

THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB
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EDITED BY
A. D. M. COX

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THE GROWTH OF THE CLUB

(" The Club has now approximately 475 members and it is growing fast. The Committee have decided to refer the question whether membership should be allowed to grow unchecked, or whether it should be limited, to the general opinion of the Club, and they propose in the next Journal to state side by side the case for and against the limitation of membership and to ask members to decide a matter of such great importance to them and to the Club in future years."—*Extract from the Annual Report*, 1946).

A STATEMENT OF THE CASE FOR LIMITATION OF MEMBERSHIP

F. H. KEENLYSIDE

The Committee have for some time been giving attention to the question whether the membership of the Club should be limited or not. This question is of such importance to the future of the Club that it must be decided by the Club for themselves. It is for you to choose whether the Club shall be allowed to grow indefinitely or whether, in order to preserve its distinctive character, a limit should be set to this expansion.

The position is this. During the war the membership of the Club remained practically stationary, moving only from 427 in January, 1942 to 433 in May, 1945. Since then it has grown rapidly to 486 in March, 1947. The present rate of growth is therefore fifty-three in twenty-three months, or 6·38 per cent.

per annum. Assuming a mere continuance of this rate, the membership would be 902 in ten years time and 1,671 in twenty years. If the pace increases as the result of modern publicity, as it may well do, the figures would be even more alarming. Helyg is already uncomfortably full at summer week-ends. We may hope that in a few years the Government will have permitted us to build the R. W. Lloyd hut, at Ynys Ettws, but we should need at least four huts by 1967 and thereafter a steadily accelerating building programme. Do we want this? Do we wish to turn North Wales into a built-up area? What proportion of members would be able to attend the Annual General Meeting and Dinner?

With the present membership of the Club, most members know personally a relatively high proportion of their active fellow-members. One can expect to find friends at Helyg. With a greatly enlarged membership the personal link, which is the *sine qua non* of a club, must disappear. We believe that there is in the Club a tradition of good climbing handed on from the pioneers of British rocks and enriched by each succeeding generation. This tradition can be continued unless the Club grows unwieldily large; if new recruits flow in faster than they can be absorbed into this tradition the character and the *raison-d'être* of the Club is lost. This applies even in lowly practical details; if the intake of new members rises above the optimum, they cannot be brought to know the ropes at Helyg and living conditions there must deteriorate.

Indeed the distinctive feature of a club *qua* club is that its membership is limited, either by a strict discrimination amongst candidates offering for election, or by a qualification which is automatically restrictive, or by an upper limit on the total of members. The method of careful discrimination is not suitable for us because so many new members are very young and it is impossible to know enough about them and their records. The imposition of a climbing qualification (as by the Alpine Club, G.H.M., Karabiner Club and others) would be contrary to Rule 2 and to past policy; if this method be rejected, as I think it should, we are left with the imposition of straight limitation of numbers. It has been suggested that this would be unworkable; it has, however, worked well in practice with many clubs for many years. Once the total was reached, a waiting list

would be needed and the Committee would have to fill vacancies from this list. In doing so, they would be influenced by many factors, such as the extent of the support within the Club, the candidate's climbing record and so on. It would be my hope that the Committee would continue to favour a high proportion of young candidates, particularly members of University Clubs with which we maintain specially close relations. It is generally held to be the mark of a good club that it has a waiting list, and the Climbers' Club should not be shy of this distinction.

If we refuse to face limitation, we shall sink from the level of a Club to that of an Association ; we should place ourselves on a par with, say, the Y.H.A. or the A.A. These are admirable organisations, run on the basis that you pay your money and receive certain services ; there is no personal connection between the members, and they are certainly not clubs.

It is sometimes argued that any kind of limitation on membership would be contrary to the objects of the Club as defined by Rule 1, namely "to encourage mountaineering and hill-walking, particularly in England, Ireland and Wales, and to further the interests of science and art in relation thereto." It does not follow from this that everybody is to be encouraged to join the Climbers' Club ; far from it. Mountaineering is encouraged by the Club in many ways, by support (both in cash and in personnel) for the B.M.C. ; by supplying speakers on request to University Clubs, Y.H.A. groups, etc. ; by initiating others ; by instructing military and other organised courses, and in many other ways. The Jockey Club encourages racing, but it does not seek to enrol all those interested in racing ; the Royal Academy does not elect everybody who wants to paint.

I do not deny that there are excellent mountaineering institutions such as the French Alpine Club or the D.O.A.V. that open their doors to all and sundry. If the Club wishes, the Climbers' Club can go the same way, but much would be lost and I, for one, should regret it. The Swiss Alpine Club has lost all cohesion as a Club ; the personal links and traditions which make a good Club something more than an organisation survive only in the Sections. We could follow the same course, but in doing so we should cease to be a Club and become an organisation of local Clubs. We have set up the B.M.C. to fill this role and there is no need to understudy that body.

A STATEMENT OF THE CASE AGAINST LIMITATION OF MEMBERSHIP

J. L. LONGLAND

It would be stupid not to begin by admitting the pleasures of belonging to a small and intimate club whose members know each other well. The mountaineering clubs were created almost as much to provide a framework for the activities of small groups of friends as to fulfil the aim which they all in varying degrees profess, which is to introduce new members to the hills, and to train them in the art of enjoying them safely.

Those early days must have been great fun. You started with a nucleus of climbers who were close friends, and perhaps shared the secrets of an unexplored climbing district. These in turn met other rare explorers and invited them to join the family, or spent their missionary zeal in introducing younger or older friends to their craft and helping to fit them to join the club. Even later still we used to drive up the Holyhead Road with fair certainty of being welcomed at Helyg by friends we had met there before. Huts, paths, climbs and dinners—all were places where familiar faces were expected and greeted. The others were members because they were your friends, not friends because they were members.

But does this nostalgic vision describe the Climbers' Club as it is today? Has the Club in fact been anything like this since the earliest days of our pious founders? Like the bird in the story, we ought to see where we have come from before deciding where we are going. In other words, let us have a look at the Club as it is today, and re-examine its objects and traditions, before we take the decisive step which will commit the Club's future. If a climbing club has a hundred members, it is perhaps possible for a conscientious secretary to know them all by sight. We left that number behind many years ago and now have more than 450 members. None of us can know them all, not even Stuart Chantrell or John Barford, and Helyg is nowadays a place to which one goes to make new acquaintances, and to admire the exploits of members who have till then been only names on the Club list. If we wanted to preserve the Club as the meeting

ground of mutual friends, it would not be merely a matter of stabilising membership at the present number. It would mean organising a revolution as the result of which four-fifths of us would be removed from membership of the Club, or a group of those who knew each other best going off and forming a splinter-club of their own, as the G.H.M. detached itself from the French Alpine Club.

What have our objects and traditions to say that is relevant to the proposal to limit the number of members? They are defined in Rules 1 and 2 of the Club's Constitution. Rule 1 tells us that our objects "shall be to encourage mountaineering and hill-walking, particularly in England, Ireland and Wales, and to further the interests of science and art in relation thereto." Rule 2 states that "All gentlemen interested in the objects of the Club, as defined in Rule 1, shall be eligible as Members." It is true that this second rule implies a limitation which excludes women from membership, and a purist might hold that it also conveys the hint of a test of social fitness, but otherwise the field of eligible candidates is as wide as the top of Glyder Fawr. In fact the Club's tradition is to do precisely the opposite of limiting its membership. It is a tradition of welcoming all those who share a belief in the importance of the objects of the Club, and of training as many people as possible to pursue those objects fitly.

This view of the Club's function can be tested against the facts of its history. The Climbers' Club has never been a localised club, with its members living mainly in one city, like the Rucksack Club. It has not kept closely to one climbing district, as the Fell and Rock Climbing Club has done, and though Helyg is the Club's strongly beating heart, and Wales its most loved playground, our members have never shown any sign of confining themselves to Snowdonia, or of professing a narrow patriotism for a few acres of rock which they consider their special preserve, and the Club would have been a different and a poorer club if they had. We have drawn our members from all over the British Isles and beyond, and they have won laurels for the Club in every mountain range of the world, so that the Club might almost deserve the description given to a considerably more august personage, that "its centre is everywhere and its circumference nowhere!"

It is no less the Club's tradition to promote the pursuit of mountaineering and to train as many as possible in this pursuit. Unlike many of our kindred clubs, we have no technical qualifications for entrance, no list of Munroes or Grade VI climbs. We welcome novices at the early age of 17. The Club has kept a traditionally open door through which large numbers of members of university mountaineering clubs who wish to continue climbing after they go down have passed. It is true that there is one very important qualification for new members which is not written into our Constitution, and this is simply that we expect them to be good chaps, before we admit them into the Club. And we keep this unwritten rule by insisting that proposer and seconder must have personal and if possible mountain knowledge of the candidate they put forward. The Club's safeguard against the wrong kind of member has not been the threat of being blackballed by a powerful central committee sitting in London, but the good sense and care for the Club's reputation of any two members in good standing who wish to sponsor a new one. In this way, a way solidly based on personal knowledge, the ripples have spread outwards, the individual cells have multiplied, and the Club has changed and expanded, and yet remained not only a club, but the club of all clubs whose membership is most sought after by the kind of people whom we are happiest to welcome as members.

If it is our tradition to welcome all those whom our own members consider likely to prove good members in their turn, it is in a special sense our responsibility not to break with this tradition at the present time. The Club has, as I see it, a special responsibility, first towards its own members, and in the next place towards ensuring the good name and the better future of mountaineering in this country. What safeguards do the Club's members expect, if they are to continue to be proud of the Club which they have joined? I do not believe that they expect the Club any longer to be just a family circle, a ring of well-known faces. But I do believe that they ask that new members, wherever and whenever they meet them, should be good members of the Club, devoted to its objects, trained in its traditions—and clean about the house. If they have any fears about a still expanding membership, it is only because they are not sure that a larger Club may not mean some dilution of these vital standards.

To this instinctive fear, and to the best ways of overcoming it, I want to return before I finish.

The wider responsibility which I believe any climbing club which is worthy of its traditions must now undertake is, quite simply, to play the fullest possible part in teaching the tens of thousands who are coming into the mountains for health and recreation those traditions on which British climbing clubs have been built—traditions of reverence for the hills, of good mountaineering, and of mutual help amongst mountaineers. The Club can shoulder this responsibility by doing two things, neither of which is sufficient by itself, since each reinforces the other.

The first is to participate actively in all sound training schemes which aim at spreading the practice of mountain craft as widely as possible. This is no new task for the Club. I sometimes think that the best job that Colin Kirkus ever did, among all the fine things he did, was to devote himself, week after week, to training in safe mountain habits the keen young climbers who gathered at the Youth Hostel at Idwal Cottage. More recently, the Club has followed his lead in organising or helping with training courses for the Army Cadets, the Council of Physical Recreation, and the Youth Hostels Association. It has also played an active, indeed through its members a major part in strengthening the hands of the British Mountaineering Council, of which almost the most important function is to promote mountain training on a very large scale. All this means that members of the Club are prepared to sacrifice time and pleasanter climbing to this special job, because in this way the Club can reach and help far greater numbers than we should ever wish to accept as members of the Club.

It may be said that in doing this the Club has done enough. Train the blighters by all means, but why spoil the Club by bringing them into it! I think that this view, though understandable, is wrong for two reasons. The first is that it is, as already mentioned, against the tradition of the Club, which is to welcome as members all those who share or are willing to learn to share our beliefs and practices. The second and more important reason is that, by not being afraid to expand our membership, we increase the direct influence for good which the Club can exert over the whole pattern of British mountain

habits. A small club can do much, a large club, provided it holds to its standards, can do that much the more. The ripples spread outwards, and more quickly reach the circumference of the pool.

I hope it will not be thought too vulgar to appeal to our instincts of self-preservation also. The crowds will come to the mountains—no longer, alas, our mountains—whether we do anything about them or not. But if we take no steps to tame and train and befriend the beast, both by helping in training courses for those outside the Club and by acting on the belief that we can make good members of those who might otherwise become very bad beasts indeed, we shall invite consequences which are already becoming all too familiar. Those wretched search-parties will drive us away from the hills not only at Bank Holidays, but over most of the year ; the stones will fall even thicker down the familiar climbs ; our own climbing will be distracted by the agonised attention with which we watch the bad rope technique of other parties ; there will be far more of the shouts, and the shorts, and the open hostility towards the toffs who think they invented climbing—as, poor fools, in fact they did ! more, too, of the broken bottles, and the sandwich papers poked between the crevices of summit cairns. All this has come upon us already, and we cannot turn back the clock, nor, unless a new Atlantis should rise glittering with new washed mountain ranges from the sea beyond Holyhead, shall we ever again be a little band of eccentric intimates, writing cryptically of our odd discoveries on Lliwedd in the manuscript book kept in the locked cupboard at Pen y pass.

All this does not mean turning the Climbers' Club into a homegrown imitation of the Swiss Alpine Club, though the S.A.C. with its huts and its standards and its qualified guides is a very good thing of its kind. Though I hope we shall take an always fuller share in the extra-mural activities I have mentioned—training courses, support of the B.M.C. and so on—in choosing our own new members we shall stick to the only limitation that matters, a limitation not in numbers, but in quality. And this we secure by continuing to insist on the guarantee of personal knowledge by two members of the Club, each of whom was in turn personally known to two other members before he was allowed to join the Club. Nor need an expanding member-

ship deprive us of our good tradition of being a sociable club. But it will at least prevent us from degenerating into the kind of social club in which we have only a hostile stare for the unknown member in the next armchair.

There are difficulties, of course, to be faced by a club which cheerfully accepts an expanding membership. The most obvious of these is the overcrowding of climbing huts. But are we to be frightened of a little more wise planning and wise spending? More members, as we have already learnt, mean more huts, in more places—and why ever not? An expanding membership will not itself overcrowd our climbing grounds. It will only ensure that those whom we shall in any case meet there will be, in much larger measure, better, safer and more congenial climbers than they sometimes are at present.

May I end by asking members once again to look into the record of the Club's history and achievements and ask themselves whether an arbitrary limitation of our membership would not be a break with our own traditions? There is no need for us to abdicate, because that is what limitation of membership would in the end mean. An increasing membership means that we cheerfully accept an increasing responsibility for the whole future of British mountaineering, and in doing this we shall not only ensure that the Club is continually infused with fresh and vigorous blood, but also, I believe, in the changed circumstances of today, fulfil the purpose which inspired its original founders.



MOUNT OLYMPUS

JOHN HUNT

DURING 1945-6 a number of British and Indian Officers and men of the Garrison in Greece availed themselves of the opportunities offered to explore, on foot and on ski, the Greek highlands in the Peloponnese, the main Pindus Range, and the massif of Mount Olympus.

Those of us who were stationed in Northern Greece were fortunate, in that Olympus itself lies at a distance of less than 80 miles from Salonika. The mountain provides a splendid spectacle in clear weather, across the bay, particularly during the winter months under its mantle of snow. The villages at its foot can be reached, in dry conditions, in some $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 hours' motoring from the port.

For those who are not familiar with this mountain of mythology, a few details of its location and recent history may be of interest. The massif, of which the summits of Olympus are part, consists of an area of high ground rising independently to the east of the main Pindus mountains and flanking the west side of Salonika Bay. Its height, only 9,480 feet, appears to be enhanced by the fact that Olympus, in addition to its independence of surrounding peaks, rises abruptly within a mile or so of the coast, and from early Autumn until the end of April its slopes above the 7,000 foot contour are well covered with snow.

There are five separate summits grouped under the title of the mountain. From north to south, these are :—Profitis Ilias (2,788 metres)—“ Prophet Elijah ”—an easy shale covered peak, on the top of which is a minute chapel which used to be visited annually in summer by the monks from the monastery of Ayios Ioannis, in the Mavrolongos Glen ; Stefani (2,909 metres), “ The Crown of Zeus,” an imposing curve of limestone arête, which was first climbed by Marcel Kurz in 1921 ; Mitika (2,917 metres) “ The Needle,” the highest point, which is more

broken, but scarcely less impressive when seen from its neighbours on the north and south ; Skala and Skolian (2,911 metres), which lie to the south of Mitika, and are less prominent summits, from which, however, fine precipices fall into the Tigania Glen.

Prior to the war, Olympus was infrequently visited. According to Marcel Kurz, whose book *Le Mont Olympe* deals admirably with the area, Mitika was first climbed as late as 1913, by two Swiss visitors Boissonas and Baud-Bony, accompanied by a protective escort of gendarmes. Indeed, it was not for several years after the close of World War I, that Olympus ceased to be a hide-out for bandits, and exploration was attended by some risks. Typical of other adventures was the experience of a German, Dr. Richter, who was captured together with his escort in 1910. The gendarmes were then killed, and the tourist was held to ransom for several months before a successful deal was made by the Turks with his captors.

More recently, the Greek Alpine Club, with an active Section in Salonika, built a fine cabin at the head of the Mavrolongos glen, some two thousand feet below the summits, and a few Greek and foreign Alpinists used to visit the higher reaches of the massif each year.

It was due to the kindness of the President of the G.A.C. that I was able to obtain the use of the Club Hut on Olympus for two months, in June and July 1945, in order to organize a series of Mountain Training courses for Units of my Brigade Group. I was fortunate in having on my staff Captain T. Nicholson (Lovat Scouts), who had been with me two years earlier as an instructor at the Commando Mountain and Snow Warfare Training Centre, as planner and chief instructor of the training. Based on the Club Hut at a height of over 7,000 feet, the Mountain School of 11 Indian Infantry Brigade carried out four successive courses, each of one week's duration. Taking advantage of the excellent terrain, and the existence of snow in some of the steep sheltered gullies, Captain Nicholson succeeded in imparting to Gurkhas, Pathans, Dogras, and men of my Scottish Battalions, a considerable amount of mountain craft in a very short time. A little rock climbing was done on Stefani, whose exposed, narrow and rickety arête demands a steady head. The Gurkha contingent proved, as expected, by far the most

agile on difficult ground, and were in a position to demonstrate to their Instructors the art of descending steep slopes (but not on snow !). In addition to their military value to a mountain-trained Brigade, these courses provided excellent recreation in a fine environment, during the most trying period of the summer in Northern Greece. I am, in fact, a convinced advocate of basic training of this type in mountain country for all Infantry, owing to the very beneficial effect it produces on morale.

The usual approach to Olympus is by the village of Litokhoron which is situated at the mouth of the Mavrolongos gorge and at the foot of the east side of the massif. From here a mule track leads through thorn and holly scrub up 2,000 feet of steep and stony hill-side, to the little grassy alp known as Stravros, a pasture used by flocks of goats and sheep in summer. Here the track enters the dense forests which cover the mountain on its north and east flanks, and passes through fir, beech and walnut trees into the Mavrolongos glen, where it keeps a fairly level elevation for some miles, at a height of almost 1,000 feet above the torrent. The scenery at once becomes rugged and impressive. Limestone crags and pinnacles tower up on either side of the glen, with odd pine-trees clinging to fissures in the rocks. Below, the river plunges in a series of pools and rapids between dense undergrowth, and looking up the glen a wonderful variety of colour is provided by the mixed and changing foliage. In May, the beeches give an indication of their elevation by the varying shades of their leaves. Already in full summer foliage at 3,000 feet, the shade of green gradually becomes paler as the eye travels upwards, until at 7,000 feet the topmost trees lie still naked, their trunks buried in snow.

Some miles up-valley, the main track descends steeply to the monastery of Ayios Ioannis, which is built on the banks of the river in a small clearing of the forest. Now a ruin after being destroyed by the Germans, this monastery must once have been a picturesque addition to the splendid scenery, standing, as it did, amid the pine trees, with a view upwards to the crags of Olympus towering at the head of the glen.

The path now becomes narrow and less distinct, as it continues its traverse of the north side of the valley, until some ten miles from Litokhoron it descends to the stream at a point

where the latter emerges from the dry bed of the gorge, gushing out at several points beneath the enclosing cliffs.

This place, known as Prioni, is another haunt of shepherds during the summer, and is the last place in the gorge where water, other than snow-melted, is to be obtained. We found the shepherds' dogs at Prioni exceptionally fierce, and more than one visitor last year was attacked and bitten by these near-wild creatures ; it is worth noting that their owners are scarcely less wild and uncouth.

Prioni has an elevation of only 4,000 feet, and a steep ascent is now necessary by the ill-defined path to reach the hut. The visitor climbs above the forest, and at 6,000 feet the trees, now only beech and pine, are less dense, while a little higher, the screes and crags of Olympus itself rise bare of any vegetation. In May, however, the prospect at this stage of the journey is truly Alpine, for the path itself is still partly snow-covered, and above, the crags descend to steep slopes of snow skirting their base, and fine snow couloirs lead downwards on either hand.

Perched on a rocky buttress, surrounded by giant pines, the hut soon comes into view, and is finally reached in some eight hours' walk from the village. Supplies were brought up to the troops under training by mule, but it was not until June that these could reach the hut itself, so deep was the snow. By July, however, it would have been possible to ride on mule-back onto the summits of both Skala and Skolian.

Of wild life on Olympus we saw very little. Spotted eagles and Griffon vultures were a common sight, and one party was fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of the few remaining chamois on the screes below Stefani, of which we had heard from the hermit-artist, M. Ithakigios, who for years inhabited a cave beneath Petrostrounca and whose paintings in his home in Litokhoron are well worth seeing. Wild animals such as boars, wolves, bears and deer appear to be less common on this massif than they are elsewhere in Greece.

To the skier, Olympus has little to offer. In winter, the fine snow slopes above 7,000 feet on the mountain are very difficult of access, and the problem of maintaining or supplying a party might be insoluble. There are, fortunately, other areas well adapted for skiing. The crags in April and early May, while still

snow-covered, present mountaineering problems of serious merit, and throughout the summer some amusement may be had on the crags of Stefani, on which some very difficult routes could doubtless be made, and on other pinnacles such as the "Virgin", between Skala and Mitika.

For its general grandeur and settings, as also for the superb views from the summits, however, a visit to Olympus should not be missed by anyone visiting Greece.

IN PRAISE OF SCOTLAND

J. CORTLANDT-SIMPSON

IT is to be regretted that so few English mountaineers appreciate the Alpine character of the Highland winter. The loss is entirely theirs. The majority of those who cross the border do so in the summer months, impelled, perhaps, by the almost legendary virtues of Cuillin gabbro. A few may turn aside to spend an hour or two on the Rannoch Wall, or penetrate the well-washed recesses of the Chasm. The main ridges of Skye and Ben Nevis may indeed be raised by their length into a class by themselves, and there is probably no gully south of the border so calculated to impress the climber as the great pitches of the Chasm. But as summer rock climbs these are in the same tradition as our Welsh crags. The situations they create and the technique required are familiar, and your Sassenach can give a good account of himself on Scottish rock.

However, it is in no spirit of disrespect for the great wall of lava which overshadows the Mhuillin glen, or for the remote beauty of old red sandstone with its feet washed by the western sea, that the writer's praise is lavished on the winter scene, but rather because Scotland's treasures of summer rock and misty distances are less foreign to our native element, and therefore less to be desired by the mountaineer who would woo his mistress in every dress and mood. But wait until the snows of winter have transformed the scene, till every pinnacle is sheathed in ice and the gully is a frozen waterfall, till the summit cornice curls over like a wave frozen in the breaking and blizzards sweeping in from the sea have packed the snow into a most commendable toughness. Then let the Sassenach fill his rucksack with good wind-proof clothing and an extra sweater, and cross the border ice-axe in hand. But let him tread circumspectly. Scottish winter climbing calls for a technique of its own and is no pale shadow of the Alps. It is not unknown for

veterans of higher hills to turn back where the Highland trained have led with assurance. Ice cliffs of a steepness beyond the limit of balance, necessitating a light single-handed axe are usually avoided outside these hills. Here they are the hard core of the more interesting climbs. In short, between February and April the Highlands offer a first-rate training ground for difficult snow and ice technique, where mountaineering in the widest sense may be indulged in, and the climber may find problems of ice and snow which will tax his skill and endurance to the utmost. It is the writer's purpose to sketch here the winter scene as he has found it, in the hope that he may thereby induce more of his fellows to share his enthusiasm.

Come away then to Glencoe as March gives place to April. Two climbers, we will call them Michael and Jim, are just setting out from Lagangarbh, the well-placed S.M.C. hut near the head of the glen. Earlier that morning they watched in silent contentment as the sun's first rays lit up the summit of the "Great Shepherd," and a rosy flush spread slowly across his snow-clad shoulders. Now, with the promise of a fine day confirmed they are heading for Crowberry Gully, and are nearing the snow line. Presently they cross a shallow gully, and the musical tinkle of ice chips tells that the axe is coming into play. Above them, where a burn has frozen solid as it poured down over a water slide, hangs a translucent curtain of green ice fringed by icicles as big as a man's leg. Two or three hundred feet of scrambling up a broken ridge of snow-covered rock, and they traverse onto a small hanging snowfield. The snow here is deep and has packed hard. It fills a small bay in the mountain surrounded by precipices. Our climbers kick steps as they traverse diagonally upwards towards the foot of a steep buttress, well known as the start of one of the Abraham brothers' famous rock climbs. But today they pass round the foot of the buttress and drop into the gully beyond, where they pause to put on the rope.

Before them a great gully bites deep into the mountain, cleaving it for 1,500 feet. Its walls tower above them precipitously, never far from vertical, often overhanging, and of uncompromising smoothness. Once entered, there is no escape from this icy cleft ; only advance or retreat are possible. In summer the gully is a severe rock climb, but in winter its charac-

ter is completely altered. Atlantic gales drive and pack the snow to a considerable depth ; alternating frost and thaw cement it into an icy *nevé*. Its many pitches are filled and banked up with snow, while here and there a curtain of ice bulges outwards over the chockstone of a hidden cave. As a winter climb its difficulties vary greatly with the conditions and time of year. After the first winter's snowfall it is probably unclimbable until much more snow has packed and hardened. It is never less than severe, if one may apply that expression to a winter climb. As our two climbers find it, no snow has fallen for several days. The crust is often too hard for step-kicking, a few strokes of the axe being necessary at each step. As they enter the gully the steepness of the snow increases. An ice-coated groove down its centre indicates that it is a place to be avoided under winter thaw conditions, when it is the natural receiver of rocks and snow avalanching off the north buttress. Jim, who is in the lead, kicks and hacks his way slowly upwards ; it is hot work. He cuts quickly across the groove and keeps to the side of the gully with Michael close behind him. The rope is scarcely necessary as yet. Presently he arrives at the foot of a small ice wall. The ice is steep, but the pitch is no more than fifteen feet high. The single-hander is not necessary for this, and with the big axe it does not take long to cut steps up the face. Once up, he continues until the *nevé* becomes soft enough to drive in the axe for a belay. Then he cuts himself a small platform and brings up his companion. It is Michael's turn to do the hard work now and he makes his way laboriously up the snow bed for another 200 feet. The angle is probably about fifty degrees and he finds it prudent to drive in his axe at every step. His companion keeps close behind him and the two move up together. Presently a second ice pitch confronts them, rather bigger than the first. It is Jim's turn to lead again and he cuts his way up the ice, using the little axe where the angle is steepest. This handy little instrument is almost essential for very steep ice pitches. It has a curved pick six or seven inches long balanced by a small hammer or adze, with a handle of about twice that length. It can be slung from the wrist and very greatly reduces the fatigue of cutting steps above one's head.

Once above the second ice pitch, the two move up together again on the snow. They have by now covered the lower and

easier third of the climb and will soon be up against its real difficulties. The first of these is an ice fall of some thirty feet, which is noticeably steeper than those already passed. It is near the limit of balance and hand-holds as well as steps are obviously necessary.

The ice is tough and the strain of cutting above one exhausting. It is Michael's turn to lead and, before he has finished, his wrists and shoulders feel red hot and he is glad to shift his weight as often as possible. He works away hard, the steam rising from his back into the frosty air. Doubtless he feels that he is making quick progress. To Jim, shivering on his foot-square platform below and watching the rope pay out inch by inch, while a constant stream of ice chips pours down on him from above, the time seems interminable. He stamps about on his perch, and wriggles his toes inside his boots. But when at last the long-awaited shout comes from above and it is his turn to follow, the welcome exercise quickly restores his circulation.

Another couple of hundred feet of step-cutting on the *nevé* and they are about half way up. The crux of the climb confronts them. The way is blocked by an overhanging mass of rock some thirty feet high, with a filled-in cave at its foot. It is plastered with ice and presents a formidable obstacle. Above this the gully forks. The left-hand section is deeply recessed and cannot be viewed from below. The right-hand section is shallower and can be seen to provide a route to the top. It only begins a hundred feet above them, however, and to reach it they must climb an ice wall of uncompromising steepness. Four hours have lapsed since breakfast, so they scoop a shelf out of the snow and sit down to have lunch and consider the matter.

From their perch the mountain architecture is seen to good advantage and is certainly impressive. On their left the ice cliff stretches across the face above an overhang, until it merges with the North Buttress, some 200 feet beyond. On their right the wall of the gully rises sheer and overhanging for a hundred feet. Below them the gully stretches downwards for a seemingly interminable distance. They can just follow their line of steps until it twists behind a buttress, and is lost to sight. All around the rocks are plastered with ice and fog crystals, and glistening white. Far across the valley the sun is shining on the opposite hillside, and they have the glimpse of a shapely snow peak in the

distant Mamores. It is as if they are looking through a lancet window in some titanic castle of the snows.

Though they drink in all the weird, wild beauty of the place our climbers' thoughts are eminently practical. A bitter north wind is blowing up the gully, gathering up the loose snow in exposed places and scattering it like wisps of smoke. The sun may be shining in Glencoe, but the speed with which boots begin to stiffen as soon as they cease work shows that the temperature of the gully is far from sunny. They know that the normal route involves traversing outwards on the right wall on very steep ice, until the angle eases somewhat and an upward and backward movement is possible which leads into the right hand fork. They also know that the left hand fork, which is a very severe rock climb in summer, has never been climbed under winter conditions. This is undoubtedly an attraction. Though the way is practically barred by the overhanging mass above them, access to this fork may just be possible by a vertical chimney between the nose of the overhang and the left wall of the gully. The lure of the unclimbed is strong and they agree to tackle this route first. If the chimney should not go, or if what is then seen to lie above should prove impossible, they will tackle the traverse of the ice wall and the right fork. So Michael wedges himself into what remains of the cave and gets an axe belay, while Jim works himself upwards into the chimney. It is not a promising place. The left wall is vertical and smooth and covered with verglas. The right wall also is vertical and plastered with ice, but this is little more than an inch thick and permits only small nicks to be cut by way of steps. Using the small axe and reassured by a stout belay below, he slowly works his way upwards. The strain on fingers and calves is considerable and owing to the glazed condition of the back wall little support is possible by wedging. The ice is inclined to flake off the rock and the position feels precarious. After a depressingly long time, and the expenditure of a great deal of energy for very little height gained, he is over the worst of it and can see up the gully. Any hopes the pair may have held of making a first ascent of this fork are immediately expelled. The floor of the gully rises steeply for another 200 feet and then ends abruptly under a forty-foot overhang. On both sides the walls are vertical, smooth and covered with verglas. There is

not enough thickness of ice to cut even the smallest of steps, and at that angle substantial incut handholds would be essential. Gingerly and sadly Jim works back down the chimney and is relieved when he is once more standing beside his companion.

Now it is Michael's turn to stop shivering in his hole in the snow and to tackle the right-hand wall. The lower part is the steepest and the angle is just about the limit of balance. The ice over the rocks is thin, but thick enough to cut steps which are just adequate. It takes some time, and the rope around Jim's shoulders creeps out by inches. Over a hundred feet has run out before the angle eases and the *nevé* softens enough to drive the axe right in.

Then the leader catches a turn round it and brings up his companion. Jim passes him and is presently back in the gully. It is possible to cut faster now, and he runs out the full 120 feet of rope. Then Michael comes up and continues to the foot of another small ice pitch. This seems like child's play after what lies behind them, though a strong wind, which whips up the debris into the leader's face, when by rights it should descend onto number two, makes the work of step-cutting unpleasant. Jim leads on until he can get a belay, and Michael then comes up to him. The angle now begins to ease off and the two move up together until they come to the foot of a sixth and final ice pitch. This is known to be a very variable quantity according to the season. As the party finds it, it is largely snowed up and less formidable than the big pitch at the division of the gully. At times, however, it has proved to be the crux of the climb, which sometimes keeps its trump card to the last. It is Michael's lead and by running out the full rope he has the pleasure of emerging triumphant on a beautiful snow arête. The climb ends almost on the summit, and in a few minutes the two are eating their last piece of chocolate by the cairn. It is half-past three, and they have been six and a half hours in the gully. It has been a grand climb, magnificently set and full of interest. It maintained a high level of difficulty throughout and they are pleased because they know that their technique has been well tried and has not been found wanting. Contentedly they stroll along the summit ridge, while far below Glen Etive unrolls itself from a misty blanket. They descend to a col from which a wide snow gully leads down towards the hut. The

best ending to a first-rate day awaits them and they enjoy a thousand-foot glissade which takes them half-way down to the snow line.

Crowberry Gully is possibly the finest winter climb of its kind in Scotland. There is nothing yet accomplished which can touch it in the Western Highlands south of the Great Glen. But there are others nearly as fine and these gullies packed with *nevé* and alternating ice pitches are perhaps typical of Scottish winter climbing. Amongst others in the Glencoe area there is one which, though shorter, is technically more formidable. On the north-eastern side of the ridge which leads up to Stob Coire nan Lochan from Aonach Dhu is a fine cliff of columnar basalt four or five hundred feet in height. It is split into three distinct buttresses of which the southern and central are the steepest, being nearly vertical in their lower parts. The South-Central Gully which divides them cuts deeply into the ridge between vertical walls which offer no lateral lines of escape. It is not often climbed, and is usually shunned by all except expert icemen. It offers what is probably the finest and hardest ice pitch south of Ben Nevis. As with other climbs of this type, its condition varies with the season, but during March and early April it can usually be relied upon to produce 200 feet or more of steep, continuous ice, part of which is beyond the limit of balance. Our two climbers visited it the day after Crowberry Gully, and were duly impressed. The gleam of the ice fall seemed almost menacing as they approached up the snow slope which stretched beneath the cliff. As they entered the gully the angle steepened and the surface became icy ; step-kicking gave place to cutting. This brought them to the foot of the ice fall, where they cut a platform and secured an ice-axe belay. Above them the ice poured down the gully like a frozen cataract, which indeed it was. About half-way up it bulged outwards in a devilish manner calculated to thrust the climber out of balance. The first lead ran out a full 120 feet of rope before a good rock spike belay could be found in the floor of the gully. The route kept to the left where the angle was easiest and led up a kind of ice staircase. The second lead was shorter but harder, involving a delicate and difficult traverse round, up and over the nose of ice in its steepest part. It was necessary to cut substantial incut hand as well as foot holds. The ice proved

extremely tough and the single-handed axe was used ; even then it was arduous work and Michael, who led this pitch, found it exhausting. He managed to secure a small rock belay with next to no stance after about forty feet. His companion then came up and continued single-handed step-cutting for another fifty feet. The angle then began to ease off and the big axe could be used, though the whole rope ran out again before it was possible to drive in the axe shaft for a belay. Thereafter the climb continued on *nevé* and snow at an easier angle to the top. The exit was beautifully situated, with the shadow cast by a delicately curled cornice in sharp contrast with the sunlight glistening on its crest.

Let me end on a note of warning. During Easter week this year on Ben Nevis after five days of glorious sunshine during which the party ascended Observatory and Tower Ridges amongst other climbs, the weather broke during the night. The next morning a strong wind was blowing and periodical snow squalls swept over the hut. The cherished intention of attacking North-East Buttress had to be abandoned in favour of a more sheltered climb, and the writer's party of three cut their way up Gardyloo Gully. It was snowing steadily but lightly in the gully, which was completely sheltered from the wind, so completely in fact that there was no indication of the fury raging above. As we emerged through the cornice we were smitten by an inferno of wind and snow. In the stronger gusts it was impossible to stand against the wind, and one could only drive in the axe and crouch low over it for safety. The snow was driving up over the brow of the Ben from below the horizontal. It was impossible to look into it and the visibility was no more than twenty yards. In a matter of seconds we were plastered white from head to foot.

In that blizzard it was scarcely possible to make out words shouted into the ear. We could only just manage to steer a rough compass course and, keeping the rope on to hold us together, struggle off the mountain in the direction calculated to lose height quickly and safely. We had to drop some 2,000 feet, scarcely able to see where we were heading, before there was any appreciable relief. By the time that the blizzard had eased sufficiently for us to get our bearings and unrope we were exceedingly thankful to be safely off the top. We had perforce

descended on the side of the mountain furthest from the hut. The way home lay by contouring round its flanks, seamed by innumerable gullies, for twelve or thirteen miles. When we got back some ten or eleven hours after setting out, the writer, who had already had the benefit of a week's climbing, was, to say the least of it, weary. The other two members of the party were in a state of exhaustion, and one, unused to such conditions, collapsed half a mile from the hut and had to be assisted in.

It is a fair statement to say that Scottish winter climbing means mountaineering in the widest sense.



NORWEGIAN MEET, 1946

I—SYNOPSIS

LAST year the Club broke new ground by going to Turtagrö, in Norway. Only one of the party had ever been to Norway before, and knew a little Norwegian. Most of the rest of us had got as far as buying a Hugo or some similar book, but I do not think many of these had been opened before we got on board the *Astrea*. However, a dead calm sea, a brilliant sun and a number of good-looking Norwegian girls made the party study Norwegian with surprising diligence.

The crossing gave us a chance of sorting ourselves out and getting to know one another. A day in Bergen, twenty-four hours on a fjord steamer, and four hours by bus brought us to Turtagrö at 1 a.m., on June 16th, glad to sleep in a stationary bed once more after three and a half days on the way.

The following day we examined the situation. Turtagrö lies 3,000 feet above sea level, and well above the tree line. There is a grand view of the Skagastölstinder from the front door when the cloud is high enough for them to be seen. We were not feeling very energetic our first day, and there *was* some cloud. Most of the party started up the valley as far as the Norsk Tindeklub (N.T.K.) hut, where we were hospitably received by the inhabitants. Some of the more energetic members went on, in spite of the heavy rain storm which blew up, over the glacier to Bandet hut at the head of the valley, while the others returned, rather ignominiously, to the hotel.

Subsequently Bandet hut was often the scene of our night's rest (?), not because of its home comforts, but because it was a convenient jumping off place, saving one at least 2,500 feet of climbing compared with starting from the hotel, and—an important point—one could have dinner at the hotel first, and still arrive at the pass before dark ! Unlike most Norwegian huts, Bandet was built of stone and specialised in draughts and a smell of paraffin.

After our initial outing together, the party split up more. Most of the hills in the Horungtinder were climbed by members of the party during our stay, though we were not often favoured with fine weather. Naturally Store Skagastölstind was one of our principle objectives, being the highest mountain in the neighbourhood and commanding the other hills, especially when seen from the south-west.

With Clive Simmonds in the lead, I climbed Store from Bandet by Slingsby's glacier. We started the day in brilliant weather, but were soon enveloped in cloud, which later turned to snow. This made the upper part of the route from Mohn Skar to the top by no means easy, as fresh snow was deep enough to cover the holds, but not deep enough to stand on. When we got up we were delighted to meet John Glass and John Poole (who had started from the hotel that morning) appearing suddenly at the top of Hefty's chimney. However it was 4 p.m. already and we could see absolutely nothing from the summit, so we did not stop long but hurried down to the hut, and from there to the hotel as quickly as possible. We were saved all the trouble of route finding by the other party's tracks, and were duly grateful. The following day most of the rest of the party climbed Store Skagastölstind in brilliant weather, and had a very good day traversing the ridge afterwards.

Half the party went to climb Galdhöpigggen, the highest summit in Norway. As a climb it is very tame, being mostly over a snowfield at the head of a glacier. The following day Skarstind was climbed by the north-east arête with John Poole leading. This was one of the highlights of the Meet, as it was a new climb which some of the N.T.K. had had their eye on for some time.

Friendly relations were established early on with the N.T.K., as a result of which John Poole and I were privileged to attend the dinner celebrating the reopening of the hut. This was a great event, remarkable for the quantity and variety of refreshments consumed, both solid and liquid. The guests did not climb the day before for fear of being late for dinner, nor the day after because they were—because it was too wet. But so far as we can gather they did not disgrace the Club, apart from committing the *faux pas* of leaving their pyjamas at the hotel. I should perhaps explain that the N.T.K. hut compared with Helyg is a palace, although it does not possess constant hot

water. Considering that it is 1,800 feet above the road, and everything except water has to be brought up over a rough track on ponies, it is extraordinarily comfortable and well equipped.

We were very grateful to various members of the N.T.K. for help and advice, and hope to maintain the friendly contacts established.

John Poole and John Glass went off for a week-end later in the Meet to climb in Romsdal with Herr Nissen-Meyer (of the N.T.K.) and his wife, and had a most enjoyable time, and some fine weather. We heard that the weather in Eastern Norway was generally much better than in the Horungtinder.

During the Meet some of the braver members of the party attempted some bivouacs in the open. Only a trifle less brave, Arthur Young and Peter Thomas camped in a tent on the Gravdals Glacier one night. I was not envious. However, they thought we were spending the night on the hills, without even a tent, so that they were not envious either. Actually we had arrived at Vetti about 10 p.m. and were comfortably established in the hotel there, if rather squashed. The capacity was normally ten, and there were sixteen of us altogether. But it is a principle of Norwegian mountain hospitality (and one which people elsewhere would do well to copy) that it is never too late to have a meal, nor is a place ever too full to take in more people.

Two parties made circular tours round the Horungtinder massif, in opposite directions, by way of Vetti and Skogadalsboen, making the trip comfortably in three days. John Neill and John Platt made an only slightly shorter circular tour in eleven hours to the hotel porter's surprise and John Platt's consternation. But the trip was well worth while, if only for the sake of the views.

Many memories of the trip remain ; of being waked up by two bodies at 3 a.m. to say they hadn't spent the night out ; of bilberries in such profusion that one didn't bother about those not at the right height to pick comfortably ; of recovering the ice axe of one member of the party lost some days previously, in spite of its having slid down a steep snow slope and being completely buried by six inches of fresh snow ; of the battle of wills in search of cheeses on the last day ; of the drill for getting somebody else's bath at the hotel ; and particularly of the

universal welcome and kindness we enjoyed. I think I can predict safely that we all hope to pay a return visit.

The following attended the Meet :

J. W. Cortlandt-Simpson	R. B. O. Richards
J. V. S. Glass	W. H. C. Simmonds
R. M. P. Hartog	P. D.S. Thomas (guest)
J. Neill	H. W. Tilman
J. W. Platt	J. H. McD. Whitaker
J. Poole	A. J. Young

R. M. P. HARTOG.

II—TWO HIGH SPOTS

During the Summer Meet, at Turtagrö half of the party of twelve decided to make an expedition to Galdhøpiggen (8,099 feet), partly because this is the highest peak in Northern Europe and partly to gain experience of a new region of the Jotunheim. At 7-30 a.m., on July 24th, six of us got into the local "bus" (in reality a pair of luxurious cars) and had an enjoyable drive to Elvesaeter, a village twenty-five miles to the north-west of Turtagrö. Our first objective was the Juvass hut, but not until we had drunk coffee at the comfortable hotel at Elvesaeter did we set off on the 4,000-foot ascent. Leisurely we followed the path, first through sunlit silver-birch woods, then over open hillside until we came to the Juvfonne, a patch of permanent snow. This we ascended in worsening weather until we came to the hut. This word does not convey a proper idea of the establishment, which holds at least sixty people, is on the telephone, has a lorry with seats to serve as a bus for its patrons and provides three meals daily.

As soon as we had installed ourselves we sampled one of these meals—"lunch," at 4-15 p.m. In Norway this is a meal which may be had at any time during the afternoon. As everywhere in Norway, we were treated with embarrassing kindness, being given a special table and served first; soup, meat, peas and potatoes, prunes and other fruit in "arrowroot jelly" with milk, followed by coffee in the spacious lounge.

It was an effort to turn out again at 5-30 p.m., when the party set off for the summit of Galdhøpiggen—"to get it done with," as we said, wishing to leave the next day free for the task of

climbing Skarstind. Three miles, 2,000 feet, seemed modest enough for an evening's outing. "This," we said, "is a Tourist peak ; ropes will not be required." On the Stygge Glacier we had cause to regret our superciliousness, for we got amongst snow-covered crevasses and only extricated ourselves after two of the party had broken through snow-bridges and subsided up to their waists. Somewhat chastened, we ascended the north-east ridge to the summit, treading warily on a snow-above-ice section and marvelling how so many of the thousands who make the pilgrimage to Norway's highest mountain ever survive to tell the tale. Two huts, a frost-coated cairn and thick mist were our sole companions on the summit. Baedeker, who assures us that the view is "marvellously extensive," mentions that the huts are "stocked with coffee, port and champagne." That, alas, was in 1899.

During our descent to the glacier we overtook a man, a girl of sixteen and a small boy, who in light shoes and with a couple of walking-sticks between them were heading for Elvesaeter to complete a fourteen-hour day. Fearing for their safety on the glacier, as well as for our own, we all roped up to a thick knotted rope which appeared from somewhere and cautiously prodded our way across the snow. This time, of course, only one crevasse was encountered.

The Juvass hut was reached at 9-30 p.m. and an excellent supper was enjoyed. This meal was of the typical Norwegian "help-yourself" variety ; after an initial hot dish, one goes to a central table and collects tomatoes, beetroot, anchovies, cheeses and various kinds of bread. "Oh to be in England," murmured someone, enthusiastically attacking the unlimited supply of butter and requesting more cream for the coffee.

Retiring to the lounge, we found an old-fashioned dance in progress, music being provided by a piano-accordion virtuoso. Most of the dances were novel to us, but when a fast waltz was started, we joined in the whirling throng. Much later, when all the others had retired to bed, I tried a variety of polka, not—to be honest—with much success. After that, I was content to watch, listening to the intoxicating music of the highly-embellished folk-tunes and talking with a friendly Dane. Singing, dancing, a great brew of coffee at midnight—the whole room lit

by many candles and a log fire—all this at 6,000 feet on the bleakest of rocky plateaux was an unforgettable experience.

The next day we made directly for Skarstind, a peak of 7,785 feet lying some five miles south-west of the Juvass hut. We liked the name, it looked steep from the map and we knew nothing about it—three good reasons for going there. Skirting Galdhøpiggen on the north-west side we reached the “two-metre gap”—marked Porten on the one-inch map—a convenient couloir which led over a bridged bergschrund to the *nevé* of the Storjuvbrein, “the Great Ravine Glacier.” The snow was in perfect condition, which is more than can be said of the weather. Thick grey clouds filled the sky, wreathing the summit of Skarstind. The peak itself looked grim, not unlike a gigantic medieval castle, with its almost-vertical south-east arête surmounted by a curious tower. We sensed that the object of our attention was in a bad mood—induced, doubtless, by the persistently bad weather which had dogged us for most of our stay in Norway—and would not be an easy conquest.

We decided to traverse across the east face on the higher of two sloping terraces and then attempt the upper part of the north-east arête which was partially hidden in the clouds. Soon it began to snow in earnest and all landmarks were lost. Since the terrace had shown no point of undue difficulty, we decided to cross the bergschrund, and having done this, found the traverse to be quite easy but covered with loose debris. Above us loomed the east face, an absolutely vertical wall 700 feet high. At the north-east arête the terrace ended. Our only way now was—straight up ; the prospect was not encouraging.

Two short pitches, which might be called “pleasant,” but for the insecurity of much of the rock, brought us to the foot of an ugly buttress some thirty feet high. John Poole was leading, with myself next and Thomas third. Young, Richards and Glass comprised the second rope. A smooth groove, thoroughly wet, would not go, so John Poole swung himself round a corner to the left and began to ascend a steep wall with few holds. Such holds as did exist were hidden under a prolific growth of dead fungus. With a determined look John plucked away these rosette-shaped excrescences and hurled them into space, inching his way up until the holds definitely gave out. A short pause, then a

great effort with scrabbling knees to assist a difficult mantelshelf, and he was up.

When my turn came, I found this a very hard pitch, not made easier by the presence of a rucksack containing articles for a three-day trip. Everyone in turn had his own comments to make on this and the following pitch, which was only less difficult by comparison. Subsequent ones offered a variety of face problems and were far from easy, for the arête maintained its very steep angle, the rocks were often loose and it was cold. True, the snow had stopped but we were in thick cloud and on the northerly side of the mountain, so that even when the sun did eventually shine above, we remained in shadow all the time. A traverse round a corner to the right enabled us to avoid some overhanging blocks, on top of which was a comfortable platform. One final pitch brought us right out on the summit, into long-sought sunshine and much-needed warmth—this, in spite of the hour, which was 8 p.m.

All around lay a profusion of black peaks contrasting with white snow-covered glaciers—very little green could be observed in this wild region of the Jotunheim. Masses of cumulus were pink-tinged in the evening light, while over the Jostedalsbrae—Europe's largest ice-cap—was an orange glow. The doubts and anxieties of the ascent were at an end ; those of the descent had not yet begun ; here, between two worlds, were beauty and peace.

We had spent seven hours on the 700-foot climb ; but we were virtually six on one rope—a miniature Hannibal's army *sans* elephants. Also there was a good deal of untying and retying and separate transporting of rucksacks and ice-axes, and the rocks and ourselves were wet and cold from melting snow. By common consent we ranked the two lower pitches as severe and the rest about very difficult under these conditions. John Poole was heartily congratulated on his courageous lead, which was a very fine achievement. It must have been of particular satisfaction for him to learn, as we did later from the President of the Norsk Tindeklub, that this ascent of Skarstind's north-east arête was a new climb. This was only the third or fourth ascent of Skarstind since C. Hall climbed it for the first time towards the end of last century. Hardly a popular mountain, this.

The difficulties of the descent were soon apparent. Although we chose what seemed to be the easiest way off, we were slowed down by snow too thin and too steep for a glissade and by exasperating smooth slabs reminiscent of Coire Ghrundda in Skye. At last the North Illaabrae was reached ; this glacier was descended as night overtook us. Soon after leaving the ice near the snout of the glacier, the darkness, rough ground and general tiredness of the party forced a halt and at midnight we bivouacked on the open mountainside. One went on and found a cave, the rest lay down—not under the stars, but beneath a rain-cloud which playfully drizzled on us about 2 a.m. Some spent a reasonable night in efficient sleeping-bags ; others shivered for three hours and were only too glad to move on again at 3 a.m. when it was light enough for safe progress.

Breakfast was the first item on the agenda, but our small food supply had long since been used up. There was nothing for it but a ten-mile walk to Bövertun or a slightly shorter one to Elvesaeter. Two elected to complete full-circle by going to the latter place ; the others chose the former and set off along the track and road, muttering something about the virtues of a before-breakfast stroll. At Bövertun Hotel the kind proprietor was not unduly alarmed by our appearances, but lit a fire for us in the lounge while his daughter played soothing music on the gramophone. Then followed the long-desired breakfast—a meal to remember. We had porridge, various kinds of bread with much butter, onto which we put tinned and pickled anchovies, sardines, roast beef, bacon, tomatoes, beetroot, corned beef and four sorts of cheeses, helped down by three cups of coffee and two glasses of milk! This, I add hastily, was the first square (cubic ?) meal which we had had for twenty-four hours.

After pleasant and necessary lounging by the lakeside we hired a car to return us to Turtagrö. The driver, knowing the Englishman's love of fresh air, lowered the hood before starting. The view all round was magnificent, but as we sped over the 4,500-foot pass on Sognefjell we got colder and colder. We buttoned up our jackets, donned balaclavas and settled lower into our seats, unwilling to admit that we were well-nigh frozen. It was with great relief that we got out at our destination ; considering the magnitude of our twenty-two hour trip over Skar-

stind, the speed with which we raced for the bathroom for the luxury of a really hot bath was quite commendable.

J. H. McD. WHITAKER.

III—THE STORE-SKAGASTÖLSTIND

On August 1st, the day following our three-day expedition to Galdhöpigen and Skarstind, Whitaker and I teamed up on a rope to follow Tilman and Cortlandt-Simpson up the Store-Skagastölstind (7,888 feet), the highest peak of the Horungtinder group. It was a two-day climb as we were to attempt it, entailing a night spent in the hut at Bandet, the pass at the head of the Skagastölsbrae, and thence a climb direct up the south-west ridge to the summit—which the guide classed as "Easy." This I regarded as a good thing as it enabled us to start only at 7-50 p.m. in order to reach the hut in respectable time to turn in.

We ascended the valley from Turtagrö at a steady pace, walked up the glacier, and reached the hut without incident at 10-15 p.m. By now the sun had set in a fine glow of red clouds, and as darkness came on, we off-loaded our rucksacks and started up the Primus stove prior to demolishing much bread, butter and cheese. As we explored round the hut one member of the party discovered a tin which he suspected contained something edible. Disdaining to employ elementary precautions with such a discovery, he opened the tin and tasted the contents with confidence. Without much delay he expectorated violently, muttering something to the effect that even *Geitost*¹ was preferable to dubbin !

After a comfortable night and a good breakfast we left the hut at 7-20 a.m. in fine calm weather. The cloud ceiling, however, was below the summit, but the route up this south-west ridge is exceedingly well marked with cairns—of gabbro rock, I believe. Some 500 feet below the summit the ridge, which up till now had been easy going at a moderate angle, ran into a cliff of rock which, in the prevailing light mist, looked to me somewhat awesome and unassailable. In fact, this point marked a bifurcation in our route ; either we could bear left and proceed

¹ *Geitost*, pronounced yesterst. A very concentrated dark brown cheese made from goat's milk.

by Vigdal's Slab, or we could bear right and turn the cliff by ascending Heftye's Chimney. This is the only really difficult part of the whole route and, in itself, is only difficult at the start or take-off into the chimney.

Tilman and Cortlandt-Simpson were about a hundred feet ahead of us and, after giving Whitaker a leg up into the chimney, I followed with much material assistance from a fixed rope which happened to be there. A few moments later we climbed to the level of the cloud-top to see the other two sitting on the summit, sun-bathing and admiring a particularly fine Brocken Spectre, which was surrounded by three rings on the cloud floor beneath us. The clouds parted slowly and revealed the Store-Midtmaraadalstind etched in deep new snow ; a scene of intrinsic beauty and peace from which we had to tear ourselves away at about 11 a.m.

The new snow which had fallen in the last few days caused us some embarrassment on our descent north-east to Mohn's Skar, and Whitaker and I changed ends on our rope. This route and the Skagastöls Ridge which we followed later are described in the guide as "Moderately Difficult." But I believe that it was agreed by the party as a whole that the classifications given in the guide should be up-graded one in order to fall into line with modern British standards.

Here the other pair gained on us considerably, for though I had little to do but trail them in the snow, I trod with caution. However, we caught them up on the slopes of the Vetle-Skagastölstind (7,576 feet), for they had attempted a direct ascent of this peak from Mohn's Skar and were held up by difficult rocks smothered in snow and ice. The proper route traverses the peak to the right for some distance before doubling back to the summit by the east arête. After some hunting around Tilman led us up to this arête by a traverse somewhat higher than the normal route, whence we reached the summit, only a few yards away, with ease. A short pause followed in order to take a photograph and, conscious of the passage of time, we hastened to keep Tilman and Cortlandt-Simpson in sight as they strode along the rocky arête to the north-west. Again the rocks were smothered in snow, making it easy to follow their trail which, judging by the interval between the footsteps, showed gymnastic feats of equilibrium approaching those of a chamois. The cloud

had lifted completely by now and the scene about us was magnificent. The ridge fell away steeply on either hand to glaciers far below ; the Styggedalstind soared up on our right, on our left the peaks of the Riingstinder were spread before us, while the constant booming of avalanches came up from far below. Much as we would have liked to sit and enjoy the view, we were forced to move on ; for even though we might reasonably ignore such a mundane instrument as a watch in such noble surroundings, we could not ignore the inevitable natural law of sunset. So we set off once again, Tilman now far ahead. Once again we caught up to some extent for they had to negotiate Hall's Crag, a descent of some thirty feet over the edge of an enormous block with a smooth, vertical face. When we reached this point the others had already descended by an abseil and were well on their way.

I had not expected quite such an obstacle on our route ; the last time I had done an abseil was on a nylon rope at Harrison Rocks. Now, however, everything was wet and a wet rope did not go well with wet gabardine pants. The lengthy time of my descent caused some worry ; but possibly the rise in local temperature engendered by my struggles dried up the rope a little, for at last I slid down in a series of "stop me and buy one" jerks.

Tilman and Cortlandt-Simpson waited on top of the next bump in the ridge—Mellemste-Skagastölstind (7,504 feet)—to see that we did not get into difficulties. Whitaker had preceded me down the crag in a manner which belied his statement of limited experience in performing abseils, and as soon as I touched down we all proceeded along the ridge as fast as possible to the next point of entertainment, the descent into the V-Skar—a gash in the ridge with sides steeper than the letter. As we reached the edge of the V it started to snow and became very cold. Tilman looked up from the bottom of the V, about 150 feet below, and advised us to abseil down in three pitches. This time I went down rather more speedily ; Whitaker then lowered our ice axes and followed after them. By now it was bitterly cold and getting on for seven o'clock. Quickly we scrambled up to the Nebb and thence followed the trail of the others off the mountain to the track in the valley. We rushed down the track as fast as we could and reached the hotel at

10-45 p.m., to find that I was not the only one who had found the abseils difficult in wet clothes. Our noble hostess, the proprietrix of the hotel, had kept some supper for us ; fifteen chops and potatoes *ad lib*, a huge plate of jam as the sweet and a plate piled high with sandwiches were assisted down with a jugful of milk each.

A. J. YOUNG.

IV—ROMSDAL EXPEDITION

When Roger Hartog and I were at the Tindeklub hut on that memorable occasion which is described elsewhere in this journal, we met, among others, a young Norwegian doctor named Sven Nissen-Meyer ; and he must have followed close behind us when we returned to the hotel. At any rate, I ran into him shortly afterwards in the hall and he joined me as I looked disparagingly at the weather and told me that he and his wife (Elna) were off in a few minutes in a small car to the Romsdal, and would I and another member of the party care to come ? I immediately said we would, and meeting John Glass as I crossed the hall, I put the offer to him and he grasped it instantly. The small car turned out to be a 10 h.p. model of a well-known English make and we learned later that it had been through some exciting adventures during the war. Its career of adventure was still not over as Sven seemed to leave it to steer itself as we approached the Romsdal, and he showed more interest in the summits than in the road immediately ahead. It was nine o'clock in the evening when we arrived at Andalsnes and took up temporary residence at the Park Hotel which is kept by one Gerhard Munthe—I think the most interesting and entertaining *hôte*lier of my acquaintance.

Next morning (4th August) we set off for the Romsdalthorn. On British principles we took the car as high and as far as we could get it, which was considerable, and left it at 9-30 a.m. Then there was a walk of an hour or so to a lake by the side of which we parked Elna, who was having an off-day. She had climbed the Romsdalthorn with her husband about a week earlier and chose to have an off-day on this occasion so that we could go as fast as we liked. From what we saw of her later we

were able to judge that her absence on this occasion made no contribution to the speed of the party. The three of us roped up at 1 p.m., Sven leading John Glass and me, in that order. Our route was the Nordweggen and the first pitch was the best. "Best" for this purpose means longest and steepest and most difficult. It contained an overhang and also three fixed pitons, two of which we used. Thereafter the climb was continuously interesting and of good quality, although it never again attained the standard set by the first pitch. It was possibly with a view to creating some outside interest equivalent to the excitement of the first pitch that I later rolled a boulder on to Glass's leg but I am afraid the explanation is much simpler: it was just plumb carelessness. Glass was about 30 feet below me at the time and I was not even climbing. I rested my knee idly against a block of rock and to my disgust the block started to move. I tried to stop it but failed and watched it go bounding down. Just above Glass's head it broke into two parts, each about the size of a football. He was not really well placed for dodging footballs, and in any case he is a rowing man not a left wing threequarter; and although he side-stepped neatly out of the way of one of the footballs, the other one caught him on the back of the leg. I said I was sorry. He said I was something else. He was probably right. We got to the top at three o'clock and were rewarded with an excellent view across the valley to an intriguing looking ridge called the Trolltindeggen, which we planned to visit next day. We were back at the car by 6-45 p.m., having collected Elna on the way, and dined sumptuously in the hotel at 7-30.

Sven thoroughly understood our British mountaineering principles so next day we again got the car to incredible heights before parking it at 9-40 a.m. and starting our walk to the Trolltindeggen. There was scree, and what the Norwegians call "ur" for which there is no single word translation (although there ought to be) but which is used to denote masses of boulders. Then there was some snow, followed by more "ur" until we roped up at the foot of our chosen pinnacle, called Brynsnaal. It was a blazing hot day, the only one of its kind we had seen in Norway, and we celebrated the event by climbing in rubbers for the only occasion during the whole holiday. Sven led Elna; and John Glass led me on a second rope. There were about

eight pitches, of excellent quality, and I should rate the climb as perhaps a "mild severe" by British standards. There were places where you could throw a stone 3,000 feet. We arrived on the summit at 2-30 p.m. and stayed there for half an hour. On the way down, Glass and I exchanged places on the rope so that I came last and I found that of the two hardest pitches one was enormously simplified in descent, while the other was (or so I thought) a little harder. Incidentally this was only the third ascent by a lady. I smoked continuously (as I generally do) during the actual rock-climbing, and Elna was amused when I marked the climb as being two-and-a-half pipes long. We were back at the car by 6-40 and dined in the hotel at 7-30, after which we sat up with Hr. Munthe until 1-30 a.m., drinking aquavit and enjoying his reminiscences.

We returned to Turtagrö next day, half of the journey being done in Nissen-Meyer's car until our ways parted at Otta, after which the journey was continued in a car-bus. We arrived at Turtagrö at 8-15 p.m. in the chill but familiar welcome of a storm of snow and sleet.

For Glass and myself this expedition to the Romsdal was a high spot of the holiday. In a land where kindliness to English visitors was always a notable feature, we have never seen it displayed at such extremes as were shown us by Sven and Elna Nissen-Meyer. It is unforgettable.

JOHN POOLE.



MOUNTAIN TRAINING WING, LLANBERIS, 1945

E. A. H. HAMSON

THE progress of mountain training during the war was rather like the history of civilisation through the ages. Periodically it bloomed in unpredictable places—it might be somewhere at home, or in the Lebanon, or Canada or Italy—then after a few months of splendour it declined and almost vanished. In each gap its traditions were carried on by a few nomads who spent their time writing reports and being a nuisance to War Office, till a change of policy reassembled instructors and started a new school.

The middle of 1945 was one of the dark ages. John Tilby and Bob Handley, holding the fort at Llanberis, and David Cox, well inside the enemy's lines in Horseguards Building, pretty well represented the sum of mountain training in the British Army. But there were signs of a revival. Equipment was arriving in Llanberis, and odd instructors returning from abroad were being posted there in ones and twos. I joined the still very small party in the middle of June.

The first day in the Welsh hills after being away for five years was one of the supreme moments of life. The previous night I had arrived late and seen nothing but shadows. But now the sun shone on the slopes of the Glyders and the oak woods across the lake. The Snowdon massif was a dark silhouette with the light right behind it, and from the end of the village street one could see the actual top of Snowdon peeping over the cliffs of Clogwyn du'r Arddu. At John's suggestion we decided to have a look at du'r Arddu—very strictly a look. The whole way was a delight, up through the woods, over the springy turf, thyme-scented and gay with bedstraw and potentilla, through the short bracken and the bogs full of marsh orchids. As we approached

Llyn du'r Arddu we saw six figures climbing up the scree to the bottom of the West Buttress, promising entertainment for the day. And while they were going up the Green Caterpillar and making the thin traverse across to the Great Slab we brewed tea and criticised them or lay in the sun listening to the water. When it came to climbing ourselves the next day we felt that perhaps Tryfan was nearer the mark, so we drove round to Gwern-y-Gof and went modestly up Pinnacle Rib.

By the end of June we had got together a very fine climbing party. We had been joined by Chris Preston, Jack Heap of the F. & R.C.C., Dan McKellar and Jock Campbell, both of the J.M.C.S., Jim Williamson and Larry Lachmann. These six who, for what the difference was worth, formed the N.C.O. contingent of Mountain Training Wing, contained two outstanding rock climbers in Campbell and Preston ; and Dan McKellar's vivid personality, which enabled him to be on Christian name terms with a Brigadier within forty-eight hours, was virtually the mainspring of the whole organisation. Considerably later came Ken Booth and Jack Haines, back from the Canadian winter trials in the Rockies, and early in September, David Cox arrived as C.O. War Office who had so ably collected us had omitted for the moment to give us any particular instructions, so all we had to do was to go on climbing. We had North Wales at our disposal and practically unlimited time. Everyone agreed that it was a unique chance and determined not to waste it ; from then on the diary is full of climbs. We got to know Lliwedd pretty well. Jock Campbell and Chris Preston went up Belle Vue Bastion by mistake, thinking they were on a hard variation of Grooved Arête ; this was the first venture onto one of the harder routes. On the Idwal Slabs and Glyder Fach we worked through the guide books, and Jock and Chris tossed for who should be first to lead Lot's Groove. One day saw six of us strung out across the Great Slab on Clogwyn du'r Arddu. And we discovered gems that pleased us particularly like the Nose of Dinas Mot, the Via Media on the Teyrn Slabs and the Marble Slab on Bochlwyd Buttress.

During July most mornings found us driving out of Llanberis up the pass, and most evenings drinking tea in the kitchen with Miss Jones at Pen-y-Pass or Mrs. Williams at Ogwen Cottage, for they both received us with unvarying cheerfulness however

wet we were. And a word must be said for our long-suffering, involuntary hosts, the Advanced Handling and Fieldcraft School. It must have been galling for them, as they were starting off weighed down with armament every morning on their martial pursuits, to see us riding by standing on the tail-board of our truck (it was a principle of Mountain Training Wing never to ride inside a vehicle). They sometimes said that it was rather disheartening to have their students begging to be allowed to change over to a mountaineering course. Our conversation in the mess must have driven them frantic, but they endured us with patience and practically without complaint.

During August we at last had some work ; a course of a hundred cadets from the J.T.C. and A.T.C., on which half a dozen members of the Climbers' Club came to help. Or rather, it was Tom Brocklebank's course and we were helping him. It only lasted for ten days, but it was most heartening to see the way the cadets took to the hills. The enthusiasm of most of them was terrific, though nothing quite equalled that of two cadets who were seen disappearing up the pass very early in the morning on their off day. When they got back late in the evening this is the account they gave of themselves. They had got a lift up to Pen-y-Pass, walked up Crib Goch and along the ridge, then gone down to Glaslyn for a swim. They had then climbed " up the front " of Snowdon—a thing I can't remember hearing of anyone else ever doing—and down to Beddgelert for lunch. After lunch they had gone up Moel Hebog, along the Moel Lefn ridge and down to Rhyd-ddu for tea. They then came back to Llanberis over Moel y Cynghorion. When we asked them why, they said they had wanted to see as much of the hills as possible, which seemed very reasonable.

September and the first half of October, a period of almost continuous fine weather, saw a stepping-up of activity. The diary has entries : " Sept. 5th : Curving Crack ; Pedestal Crack by direct start " (a notable lead by Campbell) ; " Sept. 9th : First ascent of Advocate's Wall, Devil's Kitchen. Reconnaissance of Suicide Wall." These were both climbs to which Preston's attention had been drawn by Dick Morsley, who occasionally joined us from Capel. Chris was enjoying himself very much at this time. A day or two later he heard that someone had just run up Snowdon from Llanberis (a practice which

had a short vogue with one or two of our number) in fifty-three minutes and down in thirty-two, so after a day's climbing he ate a large steak pudding and ran up in forty-eight minutes and down in twenty-six-and-a-quarter.

In the middle of September our carefree pursuits were again interrupted by instructions that we were to put on a five weeks' general mountaineering course. That the students were to be twenty regular officers rather alarmed us ; we had visions of saluting on Heather Terrace and forming up in threes outside Pen-y-Pass. We resolved to meet them on their own ground and have a morning parade, which we rehearsed pretty carefully, the small boys of Llanberis turning out in a body to watch us. On the first morning of the course we were a bit shaken when we got the order to dress by the right, a manoeuvre for which we were not prepared, but on the whole the parade went with a swing. At the right moment the Chief Instructor appeared from behind a clump of laurels, took over from Ken Booth and said his piece in the right accents of command. All the same we felt there was something wrong with the morning parade ; but when, after a few days, we attempted to drop it, the students were dismayed and would not hear of the abolition of such a uniquely irregular performance. Most of the course took to the hills at once. We started them walking round the Snowdon Horseshoe and up Bristly Ridge, then climbing on Tryfan and Lliwedd. The third week we camped by Llyn Bochlywd in warm October weather, climbing on Tryfan and the Glyders, and swimming in the lake when we got back in the evening. All this time there was little opportunity for any but instructional work. It was while we were at Bochlywd, however, that we heard that a member of a rival body to ours, the O.C.T.U. at Capel, had knocked seven minutes off Firbank's time for the fourteen 3,000-foot peaks of North Wales. That set our minds working. One evening, one of those crowded hours one remembers so well, I sent my students back to camp from the top of Tryfan and considered the route down to the road. One of Firbank's times which had impressed me most was twelve minutes from Tryfan to the road. I did not see how it could be done. There was not a hope down the North Gully or the North Ridge. It would take twelve minutes to get to Bwlch Tryfan. Then suddenly I became aware of the broad gully going down

the middle of the west side, set off down it and got to the road in ten minutes. That looked hopeful. I went off back to the camp, feeling rather hard-worked, and immediately got involved in something else. It was a glorious evening and the camp was rather empty ; someone told me that Preston had gone up to try and lead Lot's Groove in boots. I had never climbed Lot's Groove and did not want to, and I knew that if I went anywhere near it I should get embroiled. I told myself that I was tired ; anyhow it was too late ; I could see all I wanted to see with glasses from the camp, and it would be far better to have a swim and some food. Nevertheless it would be interesting to watch the climb from closer quarters . . . and before long I found myself climbing up the scree below the crags. By the time I arrived, Chris had gone up in boots and was sitting at the top, looking very pleased with life and holding the rope with a " pull you up for sixpence " air. David was in fact tying on at that moment, and he made a very workmanlike ascent. It did not appear too bad, and I thought I should like to have a look at the start and perhaps the first ten feet. Chris threw the rope down. I tied a more than usually careful bowline and started. The last few feet over the final overhang were the worst. My wrists ached and my feet slipped and I felt most unhappy. I was spared asking for a tight rope by a friendly pull from above, but I knew from Chris's grin just what he was thinking.

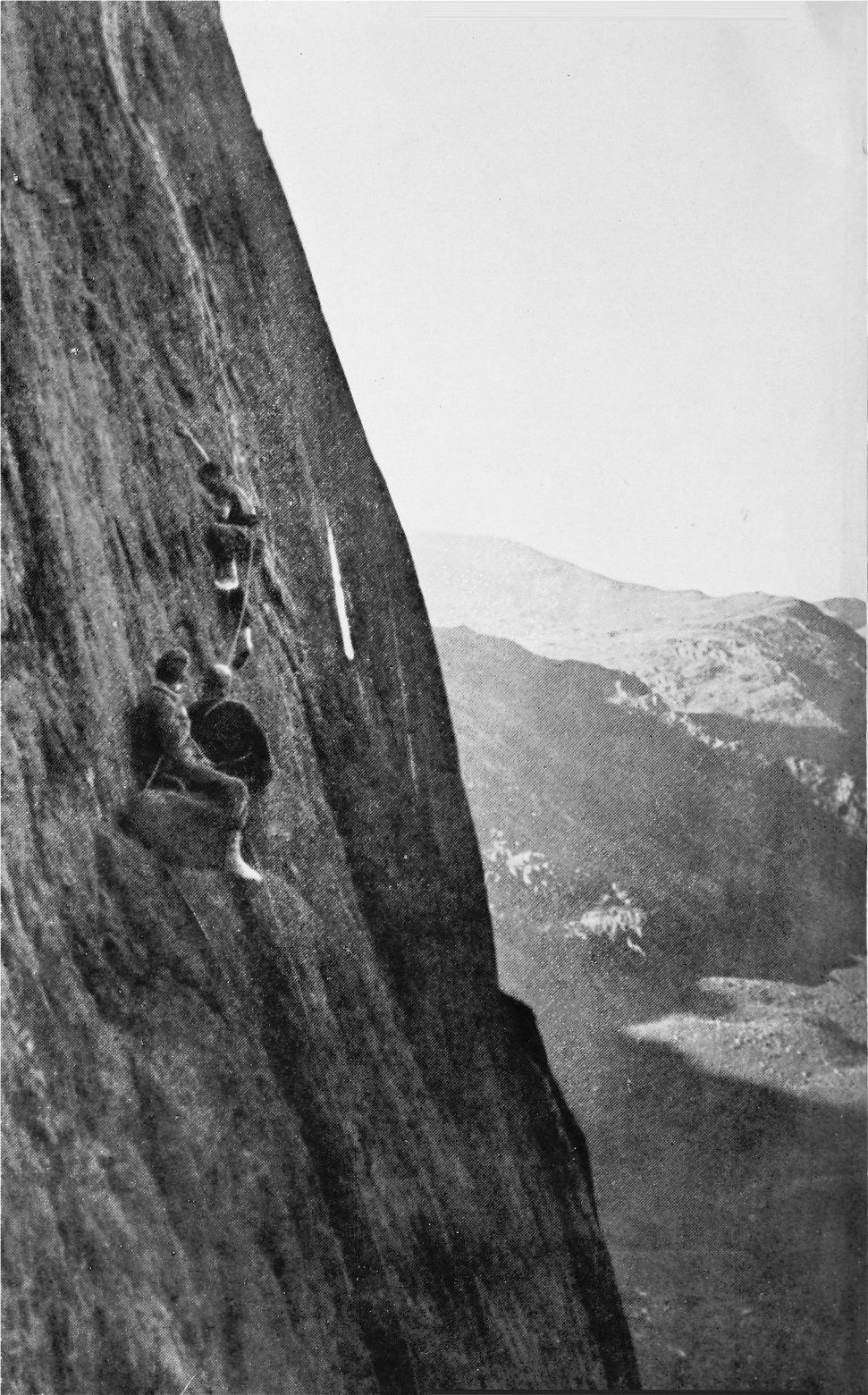
It was shortly after this, at a weekend, that Chris found time to make his long-delayed ascent of Suicide Wall. I did not see it, but one gathered from his modest comments, and the less restrained ones of the other participants, that it must have been pretty near the limit of the possible.

The course were as keen about the fourteen peak walk as we were, but, although a certain amount of thought had been given to the route, to the extent at least of deciding that it would be better done from north to south rather than as Firbank had done it, the other way round, the actual decision to try it was made without premeditation. We had gone round to Ogwen one morning intending to climb, but the obviously set fair weather seemed an opportunity for the eight more or less serious participants (including four students) to go round and camp in the Anafon valley, below Foel Fras, and try the walk next day. " Walk " was scarcely the word. We crossed the Carnedd's at a

trot and went up Elidyr Fawr pretty well on our knees. The price of not having trained was shocking cramp in the legs, and—as far as I was concerned—it was entirely due to Bob Handley's painful massage at Nant Peris that I was able to get up Crib Goch. It was hot for the time of year, so we wore only shorts and boots ; half way round Jack Haines discarded the shorts and went on just in boots. Someone clothed him to go through Nant Peris, but at Blaen-y-Nant he stripped again and sent a runner ahead to the top of Snowdon with his trousers. He arrived, however, before the runner. There were several ladies, including his wife, waiting at the top, and I heard later how his wife welcomed him with open arms while the others discovered a new beauty in the view of the Lleyrn Peninsula. Jack had reduced Firbank's time by exactly an hour, an effort which gave him severe rheumatism in the neck for the next ten days.

We returned to Clogwyn du'r Arddu on several occasions on off days during October. David had become interested in the guide book's problem of " Another Climb," unidentified on the East Buttress, and found the solution in Terrace Crack, where the discovery of an old sling was at least proof that this was not a first ascent. Another day I was one of a party behind Jock Campbell on the Narrow Slab. Jock on steep rock was always worth seeing, and I remember watching him going up the hard moves at the bottom of the slab. He was very slow and very safe, as calm and absorbed as a chess player, setting his feet and fingers on to the very slight holds, then leaning back to look at the route ahead. A splinter of quartz tinkled down the rock. Jock worked gradually over to the left and moved round the corner, then suddenly reached out and shouted " Got it," and stood up on the stance. Only then did one realise that while he was climbing one had not noticed the wind or the noise of the stream or the ravens, and that in a moment it would be one's own turn to follow. A few days after this, David pointed out to Jock the gap between Longland's and the Narrow Slab. Jock led off, and the result was a route which from below looked superb, the Sheaf Climb.

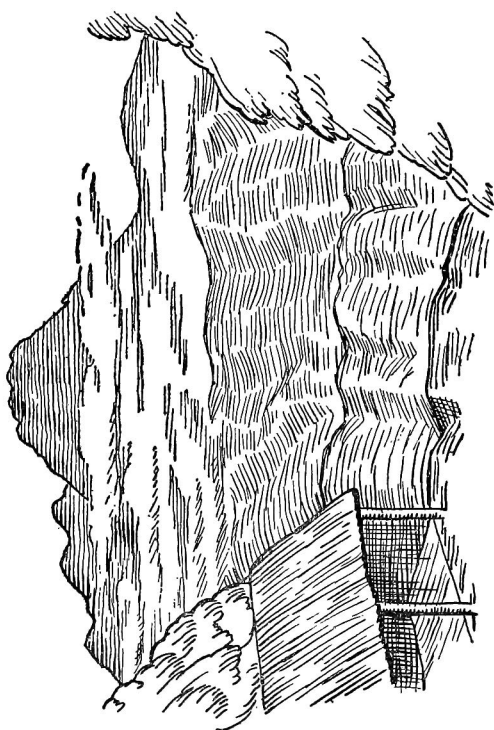
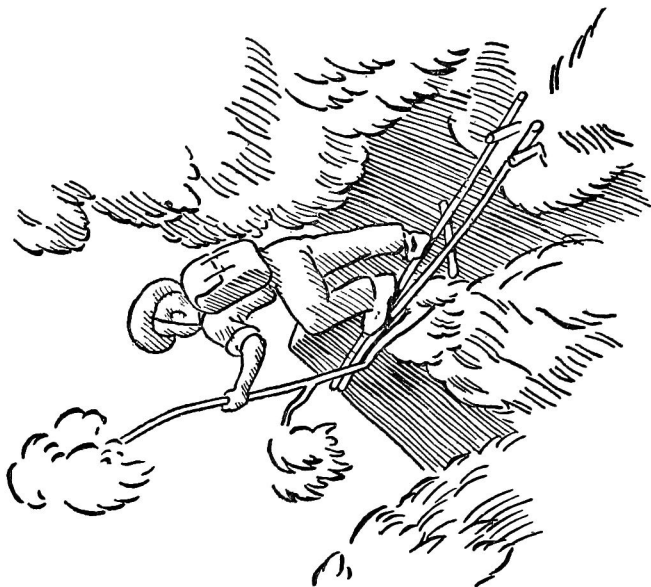
We felt it was in the interest of our students to introduce them to more than one kind of rock, so to finish the course we took them north, and for the next week the diary has entries like this : " Ridge walk, Sgurr nan Gillean to Sgurr na Banachdich " ;



“rained out” ; “washed off Window Buttress ; Inaccessible Pinnacle” ; “wet and gale—off day” ; “Cioch West, Cioch Direct.” The visit to Skye was a great success in spite of the weather, and the course finished with a notable party in Carnarvon.

Our next course started almost at once, after a brief interval of leave, but the weather was not so kind. Nevertheless we camped by Llyn Bochlwyd again in an Indian summer, though only one person swam in the lake this time. And again we finished up in Scotland, spending four crisp December days in a traverse of the Cairngorms.

That was virtually the end of Mountain Training Wing. We had a few more scrambles and some skating at Capel, but the Wing rapidly melted away as its members left the army. Its value in the grand military plan I cannot judge, but to the people in it it gave a rare opportunity for climbing in Wales, a chance to introduce a number of people to the hills, firm friendships and a great store of memories.



KINABALU

R. C. EVANS

EARLY in 1946 I was stationed at Jesselton, British North Borneo, and was able to join an expedition from the 4th/2nd Gurkha Rifles to climb Mt. Kinabalu, the highest mountain in the island. There were thirty of us altogether, commanded by Peter Sparks, then a Major of the 4th/2nd G.R. Of the men, twenty-four were Gurkhas and the other four came from various parts of India.

The expedition was meant as a pleasure trip, so we took with us local coolies, one to each man, to do the hard work. In addition, Daniel Hiw, a native of Tuaran near Jesselton, came to show us the way and to look after the coolies. He was half Chinese, half native of Borneo and besides being a pleasant companion he was a great help to us because of his knowledge of the dialects of the interior.

Kinabalu is 13,700 feet high and rises conspicuously out of a mass of densely wooded hills. It is twenty-five miles inland and its long axis lies roughly north and south. Its west side is a great precipice which forms the eastern wall of a basin drained by the River Tempasuk. This river runs north to the sea and is reputed to possess the world's highest waterfall. To the west of the Tempasuk basin is a tangle of hills which reach as far as Tuaran and Jesselton on the coast ; and at the bottom of the basin there is a village called Kaung which we guessed to be only about 2,000 feet above sea level.

Our route was from Jesselton to Tamparuli, near Tuaran, by road ; thence east along a track across the hills to Kaung, and from there by a mountain path up the headwaters of the Tempasuk to Tenampok pass, where the south-west ridge of Kinabalu joins the southern rim of the Kaung basin.

In Borneo, the rainy season, we were told, ends in January, so we put off the start until February, thinking that then we

should have fine weather. But we were out of luck and my memory of most days is that we tramped in steady rain along narrow, muddy trails while the water poured from the foliage around and ran in rivulets down the track. It took us two days to reach Kaung, where we found a wooden bungalow built in a clearing by the river. It had walls of bamboo lattice-work and a roof of palm leaves. Its floor was raised off the ground and there was a short ladder up to the front entrance. It was rain-proof and airy and was typical of the buildings in that part of the country. Across the river there was a cluster of huts, the "Kampong" of Kaung. The natives of this region are called Dusuns, and soon after our arrival they waded the stream to visit us, bringing fruit and eggs and chickens to sell. We stayed two nights at Kaung, enjoying the cool air after the steamy heat of the coast, and bathing in the cold water of the Tempasuk. One evening Peter and I got caught there by a sudden flood. We were sitting on a boulder in midstream when we noticed that the water level was rising before our eyes. Sticks and leaves came floating down and we dashed to save our towels which had been left, we thought, out of reach of the current. We saved them, but we lost a pair of canvas shoes, and in trying to rescue my pipe I got stranded on the Kaung side of the river, separated from the bungalow by a torrent which was now too fierce to wade. Luckily, at this point, Daniel turned up from the village where he had been having a celebration with his friends and he led me to a bamboo bridge, some way upstream. It was a flimsy affair of two poles lashed one above the other and it sloped steeply down towards the far bank. We shuffled over, moving sideways, and thereafter a detour through the woods led back to camp.

The Dusuns are good craftsmen. Each man carries a small sheath-knife slung round his waist ; and with no other materials than bamboo and lengths of rattan, the stringy stem of a plant that grows there, he can make almost anything from a house to a rat-trap. Many of our coolies, for example, had home-made packs made of bamboo and leaves. They were fitted with watertight wooden lids and had head and shoulder straps of plaited grass. These packs were light, strong and comfortable, and were so well finished that it was a pleasure to look at them.

At Kaung we took over a new team of coolies. The men

from Tamparuli went home and were replaced by men from Kiau and Bundu Tuhan, who were used to carrying loads up and down steep slopes. Among the newcomers were Tongal, a "priest," and Labuan, a "guide." Tongal, a short, stocky man and a bit of a rogue, had to come because the coolies were afraid to venture on the mountain without his protection against the devil that haunts its top. Labuan was a very different person. He was a thin, emaciated little chap with horrible decaying teeth which were constantly displayed in a wide grin. He looked, like so many of our coolies, as if he ought to be lying on a sick-bed, but, again like the coolies, when it came to travelling over jungle-covered hillsides he was as agile as a monkey, and going uphill could show me a clean pair of heels whenever he liked.

From Kaung to Bundu Tuhan, on the south side of Tenampok pass, it was a long uphill pull, saved from dullness by fleeting views through the mist. Occasional breaks in the damp curtain showed the dark ridges of the mountain plunging down high above us, and sometimes, crossing a slope from which the trees had been swept away by a landslide, we could see Kaung or Kiau, and get a glimpse of the distant sea.

On our daily marches we used to travel independently, the Gurkhas as a rule going ahead in twos and threes, Peter and I coming somewhere in the middle, and the laden porters bringing up the rear. Daniel sometimes walked with Peter and me, and towards the end of the day he used to keep up our spirits by cheerfully repeating that there was only an hour more to go. At other times he stayed behind to bring on the coolies, and then we would plod through the rain hoping at each turn of the track to find that the men ahead had halted, as they occasionally did, to light a fire and make tea.

From Bundu Tuhan to the top took us three days. The ridge up from Tenampok is steep and narrow and covered for the most part with luxuriant vegetation ; tall trees, ferns, creepers and mosses. It abounds with tiny leeches and insect-catching plants. Foreigners such as ourselves, naturalists and occasional visitors are the only people who go there.

From Tenampok "slashers" went on ahead to prepare the trail while we had a slack day pottering about Bundu Tuhan. The slashers not only cleared the trail, they built ladders up the

steps in the ridge and made rough bridges and wooden ledges to help us over the gaps and across the faces. At Kemberanga, about 8,000 feet above sea level, they made shelters roofed with leaves in which we spent our first night on the ridge. Perhaps we could have scrambled up that ridge without their ministrations, but it would have taken us a long time and we would almost certainly have lost the way and got mixed up in the tangled undergrowth that interferes so much with vision and with progress. Even as it was, I once found myself on a trail that led nowhere in particular, and I was heading for the interior of the island when Labuan tracked me down and brought me back to the fold.

At 10,000 feet, at a place on the ridge called Paka, there are several natural caves, and it was here that we spent the nights before and after going to the top. In one cave we got fires going and when the cave mouth had been closed with leaves and sticks we had a good spot in which to get dry and to keep warm during the night. From there, next day, we followed the main ridge until it ended, about 2,000 feet below the summit, against a sweep of easy slabs well supplied with vegetable handholds.

After the slabs a short wall of broken rocks led on to the sloping summit of the mountain and a walk of half a mile over bare rock took us to its highest point.

Just before getting there Tongal gave a performance near a pool in the rocks. We all waited while he squatted by the pool and brought out a necklace of beads, teeth and roots. After a long muttered incantation punctuated by shrieks he offered the devil a handful of rice and a few eggs, and ended by cutting the throats of two fowls, which his servant had carried up for the occasion, and scattering their blood on the stones.

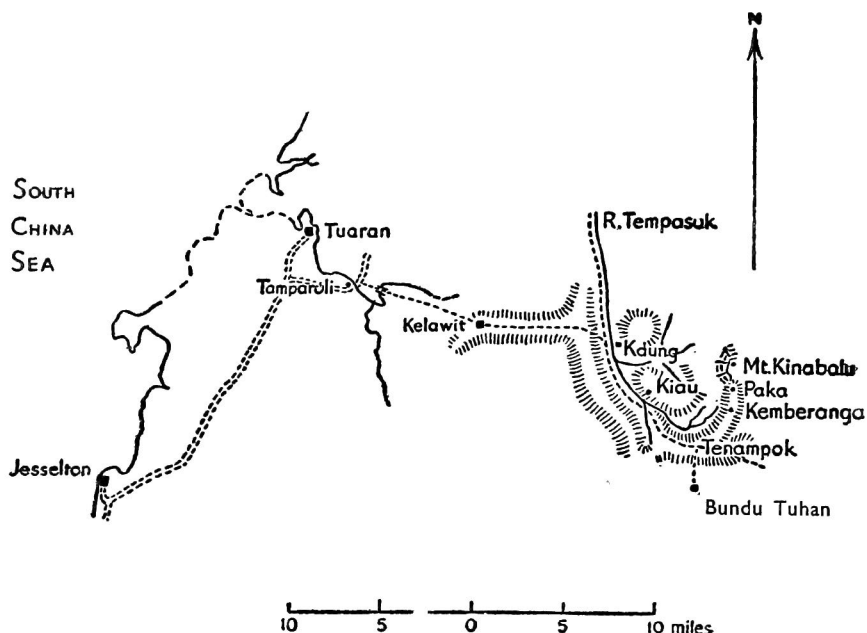
On the top, in cloud, we could see very little, and, after persuading the Gurkhas to abandon a slab of rock which they wanted to bring home as a trophy, we started down. It now began to clear, and from the lowest part of the summit plateau we had a fine view to the south-east, where ridge after ridge of dark blue hills, rising out of the mist, stretched towards the Dutch frontier.

At Paka Hira Bahadur, Peter's batman, who had stayed behind, had tea ready, and after our usual evening meal of curry and rice, we sat contentedly round the fire and listened to Hira

Bahadur telling stories. It would be more true to say that Peter listened, for I could understand very little of what he said, but I enjoyed the mimicry and pantomime that went with his tales. He was older than the rest of the men, and entertained them with yarns the whole time, whether in camp or on the march.

Next day, coming down again to Bundu Tuhan, we had the finest weather of the whole trip. As we left Paka and looked down from the clean rocks above to the twisted line of the coast below, and from the islands and coral reefs to the open sea beyond, mottled with cloud shadows, we seemed to be perched on top of the world.

Our journey back was by the same trail: first to Bundu Tuhan, then down again to Kaung, where we spent a day bathing and cleaning up. It was noticeably warm going from there to Tuaran, and I remember arriving at Kelawit on a sultry afternoon, hot and tired, and lying stretched at ease there on the bamboo floor of the hut in a heavy silence broken by the low humming of countless insects. On our last day we started early. It was all downhill and we dropped suddenly into a



hothouse atmosphere. There were groves of banana trees and slow, muddy streams choked with rotting tree trunks. We came to clearings and to huts, near which were heaps of stinking fish laid out in the sun to dry. By noon we were at Tamparuli and on the road to Jesselton.

Two weeks later, bound for England, I looked at Kinabalu from a motor launch at sea. It seemed remote and it was hard to believe that we had bridged so swiftly the gap from the palm-fringed beach to the bare top of the mountain. For me the charm of our expedition was in reaching the summit at which we had looked ever since Borneo first came into our view, and in entering the fringe of a country that was new to us, where the people were so friendly and hospitable.

SCOTTISH RIDGES

WILFRID NOYCE

IN our hours of youth, we were called to the strenuous places. We scrambled gladly the steep sides of rocks as steep as we could find them, we bedecked ourselves with rope, in whose coils we thought it a joy, no less, to struggle a whole day long about our favourite precipice. Then in our stormy season of strength, we made our way, heart in mouth, along the narrowest and most twisted, the least plausible of the Alpine crests that we could find. The mist would beat at us, the wind would roar, as we peered from one point of nothing towards the ribbon of the col, far below, or at the next black menacing tower in line along. How should we win our way ?

The Scottish snow ridges yield to a gentler spirit. They sympathise with an incipient old age, they beckon with the delicate white finger of an elderly and lovable maiden lady ; and when they seem to frown, there is a smile and welcome lurking still in the shadowed creases of their eyes. And now they have welcomed us, trim in their white Easter snow lace, to their gathering. We on an Easter day have struggled in a blind mist up the bumps and buttresses of Beinn Fada above Glencoe, and over the crest of Stob Coire nan Sgreabhach to Bidean. At each summit, the snow curve has seemed to bend to nothing beyond. We have tramped up, expecting it to be our last—a few yards of blank whiteness beyond, and then assuredly we should be driven home, the old ladies would have none of us. But at each summit a kindly imp, a grandson perhaps, beckoned over the crest into a beyond. A yet kindlier snow ridge opened out, a few feet only at a time but a fair narrow path down which to wander, with hands in pockets if one so willed, and always to the accompaniment of windbeat and the driving of miniature snow.

For the Scottish ridges, if they allow the easy road and if they are not insistent with the dangers, arrange none the less carefully

for the scenic effects. The thunder is not the thunder of avalanches, but it is no less real thunder. We were not roped, but we needed no less to be careful, not to tread too near the cornices, for the corries were steep and broken enough. The theatre was set to make the stage respond to our willing awe, our unambitious powers. And we allowed the spell to work.

Yet they smiled, the Scottish ridges, for all that. To prove it to us, they gave us, on another Easter day, pure joy of sun and snow, long crests that beacons to fairy summits, Alps in miniature without the panting discomfort of Alpine adventure. It was as exciting to see Ben Nevis' bulk across the way as it had been, earlier, to nod friendly fashion to Mont Blanc. The ridge that we were on, that of the Mamores, was steep and intricate to look at, spangled with snow. My boy companion was unacquainted with the ways and was nervous, not unnaturally. "I may not come with you along there," he said, as we stepped up towards the ridge junction of Binnein Mor—and Binnein Mor, as is plain to see, looks for all the world like the Weisshorn, its snowy north ridge gracefully to the fore. A few minutes later and we were stamping our track, hands in pockets, along the broad top. We looked back and laughed at fear.

The ridges are kind, certainly, in their homely selves. They wear the dour clothes that the Scots wear ; they veil themselves, like the inhabitants of their valleys, in uncomfortable mist and peer with suspicious inquiry at the traveller who has dared to approach them. The villagers of Arrochar had answered, to our anxious demands, "A bed? No, we have not a bed, but ye may try Mrs. Macdonald down the road." The door was closed, we tramped off through the rain. So the ridges too, canny and hard of head, are not going to open themselves to the first who whistles. They demand a wooing, an apprenticeship. But if the wooer should be selected they will show the best sitting room, as the villagers do. The mist of unknowing will clear from their eyes and they too will ask, in their gentle northern speech, "Will ye not come in?"

THE ASCENT OF THE BEISPIELSPITZ

B. H. KEMBALL-COOK

(*Editor's Note* : All readers of that classic of climbing manuals, the Badminton Library volume *Mountaineering*, are familiar with the noble and flowing lines of the Beispielspitz. This peak presents the most fascinating enigma in mountaineering literature. On pages 143 to 156 of the Badminton book (third edition, 1901) methods of ascent are exhaustively discussed. Yet nowhere had survived any record of the first ascent of a peak which must early have attracted, and not for ever withstood, the ambitions of British mountaineers.

At last the enigma is, in part at least, resolved. On a pavement in South Audley Street, a member of this Club found a tattered sheet of manuscript, of provenance unknown. Though but a fragment and partly illegible, it is clearly a page from the original climbing diary of a member of this Club. The conquerors of the Beispielspitz must, alas, be known to us by initials only, until a further happy find enables us to complete the narrative which follows. The authenticity of the document is, however, guaranteed by the presence in one corner of a stain caused by Bouvier of the vintage of 1890, tested by our Honorary Analyst.

This lucky find sheds light incidentally upon another problem which has teased Alpine scholars, namely the origin of the illustrations in the Badminton volume. It has long been thought that these graphic and masterly pictures represented scenes of actual experience. The sombre gloom of "British Hill-Weather" (page 356) ; the extraordinary antics of the "Crack-Climbers" (page 242), all moving together to get the difficult part over quickly ; the pitiless realism of "Serve Him Right" (page 110), in which members of the Alpine Club moodily abandon the straw-hatted tourist to his fate in a

snow-concealed crevasse ; all these bear the stamp of truth. What was long suspected is now certain, and that gripping picture "Backing-Up" (page 184) undoubtedly represents the most critical moment in the victorious ascent of the Beispielspitz, which brought imperishable laurels to this Club.

We cannot too strongly condemn any attempt to explore the origin of this document, or to enquire why it has remained so long unpublished. We deplore above all certain malicious reports that have gained currency, suggesting that it might have been suppressed by a fellow body, whose long roll of Alpine victories need not grudge this one triumph to a younger rival.

We give this fragmentary document in its entirety, and with its opening words find ourselves engaged on the first rocks of the North-West Ridge.)

... "Verglas !" Old Kaspar Abendessen rapped out the dread word in his rough patois, and Zum Frühstück blanched beneath his tan. This was serious ! The real business of the day still lay before us (B., sturdiest trencherman of the Climbers Club, had but lately finished his third breakfast) and already the grand old Beispielspitz was weighting the scales against those hardy mortals who were presuming to

"molest his ancient, solitary reign."

I knew well that at the first sign of irresolution on my part the guides would finish the Bouvier and counsel retreat, convinced, like all natives of the Kartoffelthal, that the Beispielspitz was inhabited by malicious demons of a terrifying power and very touchy disposition.

"Vorwärts !" I cried therefore, lifting my stout baton and prodding Zum Frühstück firmly in the back . . .

... a desperate situation ! Between us and the further rocks the wide and ice-glazed couloir plunged at an angle of seventy-five degrees to where, 2,000 feet below, the gaping bergschrund awaited impious mortals who would tamper with the ice-fringed solitudes of the Beispielspitz.

Old Kaspar shrugged his shoulders. "Es geht nichts," he muttered. "I have a wife and twelve children whom I have a fancy to see again. If we set foot there we are all dead men. Let us drink the Bouvier and turn back, before it is too late."

Such words from the cock of the Kartoffelthal were an eloquent proof of the terror inspired by our peak. But I was determined that we would not be foiled by the superstitious spell which had for so long thwarted the best efforts of the Alpine Club. I turned to see what B. thought of it. Old B., stoutest scientist of the Climbers' Club, had already set up his boiling-water apparatus and was timing an egg with his stop-watch. The sight gave me confidence.

"Vorwärts!" I cried, prodding Abendessen in the back with my baton . . .

. . . Kaspar was half over, plying his axe with dogged haste, when I heard a horrified whisper in my ear. It was B.

"Look, J. ! *The fleas are deserting Kaspar !*"

It was true. Even as he spoke, a little group of those persistent ministers to the discomfort of the Kartoffelthaler gathered on the snow and hopped off purposively (*heu pietas ! heu prisca fides !*) down the couloir. Fearful of the effect which this portent might have upon Zum Frühstück's superstitious soul, I turned. Fortunately he had not seen, for, infected no doubt with B.'s scientific zeal, he was engaged in testing the specific gravity of a bottle of Bouvier, and, finding it, I should say, less every minute. I turned back. Kaspar was over !

"Vorwärts !" I cried, and advanced in my turn . . .

. . . a most desperate situation ! My slip had been arrested, but not until I was extended at full length on the nearly vertical slope, my pick driven firmly into the ice above my head. But the rope—and my comrades—held ! That moment is graven on my memory.¹ As I lay there, in the cold shadow of the rocks, my glance travelled from good old Kaspar, poised lightly on the further edge of the couloir, and belaying firmly beneath his right thumb the rope which held me : to good old B., backing up staunchly in his ice-steps, with the sunlight gilding his grand white beard and the ancient and decrepit hat which he dare not sport below the tree-line lest Mrs. B. behold it and consign it to instant destruction . . .

¹ This is the scene illustrated on page 184 of the Badminton volume. Zum Frühstück can have been of little help at this crisis. He is precariously placed, and appears the worse for drink.

. . . I hope that I shall not be accused of unmanliness when I confess that it was with a momentary pang of regret that I planted on the summit of the Beispielspitz the new standard of the Climbers' Club, with its noble design of two purists, rampant, gules, upon a field of pitons . . .¹

(*Editor's Note* : Here the fragment ends. It is certain that B. at least got down safely, and lived to cry " Vorwärts ! " another day.)

¹ It is a pity this flag has fallen into desuetude, but there is no reason to doubt its existence. The piton controversy is of great antiquity. Cf. Samuel Butler's comment in " Hudibras " (*Canto* 3, vv. 1-2).

" Alas ! What perils do environ
The man who meddles with cold iron ! "

UNCOVENANTED MERCIES

G. F. PEAKER

“THE scenery here is very impressive.” So says the *Climber’s Guide to Snowdon*, of a point reached in the ascent of the Great Gully which seams the face below Y Wyddfa. To my middle-aged eyes the statement seemed justified, though it may conceivably provoke the mirth of

“ . . . those

Whose clinging hands, prehensile toes

Enable them to stand at ease,”

in Keenlyside’s excellent verse, upon the steeper parts of Clogwyn du’r Arddu and kindred declivities.¹

The point in question is attained, under suitable conditions, by ascending the snow bed of the gully until one can traverse out, below a cave, onto the ridge which forms the edge of the Glaslyn precipice. Above it a long diagonal traverse to the left, followed by one to the right, will give access to the “ roof ” which is such a conspicuous feature of Y Wyddfa. Alternatively a continuation of the first traverse will bring one to the Bwlch-y-Saethau ridge some distance below the summit. Either route constitutes an admirable winter way to the top of Snowdon. This year a certain amount of cutting in hard ice was needed by April, but normally step kicking suffices.

This main cliff of Snowdon is a fascinating place, and it will be a matter of lifelong regret to me that it took me more than twenty years to discover it. The snow falls early and lies late, and certainly during the last three winters there have been many days between the New Year and Easter on which it has afforded much better climbing than one snow-lover ever expected to find in Wales. The best climb is perhaps the right-hand Trinity Gully, which is steeper than the others and sometimes contains a good deal of water-ice. On such an occasion the middle section gives excellent sport. It is perhaps worth remarking that if the

¹ The distinction between a declivity and an acclivity is for the general reader merely an interesting point in semantics. For the climber, one may suggest, acclivities are slopes which do not, in the dark words of Doughty’s anonymous friend, “ give the rocks a chance,” and declivities are those which do.

ice peels off from a short slabby pitch below a chockstone a turning movement can be made to the left up snow lying on steep grass. Unless the snow is well anchored it is advisable to cut through into the frozen turf, which also affords good holding for the pick of the axe. The angle here is about sixty, but after ascending some fifty feet one can get back into the bed of the gully above the chockstone, and kick steps up the snow bed to the foot of the last steep bit. This can either be taken straight, or, if the snow or ice in the bed of the gully is too thin to make reliable footing, climbed up the (ascending) right wall, in which case an excellent thread belay will be found, half-way up, in the shape of a small hole pierced clean through a leaf of rock. In some states of the snow the traverse back into the gully above needs care. After one or two more small pitches one arrives at the neck of the final funnel. If there is a lot of snow this gives a most delightful exit on to the summit ridge, since it combines steepness with safety. The angle varies over quite a large range with the extent to which the snow has banked up in the funnel.

For the right-hand Trinity Gully and for the two gullies further to the right it is probably advisable to have a party. The central and left-hand Trinity Gullies, and a number of face routes, make excellent winter ways to the summit for a solitary climber accustomed to snow and ice. The proviso is worth making, since the main skills needed are ability to use an axe with both hands or either, and to judge the reliability of a step and of an axe hold. On most of these climbs one should not need to lay a hand on rock, but might be in a difficult situation if one felt it important to do so. One of the easiest, but most rewarding, of these scrambles is the Rake and Rib. This can be well seen from the Pig Track as a snow rake running up to the right from the lower part of the right-hand Trinity Gully, and a rib continuing to the summit ridge from the right-hand end of the rake. The other lines are all obvious when the snow picks them out, and it is not worth describing them, since the element of exploration is an essential part of the fun one can get from this N.E. face. There is also at least one route up the E. face, to the left of the formidably steep part described by Irving in *Ten Great Mountains*, which makes a first-class scramble provided the turf is frozen to just the right degree ; and I have no doubt there are plenty of others.



I remember reading many years ago of the danger from falling bedsteads encountered by those who ventured on to these slopes, but although I have spent a good deal of time there in these last three winters the only missiles I have seen have been a few stones and ice fragments loosed by the ordinary processes of nature, as in the Alps. I dare say a certain amount of debris would be visible in summer, but in winter the snow covers most of it, and for my part I find the occasional protrusion of a wooden stake, the trace no doubt of a former summit hut, less offensive than the discarded cigarette packets, tins, broken glass and orange peel with which our better known rock climbs are becoming increasingly befouled. On the whole I rate the days I have spent here among the very best that have come my way in Wales, and a sense of duty prompts me to recommend the place to others, though having discharged this duty I shall heartily hope they will ignore the recommendation. Justice must be done, and yet

“Hast thou yet dealt her, O life, thy full measure ?

World, have thy children yet bowed at her knee ?

Hast thou with myrtle leaf crowned her, O pleasure ?

Crown, crown her quickly, *and leave her to me.*”

The hard weather of the early months of 1947 brought other uncovenanted mercies to the mountaineer, and those who were able to get some leave in February were indeed fortunate. Although I did not myself belong to this happy class I cannot complain, since I was able, in the course of various journeys, to snatch a day's skiing in the Pennines, another in Wales over Pen Llithrig and Pen Helyg, and a memorable walk round the Buttermere fells when most of the snow had gone, but enough lingered on the tops to catch the setting sun on an evening of surpassing beauty, with that extreme and delicate translucency that foretells the coming of rain. On this occasion there was no mistake about the prediction, and on the following day I drove over the Pennines to Durham in weather that was singularly wet even for the British hills. There were deep cuttings through the snow, and no traffic, on the road to Alston, which had only just been reopened. I stopped at the highest point to eat and to watch the rain sweeping in almost level lines across the fell, and to enjoy a sense of solitude very rare on a road in this country today. On the eastern side the burns were in spate, and I slid

DENT BLANCHE.

Looking down the Viereselgrat
from the summit.

C. Secord.

down to Alston to the sound of falling waters. Beyond Alston the road rises again to Clargill Head, and a momentary clearance gave a view down South Tynedale with that strange but instantly recognisable quality which makes a permanent impression on the mind. Then down Allendale with its woods and Cotswold coloured stone (but no Cotswold stream could rival Allen Water, nor can the air of the Cotswolds for one moment compare with the wind which sweeps across these northern fells), and so to Hexham and by the Roman road through Ebchester to Durham. This road is a good example of the way in which the Romans paid far more attention to plan than to elevation in their road-making, holding a straight line regardless of gradient. Beyond Ebchester a merciful fog veiled the ravaged countryside, until the towers of Durham rose starkly through the gloom.

This fog persisted throughout my stay, but I emerged from it at Bowes on the return journey across the Yorkshire fells and ran into a fair afternoon, with mist on the tops but gleams of watery sunshine in the valleys. Between Kirkby Stephen and Sedbergh I pulled up at Cautley to revisit, after many years, the locally famous waterfall. Cautley Spout is a very fine fall indeed, very long, and deep cut in the fellsides. One can get a good scramble beside the water, and indeed a purist might find a high-class rock climb: the definition of a pure ascent might be that the climb should be done in dry weather and that one should always have at least one extremity on a wet hold, if not actually in the flow. For my part I am seldom tempted by notions of purity, and on this occasion the sheer volume of water thundering down compelled a line of only moderate difficulty well away from the back of the gorge. At the head of the fall I was already in mist, and took a compass line to where I conceived the top of the fell ('The Calf') to be. My intention was to return by descending Cautley Crag, which is normally a heather-covered slope of some steepness. When I arrived above it, however, I perceived a continuous snowslope descending into the mist to the not very distant limit of visibility, and observed that at one point this had been changed into a large ice tongue, such as descends from the snout of a glacier. Melting snow from the fell above had evidently trickled down and refrozen for many days, leaving a very passible imitation of an icefall problem about 200 feet in height. The construction of a ladder of steps and an occasional handhold up

this furnished an hour's pleasant occupation, and added a novel item to the attraction of the fells in which the holidays of my boyhood were spent.

Perhaps the element of construction, which, we are informed by distinguished authorities, it is so important to invoke in the education of the young, plays a part in the increasing attraction of snow and ice, as compared with rock, for the aged, or at any rate ageing, mountaineer. With rock, either one can or one can't; one is (very properly) forbidden by the rules to modify the structure of the pitch, and twenty-five years' experience, if it does nothing else, gives one a reliable knowledge of the modifications one can safely make in one's own anatomy—the only other possibility. With ice, the position is quite different, and the most apparently uncompromising situations will yield to time and patience; the question is not usually whether the thing can be done safely at all, but whether it can be done in the time available. The immediate safety factor can generally be increased to any reasonable extent by hard work with the axe and judgment in placing the steps, but prolonged step cutting, particularly on the descent, does of course increase the risk of being benighted. This was well-illustrated last year by a party of which I was a member. Our first climb was the Bietschorn. We arrived from England in August just as the weather broke, and walked up in the first shower from Goppestein to Ried. At Ried I, unwisely as it turned out, decided to leave the crampons behind, thinking that there might be new snow above, which would be a danger until the routine of tapping out the "sabots" had been established. We walked up to the hut in improving weather, with the intention of crossing the Baltschiederjoch to the Klause and returning over the Bietschorn the next day. In the evening it looked as though the weather was good for one fine day but not two—a judgment subsequently confirmed—and we altered the plan to that of ascending by the North ridge reached from the west and subsequently descending the whole length of the North ridge to the Baltschiederjoch. If the traverse is done in this sense the main difficulties are in the descent. It would have perhaps been prudent to have saved time by going up the easier West ridge direct, but the other way is more fun, and we were partly seduced by the attraction of leaving our sacks and several days' provisions at the point 3,712, where the North ridge is

joined from the Bietschorn hut. We got away in good time on a perfect morning, and saw the Pennines and Mont Blanc again, after six long years, at sunrise from the Schafberg. The bergschrund provided the only problem on the way to Point 3,712. There was no new snow on the ridge, which was all in hard ice. We reached the summit, spent a pleasant hour there, and returned to Point 3,712. In view of the hour it would no doubt have been wise to have completed the descent by our morning's line, but I had not been down the North ridge before, and the attraction of a new route, and the sheer mechanical pleasure of cutting away at ice after so long an abstinence was too strong, and we continued down over the steep boss of the North ridge. On the easier angle below the boss we could have walked in claws, but our claws were down in Ried, and the cutting went on, absorbing but time-consuming. We were still in full sunshine, but the shadows were filling the Lötschenthal and the ice continued unrelentingly. Finally we reached a point where a snow ribbon afforded an opportunity of descending, on the west side, to a line of slabs emerging from the face and offering some prospect of pursuing a parallel line about 150 feet below the ridge. This line, when we reached it, proved intermittent and of doubtful advantage. The sun set, as in Samivel's drawing—"il se couche, lui, au moins"—and we realised we were in for a bivouac. In the rapidly failing light Sinclair discovered a rudimentary cave, and suggested that we might go further and fare worse. There was a sort of constricted attic above, and a larger, and chillier, ground floor. Sinclair and Adams squeezed into the attic, and Bryson and I occupied the ground floor. My companions behaved with admirable cheerfulness: my own sang froid was purely physical. The step cutting had been laborious though enjoyable, and I was still drenched with sweat when we halted. Lugubrious visions of chills in the liver, lumbago and kindred maladies putting a stop to further operations during the remainder of our holiday filled me with apprehension, not to say querulousness, and the insouciance with which my friends flashed torches and struck matches to light the stove added to my fretful humour. Some 7,000 feet below us we could see the lights of the Lötschenthal: ergo, the inhabitants would not fail to perceive any flames or other illuminations we produced, and a long cohort of rescuers,

bringing a still longer bill in their train, might even now be assembling. I pointed out these probabilities to the meeting ; Sinclair's Treasury mind instantly grasped the threat to the Anglo-Swiss balance of payments, the Inland Revenue dutifully followed the Treasury's lead, and the B.B.C., after a formal departmental protest against the principle of hiding lights under bushels, submitted. Well shielded, the stove bubbled in the innermost recesses of the cave, and sweetness, if not light, was circulated. One by one, and then in groups, the fixed lights in the valley winked out. A wandering lantern aroused my apprehension for a while, until it moved up the opposite side of the valley and disappeared. Gradually the stars were veiled by mist. A little wind sprang up, and it began to snow. We dozed fitfully from sheer fatigue, and awoke through the violence of our shivering. Towards morning the snow ceased, and the wind blew harder. Bryson's labours in transporting to the summit of the Bietschorn a phenomenal supply of sweaters and extra pairs of trousers were now rewarded, and he was in a position to take the line adopted by the wise virgins in the parable. Instead, he earned my undying gratitude by enfolding himself and me in his gascape. Sinclair and Adams in their eyrie were to some extent sheltered from the wind, and were also possessed of more than the usual complement of trousers ; they appeared to pass the night in a series of recondite arguments on topics of a rarefaction suitable to the altitude. I remember reflecting that this bivouac must represent the highest, longest, and possibly latest, inter-departmental meeting on record, then trying to remember the context of the lines :

“ Which had never been done

By a clergyman's son

On a Friday, in August, at Dover,”

and then waking up to find the dawn already grey, with mist and a little blown snow before a fitful breeze.

Slowly the troglodytes emerged ; painfully we straightened our cramped limbs, untied our belays, collected our belongings and roped up. An hour saw us at the bottom of the ice ridge, on a spacious platform above the lower, rocky ridge that runs up from the Baltschiederjoch, sheltered from the wind and warmed by the morning sun. Here we cooked an elaborate breakfast, slept a little and thawed out. The rocks below were

easy, but separated from the glacier by a short ice slope and a fair-sized schrund. This gave us a little trouble, as the two obvious crossings were swept from time to time by showers of stones. We had about 200 feet of rope—enough to reach as a single cord, but not doubled, from the lowest rocks to the glacier over the ice slope and a place where the upper lip of the schrund was quite high, on a line not exposed to stones. Three members of the party went down the rope, and I then began to cut quickly on a diagonal descent towards a place where the lip was lower. I had almost reached this spot when I heard a fresh shower bounding down the couloir I was crossing. I cut two more extremely sketchy steps and then one that was altogether too thin—a mere clearing of the surface slush—and shot over the lip onto the avalanche debris below, alighting on my feet without damage and in shelter. The stones actually reached the schrund a little further back, crossing my line of steps, but I think it was wise not to await their advent.

From this spot half-an-hour's trudge brought us to the Baltschiederjoch, where a cold collation and hot drinks were consumed. We were by now so far restored that the idea of descending to the Baltschieder Klause instead of to Ried was seriously discussed—we had plenty of food—and dismissed rather on the score that the belated fifth member of the party might by now have succeeded in reaching Ried from England than on grounds of fatigue. (In fact he had.) Packing up the tea things we dashed into a long glissade down one of the couloirs on the western side, roped again for the snow-covered glacier below and scrambled over many tedious moraines to the path. Here the party divided, Adams and Sinclair electing for a leisurely descent with intervals for scenery or sleep, while Bryson's mind was set on beer and baths, and I accompanied him to even things up, though somewhat doubtful about the effect of a rapid descent on my ageing knees. In the event I was led to demand a couple of halts on the interminable path, but he supported these delays with admirable philosophy, which I reinforced by a circumstantial narration of the story of the Austrian guide who raced up, and down, a mountain, drank half-a-gallon of beer, and died of it. I also pointed out the advisability of a bathe in the Birch-bach as a preliminary and external cooling to prepare his inner economy for the chill he proposed to inflict upon it, but

I was unable to convince him on this point, and we arrived at Ried at a round trot to find David Attenborough awaiting us and thirsting for fresh fields to conquer.

Alas, it was not to be. The weather, no doubt feeling that we had been treated a great deal better than we had any right to expect during our night on the Bietschorn, resolutely withheld any further mercies, covenanted or uncovenanted, during the rest of our stay, and our major plans were washed out or snowed under. In a strenuous fortnight we crossed and recrossed the Oberland, enjoying some minor successes and some exhilarating failures, but the wet wind continued to blow and the snow lay always deep, loose and dangerous on the steeper northern slopes we had hoped to tread. Disappointing in a way, but any weather in the hills is good provided one keeps on trying, and one of those failures in particular was a cracking good day.

A HYPOCHONDRIAC IN THE ALPS

H. E. KRETSCHMER

AS I grow older I become fascinated by the disorders to which my body is subject. I am amazed at the tremendous underlying strength of a constitution which can support such suffering and by the climactic spectacle of a magnificent spirit triumphant in adversity. Last summer I watched this one-man drama in the Alps.

At first it was not clear in which way a malign fate would strike at me. Indeed, I had thoughts of being impregnable to all ailments, thoughts of coming to high pastures as a conquering god, superlatively—though unostentatiously, of course—fit and strong. That this was not to be, I could see on the eve of our first day, when the way up to the Mountet Hut became stony and steep. The mountains were too cold and too high. I thought I diagnosed serious cardiac trouble, consumption and pleurisy. I toyed with frostbite. When we went down to Zinal again, it was sadly clear that it was a question of total decline. Surely this time the spirit would succumb ; but I hid this thought from my companions as I bravely forced down a few more buttered rolls with cherry jam and mournfully sipped at my rum in the Carnozette.

Somehow I seemed to forget about myself as we toiled up to the Cabane de Tracuit. The clouds were clearing after a storm when we came out of the sultry valley. As we climbed higher and higher in slow rhythm of effort, wave upon wave of mountains appeared. In the golden evening sun my mind became deliciously empty and it ebbed out toward the west, where Mont Blanc stood supreme ; and then, with equal liquidity and pleasantness, all the great peaks of the Oberland flooded in to fill the void. It was an unexpected awareness and pleasure which surely held promise of even greater fulfilment ; for were we not to climb the Weisshorn, the most handsome of

mountains? The mood outlasted supper, sleep and breakfast, but in the hours before dawn, it was lost in going too fast and stopping too often, in footsteps breaking through crusted snow and in lanterns that would not stay alight. Nothing went wrong but things were not right. I had got used to the altitude but I had caught a chill. I felt sick.

In Zermatt there was too much Fendant de Sion to be drunk, and there were too many cakes to be eaten, to allow me to attend fully to internal disorders. When we were crossing back to the Mountet Hut over the Trifhorn I decided to stop shilly-shallying. I was taken ill to such good effect that it was necessary for Cam to administer large tots of rum, for David to take my rucksack which had become ugly in its heaviness, and for Peter to coax me up the unfriendly steepness on a short rope. It was a bellyache. Unromantic, you may say, and lacking in dignity; but I can assure you that for the sensitive it is as good as any other pain for achieving even the most rugged grandeur of suffering. A heavily-bearded French witch doctor undertook to heal me by drawing the badness out of my guts. For about fifteen minutes his hand circled in the air above my stomach in lewd gesturing. During the magical operation he kept up a steady patter of small talk with anyone who happened to pass by, and I, at a loss to know how to behave on this solemn occasion, pretended to be asleep. By this I also managed to avoid meeting the eye of Cam, who said when it was all over, "Well, at any rate you have gotten a free chunk of libido out of him." I must have been deficient in faith, though, because I felt worse as the day went on. A kind Swiss doctor injected laudanum and counselled tranquillity. I should like to describe in detail my symptoms, and how I suffered in stoic silence once I had made people realise how parlous my condition was, but let it suffice if I say that I was brought very low; for I must hurry on from the apotheosis of my sick bed to my phoenix-like renewal.

The scene shifts to the Schönbühl hut two days later, where our intention was to climb the Matterhorn. My recovery was still a matter of pious hope rather than of accomplished fact. As yet there was only an uneasy state of truce between my belly and me. All evening and all night I watched my stomach with almost fanatical concentration, now putting on it another sweater, now giving it more sodium bicarbonate.

The hard, narrow bunk, the inadequate warmth of the single blanket, the unmusical whispering in Swiss German, the breathing, the coughing, the snoring and the reluctant passage of time were suffered until at last it was 1.30 and we got up. Slowly, as in a dream, we walked down to the glacier. When we got on to the moraine, a sharp wind blew out the lamps but it was light enough to manage without them. It was a curious night, warm and yet cold, cloudy and moonless and yet light. On the other side of the Zmutt glacier we put on crampons. For the first time I became aware of the others and felt compassion when the fastening of David's crampons gave trouble ; but was not mine a special mission on the mountain, did I not carry the precious burden of my great illness ? So I shut everything out of my mind that was not the placing of one foot above the other, all the while intently training my inner eye on my stomach. Devoutly I put down each foot with infinite deliberation and precision, until the slow plodding rhythm became a holy ritual which conquered steepness, night and stomach. The exultation of achieving height united all except Cam who nattered about the route. Unfortunately he was right. Then we eagerly scrambled up easy rocks, which was fun once it had been established that there was no need to climb up the worst waterfall. And then we put on crampons again but this time there was sureness and strength. When we reached the snow-covered ridge the sun rose brilliantly upon a host of peaks and the sides of the Matterhorn glistened. I felt as though I was walking on the roof of the morning and in my mind there was a noise of half-remembered music which pleasantly repeated itself again and again. It was much further to the teeth of Zmutt than I had thought and the wind was bitter, but all the time I felt that I was gaining in strength. When we stopped just past the third tooth, the sky looked threatening in many shades of grey and we soon hurried on. We were roped now, climbing in two parties of two—Peter and I were ahead. There was still a long way to go and it was very cold. There was no longer much obvious change of scene or passing of landmarks. The weather remained streaky grey and the wind blew. The rocky ridge grew no shorter. We went well, but we were dull and without eagerness. The scene changed when we reached the nose of Zmutt and went out onto the Tiefenmatten face which was plastered



with ice and snow. It did not present any acute difficulty but a certain wariness was necessary and there were steps to be cut. Although on the windward side of the mountain the face was almost out of the wind, thereby upholding in a most commendable fashion an old Alpine Club tradition which lesser mountains often forget. When we got back onto the ridge, there were still many steps to the summit. It had been a long journey but there was no sense of achievement. A continuous stream of clouds came up from Italy and tore down into Switzerland. Visibility was not good. It was cold and I was tired. Yet it was well enough. I felt reasonably contented and far from the self which had left the Schönbühl hut eleven hours ago. By an act of freewill I decided that I was fully cured and I announced to the others the glad tidings that for the first time in days I felt hungry and was ready to eat anything. This announcement did not draw the rousing cheers that might have been expected because unfortunately there was very little food left.

Rapidly we pushed down the Arête de Lion into Italy. What a very long way down it was. Down magnificent rock, it is true, but for tired men it was a great strain to slide down the thick fixed ropes. With my flair for mechanical invention I was able to devise for the others ingenious friction techniques with rope loops and karabiners. These methods were received with a progressive decline of enthusiasm. We spent hours sliding down the mountain. Sometimes our two ropes were right on top of each other, sometimes we quite lost sight of one another. The sun had come out again and the wind had dropped. Firn ridges started to appear. We were still high up on the mountain, but there was pleasure in the afternoon sun. At about 6 o'clock we reached the Rifugio de Luigi Amadeo. Although we were all set in gear to go straight down to Italy, the insidious suggestion was now put forward that we should spend the night at the refuge. The possible unpleasantness of being benighted on the mountain or of arriving in a strange Italy after dark without the introduction afforded by passports was weighed against the certain knowledge of going to bed hungry. To my surprise, the consensus of opinion was in favour of staying at the hut. All hidden reserves of food were called in for official distribution and four hungry men supped off three part-worn slices of salami, five lumps of sugar, six squares of chocolate, seventeen raisins, seven dried

apricots, a packet of saccharine and a modicum of tea. By striking a nice balance between respect for property and the necessity for the survival of the race, and by using great dexterity, it was possible to go on making and drinking hot tea for over an hour. To conserve warmth we had kept the shutters closed and when I looked outside again, it was surprising to find that the sun was only just setting. It was a magnificently wild and breathtaking sight. There we were high up in a tiny shack, perched on the side of this huge mountain. It was freezing hard and the wind boomed and whistled. Almost vertically above towered the Pic Tyndall. Below and all around us there was a boiling sea of clouds and peaks stretching as far as the eye could see. In many shafted hues of rosy light the sky expanded into the darkening night. I quickly turned away, back to the squalid, comfortably human scene inside the hut.

We passed a night in which we were neither as hungry nor as cold and uncomfortable as we had expected to be. As the bearer of "Big Ben," I had to reveal the appointed hour when it came and I remember heralding dawn with some reluctance. There was no breakfast.

We soon got warm and we found that the mountain had got much smaller overnight. In less than one hour we were down at the Col du Lion. Shouting "*mangiare, mangiare*," we ran down to the Albergo Orlande.

What a breakfast we had, starting with Chianti and omelettes and ending in compliments and Chianti, with a slight coldness and coffee in the middle. There had been a misunderstanding with our host when we tried to explain the inadequacy of single cups of *espresso*. The right word for jug would not come to mind and he brought along a bowl thinking the mad English wanted to mix coffee and wine. In the mid-day sun we were overtaken by glacier lassitude and on the Forca glacier our thirst made us regret the red wine for breakfast ; but I thought it had been worth it. We had a big lunch at the Schwarzsee Hotel, and on our return to Zermatt we were soon so surfeited that we almost had difficulty in completing our full programme of eating orgies. I was feeling strong and eager for action, but my restless mind grew apprehensive. Could it be that I was beginning to suffer from that most dangerously insidious complaint—false fitness ?

CRIB GOCH BUTTRESS

H. R. C. CARR

FROM the obsolete Snowdon Guide of 1926, I quote the following (on page 90 about Crib Goch): "Route No. 2 (i.e., the original climb of 1904 described in *Rock Climbing in North Wales*, pp. 302-313) lies, or lay, somewhere about the centre of the buttress . . . it manages to elude the majority of modern searchers and has fallen into disuse. Loose rock . . ." etc., etc. Well, it had eluded me. All I can now remember is a futile scramble which ended near the summit cairn, more or less on one of the dotted lines in Abraham's diagram, but certainly a long way from the Buttress route. On several occasions in 1945 when threading my way along the ridge through crowds of happy hikers and perspiring Commando squads I had paused to admire the bold architecture of the Buttress. The feeling grew that there must be more than one good climb on the crag ; here, I feared, was another shot I had placed off the target. In the smokeroom at Pen-y-Pass I read the book of Genesis carefully over again. What a splendid day it had been in the jocund May sunshine long ago when the world was young, with A. E. Field smoking peacefully on his ledge and the gymnast of the party doing hand traverses on a course of "exceptional difficulty." The homeric jest about loose rock being an excuse for climbing inability went home, and I badly wanted to make an *amende honorable*. Fortunately Ben Bathurst was also keen to discover Abraham's route, and on August 26th and 27th of last year he led my wife, Bill Fahie and me up two excellent climbs parallel to Reade's route, both led through without prior exploration from above.

The Buttress is really a tower perched above a 200-foot glaciis which is of no interest to the climber under summer conditions. It is therefore convenient to reach the base of the tower by traversing either from Bwlch Goch or from the Pinnacle Gully ; climbing is then begun about 80 feet below the

fierce rampart which extends across the front of the tower at the level of the first pitch on Reade's climb. We believe that the 1904 climb keeps at first to the left of the second route here described, joining it at the "small overhanging pitch" and then finishing to the right by taking the "cricket pitch" traverse. When these climbs, and perhaps two more yet to be tackled, have been cleaned and gardened we shall have a grand little climbing ground, exposed, difficult to severe in standards, very attractive as a finale to a day in Cwm Glas. Our first climb was repeated by Mrs. Morin and Miss Ritchie, in October, their verdict being "a high severe as an initial lead." On both climbs a lot of loose mountain was cast down, much to the excitement of the hikers on the ridge, who were perhaps a trifle disappointed when no bodies accompanied the cannonade.

Here is the note we put in the Pen-y-Pass book (the first of its kind for twenty years) :

CRIB GOCH BUTTRESS

August 26th and 27th, 1946. CRIB GOCH BUTTRESS.

An attempt to reopen the Abrahams' climb on this buttress produced two interesting routes.

1. August 26th. A start was made on an easy rib 20 yards L (north) of Reade's route and 100 feet lower down the buttress than the first difficulty in Reade's climb.

- (1) 80 feet up rib.
- (2) Straight up 50 feet to a belay below the overhanging wall of the buttress.
- (3) 100 feet. Round a bulge R, up a crack and up a wall on the L to a point where it is possible to step onto the steep slab above the overhang. A good hitch for a sling is available at this point. Trend R up slab and then up to R steeply to belays close to Reade's pinnacle.
- (4) Up slab above bearing L to wedged stone below a good ledge with large belays, 45 feet.
- (5) From ledge step R onto slab, then up for 25 feet, then finish by traversing up and L avoiding Reade's route. 50 feet.

Standard: Severe. B.L.B., Mrs. E.D.C., H.R.C.C.

This clearly was *not* the Abrahams' climb.

2. August 27th.

- (1) Same as above.
- (2) Easy upward traverse to L, 35 feet to ledge and belay.
- (3) Up on L 20 feet, then up awkward slab to R, 25 feet (a useful hold moves but could not be dislodged) to stance and belay.

(4) Up onto rib on L, up and over it and into a grassy corner. 40 feet.

(5) 15 feet up steep wall on R (belay)—Abrahams' "small overhanging pitch."

(6) Step 8 feet R (now above sheer part of the buttress wall) and go straight up slab above, 30 feet. Then move L into the grassy entrance of a deep and wide chimney over which a large capstone roofs a cave.

(7) Easy exit on R, 30 feet to top of Buttress.

At L of chimney stands a big pinnacle similar to Reade's. It was climbed, and attempt made on slab above. This was climbed on a slack rope, but gives an alternative finish very much more difficult than any pitch on the climb.

Standard: Very Difficult—rather harder than Reade's route at present. If it were to become a popular route it might be considered a similar climb. No evidence of a previous ascent was seen, but it may well be in part the Abrahams' climb and is certainly worthy of them. B.L.B., Mrs. E.D.C., H.R.C.C., W. Fahie.

Climbing on this cliff requires great care owing to the presence of much loose rock, but it is of delightful quality.

Pitch 3 on the first climb described is severe, as the slab is holdless and the position exposed.

H.R.C.C.

IN MEMORIAM

P. A. L. BROWN

Peter Brown¹ had been away in India for so many years that his death in action in Burma passed generally unnoticed in climbing circles. But now that the Club has leisure to review its losses—losses which won that leisure—a warm tribute is due to that gruff and great-hearted climber. Peter's family owned a cottage at Maes Caradoc in Nant Ffrancon, and at an early age he was running barefoot over the surrounding mountains. He started rock climbing with his cousin Ted Hicks, and was leading "Severes" in his 'teens. And though he never attained to any remarkable distinction in the sport (his extremely strong fingers and forearms tended to leave his feet to fend for themselves), he will be widely and gratefully remembered by the countless novices whom he introduced, with equal parts of patience and enthusiasm, both to the technique of rock climbing and to the wider lore and love of the mountains. His loveable simplicity and woolly-ruggedness of character made him accord most perfectly with those hills which, as his letters showed, he had for so many years longed to revisit.

R. W. STALLYBRASS.

CAPTAIN F. H. GRENFELL, R.N.

Francis Henry Grenfell liked good talk, talked well without loquacity, but never talked about himself. Large Board of Education envelopes on the breakfast-table during climbing holidays addressed to Capt. F. H. Grenfell, D.S.O., R.N., H.M.I., implied two careers of distinction. When I had the honour to propose him for the Club I knew him well as a climber—it was only when I sat down to write this notice that I realised

¹ The name of P. A. L. Brown was inadvertently omitted from the Roll of Honour in last year's Journal. He served in the Indian Army and held the rank of Captain.

my ignorance about his life and the reason for that ignorance. A glance at *Who's Who* showed that he had been equally reticent with its editors ; an obituary notice in *The Times* of May 22nd, 1946, though more helpful, confirmed that self-advertisement had never been his weakness. However, here is an outline of his life.

Destined for the Navy, he entered the Britannia in 1898 and was one of the latest officers to serve a commission in sail. Activity aloft was then a key to fitness. With the transfer to steam the Admiralty decided to introduce systematic physical training. Grenfell was appointed the first Lieutenant of the Physical Training School established at Portsmouth. During his two years' appointment he became so enthusiastic about the Swedish system which he was teaching that he decided to send in his papers and devote himself to introducing the system to the Public Schools. His work roused such interest that in 1909 he was invited by the Board of Education to join their Staff.

Recalled to the Navy in 1914 he volunteered for " Q " ships and was given command of the *Penshurst*. He grew a beard which he kept till late in life, settled down to hunt submarines, and in numerous encounters definitely disposed of two.

With the D.S.O. and bar, the French Croix de Guerre, and special promotion to captain on the retired list, he returned to the Board of Education at the close of the War. He became their Chief Inspector of Physical Training, and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1935.

Music and Art had always played an important part in his life, and he was the owner of an unusually fine collection of modern etchings. With leisure to command, he now turned to sculpture, and within eighteen months work of his was accepted for the Royal Academy. Here was a third career of distinction in the making.

A thread running through all these activities was his love of mountains. He had all the qualities of a great mountaineer : gymnastic ability, fitness, endurance, nerve, judgment, and a gift for companionship. Supremely modest, he inspired the greatest confidence : qualities surely rare in combination. He had climbed much in the Alps, Cumberland, and the Welsh hills ; to climb with him was a privilege, and to watch him a lesson. I have seen him dominate more than one hazardous

situation ; and on one occasion, at least, his presence of mind, courage, and wrists of steel, averted grave disaster.

Captain Grenfell's modesty, which was so great as almost to amount to a fault, tended to obscure, for all except those who actually climbed with him, that he was one of the finest leaders of our time. He did much to popularize little known routes, and he was fond of exploring new ones, some of which have never been recorded. Some of our younger climbers might like to know that The Captain's Bluff, near the Pig track, was named after him.

With all his greatness he was a merry little man, and his friends will not forget him.

He died early in 1946, unmarried, at the age of 71.

M. S. GOTCH.

A. G. MACFARLANE

It was in the early summer of 1918 that Mac and I first met. We were both in the mountains convalescing from wounds. We joined forces and soon found that we were temperamentally congenial partners on the rocks. To me Mac was the ideal second ; reticent and strong, self-effacing but utterly reliable in times of trouble. He tackled a climb in no happy-go-lucky fashion, but approached each pitch with the attitude of one solving a chess problem, working out the correct moves with intellectual concentration, and, advanced philosopher though he was, most unphilosophical in his irritation with himself for failing to climb a pitch in ideal fashion. One always knew when he was thus annoyed from cryptic mutterings, which I eventually discovered were swearing in Greek ; when he was pleased with things in general, however, he was in the habit of indulging in long quotations from German poets, particularly Goethe.

Like Sir Bedevere, revolving happy memories of days with Mac, one recalls especially days in Wales with Ivor Richards and Dorothy Pilley on Lliwedd and Tryfan, and in the Lakes with Speaker on Scawfell and Pillar, and a few golden days wandering with a little Scotch friend all over the Pinnacle face.

Characteristic of his determination and " essential guts " was an incident that occurred one snowy day on Tryfan. We had accumulated an unusual number of followers, and it was arranged

that while I conducted one party up the ordinary North Buttress route, he should lead the rest up the Grooved Arête. Conditions were severe, and early in the climb he had reached a point some forty feet above his second when his numbed fingers gave out, and he came off, landing finally in a sitting position on a turf ledge, quite uninjured. Only waiting to restore his circulation he started straight up again, and this time finished the pitch. There were many facets to Mac. His main passion was, I believe, rock climbing, but with him it was only just ahead of music, chess and the art of appreciation of good wines. These he took with intense seriousness, and approached a vintage wine with as much reverence as he gave to a vintage climb. Indeed Hobbs and Sutcliffe facing the Australians on a sticky wicket displayed no greater concentration than Speaker and Mac at the Holborn Restaurant selecting the wines for the evening. The only occasion on which I saw Mac really upset was one night at Wastdale Head, when he had decreed a bottle of port. This he sent away to be warmed. The damsel who dealt with this operation had original ideas on the subject ; when the bottle reappeared it was almost too hot to hold, and when the cork was removed a cloud of steam came with it. Mac muttered to himself for at least three minutes, and then said, " Well, I shall drink one glass, and go straight to bed. You will finish the bottle." He then drank his glass, vanished, and we saw him no more that night.

I like to think of Speaker and Mac quaffing nectar in some heavenly mansion ; the latter, at any rate, would have no hesitation in sending for St. Peter himself if the brew did not reach the requisite standard of excellence.

C. F. HOLLAND.

NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES

CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU

CENTRAL RIB.

This is the prominent rib on the right of the Great Slab, and in the centre of the West Buttress.

First Ascent May 4th, 1946.

Party : H. A. Carsten, G. G. Macphee.

Standard : Very Severe. About as hard as Great Slab.

Start : From "second field" of Great Slab. A thin crack, overhanging in its lower part, can be seen up on the right wall. It provides a way onto the rib.

(1) 35 feet. Ascend the corner of Great Slab for 15 feet, and traverse out to the edge on the right, and so to the foot of the crack. This point may be reached from the top of pitch (4) of the Great Slab by traversing across the block on the right and descending slightly.

(2) 90 feet. The crux of the climb. Ascend the crack to grass ledges. (55 feet ; no belay.) Take the groove on the left, then traverse right to the crest of the rib. This is reached 10 feet below some conspicuous overhangs. Stance and belay on far side of rib.

Scramble up 20 feet to a larger grassledge at the foot of the upper part of the rib.

(3) 30 feet. Moderate climbing on the rib.

(4) 50 feet. Take the thin rib on the right and ascend until it steepens.

(5) 50 feet. Continue to the top of the cliff. A delightful finish, steep but on good holds.

TRYFAN : TERRACE WALL

BEELINE.

The climb starts at a groove by the Finger Stone, and takes a direct line to Belle Vue Terrace.

First Ascent August 9th, 1946.

Party : A. R. Dolphin, D. C. Birch (both of F. and R.C.C.).

Standard : Very Severe.

(1) Up groove for a few feet, cross to the arête on the right and ascend it to below the overhang on the right of Long Chimney.

(2) 70 feet. Straight up over the overhang above the belay, good holds being obtained some distance above. Bear first right and then straight up to Bollards Slab, and then up to the belay at the top of Long Chimney.

(3) 35 feet. The wall on the right is taken, a curving crack providing holds for a rising traverse towards the right, to the foot of a shallow groove sloping up to the left. Ascend this to the left-hand end of Belle Vue Terrace. This pitch is the same as pitch (3) of the Scars Climb.

SPIDER WALL

First Ascent August 9th, 1946.

Party : A. R. Dolphin, D. C. Birch.

Standard : Very Severe. Considerably harder than Central Route.

Start : From easy gangway of the Cheek Climb, a few feet left of Central Route, at the left-hand end of a 3-foot quartz ledge.

Follow the quartz ledge below the overhang. Cross Central Route, and continue the traverse until it is possible to work up over the bulge to a steep slab, and so to the rib. This is ascended direct to junction with Belle Vue Bastion. (Presumably the rib is the one taken as a variation to pitch (2) of the Bastion.)

GLYDER FACH

FINAL FLAKE VARIANT.

First Ascent August 21st, 1946.

Party : P. R. J. Harding, J. Wills.

Standard : Very Severe ; as for the Final Flake.

Start : From verandah.

(1) 15 feet. To the ledge below the Final Flake.

(2) 25 feet. The upper part of the crack.

CHASM CRACK.

Used as a continuation of Lot's Groove.

First Ascent August 21st, 1946.

Party : P. R. J. Harding, J. Wills.

Standard : Very Severe (hard).

Start : In the Chasm, at a grass platform 50 feet below the Vertical Vice. Twin cracks on the left wall of Chasm Rib give a pitch of 40 feet.

CRAIG YR YSFA

NETHER CLIMB : DIRECT FINISH.

Two pitches, previously turned on the left, provide a much better finish to the climb.

First Ascent August 12th, 1946 ; led by H. A. Carsten.

Standard : Severe.

Start : At top of pitch (4).

(1) 45 feet. There is a clean, steep groove round the corner on the right. Up this for half its length, then pull over a low vertical wall on the left into another groove ; this one greasy. Up this to a stance and belay beneath an overhang at the top.

(2) 50 feet. Cross the slab on the right and ascend a low, easy wall.

LLECH DU

CENTRAL ROUTE.

A steep and clean climb which goes straight up to the highest part of the cliff.

First Ascent April 22nd, 1946.

Party : G. Dwyer, R. S. Morsley.

Standard : Very Severe.

Start : At an obvious chimney in the highest line of the cliff.

(1) 60 feet. Up a grass rake for 10 feet, then awkwardly into the chimney. Back up the chimney until it is possible to move out onto the right rib. Up the rib to a stance and belay.

(2) 30 feet. Go to the left until a long move reaches the foot of an obvious slabby groove with a spike belay at its foot.

(3) 115 feet. Up the groove for 10 feet, then very awkwardly onto the right wall. Climb the wall, bearing first right, then left, then right again to the top of the wall, where a not very satisfactory thread can be arranged. Take the left hand rib to a grass ledge at the foot of a wall (belay).

(4) 40 feet. Climb (easily) either the crack or the chimney on the right.

(5) 70 feet. Climb the left-hand corner slab, and cross left to a shallow gully.

100 feet of scrambling remains.

GENERAL

What was probably the third ascent of Bow Shaped Slab was done in June, 1946, by J. Ball and J. Greenwood. They experienced considerable difficulty, and came to the conclusion that it was much harder than Narrow Slab. This view has also been expressed by others who have tried and abandoned the climb.

An account of two routes on Crib Goch Buttress appears elsewhere in this number in an article by H. R. C. Carr.

M. G. HUGHES.

LAKE DISTRICT

THE NAPES : GREMLIN CRACK

First Ascent July 14th, 1946.

Party : D. H. Haworth.

Standard : Hard Severe.

This is a prominent crack, slightly overhanging, up the east wall of the Sphinx Ridge of the Napes, starting from a left branch of Arrowhead Gully. A strenuous climb of about 50 feet.

SCOTLAND

ARRAN

At the end of March and beginning of April, 1947, D. H. Haworth led a number of new climbs in Arran. The climbs, most of which were

severe or very severe, were on Ben Tarsuinn, on the Rosa Pinnacle of Cir Mhor, the north A'Chir ridge, Ben Chliabhain and the Bealach an Fhir Bhoga Pinnacle. Details have been sent to the S.M.C. guide book editor.

GLENCOE

STOB COIRE NAN LOCHAN : TWISTING GULLY.

First Winter Ascent January, 1947.

Party : W. H. Murray, D. Scott, J. Cortlandt-Simpson.

Stob Coire nan Lochan, a subsidiary peak of Bidean nan Bian, is connected to Aonach Dhu by a ridge which is steep on its north-east side. A fine cliff of columnar basalt about 450 feet high stands out from this ridge. The cliff is split by deep gullies into three distinct buttresses. Twisting Gully separates the South Buttress from a nondescript mass of steep rock which borders it on the south side. The cliff stands high, about 3,000 feet. The gully is shallow, and is bounded by the vertical south wall of the South Buttress on the right. On the left escape is possible at some places ; but it is doubtful whether the crux can be avoided.

As the first party found it, the approach lay up a slope of hard snow. The first difficulty was a steep pitch of icy *nevé* requiring step-cutting and a run-out of about 50 feet. Beyond this, 150-200 feet of snow or *nevé* led to the crux. This consisted of a cave pitch, completely snowed up, where a route had to be made up the heavily iced rocks of the left wall, a very delicate pitch. Above, a return to the gully was possible, and another 100 feet of easier work led to the bottom of a funnel of steep snow. Here the gully divided, and the party took the left fork, which contained a short, difficult ice pitch. The snow in the upper part of the funnel was soft, and an ominous crack appeared across its surface as the leader stepped onto it. However, it did not avalanche, and the small final cornice was not a serious obstacle.

The climb took about four hours, and under the conditions the crucial pitch was very severe. It was not as difficult as South-Central Gully, except in this section, but is otherwise probably harder than any other recognized gully climb on Bidean.

BEN NEVIS

CARN DEARG : THE CRACK.

The crack is the most striking feature of the slender pinnacle known as Raeburn's Buttress. It runs straight up the middle of the vertical face and ends at about 300 feet, where the angle eases off, and the buttress takes the form of a ridge.

A strenuous climb with good holds all the way. The situations are outstanding, and there is no way off. It should be climbed in boots.

First Ascent June 16th, 1946.

Party : H. A. Carsten, I. McGuinness.

Standard : Severe.

Start : Scramble up grassy ledges to 60 feet or so below the crack.

(1) 50 feet. A series of short, difficult overhanging steps, best taken diagonally from left to right. Stance and belay 15 feet below the foot of the crack.

(2) 50 feet. Enter the crack, and up to a platform with a belay on the right, above the first overhang.

(3) 70 feet. The crack is narrow and overhanging. At 20 feet it becomes easier. Ascend to a large grassy recess on the left.

(4) 30 feet. Another overhang. Stance and belay above.

(5) 80 feet. The crack widens, and soon easy ground is reached.

Here Raeburn's route comes onto the buttress from the gully on the left, and offers some 200 feet of pleasant scrambling to the top.

REVIEWS

IN THE RAIN AND THE SUN. By L. S. Amery. (Hutchinson, 1946. 21/-.)

WHEN MEN AND MOUNTAINS MEET. By H. W. Tilman. (Cambridge University Press, 1946. 15/-.)

I read these books while I was working at a large industrial plant near a little town in Bavaria. At all sorts of odd times I could glance southwards and see the silver ramparts of the Bavarian Alps dominated by the crest of the Watzmann. They formed the background of every minute, aloof, enticing and strangely significant.

So it is with these books. They are not strictly about climbing, but love of the hills so permeates them that we catch a glimpse of the mountains on almost every page. They are, then, particularly books for mountaineers and not only because the authors are distinguished and familiar figures in the climbing world.

Tilman's book is a mixed bag. He recounts an expedition to the Assam Himalaya, the first crossing of the Zemu Gap under Kangchenjunga, ascents of three odd peaks in Irak, Persia, and Tunis, snatched in the course of his war-time service, and his experiences as a liaison officer with the partisans first in Albania and then in the Dolomites. The earlier part might have seemed scrappy were it less skilfully written. The Assam journey was a hideous failure in which the mistake of forgetting the quinine in malaria-ridden country proved fatal indeed. A porter lost his life and the rest of the party escaped alive only by Tilman's astonishing hardihood and courage. The Zemu Gap expeditions, though excellently conceived and carried out, were not undertakings of the first magnitude. The three war-time climbs were only incidents in a larger experience. But the descriptions of unfamiliar country and scenes are so good, the story carries one on so swiftly and with so much zest and humour, that these isolated incidents are welded into a coherent whole by force of personality and narrative style.

The second part is another kettle of fish altogether. Here indeed is a tale worth telling, and it is again extremely well told. The fantastic life of the partisan bands, skulking in the mountains or the woods, often starved of supplies and perpetually threatened as much by starvation or treachery as by the enemy, is vividly recreated. Tilman throughout hides his light under a bushel. He has little to say of the hardships of this life and particularly of his own. But if one reads with even a little imagination, one hardly knows which to admire more: the bravery and independence of the partisans for whom even a severe wound meant almost certain death with a grave risk of torture into the bargain and who carried the risk of the lives of their kin as well as of their own; or the pertinacity and devotion of the Englishman who shared equally

all their dangers and difficulties, and for whom even under the worst conditions "cheerfulness would keep breaking in." His resource and courage must surely have played no small part in maintaining the morale he so much admired. One feels that the glowing tribute he pays to the Italian partisans on the last page should by rights be addressed to him.

Amery's book, a sequel to *Days of Fresh Air*, is a complete contrast. It reminded me in text and photographs of one of those delightful family scrap books in which photographs are surrounded by descriptions of the scenes and incidents they illustrate. As we turn the pages we skim over Europe in the first World War ; we climb in every major region of the Alps ; we traverse the great dominions on tours of Empire diplomacy ; we go on expeditions in the Rockies, the New Zealand Alps and the Drakensberg snatched in the intervals between civic dinners or on transcontinental journeys ; we watch the inner workings of public life ; we ski with the family ; in fact we do all the things and see all the sights which have caught the imagination or interest of one who has lived a remarkably full life both inside and outside his work, a scholar without a trace of pedantry, a public man without a sense of his own importance, a traveller whose curiosity is inexhaustible, and above all, a mountaineer whose enthusiasm for the hills, small as well as great, has in no way dimmed but has only broadened and deepened with the passing of the years.

Inevitably, some leaves of the album will be less interesting than others. Some, perhaps, will find that they could do with less of the detailed catalogues of dinners and speeches on the long dominion tours. But this is a small matter, offset by fascinating side shows like the wicked practical joking of some New Zealand parrots or the phosphorescent angling insects of the Waitomo caves.

Sometimes we are not allowed to linger where we should like. Too often we are tantalised by a glimpse of some intriguing political crisis only to hear our mentor say, "but that belongs to another story," and see the page turned over quickly to a more familiar scene. But we are compensated for such disappointments by the many places where we find Amery's enthusiasms coinciding with our own. For one it may be the expedition to climb Mount Amery in the Rockies, for another his delight in the Classics ; for me it is particularly his love of the Eastern Alps, especially of Bavaria which has always been grossly neglected by British mountaineers. Whatever it may be, there is all the charm of description, apt and humorous anecdote and cultivated appreciation of the joys and beauties of life, which make such passages a rare and remaining pleasure. Amery's taste is so catholic and sure that it is impossible to imagine anyone who will not find much to beguile and entertain him here.

He has been poorly served by his publishers. Binding, type, paper and price of his book all compare unfavourably with Tilman's. The proof reading has been careless and there are a number of slips in place names. The description of a day on Craigiau Gelision (*sic*) will certainly not do anything to clear up the already confused topography of

Cwm Goch, nor is the North Ridge of the Badile visible from Sondrio. The production of *When Men and Mountains Meet* is, however, as good as one can hope for in these hard times. The illustrations are apt, interesting and well reproduced if not outstanding artistically.

Neither of these books then is likely to become a classic of mountain literature, but both will give a deal of enjoyment. In style and content they reflect remarkably well the different characters of their authors : Tilman, straightforward, racy, with a pretty turn of caustic wit, revelling with remarkable zest in the place and circumstance of discomfort ; Amery, urbane and charming, enjoying to the full every pleasure, physical or intellectual, he can find, and relinquishing them only when the prize is proportionately great. The puritan and the epicurean attitude to the mountains ; take your choice. There is much profit to be had from each.

G.A.D.

THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS. By Douglas Busk. (Hodder & Stoughton, 1946. 21/-.)

MOUNTAIN PROSPECT. By Scott Russell. (Chatto & Windus, 1946. 18/-.)

Few recent reviews have been so much enjoyed as Mr. Desmond McCarthy's unflinching dissection of Mr. Auden's boyish corpse. Both reader and critic get much more fun out of castigation than eulogy. I always hope, therefore, for a thoroughly bad book, but my luck is out ; the pleasure of damning is denied.

Distinguished books from members of the Club do not often fall so quickly from the press, as they have done in the past year. Here we have Busk and Russell ; Noyce is in the press ; Amery, Tilman and others are reviewed on other pages. Excellent as they are, I have a sneaking reservation in that these admirable accounts of mountain joys may serve to popularise the follies of climbing. Our authors have all been able to reach remote climbing grounds, and are perhaps less familiar with the perils of Lliwedd on a Bank Holiday.

Mountain Prospect is really a retrospect. The aposiopesis on which it ends does not reverse the character of the book, which is a vividly personal record of good times had by the author. He starts with a bow to the best conventions by getting G.W.Y. to write a foreword (which also tails off in an aposiopesis, a dreadful word for a nasty habit¹), but he lapses later into an inaccuracy that is less conventional. Piers Gill stands proxy for Rossett Gill ; Schunbuhl ; Gandeg ; Montonvers ; Pavey Arc ; Tilman's initials back to front ; ascend for descend. All this is easily forgiven a work written in a Japanese camp, but it leaves the reader sometimes uncertain that what he reads is what the author meant. " My own special task was the preparation of our botanical plans in which Professor F. G. Gregory, F.R.S., of the Imperial College and the Staff of the British Museum Herbarium took almost

¹ Since writing the above, I find in *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1947, the following advice : " ULTIMATE GOLDEN RULE. Do not attempt to give the impression of an infinity left unsaid by ending with a row of . . . "

kindly and helpful interest." At first glance one is pleased by a neat back-hander, but inaccuracies elsewhere lead me to read "took almost" as "all took most." I may well be wrong.

As Scott Russell took me round the world from New Zealand to North Wales, from the Lakes to the Alps, to Jan Mayen and the Karakorum, my chief feeling was of envy. He writes so feelingly of his happy pilgrimage that envy cannot be kept down. He awoke from childhood to find unexplored mountain country at his back door; he chose a career which enabled him to visit Jan Mayen and the Himalayas in the course of business; he fell always into just the right company. This, of course, was not all pure luck, for he did not waste his opportunities. It is amusing to see him from his peak of fortune's favour, pitying poor Campbell Secord for the shortness of his holiday, which had only allowed him to leave England with time for six weeks' travel in the Karakorum.

Wales is rather perfunctorily sketched as the background to a house-party; the Lakes have their geography briefly confused, nor do the Alps take up much space. The book is mainly about further fields, and it is on these that the interest is concentrated. Perhaps the New Zealand chapters are the best of all, describing expeditions in an earthly paradise, marred only by the weather and provoking birds.

The author has the uncommon gift of communicating his own zest in his expeditions. His writing is good, except in a few constructed bridge passages which descend to polite composition; these passages are short and rare. As a botanist he naturally shows interest in the detail as well as in the grandeur of mountains and the frequent transition from flower to peak, from foreground to background, from meadow to glacier sharpens his own and his readers' perception.

Photographs are excellent and numerous. The publishers have done their job well, giving the book a pleasant binding, an excellent dust cover and a readable page. The price, however, is high.

Douglas Busk, too, has been lucky. At Eton he fell under the spell of a very gallant master who set him in a happy direction; before going up to Oxford, he was able to study languages in the Engadine and the Pyrenees; he was fortunate in his early tutors in the Alps; he possessed, in an admirable aunt, a standing headquarters at Les Praz de Chamonix and he climbed regularly in those parts with Armand Charlet; he got a scholarship to Princeton, whence he visited the White Mountains and the Rockies. His subsequent career as a diplomat was not quite so well chosen as Scott Russell's, but it brought him within striking distance of many hills outside common experience, Demavend, the Elburz, Table Mountain and the Drakensberg, without denying him the mountains of Europe.

His book has not the same headlong verve as Scott Russell's, but it is a ripper work. He finds more time "to stand and stare," to reflect and to reconsider. Consequently the treatment is not chronological, and later climbs will be found in earlier chapters. Delightful people, as well as delectable mountains, are to be met. Causes are advocated, theories

propounded, opinions aired. His view of his mountains is, therefore, more comprehensive, and his book watered by more streams. He suppresses his own personality in order to present a public face. "I have deliberately left out many sharp recollections which, in retrospect, appear to lack unity." I think this is a pity ; after seven years pruning his book is almost too carefully balanced, his opinions too considered.

This does not mean that I do not heartily disagree with much of his Introduction, but this perhaps was written hastily at the end, a coda rather than an introduction. Mountaineering is not good or bad in itself without condition ; the good or evil lies in the climbers. There is a presumption in favour of good, in that the activity is carried out in surroundings which make what is base appear very obviously base. Much the same is probably true of the lofty intellectual environment of nuclear physics, but it does not follow that atomic bombs are good things. Mountaineering is perhaps, as Busk contends, a useful sublimation of warlike tendencies ; it is also (or so Lord Chorley assured the B.M.C. in December, 1945) a useful training for war and (he said) should be forbidden to those who may misuse it. The Council of the B.M.C. itself in one and the same afternoon laid stress on the high educational value of mountain craft and refused to condemn allied action which forbade Germans to practise it. It would be unfair to damn Busk with the B.M.C.'s confusion, but in an unguarded moment he seems to have admitted a smell of popular cant into his otherwise spotless kitchen.

Incidentally, Busk hopes that the initials B.M.C. will soon be as familiar as A.A. and R.A.C. And Cwm Glas as vulgar as the Brighton Road ? Or is the corollary naughty ?

This is a friendly book of mountains at all seasons and, if you have not already read it, you should contrive to do so. You will enjoy it and turn to it again in a mad world ; there are no "controls" in it, but by weather, topography and (sometimes) rope. There are gently humorous decorations by Bridget Busk which accord admirably with the spirit of the book. The photographs are not quite so good as (or are less well reproduced than) those in *Mountain Prospect*. The price is also high.

F.H.K.

CLIMBING IN BRITAIN. By J. E. Q. Barford. (Pelican Books, London, 1946. 1/-.)¹

This book does not aspire to literary heights ; it does aim to be useful. With a first printing of many thousands of copies it will certainly disseminate a lot of valuable information to a wide audience. As an easily available compendium of mountain method it is good ; and if no more than this was intended, then it must be pronounced a success.

Nevertheless, in reading Barford's book, I could not help feeling that he had not made the best of a great opportunity. The book might

¹ This review was written before the accident in which John Barford lost his life.

have been better if the author had laid aside some of the techniques and technicalities, and had considered more sympathetically the hearts and minds of his readers. Too many of these will, one fears, get an unduly grim impression of mountain climbing. The illustrations, both line drawings and photogravure plates, are in most respects excellent. But most of them are too beetling. Many of them are more likely to produce gasps of misplaced awe and respectful admiration than to encourage timid tyros. This aspect of the book illustrates a dilemma which confronts anybody who tries to talk intelligently about mountaineering to the uninitiated. It is always necessary to tell beginners that climbing is both much *easier* than they imagine, and, once they start liking it, that it is much more dangerous than they imagine. The book fails, almost completely, to mention the former fact, which, to a Pelican audience, is surely almost as important as the latter.

There is sometimes, also, a lack of balance in the choice of detail. Rather advanced notions are often dilated on, while some elementary, but useful, ones are insufficiently discussed. Take, for example, the section on "the ice-axe in descent." There is no amplification of the good diagram of a man descending hard snow. This could have provided the basis for a most useful discussion on how to drive in the heels properly by leaning out from the slope and stepping confidently forwards. There is no mention of this, but the paragraph ends on a much more ominous note: "If the party has got into difficulties and night approaches, it may be necessary to sacrifice an ice-axe as an anchor." True, but should we emphasise such things, especially to the young and to strangers?

But despite some shortcomings this book has a great deal to recommend it. Though it is easy for a mountaineer to attack its aim and its method, there is no doubt that its general effect will be good. There will be many people on the verge of conversion, whose missal it will become, and most of these will be capable of finding out for themselves how much more there is to climbing than can be held by a "Pelican."

R.A.H.

MOUNTAIN HOLIDAYS. By Janet Adam Smith. (J. M. Dent, 1946. 15/-.)

The trouble with mountain literature is that it so easily becomes a bore. Real mountain literature has come from the writers who wandered in the mountains, not, in the main, from the climbers who also wrote. Samuel Butler, C. E. Montague, Freshfield "below the snowline," are writers who can be re-read. Mr. A. and Professor B., for all their first ascents, cannot. Miss Janet Adam Smith is a writer: she has also wandered over mountains from her extreme youth, but neither as climber nor writer does she hit the highspots, and this is her achievement. She started on the hills in the usual way, she made the usual mistakes, but she has achieved the most unusual feat of turning this into a narrative credible, humorous, disarmingly well-written. Mainly concerned with the French Alps she is as interested in the people as

in the peaks. She has a thorough knowledge of and a very proper respect for her predecessors in those stoney valleys. It is instructive to compare her narrative with Miss Dorothy Pilley's *Climbing Days*, as they have much that is good in common, in particular their portraits of two fine guides, Othon Bron and Joseph Georges. The earlier book is not enlivened with such a light touch—witness the account of the arrest at Bellegarde on pp. 93-4.

This is then a good book which the publishers have presented in a seemly fashion. The illustrations gathered together at the end are a mixture of old prints, which do not take altogether kindly to half-tone reproduction, and photographs, pleasantly amateur and informal and fully in key with the text. In 1868 Bonney wrote of this district: "Snowfields and glaciers are numerous, but not extensive; the scenery is very varied, and often on that account not less attractive than in some of the grander regions." It would be a good comment on the book.

E.V.

THE BACKBONE OF ENGLAND. By W. A. Poucher. (Country Life, 1946. 30/-.)

SNOW ON THE HILLS. By F. S. Smythe. (A. & C. Black, 1946. 20/-.)

ON SCOTTISH HILLS. By B. H. Humble. (Chapman & Hall, 1946. 18/-.)

Three books of photographs, but there the similarity ends. Poucher relies principally on the photographic record of a district, Smythe on artistic form and Humble on human experience. So we find *The Backbone of England* the most factual and the most useful, while *Snow on the Hills* contains the most beautiful photographs and a not altogether convincing attempt to seek more abstract qualities. In *On Scottish Hills* the human emphasis appears in almost every photograph and the text is more lively than in the other two.

The Backbone of England follows the now familiar pattern of Poucher's many other books on the hills of Great Britain. He spent six weeks walking in the Pennines and has here recorded his experiences in almost guide book form. The departure from the more mountainous parts of the island has driven him inevitably to the valleys for his more interesting photographs, where—as he puts it—he has found "a galaxy of loveliness." Nevertheless he has also achieved the more difficult task of revealing the attractions of the bleak moors themselves. A book which should form a pleasant anticipation for those intending to visit the Pennines and a beautiful record for those already familiar with them.

The pattern of a Smythe book of photographs is also too well known to need description. The text is largely concerned with technique and with a short dissertation on the beauty of snow. In subject it is divided into chapters on the British Hills, the Alps, the Rockies and the Himalayas. The photographs are as usual superb and the production exceptionally good under present conditions.

On Scottish Hills is in rather a different category ; neither the production nor the photographs are so good, but then one would hardly expect them to be ; on the other hand the book has a quality of enthusiastic sincerity which for me made it the most enjoyable of these three. Again the country is described by districts. They are illustrated by holiday photographs mostly taken under snow conditions—a natural temptation in Scotland when trying to make the most of one's subject. The text consists of a series of lively personal reminiscences giving the reader a share in good days on the snow, hardships endured and the pleasures of camping in wild valleys. Rather a tendency to heartiness and dancing in the dew, but basically the right ideas—by which I doubtless mean my ideas.

F.A.P.

THE MOUNTAINS SHALL BRING PEACE. By R. L. G. Irving. (Basil Blackwell, 1947. 2/6.)

In the final section of this pamphlet Mr. Irving brings forward the suggestion that a small college, or Mountain Home, should be established, at which men training to be school teachers should be given two or three months to learn to appreciate the hills. The argument from which this proposal derives may be summarised as follows : there is a need for new ways of teaching religion at schools ; mountaineering is, or can be, a form of religion ; therefore there is a need for mountaineering to be taught to schoolboys. The core of the pamphlet, the section on mountains and religion, is the author's confession of faith ; one may respect its sincerity, while doubting if the *religion* of mountaineering can ever commend itself widely, even (or perhaps particularly) among mountaineers. The philosophical aspects of the question were discussed by Arnold Lunn in the 1930 number of this Journal.

A.D.M.C.

ALPINE JOURNAL, November, 1946.

LADIES' ALPINE CLUB YEAR BOOK, 1947.

One imagines that the Editor of the *Alpine Journal* must be looking forward very keenly to the return of days when he can draw primarily on the present rather than the past. The transition from war to peace is slow, but it is reasonable to hope that the number under review, or possibly its successor, may be the last of that protracted period in which the Editor has been contending against odds ; and if so, it is an appropriate time at which to express climbers' appreciation of the fact that he has been so successful in maintaining the Journal's regular appearance and high standards throughout the war.

The present number, which is based on papers read in the spring, does not yet reflect the first post-war Alpine summer, and to some extent the Editor is still relying on reminiscences, Col. Strutt going back to the heroic days and G. G. Macphee finishing off a prettily barbed account of a very active season. George Salt's article on mountain insects comes strictly within the Journal's terms of reference

as a record of scientific observation ; G. R. de Beer's Alpine antiquarianism and John Barford's exposition of the technicalities of modern ropework (why *does* Cambridge get the credit for the simplest of all types of belay ?) also fall within that broad category. The non-specialist articles, the records of recent mountain adventure, derive with one exception from the war, relaxation from the war, or the aftermath of the war. The most readable is B. R. Goodfellow's "Indian Leave," the most interesting, perhaps, J. B. Joyce's "In the Dolomites with an Orientalist," an article which draws some illuminating comparisons of one technique with another. But it is A. H. Firmin's account of a new route on Mount Kenya, a straightforward narrative of a fine climb, which makes one realise how pleasant it will be when the A.J. is able to devote more space to the resumed flow of peacetime mountaineering.

The slim, but admirably produced, *Ladies' Alpine Club Yearbook*, 1947, is open to no such complaint ; indeed the captious might say that it has erred in the other direction. But it is fair enough perhaps that this year all its five articles should be on the same theme, return to the Alps, whether in Switzerland, Austria, France or Italy. All are concerned less with performances than with impressions, and, in the belligerent countries at least, the contributors are in marked agreement on the still evident effects of the war. Nea Morin is particularly illuminating on the depressing state of Austria, still for the most part politically unregenerate. The outstanding contribution is Lady Chorley's "Switzerland Once More," as vivid a piece of writing as has appeared in any recent climbing journal.

A.D.M.C.

THE FELL AND ROCK JOURNAL, Volume XIV, No. 3, 1946.

This number of the *Fell and Rock Journal*, after the period of magnificent profusion of photographs and general air of opulence that marked the late G. R. Speaker's period as Editor, and the high level of literary and artistic quality sponsored by Katherine Chorley, has reverted to its local and in places almost defiantly parochial character.

We find the President on the frontispiece—there is no need to ask what part of the country *he* comes from—and pride of place is given to Bentley Beetham's admirable collection of new discoveries in Borrowdale. Later come memories of J. Wilson Robinson, as local a figure as the President, and F. H. F. Simpson evoking the charm of the Lake District through the frames of the Club's collection of lantern slides, and even Howard Somervell at the end of his characteristically modest and perfectly keyed account of his explorations in Kulu comes back very firmly to Bowfell Buttress at the close.

Among all these expressions of local patriotism the special gratitude of members of other clubs will go to Bentley Beetham, who has given us all an object lesson in the new climbing that can be found by going and rubbing your nose into odd corners of a valley in which all the familiar climbs are guarded by waiting queues. Any party that find themselves near Borrowdale on a day clearing from bad weather or with

an hour or two to spare before they leave for home will find special cause to bless Beetham for his excellent discoveries.

A tougher reminder that this is not only a Fell and Rock Climbing Club, but of the English Lake District—and to hell with foreigners—comes from J. Carswell writing on a "Welsh Week-end." The author carries round his parochialism in his rucksack, and is resolute in attacking the "contention that Welsh climbing is so much superior to Cumbrian." We are glad he intends to visit Wales again, because he may forget his prejudices and realise that Lliwedd has more to offer than Avalanche and Red Wall, and he may feel less certain that Menlove Edwards' classifications overrate the climbs, when he has had time to look at Central Chimney, the Child's and Elliptical Faces, and the direct climbs on Central Gully. He may also learn that our liking for the natural hazards of range of rock-surfaces, vegetation, and variety of firmness of rock is not mere cussedness, and is besides a training for the much greater range of technique needed on bigger mountains elsewhere. He may even find he wants to do Colin Kirkus' lovely and ingenious climb up Dinas Mot again, when once he has had the chance to set it against the background of the much more continuous effort and strain of the best routes on Du'r Arddu.

Perhaps a similar word about H. Keith Gregory's appreciative notes on climbing in Northumberland will not seem too ungracious. It is very pleasant, on cliffs where nail scratches are infrequent or have mercifully been covered again with a skin of lichen, to feel that we are probably doing new climbs, but it is prudent to verify our references before we claim them as new. Main Wall at Craig Lough is an old favourite, and A. P. Rossiter, among other climbers living in the North-East, worked out a wide range of climbs at Great Wanney some years ago, including the Girdle Traverse. And the assertion that most of the climbs on Simonside "were first done by a man called Emley," is enough to call up the wrathful shade of Raymond Bicknell, if he had not been so modest about his many discoveries in the district. But a really good mark to Mr. Gregory for what he says about the peculiar charm and wildness of the hill-walking between Upper Tyne and Cheviot, where a man may go all day and see nothing but wild duck and wild goats.

And a specially good mark should go to S. B. Beck, who will certainly not be accused of not knowing his Lake District climbing, but who writes to inspire younger members, without previous experience of big mountaineering or much money in their pockets, to turn their eyes to the Alps. His article is full of most valuable tips about post-war conditions there, and of encouragement to those who want to spend a fortnight climbing as hard and as cheaply as possible. He ought to wean himself from Chamonix, which has a fatal fascination for British-trained climbers, or they will never learn that a glacier has more uses than serving as an approach road to the rocks. But he has blazed a good trail, and the toughest of his successors will find it hard to live up to the slogan "peak-peak-change of hut," by which he has replaced the classic and more leisurely "hut-peak-rest day" of our forbears.

Everyone who wants to see "les jeunes britanniques" breaking free from the spell of their own home districts and learning new methods on other mountains will shout "Hear! hear!" to the rousing exhortations with which he ends his very valuable article. S. B. Beck's contribution and F. L. Jenkins' "Raid on Rum" are encouraging signs that some members of the Fell and Rock Club still continue to lift their eyes to other hills.

One last tilt—this time against E. W. Hodge's paper on "Amenity and All That." The author makes you think, as no doubt he intended, and he has good things to say against the tendency of amenity societies to try to preserve what has long ceased to exist. But the general line of his argument is perverse, and, in view of the small size and irreplaceability of the Lake District, at times downright dangerous. He is muddle-headed about afforestation; the Forestry Commission's occasional screens of hardwood, usually only planted after sustained pressure from the amenity societies, are no real compensation for the serried masses of conifers, which they usually screen only from one angle and at one eye-level. And his championship of Thirlmere, including the abrupt variations in the water-level and the dirty bath-water rim that these leave all round, is even more perverse. The Lake District is too precious a possession for us to listen to perversely ingenious arguments in favour of its despoilers—we should be cleaning our guns instead.

Among Club happenings and tributes, there is a particularly good notice on Haskett-Smith from the pen of Geoffrey Winthrop Young, which places "Haskett" delicately and firmly in his appointed place among the great ones.

J.L.L.

OXFORD MOUNTAINEERING, 1947.

CAMBRIDGE MOUNTAINEERING, 1946.

Outwardly the Cambridge Journal is presentably conformist. The Oxford Journal could not look much worse than it does. Yet there was something about the dark blue magazine which at first glance made it seem the more attractive of the two. It takes itself less seriously than does the other. In an editorial of admirable terseness an interval is recorded of ten years since the appearance of the previous O.U.M.C. Journal and the hope is expressed that the 1947 number will not produce a fervent prayer for an even longer interval.

The Journal contains Baron's charming account of a Frenchman's reactions to the English Lake District under the title "She is Very Beautiful." There is also the pertinent Jacques' "Short Guide to the Writing of Articles for Climbing Journals," which will prove invaluable to editors and contributors alike. For the rest there is promise but it is not fulfilled. There is too much improvisation and not enough to write about. Undergraduates are notoriously very busy and important persons, but it would have been well to have spent more time and trouble over this. These Journals are not as ephemeral as perhaps

they should be and they have a habit of getting themselves bound in volumes which clutter up the bookshelves of climbing libraries. I for one should be sorry to have to wait for another ten years for the next number of *Oxford Mountaineering*, but I hope that it will be possible to combine a shorter interval between production with a longer period of gestation.

The Cambridge Journal is a much better production. At first it seemed a trifle dull with only the apparently irrelevant woodcut tail-pieces showing lightness of touch, but it tends to improve as it goes on. A fine careless extravagance of C.U.M.C. spirits is distilled by articles such as those by Michael Ward and David Attenborough. The book reviews are informative and well balanced.

In both Journals the subject matter of the articles as well as Club Notes show the flourishing vitality of the two University Clubs.

H.E.K.

Publications of the Friends of the Lake District :

REPORT AND NEWS LETTER, APRIL, 1947.

NATIONAL PARKS : THEIR PURPOSE AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION.

The impression which the pamphlets of the Friends of the Lake District always give is not just one of enthusiasm in a good cause, but of an astonishing amount of practical work done and an acute knowledge of the problems involved. Protecting the Lake District is not just a matter of protest, but requires a high degree of technical knowledge of such matters as the law, the workings of central and local government and the actual needs of engineering projects, particularly water supply. Mere obstruction would usually defeat its own end ; the only way to divert a government department or an industrial concern from an intended piece of development is to meet it on its own ground, if necessary to the extent of suggesting workable alternative plans. From the 1947 Report it is obvious that the Executive Committee is well qualified to do this. Battle has been joined at many points in a very active year, in which, if a gallant failure had to be accepted in Ennerdale, a strong stand is being developed against the still more serious threat (if it is maintained) of a reservoir in the Duddon Valley. The report makes lively reading ; it is both lucid and outspoken, though never unreasonable. The pamphlet on National Parks shows the same wide knowledge of technical points, and is a very clear statement both of what the constitution and powers of the National Park authorities should be and of the general policy which they will need to adopt. How necessary it is for the powers of the National Park Commission to be effective is shown by the formidable list of Ministries liable to wish to encroach on scheduled areas (pp. 8 and 9) ; one realises also from this what opposition is ranged against the voluntary bodies until a National Parks Bill has become law.

A.D.M.C.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS.

The Club gratefully acknowledges receipt of the following Journals and Bulletins, of which it has not been possible to include reviews : *Alpine Ski Club Review*, 1946 ; *American Alpine Journal*, 1946 ; *Canadian Alpine Journal*, 1946 ; *Rucksack Club Journal*, 1947 ; *Sierra Club Bulletin* (various numbers, 1946 and 1947) ; *The Tararua Tramper* (various numbers, 1946 and 1947) ; *University Mountaineering Bulletin* (undated) ; *Wayfarers' Journal*, 1947 ; *Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal*, 1947.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Although F. A. Pullinger's resignation of the Editorship will be deplored, and by none more poignantly than his successor, he undoubtedly had a claim to be allowed to retire. In the thirty-five years since the start of the New Series, no Editor has been active in the post so long and none has produced so many Journals. Moreover, despite any appearances to the contrary caused by the slight stagger in 1945-6, the regularity of the Journal's appearance in these years has not been surpassed since those phenomenal days of the Old Series, when E. R. Turner and A. W. Andrews gave to the Club fifty numbers in twelve years—and on one occasion six in a single year. That was before the resolution of 1911 : " that the Journal be henceforth published annually," a resolution more or less consistently disregarded until recent times, with the exception of two periods of four consecutive years each (1912-15 and 1928-31). Between 1937 and 1939 Elliott Viney both modernised the format of the Journal and equalled John Hills' production record of three issues by the same Editor in consecutive years. The revived continuity and perhaps also the new format might well have been allowed to lapse when Viney disappeared into the army, since during the first Great War publication was suspended altogether. Thanks to Pullinger this precedent was not followed, and despite the pressure of other work, as well as the secretaryship of the Ynys Ettws Sub-Committee, he contrived to produce regular Journals for all the years between 1940 and 1944. If each number did not necessarily reach its public in the year which was stamped on its cover, that was only a reflection of the increasing production troubles with which the Editor had to battle ; and the miracle is that it was not until 1946 that the time-lag gained such a lead that one year had to be conceded.

* * *

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on 28th February, 1947. Among the many items of business which the President piloted through in a brisk half hour, the most important was the raising of the subscription to thirty shillings

in 1948. This cast no blight on the Dinner which followed, and the evening was notable for the felicity of its four speeches, which were made by Dr. Cullinan, the President, Geoffrey Young (deputising at a moment's notice for an absent Minister of State) and Tom Longstaff in his capacity as President of the Alpine Club.

* * *

Up to the time of going to press it has been an unproductive year as regards visible progress on the Ynys Ettws site. Periodic nagging at the different authorities has made no apparent difference. On the other hand R. W. Lloyd's magnificent gift of £3,500 has removed any anxiety about the Club's ability to raise the funds to carry the work through, and ensured that the plan will go ahead at once the moment the licence and materials are available. The Club has expressed its appreciation by electing Lloyd an Honorary Member. It is appropriate that at the same time Geoffrey Bartrum should have been elected to Honorary Membership ; he also has been actively concerned with the hut project, as with so many Club activities over a long period.

In his Annual Report, the President expressed the rather tenuous hope that the R. W. Lloyd Hut might be one of the scenes of celebration of the Club's Jubilee in 1948. One is inclined to think that we shall have cause for gratitude if we are able to celebrate the laying of its foundation stone in that year. Apart from any special festivities which may mark the Jubilee, the Committee hopes that, under Elliott Viney's editorship, it may be possible to publish a volume which will be partly a Club history, partly a collection of some of the best things in past Journals ; and it has also decided (again with generous help from Lloyd) on the preparation of a comprehensive Index to all Journals and Bulletins of the Club's first half-century. This will not be an easy task. There is an Old Series and a New Series for both Journals and Bulletins ; the numbering of consecutive issues has not necessarily been consecutive, and the same is occasionally true even of pages. The unravelling of these complexities has been entrusted to Mr. F. W. Oughton, Assistant Secretary of the Alpine Club. While on the subject of commemorative writings, I should like to suggest that along with this revivification of the records of the past might go a special contribution to the records of the future ; the Jubilee number of the Journal will require prompt and prolific material, and members should bear in mind that, with present day difficulties in printing, articles need to be in the Editor's hands early in the year.

* * *

It would be interesting to know to which period, 1942-6 or 1947- ?, posterity will look back as the time of strange aberration from the sensible way of describing climbs. The Committee, feeling that four years had been enough to give the numerical system of classification a fair trial, decided to take a poll, on the Gallup model, of opinion inside and outside the Club. The result (Reactionaries: 88, Progressives: 6) showed clearly that the advocates of numbers had failed to establish their case, and 1947 therefore marks a return to the un-

disputed official sovereignty of words. The Editor has to deplore the disappearance of an issue which has been such a stimulus to contributors, whether of prose, verse or unpublishable correspondence.

* * *

Burglary and overcrowding have caused some tightening up of the rules about the use of Helyg this year. Keys are now kept at specified places of which members have been notified, and attention has been drawn to the obvious risk of leaving a key anywhere where it could be found by outsiders. The recent decision of the Committee to issue membership cards, without which keys cannot be procured, is an additional safeguard. As regards overcrowding, it is essential for parties to make every effort to warn the Custodian of intended visits; any who are unable to do so must be prepared to be ejected from their beds by later arrivals who have been promised accommodation.

* * *

The Hon. Secretary of the B.M.C. (described in a speech at the Annual Dinner as "the Club's Gargantuan child") has asked that the following notices should be published in the Journal:—

The B.M.C. is now issuing a Bulletin at approximately quarterly intervals. Members of the Club can obtain this Bulletin for 5/- a year. It covers news of the Council's activities, items of general mountaineering interest, information about equipment and details of all new books and Journals dealing with mountaineering and allied subjects. It can be ordered from A. E. Rideout, 148 Sussex Gardens, London, W.2.

The Council has decided to form a central fund to assist clubs in the provision of further huts and bivouacs in the British Isles, particularly in Scotland, open to all members of constituent clubs. Consideration is now being given to the association of this fund with the proposal for a War Memorial to all climbers killed in the war.

The Council is now empowered to organise lectures and film shows in any district, if a number of local clubs request it to do so, but not otherwise. A group of the smaller London clubs recently made such a request and it was possible to arrange the showing of two excellent talking films, one of caving and the other of climbing on the Aiguilles du Diable.

The Council has recently issued certificates of competency to five men practising as guides in England and Wales. Further applications for certificates are under consideration.

The specification, design and supply of mountaineering equipment is kept continuously under review. The secretary of the Rope and Equipment Sub-Committee, A. R. H. Worssam, 85d Marchmont Street, London, W.C.1, will deal with enquiries on these subjects.

Copies of the Pelican book *Climbing in Britain*, which is a practical guide to hill walking, rock climbing and winter mountaineering in this country, can be obtained, price 1/3 post free, from the Assistant Secretary, E. C. Pyatt, 96 Priory Gardens, London, N.6.

Members may be interested to know that hostel-type accommodation is now available near Glencoe, at Ardarroch, Ballachulish. Ardarroch aims to cater specially for walkers and climbers ; the charges are three guineas per week from October to May, four guineas from June to September. Another new Scottish venture is a magazine, *The Open Air in Scotland*, edited by B. H. Humble, which has contained contributions by several of our members.

* * *

A book has recently appeared which, although not a mountaineering book, seems worth calling to members' attention. It is *Britain's Structure and Scenery*, by L. Dudley Stamp (Collins, 1946, 16/-). Its aim is to provide for non-scientific readers an intelligible and accurate account of the geology of the British Isles ; and so far as a non-scientific reader can judge it is admirably successful. The text, which is very clear, is closely related to numerous diagrams, photographs and coloured plates which illustrate it at almost every point. Much of it is concerned with the flatter parts of the country, but the book as a whole seems to provide the primer of geology which many climbers must often have hankered after. Even those who prefer to think of a mountain simply as a mountain rather than as a piece of an Armorican syncline must sometimes have wondered what it was that made the upper part of Clogwyn y Ddisgl so inferior, or how the improbable quartz holds on pitch 2 of the Zig-Zag came to be provided. Climbers, I imagine, see more of the raw material of geology than any other amateurs except possibly coal-miners and gold-prospectors, and if the grammar of the subject was easier to grasp many of them would naturally develop an interest in it. For this reason this book has been thought worth adding to the Club Library in London. Its chapter on the Welsh massif is necessarily very general, and it remains for some geological mountaineer to produce an equally lucid account of the detailed geology of the Snowdon district.

* * *

Information has not been forthcoming to make possible the publication of a list of corrections to the ranks and branches of the Services of the members who appeared in last year's journal as having served in the war. The following were omitted altogether: G. Cruikshank (Lt.-Cdr., R.N.V.R.), B. A. Harwood (Major), M. G. Meade-King (Major).

* * *

The very treacherous Alpine season of 1947 has brought the Club two heavy blows. On 23rd July, J. E. Q. Barford was killed by a stonefall on the Col Coste Rouge, below the Ailefroide. The other members of the party, W. H. Murray (S.M.C.) and Michael Ward, were severely hurt and only got down to Ailefroide village by a remarkable display of courage and toughness. On 7th August H. E. Kretschmer and J. R. Jenkins (Rucksack Club) lost their lives through a slip on ice when descending the upper part of the Brenva ridge.

John Barford and Nully Kretschmer were two of the outstanding mountaineers of the younger generation, and each played a very active part in the life of the Club. Much of their climbing in this country was done from Helyg. Between them they were responsible, wholly or in part, for all the three Welsh guidebooks published during the war. Barford was Hon. Secretary of the Club from 1939 to 1946, when he resigned in order to be able to give more time to the B.M.C. During all the war years, he was the very efficient compiler of "New Climbs and Notes" for the Journal, to which he also contributed several articles. Kretschmer was the Journal's Assistant Editor for two years, and, as Guidebook Editor since 1943, had recently completed the republication of all the pre-war guides. A very typical article and a review by him appear in this number of the Journal. It will not be possible to print obituary notices until next year, but the Club will wish to offer its deep sympathy to the relatives in a loss by which it is itself so deeply affected.

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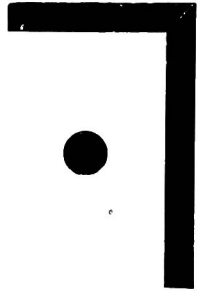
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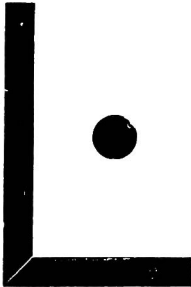
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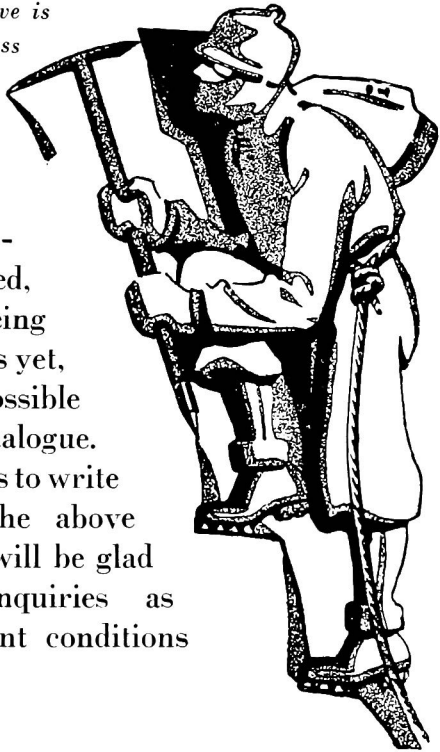
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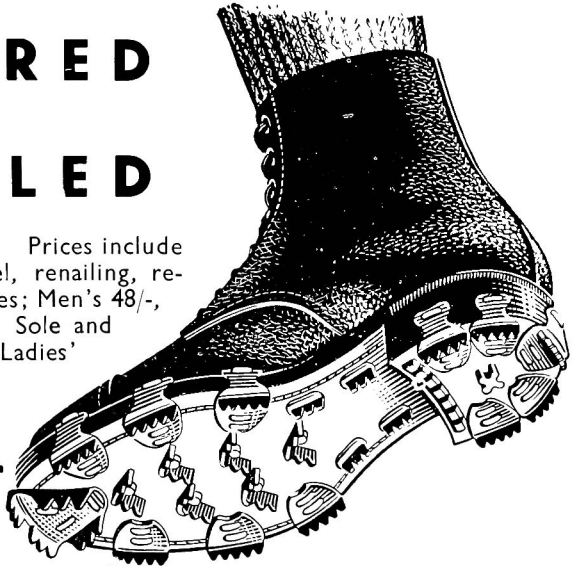
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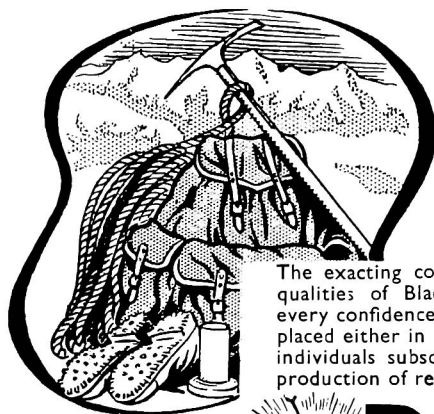
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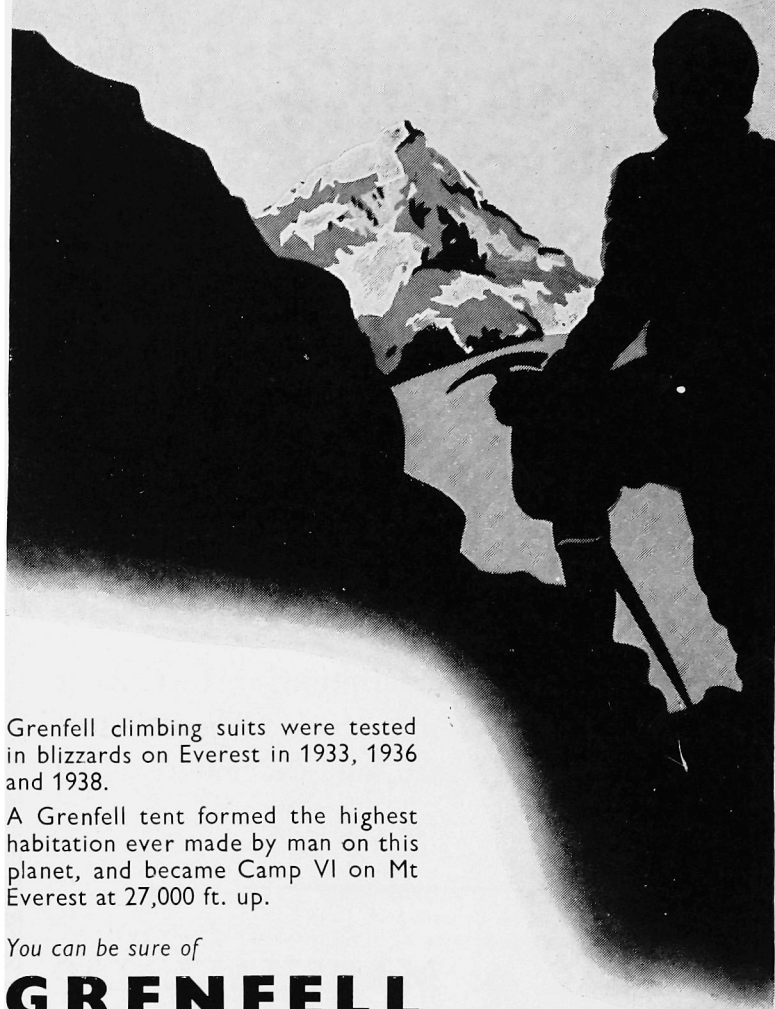
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