the snow walls at its head to a high plateau of about 20,000 feet which lies at the foot of the final pyramid of the peak. Here we pitched Camp IV.

Any excess of optimism which we may have felt here was damped by a two days' snow-storm which half buried the line of tents at Camp IV. It was decided that Harrison and I with two Sherpas should push on, find suitable sites for the next few camps, and if possible make a first attempt on the summit itself. Waller, Graham-Brown, and Roberts were going to follow more slowly, stocking camps as they went.

Snow had stopped falling, but visibility was poor as we made our way up an ice-tongue leading into the basin enclosed by the east ridge, south-east face, and south ridge of the mountain. Once in this basin, we saw very little. An occasional break in the clouds showed us a steep ice-wall or the jagged outline of a ridge which gave us a vague idea of the direction in which we were going. After some hours of weary plodding in deep snow up gentle slopes, we began to think about camping. We were

taking turns in breaking the trail in the soft snow and I would count my steps to try to forget the transient misery of high-altitude drudgery. I had counted 200; a hundred more and I would take a rest. But perhaps I hadn't really done my share, so would plod on for fifty more. And after that, twenty-five more; I could logically stop then as two into twenty-five wouldn't go. So we all stopped and pitched our two tents in the mist and snow. That was Camp V.

The next day was rather better. The fleeting views of ridges were rather more frequent, the snow rather less soft, and the angle steepened up. We knew we were beginning to climb the lower part of the south-east face, so we bore right towards the east ridge, away from some rather too steep ice-cliffs. Towards evening we found a good site for Camp VI on the lower lip of a wide crevasse at 23,400 feet. We had little hope of a fine day on the morrow, and were prepared to come down if the poor weather continued.

Our pessimism was dispersed and our faint hopes of the night before were fully justified next morning, when Harrison poked his head out of the tent into the brilliance of a perfect dawn. We got going as soon as possible, but one Sherpa, Passang Phutar, was ill, so we divided his load between the three of us. As we climbed higher, sometimes stamping wearily into the soft steep snow, occasionally cutting a few steps in a bulge of ice, we felt less aware than we had been for some days of the physical discomfort of high altitudes. Our spirits rose as we saw landmarks, only too familiar from below, take on new perspectives and sink to our level. In the afternoon we trudged along a short arête and up a shallow gully. We had climbed over 1,000 feet, and as there was a convenient rib of ice which projected out into a spur whose neck seemed to form an excellent camp site, we decided that this should be Camp VII. As Harrison and I pitched the tent, Darwa Tsering started back to Camp VI. He descended fast and faultlessly, taking only an hour for the descent which was to take us about thirty times as long.

The next day was also fine, and we started out as soon as the sun was on our tent. We ploughed our way slowly through deep and gradually steepening snow. We must have gained 400 feet when we started bearing right in an attempt to climb the rocks of the east ridge which here looked quite easy. They weren't. Ice filled all the holds and a sharp wind touched our fingers with frostbite. So we turned back just before noon, and arrived at our tent an hour later. We were pretty tired, but expended quite a

lot of energy that afternoon restoring to normal the circulation of our hands and feet. That evening, as we heated some milk, we were happy enough lying still in our sleeping bags. We hoped to join the others at Camp VI next day, but even if this was impossible—and the gentle patter of snow and a gusty wind suggested that it might be—we had food for several days with which to last out a possible spell of bad weather. Our sleeping bags were warm, so was the hot milk we drank, and the thick material of our minute tent looked as if it would keep out anything.

Avalanches, because of their suddenness and often incalculable behaviour, are the most deeply feared of the dangers of high mountains. We thought our tent was pretty safe, however, as we had seen nothing fall on this face, and even if some of the séracs near the top had fallen, they would have been unlikely to come our way. At about five o'clock next morning we were woken by a sudden rumbling; it might have been distant thunder or an avalanche close to. We were not left long in doubt, for it was on top of us almost as soon as we had heard it. The tent caved in. The weight of snow pressed in around us. For a moment I thought we were going to be killed, but the whole thing was over in three seconds, and I found myself in a crouching position with my head to the ventilator. We burrowed our way out of the wreckage and viewed the situation in the cold light of the approaching dawn. The tent was completely buried. One ice-axe was missing and the clouds about us gave promise of some bad weather during the day. The avalanche, if worthy of the name, was very small: it had slid from the pointed spur which had made our camp-site seem such a good one. There was no alternative but to salvage what we could in the way of sleeping bags and food, and return as quickly as possible to the safety of Camp VI.

Almost as soon as we had started down the steep slope below Camp VII, the blizzard began in earnest. It continued all day, tearing towards us up the slope, gradually numbing our hands and feet, blinding our eyes with icicles which formed from our breath and freezing our clothes into grotesque steel-like sheets. The grey-white forms of ice-cliffs loomed momentarily in the driving snow, dark shadows suggesting neither their real size nor their whereabouts—giving only a feeling of disquieting steepness in an almost non-existent landscape. I felt that my feet no longer belonged to me. They belonged to a clearly pictured clerk in brown boots—pointed brown boots—made for the

suburban train or the Church parade, and they had no business swinging fatuously in the snow beneath me. Simple repetitive thoughts kept coming back. The words of a song went round and round : " There's a limit to the minutes in an hour, the rain-drops in a shower, the petals on a flower." Flowers, forsooth ! What I wanted was a nice drink of hot milk, or hot rum, or hot cocoa. I thought with detached affection of the tall summer grasses which are so good to chew, and of the slow reedy waters of the Windrush and the Cher'. One idea, however, was always there, floating behind the endless procession of irrelevancies : somewhere below in the drifting snow was a camp, shelter from the universal drive of snow and cold.

Progress soon became impossible, and we took shelter in a small letter-box of a crevasse—a horizontal slit in the steep slope. The shelter was scanty. I attempted to augment it by blowing up an air mattress to use as a wind-screen. With fumbling fingers I accidentally let it slide. It shot away. Then a particularly powerful gust of wind caught it 20 feet down the slope, lifted it into the air, and back into our crevasse. That was the only good turn the wind did us that day. We gave a shout and the wind tossed back voices that were not ours. They had heard us down below. Waller and four Sherpas came out to meet us, thinking we must have been on our way down, but after an hour's hard tussle with the blizzard they were eventually driven back. We, having heard their shouts, were confirmed in our belief that we were not off the route and not very far from Camp VI. We made one more attempt to force our way down and struggled on for a hundred yards or so down and across the slope. This demanded our utmost efforts and took a very long time. Evening was approaching, and we realised that at all costs we must not spend a night out in this storm. We found ourselves on the lip of a deep crevasse which was provided with a small snow platform 15 feet down, and decided to take shelter in it. We spent the night in the comparative warmth of this friendly hole.

Next morning, though feeling rather weak from cold and thirst, we had enough strength to pull ourselves out of the crevasse and start down the slope once more. The wind was blowing less strongly, and the visibility was better. After twenty minutes' plodding a gust of wind tore a curtain in the clouds, and we saw, only a few hundred feet lower down the slope, tents half buried in the snow. At the camp we flopped down, wearily happy. Our chief responsibility was transferred to Waller, Roberts, and



TOWARDS CAMP I

R. A. Hodgkin



MASHERBRUM FROM THE HUSHE VALLEY

R. A. Hodgkin

Graham-Brown, who shouldered it nobly, and ours became a more or less passive rôle.

* * *

When I next lie lazily in a punt drifting on the Cher', I know that I will think of the mountains in just the same way that I think of grass and punts when I am in the mountains—longing for the things I haven't got with a vague but happy passion. It would seem that we are a contrary race. When we are at peace in the plain we pine for the mountains ; and when we struggle on the mountain or crouch in the blizzard, we long for the comforts of the plain. But we know that with a mental background full of the extremes of our experience we can best appreciate the moments of real happiness when they come. They are few and short compared with the long hours of hardship and weariness. They come in the brief instants when a long grind is over and the summit is attained, when the hours of danger are passed and the refuge is reached, when the cold night is ended and the mountains are touched with the pale light of dawn. The happiness passes in a moment, but is not lost. It becomes a part of life and lives on in us always.

SCENERY FOR A MURDER

J. M. EDWARDS

I DID start by trying to write an essay, but it was soon clear that it was not an essay I wanted to write but the facts, the plain facts as they happened. What do I mean? You will see what I mean. The fact is, there has been murder done, a murder, done under their noses, and the fools can't spot the murderer. So I will set it all out; but I will have to be a little careful, for the murderer is a gentleman and very well connected; one is supposed to talk of him carefully so to speak, as if he wasn't there or didn't do anything.

But the story.

This is what happened. I opened the paper one morning at home and saw that an accident had happened; a well-known climber killed in the Alps; one of the most notorious slices of cliff in the world; frozen to death on it; three nights out; now trying to get the body; and it was he, my friend. But that is the barest summary. I can tell you more than that. For I was there when it was done.

The first time I saw him was nothing to do with climbing. It was in the Albert Hall. In fact, strictly, I didn't see him; heard him over the wireless. Eight of them; they walked down the centre of the Hall on to the platform, and I didn't notice him, naturally, during that part of the business; but then, what they had come for, they sang, a dozen or so of the folk-songs of their country; and then I couldn't help it, for a really fine voice does not need careful comparison or notice to pick it out, it stands out of itself, and this was a young voice, one in a million, high, sung full out, accurate, but a wild voice. What a voice! The Albert Hall faded out in two seconds: he stood still, head thrown back a little; you could see that, though he stood in line amongst the others.

And even then you could see it was tragedy.

Of course that was years ago. Then one of those strange things happened. I met him. Got talking with a German boy in Berne : was leaning up against the railings watching the sky over the roof-tops, and I saw him, quite suddenly, walking past, and you couldn't miss it, the same look, the same attitude ; didn't even have to ask his name : it stood out all over him : power, courage ; love, honour ; the heroes, fame, God, the Devil ; no, I can't phrase it, but you can take it from me it was not the boy so much as the scenery. I've never seen such wild scenery ; it stood out a mile. So I got in tow. He was a tall young fellow, could obviously climb as well as any man, but as I say, I was in luck that day, and I got in tow.

Skip a few days, and the two of us, Toni and I, enormous rucksacks on our backs, walked slowly out of an hotel, together, sweating we were, brown, in the heat of the sun, out of the village, past the few last houses, beside the hay plots, and up, leaving the fir-trees one by one, along the scorched dry bed of the valley, the hills sloping high on either side, up the track towards the thin, far-away line of the mountains. I think I have never known a hut walk go so well. Toni looked around contentedly enough, but he seemed not to notice much ; yet he transformed the land, he gave it an atmosphere, a scenery, a hauteur, that made the bare places and the vivid sky seem beautiful. Noticeable with me, for in myself I am dull. Like most people, perhaps, the things that happen to me come, pass over me, then they travel on ; but as they go I go also, with them, into the past ; and if I walk out, for instance, I am often behind-hand and cannot catch up, cannot produce in time the right attitude with which to appreciate a scenery. So to me the effect on the valley was remarkable. He spoke a fair amount, but that was nothing. It was his atmosphere, in which the features of the country became more beautiful than I had known them.

We got to the hut in good time, had a meal and sat over it, and my mind was still running over the same subject so, as we were well fed and he seemed not to mind my talking, I held forth. Now you are all right, I said, I'm not a fool and I know the genuine article—phrase we have in England—when I see it, but I think there's nothing I've hated so much in my time and so reasonably as the love of the mountains. And as I talked I got enthusiastic. Now follow me, I said ; take a chestnut, cover it with sugar. He was a shy fellow and looked quickly round, but I make no difficulty of an incident like that and I carried straight on. No, no, I said, cover it with sugar, more, boil it in

sugar, say that you are a bad cook, five, six, ten, twenty times its own weight of sugar, boil it for two days, no, two years, and you get my meaning, you have a fine piece of sugar left, but not a chestnut ; after two years it would be a tragedy to go on calling a thing like that a chestnut. And a man's feelings are more tender than that, surely. So when a fellow produces thick syrup whenever he sees a hill, he may protest any fine origin for it that he likes, but most of us consider it simply sickening. We are right ? Yes, he said. So I went on talking ; for he did not understand : he had had less experience of having other people's feelings himself than a child of ten.

We went to bed ; at least, we didn't go to bed, we lay on the floor that night, for the hut was crowded out and the breathing was terrible. But who cares ; throw off the cloak, make no pretence to be beautiful, cuddle down a bit, all fully dressed, all close together, and it's pleasant enough. No, I had forgotten ; funny how one's mind goes on. He must have such feelings, but not the same I suppose ; they'd get a different sort of reception in him ; try to find out to-morrow ; what a hope. So I lay on my back that night, Spartan. But next morning, early breakfast, it was just the same as the day before, the crowd did not count, we were in the heights again, miles away, and man's desires rose up over the sweat over the earth and chased madly away, out of sight, in the air, where they dallied.

We went up one side of a mountain that day, down the other, over a fine snow col, and stood at about two o'clock in the afternoon by the front of a small tin cabane, miles away high up on the side of the mountains, difficult to get at, used ten or a dozen times a year perhaps, not more, at the top of the small steep armchair valley beneath our cliff ; not a valley, a ledge, a slight relenting of the main sweep, existing for no good reason. I was excited. Toni went to bed and I was alone. I became a little frightened inside me, and I stood at the door of the hut. The sun streamed in at the window ; the stones shone white before me ; the little cabane dwarfed, crouching away ; nothing moved ; down on the left there was a faint sound of running water, but none visible ; then the slope dropped steeply over into cliffs, then beyond that, far below, the valley, a little river in it, with trees and a few pastures, and beyond that the hills, the trees rose steeply up their side in dark patches, and then the deep green of the high Alp pastures, cool, dry, in the distance, then more hills, grey-green hills. But up here there was not much green. And the boy still slept. And I couldn't

get it out of my mind. Then after a time I got some water in the bucket and made some tea for him. Woke him up. He was quiet now ; enjoyed the drink, and he even accepted my attention. Then there was nothing else to do, and we stood at the door of the hut again. The valley shimmered still in the warm sun of the late afternoon, but up here the shadow of the great ridge opposite was coming over us, and there was a slight cold breeze. And, up on the right, dominating the whole, part white in the sun, part black, hard and scintillating, stood the shape of the mountain. He gazed at it carefully, so did I. Then we went in, and went to bed early in preparation for the morrow. Toni looked a little tired. Well, we were here now ; and I didn't like it.

Why we got up at that hour of the night I don't know. To miss the avalanches perhaps, the stone falls, but so far as I could see we couldn't miss them anyhow on this route, so what was the use ? I expect Toni liked getting up : it was all right for him ; he could take it. And as I laced up my boots in the early morning I cursed, and as I ate I was angry, and all the while under the warm shirt my muscles shivered slightly in the cold, and the shiver flitted on and over my mind, so that my heart beat quicker than it should do before a climb. Then Toni got up, ready ; I am always in a bit of a scramble with my things on an early start, and I went out after him. God, it was black. I am a rabbit at heart, I said. He said nothing. We set off along a tiny track. Panting and unhappy, I said, I yet shall do it. I shall follow this boy until I drop, nor will I ask for sympathy ; though with his massive limbs he has no pity for me, me small, following after. Here, where a slight temporary difficulty on this patch of rock makes it impossible for me to keep to his heels, I will make a clatter with my ice-axe, rather louder than the ordinary, and attract his attention so that he will notice the labour of my breathing and go a little slower. No. Now I shall have to run a few paces to catch up with him. No. He has a heart of stone, this boy, he cannot respond. All my kindness, my special treatment is to no purpose. Panting and unhappy. And we picked our way along the head of the valley, crawled up a small rock slope, stumbled over the stones across the tongue of a short moraine ; ach ; then we stepped off on to the snow of the glacier. Ah, now my friend, now let me not be angry. In the cold morning air I can forget. Well ? You take no notice ? You do not understand ? My hatred and my forgiveness have nowhere to go ? You have come here welded,

set into something, I believe, and your weldedness, your one object, is to climb, apparently, this mountain. But aloud I said, do you think we might rest a minute? And he assented.

So we turned and stood, looking outward over the valley, and we were high up and it was dark, and in the cold I shivered and was excited again, and Toni took off his hat, loosened his hair with his hands, and looked out over the dark beneath, over to the north far horizon, with me for a minute, then we went on; and the cliff rose before us, as we turned, bare and dark, standing like a ghost over the glacier. We went steadily up, not difficult, over the grey snow, crisp to tread upon, bending slightly, winding in and out, making our way. We were playing the part now and no mistake. An hour passed and another hour, the glacier steepened, we trod carefully in on the edge of our boots, now and then kicking slightly; the snow was perfect; if all would go like this—then the glacier stopped and the bergschrund lay before us, 8 to 10 feet wide, uniform, curving, the far side steep, so we stopped too, sat down in a dip on the top edge of the glacier and ate a little. It was lighter now. Then we unhooked our sacks, drew up our legs, strapped on the crampons and pulled them tight round the instep; and then we stood up again and felt strong like conquerors; but there was this damned bergschrund yet. Would it go? So I made myself firm while Toni scouted, and he walked along the edge of the bergschrund to the right a little and said I will try here, and he got on to a little bridge, looked at the wall above split by a vertical crack, thin, the right size, jammed his ice-axe at chest height into it, put a foot high up and lay back on it, then he pulled in a bit, slipped his right arm into the crack up to the elbow, held on so, and with his left hand, a twist, got the ice-axe out, jammed it in higher and so proceeded, 10 feet or more; then the angle eased slightly and the crack was not so good and the ice gave way to brittle snow, but the crack widened also with a thinner crack at the back, and he stood up, jammed himself, cut a wide foothold out on the right, and at last, about quarter of an hour I should say, got on to it. And the snow sloped steeply up before him towards the rocks, but could we stand there? and he rested a minute, then cut big steps hand- and foothold upwards in good hard snow. It was 80 feet before he took me up and I needed aid. There was no doubt he could climb. But the cliff looked steep up ahead. A groove and rib structure, the groove going up wide, open and parallel and about 50 yards between. From a distance it had looked as if, when you got fed up with one

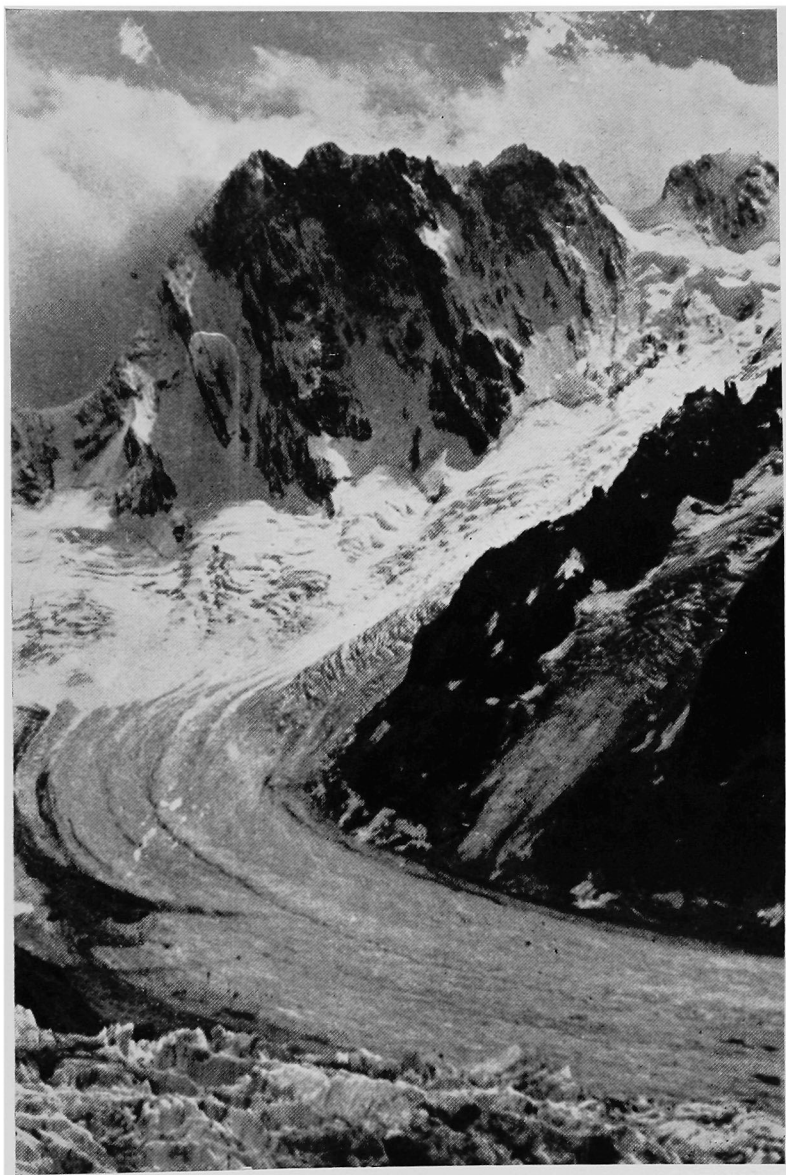
groove, you would climb into the next on either side, but now you could see it better, this was none of your Chamonix stuff and the rock had no holds on it, nasty. The grooves were backed with a runnel of ice or snow mostly and the ribs with verglas. If you came off you wouldn't hit up against anything outstanding by the look of it either, but shooting the bergschrund you would skate for miles ; the odds are, I think, you would not stop on the glacier going at that speed, but would follow it to the mouth of the little valley, tip up over the end over the cliff edge and die.

The dawn had risen unnoticed away on the left, but it was still cold here. Toni was off again and it looked bad. Our groove was rather bare at first, but he kept his crampons on and as there didn't seem to be much in the way of holds, he was using a pressure technique, pressing against the little grooves sideways to keep the snow up, and with hands pressing sideways also to keep himself up, and the method was slow, and produced much scraping sometimes, and now and then it took convulsions for a moment or two when a position became untenable. I can watch a climber and tell what he is doing exactly. Poor old Toni, he didn't like it any more than I did ; but luckily in those days he didn't know how much he didn't like it. Then at last, it seemed hours, at 100 feet he got a stance for his feet, stuck in a piton and took me up. Then it looked as if it might get better, but it got worse instead. And so it went on ; some patches of ice were more good than bad, though needing hacked handholds all the way, and it took a time. I led one or two bits of that, but was not safe on the rest. At midday we had done 800 feet or so ; several times he stood on my shoulders ; then it got worse and we were getting tired, and towards evening we were not much above 1,200 feet from the foot of the rocks still, but there was the best ledge we had met ; carefully roping we might both lie down ; so we ate a good meal and felt better, and decided to stay there for the night. Stones had been dropping a bit all day, but it was cold and you hardly noticed them, and what could you do, anyhow ? And now the sun appeared on the right, and at last unexpectedly we were warmed, and he sat and watched it set, and I began to think again of what we were doing for the first time that day. Why should he be noticing the sunset ? But he was noticing it, watching about the weather maybe, the chances for the night ; no, he wasn't looking like that ; it was those other things, he could drag those same thoughts out of me still. What a sky it was ! Restless, slowly moving ; and

gathered now, far away, she stopped, lifted her head and spread her arms out towards us while the sun went down. Look at her. Ha! Red. Light. Straight. A vision. For the faithful a sign. Truth, naked, looking over the mountains. Toni, come down again, come down. But I said nothing. Toni. It was all he knew. It was so he had been taught. And when he was young, early, he had looked out of the window. How do I know that? How? I know it. I was there, I tell you, I was there at the time. The ascension to heaven. I couldn't get it out of my mind. And I knew perfectly what was going to happen. We were going to go straight up into the clouds, he and I, then we might or might not get down again.

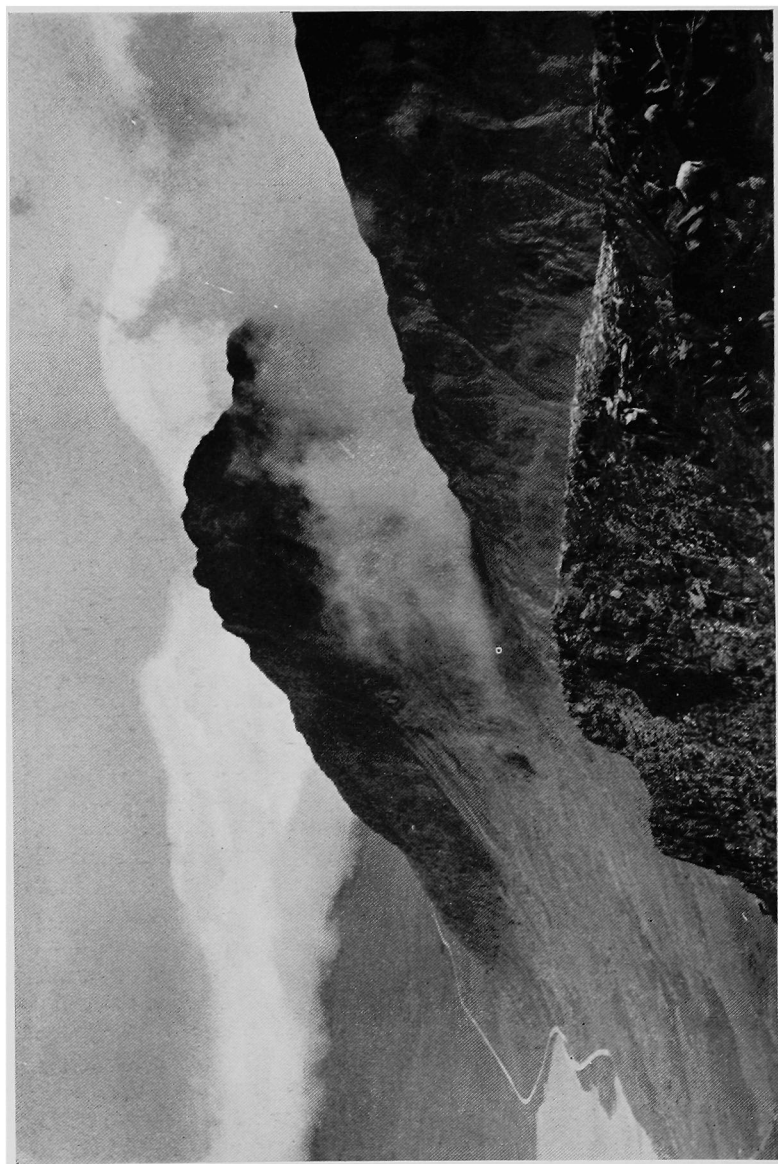
We had arranged ourselves on the ledge and, close together, we would be able to sleep. We were well off, but I did not compose myself at once. His chances of survival for the next two years, I thought, are about fifty-fifty: as for me, I have fitted in nobly, have played my part, fool, and have even applauded. I couldn't get it out of my mind. I couldn't get the Alps out either. Then I dozed off.

We slept fitfully through the night, waited for the dawn, a lot of cloud about, then we set out. There was little snow on the next bit. I want to get on. All this is by the way. I think we both braced ourselves up; we were cold, and there was more cloud drifting around than we liked. The next bit was not too bad either. Three hundred to four hundred feet quite quickly, three pitons and they only for safety; perhaps we were over the worst; then a tiny ledge and the groove went on under snow, and we stood on the ledge leaning back against the last rocks to put on our crampons; and that heartened us; I think it would hearten a cow, that particular manoeuvre. Not? You think? With your back against the rock, bent slightly, putting on crampons? Oh, but you know it would! It increases a man's virility, any man's, tenfold. But it did not last. It never does. The snow was ice. The next 80 feet took hours, and then it didn't look too good up above. You know what it is when a cliff is too steep to start with and then the whole structure gets steeper, a little bulge. The steepest part was 120 feet or so above us, and a big drop now below; the ice gave out in little runnels 40 feet up, couldn't hold on any longer, north face though it was. He got up 40 feet, 60 feet, 70 feet, in about half an hour, scraped for a quarter of an hour, and at last, thank God, managed to get down again, found a crack to stick a piton in at 40 feet, and had a rest. I was shivering hard all



GRANDES JORASSES—NORTH FACE

A. W. Osborne



R. Gorboid

TRYFAN

that time, watching, and I too was tied on to a piton. What to do now? But his blood was up, a light in his eyes, no talk of surrender, he got down 10 feet, traversed out right, quite quickly, on next to nothing, got a piton in I don't know how, let himself down on a long loop and swung out for the edge of the groove, got the rib by the nails of his fingers, more gymnastics, stuck in another piton, and rested. The other side sounded harder; I couldn't see; it took a long time; I didn't go that way myself, either; there was a sureness about hanging on to a rope and swinging, even a long swing, that was preferable in my mind to the longer drawn agony of trying to climb a traverse that you couldn't. I don't know why I'm going into all this, it's not the point, but it sticks in my memory, all this detail. I landed up bump in the next groove, jammed, breathless, into a shallow, square, little, overhang crack, quite a rarity, that crack; and I was surprised; I doubt if there's another crack good enough to jam in on this side of the mountain, and I struggled a bit, I can do that on the rope, got a sort of hold near the top, something stuck, but I gave a grunt of joy, pulled like hell, I am a man with great reserves of strength, though I seldom if ever get the chance to use them, and something snapped and up I went. I was exultant, I felt a lighter man, and it must have been a full second before it dawned on me; my rucksack; the sound of falling; my poor benighted rucksack. Yes, it was making tracks for home. In the wigwam of her fathers she would repose. Now she must be nearing the glacier. There she would burst and her contents would fly from her; separate, they would make their way each to their resting-place. The food; birds might have it. A pair of kletterschuhe; by luck a man might find them, some time. The camera; there would be no use for that now, not in this world. The sleeping things. Oh, the devil. What have I done, Toni? And as I came up towards him I almost began to speak to him of my feelings; but I stopped half-way, he was thinking already more of the cliff again than of me, and that was as it should be; for this groove we were in looked difficult and we were short of time, short of everything now.

We got up a bit, and another bit, or rather he did, then the mists came. Like the words of the prophet they stole over, among the ribs of the cliff, and covered us. Then the snow came. What a mess. We put on all that was wearable in Toni's sack, ate, tied on to a piton—we had pitons anyhow—and we scraped in the snow and went on. That did not mean much, but we did what we could. So at the end of the second day we were getting

tired and we had got nowhere. We got a scrap of a ledge and anchored ourselves, up against each other, ropes crossed. There was a wind up now, and the snow swirled round us, coming in gusts, eddying very beautifully but appallingly cold. What sort of a job was this? Is there any way out of it? Hell. I for one would be frozen in two hours at this rate. No, I said, slow up; don't let your thoughts run away silly. Do you know, I've just got it, I have been wondering why I was here. My function is that I am the barometer of this party; I go up and down. Oh no, I had forgotten. As regards pressure, that boy doesn't oscillate; if you put him in space he wouldn't alter to speak of; he doesn't know how. Screwed up to a certain pitch throughout his conscious existence, for the last ten years or so, he has had no experience of any variation. If he had a barometer it would not move, unless it had burst perhaps, or unless, protesting, it had begun to vary like me on its own account. My going up and down, then, serves no purpose. My being here is no good. Toni. Then I looked at him more closely. One thing was certain. The boy was about done. There was nothing one could say.

The wind was cold but not very strong. We had a tiny bit of food. I had arranged his ropes very carefully, and mine, and we put our feet in the sack and settled down. We had two balaclavas, four good gloves. The snow coated over them and froze. We rubbed each other at intervals. I did not think at all that night. It was too cold. That's all I remember about it. Our hands and our feet froze; later on it became difficult to move arms and legs, and the cold went right through our bodies. But we did it, we lasted the night, and the next morning we took our feet out of the sack, pulled ourselves up into a standing position, creaking, leaning on the stiff cold rope, and trod about as best we could, painful and cold, to get moving. It must have been nearly two hours before we felt fit to go on, and the groove above looked hopeless; but you never know on a cliff, and as we went up foot by foot, using plenty of pitons, leading alternately, clearing masses of snow, it seemed not impossible. We kept to very short pitches, he did the harder bits. Once, close above me, he was swept clean off by a small snowslide. I fielded him. He gasped, got a footing, and held on. Are you hurt? he said. Me, no, me? Not me, no, I said. He said nothing. His face was rigid and he did not look quite full at me. We went on again. The wind hardened and set round more to the north, blowing right into the groove, colder than

ever. Climbing at this rate we didn't get on much, we didn't even keep warm. But we went on steadily, rather desperate. The details of it will not come to my mind now ; I doubt if they were ever taken into it. At about five o'clock it looked as if things were getting easier, but the weather was worse than ever, blowing really hard now. We hadn't a chance, though we must be getting near the summit. I looked at Toni and suggested a rest. The storm increased in violence. It might blow itself out any time, but meanwhile it was not possible. Toni was not breathing properly, damn it. I supported his head. He looked at me but could not speak. Toni, Toni, I thought ; Toni, why did you listen always to the sounds of the mountains and to those things ; and if you had listened some time to me also, and to my voice. Then his eyes went wild a little, they were a little wild always, and then he cried, sobbed out aloud on my shoulder. Not long after that he died.

But murder, you say. There was no one else present, you say, no murderer. So ? Nobody else ? Have you forgotten the singing, have you forgotten the scenery, the wild scenery ? And how are you here to tell the tale, you ask ? How ! Do you not understand ?

But the boy himself, Toni, my friend ? Did he die ? Was he killed ? Or I, or was I alone ? Well, those are quite different matters, and really I must confess I don't know. But take it which way you like, that does not alter the facts ; and make no mistake about it : that does not justify that very wild scenery ; nor does it justify murder.

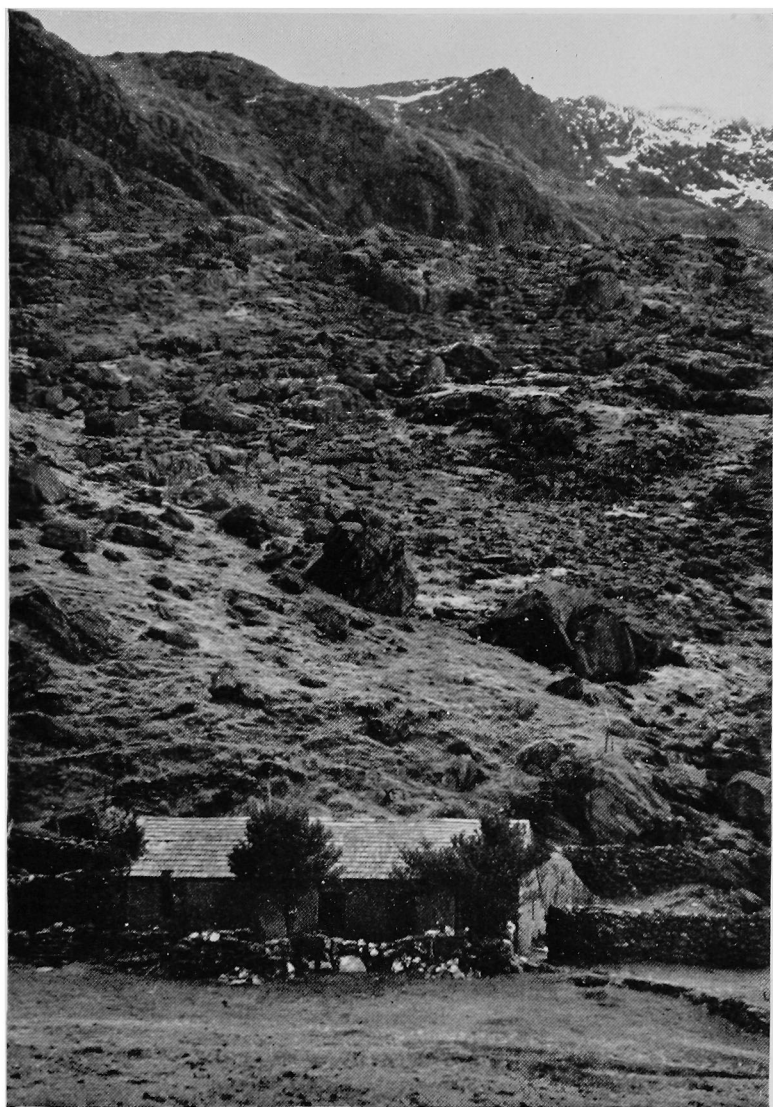
SCHEIDEGG WETTERHORN

WILFRID NOYCE

*“ There is a fable
That Virtue dwells upon the pathless rocks.”*

WE started somewhere in the dawn ; though we should have started earlier, but that I underestimated lengths and fumbled unnecessarily in delay, not liking to reach the cold rocks too soon. I had lain and looked at the face from the Scheidegg grass the evening before, with the lights changing and the stars slowly gathering, and had spied innumerable routes with and without the telescope, abundance of holds, and no very long climb. So that we were pulled up abruptly by the first chimney, and sent the fragments clattering cautiously into the grass.

This side of the Wetterhorn strangely belies its friendly Gleckstein snowiness ; it heaves itself laboriously from the Scheidegg in a vast stretch of wall, the theme-tune, as it were, of all the photographs, to form a continuation really of the Eigerwand on the one side and the Wellhorn-Engelheiner stretch on the other ; always tending to tilt back into nothing and precipitate you among the multifarious screees of its terraces. Between these terraces are smaller, split walls ; through which the way lies. About a quarter-way up even the terraces seemed to steepen, and a big wall, obvious from the Scheidegg, loomed ahead ; kletterschuhe seemed indicated, and we halted to put them on, admiring the sun-streaked pastures over Grindelwald and the sculpture of the cliffs ahead, dark against the sky. And with this we reached the wall. Hans said left ; I, for argument's sake and to keep the true crest as far as possible overlooking Grindelwald, plumped for right. And so, that day, the divinity that shapes our ends finally ordained it ; though it meant a long circumvention of the wall and much rough-hewing back left,



YNYS ETTWS

B. Donkin



BOSIGRAN COUNT HOUSE

B. Donkin

with anxious glances at the watch, for fantastic cliffs seemed to hang over us, and only far along a possible line. We tried one, which wasn't possible. Time was getting on when we turned still farther left and reached a piton, used by a former party, in the last tricky bit of wall, and about 2.15 we stepped from the face proper on to easy stuff running up the side of it.

Not that we were out of the wood yet. And I decided, in the next two hours, on a new type of torture, presentable to the powers below, that of climbing endless slippery, rather glazed rocks in squeaky crampons. At 4.25 we were on the Scheidegg-Wetterhorn ridge, Hans now smitten hard with pains inside, a disease which had been approaching for days, but as careful as ever, as attentive to his companion. We were thankful at any rate not to have to reach the Wetterhorn proper summit, still from that point slightly similar to views of Everest seen from the Base Camp, but to slip almost directly over an upper glacier plateau to the Gleckstein, 7.25, and Grindelwald, 9.40.

It was a good ending, too, the last plod through the trees in the dark, with obscure masses of frogs quivering at one's feet, and the peaks still white overhead. With the body, too, at the right stage of tiredness, it was easy for the mind to take leave of it, and itself flit gracefully back over the day: over the snow in the chimneys, looking like dirty ice-cream cartons, and the cairns (as they seemed) daubed over absurd, unthinkable pinnacles; over the joy of the summit ridge, and the still greater joy of the green valley uprush. Strangely, the irrelevances (such as squeaky crampons) faded out. The lights of Grindelwald drew perceptibly nearer. What was it that Greek said? "Virtue . . . upon the pathless rocks." Well, Pleasure at any rate. And to your good Epicurean they are the same.

WELSH RAREBITS

BALDWIN SHAW

I. LAZARUS, A PARABLE.

A CERTAIN man took with him his friend and his friend's wife, and led them to the Slabs which lie beyond Idwal. And they girt them about with ropes and went up the rocks by the way which men call the way of Hope. And it was wet and the sun shone not upon them. And seeing upon the left hand other climbers, that went upon the common road, they were themselves puffed up with pride. For were they not upon the way of Hope? And upon the common way there walked with difficulty a Headmaster and a Headmaster's wife and one who rowed boats at Oxford and another, whose name we knew not, a tall man, comely and gentle withal.

And after a while they came to a resting place and did eat the food which they had brought in their sacks. And they looked at the high rocks above them and considered amongst themselves what they should do. And the man said we will go by the way which is called Lazarus. Truly men say that it is very difficult, but there is no severity. Many times have I gone by ways which men call very difficult and found them in no wise beyond my strength. And straightway his friend and his friend's wife did agree to go with him.

And they discussed one with another and said, Why is this way called the way of Lazarus? And one said it was because in past time Abraham did make a path there, but now the secret of that journeying was locked, even as Lazarus was locked, in Abraham's bosom. But the man laughed and said, Nay, it is because the dogs will lick our sores, when we shall fall like crumbs beneath the table at which we now sit at meat together.

And after they had taken one or two steps in the gully which goes before the rocks which are named Lazarus, the tall man,

comely and gentle withal, stood below them and called unto them and said, Go ye upon the way which is called Lazarus? And they answered him, Yea. Tell us, we pray thee, of what sort is this way? And he answered and said, Of a truth it is as one which leadeth another up a pathway in a garden. So they did continue on their way, in no wise comforted.

And it came to pass that when the man came to the place where once had been a piton, that the rain beat upon his head and the waters flowed round about him and he was at a loss how he might get him any further. And he called to his friend and said, I cannot go forward; verily I must come back to thee. And his friend and his friend's wife still tarried in the gully. And they cried to the man with one voice, Return unto us quickly while there is yet time. And the man began to come down unto them but liked it not, so that he stretched out first one foot and then another and found no resting place for either of them. And he cried with a low voice and said, What shall I do? I can go neither forward nor backward and ye cannot help me.

And while they communed thus one with another, one saying cannot thy right hand find lodgment in yonder crevice and another cannot thy right foot rest upon yonder bollard? of a sudden there came a cry from above. And a voice said, Wouldest thou that I lowered a rope unto thee? And behold it was the tall man, comely and gentle withal. And the man and his friend and his friend's wife were humbled and said, Yea, we pray thee, send us a rope. Of a truth thou art a good Samaritan and thy place is not in this parable of Lazarus but in another; but that is of small account in this place. So he lowered a rope and they were drawn up and were thankful.

And they that cannot understand this parable, let them in no wise set foot upon the mountain, for they be men of weak understanding.

II. LAYBACK.

Some years ago I was standing in the rocky bay above the difficult pitch on the Holly Tree Wall, looking at the crack which leads to the top of the climb. My companion, who was also my leader, said, "This is easy enough; a very mild layback." Thereupon he placed his feet upon the far edge of the crack, curled his fingers round the near edge and, by a cunning combination of foot-push and hand-pull, quickly reached the top of the crack. That, I thought, is a "layback." And I marvelled

both at his agility and at his vulgarity. For it is only the vulgar who say lay when they mean lie.

Since then I have met the expression on several occasions and now it has appeared in print. Mr. Kirkus, in his official guide-book description of the Final Flake of the Direct Route on Glyder Fach (Variation B), speaks of a "layback of extreme severity." What, then, is the origin of this word; what the parentage of this astonishing bastard?

"Back" is presumably, though not necessarily, an adverb; "lay" must be either a verb, a noun, or an adjective. Two of these may be quickly dismissed. Minstrels have lays and some burglars, but no climbers. The adjective "lay" as opposed to clerical makes even less sense. A Lay Nose, as partner to the clerical nose in Cwm Glas, might have some special significance. But in the whole realm of climbing literature I can find no reference to a Parson's Back. So "lay" must surely be a verb. A man may lay bricks and ghosts and six-to-four; a hen may lay eggs; some men lay down the law and others their pens or their arms. But whoever heard of a man laying his back? Or did M. Hanaud, confusing his idioms, once offer to "lay a back," intending to back a horse? It is possible, but useless for our purpose. For in these situations these "laybacks," laying one's back, is precisely what one does not do. One leaves it very much *en air*.

Of course there is still "lay," the past tense of "lie." Now the climber does in fact lie back when he climbs in this way. But then, why give this technique the unique distinction of the past tense? Why not "a short arm-pulled past the overhung leads to a long and strenuous backed-and-kneed"? Of course this clearly won't do.

Can it then be that the Climbers' Club, long the guardians of mountaineering literature, whose boast has been that their journals, if nothing much to do with mountains, have always been worth reading, while their guide-books, if not explicit, have always been excellent journals—can it be that they have had a lapse, a fall from grace, have given their blessing to a vulgar error? Surely not.

So I turn back to my starting place, the rocky bay above the difficult pitch on the Holly Tree Wall. What has Mr. Edwards to say about this? "From the right end of the bay a long crack runs straight up. It *lies back* somewhat. . . ."

So it is not the man who lies back, but the crack! I must begin all over again.

My learned friend tells me that all this is pedantic rubbish. If a man can blow out his belly on plum pudding and call it a "blow-out," he can surely lay back his body in mid-air and call it a "layback." So Mr. Kirkus is correct after all, and the Climbers' Club has not lapsed into vulgarity, and this is a rubbishy article. But what about Mr. Edwards? Of course he is correct too. It was just a coincidence that the crack, which had once been described to me as requiring a mild layback, should seem to him to lie back somewhat. I hope everybody is satisfied.

III. GREAT MEN OF NORTH WALES
(with apologies to Messrs. Punch and Bentley).

(I)

Llywelyn
Had never even heard of Helvelyn
But he got considerably blowed on
Snowdon.

(II)

Mr. President Donkin
Has no use for a grassy bonkin.
He delights in heights
And electric lights.

(III)

Edwards and Noyce
* Differed in the Vertical Vice.
Edwards thought it an "almost mild severe";
Noyce said, "Nowhere near."

(IV)

Major Bradley
Has not done too badly.
There was a Pinnacle Club Meet
At his country seat.

(v)

Our leader, Kirkus,
Could scarcely forbear to jerk us
While we were enjoying a layback
In the Monolith Crack.

IV. THE TRYFAEN GULLY GAME.

This game is frequently played by any number of players from two to six. Unlike all other games; the players are unaware that they are playing it. The more players, the greater the confusion. It is, however, difficult for more than six to talk at the same time. The only requirement is thick weather on the Heather Terrace. For old hands it is best to have very thick weather. Novices have been known to play well, even in clear weather. There are no rules.

The game is best explained by describing a few typical "hands" played by a party of four.

First Round.

At the foot of Bastow Gully.

Smith. Hullo. Nor-Nor Gully already?

Jones. Already? Why, we passed it yards back. This is the North Gully.

Smith. Rot. It can't be the North yet. I'll show you that cross cut in the rock. (*Goes to look for it.*)

Jones. He won't find it, because this isn't the Nor-Nor.

Brown. I believe you're both wrong. It's Bastow.

Jones and Robinson (together). It's certainly not that.

Jones. It's too deep cut for Bastow.

Robinson. It's too shallow for Bastow. Perhaps it's No Gully.

Smith (returning). It's odd. I can't see the cross. But the rock's there on which it used to be. I'm still sure this is the Nor-Nor.

Jones. Well, let's go on. It's no use arguing here. We shall come to something definite soon.

Second Round.

At foot of Nor-Nor Gully. (Five minutes later.)

Smith. Ah! This is Nor-Nor Gully. I'm sorry, you chaps, I was wrong. That last must have been Bastow after all.

Jones. No. You were right. I was wrong. This is the North Gully. Look at all that water coming down. There's no waterfall in Nor-Nor Gully.

Smith. You've never been here in such wet weather, to say nothing of melting snow. Look, there are the rocks you stand on to see that cross. I'll show you. (*Goes to look for it.*)

Brown. Smith's right.

Robinson. Jones is right.

Jones. We can't both be right. Well, Smith, found that cross?

Smith (returning). It's very odd. I can't find it. But I'm sure those are the right rocks. It must have been cracked off by the frost.

Jones. Well, let's get on. It's no use arguing here. We shall come to something definite soon.

Third Round.

At foot of Green Gully. (One minute later.)

Smith (passing without noticing). I can't make it . . .

Jones. What's that gully there?

Smith. That must be Green Gully and the last *was* Nor-Nor; but it can't have been. There was no cross.

Jones. Well, if it's Green, it can't be far to the North Gully. Let's go on and find it. We can't mistake that when we get to it.

Brown. Listen. I heard voices just above. There's a party climbing there. Let's ask them what climb they're on.

Jones. Hullo, up there. What are you climbing?

Two Voices (together). {Gashed Crag.
Grooved Arete.

One Voice. Well, we thought we were doing the Gashed Crag, but it seems to be turning into the Grooved Arete. Are you at the foot of a Gully? If so, can you tell us which it is?

Enter along Heather Terrace a party of three with competent and determined leader.

Leader of New Party (to his friends). We're getting on fast. This is Grassy Gully all right. (To *Smith, Jones, etc.*) Morning! Pretty thick, isn't it? Almost lost just now. Got the gullies muddled. All right now, though. This is Grassy Gully.

Smith, Jones, Brown, Robinson, and Voices above. ????

Game continues at foot of North and South Gullies, and at selected intervals between these.

N.B.—*Cheating.* Last time that I was on the Heather Terrace, the words Nor-Nor Gully were deeply scratched in the pure white snow at the foot of Bastow Gully. This is cheating.

NOTES FROM A LOFOTEN LOG, 1938

A. D. MALCOLM

A NIGHT in the Concordia Hut in August last year, followed by a day in a queue on the Jungfrau, sent us this year to look for solitude in the Lofoten Islands.

We, A. M. Binnie, H. R. Herbert, and myself, arrived at Svolvær in broad daylight at 00.30 hours on July 7th. The excessive activity of the sun there gives a genuine use for the military time system. Later in the morning, with the assistance of Herr Gunnar Berg, the British Vice-Consul, we hired the *Langnat*, a 35-foot fishing-smack. Its small fo'c'sle contained three bunks, a folding table, and a stove, so we were independent of the tents we had brought. It was driven by an amazingly indefatigable engine. Captain and crew were Adolf Nielsen, the owner's brother; inclusive of his services, we paid Kr. 25 a day, but hard bargaining would probably have reduced this. Fuel was extra.

Our chartering completed, we bought our stores, all of which (except tea and chocolate) we obtained in Svolvær and found perfectly satisfactory. At 20.00 we sailed, and less than two hours later dropped anchor at the head of the Ostpollen, a branch of the Ostnesfjord. There is a good camping-ground there for anyone who wants to pitch tents: the best we found in the Islands.

After a morning of drizzle and low cloud, we landed at 15.00 to prospect the route up Gjeitgaljar. We kept too much into the face of the mountain in thick fog, and eventually came out above the clouds on to a fantastic but utterly useless pinnacle on an extremely jagged ridge. As we went down the way we had come, the mist cleared, and we soon found the easy way up, which brought us to the top at 22.00. We got an exciting but rather confused view of the ranges round us, and soon ran down to the boat, which we reached at midnight.



TROLDFJORDVAND

A. D. Malcolm



AN EXCITING VIEW FROM GJEITGALJAR''

A. D. Malcolm

The next day was spent on an easy walk up to the Store Rorhoptind, from where we were able to sort out the geography rather more easily. The next peak of the Rorhoptindene looked like an interesting climb from this side, but we had no opportunity to investigate closer, so that remains among many other routes for another visit.

Not having yet appreciated that, under the twenty-four-hour day system, the only reason for getting out of bed is the inability to sleep, we weighed anchor the following morning at 06.30 and chugged round to the Oihellesund. We stopped in a very sheltered little bay close under the east ridge of Rulten and about half a mile short of the peninsular on which Recknes stands. This ridge is one of the classic climbs, and deserves to be. It is very long: only two of us climbed it, but we took nearly eight hours to get up; few really difficult pitches have to be done, but there are many obstacles to make you think, and careful attention to the route is needed. Near the top, we found 400 feet of hard snow to kick up, a common feature on the Ostvaago climbs, and we regretted that we had only one ice-axe. We were on the top at 17.30, and eventually arrived back at the boat at 01.00. The descent of the final slope of scrub and slabs was negotiated with the help of an abseil from a birch tree. I enjoyed this best of the climbs we did, but others have described it as "long and tedious."

During a day of sun-bathing and idleness which followed, we changed our anchorage to the head of the Troldfjord, from where we climbed the Store Troldtind. It is an easy but rather laborious climb of about four hours, relieved by remarkable scenery. The way goes past the Troldfjord-vand, the local Marjelensee, and later there is a fine view of Tracta and its north ridge. The cliffs of the Troldfjord itself make it well worthy of its reputation, which brings even the "Hurtig Rute" steamers off their course for the tourists to see it. An added attraction was the large flocks of neat little black guillemots scuttering about the water or wheeling round the boat in well-drilled squadrons.

After one of our few wet days, we set off on July 14th at the unnaturally early hour of 06.45 from the head of the Grundfjord: a deceitful place which can only be entered at high tide. We were aiming at the West Peak of the Blaafjeld, but by a misreading of the map, turned up the wrong valley, and found ourselves on the little glacier north of the east peak, instead of on that to its south. A fairly extensive detour to the north, then west and eventually east again, brought us to the top of a peak on

the main north-south ridge, where a large subsidiary ridge leaves it on the west. After roping down a steep and rotten gully, we slithered down shaly slabs to the main glacier in the middle of the group, and at last an easy plod brought us to the top of the peak we wanted at 15.15. During a prolonged and sunny rest there, we discovered that close to the cairn our compasses made no attempt to point to the north. We did not notice erratic behaviour by them anywhere else in the Lofoten, but seldom used them, and did not try to test them regularly. I might mention here that on all our climbs we referred continuously to an article in the *Wayfarers' Journal* for 1937 by Mr. H. P. Spilsbury. This amounts practically to a guide-book, and I must regretfully admit that it was extremely useful. It would be nice if just one mountain district somewhere could be left unguide-booked, so that all climbers there could be pioneers in spirit, but when the book is there, and holiday time is very limited, it is a stern-hearted party which refrains from using it.

We got back from Blaafjeld at 19.30, and found the boat lying in the outer part of the Grundfjord, where Adolf had taken her to save being trapped by the tide. Not wanting to anchor there, we sailed after dinner up the Raftsund to the distant Lonkanfjord, which we reached in two hours, going with the tide. We wanted to climb Moisalén, partly because it is the highest peak in the Islands and partly because it is in a separate district, and ought to give a good view over the whole of Ostvaago. The next morning was wet and was usefully employed in buying bread, which is sometimes difficult to get in the smaller villages. The weather cleared in the evening, and at 21.45 we started for our climb. We particularly wanted to do another expedition during the so-called night, and hoped for clear weather to enjoy the colours and scenery. We were disappointed: it was not intelligent to choose a route for a night climb almost entirely on a south face, and when we did get up on to the ridge, we were in cloud and a strong cold wind, but through a break we did get one glorious glimpse of an archipelago of purple islets, set in an amazing golden sea against the vivid glow of a brilliant orange sky. In spite of that, when we got back to the boat at 04.50, we felt that Moisalén had been a little unkind.

We had breakfast (I suppose) at 13.30 that day, and left our anchorage at 15.00, much to the relief of a pair of nesting oystercatchers, who never stopped screaming at us while we were there. We were heading for Moskeneso, 80 miles away to the west, but had to go back through the Raftsund to reprovision at Svolvær.

Norwegian-like, there was little difficulty in doing this after dinner-time on a Sunday evening, and we sailed again at 23.00. I stayed on deck till long after midnight, ostensibly to give Adolf a watch below, and really because I could not leave the continuous sunset-cum-rise, but was asleep when we finally reached the head of the Forsfjord, probably at about 04.30. It was exciting to wake up to the Moskeneso scenery : rather like going to bed at Zermatt and getting up in the Dolomites. The mountains seem to have been pulled up and replanted with their roots in the air : this gives them a weird appearance, like the illustrations in a fairy story. There are so many of them, too, that they are badly overcrowded on the thin skeleton of land, and are arranged in no proper order. During four days, we traversed Hermandalstind and climbed Krokhammertind and Klokketind. The chief difficulty on the first was the preliminary boulder slope, which was densely covered with a jungle of ferns, shoulder high : a type of obstacle which is common in the Lofotens and most developed in Moskeneso. The feature of Krokhammertind is the traverse of a vast smooth slab : the angle is such that it is difficult to stand upright, uncomfortable to walk slowly, but quite easy to progress at a jog trot. That would be very well on a clear day, but was exciting in a fog. There are no belays, and the angle steepens rapidly just below. Klokketind was inclined to be laborious and over-free with mud and moss holds, but it has a worthy summit.

The next day we had to pound our way back against a head wind in the Vestfjord to let me join the Bergen steamer at Stamsund. I had had only two wet days in a fortnight, a very low average, and a holiday of greater charm than any before. We were independent and unhampered by the usual restrictions of time or travel. For me, the scenery was more satisfying than it is in the Alps : certainly more restful. In the foreground the cliffs drop into water studded with a horde of lumpy little islands, and out westwards the view stretches to a wide horizon of ocean which has the peculiar fascination of containing absolutely nothing. For colour, there is every soft variety of green, blue, and purple, enlivened at night by all the madness of sunset. There is a close affinity between the Lofotens and the West Highlands of Scotland, for which the Gulf Stream and the Vikings must share responsibility. This added to the comfortable feeling of easy-going friendliness which this holiday gave me and which contrasted so pleasantly with the awe and agitation with which the Alps affect me.

THE FIRST AIGUILLE

J. E. Q. BARFORD

AFTER a fortnight at Zermatt we both felt like a spot of clean, honest, rock climbing, and a notable distaste for any mountain over four thousand metres high, so we decided to shift our base to Chamonix, where we had heard that there were some good, though small, rock pinnacles of red granite. Our experience of this rock was confined to the grey unstable cliffs of Trevor and the black microgranites of Mynydd Mawr, and it was ripe to be extended by the hurried investigation of these classic needles.

The Zermatt party disintegrated, some to Thun to sail on the lake, some to Grindelwald to wipe off old scores there while the good weather lasted, Sammy and I to Chamonix. As far as Visp, our roads coincided, and, in the blaze of midday, we admired all the peaks we should have climbed—in particular the Rothorn, which is still my chief unachieved ambition in the Zermatt Pennines. At Visp the expedition photograph was taken, the party broke up, and we caught the next train down the valley to Martigny. This train seemed to travel at a fantastically suicidal pace, by contrast with the leisured rhythm of the higher valleys which we had just left.

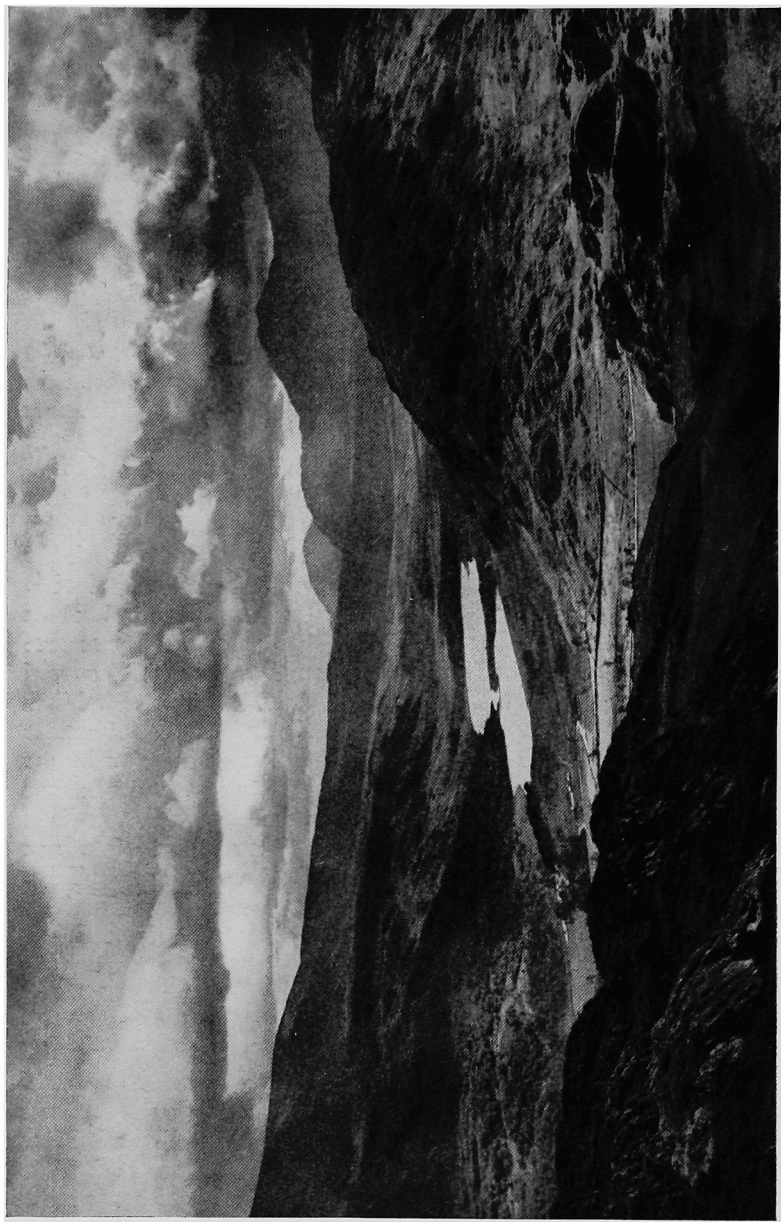
At Martigny, in the hot sun, we set out along the long avenue to Martigny-Ville in search of a book-shop and a guide-book to the Chamonix climbs—but the sun was much too hot, so we gave up the quest, and wiser, but less sad, returned to drink beer at the Station Hotel until our train was ready to go, shelving for the time being the question of what we should climb.

The journey up the Trient valley over to Chamonix is pleasantly casual; no one takes the time-table seriously, the views are good, and the French Customs delightfully officious over the pig-headed Britisher who refused, for the occasion, to understand French. At our destination our first concern was for a bed, as



A. W. Osborne

LES DROITES AND AIGUILLE VERTE



LLYN MYMYR AND LLIWEDD

R. Gorbald

we had been warned that it was humanly impossible to get rooms there in August owing to the inconsiderate habit of the French of taking their holidays at the same place and time of the year as we do. To our surprise, we were received by an affable manager, who seemed able to offer us the major part of his hotel.

As soon as this matter was settled, I rushed out to buy the guideless climbers' vade-mecum—the guide-book to his chosen district. It should be explained that, although Sammy had been there before in his extreme youth, neither of us had any real knowledge of the climbing, except a rather cursory acquaintance with the accounts in the Alpine classics. It was essential to buy a guide-book or hire a guide; as the latter alternative appealed neither to our conscience nor our purse, we had no real choice. The only book I had heard of was Louis Kurz' *La Chaîne de Mont Blanc*, and having once got this title in my head, nothing else that was offered me was good enough. As it happened, this book was quite unobtainable; instead, I was offered Vallot. In my single-mindedness I despised the offer, and only Sammy's wider education persuaded me to buy *Les Aiguilles de Chamonix* later on, after dinner.

The names of its compilers, Jacques de Lépiney, de Gigord and Migot, soon dispelled any doubts as to its adequacy, and with considerable relief at clearing this second obstacle, we settled down with our coffee and our book at a pavement café to decide what we should climb. From the first the Grépon had attracted us, and when we discovered that it could be climbed from an hotel, there was little doubt left as to what we should do. Before we had digested the essential information about the climb, the providential appearance of John Jenkins and the genial Irons disturbed our table and brought more varied drinks. Jenkins confirmed our preliminary impressions, and the Grépon was as good as climbed. It was really the obvious choice for two rock-climbers pining for their favourite igneous rocks after the glacial wilderness of Monte Rosa and the ignoble rubbish of the Hörnli slag-heap. We were also told that the 120 feet of rope we had with us would be sufficient.

The evening was spent congenially and the Sunday morning went uneventfully enough in the purchase of stores and the sweat (in the train) up to Montanvert, although at the last moment a poster on the station almost persuaded us that Chamonix, and not the mountains, was the place for us after our recent spartan life. We arrived at Montanvert with the flowing tide but fed and booked a room quite easily.

We left the hotel at 1.45 a.m. the next morning, well before the crowd. In the light of our lanterns it might well have been a Welsh hillside path that we were following, except that the glare of the street lights below made it seem much less like real mountaineering. It was only when we reached the glacier that the roar of the first falling sérac impressed our sluggish early-morning consciousness that these were indeed real mountains. Our slight confusion on the Rognon almost allowed the party behind us to catch up, so we curtailed our breakfast in order to avoid following them, rushing this in any case rather formal meal to a premature conclusion. Urged both by anxiety to keep ahead and the threat of séracs, tilting ominously above, we stumbled hurriedly over the avalanche debris to the bergschrund at the foot of the Charmoz-Grépon couloir.

This schrund caused some amusement, as it was clear that it could not be crossed; on the left, however, the rock reached down through it, and in the shape of a steep and awkward crack led the way to higher things.

It is one of my climbing principles, when the intention is to lead through, to take the lead on the easy and obvious stuff at the beginning, so that when a really difficult or tricky pitch is met, I have a good excuse to pass the buck to the other man. I did this now. As soon as we reached the upper lip of the schrund, I gave up the lead, so that Sammy should choose which exasperating alternative up the couloir we should take. We moved up over rather dull rocks and snow quite rapidly, until back-seat driving brought us to a steep and smooth chimney well to the right of the proper route. Sammy led this competently, but I slithered about rather clumsily in it and on the rope most of the time.

After this unnecessary incident we found a way back to the proper route, and continued over patches of hard snow and easy rocks to the place where the gully forks. This is where the climbing begins. The left fork led quickly to the foot of the Mummery crack. This crack is not difficult, but is interesting because of the high polish on what holds there are. I was intimidated, and after a scrape or two changed into kletterschuhe and left my boots and ice-axe for Sammy to bring up.

At the top a belay and an airy stance were found, and Sammy came across from his cosy niche on the ridge to the ledge at the foot of the crack. The kit was sent up—half-way—for it stuck there and refused to go either up or down. As a consequence Sammy had to climb up to it without any protection from the

rope, and finally reached the top preceded by a clattering bundle of old iron and boots. The Trou de Canon followed easily and disgorged us on the Mer de Glace face and sunshine. A steep pile of jammed blocks was climbed straight up, and, after a slight pause by the leader for vituperation of all patent roping systems, another curious hole and cleft led us back to the Nantillons face. I ensconced myself happily in the cleft while Sammy went round the corner and out of sight. Soon the rope stopped running out, and he announced that he was leaving his ice-axe behind for me to bring on; some more progress was made, and then the rope stopped altogether. A pause—and then rather a breathless call to the second to come out of his hole and belay higher up, brought me out to a good view of the difficulty.

This was the Râteau de Chèvre, the Goat's Walk, an apposite name for the greatest difficulty of the climb, a crack overshadowed by an impending wall on the left and with the "great brown slabs bending over into immeasurable space" on the right. It is a type of pitch familiar on more homely cliffs, where the greater the security aimed at, the more friction to retard progress, which is difficult enough in any case, now made unforgettable by its situation and character. Sammy had pretty well exhausted himself, and was panting like a fish, but with a grunt and a heave he was up the last steep step of the pitch and telling me to come on. I came, more elegantly perhaps, but very glad of the rope above.

A few feet of nondescript climbing led to the next obstacle which, although it bore some resemblance to the previous pitch, was all fun—in this case, when the steep part of the crack is reached, tough climbing is forsaken, and one slides gently down into the bowels of the mountain to arrive surprisingly enough on the ridge again. This is the best conjuring trick of the Grépon geni and the perfect foil to the previous pitch.

A pleasant but quite easy slab brought us to the top of the Grand Diable, and the notorious abseil place lay below. When we saw this we dithered a bit, but it had to be done, so we made our preparations with care. John had told us that our rope would be sufficient; we had believed this information, and brought only the one rope. Also being conservative, we had brought out ice-axes with us, and not left them on the glacier as de Lépiney recommends. For greater comfort and to keep me company, Sammy changed into kletterschuhe. Enough luggage to justify a taxi had to be carried down somehow, so Sammy nobly volunteered to go first to see if the rope was long enough.

There was a collection of ten or fifteen rope slings round the

triangular baby on the top of the gendarme, so we put another of our own on to make the confusion worse, and for increased security used the best of those already there, in addition. An ingenious scheme was evolved in order that the 120-foot rope should serve for the abseil and for the protection of the first man down in case anything should go wrong. All went well for some way except that the victim of this scheme descended too far round on the Nantillons side. Soon, from the remarks floating up, the director of operations gathered that the situation below was pretty tense. It appeared that Sammy had descended over an overhang, and then injudiciously decided that it might be a good plan to see how much of the abseil rope was left. He looked down to see a tail two feet long and then below that, the glacier.

After some juggling with the rope by the engineer at the top, and some rather convulsive movements on his part, he managed to reach a landing-place and scramble back to the ridge. The next thing to be dealt with was the excess luggage, two pairs of boots, two ice-axes, and a rucksack. I refused to carry all this junk down, so proceeded to let it down the rope. The rucksack went first and showed signs of sticking, but finally reached the fielder below. In order that the ice-axes should slide more freely, I attached them to the rope with a karabiner. This had the desired effect—in fact, they simply whistled down. Sammy saw them coming, a whirling mass of steel and wood, and preferring dishonour to death, let go the end of the rope. The ice-axes whistled for another three thousand feet to the Mer de Glace, and that was the last we saw of them.

After this a rather subdued engineer descended to Sammy, and the climb was continued in a slightly strained atmosphere. The Route aux Bicyclettes and the Boîte aux Lettres led to the final cracks. Here we sacrificed our noble principles and utilised combined tactics, and in a very few moments were standing beside the Virgin.

The party following us arrived a few minutes later, and we sat down in the sunshine and endeavoured to muster an appetite for a meal. This attempt was not assisted by the leader of the party behind, who insisted that we should properly descend by the Mer de Glace face, and not by the Dunod chimney as indicated in the book. We did not read the guide-book really thoroughly until we were on our way back to England, and we then found that this course was in fact recommended by the author. At the moment we were rather worried, and we thought we must have

misunderstood our adviser, until he started fixing his rappel rope to the Virgin and dangling the ends down the line of the Knubel crack. Then we thought we might as well go that way, especially as there was another party coming up on the other side, and with the guide's consent slid rapidly down his rope. We then saw the reason for this manœuvre—a nice easy promenade led to the Balfour-Grépon gap. An easy series of chimneys and terraces was then followed, with some involuntary variations, to the top of a steep slab between two cracks. Although one can climb down this place, it seemed to us better to abseil, in spite of the very strong attraction that the cracks exert on the rope. Ours stuck twice. An awkward corner, a delicate descent "à cheval" across the C.P. bridge, leads to easier ground and finally to the Nantillons glacier, which we descended very gingerly, feeling the loss of our axes acutely.

This climb is a pleasant enough excursion without that quality of seriousness that the big Pennine peaks have even by their ordinary routes. The Grépon in good conditions is delightful, but the technical problems involved are no more difficult than those of the Gashed Crag, only the scale is different and the exposure satisfying. The popularity is comparable. The rappels are what I remember most vividly, perhaps because of my inexpertness in this particular sphere.

Perhaps an apology should be given for describing a climb which has been described too often before and by better climbers and writers. However, I think this climb above all others in the Chamonix district attracts the English rock-climbers going there for the first time; that it is the climb which has depreciated most in the alpinists' estimation of all the major classic routes is unimportant, for the newcomer to the red granite will always get great satisfaction from crawling through these curious holes and up the strenuous and awkward cracks that are the Grépon, whether he is interested in the prestige of the climbs he does or not.

ON THE REQUISITE STRENGTH OF A ROCK CLIMBER'S ROPE

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INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH climbers realise that the tension set up in a rope by the sudden arrest of a falling body is greater than the weight of the body, quantitative conclusions regarding the requisite strength of the rope do not appear to have been published. The writer's attention was drawn to this matter by a recent fatal accident on Table Mountain, in which an apparently sound rope broke when the leader fell an initial distance of only a few feet.

THEORY

Suppose an elastic string, hanging vertically, arrests the descent of a body falling freely from a height h above the lower end of the string. Let $v = \sqrt{2gh}$ be velocity of the body at the instant it began to stretch the string and let $a = \sqrt{E/\rho}$ * be the velocity of propagation of longitudinal elastic waves in the string. Then after a time interval t so short that the velocity of the weight has not appreciably altered, the lower end of the string has moved downwards a distance vt and a wave of extension has travelled upwards a distance at . The strain of the string is therefore v/a and the corresponding stress $E v/a$. A stress wave of this initial amplitude travels to the upper fixed end of the string, undergoes reflection, travels down to the lower end, undergoes a second reflection, and so on. The stress in the string at any time after the impact can be calculated by summing the stresses produced by the various individual stress waves. A problem

* E = Young's modulus, ρ = density.

virtually identical with the present one—viz. the longitudinal vibrations of a prismatic bar fixed at one end and struck at the other by a moving weight—is discussed by this method in § 281 of Love's *Theory of Elasticity*.

In the present case, however, a simpler solution is possible. The weight of a climbing rope is small compared with that of the climber, and it is therefore permissible to assume that the entire kinetic energy acquired in a fall is converted into strain energy in the rope.

Let W = weight of climber.

l = length of rope to belay.

A = cross-sectional area of rope.

E = Young's modulus.

T = maximum tension in rope.

x = increase in length of rope due to tension T .

h = distance through which climber falls before beginning to stretch rope.

Tension T and elongation x are related by the equation $T = AE \cdot x/l$, while the energy stored in the rope when stretched to a tension T and length $(l + x)$ is $\frac{1}{2} T x$ or $AEx^2/2l$. The energy output of the climber in falling a total distance $(h + x)$ is $W(h + x)$. Hence :

$$\frac{AE}{2l} x^2 = W(h + x)$$

Solving this as a quadratic equation for x and multiplying by AE/l , we get for the maximum tension in the rope the expression :

$$T = W + \sqrt{W^2 + 2AEW h/l} \quad . \quad . \quad (1)$$

The point to note is that the tension depends, not on the absolute fall h , but on the ratio h/l . Doubling both the fall *and* the length of the rope with the same weight leaves the maximum tension unchanged! Conditions are worst in the case of the leader who can fall twice the length of his rope. The tension in this case ($h = 2l$) is :

$$T = W + \sqrt{W^2 + 4AEW} \quad . \quad . \quad (2)$$

The criterion of absolute safety for a climber's rope is therefore that the breaking tension be greater than the tension T , calculated from equation (2).

EXPERIMENTS

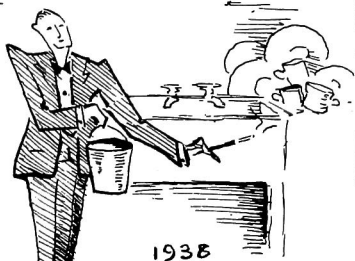
To check the validity of the foregoing theory, small-scale tests were made with scale-pan weights and white engineers' twine weighing 0.74×10^{-3} lb. per foot. The elastic modulus and breaking tension of the twine were determined by hanging a scale-pan on a length of twine and observing the elongation as a function of the load up to the breaking point. The elongation/load points were found to lie fairly closely on a straight line from the slope of which the elastic modulus could be calculated. A number of such tests was made and the string was found to be very uniform in quality. The mean value of the elastic modulus AE was 240 lb. The breaking tension of various samples varied between 24 and 28 lb. Experiments were then made to determine the height through which a given weight must fall to just break the string. The string was made fast to the ring of the weight by the knot known as a round turn and two half hitches; at the support the string was passed half round a smooth piece of wood and belayed round a screw driven into the back of the wood. The weight was dropped by hand from a given height until the string broke. Results for two different lengths of string are given in the following table.

<i>Length, l. cm.</i>	<i>Fall, h. cm.</i>	<i>Weight, W. lb.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>	<i>Calculated Tension lb.</i>
200	200	1	Broken 4th fall	23.0
200	200	1	Broken 1st fall	23.0
200	100	2	Broken 2nd fall	24.0
200	100	2	Broken 3rd fall	24.0
200	66	3	Broken 2nd fall	25.0
200	66	3	Broken 3rd fall	25.0
200	50	4	Broken 3rd fall	26.3
200	50	4	Broken 2nd fall	26.3
200	25	7	Broken 2nd fall	28.6
200	25	7	Broken 2nd fall	28.6
200	100	1	Withstood 50 falls	16.5
200	150	1	Broke on 12th fall	20.0
100	200	0.75	Broke on 2nd fall	27.5
100	200	0.75	Broke on 2nd fall	27.5
100	150	1	Broke on 2nd fall	27.8
100	150	1	Broke on 2nd fall	27.8
100	100	1.25	Broke on 2nd fall	25.8
100	100	1.25	Broke on 2nd fall	25.8
100	100	1.25	Broke on 2nd fall	25.8
100	50	2	Broke on 4th fall	24.0
100	50	2	Broke on 3rd fall	24.0



From a drawing by Francis Dodd

S. B. DONKIN, PRESIDENT 1936-1939



1938

Witnessed
a Helyg invasion
of boiled shirts after
the Northern Dinner



The
Quartz Babe
approaches
adolescence
and consumes
Quartz.



Secrets have been torn from the
heart of mountains and
now make Guide literature -



Hon.
Ed.



We
know not whether
mist prevented a
view of Hills in Corsica



The
Tricolour crop was up
to standard & free from Boll weevil

FRENCH 1938

The last column in the table gives the tension calculated from equation (1), with $AE = 240$. As the static breaking tension of the string is 24 to 28 lb., it is evident that these results provide considerable support for the view that the string breaks when the tension calculated from, e.g. (1), approaches the breaking tension under steady loading. Complete agreement is not to be expected, since the elastic modulus is attended by repeated heavy loading, and in any case may vary slightly between samples. In most cases the break occurred a short distance above the knot tying the string to the weight; when this knot was a bowline or a middleman's knot, the break usually occurred in the knot.

These small-scale tests were so instructive that some full-scale tests were made. The 3-strand rope employed was purchased as "1½" white yacht manilla" (1½ inches being the circumference of the rope), weighed 0.063 lb. per foot, and was identical with the writer's climbing rope. Three samples were prepared with an eye splice in each end and 3 feet clear between splices; these samples were pulled in a testing machine, the elongation being observed as a function of the load. The break in every case occurred outside the splice, the breaking tensions being 3,000, 2,850, and 3,000 lb. The mean value of the elastic modulus AE was found to be 12,000 lb. Dynamic tests were then carried out, as follows:

I. An eye splice was made at one end of a piece of rope, and the other was knotted by a bowline through the ring of a cast-iron weight of 142 lb. The eye was fitted over a crane hook, and the weight allowed to fall freely through a distance equal to the length of the rope (2 metres from fork of splice to top of knot). The first fall produced a permanent set of 5 per cent. The rope broke in the knot on the second fall. The calculated tension for the fall is 1,970 lb.

II. As I, but with a fall 1.5 times the length of the rope. The break occurred in the knot on the first fall. The calculated tension is 2,500 lb.

III. As II, but the weight was attached to the rope by an eye splice in order to eliminate the weakness due to the knot. The rope broke on the first fall in the bottom splice.

The foregoing experiments appear to justify the following conclusions:

1. The simple energy method of stress calculation leading to equation (1) is satisfactory.

2. The prediction that a short fall on to a short rope may be as dangerous as a long fall on to a long rope is substantiated.

3. Failure is certain to occur if the tension due to a fall approaches the static breaking tension of the rope. Failure may occur at lower tensions if the rope is weakened by knots.

DISCUSSION

It remains to consider the application of the above results in practical climbing.

(a) It must be said that the tension which a climbing rope may have to withstand is much greater than most climbers realise. It was seen above that a new $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch rope broke on the second fall of a weight of only 10 stones from a height equal to the length of the rope. A short fall with $h = l$ is an ever-present possibility, and there is no doubt that many climbers' ropes would break under this condition.

(b) The great importance of elasticity in the rope must be realised. The static breaking tension of an old weathered rope may be little less than that of a new rope of the same quality; its elasticity, however, is invariably smaller (i.e. AE is larger), which means that a given fall will set up in it a higher tension than in the new rope. Mountain clubs might very well carry out periodic elasticity tests on the ropes used by their members.*

(c) The standardisation of climbing ropes should be considered. It may not be possible to obtain a rope sufficiently light which will withstand a fall of twice its length; a rope to withstand a fall equal to its length is a practical necessity.

(d) The free fall assumed will seldom occur, the usual fall being more of a slide. The tension in the rope will seldom attain the value corresponding to a free fall. In addition, the climber's body is not rigid, and a certain amount of cushioning is thus provided for the impact.

(e) It is generally believed that a climber who falls a long distance on to a rope will sustain severe injuries from the rope. The force on the climber's body is, however, equal to the tension in the rope, which, as has been shown, may be as great on a short fall as on a long one. A long fall is of course more dangerous, owing to the possibility of impact on rocks before the rope comes into action.

* The elastic modulus of a rope can be *roughly* found by the following method. Hang a length of the rope vertically, stretch it slightly, make two marks on it a distance d apart. Hang a weight W lb. on the lower end and note the increased distance $d + l$ between the marks. Then :

$$AE = \frac{Wd}{l} \text{ lb.}$$

(f) The tension in the rope could be considerably reduced by attaching the rope to the climber (or to the support) through a suitable spring. If the spring is such as to extend an amount δ under the weight W , then the maximum tension due to a fall is easily shown to be—

$$T = W + \sqrt{W^2 + \frac{2AEW}{1 + \frac{AE\delta}{Wl}} \times h/l} \quad . \quad (3)$$

Thus, if $W = 140$ lb., $AE = 12,000$, $h/l = 2$, and $l = 30$ feet, the insertion of a spring which extends 4 inches under the weight will reduce the tension in the rope from 2,720 to 2,000 lb. A spring is, however, a considerable complication, and if the extra weight is permissible, it would probably be better simply to carry a stouter rope.

I am indebted for assistance in the static and dynamic tests on the $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch rope to Professor A. E. Snape and Dr. H. D. Einhorn respectively.

The importance of elasticity and other features are dealt with in the following articles :

Article by A. F. Bird, *Climbers' Club Journal*, Vol. iv, No. 3, 1931 ;

Report on Tensile Tests of Ropes, *Alpine Journal*, Vol. xliii, Nov. 1931 ; and

Note on the above tests by S. B. Donkin, *Alpine Journal*, Vol. xlv, May 1932, p. 107.

“ARMCHAIR MOUNTAINEERING”

J. N. MILLS

MOST climbers at one time or another start reflecting upon the age-old problem of why we climb ; and when I started thinking on these lines during some months' absence from the mountains, one thing seemed quite clear : that memory and anticipation give as much pleasure as the actual climbing. We climb, perhaps, for two or three weeks in the summer and a few odd week-ends scattered about the rest of the year, and for the rest of the time we live on the memories with which our minds are stored, and upon the plans, reasonable and fantastic, which we make for future holidays. If we did not repeat our climbs in memory they would be but a fleeting joy ; whilst if we had no future ambitions, nor the joy of planning a holiday over and over again weeks and months in advance, our working months would indeed be dull.

Foremost among the memories that come crowding in are those of Helyg, of brief week-ends snatched in the middle of work, of the arrival by night with Tryfan looming faintly in the moonshine ; of waking early in the dark and listening to the rain rattling down, or of plunging into the stream on a sunny morning.

There are warm dry days in June, when one idles about on the Milestone, or childishly runs up and down beside the Holly Tree, or perhaps staggers up as far as the Terrace Wall, puts on tennis-shoes, and careers about with a camera ; and there was the day we found Lloydia beside the Devil's Kitchen, and traversed across to it along rotten ledges, protected by a complicated thread-belay.

There have been days so fierce, when ice and snow were thick, that we took all day getting up the Gashed Crag or the Grooved Arete, reaching the top in darkness through snow which froze to the glazed rocks, and discovered that the descent of

the North Ridge in snow and dark is a glorious little climb. There was another winter day, in the Great Gully, when we were rather below form ; at the pitch below the cave there was some trouble, and it turned out eventually that the leader could get up with the help of a shoulder from below or a rope from above ; the other two climbers both needed a rope above and a shoulder below ; a little ingenuity will reveal the procedure which we had to adopt, which involved the leader in climbing the pitch twice. There was another day when we spent two hours getting up the Holly Tree Wall in heavy snow, using the axe as hand- or foothold without a twinge of conscience, before we rejoined the anxious ladies of the party above.

There are days when the weather is better than one might expect, though these are rare. There was a February day when, though intensely cold, it was dry and clear, so we went up the Direct, and got well frozen for our pains ; on the way home one of the party stepped through the ice into Llyn Caseg-fraith, and a few minutes later his trousers leg was a rigid tube of ice. There was a December day which was as usual cold, wet, and foggy, so we went rather sadly up the Amphitheatre Buttress ; but a bit higher up we got above the mist, and on top of Carnedd we took off our sweaters and sat down on the snow to bathe in the sun, looking across the sea of mist at all the peaks from Cader to Plynlimmon.

There are days when one is in the best of one's form, and days when one suddenly becomes quite incompetent ; I once had to use two ropes to haul up the cave in the North Gully of Tryfan a man who, only the day before, had been leading on the East Wall of the Slabs. There are days when one is thirsting for severes, and days when one is perfectly happy ambling up the easy buttresses of Tryfan, and all alike may stand out in one's memory.

There is a grim delight in keeping the temper of the party smooth, in putting up with the carelessness and incompetence of the other members, in bearing mildly their strictures upon one's own shortcomings ; but I often think that the best days of all are the solitary ones, whether or no one does any climbing. One that sticks in my mind is when we got up early to go home ; but as it was the first fine day in the holiday I said I was stopping ; I began by walking over to Pen-y-pass for breakfast, and then laboured over rock and floundery snow up Cwm Glas ; suddenly I reached the brink of the upper cwm, and was met by one of those scenes which make one feel almost poetical. At my feet

was the llyn in a white cwm, bounded on the right by the sharp-cut Parson's Nose ; ahead, the snows petered out into the dark rocks of Crib Goch silhouetted against a deep-blue sky. I wandered happily up the Nose to the ridge, but it was too beautiful a day to desecrate by going on to the summit of Snowdon, and from where I was I saw one of those views which hold one rooted to the ground, absorbing it as avidly as does the Gribin Facet absorb one's superfluous energy.

The next day was, if possible, more wonderful for its contrasts ; for the first part of the day, I followed the snowy wastes of the northward Carnedd ridge, through knee-deep snow with a crust which gave at every step, and in one of those piercing winds which we all know well ; then in the afternoon I was wandering down sunny lanes by Conway, with the first spring flowers around ; and by the evening I was back in "Brum." Solitary days are like strong drink, not to be indulged in too often, lest one become addicted to the habit.

Few of us remain content, however, with occasional visits to the familiar climbing grounds of Wales, the Lakes, and Scotland, and we can most of us find something to climb nearer home ; some are blessed with sea cliffs, others have to content themselves with quarries and small rocky outcrops, while others again have only the pure work of man—buildings and railway bridges and the like.

The climbs on Cambridge colleges have received enough publicity of late ; Oxford likewise provides a wealth of opportunity, perhaps especially for the solitary rambler ; the Museum buildings offer some interesting and spectacular climbs for those who do not like their pleasures alloyed with the risk of discovery by college authorities ; some pretty problems are provided by the Nunnery (uninhabited), and the country around abounds in a particularly inviting variety of railway bridge.

Most of us at times regret the careful guide-book descriptions of climbs, the scratches of nails which mark a network of routes all over the best cliffs ; we want to explore for ourselves something less artificial than roof-tops and quarries ; and though many remote bits of rock have been hunted out and explored, there remain many more unexplored and undescribed. These are often of considerable severity, or else they are rotten and "vegetaceous," two characteristics which seem to attract many climbers to-day ; many other outcrops provide excellent rock, and climbing anywhere between moderate and severe, but without long, continuous routes. Behind Harlech there is

much fine rock of this character, where the climbing is broken up into little steps of 40 to 80 feet, though there are some bigger cliffs which, owing to their steepness, look at first glance almost unclimbable. To describe these climbs in detail would deprive them of much of their charm ; essentially they are places for two climbers, preferably with a rope, to spend warm days exploring, and they usually mean a longer walk than such sybaritic playgrounds as the Milestone Buttress or the Idwal Slabs. Even if they were written up, they would never become popular, for the climbing is not much in proportion to the distance walked, and I have no doubt that there is much more unknown rock just as good ; indeed, I know several other places myself that are well worth a visit, and so, I expect, do most climbers who do not confine their activities to the neighbourhood of Helyg.

The best place in these islands for exploration, however, is Scotland, for even in the Coolin there is a lot of fine rock uncharted, and long may it remain so ; and on the mainland, if one avoids the popular centres and does not buy a guide-book, one can find without difficulty rock of all sorts with no trace of previous exploration.

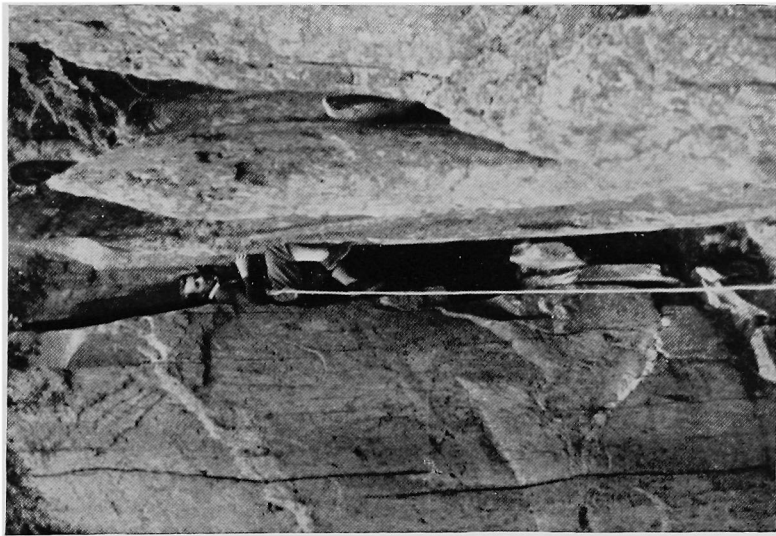
Whilst some of the rock is so far from a road as to be almost inaccessible, and much must be taken as an incident in a long day's walk, we did find one collection of bluffs even closer to the road than the Milestone Buttress ; they were seldom high, not more than a hundred or two feet, but there were quite a lot of little cliffs of this size ; the rock was magnificent, except that no previous explorers had cleared out the loose stuff ; there was every variety, from frank overhangs, possible and impossible, to delightful little moderates ; there was a great slab, continuously interesting, a variety of cracks and grooves, and some good sensational traverses ; there was a cave, carpeted with succulent berries which were welcome after the hand-traverse by which one entered it and refreshed one for the *pièce de résistance* by which one left it ; this, I fear, was only done with the moral assistance of the rope, for it was a tricky crack overhanging at the bottom, and with no satisfactory holds.

Then there was a gully near the top of one of the larger mountains which provided several hundred feet of entertaining climbing, at least for the leader, although the rock was often loose. It was entered by a traverse round a rotten corner on to a slab, but we soon got stuck below a chockstone, which was so smooth above that even with a shoulder the leader could not get up ; however, we managed to escape up the left wall, where the

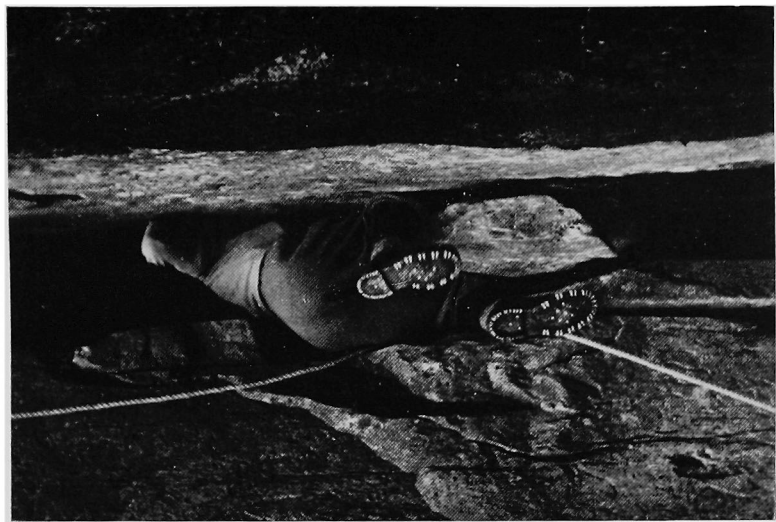
second man dislodged a critical hold which was precariously balanced and we entered a subsidiary gully. This resolved itself into a great chimney with two smooth walls at a convenient distance apart for back-and-knee work, but with no back wall within reach to provide any respite, for a lot of loose rubble was jammed between the walls and descended in torrents, while the second cowered in the back of the gully and anxiously watched the rope. However, the leader at length found a boulder securely wedged, just when the increasing distance between the walls was causing him some anxiety, and the second came up, much relieved to have escaped the falling stones ; above this point the gully soon became easier, and we were free to admire the views.

I have described these climbs, not so that others may try to follow them, for I had far rather they discovered them afresh for themselves, but rather to point out what a wealth of unexplored rock awaits us ; this is often emphasised to-day, for we have abandoned the " all possible climbs have been explored " theory of some years ago ; but the very people who point it out are often the ones who busy themselves with careful pitch-by-pitch descriptions of anything they discover. It seems to me that we want climbs of both sorts around us, those which are explored, described, and docketed, and those where we are free to choose a route wherever one seems most likely. People may here object that the existence of guides does not compel one to use them. No ; but the existence of routes polished smooth by the nails of those who have followed the guide removes the possibility of finding the route for oneself. There are some cliffs where, in spite of scratches, one can pick the route for oneself, if every direction is interesting and all are equally scratched ; such, for example, is the Cioch Upper Buttress. Others, such as the Idwal Slabs and the Milestone Buttress, have so many adjacent routes and intermediate variants that one can pick one's own way without bias ; my favourite route on the Slabs starts, I believe, on Charity, crosses Hope and gets on to Faith, and eventually rejoins Hope, but I have never bothered to verify this exactly. New routes have been made by losing the way on such well-scratched routes as the Grooved Arete, though not many climbers are so blind, but the general fact remains that thickly scratched routes destroy a cliff for exploration.

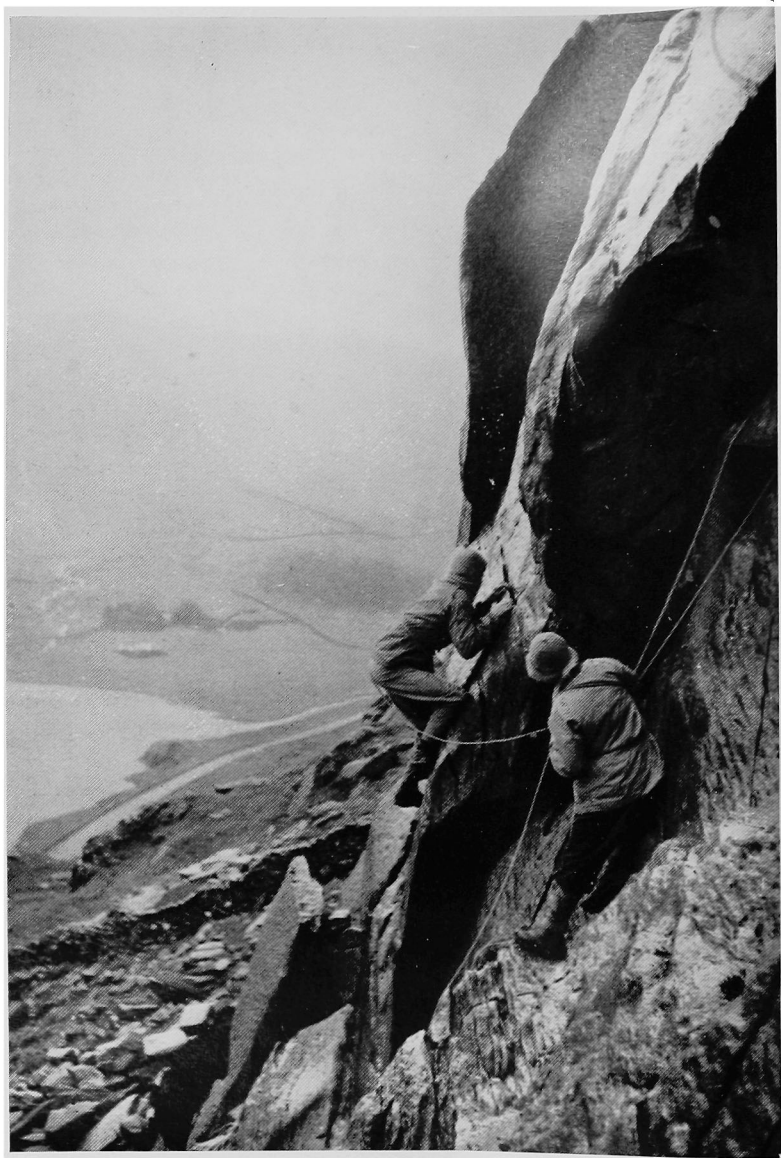
I do not mean, however, that guides should be abolished. There are many days when one is wet and cold, and perhaps a little miserable, and does not want to waste time over finding



J. A. Martinez
CORNER CHIMNEY, MILESTONE BUTTESS: TWO VIEWS



R. A. Hull



THE SUPER-DIRECT, MILESTONE BUTTRESS

J. S. T. Gibson

a route, but is thankful for a line of scratches to follow ; there are fine days when one wants to do something at the limit of one's powers, and there is no doubt that most climbers can lead a more severe climb if they know its standard beforehand. Guides are invaluable for beginners ; and there are climbs so good of their class that one does not grudge their previous exploration, and would be sorry to have missed them, such as the Great Gully, the Grooved Arete, and the Direct. There are cliffs on the East Wall of the Slabs which a climber like myself had always imagined unclimbable, but which have given us great delight now that they have been explored by others ; but it seems unnecessary to describe the climbs on a little cliff like Drws Neoddodd. In my opinion we should be allowed climbs of both sorts ; whilst numerous routes are described on the Helyg Boulder, other finer boulders are unrecorded ; and likewise we should have some cliffs neatly docketed and others undescribed ; Craig Cwm Silin, for instance, would have made a wonderful cliff for climbers to find their own routes ; and there are plenty of climbs in the guides to satisfy the most voracious appetite, without any fresh descriptions.

Moreover, a guide should content itself with a statement of the standard of difficulty of a climb, and just enough description to identify the route, without any detailed description of how to get up it ; instructions about where to place each hand and foot may be all very well on the Boulder, but they spoil a real climb. In this respect our new Welsh guides are excellent, with a few exceptions such as Rope Wall ; this must have been fun for the first party, but for others following their directions it becomes merely a gymnastic feat. In the guides yet to be published there should be even less detailed description. In the Great Gully, for example, the route is obvious, so the various possible evasions and escapes are better left for climbers to find for themselves, and the prettiest bit of all, the exit from the cave, is spoilt by a careful description of what one is to do.

Mountains are more than mere climbing problems : whilst one has some grand days disporting oneself around the Holly Tree, the best days of all are often those in which the climb has just fitted in as part of a day's walk, and the most memorable days are often not the fine days in which the only difficulty lay in the severity of the climb, but the wet days, the cold days, the windy days, when a straightforward climb becomes a glorious struggle and the warmth of Helyg on return seems the lap of luxury.



BOSIGRAN COUNT HOUSE

IT'S a far cry to Bosigran, but it's a good place when you get there. The new hut was only opened in the middle of July, 1938, but about twenty climbers visited it during the summer months and it is being used for occasional week-ends in the winter.

The authorities seem content with the start, but the Hon. Custodian with his incurable optimism thinks that it might have been made more use of. It is probably not well enough known as yet, and there will no doubt be an overflow next year, especially as a separate part of the house will be available for the use of members who wish to bring ladies and family parties.

The house is the old Count House of Carn Galva Mine, which was worked for a short time in the last century, but was closed down as it produced only 150 tons of tin. The engine shafts and part of the mine buildings still stand, though they are getting a little unsafe.

The house has plenty of room for climbers, as it contains a large dormitory, with twelve bunks fitted with "Vi-spring" mattresses, and a fire-place. It is reached by a staircase from the hall, which has a very efficient slow-combustion stove, invaluable for warming and drying purposes. Leading out of the hall below the dormitory is a large sitting-room, with four windows and a good Devon fire-place. There is a well-equipped kitchen with a Cornish range and the usual complement of Primus stoves, and a scullery and washing room. A large workshop is used at present for storage and two sheds serve as garages. Water has to be fetched from a deep well close by, but there are two small storage tanks.

In addition to this accommodation, which, except on special occasions, will probably be ample for climbers, there is an upstairs portion of the house which has been separated from the rest, with its own entry. It is proposed, under conditions which will be announced to members, to admit ladies to this part. There is a separate outside lavatory. One of the bedrooms has been turned into a kitchen and scullery, which is plainly equipped

for small parties. This leaves two bedrooms for use, both with two single bedsteads, though a camp-bed could easily be added for the larger room. A large sitting-room facing south, with fire-place, is available for use. There is also a bathroom.

It must be clearly understood that the accommodation is that of a hut, though the bedrooms are well equipped.

The house lies on the moorland below Carn Galva, the most prominent and finest hill ridge in West Cornwall. With the exception of farm buildings at Bosigran Farm and Rosemergy, there are no houses anywhere near. To the south there are several miles of open moor and the sea lies on the north. It is a little over a mile from the Gurnard's Head and a quarter of a mile from the sea at Bosigran Castle. Penzance is six miles away and St. Ives eight miles. Buses run constantly to the Gurnard's Head and in summer pass the house itself.

The coast is the highest in West Cornwall, reaching to over 300 feet, and consists of granite cliffs broken into ridges and pinnacles over the whole stretch from Porthmeor to Pendeen. Except at a few places, there is a ledge which can be followed at low tide, in not too rough weather, though sometimes a hand traverse provides the only passage. Much is easy, but a few places are extremely sporting and difficult. It is all worth doing. There is plenty of climbing above sea-level and scope for new climbs, as, except at Bosigran itself, the cliff has hardly been explored.

The other good climbing area of granite is at Wicca, where the Pillar forms a unique climbing block of 60 to 70 feet, and on the south coast, where the Chair Ladder promises many new routes. The joy of climbing on firm granite can hardly be exaggerated. All sorts of ledges and wrinkles can be used on sheer faces with reasonable safety, as in the Dolomites. It is, above all, a rock for novices, and it is unique in the British Isles.

Besides granite there is "killas," a hardened Ordovician rock a little like slate but very hard and firm. This is fairly rough except where it has been worn by the sea, when it is sometimes very smooth and difficult. It stretches from Wicca to Porthmeor, with inlying patches of greenstone or trap usually appearing in massive blocks like the lava of the Giant's Causeway and nearly always black and slippery, where even rubbers give little hold. A tribute to the character of the climbing has been paid by several experienced climbers, who mainly go to Helyg. A number of new climbs have been done by them and recorded in the Bosigran Climbing Book.

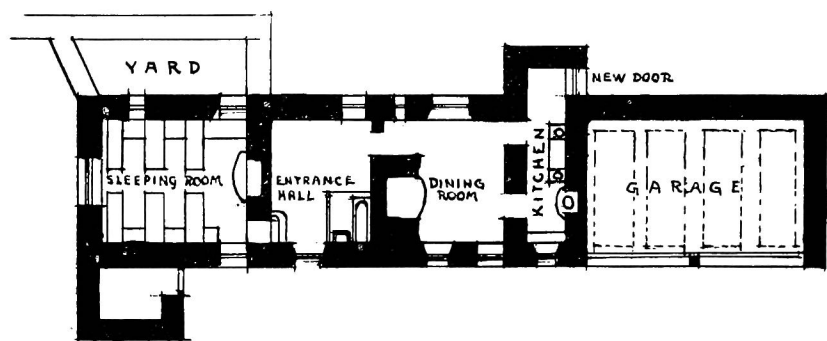


B. Donkin
BOSIGRAN—THE INTERIOR



B. Donkin

Y N Y S E T T W S
 LLANBERIS PASS
 FOR THE CLIMBERS CLUB
 PLANS AS PROPOSED



PLAN



STEWART McLAUCHLAN F.R.I.B.A.
 CHARTERED ARCHITECT
 ROYAL LIVER BUILDING
 LIVERPOOL FEBRUARY 1939

There is, in addition to climbing, much of interest in the neighbourhood. It is a sanctuary for wild birds, such as the raven and the buzzard. The peregrine falcon is a visitor and occasionally nests. There is a guillemot colony on the Pinnacle, and it is necessary to ask climbers not to take a particular ledge on the west side during the nesting season. The golden oriole has been observed by the author, though only once. The migration of the gannet is especially interesting, and thousands pass in spring on their way to the nesting-places in the north. There are seals and a few otters, and innumerable badgers, stoats, and foxes.

The vegetation is that of the sea-coast and moorland, the slopes at the right seasons affording a blaze of colour with thrift, bluebells, and other massed formations of flowers. The gorse and heather and the brown of the bracken in autumn make a vivid picture when framed by a sea of a blue even more intense than the Riviera posters at Paddington.

For the lover of antiquities there is much to see. There are numerous cromlechs and circles mentioned in the ordinary guide-books. A new era in the discovery of ancient British remains is due to the untiring enthusiasm of the late Colonel Hirst, who identified twenty-three old courtyard sites, one of which, at Porthmeor, is still being excavated. These are far more elaborately conceived than anything else that is known in the British Isles, and date from a little before B.C. to a century or so A.D. There are signs that the population of West Penwith was far more numerous, the towns excepted, than at the present day, and the remains indicate that the inhabitants reached a high degree of culture. Many of these discoveries are preserved in a local museum.

It has been suggested that the hall-mark of modern enterprise is to try anything once. Come and see for yourselves.

A. W. A.

YNYS ETTWS

AT the Annual Dinner the President spoke of the steps taken by the Committee to provide additional accommodation in North Wales. This article is intended to give members more detailed information about the old cottage which the Sub-Committee has chosen for its purpose, and the plans for its reconstruction.

Ynys Ettws is situated $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles down the Llanberis Pass on

the left side of the road, from which it stands back about 100 yards on the far side of the river. From its front windows one looks across a two-acre field to the Columnar Cliff and Carreg Wasted. Dinas Mot lies 300 yards up the Pass on the same side, and from the back windows one looks up to Cwm Glas, a grand view.

At present there is no direct approach to the cottage, but it is proposed to construct a bridge and a rough road to enable cars to be driven up to the garage which will be built alongside the cottage and be capable of holding six cars.

A good idea of the accommodation can be obtained from the sketch plan opposite page 53. It will be seen that one door from the hall leads into the bedroom on the left and another on the right to the living-room, the chief features of which are the very large fire-place and the slate floor. The bedroom is a large room 20 feet \times 15 feet, and it will comfortably take eighteen bunks. The kitchen is curiously shaped, being 20 feet in length and only 6 feet wide, but ideal for the purpose required. It will be obvious that it is advantageous to have the cooking in a separate room. A door from the kitchen leads into the garage. It would be a simple although a costly undertaking to install electricity; but in view of the expense, it has been decided to make use of Calor Gas, which will serve for lighting, cooking, and a hot-water system. There will be a bath and wash-basin in the hall, and the usual offices outside. It is hoped that work on the building will commence about the end of March, and that it will be ready for occupation by September 1st.

One cannot believe that anywhere in North Wales would it be possible to find a property more ideally situated, surrounded as it is by cliffs—many of them unclimbed and offering routes of every standard. Many popular climbs are within easy reach, including Crib Goch Buttresses, the various routes on Crib y Ddisgl, Dinas Mot, and the Columnar Cliff. A walk of $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours will take one to Lliwedd or Clogwyn du'r-Arddu, though a car to Pen-y-pass means that Lliwedd can be reached very quickly.

The cottage itself is well protected from the cold winds, and there is every reason to believe it will provide most comfortable accommodation.

E. S. C.

Ynys Ettws Sub-Committee :

S. B. DONKIN (*Chairman*).

G. L. BARTRUM.

W. R. READE.

B. DONKIN (*Hon. Treasurer*).

E. S. CHANTRELL.

B. MCKENNA.

IN MEMORIAM

R. L. BEAUMONT

TO those who knew him only slightly, Robert Beaumont's ever-changing characteristics and suddenly revealed qualities were often a surprise and a puzzle. A sudden spasm of levity would shatter a first impression of intensity. His love of truth and accuracy and his formidable memory were tempered with the sense of humour which saves a don from being a pedant. Perhaps the most important factor in his character was a great depth of inner energy, which found its expression in his immense ability for hard work, his numerous and varied interests, and his love of climbing.

His first climbs were done when he was still at Uppingham. While an undergraduate at Oxford he continued his climbing activity, and in 1935 went to the C.C. and O.U.M.C. meet in the Alps—his second visit.

On leaving Oxford, he went for a year to continue his work in Athens. He spent much of his spare time in scrambling alone amongst the wild limestone hills of Dalmatia and Crete, with little equipment but a sleeping sack, a bag of olives, and his ice-axe. It was during this time, I think, that his motive in climbing became more than the mere joy of doing something hard—the fuller love of the beauty and friendship of the mountains as well as of their difficulty. At any rate, his half-serious insistence that golf was the better game was less strongly voiced and his love for the hills more firm when he returned to Oxford at the end of 1936 as a fellow of Corpus Christi.

The expedition to the Caucasus could never have succeeded had not Beaumont been able to join, for someone with a knowledge of Russian was almost indispensable. Incidentally he knew six languages well and two or three others slightly.

Though it was of lesser importance than some of the Caucasus climbs, I shall always associate the traverse of Kitchikidar with

Beaumont. On our arrival in the mountains, he was the first of us to get the mild form of dysentery which is so common in South Russia. This he allowed to hold him back for one day only. After looking for our camp on the wrong glacier, where he spent a hungry and shelterless night, he joined us after our first climb. A return of his internal trouble made him fear that he was in for a long bout, but he was determined to do one climb in the Caucasus first. It was a long day. The weather was poor, fleeting clouds and hail-storms alternated with a watery sun. The climbing was hard, and we descended by a new route, only to get lost in the mazy ice-field of an unknown glacier. Here we spent a miserable hour in the mist before finding the way back to camp. Camp, however, was completely flooded out, so as darkness approached we went wearily down to try the doubtful hospitality of the valley. Despite having eaten practically nothing, and despite being an ill man, he had never kept us back for a moment, and what is more, he had recovered next day.

While he was in the mountains his fortitude, energy, and love of hardship found their most natural outlet. The higher he was and the harder the conditions the happier he became. Amongst the hills his restless spirit found a greater peace and freedom which life in the plains may sometimes have denied.

He died at the age of 24 after an accident on the Black Ladders while working on the new C.C. guide. The world will be poorer without his courage, his scholarship, and his love of truth. In any other catastrophe but death we should have had his laughing assurance "that this proves the superiority of golf." But we should have known, and now in his death we must believe, that his love for the hills remained undimmed.

R. A. H.

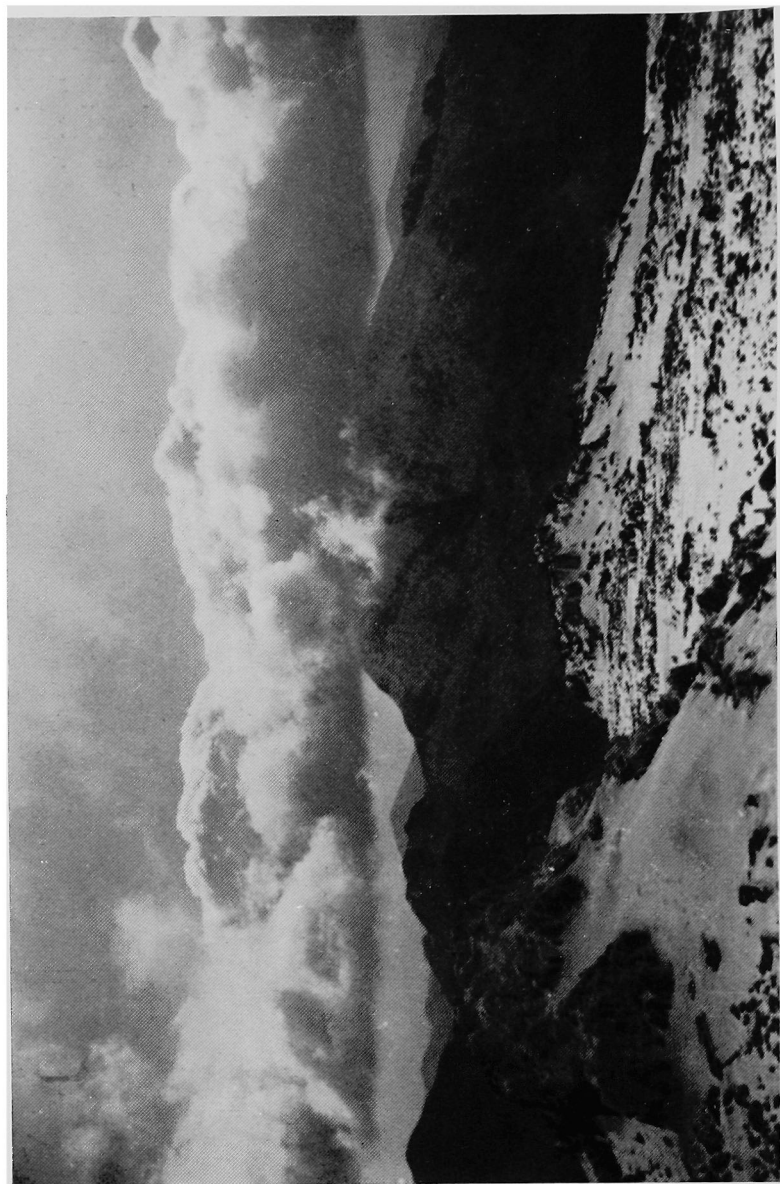
W. M. MORDEY

William Morris Mordey, M.Inst.C.E., P.P.Inst.E.E., the distinguished consulting engineer, died suddenly on July 1st, 1938, in his eighty-second year.

He was born at Donnywell, in the County of Durham, and was the second son of John Goodchild Mordey, F.R.C.S., who was several times Mayor of Sunderland. At the age of 14 he entered the Postal Telegraph Service. In 1881 he joined the Brush Electrical Engineering Company as superintendent of the testing department, and remained with them until 1897.



R. L. BEAUMONT



Y WYDDFA

A. W. Osborne

After that date he practised as a consulting engineer, and had as partner for many years Mr. R. A. Dawbarn, M.Inst.C.E., who died in 1916. He took a leading part in this country in the design and development of alternating-current generators and transformers.

Apart from his work concerning the development of electromagnetic machinery, his name will be remembered for the "Mordey-effect" discovered by him as the result of long and patient investigation of the properties of matter subjected to alternating-magnetic fields. His explanation of these effects was given in a Friday evening lecture at the Royal Institution on May 18th, 1923.

The first record of his association with the Alps was in 1890, when he was walking over many passes with various friends. In 1892 this association developed, and he climbed the Aiguille de la Za, and Mont Collon, and traversed several long glacier passes. Nearly every summer after that date found him in the Alps with various friends, often G. B. Bryant, the original secretary of the Climbers' Club.

He climbed most of the well-known peaks in the Central Pennines, was very fond of the Maderanertal, where the writer first met him in 1900, when his daughter (since deceased) used often to accompany him.

He was a good rock climber in those days—very safe and careful, for he had trained in the Welsh mountains, and loved the technique of the rope. I think Prof. Sylvanus Thompson largely inspired him in his earlier days towards the beauty and grandeur of Alpine scenery.

It was at Easter 1913 that Mordey, with a large party of climbers, got benighted on Tryfan, owing to the presence of a great deal of ice and snow. The party was discovered late in the evening on a terrace under the north-west summit, and flash signals were exchanged, which indicated the ability of the climbers to stay out all night. A party from Pen-y-Pass and P.Y.G. brought food and hot drinks at daybreak, and none of those benighted were any the worse.

It was about the beginning of this century that Mordey started visiting the Alps in the winter, and soon became a keen ski runner. He continued actively to visit the Alps both in summer and winter until the War, but his visits to the Welsh hills and to the Cornish cliffs went on till about 1930.

He had a great admiration, in this post-war period, for the wilder parts of Surrey, and was very often met on Sundays

accompanied by friends on his favourite walk from Holmwood to Guildford over Leith Hill, Holmbury Hill, Pitch Hill, and Blackheath.

Mordey was twice married, and his second wife survives him. He was elected a member of the Alpine Club in 1901, became a member of the Climbers' Club in 1911, and served on the Climbers' Club Committee from 1920 to 1924.

He had a very keen appreciation of music, and up to a few years before his death was a member of the Bach Choir.

He had led an active and useful life, one of lasting benefit to the science and industry of electrical engineering, whilst his well-earned holidays in the Alps and in the hills of Great Britain enabled him to maintain that energy and activity which was so typical of him, and which made him a genial and kindly friend.

S. B. D.

NEW CLIMBS

CRAIG YR YSFA. AMPHITHEATRE RIGHT WALL

THE GRIMMETT.

This route is steep and clean ; and satisfying, in that it goes directly up, without deviation, from its starting-point to the top of the cliff. Very severe ; stockings. A. D. M. C., R. L. B.

Start : 25 feet above the inner end of the big bilberry terrace which crosses the right wall of the Amphitheatre is a second bilberry terrace, shorter but very definite. At the right-hand end of this is a very steep corner, rising nearly vertically for about 80 feet, with two overhangs, one half-way up, the other at the top. The terrace is reached from the chimney pitch of D Gully. Walk to its far end.

(1) 30 feet. Start on the right, and climb the corner to the cave formed by the first overhang. Thread belay.

(2) 75 feet. A shoulder may be needed in order to emerge from the cave. A crack continues up the back of a groove, with a running thread in a few feet if desired. Above this point the climbing becomes harder ; face left and bridge, until a good handhold is reached on the left wall. As foothold, this gives a resting-place before the next move. The main groove is blocked at the top by an overhang, and 10 feet below it an extremely delicate move must be made to enter a secondary groove on the left. A doubtful chockstone may be used for a protecting thread. The second groove is more easily climbed, though the landing is rather awkward. Above it, an easy slab leads in 20 feet to belays.

(3) 40 feet. The nose of rock directly ahead is climbed on the left. A wall with superb rough holds leads into an awkward crack slanting back to the right. Big belays.

(4) 10 feet. Two mantelshelves lead straight on to the top.

TRYFAN. TERRACE WALL

THE LINEAR CLIMB.

The start is up a groove about 6 feet to the left of the finger pointing to Long Chimney, and the route goes in a vertical line to the flake on the traverse. R. A. Hull, P. Marsden, *September 8th*, 1938.

(1) 60 feet. Identical with the Direct Start of the Terrace Wall Variant, as described in the Tryfan Guide. The overhangs are passed just on the left. Belay on First Ledge.

(2) 15 feet. Continuing straight ahead, the Second Ledge is reached by climbing two steep scoops separated by a bulge. The ordinary route is parallel and a few feet to the right. On the Second Ledge there is a belay suitable for line about 8 feet above the middle of the ledge.

(3) 20 feet. The steep wall ahead is climbed direct to a stance and belay. The Cheek Climb reaches the same point by easy slabs just on the left.

(4) 45 feet. Instead of bearing right as for the Cheek Climb, continue vertically up to where the line of moulding is split by a very thin crack. Hence to the foot of the flake, which can be taken direct.

The climb is somewhat artificial, in that pitches (2) and (3) have easier alternatives close at hand. But it is of continuous technical interest, and it preserves a direct line up the cliff.

Standard : Probably just severe in rubbers.

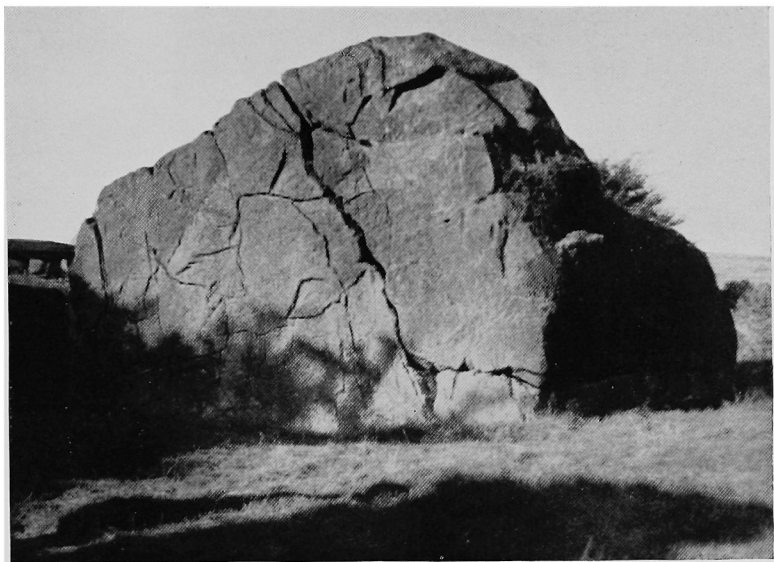
SKYE. SGURR AN FHEADAIN

THE WATER PIPE GULLY.

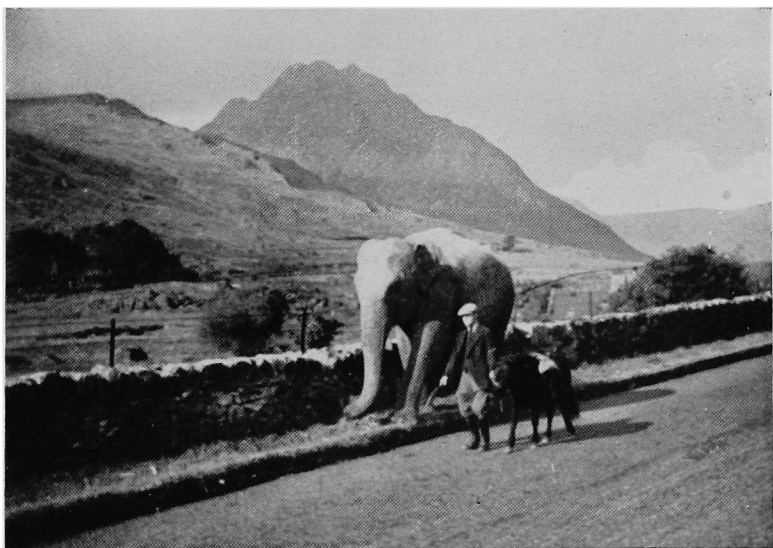
A super-direct ascent of this climb was made on August 10th, 1938, by a party composed of Percy Robson (Preston Mountaineering Club), L. S. Powell (Climbers' Club), and J. L. Farnworth (Preston Mountaineering Club). In addition to the new pitch, the party made a certain number of notes and judgments; as, owing to the exceptional weather conditions needed, this ascent is but rarely done, these judgments may be of use to future parties.

In the S.M.C. guide to Skye (page 69), four pitches are described as giving interesting climbing. The first of these is the second pitch up; it is somewhat shorter than described, and cannot be more than 70 feet, but from start to finish the pitch is rotten. We discovered that if the leader so desires it, the second man can be brought up to a stance with an adequate loop-belay at the half-way stage on the buttress to the right of the chimney itself. This definitely safeguards the leader, but in view of the fact that it exposes No. 2 to the full flood of the avalanche of stones, is probably not justifiable. Technically this pitch may not be as hard as others on the climb, but the rotten nature of the rock makes it unquestionably the most severe.

The last pitch of all provides a worthy finish in a situation which can scarcely be bettered for dignity and solemn magnificence. The move across at the top of the chimney is a hard one, and the step up the face immediately afterwards even harder, especially to arms which, after a score of pitches all requiring a good deal of very hard work, must be tired. The rock here is very sound and the mossiness

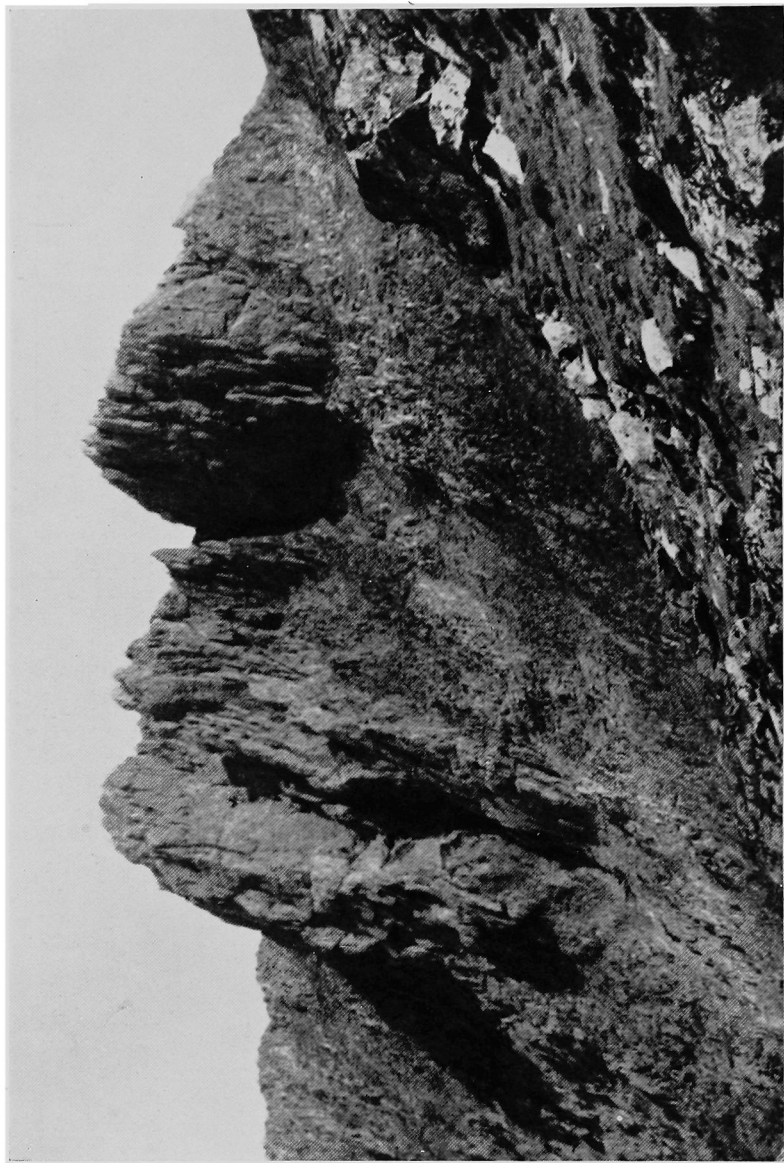


R. J. Collinson



W. W. Stallybrass

THE FAMILIAR AND THE UNFAMILIAR AT HELYG



CRIB GOCH

A. D. Malcolm

mentioned in the guide-book as prevalent seems to have disappeared, and was in fact more of a nuisance to us in the middle sections of the gully. We noted that a small knob-belay is available half-way up the final chimney, from which the leader can be safeguarded on the two difficult moves, and considering the possibility of tiredness at this stage, such a precaution may well be advisable.

In between the waterfall crux and the point where the gully is divided by a stack of rock, which provide the third of the original four hard pitches, we found a new pitch. The gully is divided by a "boss of rock," which was observed and examined by at least one of the early parties to do the climb: their report, preserved in the Sligachan climbing book, mentions an attempt to force a way up to the left of this boss which was abandoned in favour of the easier broad chimney on the right, which has since become the regular route.

On arrival at this point the right-hand route appeared to us both easy and not in the direct line, and on a vote being taken, we decided to attempt the left-hand chimney. This begins with a nasty overhang, but thereafter appeared to ease considerably. Robson, attacking the initial overhang, tried to turn it by a direct advance up the buttress itself, immediately to the right of the chimney, but soon found the smooth and sloping holds too greasy for further progress and returned to the gully with a speedy but somewhat inelegant jump. While he was resting No. 2 also proved in somewhat similar manner that direct assault of the boss was unprofitable, and so began an effort to climb the chimney itself. The overhang yielded, more easily than looked possible, to bridging facing right, and the climb immediately eased off. Not, however, for long, for at about 30 feet the chimney narrowed, and the footholds upon which practically everything depends grew both small and rare. A certain amount of help can be obtained by pressure on the back wall, but too much trust cannot be placed in this, as the wall is entirely covered with thick spongy moss which only takes a direct pressure. At 50 feet the chimney added verticality to its other sins, and this, combined with the usual waterfall spouting over the top, made the exit a very hard one.

The pitch is between 60 and 70 feet. The rock is sound, so long as holds in the chimney only are used: excursions out on to the face of the boss would produce avalanches similar to those found on the first crux. In standard the pitch is probably very severe.

L. S. P.

REVIEWS

THE HIMALAYA. THREE POINTS OF VIEW

HIMALAYAN ASSAULT. Edited by Henri de Ségogne and translated by Nea E. Morin. (Methuen. 1938. 15/-.)

HIMALAYAN QUEST. Edited by Paul Bauer and translated by E. G. Hall. (Nicholson & Watson. 1938. 21/-.)

BLANK ON THE MAP. By Eric Shipton. (Hodder & Stoughton. 1938. 18/-.)

The chief merit in a climbing book is the extent to which it can create and recreate in our minds the joys of mountaineering. There is nothing more pleasant, when reading the account of a climb, than to come on a passage so apt that it touches a spring in the memory which sets going once more the joy of some situation in the hills. No amount of literary skill can achieve this unaided. The attitude of an author to the hill he writes about runs through a book, and only if this is in tune with the attitude of the reader can the joy be recreated. These accounts of three expeditions to the Himalaya bring out some interesting contrasts in the attitudes and reactions of three different nationalities to similar circumstances.

The French expedition was a failure. That can be excused on grounds of inexperience and bad luck. But the book also is definitely poor. One can't help wondering why men who climb so brilliantly in the Alps should fail so thoroughly in the Himalaya. Rather than having a *wrong* attitude, their failure seems to have been due very largely to their lack of an attitude and their general uncertainty. They are uncertain of the mountains. They are uncertain of their Sherpas and Baltis. The latter are called "miserable-looking . . . poor in body and mind." This seems unfair to a people whose civilisation, though primitive, is most perfectly adapted to an uncompromisingly severe environment, and who, if trained, would make mountain porters as good as Sherpas. They are uncertain of the weather, and talk of being forced to retreat by the "breaking of the Monsoon," an occurrence which never takes place so far to the north-west. They almost seem to be uncertain of each other, and have frantic telephone calls up and down the mountain before calling the retreat. All this is reflected in the "defensive" attitude of the book, which is not helped by the often rhetorical style and the constant use of the "diary"

technique. The illustrations are good, though they do not compare with those of the other two books.

Mountaineering should need no motive and no justification other than that of bringing great contentment to those who climb. It often gets both. Bauer's book is very interesting in the way it brings out the extent to which the nation-glorifying motive has been tacked on to climbing. To these German climbers it must mean something very real, for there is no insincerity in the book. I believe that really their motives are much the same as those of all climbers, deeper and more personal than patriotism. Individual personal contentment, however, is not enough for the Fascist "philosophy of the heroic," so there is a lot of talk of the Fatherland and heroism, to serve as respectable labels for the discredited individual and personal motives. Much talk of heroism rings false in a book about recent events; for heroism, like genius, is best left to the judgment of posterity. Apart from this aspect, which, if it cannot claim our sympathy, is at any rate most interesting, the book is excellent. The illustrations are superb. The panorama from the summit of Nepal Peak must be one of the loveliest photographs ever taken. It is remarkable that an account of so many magnificent climbs, including Siniolchum, Nepal Peak, Simvu and the 1937 Nanga Parbat ventures, can be so well and concisely described.

However impartial a judgment may be attempted, most English climbers could not help giving highest marks to *Blank on the Map*, if only because the spirit in which it is written seems so right. It is a good book in many other ways. Throughout there are problems to be solved which hold the attention. There are watersheds to be crossed, rivers to be traced, and blanks to be filled, all carried on against time, rising rivers, and diminishing supplies. In mountaineering one of the most acute and satisfying sources of contrast is the continual mingling of the sublime and the trivial. Shipton's mauve patches are short, and come (as they do in reality) close on the heels of everyday trials and worries. His treatment of moonlight is an example: "My night, which started with the delicious sensation of dozing in the moonlight, was disturbed by lice . . ."; or "After a supper of pemmican and boiled chives, we settled down on a comfortable bed of sand and watched the approach of night transform the wild desert mountains into phantoms of soft unreality . . . I lay awaiting the approach of sleep, watching the constellations swing across the sky. Did I sleep that night—or was I caught for a moment in the ceaseless rhythm of space?" You may say that is sailing rather near the purple wind. But these mauve patches are brief and sincere, the book gaining immensely by them. The general format of the book and the additional chapters at the end, especially a most amusing section by Tilman, are all good.

In so far as they are both records of great achievement written by men of great fortitude, the latter two books are similar. It is when

the authors deal with motives and emotions that the difference is so marked. "The idea is ever in the forefront of my mind . . . that we are Germans, soldiers with a mission in life great enough to fill the heart of any man" (Hepp's diary). "But the greatest value of climbing is that it teaches man a way of living in the beauty and solitude of high remote places" (Shipton). Both books are excellent, however, and worthy of the great expeditions they describe.

R. A. H.

THE MOUNTAIN WAY. An Anthology, collected by R. L. G. Irving. (J. M. Dent. 1938. 10/6.)

This is a book for very lazy contemplation. It is an anthology containing, besides many pieces from the classics of mountaineering, authors who should be known but aren't, and great writers whom one had never guessed to have had any concrete opinions about mountains. It is the diversity which makes it a book for lazy reading; from the very different types of mountain affection expressed, say, by Wordsworth, Ruskin, and George Mallory, it is possible to choose to suit the mood of the moment, and having chosen, to continue with other pieces in the same line. Then another day, another mood. This is its chief advantage over a book like "The Englishman in the Alps"—besides the obvious one that Irving's anthology contains the modern writers too. And the Englishman has, thank goodness, at last admitted to his Alps the Frenchman, the German, the Italian. Besides such names as Goethe and Chateaubriand, there are the climbers, Guido Rey, Christian Klucker, and Julius Kugy. One can wander at will among these, picking at their opinions on the one focusing point which holds so diverse a multitude together—the Mountain Way.

Two criticisms that a first glance inclined me to make were swept happily out of the way. I thought there would not be enough about the people on and among the mountains, as opposed to the beauty of the mountains themselves. Reactions are very different; and it is right, however much a man feel himself, like Hilaire Belloc, swallowed up in the greatness of his surroundings, to be reminded continually of the variety of personal approaches. The problem is, as A. D. Godley puts it, to show "to what canons of beauty so many yards of snow or ice or rock placed on an inclined plane really do conform; and why these singular formations should be admired by humanity." The humanity counts too.

The second criticism is less easily quenched. As a negative to the desire to climb mountains it is good to know the opinions of those who do not, and who glory in it. Godley again puts the objections, and Ruskin diatribes on "greasy poles." We might add Dr. Johnson, and the difficulties Hannibal for instance, "the first Alpinist," got into over his Alps. And rock-climbing at any rate has been described,

with jazz music and cup finals, as one of the post-war fevers. The antagonists are sometimes almost as mighty as the supporters.

There is some very lovely poetry in this book, and some very fine prose, of all periods. The prose is perhaps of a better level than the poetry; some of the poems seem to have not much but their sincerity to them, and one or two, Keats's "Solitude" for instance, and the twenty-fourth psalm, are not specially concerned with mountains. Yet it is worth the very impressive array of poets—as Goethe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, Keats, Rossetti, Clough, Tennyson, and a modern mountain poet like Geoffrey Winthrop Young—to keep the symmetry of the thing, until we realise that mountains have perhaps long been "something far more deeply interfused" than we knew. And it is a new and exciting experience to sit with them: with Rossetti, on the hill-top, where

"Yet for this hour I still may here be stayed
And see the gold air and the silver fade
And the last bird fly into the last light,"

or Wordsworth, when he saw

"Glory beyond all glory ever seen
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul."

In conclusion then, this is a book for dreaming upon. Old favourites may be read in favourite passages, new ones may be discovered. As an anthology, too, it has this over most anthologies, that there is the one specific object, mountains, in every writer's mind; and this gives a unity, a measure, as it were, of the writers, by the single fixed scale. The selections are on the whole extremely well made, to bring out the diversity of the writers as well as to give their best writing. They form an enduring, as well as an exciting collection.

C. W. F. N.

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

This is a constructive book, full of ideas. Not all of them, however, will appeal to our more selfish and conservative natures. To some extent we all object to hikers and new-comers, new paths, and new guest-houses, unless we are using them. Prof. Stapleton, however, wants more of them. He is not in favour of National Parks merely to *preserve* the hill-country; he goes further and wants National Lands which will play a great part in our material and non-material development. He wants to exploit the hill lands to their fullest extent for the benefit of everyone—farmer and tripper. A considerable part of the book is devoted to showing how the hill-pastures could be improved while at the same time retaining their natural, if not their pristine, beauty. Though my better nature

agrees with most of these proposals, I cannot see that to multiply roads is such an important factor from the tourist's point of view. Little enough of Britain is really inaccessible to those with initiative. What is wanted is, by propaganda and education, to create more initiative; not to remove the already scant scope for it by building roads everywhere. If it were a duller book it would be the *duty* of climbers to read it; as it is, however, it is merely a pleasure.

R. A. H.

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

I have often admired, though I confess less often envied, Tilman's method of living on the land in his Himalayan expeditions. This book is interesting as revealing some of the experiences that have led to the formation of this most effective technique. "Ten years hard" breaking the scrub, no wormwood at that, might have sapped the energy of most people, but he capped that with a lone ride across 3,000 miles of darkest Africa, which itself has rather paled at the insult, on a bicycle. This type of madness is as attractive to mountaineers as it was to the douanier at Gombola, who gave more practical expression to his feelings than can be expected of even the most enthusiastic reader, in a proffered kiss and a bunch of bananas.

In the intervals when coffee could be allowed to percolate on its own, Tilman with Shipton found time to climb those surprising peaks Kilimanjaro, Kenya, and Ruwenzori. Kilimanjaro, at 19,700 feet, enjoys the distinction of being the highest mountain in Africa, but is otherwise somewhat uninspiring. After failing with Shipton to locate the highest of the many summits in 1930, Tilman returned three years later and ascended the mountain alone.

There is an exciting account of a most enterprising traverse of the twin peaks Batian and Nelion on Mt. Kenya. This included the first ascent of the West ridge.

On Ruwenzori the ascent was only the third successful one. This mountain, unique historically and geographically, places formidable obstacles in the climber's path, for besides the swirling mists which had hidden it so successfully for seventeen centuries, he has to contend with noisome mud, deceptive moss, and most of the more aggressive forms of vegetation.

F. A. P.

SON OF THE MOUNTAINS. By Julius Kugy, translated by H. E. G. Tyndale. (Nelson. 1938. 7/6.)

To readers of mountaineering literature, Dr. Kugy needs no introduction. Most of us have read *Alpine Pilgrimage*, and his latest work conforms to his high standard. It tells the life of an alpine guide. Accounts of actual climbs form but half of the book, since Anton Oitzinger, the hero, took up guiding at a later life than most

of the guides of the western alps. The first seventy pages deal with his early life, as a woodman, and draws a graphic picture of the prevailing conditions in Bulgaria in the closing years of the last century. The chapter "Among Thieves" gives blood-curdling accounts of the brutalities of the Bulgarian robber bands which infested the forests and preyed mercilessly on all peaceful traders. Then we have accounts of some of his great climbs from Valbruna—Montasch, Wischberg, and many others in both summer and winter. Perhaps the most delightful chapter of all is about bivouacs. No one who has spent a night on a mountain, whether impromptu or otherwise, will fail to recapture the romance and poetry of that occasion, while the attendant miseries will lie forgotten. In those inexperienced in bivouacs, like the vast majority of present-day climbers, it cannot fail to arouse a keen desire for that wonderful adventure. Incidentally Dr. Kugy gives a wonderful recipe for bivouac soup guaranteed to keep the cold out. An interesting chapter is devoted to the war and all its sorrows for a mountain people fighting their neighbours on the opposite side of the range. Lastly we have the account of the successful struggle of Oitzinger to rebuild his home out of the smouldering ruins of his former prosperity.

The book is well printed and nicely illustrated. At first sight the inclusion of only one map seems insufficient, since the vast majority of the readers will have never been to the Julians. However, this is no guide-book, and is not intended to be one. It is presented as a life-story, and as a life-story it can be confidently recommended.

T. A. H. P.

THE LAKES

THE HILLS OF LAKELAND. Written and Illustrated by W. Heaton Cooper. (Frederick Warne & Co., Ltd. 1938. 15/-.)

THE SILENT TRAVELLER. By Chiang Yee. (Country Life. 1937. 7/6.)

THE LAKELAND LANDSCAPE. By Geoffrey Clark and W. Harding Thompson. (A. & C. Black. 1938. 7/6.)

A ROAD POLICY FOR THE LAKE DISTRICT. (Friends of the Lake District, 1939.)

THE JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT. Edited by G. R. Speaker. (Vol. xii, No. 32. 1938. 4/-.)

The first two books on this list are of considerably more interest than the third, which is no more than a routine volume in a series entitled the "County Landscapes." Both Mr. Heaton Cooper and Mr. Chiang Yee are artists first and authors afterwards, and although in both books the text is more interesting than in many volumes of this kind, in both cases it is the illustrations that matter. Most climbers already know Mr. Heaton Cooper's drawings in the Fell and

Rock guides. It is generally agreed that they are not only admirable for their purpose, but an artistic success in themselves; some are reproduced here along with some thirty other monochrome plates, and confirm how successfully the artist can be accurate (where it is necessary) and at the same time capture the spirit of the Lakeland hills. The colour plates—of which there are sixteen—are really superb, and are enhanced by good reproduction; no British hills have the solid contrasts of the Alps or Norwegian mountains, for their charm lies in the more subtle combinations of brown, blue, and yellow; “Ennerdale from Great Gable” and “A Lakeland Stream” are particularly good examples of this.

Mr. Chiang Yee spent only a week or so in the Lakes (Mr. Cooper lives there), and those two weeks were very wet indeed; but I think this probably suited his brush and style: witness “Storm on the Scree, Wastwater.” His is a more personal view than Mr. Heaton Cooper’s and quite as successful, whilst his accompanying text is better. He was horrified by the char-a-banc driver who was “a man without taste, who drove too fast, shouting the names of lakes and mountains, pointing out the properties of famous noblemen, etc., without giving us any opportunity of enjoying the actual scenery.” After this all-in tour he was wiser and spent the rest of his stay on his feet on the fells (the foothills rather than the high tops), or rowing on Derwentwater by moonlight. Certainly this is a charming if slight book, but the same can hardly be said of *The Lakeland Landscape*, which is altogether different; it is difficult to see the exact purpose of the numerous books of this class, which set out to “appreciate” a tract of country, as if answering a School Certificate question on English Literature. The converted will not be interested, as their appreciation does not need to be stimulated, whilst those who have not been there are not likely to be encouraged by the lists of names of peaks and valleys, which will mean little to them; Mr. Cooper’s book would be a far more effective means of conversion. The book has half an eye on the motorist, and there is a faint feeling all through of a wish to catalogue, as in: “It would be difficult to arrange the lakes in any order of merit as regards their beauty, for each has an individual character”; who but the motorist would want to? There is also a map with special colours for “Country of special landscape value.” This rather reminds one of Ruth Macaulay’s “Patriotic Protest,” in which she is proving that all the wonders of the Continent can be paralleled at home:

“Turning to cathedrals, and the overgrown St. Peter’s,
We must admit that in mere bulk the Roman race has beat us.
But shall we weigh art by the ton, or measure faith by metres?”

The illustration on page 48 is mis-captioned.

There is no suggestion of pandering to the taste of the motorist in the latest pamphlet of the Friends of the Lake District: it is an

extremely well-argued case, all the better for being constructive. Naturally—and rightly—the proposed Styne Head and Hardknott roads are not welcomed; but if Telford had not driven his road over Ogwen pass over a century ago, would the same outcry be raised by the Climbers' and Rucksack Clubs? Probably there would be, though not one in twenty regrets these roads now.

Mr. Chiang Yee makes another welcome appearance in the Fell and Rock journal, which is its usual elegantly produced self. Purely domestic matters and reviews (no fewer than thirty pages of the latter) occupy half the space, but the rest is all interesting, particularly the article on John Woodcock Graves. The illustrations are, as usual, excellent, and are reproduced on a pleasant toned paper. Gerald Lacey, not for the first time, has the cream—as well as an instructive article—and even two Welsh photos which seem to bear out a contention made before that the Lakes photograph better; let us hope that the Climbers' Club can falsify this next year. The most substantial article is by F. H. F. Simpson, substantial in thought but not heavy. The number of new climbs is highly encouraging. E. V.

MR. SMYTHE

THE VALLEY OF FLOWERS. By F. S. Smythe. (Hodder & Stoughton. 1938. 18/-.)

PEAKS AND VALLEYS. By F. S. Smythe. (A. & C. Black. 1938. 12/6.)

The Valley of Flowers is written to a large extent for the botanist. There was, I believe, a limited two-guinea edition which included a packet of seeds. From the mountaineers' standpoint there are some good accounts of climbs in the Garhwal district which include the ascents of Nilgiri Parbat and the Mana Peak. The illustrations, which are all coloured, do full justice to the flowers, though they rarely refer to the climbs. Unless, therefore, one has *Peaks and Valleys* to consult, one is left with very little idea of the appearance of these magnificent mountains. Like some others of his later books, this one occasionally suffers from a surfeit of rather vague philosophical speculation. In many ways, however, it is excellent. It is a book to be enjoyed in an uncritical and subjective attitude. It will certainly be appreciated by a wide public.

Peaks and Valleys is one of those welcome books which consist almost entirely of photographs. All of them are good, many of them are superb. About half of them are Alpine, and about half were taken on the author's 1937 Garhwal expedition. For the photographer there are useful comments on exposure, composition, etc., in the brief captions accompanying each plate. The standard of photographic reproduction maintained in this book, its predecessors, the Nanga Parbat book, and one or two others, shows that in England

we are able to produce mountain books comparable to those of Germany, even if the illustrations of many recent publications might suggest otherwise.

R. A. H.

CAMBRIDGE MOUNTAINEERING. 1938. Edited by C. W. F. Noyce. (R. I. Severs, Cambridge. 3/6.)

LADIES' SCOTTISH CLIMBING CLUB JOURNAL. No. 2, 1938. Edited by Dorothy Crerar. (13 West Castle Road, Edinburgh. 3/6.)

THE BRITISH SKI YEAR-BOOK. Vol. IX, No. 19, 1938. Edited by Arnold Lunn. (Ski Club of Great Britain. 10/6.)

THE RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL. Vol. IX, No. 1, 1938. Edited by Priestley Phillips. (Manchester, 4/-.)

SONGS FOR CLIMBERS. Edited by B. H. Humble and W. M. McLellan.

Reading these four journals in conjunction, one realises that the journals of Climbing Clubs fall into two rough categories—those which are primarily manifestations of Club keenness, and those which are in addition contributions to mountaineering literature. To produce a journal of the latter type, the Editor must be able to lay his hands both on men who can climb and men who can write; either he must procure articles whose content is such that inelegancies of style may be overlooked—the journal of a Club of baboons would have a good outside sale—or he must find people who can describe ordinary days and episodes better than ordinarily. As a matter of mathematics, the quality of a Club's journal should bear a direct relation to the number of its members. A journal needs, perhaps, ten articles to make it a journal at all. The Editor of a Club with five hundred members will need only to raise contributions from 2 per cent. of the available sources. The Editor of a Club of fifty members will have to tap 20 per cent. And seeing how hard it appears to be to get even 2 per cent. to set pen to paper, one understands the difficulty of a small Club in producing a journal at all; and there is the financial difficulty on top of that.

Yet many small Clubs think it worth while to go into print; and unless one is to say that all journals are vanity—and a fair part of all of them, as a matter of fact, are—one must allow that every journal which is produced is a good thing, in that it is at once an output of, and a stimulant to, a Club's mountaineering enthusiasm. In so far as a Club journal caters only for members of the Club, it is nobody's concern but the members' to criticise it. However, there has never been, so far as I know, a Club journal of which one copy was sent to each member and none to anyone else. Every Editor, however humble, has a pile of spare copies in his room, and it is their existence which gives the reviewer his licence.

Both the *Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club Journal* and *Cambridge Mountaineering*, 1938, are thin. In point of fact, *Cambridge Mountaineering* is a bit fatter, because its print is bigger and its paper thicker; but its

Editor has been sorely pressed to bring his child to the birth at all. His own article is, of course, good, describing some fine climbs modestly and well ; but it is much too short, and his title—"Four Alps"—surely misuses a word which ought to be kept below the snowline ? The other good thing in this journal is an article, "Why Climb Everest ?" by J. L. Longland ; and if it is rather cheating for a University Club to fall back on a graduate of ten years' standing, one can in this case overlook it, as few climbers would otherwise have seen the article in the *Travel Log* from which it is reprinted. The other contributors are a silent set of men. Mr. Longland gets them as far as p. 10 ; eight terse articles follow—the end of each an opportunity to leave the rest of the page blank—but on p. 36 they are finished, and the rest of it is meets, notes, reviews, and advertisements. Two of the illustrations do, and three do not, justify the excellent way in which they are reproduced.

The L.S.C.C.J., whose revival is welcome after a lapse of nine years, is decidedly feminine in tone. For the most part, however, the articles are rather ordinary, behind their exclamation marks ; but the members of the Club have been active in various parts of the world, and the journal is far from being parochial. There is an amusing account of a notable attempt on the Cuillin ridge, but for the most part there is too much sentimentality among these ladies when they get north of the Tweed. Nevertheless, it will be a pity if we have to wait another nine years for the appearance of No. 3 of this journal.

The *British Ski Year-Book* and the *Rucksack Club Journal* are productions which will be widely read by others than those to whom they are sent free. The *Ski Year-Book*, of course, is largely concerned with technical matters and with racing, but some fifty closely printed and finely illustrated pages of it deal with those aspects of ski-ing which appeal to the mountaineer. In these, Colin Wyatt, with his journey through Arctic Lapland and another article on glacier ski-ing near St. Moritz, and Arnold Lunn, the Editor, are the outstanding contributors ; the others are mostly rather stark. Arnold Lunn's article, "Forty Years of Ski-ing," is a model of what reminiscent mountain writing should be.

But for the pure climber, the *Rucksack Club Journal* must attract more. Its Editor, as usual, has a wealth of talent at his disposal. His contributors do not range outside Europe, but the politics of that continent have not prevented them from traversing it very freely : the Caucasus, the Lofoten and the Norwegian mainland, Corsica, the Dolomites, the Swiss Alps, Scotland, Wales and "Th' Ole." Nor is variety all they have to offer ; not only do they go to these places, but when they get there they do something ; all except Frank Kiernan, who does nothing with such brilliance that it does not matter. Nearly all the other articles are vigorous narratives, well told and often picked out with an excellent touch of humour. G. A. Deane's article on Lofoten is illustrated with perhaps the best series of photographs

which has yet been published on that locality. One query: Of what were J. E. Byrom's "Innocents on Clogwyn" innocent? They did not climb the Narrow Slab; perhaps that is what he means. The whole production of this journal is excellent, and the Editor, who is apparently a dual personality called Robin Gray (on the cover) and Priestly Phillips (in the text), hide(s) away his (their?) remarks somewhere in the middle, is greatly to be congratulated.

And what of *Songs for Climbers*? It was perhaps a pity that one of the Editors of this collection also happened to be a printer and publisher. Climbing songs are all very well. A few in this collection read moderately well, though my own impression is that singing would dull their flavour; on the other hand it is *possible*, I suppose, that singing would redeem some of those which to the eye seem to lack pep.

Chorus: Yo ho! You climbers!
Yo ho! You climbers!
Yo ho! Yo ho! Yo ho!

Or again:

Chorus: Oh! the climbers. Oh! the climbers,
Oh! the men who go to climb.
I'm so happy when I'm climbing,
For the sport is so sublime.

But it would have to be no mean choir. Anyhow, let us admit that this book fills a need, because otherwise someone may come along and fill it again. A. D. M. C.

BULLETIN OF THE MIDLAND ASSOCIATION OF MOUNTAINEERS. No. 5,
June 1938. Edited by E. W. Steeple and W. O. Duncan.
(Birmingham.)

A small number but full of "meat." Jenkins takes pride of place with an account of his and Taylor's first ascent of the North face of Tetnuld in the Caucasus in 1937; they enjoyed fine weather and good conditions (they were wearing crampons for over twelve hours) and thoroughly deserved their success. Professor Schwarzgruber, who suggested the ascent to them, contributes a really magnificent photograph of the mountain. Entirely different but equally interesting in its way is Walter Barrow's "Recollections of Early Birmingham Members of the Alpine Club"; these include Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Alfred Wills, and C. E. Mathews, the first president of the Climbers' Club, and we are delighted with the story of how, high on Mont Blanc, he found an exhausted climber and revived him with rolls and butter, *pâté de foie gras*, and a glass of champagne. On another occasion he "served a dinner of six courses including coffee and liqueurs" in an Alpine hut. The notes show that the club is active both at home and abroad. E. V.

APPALACHIA. Magazines Nos. 85 and 86, June and December 1938.

Edited by Christine L. Reid. (5 Joy Street, Boston. 75 cents.)

The Appalachian Mountain Club publishes a monthly bulletin and, twice a year, a "Magazine number"; they are excellent publications, and so they ought to be with an Editor, an Assistant Editor, eleven editorial assistants, and three more for "special publications." This may be partly explained by the very wide field which is covered, as, apart from mountaineering proper, there are more general travel articles and sections on ski-ing, canoeing, National Parks, and Trails. To take the June number first, there is an interesting article on New York rock climbs, including one in the Shawangunks "whose finish overhangs the start" and other groups; there are some impressive photographs. John H. Talbott describes a fascinating journey across the Peruvian Andes; he had little or no mountaineering, but more than Henry C. Stetson; it is rather puzzling to account for the inclusion of the latter's article, which is called "Submerged Valleys of the Continental Margin" and describes the methods of "sea surveys" on the American coast. Is this the trans-atlantic equivalent of pot-holing?

By far the most interesting article in the December number is the first ascent of the North face of Mount Robson, a snow and ice climb involving three nights out and fifty-pound packs on the first day. Harrison Butterworth describes, in a modest and vivid article, the second ascent of the Devil's Tower, which sounds an exceedingly severe climb, and the impressive plates bear this out; the only snag would appear to be that as it lies in a National Park the authorities sent the leader "permission to climb the Tower by legitimate means with a party of four." When National Parks are in the air, as in this country at the moment, this sentence gives rise to various interesting speculations; the next article deals with the maintenance of these parks "in their primeval condition," and it appears that all visitors are fairly strictly regulated. There is also in this number an appreciative review of *The Night-Climbers of Cambridge*. Altogether two excellent numbers. E. V.

YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL. Vol. VII, No. 23, 1938.

Edited by Ernest E. Roberts. (Leeds. 4/-.)

Nineteen-thirty-eight finds Yorkshire Ramblers battling with the elements in most of the delightful places to which the Celts were lucky enough to be banished.

The journal opens with two alpine articles, followed by an account by D. L. Reed of one of those chastening winter expeditions to the Lakes, when mountaineering presumption was treated no better than it deserved. M. Botterill's saga of ten years' blending of sea and mountain makes good reading, and A. B. Goggs has made good use of a canoe in one of the few remaining districts unsullied by motor

roads, Knoydart. Arthur Bonner debunks the Druid myth of Chislehurst Caves, and the editor leads expeditions of Himalayan proportions, armed with coracles, to the South Welsh Caves.

When exploring Irish caves it is only appropriate that Bartlett and Gowing should use gelignite, though there is as yet no confirmation of the rumour that they have recently been trying to open up a new pot in that intriguing system at Leicester Square.

F. A. P.

CAMPING. Vol. XXXV, No. 2, February 1939. Edited by A. Papps. (39 Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1. 6d.)

This publication is the organ of the Camping Club, which includes a Mountaineering Section amongst its many sections; we are, however, not told very much of its activities, the only recorded item being an account of the Annual Dinner. There are several articles of interest to the general reader—on photography, Nature Notes and so on—and an appreciative description of a tour in south-west Ireland. We feel bound to protest at their reviewer's statement that the *Climbers' Club Journal* is printed on "newsprint" paper; if this was newsprint, the daily papers would cost about 6d. a copy!

E. V.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Members will have seen from the annual report that Helyg was filled to capacity, most week-ends, from September to May ; with the steady increase in membership—for which Helyg itself is largely responsible—this has been obvious for some time to the Custodian and others, and various schemes have been discussed by the committee to meet it ; the final result is the Ynys Ettws project which is outlined in a separate article. Should all go well the latter should be ready by next September.

The usual club meets were held at Easter, Whitsun, and Christmas. The University clubs came as in other years, Oxford in March, Liverpool in June, and Cambridge just before Christmas ; the last had the better weather and a new climb was recorded on Craig yr Ysfa. The Imperial College Mountaineering Club were also there in April. Reading through the Log Book, one or two incidents there are worth noting, and pride of place must be given to the heartfelt *cri de cœur* on March 14, a protest against the “appalling vandalism” of the removal of the German notices we all know so well “. . . any pad, obdurate matter, etc.” Some time in June, B. McKenna included a sheep in his party when making an ascent of part of the Central Gully on Lliwedd. In July A. D. M. Cox made some new routes on Craig yr Ysfa, whilst working on the new guide-book. In connection with the Lliwedd guide J. M. Edwards spent a month camping beneath or climbing on that cliff ; the fruits of his labours will soon appear, but two of his many new climbs should be mentioned—the extension of Purgatory by two 100-foot pitches and the first complete unaided ascent of the Central Gully Direct.

* * *

Dr. Martinez noted in the Log on March 6 that the stretcher used when the accident occurred on Tryfan that day was incomplete ; this, however, was not the stretcher at Helyg, which he has since inspected and found quite in order.

* * *

A long walk by W. E. Capel-Cure and R. M. Hamer became the subject of some rather unwelcome publicity in the Press. As many members may have seen the latter, and in fairness to the participants, we have transcribed their *apologia* from the Log. Their actual walk

was the "Three-thousand Footers," but they point out that as they used the Snowdon railway at the start there was never any suggestion of attempting a "record." They go on to say :

"Our attempt received ludicrous publicity, mainly owing to the newspaper value of there being a woman in the party. We regret the publicity and agree that :

(i) The publishing of climbing and walking 'records' is undesirable.

(ii) That it is unsuitable that the Climbers' Club be connected with any such publicity (and we are sorry that it has been).

(iii) That it is offensive that an appearance of rivalry with the Rucksack Club should be given. We have therefore written to the Secretary of the Rucksack Club explaining the information that was given to the Press and regretting the unfortunate turn that was given to it in print."

* * *

At the time of writing the Access to Mountains Bill has passed its second reading in the House of Commons ; in North Wales we are luckier than in other parts, but it is certain that whatever their politics most climbers will support it. Even if it is thrown out at a later stage it will have done a lot of good.

* * *

We very much regret that the captions of the illustrations in Mr. Andrews' second article on the Cornish Cliffs in last year's *Journal* were transposed. They should read as follows :

Fig. 15.—Wall of Rosemergy Pillar.

Fig. 16.—Brandys Zawn.

Fig. 17.—Window Ridge.

* * *

With Geoffrey Bartrum in the chair for the first time, the success of the Annual Dinner was assured from the start. It appeared that about the same number as usual were present, but even so the number of members attending has always seemed disproportionately low in the last few years. Those that were there enjoyed some excellent speeches, and the President's very full survey of the club's activities paid tribute to all the very hard work that Mr. Donkin has done in his three years of office—the electrification of Helyg and the new series of guides alone would make any term notable ; every activity of the club has had his continuous help, and I would like to pay tribute here to all the encouragement he has given me in the production of the *Journal*. Geoffrey Young made this tribute to the "triune capacity of the new President" at the end of his speech :

Whether he rule where supple, sensuous campers
haunt Helyg's hectically-heated hearth,
and all a luxury of ohms and amperes
light younger Decades on their downward path :—

Whether he reign within those whispered wallings
that veil the long-dead glaciers of Cwm Glas
and hurl a timely thunder of stone-fallings
athwart the motor-wailings of the Pass :—

Whether he sit enthroned on that stark Mount
above cliff-caverns measureless to man,
where Cornish Heroes triumph'd—or took the Count !—
where Andrews rules and also Bosig ran,
and, King within his Count-House, heaps our gains
on Bosigrandruidical remains :—

The King of Hearts it was, you may recall,
who trumped the Knave within his Counting Hall,
so—wish him doubly wise !—for here's the rub—
this King of Hearts perforce must lead a Club !—
the Club that calls *our* Hearts !

To Geoffrey Bartrum

—(Geoffreys are sound, whatever name comes arter 'em !)—
here's Triple Health ! . . . Let the toast Peak-and-Pass !
Raise Helyg, Gentlemen ! . . . And drain your whole Cwm Glas !

* * *

In this number, the first of Volume VI and the sixty-fifth in all, certain changes have been made. The most important is the reduction in the size from $9\frac{1}{2}$ by 6 inches to $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which has been made from motives both of appearance and economy ; the larger size has remained unchanged since 1899 and had only tradition to recommend it ; in fact would have been altered earlier but for the fact that to change in the middle of a volume would have been undesirable. The cover, too, has been altered. A. D. Malcolm, who has now succeeded E. Noel Bowman as secretary, has my thanks for his editorial assistance, though his new job will probably be even more arduous.

* * *

The address of Mr. E. S. Chantrell and Mr. B. J. Watson is now 11 Gerrard Road (Flat 2), Wallasey, Cheshire. Mr. Chantrell's telephone number (day-time only) is Central 5611.

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL"

SIR,—

R. J. Collinson must be congratulated on his fine series of photographs which you published in your issue for 1938.

In his account of the history of the piton on the Holly Tree Wall he makes this observation: "The ultimate history of this piton is veiled in a certain amount of mystery, and it has again been removed" (p. 199).

There is actually no mystery at all. In the Helyg Log, under the date October 6th, 1934, the following amusing entry occurs, written in the neat round hand which is such a prominent feature of the Log:

"Lazarus Climb. Somewhat to our astonishment on doing this very pleasant little route, when we came to the one or two most delectable moves on the whole climb, near the top, we found a rusty piece of steel inserted apparently as a hand hold. It was inserted in a crack and difficult to avoid. This object appeared to have been made roughly (probably hand-done) into the shape of a rock piton, having a ring at the upper end. The precise position was two to three feet below the very large and useful rock belay in the corner. We believe that the previous piton, in a good spot rather lower and not interfering with the actual climbing, came loose and was taken out. This is a pity, perhaps, for association's sake, especially as it was of no practical concern, being less pleasant to use than the aforesaid large rock belay. The steel object was loose. We removed it.

"J. M. E., A. M. D'A."

So far as I know, this closed the piton incident.

Yours sincerely,

J. A. MARTINEZ.

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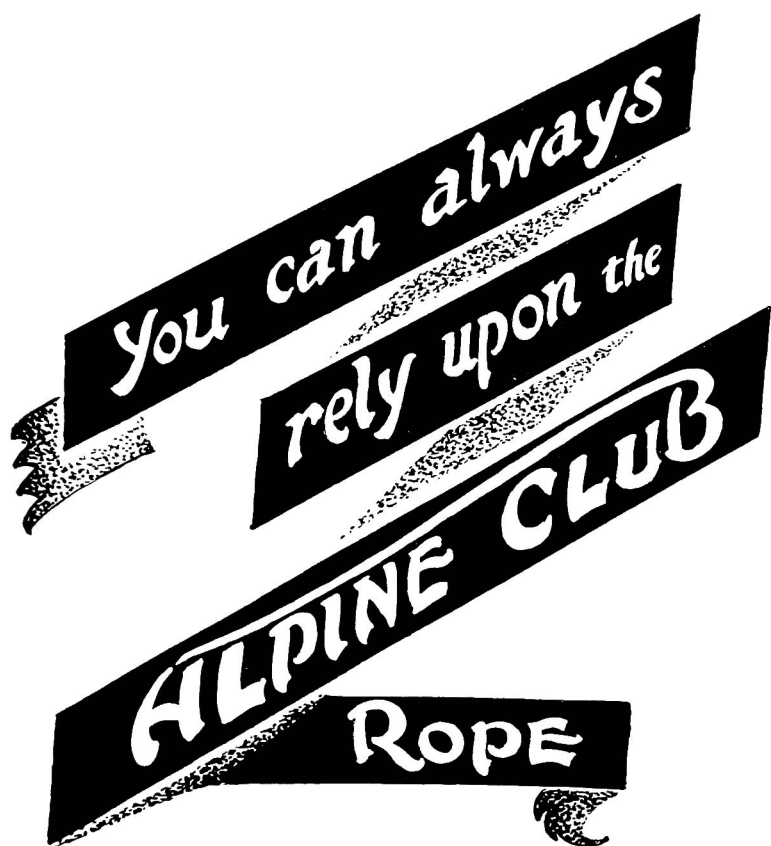
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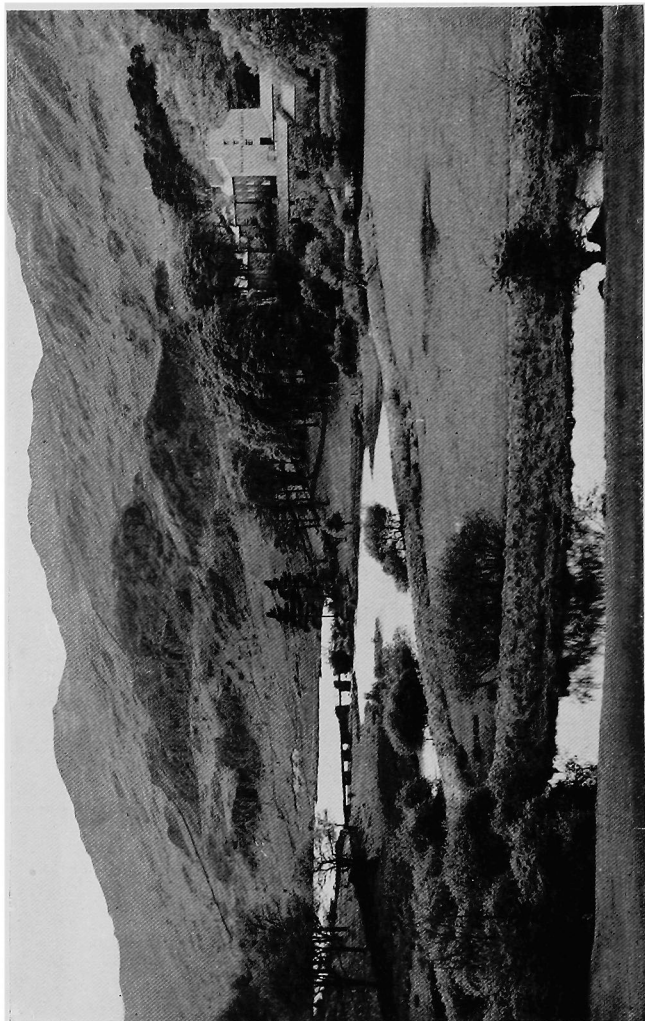


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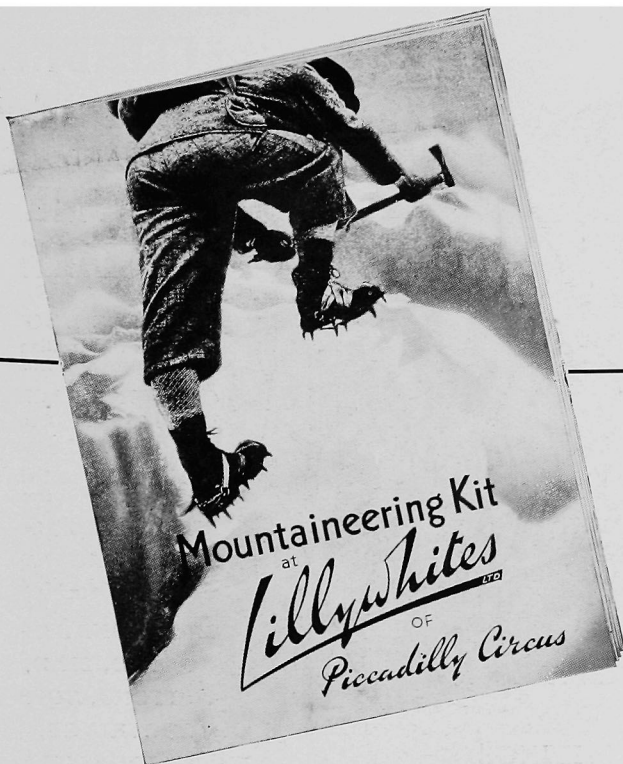
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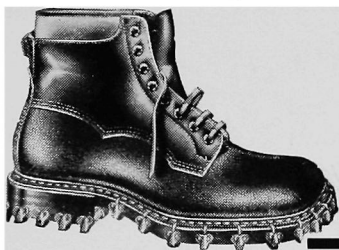
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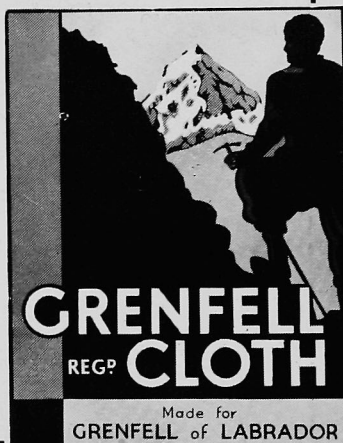
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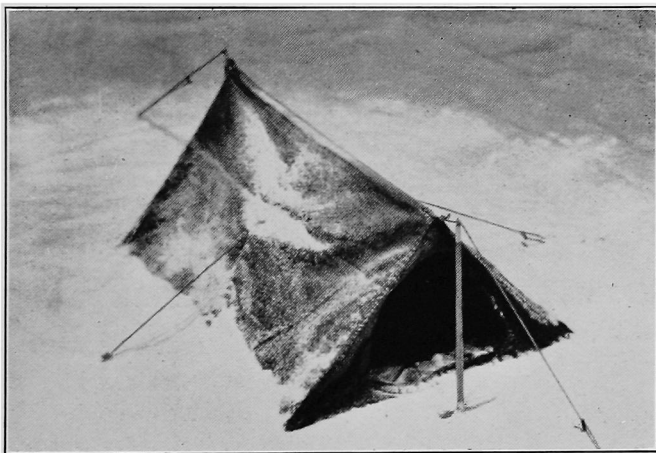
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