

THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB
JOURNAL

1953

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1953

EDITED BY
F. H. KEENLYSIDE

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB, LONDON

This is the seventy-eighth issue of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL (Vol. X, No. 2, New Series), edited by F. H. KEENLYSIDE. Copies are obtainable, price EIGHT SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE, from A. K. RAWLINSON, Ministry of Labour and National Service, 8 St. James' Square, London, S.W.1. Published by the Club in 1953, printed and bound by THE CLOISTER PRESS LTD., Heaton Mersey, Stockport.



THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL

Vol. X. No. 2

No. 78

1953

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THE FRENEY FACE: THE EASTERN PILLAR CLIMBED IS
HERE OBSCURED BY THE CENTRAL PILLAR.

C. D. Milner

THE ASCENT OF SALCANTAY

Première expédition franco-américaine à la Cordillère
des Andes

BERNARD PIERRE

POURSUIVANT le même but : le Salcantay, deux groupes, l'un américain, composé de Fred Ayres, 45 ans, George I. Bell, 27 ans, Graham Matthews, 31 ans, David Michael, 25 ans, John C. Oberlin, 38 ans, Austen F. Riggs, 28 ans et l'autre français, formé de Madame Claude Kogan, 32 ans, le Dr. Jean Guillemin, 38 ans et Bernard Pierre 32 ans, ont décidé sur la proposition de ce dernier de fusionner, en avril, 1952.

Les membres de l'expédition se sont réunis à Lima à la mi-juin et, après s'être rendus à Cuzco par avion, ont gagné ensuite Limatambo, petit village situé à 2 700 mètres d'altitude, à 35 kilomètres au Sud du Salcantay.

Le Salcantay se trouve entre les vallées de l'Urubamba et de l'Apurimac, à 50 kilomètres à vol d'oiseau au nord-ouest de Cuzco, au centre de la cordillère de Vilcabamba dont il est le plus haut sommet (6300 m.). Le Salcantay était l'un des plus hauts sommets du Pérou encore inviolé. Deux autres expéditions avaient également en vue l'ascension de cette splendide montagne ; l'une austro-italo-suédoise sous la direction de Piero Ghiglione, l'autre suisse (F. Marx et M. Broennimann). La première abandonna à son arrivée au Pérou le projet de gravir le Salcantay et se dirigea vers un autre massif. Mais la seconde effectua une tentative très poussée ; la corde suisse a réussi une très belle performance car ce n'est qu'à 6200 m. qu'elle dut rebrousser chemin.

L'expédition a quitté le village de Limatambo le 29 juin, accompagnée d'une caravane de 30 mules et chevaux qui portaient le matériel, et n'a atteint son camp de base situé à 4 400 mètres que le 13 juillet. Elle a, en effet, été retardée pendant quelque temps, dans sa marche d'approche, par des

chûtes de neige qui rendirent impossible pour les bêtes le franchissement de deux cols situés à plus de 4 000 mètres d'altitude.

Trois des membres de l'expédition : MM. Bell, Matthews et Riggs, qui avaient participé à l'expédition américaine au Yerupaja avaient déjà, en août 1950, reconnu les différentes faces du Salcantay afin de repérer une voie d'ascension. Par ailleurs, l'expédition franco-américaine de 1952 disposait d'un avion de reconnaissance qui permit de prendre de nombreuses photographies et de confirmer l'impression des Américains, à savoir que la seule voie d'ascension possible résidait dans la face nord-est.

Le 19 juillet, le camp I a pu être établi à 4 900 mètres d'altitude et, le 22, le camp II, à 5 400 mètres, malgré des conditions atmosphériques défavorables.

Une première tentative, entreprise par une cordée américaine : MM. Bell et Ayres, et une cordée française : Madame Kogan et M. Bernard Pierre, affecta plutôt la forme d'une reconnaissance vers le sommet. Elle échoua le 23 juillet (mauvais temps). Les chûtes de neige persistant, le camp II, puis le camp I durent être évacués à leur tour.

Entre temps, le team américain fut réduit à quatre membres, MM. Riggs et Oberlin devant regagner les U.S.A. pour des raisons familiales.

Le 29 juillet, deux cordées américaines : MM. Bell et Ayres et MM. Matthews et Michael et une cordée française : Mme Kogan et Bernard Pierre, retournèrent au camp II afin d'effectuer une autre tentative. Mais de nouvelles chûtes de neige les obligèrent à reprendre le chemin du camp de base, afin d'épargner les vivres montés à grand' peine à l'aide, souvent réticente, de quatre porteurs indiens équipés avec du matériel français, laissant simplement MM. Bell et Ayres au camp I.

Après plusieurs jours de mauvais temps, les conditions atmosphériques semblèrent s'améliorer. MM. Bell et Ayres rejoignirent le camp II le 2 août et les deux autres cordées : MM. Matthews-Michael et Mme Kogan-B. Pierre, le 3 août.

Le 4 au matin, les trois cordées quittèrent le camp II. Deux heures après, elles durent redescendre, car la neige menaçait de tomber, alors que l'altitude de 5 700 mètres avait été atteinte.

Une nouvelle tentative eut lieu le 5 août : elle allait enfin

réussir. Bien qu'il eût encore neigé durant la nuit du 4 au 5, le temps paraissait suffisamment stable pour autoriser l'espoir d'atteindre le sommet. Les six alpinistes quittèrent le camp II à 8 h.45 et s'attaquèrent tout de suite à des parois de neige et de glace extrêmement raides où, les jours précédents, des centaines de marches avaient été taillées. Huit cents mètres furent ainsi gravis et, vers 14 h.30, les trois cordées atteignirent le plateau (6 200 m.) où, le 26 juin dernier, les Suisses étaient arrivés. Mais le sommet était encore loin. Nos ascensionnistes poursuivirent leur route en empruntant d'abord une arête très fine séparant la face sud de la face nord-est ; ils durent effectuer une descente difficile dans la combe séparant le plateau sommital du pic du Salcantay ; enfin l'ascension du sommet lui-même fut également ardue : Ce fut seulement en fin d'après-midi, que la cîme du Salcantay fut atteinte (6 300 m.). (Les alpinistes suisses assurent que le point extrême atteint par eux cotait 6 415. En conséquence, le sommet aurait une altitude supérieure à celui que nous donnons. Quoi qu'il en soit, nous nous référons à notre propre altimètre qui marquait 6 300.)

Les membres de l'expédition franco-américaine durent passer la nuit dans une crevasse sous le sommet, à plus de 6000 mètres et par une température de -12° . Le 6 août, malgré un froid et un vent violents, les trois cordées regagnèrent le camp II où le docteur Guillemain, accompagné de quatre porteurs, les attendait, prêt à porter secours, si besoin en était. Tous les membres de l'expédition, en excellente santé, se sont retrouvés le lendemain, 7 août, au camp de base.

Le Salcantay s'est révélé, au point de vue technique, comme une ascension difficile. C'est un immense sommet glaciaire affectant plutôt la forme d'une montagne himalayenne aux dires du géologue Heim et de l'alpiniste Ghiglione. Si la montée du camp de base au camp II n'a pas présenté d'obstacle vraiment sérieux, par contre, les 1000 mètres séparant le camp II du sommet étaient constitués par des pentes à 55° sur lesquelles plus de 1200 marches ont dû être taillées (et retaillées, par suite des chûtes de neige qui recouvraient les marches). Egalement, plus de 500 mètres de corde fixe ont dû être disposés afin de permettre une descente sans encombre en cas de mauvais temps. Durant l'ascension du sommet (5 août), nous n'avons eu à subir que quelques petites chûtes de grésil, les chûtes de neige s'étant,

heureusement, interrompues. La descente (6 août) s'est effectuée par beau temps.

La difficulté technique que présente le Salcantay, ainsi gravi par la face nord-est, a été encore aggravée par les mauvaises conditions atmosphériques. Aux dires des indigènes, il semble bien que cette saison ait été particulièrement mauvaise. Mais, quoi qu'il en soit, le massif de la cordillère de Vilcabamba ne bénéficie pas des mêmes conditions atmosphériques favorables que celui de la cordillera Blanca, parce que situé plus au sud et plus à l'est. La proximité de la forêt amazonienne, d'où venait le mauvais temps est aussi une des raisons des précipitations qui touchent si fréquemment le Salcantay. Le mot Salcantay signifie, dans le langage indien quichua "le plus terrible, le plus sauvage" (les Indiens l'assimilent à un "Dieu."). Mais nous avons eu tôt fait de le baptiser la Mère des nuages."

TWO "SUPERIOR" ROCK CLIMBS

G. C. BAND

TRYING something new is always exciting. In the Alps today, unless one is an extremely good mountaineer or else a pedantic filler-in of detail, new routes are very hard to find. It is inevitable therefore that well-seasoned Alpine climbers should desert their training ground to explore remoter regions. The younger alpinist, lacking the maturity and perhaps the wealth of his elders but filled with the ardent fire and zest of youth, still treats the Alps as his proving-ground and wishes to test his nerve and skill by trying harder and harder climbs. In default of doing new routes he likes to try climbs that his friends or countrymen have not done. One such route was a fine rock-climb above Courmayeur, the South Ridge of the Aiguille Noire de Peteurey, another less well known, above Chamonix, was the North Ridge of the Aiguille du Peigne. Last summer Roger Chorley and I hoped to climb the former route and afterwards, to maintain a sensible balance with snow and ice and altitude, follow it up with the Peteurey Ridge of Mont Blanc.

We faced the rock-climb with greater trepidation. Our excellent guide-book called it *très difficile supérieure*. British climbers were familiar with *très difficile* but not with this exalted grade save for one excursion early that season by David Fisher and John Streetly on the East Ridge of the Dent du Crocodile. But Streetly was a rock climber out of our world. Moreover, our climb was longer requiring some 12 to 17 hours, excluding the long tedious descent, and with no handy escape routes should we prove incompetent or the weather incontinent. There was something pitifully laughable in the subtle addition of the adjective *supérieure*, conveying nothing to a less aspiring climber, but causing us so much apprehension.

In Chamonix, we decided that a shorter trial climb of the same grading would be advisable. With little ceremony, we chose the North Ridge of the Aiguille du Peigne. Arthur



Dolphin and Ian MacNaught Davis, commonly called Mac, were considering it too so we joined forces. With such added strength we felt certain of success for the Peigne was only a little mountain. But we casually neglected to realise that although small it started low down and actually gave a rock-climb of 2,200 feet. This was longer, for example, than the East Ridge of the Plan or the Crocodile. The difficulties were concentrated in a steep 600-foot *di dre*, or chimney, cleaving the smooth walls of the summit and first climbed in 1947 by Francis Aubert. In 1949 Gabriel and Levanos, crack French climbers, were the first to link the lower ridge, which was about the same length and difficulty as the East Face of the Grépon, with the *dièdre* which had previously been approached by a shorter route. The latter had been climbed about 10 times and the complete ridge perhaps five. Our guide-book suggested that three to four hours should be sufficient for the lower part and another four to six hours for the *dièdre*. At six o'clock we roped up at the bottom in pairs and started off like gentlemen: standing aside and waiting while stones were dislodged by the party above or casting down a top-rope as required. Imagine our dismay, when not until 11 o'clock did the *dièdre* come into sight. Undaunted we stopped for lunch, trying not to consider our slender chances of getting down before dark. At half-past 12 we started on the *dièdre* itself. In general, one climbed a chimney or crack until blocked by an overhang. Surmounting the overhangs was always the trickiest part. We found only just enough pitons driven in to make the climb feasible. This was unusual for a Chamonix climb. Obviously it hadn't been repeated a sufficient number of times. A dainty traverse after the first overhang led to the foot of a 100-foot crack inclined steeply between smooth walls like the pages of a partly-opened book. Hands were jammed into the crack and toes relying on friction were pressed against the angle between the two walls. Feelings of awe became mingled with amazement. The overhang above appeared quite impossible. I bridged up across the walls and at full stretch could just touch a piton. But if I pulled up on two fingers locked around it my feet would swing off into space and then what? While I contemplated the awful consequences Roger, inspired, reminded me of our *étrier*, a little two-runged nylon ladder. Never had I resorted to such aids as this before on a mere passage of grade

V but without it I would have failed. I clipped it into the piton and stepped onto the dangling lower rung. A hold came into view, a pull-up and I was there.

A steep crack came next but without the customary overhang. Instead it graded imperceptibly into the vertical and there contained a tantalising loose flake which should have been avoided. From a meagre stance I brought up Roger and we surveyed the pitch above which involved artificial climbing so descriptively termed "*traction directe*" by the French. The second man aids the leader by pulling on the rope passed through a piton and snap-link above the latter. The party climbs on two ropes and the second pulls on either rope as the leader requires. This type of climbing is still a novelty for Englishmen and usually demands more energy than would be expected. It is exhausting work for both the leader and last man, even when the pitons are already driven in, but safer than free climbing. Hence it is popular on the continent. I put in one piton and began but soon realised that the *étrier* would be necessary so I descended to await the other party who would bring it up. This was a fortunate delay for Arthur's head now appeared from below, just above the loose flake. Suddenly he stopped inexplicably. His rope had jammed behind him! He could not move up and, jammed against the loose flake, disliked climbing down. The rope we cast down fell short and jammed in a crack as it was drawn up. Roger had to untie and, pulling his end down from the complicated set-up for tension climbing, I tied a loop in the end and threw it down. Still too short! Arthur grew anxious. At the third cast our rope reached him. Mac had meanwhile freed their rope and Arthur joined us. Order was restored and all four of us now roped together.

The next pitch succumbed to the onslaught with *étrier* and one or two slings but not without tiring me. When Roger tried, the friction was too great for me to pull him enough. As the rope eased out he was gradually turning upside down, subsiding like a sinking ship. We would have laughed uproariously in happier circumstances. He was forced to descend. Mac eventually joined me; we pulled a rope each and were soon all together again after Arthur had carefully extracted my piton. I started the next pitch with the prudence of a tiring climber. It required an awkward out of balance move to start so I removed

my rucksack. Once resolved and jammed in the inevitable crack it was easy. From the dark recesses behind an enormous flake I was able to look up at the last pitch of V ; a thin corner crack too narrow for fingers but holding three pitons. As I curled my fingers through the lowest they became locked with cramp and couldn't be removed. Alarmed but thoroughly safe, I felt like a carcass hanging from a butcher's hook. Mac suggested that we should reverse the order of the rope. This was wise. Arthur seemed to have been stimulated by his earlier misfortune for, with a zest that astonished us, he led the remainder of the way. I followed last removing snap-links and a sling and relaxing on the rope firmly held by Mac above. Two overhangs alone remained and at eight-fifteen we were all on the summit. For the first time for hours I could relax tense nerves and with glazed eyes watch a red sun setting in a leaden sky. Beneath us from the south the grey evening mists crept up the Vale of Chamonix to where the lights of the thronging town were beginning to twinkle. We used the last half-hour of daylight to full advantage and reached the bed of the gully which provides the easiest means of descent. In the dark we stumbled down by the light of our torches roping down where it appeared too steep. After midnight we became uncertain of the way so sharing out our last raisins and chocolate we put on all spare clothes, thrust our stockinged feet into our rucksacks, and curled up on the stones. We were lucky to have a fine cool night with the aircraft warning light on the Aiguille du Midi shining benevolently over us like a guiding star. Two Frenchmen wished us, "*Bien dormir !*" on the little glacier next morning and by eight were back at Montenvers drinking hot soup.

After this inadequately planned and executed trial we still had enough confidence (or was it cheek ?) to consider the "Noire" justifiable. Somehow we thought that as it had been done so much more often it couldn't be as difficult. Again, with Godfrey Francis and Ted Wrangham we were a party of four, the safest number for a big climb. We motor-cycled round to Courmayeur by the Little Saint Bernard Pass. From the windswept frontier post, through a gap in the hills, I could see the black fang of our mountain piercing troubled clouds. It was my first visit to Courmayeur and I was not disappointed. We passed a riotous evening being ushered from hotel to hotel and eventually spent

the night in a field. Next day we left the bicycles at Purtud by an inn profusely decorated with bizarre wood-carvings. Later I was fortunate enough to discover the artist himself crouched over his work : immense, dirty, and shaggy bearded with curly black locks and flaming eyes.

We strolled carefree towards our peak through scented pine-woods, over meadows and slopes with wild strawberries then climbed up by waterfalls and stunted yew trees to the " Fauteuil des Allemands," a great armchair big enough even for Germans, formed by the South and East ridges. The compact little hut lies snug beneath a vertical wall. We finished supper in time to see the sun sink behind and silhouette the seven successive towers of the South Ridge, the towers Gamba, Welzenbach, Brendel, Bich and others without name. The greatest difficulties, considered originally as of the sixth grade, occur on the ascents of the Brendel and the fifth towers and were such as to entitle the ridge to being " one of the last unsolved problems " until conquered in 1930 by Brendel and Schaller. " This Expedition will rank as one of the most terrible accomplished," commented the *Alpine Journal*. That night I prayed for prolonged fine weather because a bivouac either on the ascent or descent is normal upon first acquaintance. As we lay in our beds a fast party of two, descending from the Ridge by the aid of the moonlight, crawled in beside us.

At a quarter-to-five, just as it grew light enough to climb, we roped up in pairs beneath the Pointe Gamba. Our rucksacks were bulky with full waterbottles, solid fuel cookers, food and sleeping-bags besides the usual iron equipment and spare clothing. The weight never made its presence felt unduly and we rejoiced as heretics in not requiring ice-axe or crampons. Progress was uneventful but delightful, except for one move which required a shoulder, and we moved together much of the time up to the Pointe Welzenbach. Here we were puzzled by shouts but eventually spotted a party on the Pointe Brendel ahead. They had already had one bivouac ! The first major difficulty called the "*ressaut en demi-lune*" was an anti-climax. By taking the true edge of the crest the difficulties were greatly diminished ; a wonder that the first climbers had not discovered this. Higher up, above where the guides of Courmayeur have put in two pitons we made our one error in route finding on the

G.C.B. ON THE RESSAUT EN DEMI-LUNE,
S. RIDGE OF AIGUILLE NOIRE DE PEUTEREY
Hon. R. R. E. Chorley



ascent but this was soon rectified. Near the top of the Brendel there was snow and flopping down in the hot sun we augmented our flasks with the meltwater. As usual an abseil from one tower brought us to the base of the next. Here was the fifth and crucial tower. We stood with infinite patience on sloping footholds beneath the last man of the Italian party ahead while those above answered his plaintive refrain, "*Tira, Tira, Tira!*" Delicate balance and pitons for handholds made the second original pitch of VI a pleasant traverse and after we were all four across it we raced on to overtake the others before reaching the Pointe Bich. We never saw them again until back at the hut next day. Feeling pleasantly tired now, I was glad of the pitons at the last pitch of V. There followed one more abseil ; scrambling ; a suck at someone's discarded tin of condensed milk ; more scrambling ; and presently we stood on the summit. Eight o'clock. My gaze dropped down the practically vertical north face to be arrested by the little pinnacles of the Dames Anglaises huddled together in silent communion like a sculptured group. From them, through the rounded hump of the Aiguille Blanche, rose the Peteurey, the greatest ridge of Mont Blanc. I wondered how Mac and Neil Mather were faring on this today. Fifty-nine years after it was first climbed these two were making the first British guideless ascent. This day was an active one for young British climbers with two parties on route Major as well.

We sauntered down from the summit seeking a commodious bivouac platform. Nothing presented itself so we chose a spot 100 feet down and excavated our own. We built a low wall around and hurled great boulders down the mountain side which disappeared into the night with a shower of sparks. Our bivouac was better than any others we had seen and would be excellent for two. We lay in our sleeping-bags preparing supper while the moon, in partial eclipse to our surprise, threw an eerie light over our squalor. Next morning, and here readers of Smythe will shudder, we awoke to a green dawn. Anvil-shaped clouds were bursting into mushroom form. The descent was long and though not difficult, tortuous and tedious in the extreme to tired and thirsty bodies. The intricate route-finding was made easier lower down by large squares of red paper left every few yards by an ascending party ! It is important not to leave the

ridge too early ; a worn track leads off at the proper place. We unroped and scampered down. Soon we lost the path, to our humiliation, so abseiled to the nearest stream pretending to the following party that we had really meant to go that way. At two o'clock the storm forecast by the dawn caught us on our way to Purtud. There we were revived by supper and sleep twice over in quick succession while the rain drummed incessantly outside. After this storm the Peteurey Ridge was obviously out of condition and, well content, we concluded our major climbs for the season.

A few climbers may appreciate some comparisons in retrospect. Today the South Ridge of the " Noire " is more popular in ascent than the classic East Ridge and although sadly overburdened and simplified with pitons must still surely rank as one of the great rock-climbs of the Alps. Although very long, there is at present no move of " Very Severe " difficulty in spite of the numerous passages of grade V. The climb must be within the scope of many British parties. It is surprising that none had done it before, not even with a guide. In contrast, the North Ridge of the Peigne must be near the top of its class. Each of the nine passages of V is probably " Very Severe " and the artificial pitch is strenuous. The sustained difficulty of the *dièdre* and the superb situation is greater than anything I have met before and the guide-book times are suited to a fast party. It is evident that we got rather more than we bargained for. Even so, if only an average rock-climber by latest English standards can lead most of it in vibrams with a rucksack on then the best British rock-climbers, equipped with Alpine experience especially of artificial technique, can obviously attempt climbs of far greater difficulty if they so desire. No doubt they will and the best of luck to them !

BIRTHDAY ON CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU

C. M. G. SMITH

THERE is no better way of celebrating a birthday than with a good climb. One can bring the experience of the whole past year to bear on the problem of the day, and any failure is accounted for by the "gatherin' weight o' the flying years." This was my birthday (July 26th, 1950), so James and I set out for that most beautiful of cliffs, Clogwyn Du'r Arddu and, by reputation, its best route, Sheaf.

We slogged up to the cliff in sweltering heat, but with an ominous heaviness in the air. Sheaf starts on the very prominent Concrete Slab between Longland's route and Narrow Slab. Taking the easiest line it works diagonally right finishing on the top pitches of Narrow Slab. The whole formation of the cliff here is a series of slabs, running from top to bottom and overlapping from right to left. Mounting diagonally right one has to keep climbing up the overlaps from the steep or overhanging side and this gives the climb its chief characteristic.

From the bottom of Longland's we followed Linnell's "jump" across the foot of the Concrete Slab, a fascinating study in small holds which becomes quite straightforward when the moves are known. Thence, leading alternate pitches, we moved up the first overlap for a little slab and crack climbing. When it becomes hard one moves back onto the Concrete Slab, and when that becomes hard, back up the overlap. Therein lies the quality of the climb. Each section goes straight ahead until anything by way of a difficulty occurs and then at once tries a new and easier line.

The overlap by which one escapes from the Concrete Slab overhangs rather and James, who is only a little fellow, stood underneath it and stretched up his arms and nothing resulted. So, as the powers made me a little longer in the arm, I stood under it and stretched up my arms and lo, there was a beautiful jug-handle to swing like an ape upon and so blindly up and

round the corner. So up a little lay-back corner and under the next overlap, which troubled us for a while. We had a scruffy little bit of paper with the route which Joe Walmesly had dictated to us over the crackle of his frying-pan as he cooked his supper. We had something about a steep groove above us, but couldn't decide whether we had been told we must definitely go up it being the only way, or definitely not go up it as it was impossible. Whichever it was, was quite definite. As there was nothing else in sight anyway, I had a shot at it, but about half-way up where it was very greasy something seemed to go wrong with the mechanics of the situation so I climbed down and looked at the overlap. There was a very good foothold on its edge which I could just stretch on to, but looking through my legs to Llyn Du'r Arddu some hundreds of feet down, I thought perhaps the groove was right after all. If one stepped round and found there was nothing beyond, it would be awkward.

But James suddenly became keen on this step although his legs are shorter than the optimum. So he managed a terrific stride onto the hold and disappeared round the corner. It must have been a good lead on the first ascent, although perhaps they knew they were stepping onto the top of Narrow Slab, for that is where one appears, as if by magic, like a rabbit out of a conjurer's hat. The step round is quite straightforward too, once you know there is something round the corner.

Thence easily up the top pitches of Narrow to the end of a very fine route, never very hard, but hardly anywhere actually easy. It takes the easiest route up a very steep part of the West Buttress, and does so in a most dramatic and satisfying manner.

All this time the air grew heavier and heavier. By the time we stood again at the bottom of the cliff it had begun to drizzle. But there was still one climb on the cliff we hadn't done and that was Bow-Shaped. So we started at once and to save time in route finding, avoided the usual Bow-Shaped entry onto the slab and went hurriedly over Linnell's Jump, passed Narrow and onto the edge of Great Slab. By now everything was wet and the sun-dried grass ledges began to roll off. We looked long at the grass in the crack of Narrow Slab but finally left it where it was. After all we had been glad enough to use it ourselves and hardly liked to treat it with such disrespect as to tear it down.

Rubbers by now were about as good as roller-skates. Socks were the order of the day for me, but James rumbled something in his chest about an easy route and stuck his boots on. Really this was a cunning move to avoid having to lead through. It was raining in the ordinary Welsh way as we moved up the edge of Great Slab, and the lower of the two traverses onto the Bow-Shaped slab looked rather tricky and a few people we heard of seemed to have popped off it somehow. So we took George Dwyer's traverse 10 feet higher and as we came across and up the centre of the slab the rain fell steadily harder. Then quite suddenly something of the nature of a cloudburst occurred. Bow-Shaped slab is topped by small overhangs except to the left where the exit is made, and over these the water started to pour in great gutters adding itself to the weight of rain falling farther out and drumming down onto our backs with quite a weight. It was the accumulated water of weeks of dry weather and felt warm as it sluished over our bodies. Moving up the centre of the slab on beautiful holds and through the final overhangs was one of the most exhilarating pitches one could imagine. The blackness of the sky above, the terrific sweep of Du'r Arddu below and the poundings of the water on our backs made us suddenly conscious of the joy of living. No climb can be hard when one feels like that.

By the time we arrived at the top it had already begun to slacken off and we scuttled off home as fast as we could, thanking the cliff and the climbs and the weather for a wonderful birthday celebration.

PLUMB VERTICAL

R. E. MEYER

EVER heard of the Yellow Edge? It's 1,000 feet high, of which the first 900 are vertical. The edge itself is rounded, but it stands out daringly into space, like the prow of an immense ship, its loftiness beyond comparison. "Yes, that's it," says Toni, while your heart sinks, "and that's the first thing you will have to do, as a test piece, before you can have a go at the North Face." You look at it, but it won't help, it remains as vertical as ever. Climb that? D—— it, if we can climb *that*, there can't be anything in the world we cannot climb!

For me, at any rate, the Edge proved a revelation. It contains between two and three dozen distinct overhangs. I had always taken it to be a well confirmed fact that I am no good at overhangs, but I remember leading over five or six consecutive ones, on a single pitch, with only three or four pitons for running belays, as if it were a matter of course. There are hard pitches, too; our first taste of proper Six, albeit "lower limit." But that's only what you expect—the surprise is that there are so many which are easier! The even greater surprise, no, not surprise, the miracle is that rock can be that steep. It is unbelievable when you first see it. It remains unbelievable while you climb it, and whenever, during our later climbs, it came into view, with climbers on it, all our activities froze and we were forced to watch, hypnotized, the microscopic human flies sticking to the outline of that huge, vertical Edge.*

* Technical Note. The Yellow Edge supports the Southern Antecime of the Cima Piccola di Lavaredo (Kleine Zinne) in the Sexten Dolomites. It was first ascended by Comici and companions, in 1933.

For a party of two, 2 ropes of 120 feet, about 10 snaplinks, and one hammer are required. One stirrup, another hammer, 2-3 pitons are desirable reserves. Boots as useful as rubbers. 6-8 hours.

Traverse in the overhang, at the beginning of the third pitch, rather than follow the overhanging crack. Escape is possible after the third pitch, in case of bad weather or second thoughts. The crucial pitches, higher up, are somewhat harder still, and retreat grows more and more dangerous.

Keep well to the right of the edge, on the second quarter of the climb, until the steepening face guides you back to it. Do not miss the piton-studded traverse which permits you to escape from the great, yellow, overhanging groove. Thereafter, straight up the edge, with only slight excursions to the left.

Inform yourself thoroughly about the descent, the crucial traverse of which is easily missed.



We returned drenched, but the memory of our climb helped us to support squalor, hunger, and cold for yet another few days. What would they be thinking at home? We were more than a week overdue. One evening, with the clouds drifting over from the West as desolately as ever, old hands began to sniff and scratch. A change in the wind? Next morning, the sky was clear.

We followed Toni and Uli to Del Vecchio's route on the S.E. Edge of the Punta Frida. A huge, overhanging cleft, viciously black, impending ominously over the lower part of the face. "Cheer up," said Toni, "today you'll get some pitches of real Six, no nonsense about lower limit." The first one fell to me, and I swore I should not like to lead anything harder. Then it dawned on me that the crux would again be my turn. . . . I wasn't pleased when I saw Toni stick his head in the cleft, in addition to both hands and arms, in order to make up for the lack of support for his feet. By the time I had managed to re-extract my own head, Uli was just preparing to vanish over the top. What lay between us had impressed him sufficiently to turn round and enjoin me to put some pitons in for protection. I could have saved much time and trouble—the rock is too compact to take them. "30 m. 5° e 6°." Why are just these kind of remarks in the guidebook so international, if all the rest can be graciously hidden in Italian? I felt lonely; Vin* was out of sight, under the overhang, doubtlessly worried by the vacillations of the ropes. A runner gratefully threaded round a chockstone. But what next? Risky moves, nerve-racking retreats. A piton driven in, with panting effort, at the utter limit of reach; even so, it threatens to fall out under its own weight. Back again, new explorations. Finally, a solution. Back to the crack, pull, wedge, push, jam, heave, holds begin to appear on the vertical slab, out and up and up, and then Toni's unforgettable piton stance, far out on the very edge of the chasm. Just across, the broad, vertical face of the Piccolissima, soaring above, plunging below, so near you could almost throw an end of the rope across. But in between, hundreds and hundreds of feet of abyss, darkening as you peer into the gloom of the overhangs of the gully, worn smooth and round by a million years of stonefall.

* Vincent Ridgway, to whom this account is dedicated in memory of shared adventures.

That evening, under the dim paraffin lamp, we made all the suppressedly nervous preparations which usually precede a great ascent. At dawn, the familiar walk across to the Colle Paterno. But for once, we took the little track in the scree that skirt the North Faces. Then came the little pedestal. This is really quite steep enough for me, I thought, and quite hard enough, too. Surely, we wouldn't climb that without a rope in Wales? Gratefully, I pulled onto the ledge that forms the top of the pedestal. Not much point looking up above. To catch with my nose one of the drops of water that fall from the Italian Bivouac, 700 feet above, without touching rock on their way? Voices above. Max and the Roman have beaten us to it, they must be working on the second pitch. Two pairs of boot-soles. We cannot make out what they are climbing on. Even from here the Face is as void of relief as a concrete wall. 700 feet of Six, plumb vertical, are our instructions. What kind of Six? Oh, just plain, classical Six. Don't worry about finding the route, there's no choice. We begin to sort our gear, tie on the ropes. Ready? Vin attacks.

The first five feet are straightforward. Piton, snaplink, "take the weight on the dark one." But how, on earth, is he going to reach the next piton? Pull! Release two inches, no more, no more! He stretches. No. Again. He stretches, ferociously, stretches even more, more. No, a full two inches short. So that's where all British parties have turned back. Shall we have to do the same? Vin tries again. No. Do you want to come back for a rest? I'll have another try. He stretches again. "Give another inch of rope, careful, no more, no more!" He strains to the limit. Farther, still farther! Snaplink. Taut moments. The rope goes in! Pull on the light one, pull!

A fierce stirrup-traverse. How's it going? "Terribly strenuous. Care now, I'm going to go for it. Now! Slack, slack!"

I find him again, cowering on half a foot of sloping ledge, suspended from a piton. My turn, now. A shallow, vertical groove, three, four pitons for traction, a few footholds the size of a thumbnail. Then no more pitons. It must go out to the right. I hesitate, to collect a bit of breath and all my courage, then step out. What sensation! I stand on a foothold, large as the palm of a hand, free, in the middle of the immense, vertical

wall. To the right, to the left, above, below, for hundreds and hundreds of feet, nothing but vertical rock, no groove, no ledge, chimney, crack, no, not even overhangs, nothing but yellow or grey, vertical rock. A geometer's dream. The world consists of two half-spheres, one filled with air, the other solid rock ; they join along an infinite, vertical plane. In the middle of the plane is a foothold. I'm standing on it, I can touch the plane with my nose. Behind me, half the universe is filled with air.

And then up, free, up the vertical wall, as if it were a matter of course !

With numbed fingers, we both find the third pitch desperately hard. Part of the wall is coloured black. A huge patch, the shape of a dog. We have to traverse on its back. While Vin fights his way out, always off balance, scarcely sticking on, I bitterly admire the sense of humour of the first-ascensionists. Lacking a ledge, and even holds, they made their traverse on a line of colour.

On the fourth pitch, a few tiny figures appear on the scree, curiously foreshortened. How small they are. I look up, but the wall soars high as ever. Even after hours in the Face, the meaning of seven hundred feet of verticality is difficult to grasp. A stone is loose, and I want to remove it. I shout a warning in all the languages I know. How they run, down there ! I touch it, it falls silently, falls, falls. A little clack comes up as it explodes in the scree. The tiny things below start shouting. Oh, it's Toni and Uli !

The fifth pitch is entirely overhanging. Rope friction soon becomes excessive. The rope cuts in my armpits, one hand is numbed. My efforts do not help, Vin must fight it on his own, all on his arms, against the rope. He is utterly exhausted.

The Alpine troops are on manoeuvres on Monte Paterno. Sporadic shooting. Two aeroplanes roar over the Col, swoop past below us. As if there was any need to stress how much air there is between us and the screes.

Vin rejoins me above the sixth pitch, staggered. Suspended on a single finger inserted in the last piton of the overhanging groove, he had to stretch back into space, far up and out, to reach the sling suspended back there, high up, stretch still farther into the air to reach it, then release and, with his body swinging backwards into space, pull up. What a climb, where the rope

from above gives less moral support than the rope from below !

And still a hundred feet to go to the Italian Bivouac. A roof, sensationally turned. More verticality. No pitons within sight. This can't be climbed free, can it ? It can, if you've still got the nerve.

A real hold reached with a sigh. In balance ! The rock leans back, I scramble on to the little bench. Hand-shake. Boy, what a climb ! A little food, a cigarette. But not much time for rest. We are not halfway up yet.

Reaction. I fail to lead the next pitch, fail again. Only now do I realise how weary I am. Vin is right in his element on the wet, overhanging crack. Just like Wales ! Grooves and overhangs, chimneys and overhangs. Vin escapes by inches being killed by a stone sent down obligingly by Max and the Roman. He does not stop to calm his nerves. Why should he, there is no room to stand, in any case. He vanishes again. How goes it ? Another overhang. Communication lost. Tug on the ropes, my turn. More overhangs.

The face asserts itself once more in all its splendour. A traverse leads out horizontally, farther and farther, a few feet only above tremendous overhangs. Oh, for a camera ! A staggering position. If I were to lose a snaplink, how many seconds would it fall ! It would not touch before hitting the scree, twelve hundred feet below.

Technical Note. The North Face of the Cima Grande di Lavaredo (Grosse Zinne) was first climbed by Comici and companions, in 1936. The ascent created a sensation, nay, furore. The climb has become classical and its beauty is now acknowledged throughout the Alps.

Required, for a party of two, 2 ropes of 130 ft., 15 snaplinks (better 18), a hammer, 3 stirrups, and a thin sling for the second's use in traversing. Desirable reserves, 2-3 snaplinks, another hammer, 2-3 pitons, a bivouac sack. Boots or rubbers. 11 hours would appear to be a normal time.

The great chimney doubles at half-height ; traverse into the right-hand branch where it begins. The 90 ft. Traverse starts a few feet above the Black Niche ; piton stance at the beginning of the traverse. It is customary to terminate the climb about 250 ft. above the Traverse, where a debris ledge leads to the right, round half the summit block, to join the ordinary route.

TWO TRAVERSES

S. ARNOLD MARPLES

IN 1901 and 1902, I made traverses of the Strahlhorn and Jungfrau, and although it is perhaps unusual to wait half a century to put on record what were probably at the time new routes up these peaks, an account of the climbs, albeit of a somewhat factual nature, may be of interest even at this late date. Certainly, they made a profound impression at the time on a comparative novice, for whom they had the added elements of speculative interest and of adventure into the unknown.

Strahlhorn (1901). I made no detailed notes of this climb, but am able to give the main directional features of a route that provides many well varied attractions. In any case, it is fitting that it should be recorded, if only as a tribute to my guide, Franz Burgener, who led throughout with skill, caution and resolution. As a nephew of the great Alexander this was perhaps only to be expected. My closest contact with old Alexander, by the way, was in 1903 when, led by H. C. Lowen, he made his last traverse of the Grepon, as described in Zimmerman's obituary tribute to Lowen, in the *C.C. Journal*, 1950. As Joseph Simond and I left the summit, to the accompaniment of Couttet's little gun, his party was dropping down into the great fault. My guide was doubtful as to whether their party of four could get back to the Montanvert by nightfall ; that they were in fact forced to bivouac was due, as Zimmermann points out, to their long search for the way off the Aiguille.

After a night at the Mattmark inn, with Jacob Andenmatten as porter, our party of three took the usual route towards the Schwarzberg-Weissthor, the well-known snow pass from Saas to Zermatt. Well on our way up the Schwarzberg glacier and some 1,000 feet below the pass, we turned abruptly to the right and made for the ridge of rocks which forms the westward containing wall of the glacier. Above this wall, which is set at a fairly easy angle, lies a deep snow plateau fringed with a formidable cornice, which has to be negotiated to gain the level snow-field above. Care was necessary to avoid dislodgement of

dangerously large sections as we cut right through the cornice, but in 20 minutes we had cleared the obstacle. We crossed the snowfield almost due westward and reached the foot of the rocks and gullies which form the steep eastern face of the mountain. The climb up this face, though it called for no superlative effort, was certainly of absorbing interest to the amateur, as it embraced all forms of rock, snow and ice work, and one difficult slab in the early part of the ascent from the plateau. We reached the summit in good shape, very pleased with ourselves and with the accomplishment of what my guide declared to have been a new route: "Not anybody been that way before," he said.*

The descent was made on the Zermatt side by the usual route, but as no previous parties had cut a staircase for us in the steep ice-slope which characterises the upper reaches of the usual Zermatt route and as this could not be circumvented, a good deal of tedious step cutting down this steep and unbroken drop to the Findelen glacier became necessary. I took a share in this but was glad to leave most of it to the experts, especially as I was not entirely acclimatised and had acquired an altitude headache. This, after we had unroped, almost led to disaster and the end of my climbing days. The corner of a wet handkerchief that I was wearing under my hat momentarily flicked my eye. This caused a false step, and at once I found myself sliding slowly down the initial slope of a crevasse, well lubricated by moraine mud. The guide's voice in a rising crescendo of alarm warned me of the danger. By a convulsive effort I managed, while still inexorably sliding, to get on to all-fours with boot and finger-nails scraping into the muddy surface. By what I can only call a miracle something held, and I pulled up on the very edge of the sheer drop; there I stuck, unable to move. The porter, by hanging on to Burgener's axe, slid down after me, and I was just able to grasp his own axe and so reach safety again. The crevasse was a wide one and not more than 30 feet deep, but there was a sharp upstanding knife-edge of ice 20 feet directly below the spot where I had pulled up; this was exactly placed to break one's back in the event of a fall. I had learned a useful lesson at the small expense of the loss of most of my finger-nails—and much self respect. We reached the

* This seems similar to Donkin's route of 1883.—ED.



Riffelalp without further incident in good time for tea ; but for my carelessness it was a good day, and the traverse has much to recommend it.

Jungfrau (1902). I had left Paris in July for Switzerland, and after some 24 hours in that peaceful country started from Kandersteg with a local guide to cross the Tschingel pass to Mürren, intending to pass the night at the Mutt Hut and proceed to my destination, where friends were staying. After an eight-hours' tramp in a snowstorm we found ourselves long after nightfall somewhere on the upper Névé on the great Kanderfirn glacier. I say we found ourselves but, to confess the sad truth, we were definitely lost. My guide, who professed to know every crevasse of the glacier as his own hand, failed completely at the test. We wandered about in that white drifting wilderness, becoming wetter and colder every minute, with a solitary candle to light up the driving snow which enveloped us ; but at length by means of a map and a cheap pocket compass we were able, much to my guide's surprise, to locate ourselves and it was the despised *Herr* who eventually conducted the sceptical professional, after midnight, to the hospitable shelter of the hut. As I had suspected, and the slope of the glacier indicated, we had got among the crevasses above and to the right of the hut on the slopes of the Tschingelhorn.

The weather had improved during the night, so that at seven o'clock we were able to leave the hut and tramp down the Tschingel glacier towards the sunny slopes of the Ober Steinberg in the direction of the Lauterbrunnen valley. From this path one obtains a little-known view of the Jungfrau, and I questioned my guide as to the way to the summit from this side by the S.W. arête, which I hoped to climb. This, he thought, was one of the more difficult routes on the mountain, but it was said to be roped in several places. To the right of the great S.E. wall of this arête there is a deep couloir, divided in the upper part by a long outcrop of rock, which rises to within easy reach of the dip between the Jungfrau and the Rotthorn known as the Rotthal Sattel. This couloir seemed to suggest in actual distance a more direct, although probably a steeper, route to the summit than any. Indeed, measurements taken on the map appear to indicate that the subtended lateral distance from the bottom of the couloir to the summit is about equal to the difference in

altitude between the two points, postulating a mean gradient from this point direct to the summit of some 45 degrees. This great couloir appeared to offer a possible and attractive route to the Rotthal Sattel. My guide declared that many years previously there had been an accident to a party who had attempted some such climb from the Rotthal Hut ; they had come to grief owing, he thought, to an avalanche. While the couloir might be subject to stone and snow avalanches, the broken rock ridge which divided the smooth surface into two parts should be clear of this risk, provided that its lower end could be gained early and proved climbable.

As we dropped down the path below the glacier my guide gave a sudden shout as a snake, that must have been asleep on the path, leapt from under my feet and in a few convulsive springs bounded down the slope out of sight. It appeared to be about five feet long.

On arrival at Mürren I wired for Franz Burgener to come and bring a porter. He duly came over from Stalden bringing with him one Joseph Blumenthal, a strapping fellow who looked capable of carrying anything. Hearing that I was not interested in the Gspaltenhorn, Burgener entered into the spirit of a reconnaissance of the Rotthal. I suspected that he was not unattracted by the possibility of out-pioneering the Oberland guides in their own country. As the weather was propitious we got provisions together and set off early the following afternoon.

The following notes are taken from a full account of this traverse written shortly afterwards.

Our destination that day was the Rotthal Hut, the usual sleeping place for the S.W. ridge. The weather was cloudy but not unpromising, for the upper wind was from the North. Our route lay across the Lauterbrunnen valley and alongside the ice fall of the Rotthal glacier.

Discussing the matter with Burgener on the way up, I suggested that it would increase our chances of success if we could camp farther up the mountain. To do this we should have to procure a porter to carry blankets and firing and to take them back to the hut in the morning. At the last chalet we found a boy eager to earn a few francs, so he came along with us and in four hours we reached the rough little shanty, surrounded by

huge boulders, close to the edge of the glacier. While Blumenthal and the boy busied themselves with supper, Burgener and I discussed the plan of campaign. Our conclusion was that if it were cold and the wind suitable, we would try the couloir, but if the wind were from a warmer quarter it would be prudent to take the usual route, which Burgener quaintly termed the "shenerally way."

The sun was low as the porter came out to announce that supper was ready. Just as we turned to enter the hut, a terrific thundering broke the evening stillness, and we beheld one of the finest avalanches I have ever seen. Some thousands of tons of ice had come down from a hanging icefield on the Gletscherhorn onto the bed on the glacier. I rushed for my camera and succeeded in getting a picture as it fanned out into the valley, almost at our feet. A great snow-cloud came towards us with incredible velocity, and in a few moments had reached us. We took cover in the hut, as the wind enveloped us; the temperature fell and snow fell everywhere and spluttered down the chimney into our fire.

Blumenthal's nameless soup proved excellent and before turning in we went out for a look round and a pipe. The weather was clearing; there was little wind and the few clouds were touched by the last glow from the West.

Our plan to sleep farther along the glacier had been upset by the boy's stolid refusal to go up higher; as the Swiss Alpine Club's blankets could not be carried off and left out in the open we had perforce to stay in the hut.

Blumenthal was up at 2 a.m., making tea for our matutinal meal. Going outside, we found a crisp, cold morning; everything was clearly depicted in the starlight. The lingering clouds had disappeared and all augured well for our climb. It was freezing hard, and as there would probably be wind higher up we donned all our available clothing, made everything snug in the hut and started at 2.50, leaving the boy to finish his sleep. For half-an-hour we walked over debris under the S.W. ridge, as we mounted slowly along the valley in the direction of our great Rotthal couloir. We crossed several patches of hard snow until, guided by the fitful light of our lantern, we were held up by numerous gullies which fall from the S.W. arête, and had to be crossed. These became deeper as we progressed and some 90

minutes after leaving the hut we were brought up by an awkward traverse. Here Blumenthal was sent on to investigate, while we got out the rope. He struck downwards, then across. In a few minutes came the welcome shout "*es geht*" and he eventually appeared, a ghostly form waving his arms. We followed and, after throwing him a coiled rope-end, were soon across and able to inspect our couloir in the growing light.

We had reached the point where the snows that sweep down its centre spread out on to the upper névé of the Rotthal glacier. For fear of stones that might come down from the S.W. ridge it was decided to keep along the rocks to the left as long as possible. When they became too steep we would cross the snow couloir to the lower end of the central rocks which I had seen from the Steinberg path.

The climb was proving interesting but our short halt while roping up warned us that we must keep on the move ; the wind was freshening and we were fully exposed to its mercies. Just as we started, the moon appeared and, as if to warn us against the attempt, another untimely ice avalanche came down from the Gletscherhorn, probably a very rare occurrence so early in the day. We were often forced down towards the couloir by the difficult traverses, but Blumenthal found a way between snow and rock until the last 500 feet to our central ridge were covered and we drew level with our objective, to which we now had to cross.

"We go quick, here," said Burgener, but he had not bargained for the hardness of the snow, in which every step had to be hewn, while we ran the gauntlet of small stones that already had begun to come down on every side. We kept a sharp look-out, while Blumenthal worked like a Trojan with his axe. By good luck nothing hit us, and in 15 minutes we were across. The climb to this point had been easy ; but as it promised to be the reverse higher up, a halt was made for breakfast. Looking down, we could see the hut among the great boulders and the distant slopes of the Ober Steinberg, that would soon be bathed in the early sunlight. With us black winter reigned and the cold warned us not to delay. Burgener now took the lead as we started up our ridge, which runs rather to the right of the centre of the couloir. This we could trace for some few hundred feet until our view was cut off by a tower. Some 2,000 feet higher

up were the magnificent overhanging snows of the Rotthorn, beneath which the couloir bends to the left and appeared to lead to the exit of our route, towards the Sattel. There seemed to be no alternative and failure would necessitate a return to the hut.

At first we could all move together and we arrived in half-an-hour at the tower we had noticed. In front was an impossible wall about 30 feet high, but Burgener managed to find a way to the left and the obstacle was turned. The ridge now presented a less broken contour, but the surface was not good. As much of the rock was ice-bound we were able to ignore this ; in a few hours, however, these would be loosened by the sun and a descent would be unpleasant. None of us had the courage to suggest a return, so we held to our course. We soon came to a break in the ridge, bridged by a narrow arête, across which we would have to cut our way ; Burgener went on without hesitation and gained the rock at the far side, which was fortunately not badly glazed.

Three hundred feet brought us to another massive gendarme. This fellow was worse than his predecessor for not only was his face inaccessible but his sides bulged. We found a way round the difficulty by taking to the snow at the left side and working up to the ridge again ; but the leader required the full run of the rope as he disappeared round the obstruction and I had to follow for several feet to give him more rope. Feeling very insecure, I tossed the porter's rope round a projection a yard above me, so that Burgener could proceed without danger. It was a fortunate precaution, for one of my footholds gave way ; my frozen fingers failed to hold me and I slipped from my position, loosening a little cascade of snow and ice that bounded down the couloir. The porter held me ; but I can still hear his "*Herr Gott !*" as I managed to recover foothold and the leader was able to proceed. In a few minutes we were both on the ridge once more and I was able to bring Blumenthal up. Fortunately, the ice held everything firm but the prospect of any descent later in the day was even less alluring. A similar obstacle confronted us almost immediately and this time the face had to be climbed. Burgener managed to find small holds and in five tense minutes, with a few spasmodic kicks, was up on the ridge once more, puffing and laughing, as we joined him

and got to work to restore some life to our frozen hands and feet.

It was now 9.45 ; we had been seven hours on the mountain and it would be another three hours before we could reach the summit ; so we could not wait long. For some little time no unusual difficulty presented itself, and we were already congratulating ourselves on having passed the worst places. Our ridge was so steep and broken that anything beyond 50 yards was hidden ; but progress was made, until we were at length definitely nearer the overhanging Rotthorn snowfield with the sun shining through its sparkling cornices and lighting up its hanging icicles, like pendant jewels in a mammoth crown. But our attention was too seriously engaged to allow of more than a passing glance at all this loveliness. As we neared the Sattel the wind had increased in force, penetrating even the two extra sweaters I was wearing under my wool-lined coat. Our hands suffered most and halts had to be made every few minutes to save them from frost-bite.

Just as we imagined ourselves out of trouble, we were dismayed to find a break in our ridge, bridged by a long, level knife-edge of blue ice, as hard as glass. At the point where it met the rocks again was an abrupt wall of ice that was clearly impossible ; when that was reached, we should be forced to find a way either round to the right, in the path of possible avalanches from the cornice, or to the left in the track of stones. In either case there would be a steep ice slope to be negotiated. We chose the left side, which was slightly less steep, but had the disadvantage of requiring left-hand step cutting. Burgener at once chipped footholds across the crazy ribbon ; as he arrived within a yard of the face, he turned to me : " Please, if I fall, will you shump down the odder side ? " I nodded ; it was the obvious thing to do, but I was glad to note that the rope was a good one, as he commenced to cut round the ice slope.

This was the steepest ice slope I have ever crossed, and deep steps as well as hand holds had to be cut. It was slow work and we envied Burgener his job, as our extremities were again in bad shape. The cutting had to be done with one hand only and it was some 40 minutes before we had circumvented the pitch and gained the ridge again. Here we were again stopped by an unclimbable gendarme. This could only be turned by taking

to the couloir ; after a consultation we agreed that it was probably less risky to proceed than to descend. It was decided to try and force our way up one of the ice-glazed slopes on either side, that were here of a painfully smooth consistency and were, moreover, threatened by those delicately poised cornices and icicles of the Rotthorn.

The leader returned to the attack, again to the left of the obstruction, but this was soon found to be impossible and he was forced to return and make a fresh attempt on the right. This was more successful and he worked upward and round the nose and was out of sight as he called to me to follow. Soon we were all three on the steep and doubtful slab, with poor holds and no stances of any sort. The angle appeared to be about 50 degrees, but was probably less, and I recall indulging in a sort of nerve-test by glancing between my feet down the 3,000 feet of couloir to the glacier below. Only the leader could be said to be tolerably well planted ; as he would have to quit his position, we remained poised on toe-nails and fingers like spiders on the uncertain crust, while our feet and hands again lost all feeling. As Burgener started upward again, the porter shifted a foot ; this brought the warning cry : " Why you move ? If you slip I no can hold you." Slowly Franz crept on until he seemed to be within measurable distance of some sort of stance. Suddenly a warning shout came from above ; the string which secured his axe to his wrist had chosen this moment to break ; gathering momentum and striking the frozen surface, the axe came shooting down point first. I disengaged my left hand and by a stroke of luck managed to field it as it passed in mid-air a foot from my head, and so prevent it from striking the porter, who was directly below me. The luck held and I was not shaken from my insecure position. Burgener just said " Pravo," but whether he was more relieved at our escape or at the recovery of his beloved pick was open to question. As it was, he began to work upward again, eventually reaching a safer stance and gave the welcome shout to come on. In a few minutes the evil slope was surmounted and we were all together again at the top of the ridge, stamping our feet, pounding each other with our fists, rubbing our hands in the snow and working on our fingers to restore them, very slowly and painfully, to life. Shortly after, and on an easier slope, we reached a point within half-an-hour

of the Sattel ; the ridge was behind us and at last we were in the blessed sunshine.

The usual wine skin was produced and the leader toasted with due solemnity, although the mixture of tea, lemonade, Valais wine and the sticky syrup from a tin of apricots which I had emptied into my water bottle did not agree with me and were the cause of much heartburn on the descent. After a second breakfast, a jubilant party manifested its satisfaction in song. To Burgener's expert yodel and Blumenthal's melodious alto, I added some sort of bass, thus completing the trio, while the porter went cheerfully to work to build a "steinmann." The route from the top of the couloir to the Sattel proved to be reasonably level and broken, and it was reached in about 20 minutes ; thence, using the excellent steps cut by a recent party, we raced up the ridge to the summit. Here we had time to take in the wonderful prospect and I was able to indulge in the sentimental recollection of my feelings when, as a boy of 11, I had looked up to this peak from the green slopes of the Wengernalp, as the small guest of one of the Laueners—I think it was Christian Lauener—one of the great pioneers of the district. Now I was looking down on those very slopes and recalling my first close-up of the Jungfrau.

Our 20 minutes' stay was all too short, but the wind and the lateness of the hour—it was already half-past one—made immediate departure imperative. The yodelling ceased and we worked down the long ridge to the Sattel ; thence down a rickety decline of snow with a large schrund at the bottom to the upper snows of the Jungfraufirn. To carry us over the long snow stretches Burgener enlivened the proceedings with music ; from some innermost recess of his rucksack he produced a mouth-organ and played us a spirited march, which took us down in fine style, until his breath was needed more urgently for the rise to the Unter Mönch Joch. Thence to the Bergli and a luxurious tea, which restored me to fitness again. An hour's race down the glacier brought us to the green slopes, where the weary unwinding process begins, and lasts until the lower glacier is reached. From here, the fairly level track to the Bäregg and a final run down the zig-zags brought us after dark to fashionable Grindelwald, whose attention was at that moment divided between a group of Tyrolese singers and the pyro-

technical displays of a party of Germans at the Wetterhorn Hut, who were sending up rockets and burning blue lights for the benefit of admiring friends below. There is always something incongruous and anti-climactic in thus dropping down from the heights, where one had walked in the true faith, to the sophisticated world ; so we avoided all this too painful civilisation and made for the Bear Hotel ; this we reached, at the end of our 19 hour day, exactly at 9.50. We had made the ascent in $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours, and the 10,400 feet descent in just over eight, taking things easily.

As I wished my men goodnight, Burgener unbosomed himself : " I tink I not go up the Jungfrau that way again, Herr, not for thousand francs "—which was the sum at which I believe he assessed the " dangers he had passed " in conversation next morning with a visitor at the Bear, who some 35 years later became a Vice-President of the Climbers' Club.

Fine as it proved, I do not recommend this route, as there is (or was then) no apparent way of avoiding the very unpleasant and steep final exit from the couloir, which seemed to consist of an underlying foundation of smooth rock covered by a thin overlay of snow left by avalanches. After melting in the afternoon sun, this is formed by night frosts into a brittle *verglace*, from which small outcrops of smooth rock emerge to provide inadequate holds for the toe-nails of one's boots and " steadies " for the fingers. At no point could the sole of the boot be accommodated. The consistency of the snow on this slope may change in certain conditions of weather, but this cannot be foreseen from below, and I do not think the climb can be called justifiable. Possibly, with crampons and other modern equipment, the bad patch may be passed to the left. We owed our success chiefly to the icy conditions, which also may have accounted for the absence of avalanches. Our clothing was inadequate and this entailed serious risk of frost-bite.

It was probably an exceptionally bad early season in the Oberland ; our next essay, an attempt on the Finsteraarhorn from Concordia, was rendered abortive by a blizzard, and we returned from the Grünhorn Lücke with another party, which included a priest who made a queer figure with his cassock looped up to his waist.

We did not in fact escape frost-bite that season ; some days

later we started from Zermatt, and after a night bivouacked in 10 degrees of frost under the rock *gîte* at Schönbühl (there was no hut in those days), we tackled the Dent Blanche. Here we succeeded in our task, in weather similar to that encountered on the Jungfrau and with the thermometer always well under freezing point ; but this time Burgener suffered frost bite of a partial nature in his fingers. It is interesting to note that the local treatment prescribed the bathing of the affected digits all day in the icy waters of the Visp.

THE NOSE OF DINAS MOT— A DIAGONAL SOLILOQUY

H. G. NICOL

ROPE tight, glance at guide-book, everything set.
“Ready, Andrew?”
“Ready.”

The first pitch won't be too hard anyway, though it is difficult to see where it goes. Let's try the crack: it seems to lead to the partly detached block they talk about.

“Am I right, Ted?”

Ted is on the ground taking photographs. He mutters something affirmative without leaving his shutter.

The crack goes alright and I can put an enormous runner on the block up here—which is very satisfactory!

Now for the traverse.

Not much to hang on to, but a curious move with an outward swivel of the left knee lands me on a commodious ledge with a somewhat unconvincing belay low on the left.

“Can't you do better than this, Ted?”

Ted has been here before and he can't he assures me.

Without wasting much time Andrew comes up, leaving Ted below for the moment—to his camera, and some mild gymnastics to dispel the cold.

Back on the ledge the atmosphere is obviously strained, for the crucial pitch is above and this inhibits conversation.

Now Andrew has belayed and drawn on his gloves—silently but with emphasis.

“Have a good time.”

I say nothing. After all one is supposed to be enjoying oneself. Useless to put it off any longer, though an initial feint up an obviously unpromising line gains some time.

“Try farther left.” This from Ted, unfeelingly.

I do and it goes. Curious tiny flakes and great heaves and pauses for breath. And now I am alone with the rock—no rope—no second—no sky, future, past, regrets, ambitions,

fears . . . space. Nothing but an utter concentration on rock : the holds on it, small and firm, each one a jewel seized with desire, relinquished with infinite regret : the belays on it, which end one agony only to usher in the next.

At 40 feet I knew I should find an esoteric type of running belay, a shaky pebble which by manipulation can be jammed in a slot. And yet I sought it as ardently as a lover his mate !

This must be it.

The stone smirked at me from its little groove, conscious of the advances which, by the scratches on the surrounding rock, had clearly been made on it.

I made the rope firm, and left my pegs and hammer to be collected, for they could be of no help above.

Now back to the mid-line for the overhang, the crucial overhang below which on holds of faith, so they say, one moves to easier ground.

The rock was slightly greasy after a fortnight of rain. And I could see no holds : the jewelled casket firmly closed.

First I'll dry my rubbers and have a rest.

" I think this lot's wet."

Absolutely no comment from below : no help either.

And then the first move, and then the next, up from one toe-scrape to another, hands and feet brimful of air. Now bend down because the overhang is directly above, grinning at the nape of your neck.

Don't like this at all. Have to traverse right. Can't see how to do it. Wait now, this must be the key—see up there, under the overhang, firm little beaded knobs of quartz. Pull on them, sweat-shining palm-sinews standing out. Try to tear them away ! Now for it. Make a long stride (watch out for that obvious foothold ; people have come off on it) and plant the right foot well enough. Too stretched out for comfort. What to pull over on ? Yes, there are definite holds. Can't understand it. Must be a trick somewhere. Left foot shaking. Over you go—and up !

" Well done, Hamish." Ted still there.

" Not up yet, damn you."

And as if to prove this I have to perform some ridiculous antics far out on the right.

The overhang is bounded by an undercut chimney, and up this you must go.

Wonder if I can jam my shoulders in it ?

It seems possible, but what a funny situation—leant back in an armchair of rock, before some atmospheric hearth.

But the flames below are leaping impatiently. I belay and bring them up.

The next pitch looks interesting. It seems I have to go over that way, to the right. First a long low traverse into a groove, flutter hands and friction feet.

“Bad bit there, Andrew.”

Here's a pocket hold for my right foot at waist level. Too high. Have to stand in it. What has the book to say.

“ . . . groove ascended on widely spaced holds.” Widely spaced, yes, I see their point.

The move is as obvious, however, as it is repellent, and presently I am standing in the pocket, slightly incredulous. Up on the right is another resting place, a mantelshelf well protected by smooth walls. At one point, however, its defences are at fault, for a two-finger hold for the left hand—the kind of feature one remembers for years—makes possible a determined foot progress in a vertical groove, and a gasping lodgement.

Still the future does not look brilliant, but in the book again is a glimmer of hope. Take a jug handle on the right at full stretch and swing up into a groove and respite.

“Definitely harder than the crux.”

“Cheerful blighter.”

And so I sat down and took in Andrew, and then Ted, who had by this time forsaken his camera and more athletic pursuits.

At this point it is possible to traverse off onto Western Slabs, and so avoid the final direct chimney pitch. At least one member of our party was willing to do so.

“It's an over'angin' 'and jam all the way, lad”...knowing my ineptitude at this sort of manoeuvre.

However, Purism triumphed, and again I started off, with a layback and a jug handle or two into a large recess below the hardest part.

First, take a jam in the left crack from where you can just seize with both hands a promising spike, and hang there in a rather futile and self conscious way until exhaustion enjoins retreat.

Clearly I have to stand on the spike, an impossible feat while still suspended from it. However, on the second or third cycle of ascent and failure I succeed in fitting a sling on, which forms a poor, if gratifying, return for the effort involved.

But on the left there is a pocket-sized underhold which gains a few inches. Now detach a hand and look for something higher, quickly though—not much time. Right foot still waiting for something to do. Have this tuft of grass out of the way. A hold ! Pull quickly up on it and slap the right foot on the spike. Missed it by two inches . . . foot caught in sling . . . can't lift it . . . do something quick . . . knee on spike.

And so I gained a painful, though safe, release. The worst is over now, and a few more finger jams bring holds within reach.

Pull up and over.

Done it !

LIGHT AND PEAKS OF THE HOGGAR

BERNARD PIERRE

"Go to the Sahara under God's guidance, and may peace, health and goodness go with you." (A Moslem farewell)

THE peaks of the Hoggar bask in the sun every day and stand out against a sky which is almost always blue. People in the Sahara do just one thing when winter comes, they put on a coat. So the clemency of African skies is a strong incentive for climbers as early as January.

The Hoggar is in the Central Sahara, north-east of Tamanrasset and is not *terra incognita* for mountaineers. For some 15 years now, it has been visited by several climbing parties who have conquered some 20 summits. Saharan peaks are thoroughly different from European ones: they do not stand as a range where every summit is more or less linked to the next. The notion of a mountain range like the Alps has no equivalent here: most of the peaks stand clear from one another. They are rock flowers or spires soaring alone, all that is left of volcanic eruptions, and most of them are almost 3,000 metres high. The highest of them is the Tahat (3,010 metres). Seen from a plane, the Hoggar suggests some weird moonlike landscape.

The first attempt at mountaineering in this part of Africa was made in 1935 by two Swiss, H. Bossard and W. Hauser, who succeeded in climbing the Ilaman (2,800 metres) in February. It is possibly the most beautiful peak of the whole district, a dark gold sugar loaf which soars up into the sky amidst grey river-beds spotted with yellow and green, and their colours stand out against the steel-blue stones of the slopes at its base.

A few months later, in April, 1935, a French expedition reached the Hoggar. It was led by Captain Coche, a first-rate Sahara specialist and among its members was Roger Frison-Roche, the Chamonix guide who was soon to become famous through his book, *First on the Rope*. The expedition also intended the study of local fauna and geology, photography and

filming. They climbed the Ilaman once more and also three beautiful peaks : the Garet-el-Djenoun, 400 kilometres north of Tamanrasset, the Saouinan in the Assekrem, to which its conquerors gave the name of Pic de Foucauld to immortalize the unforgettable figure of the Hermit of the Desert, and lastly the Iharen, a "strange cylinder-shaped mountain," made of basalt pillars leaning against each other, soaring up for hundreds and hundreds of metres. It was named the Pic Laperrine, in remembrance of the other Saharan knight, General Laperrine whom France had to thank for bringing peace to the Hoggar.

Later, in 1937, Edouard Wyss-Dunant visited the Hoggar on his way back from Mounts Kenya and Kilimanjaro. He succeeded in climbing a number of new peaks, among which were the Tigmal and the south peak of the Tezoulaigs. The same year, a Frenchman, member of the G.H.M., Alain de Chatellus made the second ascent of the Iharen together with R. de Bournet. Then in 1939 another Frenchman, Raymond Jacquet, succeeded in making the solitary ascent of the Daouda, a basalt mountain of the weirdest aspect. It was a lost victory as Jacquet was to find his death the very next day by falling from the Iharen. Finally in 1947, 1949 and 1950, Swiss, British and Italian mountaineers (Dr. Stoll, Walker and Wollaston, and P. Ghiglione) made more ascents of the Ilaman, by new routes*.

Yet it would be wrong to think that the Hoggar has been completely explored. It is far from well known. Consequently, we decided to go to the Central Sahara ; our party was composed of Madame Syda, her husband Jean Syda, Maurice Martin and myself. We wanted to repeat a few of the ascents, to try new routes on peaks which had already been climbed, to become familiar with the very particular technique required by such climbs and finally to climb virgin summits, selecting the rock towers and spires which attracted us most. Luck favoured us all through our trip and we had the joy of being able to fulfil our programme during the Christmas holidays of 1950-51.

* In 1952 a French Party, Mme. Barbezat and Alain Barbezat, visited the Hoggar. They climbed Aokassit, a fine aiguille to the east of Tazrout in the Serkout massif. On the summit they found a cairn and a note indicating that the first ascent had been made by Jean Rouget and Raymond Jacquet. The party also climbed Salovinan, Iharen and Ilaman, the last by the east face, a new route.

December 25th

While the sun was setting behind the horizon, the plane came to a standstill on the sand : Tamanrasset ! Touaregs, veiled men who are the last witnesses of a medieval legend, surrounded the Lockheed plane together with small negro boys who stared with large white eyes at the big bird sweeping down from the sky.

Sitting on a stone and away from the crowd of natives who were unloading the plane, I was moved by the magic of the colours. My reverie was cut short by a joyful call from friends who had come to meet me ; they had been there for three days, having crossed the Sahara in a jeep. " I suppose everything is ready, camels ? guides ? packing cases ? etc. ? We are going to leave tomorrow, of course ? "

My questions were cut short by a roar of laughter ; pitying my optimism they replied : " You are in the Sahara . . . where time just doesn't count. Neither camping equipment, nor food have yet arrived." Obviously, their Saharan experience was longer than mine : within a few days, they had learned something of the philosophy of the desert. I must confess that I was just mad at the idea that our luggage, sent from Paris more than a month in advance, had still to turn up, and I was disappointed at not being able to step at once into adventure.

This introduction to the Hoggar was, indeed, too brusque.

Next day, in the afternoon, shouldering our packs, we set out for the Daouda. It was a strange approach, along the green and yellow-dun bed of the wadi which winds up a plateau strewn with stones scorched by the sun. The dark yellow shape which suddenly rose out of the earth, all in one, seemed supernatural. We bivouacked under the moon and that was a new experience. There was something inexpressibly moving in the emptiness of the desert and the utter silence of dead nature wrapped in the great Saharan peace.

At daybreak we started climbing the Daouda, a peak of about 2,000 metres. Going towards the west face two days before, my friends had made out a possible route. As we were climbing, we felt as if the lovely Daouda was rearing itself up in an almost threatening way. For about 300 metres, pillars of basalt, looking like huge organ pipes, sprung straight up and we were deeply impressed by their daring architecture. Maurice Martin, who

was leading Yvonne Syda, first came into contact with the basalt. Seeing him tackle the rocks, I thought of a boxer at the beginning of the first round, trying to discover where and how he could take his adversary off guard. The whole climb proved difficult : it was a succession of ledges, overhangs which we had to overcome by using artificial means, chimneys, open corners and different kinds of cracks. By midday, we had reached the main summit of the peak ; Maurice and Yvonne who were still leading, shouted down to us that they had found the cairn built by Jacquet.

The African sun weighed down the empty desolate plain of Tamanrasset. Round us a maze of serrated peaks built up a silent landscape, over which lorded the Iharen. Suddenly, a delightful surprise, a cool breeze invited us to relax. We slowly drank in the delight that is always felt on the summit of a mountain. We were thoroughly happy ; the Hoggar was not going to disappoint us.

The approach to the Daouda had revealed to us a majestic mountain of a triangular shape, called Teendi on the map and Issekrar by the natives. What a paradise for climbers is that country in which the very names of the peaks are a matter for discussion. We had been entranced by the pure shape and symmetrical outlines of the so-called Issekrar : it stood out against the blue sky like a diminutive Matterhorn. The spell it cast over us came at the right moment. Our luggage was still travelling down from Algiers at a snail's pace and had not yet reached us. For once, poetry was meeting reality as an unexpected ally, and we decided there and then to ascend Issekrar (1,900 metres), the first ascent of which had been made by Dr. Wyss-Dunant in 1938 up the East face. We selected the south pillar as our route : it was obviously a virgin one and the most elegant way up. It was to prove the most difficult of all our climbs in the Hoggar.

Before daybreak we left Tamanrasset by jeep. We were tightly bundled in our down-lined jackets. We followed a good track for several kilometres at the foot of the Iharen, the top of which was lost in the stars and then, as dawn was peering, we left the "road." Our car zig-zagged across the desert, like a boat picking its course between islands ; it was a strange impression for Europeans used to moving about in a well-



defined space. Little by little, the Issekrar and its south pillar were coming towards us, out of a background completely different from that of the Daouda. While the latter showed against black stones lit up by expanses of golden sand, the Issekrar soared above an ochre-brown desert flecked with a few lighter spots which were *ethels* and gnarled olive trees growing in the dry beds of wadis. We had to leave the car here. The usual approach was to require only two- or three-quarters of an hour, as in the Dolomites.

We climbed in two ropes and began the ascent up a couloir among huge *gendarmes* full of holes which hid us from the sun ; it was cold and the mountain looked strange and stern.

The first pitches were not difficult but it was not long before we were stopped by three main obstacles ; first a wall, the scaling of which was to require the use of stirrups, then a short chimney, the exit of which was rather tricky, and finally a big *dièdre* some 30 metres high, topped by an overhang above which was a rather ferocious-looking chimney. This was the key of the ascent and it required much exertion ; Maurice (the technician !) decided it was a " 5-A 1 " pitch. Higher up, a complicated succession of cracks and chimneys led us to the summit. Our climb was completed when we came up to the cairn built by Dr. Wyss-Dunant. Aesthetics had to give way to more practical considerations. The heat was suffocating. As soon as we had reached the summit, we had to leave it to get away from the sun and back into the shade on the east face which we had selected as our way down.

The luggage turned up at last.

Consequently, the next day was devoted to getting ready for what we ambitiously called " The Great Journey." Our caravan was to consist of a she-camel and five camels, each of them was to carry a load of 120 kilograms (rider and luggage). Our guide was to be a long, skinny Targui, Barka-Ag-Hama, clad in white and dark blue, his face veiled with a black " litham " which showed nothing but two piercing brown eyes. His huge size made him look like one of the old Egyptian statues, the proud, dignified aspect of which he also retained. He was of noble family, a cousin of the sons of the late Amenokal (the Amenokal is the head of the Touaregs who live according

to feudal rule in a hierarchy of lords, vassals and slaves, and follow matriarchal customs). As our guide was of noble birth, he refused to have anything to do with menial work, which was then allotted to the slave Dahmani, cook and maid-of-all-work, a negro about 50 years old who had already accompanied Frison-Roche to the Hoggar. When a child, he had known Father de Foucauld. He was to act as interpreter as he spoke French. He walked bare-foot: it was a local custom (a *kanoun*) and he would walk for 30 or 40 kilometres daily untired, apparently, and ceaselessly chattering with us.

December 31st

The sun was high in the sky when all our camels were finally brought together. They waited, either serenely or crossly for their loads and riders. A crowd collected as such a sight is unusual at Tamanrasset. Everybody felt compelled to give advice as how to tie the loads. When we made a first trial to see how things would work, all the strings broke and the loads crashed to the ground. The public guffawed, the camels emitted hoarse cries and, as we made them realize with striking arguments that they were responsible for the failure, they became more and more irritated and tried to bite. The din was getting out of control.

Dahmani, in his rasping voice, screeched at the animals. An endless succession of "Ha-ha-ha!" (to get them on their legs), "Ttschi-ttschi-ttschi!" (to make them lie down) followed, the whole being interrupted by curses. He sometimes spat right into their faces and the camels seemed to resent it very much: at last, it quieted them for a short—a very short—while. Barka tackled the water-carrying she-camel. Indignant at the lack of fair-play of human-beings, she tried to run away. Flies which were to be our constant travelling companions were driving the camels mad. Children were getting out of control, yelling, running here and there; excellent advice was showered down on us, as thick as a cloud of locusts; the pungent smell of beasts made the whole scene wilder still and Jean whispered in my ear: "What a circus.!"

Of course, we knew exactly what the public was waiting for: the moment when we would mount our camels. They were to be disappointed, as we had decided to drive in a lorry as far as

the foot of the Tigmal (1,670 metres), 20 kilometres north of Tamanrasset, which was to be our first objective.

We arrived there by the middle of the afternoon. We suddenly felt lonely and looked at the cars driving away as lighthouse-keepers watch the supply boat sailing off. For the first time we felt we were right out in the desert.

We had just time to reconnoitre quickly the approach to the mountains, and to discover a possible route up across the south face ; then we went back to our camp. The fore-feet of the camels had been loosely tied together, to prevent them from straying away ; now they were clumsily hopping about on the " grazing ground "—that is to say a few sparsely scattered bushes of thorny, sweet-scented Saharan plants like the *drinn* or the *thala*. They obviously enjoyed chewing those leaves, as sharp and pointed as barbed wire. Behind us, the first buttresses of the Koudia were sharply standing out against the setting sun, in a classical combination of blues, pinks and oranges. The first star heralded the Saharan night. The fire was lit and whilst dinner cooked, we mused, our faces turned up towards the immense clear sky, studded with stars among which the Southern Cross was shining. With our fingers, we played with the warm sand. With slow, dignified gestures, Barka was making tea according to the Touaregs' fashion—green tea brewed with mint and sugar—a becoming task for a nobleman. On a flat stone, Dahmani was kneading *kesra*—the daily wheatbread—covering it with red cinders which he grasped between fingers as hard as corn. We felt as if we had stepped back into biblical life and there was an inexpressible delight in the process.

We woke up in 1951. By 6.30 we started climbing the Tigmal. By 9.30 we were on the summit : it had been a short, disappointing scramble, more dangerous than difficult. Another disappointment was our discovery of a cairn. Later we were to learn that Dr. Wyss-Dunant had forestalled us in 1937. It was not yet time for the conquest of a virgin summit. Going back to camp did not take long ; we had lunch and packed up quickly. The luggage was ready but Barka was not in a hurry : who cares how many hours pass by ? In a slow, rhythmical step, he went out to fetch the camels. As for us, we were definitely worried : we had *now* to face the problem of how to ride a camel.

Imagine yourself sitting on the *rahla*, the wooden saddle the pommel of which is in the shape of an Agadès cross fixed to the hump of the animal, your bare feet crossed over its neck, your knees holding the cross tightly. The camel stands up all of a sudden. First movement : it gets up on its knees straightening its back legs. You have got to lean backwards to restore your balance. The second movement throws you violently forwards and you must refrain from grasping the beast's neck. In the twinkling of an eye, you are at 2.50 metres above ground. After the take-off comes the start. Don't utter a word : if you shout, the animal drops you on the ground and it is another painful experience. The camel does not start running except when it feels inclined to. It knows whom it has to deal with. Rather appeal to its better nature : if you hit it, it makes off at full speed and that is a real catastrophe.

On the whole things went well : we progressed on the flat at about four kilometres an hour. Two hours later, Barka stopped the procession, saying that there were fine pasture grounds in the vicinity. Jean was surprised to see how often those animals, supposed to be so abstemious, could feed ; besides it seemed shameful to be dependent upon a camel. We wanted to go on but Barka had an unanswerable argument : water. He had to fetch it from a well which he alone knew of, and we had to wait for him. We gave in ; the water was dirty, lukewarm, briny, smelling like an old goat ; it had been poured into *guerbas*, goatskins sewn in such a way that they had kept the shape of the animal down to the legs and reminded us of dead bodies floating on a stream ; yet, nothing else could be done. Water was a vital necessity and this was our final protest. We bowed to the rhythm of life in the Sahara.

By the end of the next afternoon we were actually encamped at the foot of one of the finest and most spectacular mountains in the Hoggar : the Ilaman. It is the perfect type of a volcanic chimney eroded at the top ; what is left of it is a sharp peak several hundred metres high. It has been climbed several times since 1935 and is now one of the Hoggar's classic climbs.

The morning was cold and the water-skins were as hard as stone. We had to face a very long day as we had planned to camp for the night at the foot of the Aoukenet (2,500 metres) which had not been ascended yet. The first thing to do was to

find the camels which had vanished. We waited for two hours, calm and unconcerned as if we were Sahara veterans. Sunrise on the Ilaman made us forget this slight technical hitch.

Our track rose in zig-zags along the slope up to a pass on the right. There we were met with an icy-cold wind. We had rightly been told that the Sahara is a country where the sun is hot but the air icy. We hoped to be able to see quite a new landscape when reaching the pass but we were bitterly disappointed: there was nothing on the other side but a world of black or copper-coloured stones weighed down by the sun, lost in mirages which made us think we were seeing water or snow. It was so cold and the wind was so strong that for shelter we walked close to the camels. The landscape was sad, desolate, dead, monotonous, but the sky was intensely blue. Suddenly there was a change: summits began to show on the right; we became aware of a mountain landscape. At last, at a turn of the track, the Aoukenet showed up: "Chouf, chouf! (See, see!)" shouted Dahmani.

How beautiful she was! Behind a foreground of small, red and yellow aiguilles, she stood out in serene loneliness. "She" was delicate and graceful; at the first glance we thought of her in the feminine. As we walked up towards her, her architecture became more definite. The Aoukenet is built of huge slabs over which blocks stand in doubtful poise like a jig-saw puzzle. On the right, the north ridge suggests a route of ascent. Maurice and I were to reconnoitre the place before nightfall and confirm that impression. The next day, we were to look for a route along that aerial thread.

Dawn came while the scree slopes echoed the rattling of stones rolling under our feet. Our approach among sweet-scented bushes came to an end when the sun soared above the horizon. We had first to make for the beginning of the north ridge over a number of ledges and steps, the ascent of which was easy. A few rope lengths brought us to a large terrace, and then the climb began in earnest. On the left there were very large steep slabs of rust-coloured granite which would probably have led us to the summit; at the start all the holds were slanting outwards but they looked solid enough. On the right, there was another route up, along a large chimney. Maurice and Yvonne

were in favour of the chimney, Jean and I of the slabs. Finally, Maurice got into the chimney but he was at once compelled to drive in pitons and the higher he went, the more difficult it became. The chimney was narrower and steeper and the way out was likely to prove extremely tricky if not impossible, as there were two overhangs at the top. After having wasted half-an-hour in that way, I shouted to Maurice : " I'll try the slabs." While he was tearing off his pitons, I started, the first metres were difficult but the rock was sound and rough enough to afford good holds. A kind of wild joy seized me. Finally I reached a small platform. " All's well . . . it's heavenly ! " I shouted down. The slabs seemed to be overlapping one another. An overhang stopped me for a short time, yet I managed to get over it. Then came a new succession of slabs. Rope length after rope length, Jean and I drew up to a flat ledge, after which we went on along an extremely tricky traverse leading us to an open corner. The whole climb was extremely exposed and, when looking down, I could see Maurice and Yvonne looking up. I then reached a broad shoulder where Jean came up to me. It did not mean that we had conquered the Aoukenet, this first summit hid the real one, but we stopped there to wait for the second party and to listen to the comments made by its members. Maurice was becoming quite lyrical and did not regret his chimney. I almost felt that he went up very slowly to be able to enjoy his delight to the full. Meanwhile Jean and I resumed our climb. The last lap was not over slabs any longer, but over big rounded blocks, holdless and resting balanced one over the other. We were able to pick up a fairly easy route through this bewildering maze of stones. The summit ridge was a mere dome and we took off the rope. I ran up to the top : there was no cairn ; I must confess that I was literally mad with joy.

The way down to camp was easy and, early in the afternoon, we started along a *mechbet*, a track made by caravans, which was to lead us to the foot of the Atalisse, a lovely mountain we had seen from the top of the Aoukenet. Maurice left us to reconnoitre the ground, and his reconnaissance became a climb : two hours after he had left us, he reached the top of the "*Pic Martin*."

January 2nd

Frison-Roche had told me : " You must climb the Taridalt ;



it is a beautiful cluster of needles which no mountaineer has tackled yet."

So, off we went towards the Taridalt. The trouble was that neither the map nor the guides could give us the faintest notion of where it was. When we mentioned the Taridalt to Barka, he replied: "Tidamayene!" As to Dahmani, though he was an old wayfarer in the district, he knew nothing.

Adventure is delightful. From eight in the morning, we wandered across the desert, in quest of the Taridalt.

We followed the deep valley of the Touroumoute oued. The landscape was magnificent: on our right, high light-coloured walls appeared. The oued where, from time to time, sheets of water flow quietly by, revealed a thick green vegetation. We were surprised to meet a herd of black goats which had come to drink; and as there is never a herd without a shepherdess, we came across a lovely Targuia girl who seemed to be very friendly with Barka. The secret telephone of the desert had brought about that "unexpected" meeting, which had, at least, the merit of disclosing the Taridalt. Apparently, the girl knew it well: she made us understand that it was the wall of steep slabs we had left on our right. So, we decided to go back, but not before having given water to the camels which had lived on their humps from the day of our departure. First we had to break a crust of ice. The camels smelt the water, thrusting out their long necks, and then by slow gulps, swallowed in something like a 100 litres, whilst Dahamani was excavating an *abankor* and filling our water-skins with this blackish ill-smelling water. While riding back, we came across two other shepherds: who said that the desert is deserted?

Finally we reached the foot of our mountain. The afternoon was spent reconnoitring as usual, and we found out the real conformation of the Taridalt. It is not one mountain of about 2,500 metres but a group of fairly sharp needles and massive towers, quite distinct from each other, soaring up to some 100 to 250 metres above valley level. The group can be divided into two parts: the eastern group which we were facing and the western one, on the far side of a deep gorge. We meant to traverse it from east to west, going up and down for 100 to 200 metres at a time. The sun was setting when we came back to camp. In this evening glory, the spell of shining colours lasted

only a few minutes and, all at once, the desert was engulfed in the night. Our dinner was extremely gay. Barka sang a local melody, accompanied by Dahmani's falsetto. Our Targui had produced the finest clothes out of his "wardrobe," a large fawn-coloured leather bag which he carried dangling from his saddle. He scented himself, painted his eyes with kohl and looked at himself in a mirror. Maurice lent him his watch and his torch and, after dinner, Barka mysteriously slipped away.

We rose early, before daybreak, as we knew that the traverse was going to be a long one. In fact, after having scaled the first point, we were faced by a second needle. Its east face was so steep that we felt scared. Climbing it was out of the question. On the left, the south face, a succession of smooth unbroken slabs, was equally impossible. We had to find some other route on the right. By going down a few metres, Maurice discovered a long horizontal crack which could be reached by using artificial means of climbing. He drove in a piton, hooked up a carabiner and then a stirrup. He warned us that the traverse continued to be difficult for some 30 metres, up to a wide chimney, the scaling of which nevertheless promised to be quite short. It was barred in the middle by big blocks tightly wedged between the walls, but we succeeded in avoiding them, went back into the chimney which was opening up and the last pitch up several wide ledges led us to the summit of the second peak.

We had now to go down the west face to reach the broad gorge which divides the two groups of the Taridalt. A succession of difficult and very exposed ledges, a magnificent steep precipice down which we roped, hanging like spiders to a 30-metre thread, a few more ledges and we reached the main gap ; it was 11 a.m.

The view of the gorge was enchanting. The west group was a wildly beautiful amphitheatre of peaks. We guessed there was a possible route when reconnoitring the place. It was to develop along a first chimney, the entrance of which was defended by smooth black slabs affording rounded holds. At first we had thought that this route would be fairly easy but we were compelled to alter our plans : the chimney was smooth to the point of impossibility. Then we attacked the right side of the crest along the chimney. It was a very long and difficult scramble which led us to the summit of the third needle where we built a third pyramid : definitely, it was a cairn-day. . . .

The main summit was not very far away now. We were separated from it by a shallow gap which we reached down easy ledges. Once we were there, we had to stop : how would it be possible to tackle the last difficulty, a dome of curiously intricate architecture ? We saw neither crack nor ridge, neither slab, nor chimney : nothing but a succession of rounded protuberances and troughs, and we felt completely lost. Moreover, the rocks which had been excellent so far, were now loose. This nasty stretch was climbed magnificently by Maurice, followed by Yvonne Syda with remarkable energy and grace. When we came up to them, we were within a few metres of the summit, a desolate rock scorched by Saharan sun. It was two o'clock. That morning at daybreak we had been able to wear our padded coats and we had even begun the ascent with them on. Now we felt overwhelmed by the light, and roasted alive by the heat. After having taken a few snapshots and built a cairn—a memorial to Alpine pride—we quickly hooked up a short double rope and were soon back in the couloir under the main summit. We had run away from the sun and were able to enjoy a short relaxation in that small realm of shadow. It was a heavenly moment of rest in the fresh fragrance of wild bushes and a delightful reward after violent efforts.

This long traverse was a dream of delight. We had often heard Barka and Dahmani call that part of the Hoggar : *Assekrem*. Why not name the peaks : the *Aiguilles de Diable de l'Assekrem* ?

January 7th

Eight a.m. The desert was sleeping heavily. Our caravan slowly wound its way towards its next goal : the Tezoulaigs, two twin Aiguilles, strangely linked together. The north Tezoulaig is strikingly beautiful : it looks like a perfectly symmetrical golden brown sugar loaf standing out against the blue sky. A white cloud was clinging to its summit. Dr. Wyss-Dunant tried twice to scale this peak of 2,900 metres in 1937.

An hour after leaving camp, we met some shepherds who offered us a goat : this was an excellent opportunity for adding some fresh meat to our meals. A little later, a Targui vassal came to pay homage to Lord Barka ; we felt we were stepping back into the Middle-Ages.

By the end of the morning we came to a camping site probably used by Touareg shepherds. We set the camels free and they rushed to pasture grounds. The whole afternoon was devoted to reconnoitring a route. All four sides of the north peak of the Tezoulaigs were equally impressive: they were 400 metres high, made of rocks piled up and precariously resting on huge smooth slabs. The one weak point in those defences was in the north-west face : a big chimney, the way to which was up a number of terraces. And what next ? Intently looking through binoculars, we were unable to make out what the end of the climb would be like. Would it be possible to get higher ? Inch Allah !

Another cause of dismay was the fact that for the first time since we had arrived in Africa, the sky was overcast and clouds were driven by the wind behind the Aiguilles. We could not believe our eyes. There was a violent gale and it was very cold. Of course, we were at an altitude of more than 2,500 metres, and yet . . . clouds and a grey sky in the Hoggar were more than amazing. Were we going to be bothered by " weather conditions," an element of the problem which we had deliberately ignored ? By the following day, the temperature had suddenly gone up, a portent of rain or snow, and yet the sky was less heavy than the night before. No matter, we left our camp by seven, well provided with pitons, carabiners and stirrups ; by eight we were beginning the climb. The ascent was to prove a " severe " one ; the crux was a chimney of some 100 metres.

At 12 sharp we reached the summit. The surrounding landscape was wonderful. The sky over which grey and black clouds were driven by the wind showed a succession of delicate changes of colour. Behind the screen of clouds, sunrays of various intensities lit up the background with constantly changing lights. The sugar-loaves, the spires, the domes, the towers, the pyramids of the Koudia had the colour of red burnt ochre ; a few streaks of sand threw lighter shades over this Saharan palette of colours. Right at the back, the skyline was light blue. And all the bands of colour succeeded one over the other.

Having completed the ascent of the North needle, we decided to give it the name of Amenokal Moussah-Ag-Amastane, in remembrance of the man who was a devoted friend of General

Laperrine and Charles de Foucauld, and who did all he could to help France to spread her influence over the Hoggar.

We went down by the route we had gone up. By roping down several times, we reached the scree slopes. Yvonne and Jean left us to go back to camp while Maurice and I went on with the climb. Thus we made the first traverse of the Tezoulaigs, ascending the south peak which had been named Pointe H. Dunant, by Dr. Wyss-Dunant, in memory of the founder of the Red Cross.

By the end of the day on our return to camp, we found a lively gathering of friends of Barka who had come to pay their respects to a member of the royal family. That night we badly needed a lavish use of D.D.T. powder.

The next day, when we woke up, it was raining, and even misty. The wind was howling and the Tezoulaigs were hidden by the clouds. "You see, Dahmani said to me, pointing to the sky, the Djenoun did it." Dahmani was certain that seeing us scaling so many of their mountains, the demons would end by getting angry. In fact, a storm had raged all night. Lightning struck the Aiguilles. Barka, the warrior, endured with great dignity the revenge of the Djenoun, but Dahmani was most uncomfortable : from our tents we heard him muttering endless prayers.

The bad weather did much to alter the remainder of our plans. On our way back we wanted to visit the *bordj* of Father de Foucauld and take an unforgettable view from the Assekrem over the Koudia region ; then climb the Ilaman by the normal route or attempt its south face or alternately the north one. Now very doubtful weather made it impossible to contemplate such a long way back. We had to return to Tamanrasset, right to the south ; and even by this shortest route, we should have to be prepared for a three days' journey, covering almost 100 kilometres.

On the first day, we followed partly the same way as from the Aoukenet. The Taridalt, the Oul, the Tezoulaigs, the Tahat, the Ilaman stood out against clouds racing over a restless horizon. We were sad, as sad as this lightless, joyless end of a Saharan day.

The following morning was radiantly beautiful. Fine weather had returned, light spread on everything. Once more we lived

glorious hours, riding under full sunshine. Our ghost-caravan plodded its way down the oued Tamanrasset. Lost in their endless dream, the camels went on, crushing the sand under their feet. The rhythm of the "mehara" rocked us to sleep; we were hardly conscious of our bodies. We slowly progressed through pure, limpid morning air, through silence hardly broken by the chirp of a bird or the nasal sing-song of our guides. We were happy in silent blessedness, breathing in primitive, animal life, in full communion with Nature, as nomadic tribes had done from time immemorial.

We plodded endlessly along the oued: the rain had given a new life to its incredibly vivid colours. The earth was grey-green, the sand yellow and gold, the bushes lemon yellow, the palm trees olive green and the stones blue. We reached a Touareg camp surrounded by crowds of black goats. The tents were made of reddish skins. According to a Touareg saying: "The beauty of the soul shows up under a hide tent." Shepherds offer us sour milk in which flies are drowning. Tomorrow, those people would move elsewhere, according to the traditional law of journeying tribes. In the evening, we camped under ethels, at the bottom of a deep gorge, hollowed out by the river.

By the end of the third afternoon, while coming down from the heights, we made out the plain of Tamanrasset, over which the wind was driving torrents of sand. It looked like the sea and the volcanic cones were showing up like islands. Here was the Iharen once more, an impressive, massive, towering summit veiled in a soft light falling from a sky veiled again by clouds. We had been unable to ascend the Ilaman, but we were to climb the Iharen tomorrow by the route discovered by Frison-Roche. And this beautiful scramble—a long, difficult one, pitches of which could be compared to Chamonix Aiguilles—was the fitting conclusion to our camel ride over the Hoggar.

THE PILLARS OF FRENEY

G. H. FRANCIS

ITALIAN soldiers were lounging in the woods of the Val Veni. Lying on the warm moss with their backs to the fir trees, they were making the most of a pause in manoeuvres. One of them, laughing, levelled his rifle and fired an imaginary round at Sutton. "If he was in my unit," fumed Geoff, "I would have him court martialled for that." It seemed to me that the *Francesco* and the two *Inglese*, in their turn, were not escaping comment from the reclining soldiery. Soon we left the tree line behind us and with it, our ill-temper with the morning frustrations of Courmayeur. No one could remain dispirited before the great skyward march of the pinnacles of the Aiguille Noire that was beginning to unfold. Terray led us up a section of slabs and walls in which wire ropes were secured by huge pitons. Above, the path led across a pleasant boulder-dotted shelf of the valley to the Gamba Hut.

At the hut the old *gardienne* gave us tea and questioned Lionel closely about an alleged non-payment of hut dues by his party when they came to climb the *via* Ratti-Vitali. For one superb moment he had the air of a little boy, very much on the defensive, answering to his school-mistress for his naughtiness. Eventually he established his innocence and we rose to continue our rather tardy climb to a bivouac site.

On the *névé* immediately below the Col de l'Innominata we met a jolly party of four young Austrians. Their leader, Herr Schuster of Innsbruck, told us that they had attempted the *via* Ratti-Vitali on the west face of the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey, but that verglas high on the face had forced them to retreat. He wore a great chain of karabiners round his neck—truly a Lord Mayor of the sixth degree! One of the karabiners, to our delight, was shaped liked a banana.

In a moment we were at the col. It was five o'clock, as we paused to look round the vast amphitheatre of the upper Frêne glacier its afternoon silence almost accentuated by the rattle of an occasional stone down some forbidding couloir.

Terray described some of the great routes which faced us. He also recalled the tragic mishap, almost at the same spot, which had, in 1950, cost the life of Francis Aubert, one of the finest young climbers in France. I remembered the pleasure of meeting him at the Tour Rouge Hut, but a few days before the accident. He was, as Terray has written, "*un chevalier des temps modernes*."

Our plan had been to place a bivouac at the Col de Peuterey, between the Aiguille Blanche de Peuterey and the ridge of Mt. Blanc of the same name. It was now obvious that the delays of the morning had frustrated this plan. Accordingly, we decided to cross the Frêney glacier and bivouac low on the rocks of the Aiguille Blanche.

The first slopes of the glacier below the col were steep and crevassed, then followed a comparatively level section ended by two huge crevasses, crossing the whole glacier. Above them lay great blocks of ice fallen from the ice cliffs of the upper, hanging part of the glacier. We wondered if the crevasses would catch all the fallen blocks if another mass cracked off the ice cliff. It was not a place in which to linger. Lionel led us swiftly off the glacier across a tracery of ice bridges and cornices onto a snow slope beneath a subsidiary couloir of the Aiguille Blanche. It was a depressing spot. The snow was thickly peppered with fallen stones from the couloir above. Again we did not linger, but traversed to an ill-defined rib of rock and earth separating our couloir from the great couloir which runs down from between the two summits of the Aiguille Blanche. Lionel assured us it was "*à l'abri des pierres*," and we began furiously to work, in the failing light, levelling and walling up a bivouac shelf. It was an education to see just how comfortable an experienced practitioner could make a high altitude bivouac.

By the light of a torch Geoff and I dived into our sleeping bags and Lionel assumed his *matériel en duvet* layer by layer. Soup, chocolate and "Tonimalt," heated on pocket meta cookers, put us in a glow of warmth before going to sleep.

Although I was comparatively warm my sleep was not undisturbed. Dank coils of mist clung to the Innominata, across the glacier, and a continuous flicker of lightning came across to us from the Val d'Aosta. I thought the weather most threatening, but in the morning Terray told me that the faint

sheet lightning was a common effect of settled summer weather, known in the mountains as *foudre de chaleur*. Faint rolls of thunder accompanied the lightning and these found their echo in the Frêne ice cliffs. At frequent intervals throughout the night the hanging glacier loosed great blocks of ice in thunderous discharges. One fall made me sit up, tense. In the moonlight I saw a pale torrent of ice surge over the glacier, many of the blocks overriding both the great crevasses.

I roused my companions at three o'clock and before first light we had cooked, packed and started up the great couloir. According to the guide Arturo Ottoz, whom we had met earlier, it was preferable to cross the couloir low down and mount its true right flank to the Col de Peuterey. However, it proved impassable as its centre was occupied by a profound and smooth furrow of black ice, worn by falling stones. In order to pass it we had to climb the couloir by verglas and frozen earth until we could traverse across almost at its top, and close beneath one of the summits of the Aiguille Blanche. From here followed a cold and exhausting traverse upwards and to the left. The rock was angular and loose, its cracks filled with snow and verglas. The sun still lay behind the mountain. Geoff and I commiserated whenever we forgathered on a ledge.

"This is misery."

"Yes, masochism."

"Oh for the Lakes in June."

"Or sun-baked gabbro in Skye."

"Even gritstone."

"Yes, gritstone especially . . . short climbs, good climbs, *warm* climbs, not this cold, unending, uninteresting fight!"

At length the traverse ended, and, turning a last rib of rock we found the sunlit *névé* stretching from the Col Eccles to the Col de Peuterey. In a grateful warmth we sat on our sacks and sucked oranges and sweets. It was nine o'clock. The Aiguille Blanche had levied a toll of five hours of struggle for access to the Pillars of Frêne.

Above us rose the great fluted formation of the Frêne face of Mt. Blanc. To the right our view was cut short by the Peuterey ridge. From the col broken rocks and then a long curving crest of snow rose against the clouds. To its left lay the great snowy central hollow of the face, bounded directly

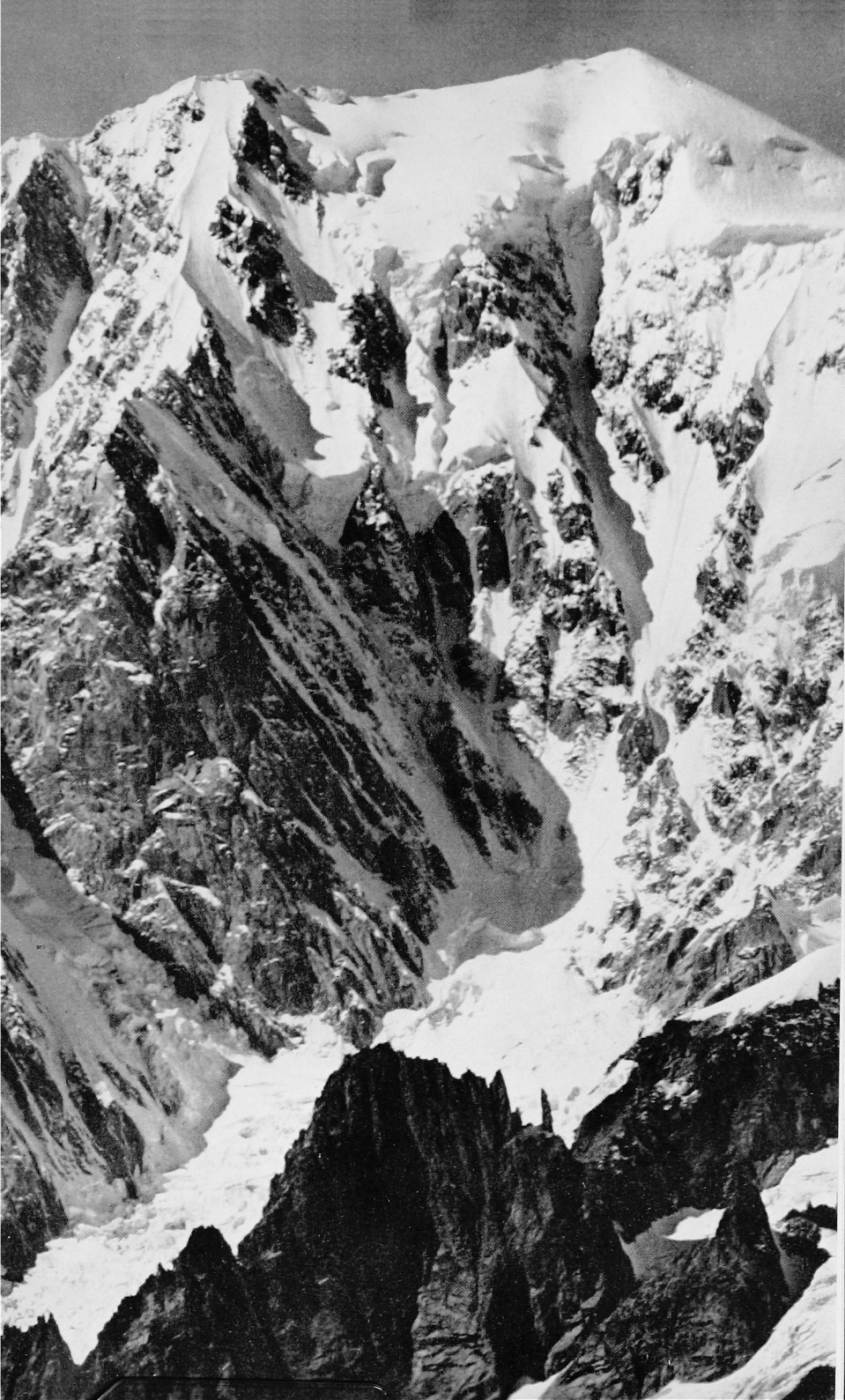
above us by the Pillars of Frêney. The right hand one, apparently the most broken, carried Gervasutti's route, that to the left rose up in one straight sweep of red forbidding granite. The third pillar, forming our left-hand skyline was climbed by Professor Graham Brown with Graven and Aufdenblatten, as a variation to the Innominata face route in 1933.

Giusto Gervasutti, the great Italian climber, has written of how, coming up the Val d'Aosta past Pré St. Didier, he had often noticed between the Peuterey and the Innominata ridges, three gigantic red columns "of the most beautiful granite imaginable," to which he gave the name "The Pillars." He goes on to describe how at last an opportunity came to climb them with Piero Bollini della Predosa in August, 1940. Theirs was a long, hard-fought climb not successfully accomplished until at midnight they reached the summit of Mt. Blanc. They only regarded it, however, as a preliminary to the much harder task of attempting the east face of the Grandes Jorasses.

We rose and put on our sacks, adjusting our rope lengths to the rock climbing ahead. Lionel took the snow slope to the foot of our Pillar in a wide sweeping curve, crossing the *rimaye* at its best bridge and slanting up over steep furrowed snow to the foot of the first rocks.

From below our guide had noticed that the first section of the Pillar was more broken on the side of the Peuterey ridge than exactly on its crest, although the Italians had chosen the latter way. Accordingly we spiralled up the pediment of the Pillar from left to right to gain the line of weakness that Terray had seen. From its foot we climbed together, at first on slabs of moderate angle, but covered in snow and verglas. The sun was shining full on the Pillars and they were quickly shedding their icy mantle. I watched the slow coilings of meltwater rivulets flowing between verglas and rock.

The first *ressaut* grew sterner as we climbed higher on its steepening side. The difficulties were continuously in the third and fourth grades, and of a most strenuous nature—armpulls and laybacks stand out from a confused memory of sustained effort. The altitude was here about 4250 metres, and the effort of fast, continuous movement on such terrain was gruelling. Our pulses hammered. I do not remember feelings of misery akin to those we had left on the cold, shadowed flanks of the



Aiguille Blanche below, but I do recall the profound relief of a halt at the top of the *ressaut*.

Before us loomed the rocky bulk of the second *ressaut* whose most imposing feature, a great grey slab, drew our anxious gaze. To get to the foot of the slab we had to cross an extremely narrow crest of snow. Terray advanced along it to a point where it dipped below our sight, then, cutting downwards one-handed, he moved across the fragile snow-festoon to anchorage on the rocks beyond. It was only in following that we came to appreciate the balance and dexterity which allowed him to cross so quickly.

A rope's length brought us to the foot of the great slab, 120 feet high, and quite blank except for two thin cracks close to its right-hand side. We disposed ourselves for the attack. Geoff took anchorage as high as he could, whilst Lionel gathered snaplinks, pegs and stirrups from each of the sacks. He climbed the first 20 feet of the right-hand crack, then clipped one rope into a huge piton, left by Gervasutti. He placed four more in succession, standing for the most part in stirrups. Then slowly he reached across a blank area and at full arm stretch planted a peg in the left-hand crack. On this he clipped a stirrup and made ready to traverse, safeguarded by both ropes in a peg, high in the right-hand crack. Geoff paid the ropes out slowly as Lionel made the move, and arrived, standing upright in the stirrup. There he rested for a few moments to calm his panting. To ease my cricked neck I turned to look outwards at the view. To my left, across the snowy hollow, the Peuterey ridge hid all sight of the Brenva basin and the Grandes Jorasses. Ahead of me I gazed across the gulf of the Frêne glacier, still thunderous with icefalls far below, and scanned the Italian foothills over the open sight of the Aiguille Noire's twin summit. Afternoon clouds welled up and, billowing round the immense jut of the central pillar, blanketed the slab. In a clearing I saw Terray standing on his piton, holding onto another he had planted above, his bowed body, powerful in repose, like a leaf spring between its pivots. Again the mist swirled over the slab and I heard the sound of four more pegs being planted. At last, with a shout, he reached the narrow ledge above the slab, where Geoff soon joined him. After some manoeuvring the sacks were hoisted, and I set to work taking out the pitons. The

Italian peg and two beyond it were immovable but the rest came out one by one. I was amused to see that Lionel had used a peg made for us by a Cambridge blacksmith.

We moved on to a ledge 10 feet higher, and Lionel and Geoff moved up to the left to the foot of the next pitch of the sixth grade, an enclosed chimney, invisible from my ledge. Lionel traversed back to the right under an overhang, on stirrups hanging from three successive pegs, his legs far out from the rock. Then he pulled himself over the overhang and disappeared to my view inside the chimney. He was tied to 100 feet of British laid nylon and 100 feet of plaited French nylon. His words floated down faintly from the depths of the chimney :

“Tirez la corde française, et l'anglaise, et encore la française.”

I stamped my feet to restore their circulation and wondered gloomily how much chance we had of getting off the mountain that day. From far above came the drone of airliners on the Rome-Geneva run. I tried to picture their view of me and idly wished that an air hostess would parachute down with a rum punch and some chicken sandwiches. Geoff afterwards told me how at that moment of boredom for me Lionel, beyond my sight and hearing, fought out the hardest pitch of the climb. Pulling up on a block in the chimney it came out and fell on his head. He slumped back in the chimney, stunned, his body mercifully jamming between the walls. After a long silence he recovered with an oath and fought on upwards between walls with no more than their granitic roughness for holding, and an interior lined with black ice. Twenty feet higher he planted a peg and pulled out onto a snowy shoulder of the *ressaut*, above the greatest difficulties. There we joined him after struggles and awkward *dépitonnage* in the chimney, flecked in places with Lionel's blood.

The amount of snow and verglas on the Pillar was by now considerable and began seriously to hamper our progress. We began what we all realised was a race with darkness to the Vallot Hut. The last difficulty, a snow-choked crack, needed three pitons, two of which, to save time I did not recover, and we found ourselves on the top of the second *ressaut*. We climbed, at first by the rocks of the third *ressaut*, then by an icy couloir between our Pillar and the Central Pillar, until we reached very steep snow leading up to the Brouillard ridge.

Fastening on our crampons we traversed up the slope, our ankles at their extreme flex and our axes held in the *piolet-ancre* position. Terray broke through the cornice and stood on the ridge just as the red orb of the sun dipped behind the Jura in an angry sunset. In a few steps we stood on the snowy point, 4,700 metres high, to which the Italians have recently given the very fitting title of Picco Gervasutti. The 700 metres of the Pillars were underfoot.

It had been, from the *rimaye* to the cornice, a superb route varied, challenging, direct and by its nature free from the distracting dangers of ice and snow-fall. The only unpleasant feature of our ascent, the great accumulations of ice and snow on the rocks, detracted nothing from the quality of the route itself. Our guide earned our greatest admiration for his performance. Returning by air after a series of snow climbs in the Andes and a reducing illness, he set off with us to the Pillars on the day after his return to Chamonix. In spite of his consequent lack of *entraînement* for hard rock climbing he had led the artificial pitches in a masterly fashion, giving us a fine introduction to the technique.

Lionel led across a snowy gap and over a last rocky outcrop of the Brouillard ridge to the slopes of Mt. Blanc de Courmayeur, which we skirted on the Miage side. A few feet above our heads lay a lowering ceiling of stormy clouds, while on our left an eerie afterglow haunted that last, remote corner of Italy, far below us. It reminded me of a set for a murder, seen from a seat in the balcony. As we crossed the Col Major all light died. We followed the amber pool of Lionel's head torch, as, without a falter, he led across the featureless snows to the summit of Mt. Blanc. It was nine o'clock. We were all far gone in weariness and I remember not the least flicker of satisfaction at having first achieved the summit by such a magnificent route. A longing for shelter and sleep obsessed me and my mind cried out for the Vallot Hut.

We descended as we had climbed, with Terray in front, followed by Geoff and then myself. I was thankful that they did not see my staggering footsteps, although I noticed that they too were unsteady. Geoff afterwards told me that Lionel's heels appeared to him to spark as he walked, and for a long time he talked softly to himself about it. For my part I kept seeing

four climbers and not two ahead of me. At last we got below the clouds and found ourselves on the Bosses. To our right we caught a glimpse of the friendly network of the lights of Chamonix, spread like a lighted map beneath us. At 9.40 we climbed into the Vallot Hut, where a hot drink and a few words of reminiscence did not by many minutes precede our deep and long-anticipated oblivion.

IN THE SHADOW

M. J. BALL

AS they recede from the present, events lose their reality. They become remembered images, which we bring to mind in the same way as when we look through a photograph album, finding it faintly surprising that the actions we recall ever ruffled the surface of our emotions. With only a few very important incidents do the feelings of the moment occur again when we look back and wonder, their intensity leaving them quite unaltered by the intervening years.

A first day in the Alps is always slightly awkward. There is so much to be recalled, so much intimacy in returning, that it is a little difficult to concentrate on the commonplace. The mind is open, receiving impressions rather too objectively, so that they lose their direct, personal significance. There is a tendency to neglect the intrinsic dangers of the situation, and a first day is designed to be easy, as if in recognition of this, so that not too much thought need be given to the actual business of climbing.

The sun passed behind a cloud, and the wind encouraged us to move. The ridge on our right rose gently to the mountain we had just climbed, its rocky crest easy if a bit unstable, but the view and the weather perfect. An ideal first day, in fact, with all the southern half of the Dauphiné Alps to admire ; the broad square buttresses of Les Bans, irresistible to the route-finding eye ; the long ridges of the Ailefroide, with angular knife-edges of granite between it and the more rounded shoulders of the Pelvoux. In the foreground was the Sélé glacier down which we were to go. From the col on which we were sitting, we saw no reason to alter the opinion formed on the summit. From there the route had looked quite straightforward. The first part of the glacier was obviously free from crevasses, a fine sweep of snow, with no breaks in the surface to destroy the beauty of the immense curving lines. Then there were crevasses at the two bends, which would need negotiating, and finally a snow-free section led straight to the hut, which we could just pick out at the bottom.

The snow was soft. A hot sun at 2 p.m. on a south-facing slope has that effect. It appeared that we were in for some hard work, even though the route was downhill. Tom sank up to his knee at every step.

I have no clear picture of that evening, only a vague memory of the unpleasant result of adding oatmeal to a stew. The next day was an off-day, and then we had a long and fairly eventful climb, traversing the Ailefroide back to La Berarde, and only just reaching easy ground as darkness fell, but the details of this day are only a series of isolated moments, and memory cannot recall the feelings so easily. The ethereal effect of the moon on the Ailefroide as we walked down the valley was the climax of this day, but even the awe and half-painful longing roused by this vision cannot now compete in intensity of feeling with the sensation of uncertainty that I felt as, for an hour and a half, I lay in the snow on the Sélé glacier. In spite of the suspense, there was no doubt about what would happen, of course. I was only waiting to see Tom appear again. It would not take very long. The heavy minutes of waiting occurred as a surprise, almost to be resented. Whilst I lay there, stray thoughts wandered through my mind. I remembered that we had seen no other climbers in the Dauphiné. Just a few workmen at the hut we had left. Our tracks should last a good week if the fine weather continued. My mind turned away, imagining the picture thus presented. You remember that exquisitely simple drawing of Samivel's? Just a line of tracks, which finish abruptly and only too obviously in the foreground, with the words, "*C'était écrit.*"

Tom sank up to his thigh. This seemed to surprise him, so I put my ice-axe into the snow, rather too vertically for safety, but this was, you understand, the part of the glacier where there were no crevasses.

"I'm in a hole," he announced, and prodded about in front of him. "But it's only a small one. The snow's firm in front of me." I relaxed slightly. There was enough time to worry about crevasses when we reached them, instead of wallowing about in the snow.

Tom leaned forward, and then his arms shot up in the air and he vanished. "He's gone," I thought, and the rope whipped through my fingers to come taut on the axe. The axe was pulled

forward through the snow, pivoting about its point, and then came straight out, pick first. The rope pulled me down and I was dragged head first towards the crevasse. With all my mind I resisted this movement and swung my feet round in front of me and stiffened. I felt myself drawn down into the snow until I was up to my waist, my feet pointing forwards and downwards towards the crevasse.

I seemed to have stopped.

It is extraordinarily easy to be caught in this way, especially on a first day. The mind is not attuned to the situation. There are the mountains to admire, the hot sun to feel on your skin, the clear air and the astonishingly blue sky. The climb is over ; you have only to walk down to the hut. On two occasions I have been caught napping in the Alps like this. The other had less immediate effect on me, indeed the whole affair can hardly have taken more than half a minute, and again it happened after a long halt at the beginning of the descent.

From the summit of the Hohberghorn a short ridge runs down to the col between this mountain and the Stecknadelhorn. The guide-book gives 15 minutes to go up it, so it is very short. It also says that the ridge is easy, in a quiet unobtrusive way. So when the ridge steepened slightly and bent round to the right it was of no significance, for there it was again flattening out only a few yards below. The situation is exposed, though. On the left the steep snow slope goes straight down in long vertical lines till it breaks up into vast crevasses above the glacier. Just before reaching the summit we had been on this north-facing slope. The sun had been on it for about half-an-hour and already the new snow was not as firm as we should have liked. On the right, the slope flattened out in a few yards and then steepened again to merge into a face of thin, interlocking rock ribs with snow between, but no direct line down to the glacier over snow alone, no possibility of glissading down.

It was the second fine day after a bad spell, with a quite considerable fall of new snow. It had frozen in the night and so the conditions had been ideal up to now, all the way up the Nadelgrat from the Bordier Hut. As it was after mid-day and we knew we would have trouble with the snow on the south side down to the Domhütte, we decided not to go on to the Nadel-

horn, but to go down from the col just below us. It was clear, of course, that the difficulties would start at the col.

As the ridge steepened and bent round to the right, Tom* kept strictly to the edge of the ridge, perhaps just to the right of the actual crest. I saw no reason to go so much out of my way, and set off about a yard or so below the crest and on the inner and south side of the curve. I was, I suppose, about half-way round when there was a distinct noise. It was fairly loud, peculiarly muffled and instantly recognisable. I felt suddenly furious at falling into such a simple trap.

As I turned round to see what was happening, my feet set off downhill and I sat down. The lowest part of the moving snow rose in a wave with a roaring sound like a breaker as the top curls over and crashes on the water beneath it. I thought, "the best position in an avalanche is swimming on your back, but what about those rocks?" It seemed impossible to move at all. There was no time. Before any decision could be carried out, the situation was altered. Now the snow slowed down, unbelievably, and stopped. The flatter section of the slope had been sufficient to halt this miniature avalanche.

I found I was on a level with Tom, who was standing, without his ice-axe, about a yard from the ridge. He was preparing to get onto its other side. Whether he could have done this before I had pulled him off I shall never know. At the time we told ourselves that he could, but looking back I feel less certain. It all happened so quickly. He could probably have resisted the pull from the other side of the sharp ridge, if he had once got there.

I stayed sitting. "I've lost my axe," said Tom. He took two steps upwards, plunged his hand into the snow and pulled out his axe. This miraculous feat (the axe was completely buried), seemed very ordinary to me at the time; in fact, I got a bit annoyed that he didn't get over the ridge at once. However, once he was safe, I gingerly got up and joined him.

And that was all, you understand. We had no further trouble. The difficulties came below the col, as I had anticipated. It took three hours to get down over snow that slid off its base of ice at the slightest touch. We moved one at a time and belayed to rocks at every halt. As the couloir was open, we could easily

* A different and lighter person from that in the main story.

avoid the centre with its danger of stones and avalanches, and although our slow progress was tedious, it was obviously safe.

So, although this incident was as important in its way as the other, and although I can remember both the actual events and feelings of the moment with equal clarity, the element of waiting was eliminated and now I cannot attach the same significance to it. I did not think about anything much whilst I lay in the snow on the Sélé glacier, waiting for Tom to appear from the crevasse. Certainly not about the avalanche affair, nor about another incident that occurred in Skye, which was in its way more similar, only the waiting period was shorter, and I did not quite appreciate the position until it was almost over.

To the right of the Cioch Gully on Sron na Ciche is a large slab, sloping up to the right at an easy angle. Above the slab is a steep wall and in the appendix of the current Skye guide we saw that a route had been found up this wall ; nice and steep, but not too difficult. Now, none of our party was very keen on this. Two of them were leaving, one was foraging for food, and the others were being either modest or lazy. However, the leaving pair recommended for partner another man in the place, whom they said was just the chap for the climb. He seemed keen to have a try, and as it was only my second day out, we agreed that he should lead. Unfortunately a long fine spell ended that day and we started in the usual Scotch mist.

We scrambled up to the foot of the climb, the first part of which went fairly easily, and after about two or three pitches I joined the leader on a small outward-sloping slab below an impressive wall. On the left a crack split this wall, and he claimed that this was the route. It seemed rather unlikely to me, but after making vague remarks about satisfactory belays, he started up it. Now the belay was on the floor of the slab and was a small rounded knob. When the rope was placed above it, and you looked up from below, you could see that it bulged over the top of the belay. I should never have dreamed of abseiling from such a belay. The knob was so utterly useless as a belay that I pretended it was not quite so bad after all.

On the right-hand side of the crack, about five feet up, was a large sloping hold. The leader soon got his foot on this, but seemed unable to move further. As he wrestled, his boot slowly slid down to the bottom of this hold. When it finally got

there, he put it on the top again and the manoeuvre was repeated.

The crack was loose inside and he threw out several large chockstones. Finally he seized one and pulled himself up. His hand suddenly jerked outwards and then grabbed in again. A shudder went through his whole body as the upper part stopped its slow pivoting outward. The chockstone sailed down the cliff, the thuds and crashes growing gradually fainter. It took a long time before it finally came to rest.

It was not until this precise moment that I fully understood what was happening. I looked down and away. The cliff went down for a good 400 feet. If he fell off, I should not be able to lift a finger to save us. I turned back again, and with complete detachment watched him struggling slowly upwards. He had clearly been shaken and his movements were nervous and jerky. I felt no particular sense of relief when he finally reached the top of the pitch. I had been too much a spectator. He was either going to fall off or stay on, and I just had to watch and see which happened.

"No more belays like that," I thought, as I moved up to join him. A bit higher he did fall off and went down about 30 feet. I had a good belay and stance and he was only slightly bruised. We got off the cliff easily enough. "That's the first time I've ever been defeated on a climb," he said, as we walked back.

Sitting in the cold snow and listening to Tom's intermittent efforts to get out of the crevasse certainly did not recall these memories, but in retrospect they are the memories that seem closest by reason of their shared importance in the threat that lies over them. Not that the possibility of immediate extinction ever lasted long or was always appreciated at the time, nor even that the odds were always against us surviving ; they were not. But the unpleasant fact was thrust under one's nose, as it were, and laid its sombre cloud over the actual events. On the Sélé glacier it was the long interval before Tom's safety was assured, and the continual impossibility of being sure that he would actually get out, that stressed the significance of the event, although at the time I did not think so clearly about it. I just sat and waited. The desire for the episode to end as quickly as possible was too intense to allow other thoughts to enter the mind.

When Tom stopped falling he found himself hanging free in space. The crevasse sloped slightly, being at right angles to the surface, and the far wall was easily in reach. On looking up he could see the small hole in the centre of the roof through which he had come. The walls of the crevasse overhung by about four feet on either side. These overhangs were themselves about four feet thick, which explained why his ice-axe found only "solid" snow in front of him. Where he had fallen through, the snow was softer and thinner, only about one or two feet deep and bridged over the two-foot gap between the overhangs. It seemed to him that much too much rope was visible, and finding his axe in his hand, rapidly cut a step on the far wall and stood on it. He certainly had reason to be alarmed, as with rucksack, boots and axe Tom must weigh about 18 stone.

As a matter of fact, my head was about 10 feet from the edge of the hole, which put my feet in a very dangerous position. The soft snow had stopped me, just as it had led Tom into such a subtle trap. I do not think I could possibly have stopped myself in firmer snow, but I think it unlikely that Tom would have been deceived so easily.

After Tom had cut a few steps on the far wall of the crevasse, I was able to move back to a safer position. From here it was easy to see how the crevasse ran, a slight but definite dimple in the snow. It was, in fact, the bergschrund, just where it should have been, and it was only our inspection from above which had led us into the elementary mistake of assuming that there was no danger immediately below the col.

Tom cut quickly up to the overhang, but he found it necessary to tunnel through this, and since both he and his rucksack had to get up, it was this that took the time. His rucksack was heavy enough to make it extremely dangerous for him to attempt to take it off, without losing his axe or even falling off himself. His gloves were in the rucksack, and he could not get at them, and he had only a handkerchief as protection for his hands. With numbed fingers, it was very difficult to assess the grip he had on his only means of getting out of the crevasse.

When he finally forced his way through and stood up on the far side of the crevasse, he shivered for a very long time, even after his strenuous exertions. A great load was suddenly lifted from me, but there was still the rest of the glacier to go down,

and as we crept and poked our way down, the tension was still there. We decided it was my turn to go in front, and twice my probing axe found only emptiness below the surface. We could not relax completely until we reached the bare ice at the end of the glacier. We were both very tired that night.

An accident is only classified as such afterwards. At the time, thought is only for the actual events. The mind is concentrated so strongly that abstract ideas about accidents have no chance to come to the surface. And afterwards, looking back at an incident like this, it is the details that are so clear. And yet the feeling is remembered too, because it is, for once, so simple and so strong. I can recall without the slightest effort my absolute concentration on keeping away from the crevasse at all costs, and the faint surprise that I had stopped as I had. And then the waiting, and the insidious effect of the passing time. I do not think I recognised this feeling for what it was until after it was all over, because the idea of Tom not appearing again was so impossible that I could not let it enter my mind. And yet it was there ; a vague apprehension that gradually turned into anxiety without any definite cause.

Whenever he rested from cutting, "My hands are very cold." Why did he keep on saying it, there was nothing he could do about it. I was cold, even with the sun on me. I would not admit the fear that was being slowly roused in me, and I will never forget it. Even at the end when I could see his ice-axe cutting through the snow, and thought that our troubles were over, "How much further?" he asked. "Only another foot," I said. "As much as that," he replied, and the words crushed down my rising hope. As much as that. What less could he have hoped for.

CHALK AND CHEESE

R. M. VINEY

NO one has ever heard of the Wandfluhorn. It was only chance that led us to it. Zermatt is a bad centre for unfit English climbers commencing their holidays, as it has few peaks or routes suitable for the first day of the season. When, therefore, I found in Roch's *Mon Carnet De Courses* a casual mention of the Mayer-Dibona Route on the Wandfluhorn as an excellent training climb, I looked up the route in the guide-book. I was amused to find that this "peak" was in actual fact only a bump in the skyline running from the Dent Blanche to the Col d'Hérens. The Val d'Hérens side of this watershed is, of course, only a large snowfield, but the Zmutt side facing the Schönbühl Hut is a rock wall of some height and steepness ; the route taken by Mayers and Angelo Dibona in 1912 goes straight up a noticeable rib at the corner of the ridge. The guide-book describes it as taking nine hours to climb, and as being very difficult. As soon as I had discovered this little orphan of a route, I became its persistent advocate. Here, I proclaimed to my unconvinced friends, was the ideal route with which to commence our season. This attitude was not due solely to pride at having unearthed a climb of which no one had ever heard. The route really did seem to fulfil my somewhat exacting requirements for a training climb. It did not require reconnaissance ; it should be hard but not long ; it was not high, and the way off was easy. In addition to this it was obviously unfrequented, and the hut grind was not steep. Anthony Rawlinson and Michael Westmacott, however, did not agree. They objected to wasting a day climbing an almost unidentifiable wart on the edge of one of the Alps' dullest snowfields. The route, they pointed out, might be very hard indeed, it would most certainly be loose and very dangerous, and in any case the Wandfluhorn was not really a mountain.

However, I was persistent, and since they were notably lacking in any constructive proposals for a better route, they finally gave in. No doubt they both hoped thus to be in a position to get

their own way over later and more important matters. So on the afternoon of our arrival we took the long satisfying trudge up to the Schönbühl Hut in perfect weather. On arriving there we met George Band and the partial remnants of a Cambridge meet. George, who had just finished climbing all the great routes we wanted to do, happily informed us that 1952 was a good season as you just did not have to consider the weather at all.

In the morning there was a storm so we did not get up until quite late. It cleared later on and in the afternoon we reconnoitred the approaches to the Zmutt Ridge for future reference. The next day we climbed our route. We left the hut at a quarter to five, and roped up at the foot of the cliff half-an-hour later. We got onto the cliff by crossing the small bergschrund which lay at the foot of a long couloir immediately facing the hut. Once fairly onto the cliff we followed the guide-book instruction to take the rib which forms the south bank of the couloir, and then go straight up. That is all the guide-book says and all that it needs to say. I can recall hardly any details of the climbing except that I enjoyed it. It cannot have been hard as I was allowed to lead throughout ; indeed I think that we had only to make formal pitches out of it about three or four times in all. The forebodings about falling stones proved to be unjustified, and the rock was perhaps a little above Zermatt average in quality. There were no alarums and excursions, and we all three climbed in that happy state of mind which takes success for granted. We reached the summit after just under seven hours of unhurried, unworried, sun-warmed movement. It was perfect climbing in a minor key. We returned, after one false cast, over the Col d'Hérens, unroped at the Stockje and wandered back in our own respective times. It rained in the last hour, and we got in a little wet and pleasantly tired. We had had an enjoyable day's climbing.

A week later we were back at the Schönbühl again. There had just been a day or so of snowfall, and we had left the Monte Rosa massif as being too much like hard work under those conditions. The sun was now shining brightly, and we thought that a day of it would melt the South Face of the Obergabelhorn sufficiently for us to climb it the next day. We had already suffered one humiliating reverse there which rankled. However,



on the path up to the hut other ideas had crept in. The sun had apparently done its work so thoroughly on the Obergabelhorn South Face that we thought other and bigger routes would be feasible. The long East Ridge of the Dent d'Hérens, which stretches for two miles to the Matterhorn, had been in our plans all the summer, and Michael now suggested that we climb it the next day. We decided on this unanimously.

We left the hut just after one o'clock. It was a cloudy night, and there were occasional flashes of lightning as we started on the preliminary business of reaching the ridge we hoped to climb. After crossing the Zmutt glacier, we trudged up the ice and snow slopes used in climbing the Zmutt Ridge of the Matterhorn. This route brought us onto the Tieffmatten glacier at the Sattelti. Here we left the Zmutt route and walked across the flat cirque of the glacier to its south-western corner. At dawn we crossed a tiny bergschrund onto a steep wall of very loose rock, and commenced the final climb towards the ridge. The rock soon turned to snow and for an hour we climbed steadily up a beautiful and steep snow rib. This was in good condition and went easily enough in crampons. However, it took up quite a lot of our time, and it was after six o'clock when we finally joined our ridge at the west end of the Col Tournanche.

We halted, ate and took off our crampons. It was windy and cold. The thunder and lightning had now stopped, but it was very cloudy and throughout the day it remained intermittently so. We could often see below us, but we seldom got a look at the route ahead of us. Meanwhile it blew, and I fidgeted while the others played around with crampons, food and gloves in a manner which indicated to my mind (it was still early) that they were deliberately trying to annoy me. Eventually (it was actually only half-an-hour) we moved off with Michael Westmacott leading, and started on the climb itself. The East Ridge of the Dent d'Hérens is long ; it rises only 700 metres in a length of more than two kilometres. But in the second half of the ridge there is a series of towers which give plenty of climbing.

The first and largest of these is the Pointe Maquignaz. We reached this quite quickly, descending some way to the col which precedes it. There was a lot of snow on the rock ledges, and it appeared a vast mountain in its own right in the swirling cloud. However, once we were committed to it, things seemed

a lot less foreboding, despite the limited visibility. The snow slowed our progress, and although we launched off in the leftward spiral that the guide-book had enjoined, we found the route finding confusing. We became involved in one rather hard pitch on small holds and loose rock, which though excellently led by Michael took up a lot of time. It was half-past nine before we reached the summit of the Maquignaz. The next gendarme, the smaller Point Carrel, starts almost at once, without any drop in the ridge ; and alone of the major points of the ridge it has a clearly defined route. We traversed along the north side of the rocks and climbed a steep chimney filled with snow and ice. This was a rather wet and exhausting process, but in better conditions the pitch is probably a fine one. After the Carrel, which presented no difficulties above the chimney, we descended for some distance across iced slabs to the next col, and attacked the Pointe Blanche which towered above us in the mist. We took it fairly direct and mounted steadily for a few hundred feet. The route then grew steeper, and Michael became involved in some fierce work at the full length of the rope. It was not possible to see what he was up to, so Anthony and I had a long and mutinous wait below while he performed unseen prodigies above. When we eventually followed him we found that the pitch gave excellent climbing of a rather Scottish winter type. It was probably more difficult than is necessary or usual. Two hours of climbing got us to the top of the Pointe Blanche ; there we rested for a bit, and changed the lead. I had very much the better of the day, however, as there were no difficulties from that point until the summit. There was a short snow arête where the glaciers of the North Face lap over onto the ridge for a moment, and then we traversed to the south side, and were back on the lightly snowed rocks again. They were not difficult to climb, and the route presented no great problems, but it still took us nearly two hours to reach the Epaule which is the last of the great gendarmes. From there it was less than an hour's easy scramble to the actual summit of the Dent d'Hérens. Just below the summit there is an impressive great nose of rock, which we avoided to the south. We reached the summit cairn at half-past three in the afternoon.

It is all too easy to relax at the top of a climb, and we did so here, although we were all well aware of the difficulties of

descending the Dent d'Hérens on the Swiss side. Despite Anthony's efforts at anticipation the day before, Michael and I had hitherto rather assumed the attitude that we would cross that bergschrund when we came to it. In a good year the great West Face glacier can be descended with ease and speed. However, it is not always possible, and we decided to avoid it at first unless there was a recent track. Since we found no traces of previous parties on it, we went down the easy West Ridge which continues the Swiss-Italian frontier to the Tiefmattenjoch, intending to cut down onto the West Face glacier lower down. We soon reached the spot, and I being still in the lead started down. The slope was ice ; it fell for a few hundred feet to the glacier, and it seemed very steep. We had no time to cut steps down this distance so we were trusting to crampons. I progressed very slowly for 20 feet. I then announced that it was steeper than I had expected and that I didn't think I could do it for 30, let alone 300 feet. Since neither of the other two was so helpful as to suggest that I should come up again, I had to suggest it myself. Even then they were not co-operative, so I announced my retreat definitely, and returned with difficulty to the ridge. I was greeted with strong disapproval and relegated to the middle of the rope in disgrace. The next likely point for getting off the ridge was some distance farther down at the eastern branch of the Tiefmattenjoch itself. It presented a similar ice slope of some 500 feet. Anthony started off down this, but to the great relief of my *amour-propre* declared after 15 feet that it was much too steep. He returned to the col and we discussed what to do next.

It was past seven o'clock, and we would soon be caught for the night. The alternatives appeared to be either to go down the Italian side of the col, which at this point seemed to be easy and try to reach the Aosta Hut for the night, or to carry on to the western branch of the Tiefmattenjoch, and make a final attempt to get down the Swiss side there. As we were not at all clear whether the Aosta had or had not been destroyed by an avalanche, we decided on the latter course, although the col looked just the same as our other attempted points of descent. We raced hastily over the intervening rock ridge, which was unbelievably loose and maddening, and looked at our new col. It seemed just the same ; but when Anthony tried it, to our

delight it turned out to be thick, soft snow. We this descended for the upper half of the slope, and then got onto some rock. This brought us to within 100 feet of the final bergschrund. Working from observations made some time before Anthony was able to find the crossing point very quickly, and we jumped easily across.

It was ten minutes past eight. Full of new-found cheerfulness we started off down the easy glacier ; we reckoned that we could get very near to the hut in the remaining hour or so of daylight. Soon, however, things began to go wrong again. Despite the guide-book, the left edge of the glacier became quite impassable with great crevasses, and we had to cross all the way to the very right-hand edge where we found a way down the icefall over avalanche débris. We then began to trudge across an interminable snowfield. We realised that we were tired. Both Anthony and I fell into an unnoticed crevasse under the snow. We got out, and plodded on again. It grew dark. We skirted under the edge of the Stockje, and began to work our way down the dry rocky icefall that we found there. Our torch suddenly went wrong and refused to work ; we had no spare one. A little farther on Anthony slipped, and slightly hurt an ankle. One of my crampons then came off, and I seemed suddenly to have lost the art of putting it on in the dark ; frustrate, I carried it instead. Finally, we reached the moraine for which we had been aiming. We unroped. Traversing the moraine seemed to go on for hours. It was dark—the clouds kept it so—and we had no light. We slipped at every step, and progressed very slowly. We were all acutely conscious of the fact that we were very tired. Eventually we reached the final glacier, and began to cross it very slowly towards the final 300-foot cliff before the hut. We knew that bit of country fairly well by then, but I am still proud of the fact that, tired as we were, we picked up the path at the first attempt. We mounted the slope, and arrived at the Schönbühl at 20 minutes to midnight. Despite our precautions the guardian's sister heard us, and insisted on coming down and making us some tea. We were exhausted, but happy. We had had an enjoyable day's climbing.

AN EXCURSION IN THE SIERRA NEVADA

G. J. SUTTON

BETWEEN Granada and the Mediterranean rises a range of mountains, the Sierra Nevada, which rolls up from the South like a great wave of surf, the crest being formed by the three highest summits in Europe outside the Alps. These are, from East to West : El Alcazaba (3,410 metres), Mulhacem (3,481 metres), and El Veleta (3,428 metres). South of this point the range is savage enough, but offers few technical problems besides those of route-finding and, reputedly, bandit-dodging. But at this crest the wave breaks, and considerable cliffs drop towards the North. From their bases a series of wild ridges and gorges descend to Granada. The scenery was aptly likened by W. T. Elmslie (*A.J.* 1927) to an enlarged Highlands, but he did rather less than justice to the stark and massive grandeur of the great corries. In winter excellent ski-ing is enjoyed there, but in summer the ridges are parched and waterless. There is plenty of rock, but it demands care in the handling. Seen from the peaks themselves or admired from the Alhambra hill, the Sierra gives a sense of sombre mystery and broad-based power.

From the North, then, and in spring : that is the approach : Granada the natural base.

They were young, my own age, and Spanish. Their names were Pepe and Manolo, and we had about a tenth of a language in common. I did not know what to expect. Some had said : " It is walking. Take no burden of climbing kit." Others : " Alas ! So young. The waste of it." These were extremes equally unwelcome ; I decided a mood of gentle receptivity was most apopos.

The tram is old, and teeters up 20 kilometres of disgustingly narrow gorge above the bared fangs of a torrent. Overhangs of loose rock lurch overhead ; within, ferocious men argue hotly about their fares with a picturesque conductor, their terrible

grimaces relaxing into smiles when they find him inexorable. And then a heap of stones, a hovel, some derelict rails and the hot sun reaching down into the gorge. The terminus.

Two or three hours farther up the mule track we stopped to attend to blisters. There was no view, just stone and scrub, stone and scrub, a few flowers and butterflies, all set at a high angle, with an occasional poor hut where someone pastured his goats. And then, at the hundredth turning, transformation. We saw the whole of the great bastions of Alcazaba and Mulhacem, black in the torrid sun and seamed with snow. Beauty that caught the breath.

Beauty, but also a long way to go. In the early afternoon we came to a place where the gorge divided. The way seemed to lie up the left fork, but local knowledge was enthusiastic for the right. An hour more and enthusiasm gave place to doubt. Compromise. So we climbed left over loose and dusty slopes onto an even looser, dustier ridge, where I had the dubious satisfaction of seeing that, after all, the left hand fork would have been correct. We reached the first patches of snow. I began to feel the altitude, and it was hot. There was no comfort but in the wine-skin. Then the ridge again, the Tartarean ridge : for while we toiled on our blisters upon its shaley spine a broad and easy snow couloir led from the left-hand valley to a col high up under Mulhacem. As for our ridge, it could have been going anywhere. There are no good maps. Without a word I sat down and began to eat. The argument proved incontrovertible to Pepe and Manolo ; we sat and wolfed wine, bread, bananas and carne de membrillo, and then built a bivouac beneath some overhanging rocks. The evening passed in blissful and disgraceful ease. Lethargy held us in thrall.

O what can ail thee, mountaineer,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the snow is withered from the crest
And no winds sing ?

In the sunset the red buttresses of Alcazaba glowed as though from within like a titanic ember. Suddenly the sun was gone, and the ember cold and charred. I snuggled into my sleeping bag, resolved that in the morning we should traverse to the couloir, and hoping that our fire would attract no bandits.

If it did we never knew it. Six o'clock, and in the fresh air I

was going better. In the couloir the snow was hard, but I had taken ill counsel and left my crampons. Pepe and Manolo had theirs, strange weapons with varying numbers of prongs and bound to the foot with bits of old belts and braces. To save cutting steps I scrambled up a rib of rock to the right of the couloir and joined them at the top, in the sun now, and the snow getting softer. We crossed a plateau containing a small green frozen lake, right under the north face of Mulhacem. And here we expended much energy in gestures, arguing over the route. I chose the North East ridge, to reach the foot of which we had to cross some steep snow in a diagonal direction upwards and eastwards. The snow was getting no firmer in the sunlight, and we stayed only to rope. Very soon a fact came to light: our ideas of rope management didn't correspond. So we doffed it again with mutual satisfaction on reaching the col at the foot of our ridge. This is the col which lies between El Alcazaba and the Mulhacem. To the left of the arête as we faced it was a steep couloir which normally should present no difficulty, but on this occasion it was ready to avalanche, and at intervals it provided an avenue for meandering stones from above. There was no health in it, and we kept to the ridge. This gave us a pleasant climb on warm rock almost reminiscent of Chamonix, and in places quite difficult, though one could always escape to the left if necessary. On the right the view over the North face was exhilarating, and far below the green llyn stared up at us like an unwinking eye. Pinnacle succeeded pinnacle, and to a timid and unroped climber some of the traverses on the exposed northern side were quite exciting. At length the angle eased off and we hopped and scrambled onto the highest point in Spain. We saw nothing but hills, blue-grey in the noon sun. But then we wanted to see nothing but hills. The eye became widely travelled, climbing effortlessly the miles up which our feet had toiled, climbing a dozen peaks before it blinked again.

Near the summit is a ruined chapel. I found it three feet deep in icy water, stripped, and bathed—the highest bathe I have had. My friends' smiles were ironical. I inquired why, and learned that a large party which had recently visited the summit had used the pool for quite other purposes. I got out and let sun and wind stroke over me purifyingly.

Food, then—adelante! down over the westerly slopes of the

mountain. It was a great scree-slope, now mostly covered with snow. Where stones had rested on the snow they had been warmed by the sun and had sunk into a depth of some inches. This had happened over a wide area, and so the slope seemed to have been peppered by a vast shot-gun.

“ So they ran down, they ran down
As never menfolk ran, they ran
Down giant slopes into valleys narrow and deep
Where flowers rich in colour and shape
Clung to the banks of troubled rock-strewn streams.”

But here there were no flowers. A small lake brimmed among the snow, and again I swam. My friends were now accustomed to this harmless English lunacy. We climbed up again to the main ridge and followed for all an afternoon of timeless pleasure its rotten pinnacles and sound pinnacles, its breaks and cornices and curves.

The sun's rays were nearly level when we reached the Cerro de los Machos (3,327 metres). On our right long cliffs fell into a savage corrie. On our left were snow slopes topped by an evil cornice. Our way lay straight before us, and accordingly we toiled up a prolonged, steep and very loose slope of boulders towards a large gendarme near the summit. One by one our heads popped over the top into the evening light, and we unhurriedly but quickly constructed a rough bivouac platform close to the top. In the morning a four-hour climb over El Veleta and down its far side was to bring us to an Albergue beside the highest road (and hence the highest bus) in Europe. Contentment settled upon us as we ate our cheese and stale bread. The complications of life were very far below. There was nothing to do but sit and watch the turning of earth. With the first star came the first shiver of cold. We crawled into our sacks and slept.

After joy, discomfort : no pleasure remains unadulterated for long. Our bivouac was exquisitely uncomfortable, and when at midnight I woke for about the hundredth time it was to feel the cobweb touch of clouds on my face. Quick then : head under the covers. But at three o'clock I woke again.

Noise ?

Certainly not, go to sleep.

Noise !

I sat up, and saw a thin flame upon the pinnacle behind us. "Then spoke the thunder : Da." The echo growled back from the Veleta. As Pepe and Manolo sat up a small flame rested upon each of them. Fear. Fumbling with bootlaces. Where is my other boot ? At last we were ready, grabbed our sleeping bags, crawled off down the mountainside in utter obscurity emphasized by unwelcome flashes. We came to steep snow and stopped, knowing that cliffs lay below us. Manolo went peacefully to sleep in his sack. Pepe had to be restrained from standing up to watch. One up for the Spanish, I thought. It was fear mixed with pleasure, and in my sack I was quite warm. The storm was a physical, conscious presence ; a malignant animal waiting to spring ; a hobgoblin ; a spiteful woman ; a cosmic policeman seeking to arrest us for contempt of court, and lock us up for ever. Despite the pleasure of inventing these thoughts I was not disappointed when the flames on the pinnacles died down, and the storm passed rumbling and grumbling along the range.

A few minutes of calm enabled us to regain our bivouac. It was in any case dawn, as a certain change in the quality of the obscurity informed us, and we swallowed our little remaining food. The wind rose, and a blizzard began to pipe about the crags. For half-an-hour we tried to find a way down the more sheltered northern face. Visibility was perhaps 30 feet, the new snow slippery and getting thick enough to be dangerous. We held a parliament. One of the party favoured crossing the Veleta, as planned. The two others were for descending on the southern, or (to the Granada-based) wrong side of the range, where they knew of a pueblo. The outnumbered gave in, hoping that local knowledge would prove more reliable than formerly.

We made our way back over the Cerro de los Machos amid a biting snow-flurry, and carefully retraced our route of the day before to the foot of the boulder slope. It was much changed. Then we turned South. As we descended the wind abated, we came out beneath the clouds, the snow turned gradually to rain. In five minutes we were all soaked to the skin, but squelched on down a valley which appropriately resembled a vast Llanberis. After four or five hours, a hut and a fire over which to dry some clothes was reached ; after two hours more, a pueblo. The

wrong one, but a pueblo. A fish lorry gave us a lift down to a larger town.

Beside this journey the joys and thrills of the past two days paled into emotional nonentity. The road was bad, the lorry worse, and the driver evidently not a human being but some kind of demon. We raced at the corners, slithering round in a shower of stones with squealing tyres and passengers. From my perch behind I could see nothing between the driver's bared teeth and the floor of the valley many hundred feet below. At last we reached a broad, straight road ; but the driver slowed down to a sedate 30. No sport here ! We came to the town, and three limp figures got out to abandon themselves to orgies of telephoning, feeding and drinking deep. Time, space and self, our old enemies : we had given them the slip for a while, but now we must reassume them. Down here, there was brilliant sunshine.

A SHORT HISTORY OF CORNISH CLIMBING

E. C. PYATT

IT is impossible to search far into the origins of climbing in this country without meeting the name of W. P. Haskett-Smith. His first ascent of Napes Needle in 1886 has long been regarded as the departure point of British rock climbing as a separate sport, while his activities in subsequent years went far towards establishing it. It is not, however for this alone that he is remembered, but rather for his extensive exploration of the rocks and hills of the whole country in search of climbing possibilities. As a result he acquired a breadth of knowledge which is astounding even today, when his books are still consulted for odd details of some out-of-the-way area. In considering, therefore, the rise and development of climbing in Cornwall we turn first to his *Rock Climbing in the British Isles*, published in 1894, the first book devoted entirely to British climbing.

Here he wrote : " To the true-souled climber, who can enjoy a tough bit of rock, even if it is only 50, aye, or 20 feet high, the coast of Cornwall with its worn granite cliffs and bays has much to offer." It seems unlikely, however, that he actually did much climbing at this time—certainly none of the longer routes.

A. W. Andrews, the " father " of Cornish climbing was familiar with the north coast of West Penwith from about 1880 onwards, but he does not seem to have realised the climbing possibilities until about 1902, the date of his first definite rock climbs. One of his early ambitions was " to make a complete traverse of the shore of the British Isles between high and low tide marks " and he began this in West Penwith in 1902. Thus were originated the famous traverses. The first climbs at Wicca and on Bosigran Ridge and Bosigran Pinnacle were made with his sister. Thenceforward and right up to the present day, A.W.A. has been so closely identified with Cornish climbing that it is impossible to think of them apart. He has provided the continuity and the enthusiasm, which have now at last established cliff climbing as a sport.

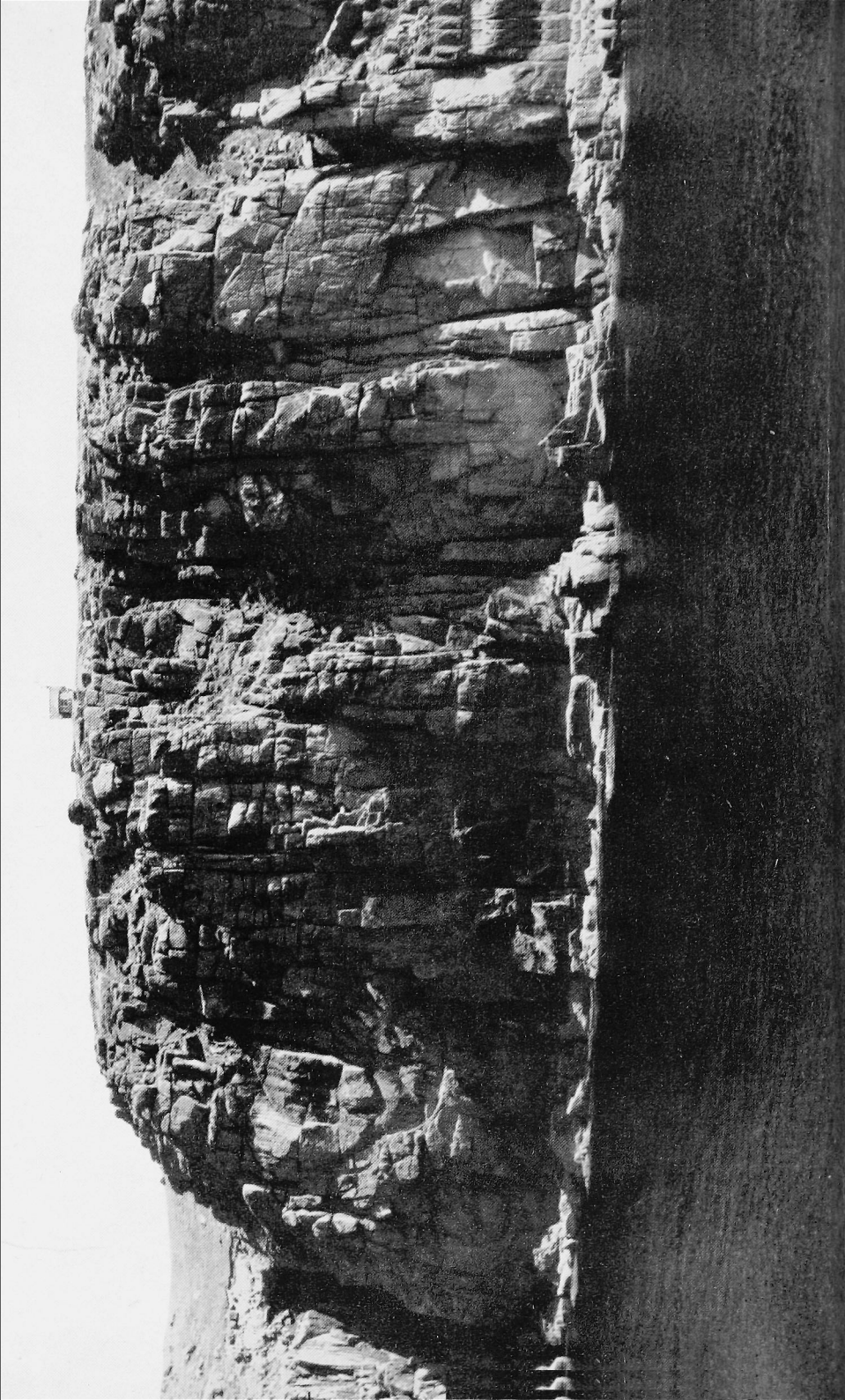
To the *Climbers' Club Journal*, No. 29 (1905), A.W.A. contributed the first authoritative article on Cornish climbing, accompanied by a selection of his cliff photographs. Several routes were described along with copious information on geology, birds, flowers, antiquities, etc.

It is only from Geoffrey Winthrop Young's latest book that we have learnt of his ascent of the ridge of Carn Lês Boel with George Mallory a year or two before the 1914-18 War. Though the Cornish coast is no longer quite so remote, the rocks themselves have not altered very much.

" . . . we picked up our rope, ran across the wide Nanjizael Bay and round the lesser inlets, in sandshoes alone—because any other human presence appearing in that bay must have been a smuggler, wrecker or pirate !—and clambered out over rock and seaweed, to where ridge and ocean met in a deep throated gurgle and scuffle of surf.

We were tanned against sun scorch ; but as step rose above gritty step, and the harsh rock edge of the ridge proved unexpectedly strenuous, our knees and elbows had to bear scrape and grind. It was a rock surface of volatile changes, from chimney or column, crystallised, friable and prickly, to a sea- and time-smoothed perpendicular or overhang. We made the most of it, and of the fair weather, keeping conscientiously to the outside edge ; and where the juts higher up gave back in easier alternatives, we chose the more steeply tilted slabs and cracks. The slow waves as we climbed into the sun muttered and yawned round the bases of the ridge, and the echoes whispering up the hollows in the walls met the ceaseless sibilant recession of broken water off the rocks. The white backs of the seagulls drifted past below us, on the up-draught above the reflecting blue surface ; and as each of us halted and belayed for the other to climb, touches of sea breeze ruffled the dry hot rock-weed and lichen, and cooled tautened muscle and sunburn. Whenever we looked up for the next problem the heads of golden gorse, pouring down off the upper cliff far above, nodded into our eyes."

In 1912 J. M. Littlewood began an independent exploration of the cliffs around Chair Ladder and Logan Rock, the details of which were not compared with the C.C. explorations until after the publication of the guide-book in 1950. The little group of



climbers which grew up round him in later years made a remarkably thorough job of this small area, but unaccountably they never seem to have visited any other. It is incredible that they could climb on Chair Ladder year after year without discovering Carn Lês Boel or Pordenack Point only a mile or two away, but this in fact happened.

Meanwhile A.W.A.'s 1905 article lured numbers of climbers westward. W. A. Brigg describes a vist in the *Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal* in 1911, A. R. Thomson another in the *Rucksack Club Journal* in 1916. A few years later, W.P.H.-S. in a lecture at the Alpine Club said of these parties :

“ For most of us to cling to a perpendicular cliff while the raging surf boils 150 feet beneath us is quite sufficiently exciting ; but Andrews has had to relieve the tameness of it by inventing a novel gamble of his own. It was said of a certain painter that his pieces were called ‘ marine ’ but were chiefly ‘ ultramarine ’ ; and some of Andrews’s expeditions may be called ‘ marine ’ but are chiefly ‘ submarine.’ His hobby is to pass round the cliffs below high-water mark, which means that you are always racing against time and tide. It is a thrilling game, and the worst bunkers in it are the ‘ zawns.’ These zawns are great recesses with sheer, parallel walls and often a considerable depth of water. The accepted practice is to jump in and swim across ; but can it be justified to a tender conscience ? Can a man honestly claim to have climbed round the cliff if he has done part of the distance by water ? If that is legitimate, why not go the whole way by boat. It must be left to the casuists to decide.

On one such occasion our party included a brilliant lady climber. Our leader and his sister had already swum the inlet leading to a zawn and landed on a low reef at the other side, when without warning this lady dropped off plump into the sea. What was our astonishment on finding that she could not swim a stroke. That anyone who was not absolutely amphibious could have gone through two or three seasons of that sort of work was wholly incredible. Of course, the brother and sister were in the water again in a moment and towed the unfortunate girl across to the reef, while the rest of the party raced back round the head of the zawn and brought a rope down the face of the rocks to their assistance.”

CHAIR LADDER

Commando Cliff Assault Wing

A.W.A. was by this time well established in the role of arch-priest.

In this same talk by W.P.H.-S. we learn that the Land's End group of cliffs was a haunt of the well-known alpine climber E. H. F. Bradby. I have not been able to discover anything more than this brief mention, but it does demonstrate the uncertainty of the early history of these lesser rocks and indicate that our knowledge of first ascents refers perhaps more frequently to "first recorded" than to "first actual."

The 1920s have been described as the "twilight years" in the Club's history and they were twilight years for Cornish climbing too. A.W.A. was still active, as always, on Carn Lês Boel and around Bosigran, but the number of other climbers visiting West Penwith was small. This state of affairs continued well on into the 1930s even after the great revival in Welsh climbing had taken place. During this period J.M.L.'s parties were continuously active in their area of the south coast, which by 1936 was more or less exhausted from the point of view of first ascents, but still no contacts or even chance meetings with Club parties ever took place. A.W.A. wrote the first description and published the first pictures of Chair Ladder and Carn Lês Boel in the *C.C. Journal* for 1934 and followed in 1937 and 1938 with minutely detailed descriptive articles on the north coast. The climbing public met for the first time Blinker's Bed, B's Bath, Green Cormorant Ledge and the rest of the picturesque local nomenclature. "Touch and pass" (i.e., moving so quickly from one slippery rock to the next that there is no time to fall off)—a technique previously overlooked by text-books was added to climbing parlance.

Then in 1938 came Bosigran Count House and at long last the arrival of Cornwall as a climbing area. Almost the first visitor to the new hut was Colin Kirkus. Here, however, no Mickledore Grooves or Pedestal Cracks resulted, for here as in another famous climbing area "our foremost experts seem to become so absorbed in the charm of their surroundings as to neglect the more austere aspects of rock climbing in a surrender to the joyous holiday spirit." Instead C.F.K. gave us the Black Slab on Bosigran Face, which is easy enough for almost everyone and wholly delightful.

The Second War was a setback for the rising popularity of the Count House. During the next few years the Commando Cliff Assault Wing was trained at St. Ives. They had their own methods—grappling irons *à la* Whympers, etc., and used their own names for the climbs. We owe to them the development of the "unknown" areas of Pedn Mên Du, Land's End and Pordenack Point, though it may well be that E.H.F.B. had already anticipated them even there many years before. The attempt to label Bosigran Ridge as Commando Ridge, reinforced by a commemorative plaque on one of the pinnacles has failed, as it surely should, in the face of established nomenclature going back to 1902 or earlier.

Pedn Mên Du was perhaps the most popular of the Commando crags and here indeed the traffic has been sufficient to produce nail scratches on the most popular climbs. This was the scene of a remarkable escape described by Frank Smythe in the *Alpine Journal* in 1946. Part of the training of these troops was to learn the art of falling from that great exponent A. W. Bridge, and Commando Corporal Meddings owes his life to this teaching. During the course of an exercise a boat capsized at the foot of the cliffs. Hurrying to the rescue he slipped on steep grass at the cliff top, slid down and went over at a point about 100 feet high. He kept his head sufficiently to remember to jump at the last moment clear of all projections towards a rift in the base of the cliffs. The sea rising and falling in the rift was at its highest when he hit the water. Still alive, though with a dislocated shoulder, he at once seized a drowning man and after a struggle brought him to a ledge. Though recommended for a medal he did not get one, as his action was held to have arisen out of fortuitous circumstances.

Other climbers of established reputation came to Bosigran in the War years. Menlove Edwards made one or two characteristic climbs; the head of Carnelloe Zawn must have reminded him of the Devil's Kitchen cliffs, while the lassoing of projections on Bosigran Pinnacle smacks of Rope Wall or Bow Shaped Slab; but there were no Brants or Slapes. G. P. Pinder and C. R. O. Bartlett of Cambridge, who were there at the same time, wrote: "J.M.E. was developing an amazing technique for getting out of rough seas on to vertical rock. Imagine trying to do this with the waves breaking against the rock with such a

force that they shoot upwards for 30 feet." Can we see here the beginnings of a new development ?

In 1947 a guide-book was decreed. A.W.A. was an automatic choice as one author and it was decided to provide him with an assistant to help with the more onerous part of the new explorations, particularly on the south coast. It was an interesting task which demanded, however, so much covering of the ground that there was not much opportunity of repeating all the climbs as well. Perhaps the highlight of all this was a trip to sea from Porthgwarra to take pictures of Chair Ladder. As might be expected, our boatman thought that cliff climbing was very dangerous, while sailing his little boat was too easy ; looking over the gunwhales into the unfriendly water we felt exactly the opposite, so we concentrated on our pictures.

And so in 1950 *Climbers' Guides to the Snowdon District* became *Climbers' Guides to the Snowdon District and Cornwall*. This was a great occasion for A.W.A., who not only saw in it the culmination of one of his life's ambitions, but achieved also the unique distinction of having been responsible for two club guide-books to widely separated districts at an interval of more than 40 years. It is an unusual volume—the specialist rock climbing material occupies only a few of the pages and the rest is a *pot-pourri* of everything Cornish—walks, seabirds, plants, antiquities, history, poetry and the sea. As far as the climbing is concerned we maintained a certain studied vagueness, so that some of the details are left for each reader to discover for himself. Possibly there is some unintentional vagueness too, as we only realised when we came to do it how much the ordinary guide-book writer relies on his outline diagrams to locate the routes. To describe crags approached from the top and often invisible from any viewpoint on the land has difficulties of its own.

There are only a few errors of fact. The Wolf Buttress Climb of the guide-book is unfortunately not on Wolf Buttress at all. Here and there are one or two more zawns than have been allowed for. J.M.L.'s work received no recognition because we had not heard of it and we missed discovering his Pedny Vounder for ourselves. G.W.Y. too, missed the credit for Carn Lês Boel.

Between them the hut and the book are at last encouraging climbers to visit West Penwith. It used to be said that cliff climbing is not mountaineering and is therefore not a suitable

activity for mountaineers. This objection is now heard less frequently. The sport has indeed "arrived" at long last.

Claire Eliane Engel has drawn attention to the fact that short prose passages can conjure up "a landscape and all that it carried with it" in much the same way as a snapshot. Here then to conclude are some snapshots of Cornwall.

" . . . the seventh wave that rolls out of a relatively calm sea and sweeps the cliff for 20 feet or more. On one occasion the leader received a shock on finding a past president of the Climbers' Club on a ledge well above him when he expected to be hauling him in from the abyss." (A.W.A.)

" . . . the immediate—sometimes too immediate contiguity of the restless sea, Mediterranean in its green and purple limpidity, the wheeling gulls, sentinel cormorants and peering seals make climbing as different from that in Lakeland or Wales as it is charming." (W. A. Brigg)

"At Chair Ladder when the sea is rough the waves throw up spray more than a hundred feet, which limits climbing to the top half of the cliff." (J. Donkin)

"Between us and the crack was a churning mass of water which rushed up the gorge every few seconds in a solid wall fully eight feet high. Could we climb the crack having swum across and get sufficiently high in time to escape the next wave?" (G. P. Pinder and C. R. O. Bartlett)

"We decided that climbing up a face hidden under a three-inch growth of stubble would be no fun; lichen in these parts is extraordinarily luxuriant." (N. E. Morin)

"Between you and the saw-edged ridge across the cove, the rollers break round Porthmoina Island, a vertical triangle of brown rock that rises 150 feet and looks as thin as a cocked hat folded out of paper. The seabirds nest on it and from the summit, perhaps 200 feet away, the gulls take wing and soar delicately to your level and above." (J. F. Adams)

"We then traversed eastwards along some broad ledges of warm brown granite and here again, taking no heed of time, we sat and watched the renewed wonder of each wave rolling in, rising to a crest, breaking over and thundering against the rocks sending sheets of spray high into the air." (N. E. Morin)

So much for what has gone before. West Penwith has been the cradle of the sport of sea-cliff climbing, but there is only a

limited amount of rock, so that while much filling in of detail remains the discovery of big new crags is extremely unlikely. The ultimate future for the sea-mountaineer lies really in the remote coastlines of Scotland and Ireland, where there are huge, high stretches of cliff as yet untouched by the climber's foot. In West Penwith, however, and chiefly by A.W.A., the foundations have been well and firmly laid.

EDITORIAL NOTES

First must we stand in a white sheet and correct our statement that Banks' and Brooke's ascent of Route Major was the first British guideless ascent. As every schoolboy knows, the first ascent of this route was made by Graham Brown and Frank Smythe in 1928. The same paragraph of our notes last year might well be read to imply that the ascents referred to of the E. ridge of the Plan, Mer de Glace face of the Grepon, the N. face of the Argentière and the Roc-Grépon traverse were "first British guideless." This was not intended and would not have been true.

* * *

Other corrections for which we bear a less direct responsibility are also needed. Garwhal should be so spelt, but who were we to correct the spelling of a don just returned from the area? On page 19 of C.C.J., 1952, the scale of the map should read: "Scale approx. $\frac{2}{3}$ inch = 1 mile."

* * *

At the time of writing the Everest party have reached India. Apart from John Hunt, the leader, the party consists of Charles Evans, Tom Bourdillon, Wilfrid Noyce, Michael Westmacott, George Band and Michael Ward, together with two or three non-members. Emlyn Jones, Hamish Nicol and Anthony Rawlinson with another constitute the reserves. They carry our best wishes for success; whatever the weather and the luck we are sure they will be a happy party.

* * *

Douglas Busk, on leave from Ethiopia, has been tidying up the map of the Mountains of the Moon. Ken Berrill and David Bryson have been on private parties to the Himalaya. Jim Simpson is leading a Greenland Expedition which includes other members of the Club.

* * *

J. I. Disley and C. W. Brasher represented this country at the Olympic Games. They also finished first and second respectively in the A.A.A. Championship Steeplechase, both beating the Yugoslav holder. Disley was voted the "British Athlete of the Year" by the A.A.A.

* * *

The Club's Alpine Meet, run once more by Herbert Carr, was held in August at Arolla. It is described as "modest" by the leader. The weather was very unkind, so that the frequency with which parties

repaired to huts resulted in economy rather than achievement. Nevertheless, a number of well-known summits were visited. Apart from Mr. and Mrs. Carr, Mr. and Mrs. John Wilks, Donald Greenwood, Eric Mensforth, Eric Arnison, Prof. Klemensiewicz, T. L. Kermode, D. G. N. Hunter, J. W. Denton and J. E. Watkin took part.

* * *

A number of good climbs were made by members in the Alps last year (for British climbs see "New Climbs and Notes"). The third ascent of the Freney face of Mt. Blanc, the N. ridge of the Aiguille du Peigne, the S. ridge of the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey, the E. ridge of the Dent d'Herens, the Yellow Edge of the Kleine Zinne and the North face of the Grosse Zinne are described elsewhere in these pages. The first British guideless ascent of the Caterinagrat (Ryan's ridge) of Monte Rosa was made by Chorley and Band, Rawlinson and Westmacott promptly made the second, and Nock and Mary Hingley the third after which they went on to the Kanzelgrat of the Rothorn. Some of the foregoing and some of the hereinafter mentioned climbs were first British ascents and others first British guideless ascents. We mention this only to show that leeway is being made up by British climbers by whom so many newer alpine routes are practically untouched. Apart from this, we do not wish to stress any record-breaking aspect; we would be in some danger of the mentality that recorded what

" Had never been done
By a clergyman's son,
On a Friday in August at Dover."

Streetly and Fisher did the E. ridge of the Dent du Crocodile, Blackshaw and another the Aiguille des Grands Charmoz by the W. face, S.W. face and N.W. ridge which was no doubt as complicated as it sounds. Streetly and Band did the N. ridge of the Dent Blanche, McNaught-Davis and another the Peuterey ridge, Francis and Sutton the Hirondelles ridge of the Grandes Jorasses, Wrangham and Rack the S.E. ridge of the Blaitière. Chorley and Band did the S. face of the Obergabelhorn and, with Wrangham and C. R. Simpson, the Mer de Glace face of the Grépon. Nicol and another did the Innominata ridge and the S.W. ridge of the Aiguille de Mummery. McNaught-Davis and Fisher traversed the Aiguilles du Diable; Rack, Blackshaw and others did the Roc-Grépon traverse, Wailes-Fairbairn joined them for the S.W. ridge of the Fou. Streetly, Fisher, Rack and Wailes-Fairbairn did the E. ridge (Ryan-Lochmatter) of the Aiguille du Plan. No doubt there were many others, and we feel it prudent to add "E. & O.E."

* * *

As members will have seen from the Secretary's circulars, Bill Osborne and Ken Berrill have resigned their honorary offices as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Fortunately the former remains

as Vice-President and the latter as a member of the Committee. Osborne had served on the Committee since 1939 and as Treasurer since 1945. His services to the Club in the last eight years, often in most trying circumstances, have been outstanding. Berrill's services, though over a shorter span, have been no less strenuous and valuable. It is not often realised by the Club at large what very heavy calls the Club's business makes on the time and energies of the holders of these two offices.

* * *

We have most cordially to congratulate the Dutch Alpine Club on the celebration of their Jubilee. Their member, Prince Bernard, was prevented by a riding accident from attending the dinner on 7th June last, but H.M. the Queen of the Netherlands conferred on the Club the title of "Royal." Maurice Herzog, who represented the C.A.F., was made an honorary member. The Presidents of the S.A.C., the Austrian Alpine Club and of the Ladies' Alpine Club were there and the A.C. was represented by our own David Brown.

* * *

We must again thank Anthony Rawlinson who has undertaken all the work on the advertisements and circulation of this Journal.

IN MEMORIAM

ROY BUMSTEAD

Roy Bumstead, ever since his childhood, was accustomed to walking and camping in the hills and when he came up to Pembroke in 1939 he joined the C.U.M.C. as a matter of course ; in the same year he became a member of the Climbers' Club. Rock climbing was soon his main interest, though he always felt it to be only a part of good mountaineering, that ability which he possessed to move steadily and economically over any sort of country in any sort of weather.

A fall on Kern Knotts which broke his thigh delayed his entry to the Army, but he left Cambridge in 1941 and was soon commissioned in the Reconnaissance Corps. It was at this time that he married Miss Kathleen Lowe. In 1943 he went out to Nigeria to train West African troops whom he later took on to Burma for the rest of the war.

On his return to England he went up for another year and then, after an unenjoyable period in a bicycle works in Birmingham, entered the Colonial Office.

As a climber his chief characteristics were enthusiasm and tenacity. Until one grew used to them his methods could be intimidating ; on difficult passages his climbing did not give the impression of ease, but one found that his moving up and down was controlled and experimental and that his perseverance was aided by great skill in finding and combining the holds which would enable him to take advantage of his unusual reach and strength. He had the habit of climbing in shirt sleeves on bitter winter days and those of us who climbed with him will remember him patiently waiting in the wind while the less skilful struggled up. He thrived on cold, " going down to fetch the sacks so we can go round the tops " and dirty jobs about the hut.

During the day's climbing he was extremely taciturn, but this was not the silence of the inarticulate ; his other interests were many and he could talk of them with eloquence. At Cambridge he read history and was a pillar of the Socialist Club and this

concern with politics and history remained. His taste in literature, too, was unusually wide and he could often be illuminating, for his thoughts did not flow in ready-made channels.

But—apart from his family and his job—mountains were the passion of his life and, lately, he felt that time was passing and he had done none of the great Alpine climbs for which he longed. Family and other responsibilities had only allowed him one visit to the Alps before his last. It was in 1950 and, with his wife and two friends, he did a number of the standard moderate routes in the Mont Blanc massif. He took naturally to Alpine conditions and it was obvious that he would soon be able to tackle much more arduous ascents.

Last year, 1952, he intended to fulfil his ambition of trying some of the “grandes courses” and, after a good week in the Dauphiné which included the traverse of the Meije, he moved to Chamonix. He and one companion ascended Mont Blanc, after passing the night at the Vallot Hut, crossed the summit at dawn and began to descend the Innominata ridge. It was while he was roping down, quite near the top, that the belay fractured and he fell.

The mountains where we climbed with him will always seem incomplete without his presence and our sense of loss enables us to extend with the more feeling our sympathy to his wife and three small sons.

DOUGLAS HEWITT.

J. B. CHURCHILL

John Churchill was killed with his fiancée, Jocelyn Moore on or about 10th July, 1952. The exact manner and time of their death is not known. They had been climbing together for several weeks, and about 7th July, they set out from Courmayeur apparently intending to climb the Innominata Ridge of Mont Blanc after spending a night in the Eccles Hut. This hut, a tiny bivouac box, was destroyed when they were in it. It either became detached from the mountainside by itself, or was swept off by an avalanche. A few days later their bodies were discovered amidst the wreckage of the hut on the Brouillard glacier.

They were retrieved by Italian guides, and are buried together in Courmayeur.

Johnnie, an American living in England, had only been a member of the Club for a few months at the time of his death. During the last two years, however, he had spent a lot of his spare time in North Wales, and had won many friends among regular Welsh climbers. He was, I think, the most wholeheartedly enthusiastic mountaineer that I have ever known. Mountains were the centre of his life and all else—friends, jobs and even family had taken second place to this great passion. He learnt to climb with his father in his native New Hampshire, and spent his first summer after school as a forest guard in the mountains. During the war he served in the U.S.A.A.F. being a prisoner in Germany after his bomber had been shot down. Returning to the States in 1945 he worked for a while as a porter-guide in the Colorado Rockies and climbed many peaks. After a period at Yale he managed to wangle himself a job at the American Embassy in London in order to see what the Alps had to offer. During the summer of 1950 and '51 he lived in Zermatt, a habit which eventually cost him his job even at the long-suffering Embassy, but which left him with a deep love of Zermatt and its people. He climbed all the peaks in the area, most of them several times and many solo. The Matterhorn he climbed often, sometimes taking friends up, and once mounting by himself in the night in order to catch the sunrise from the summit. In between his Zermatt seasons he climbed much in Wales, and also fitted in some Scottish visits. At the time of his death he had taken one more step in his inevitable mountaineering progress by securing an appointment as a Lecturer at a University in Pakistan, which was to be a base for Himalayan climbing.

Those who did not know him might suppose from the record of this single minded progress round the world in search of mountains that Johnnie was a narrow monomaniac. This however was anything but the case. Johnnie made friends wherever he went not merely because he was a man of great charm, but because he was a very lovable person with a real gift for friendship. He was an excellent companion off the hills as on them. He had a great sense of humour, and his dry tongue could prick any bubble of pomposity within reach. He

was indeed a most rare and kindly person whose early death so shortly before his marriage to a kindred spirit was a tragedy that has been a great grief to many friends.

R. M. VINEY.

S. B. DONKIN

In Sydney Bryan Donkin, who died in November last, the club has lost an original member of great distinction in his profession of engineering, and one who, besides being a notable Alpine climber, played a considerable part in the development during the last half century of those facilities for mountaineering in Britain which have contributed to make that pursuit the popular one that it is today.

He came of a line of distinguished engineers. His great-grandfather, Bryan Donkin, F.R.S., who was born in 1768, was one of the founders of the Institution of Civil Engineers. And among his forbears there were mountaineers, too. One of his uncles was W. F. Donkin, Secretary of the Alpine Club from 1885 to 1888, who after making many notable ascents in the Alps, was killed during an exploration of the peaks of the Caucasus in the latter year.

In 1892, at the age of 21, after he had completed an engineering course at University College, London, S. B. Donkin entered on a period of apprenticeship with Messrs. Sulzer, the well-known Swiss engineers, at their works at Winterthur. It was, I think, while he was there that he was first attracted to mountains ; and he seems from the beginning to have taken full advantage of the convenient proximity of Winterthur to the Alps. He paid many visits to the Glärnisch range, climbing all three of its peaks, and some to the Säntis group, and he also went up the Tödi and the Urirothstock. In 1894 he ascended the Ewigschneehorn and the Galenstock.

In 1897 he became an assistant in the firm in London of an engineer who was also a well-known mountaineer, Sir Alexander Kennedy. He became a partner in that firm in 1908, and the senior partner in 1934. He bore a prominent part in the formation and development of the electricity supply industry in the last half century. He and his partners were responsible for

the design and construction of many electricity generating stations, including hydro-electric stations, both throughout Britain and overseas. His firm was one of the firms appointed to advise the Central Electricity Board, and was re-appointed by the British Electricity Authority. He was one of the panel of advisers appointed to assist the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board, and later his firm was one of the firms appointed to advise the Board. He and his partners have recently been responsible for two great hydro-electric schemes on the Nile, those at Owen Falls in Uganda and at the existing barrage at Aswan. He was one of three engineers appointed in 1943 to re-examine the possibility of a Severn Barrage hydro-electric scheme. In the later years of his life he was greatly interested in improving the efficiency of thermal power stations by the use of back-pressure turbines to produce both heat and electricity ; and his work on this resulted in the first thermo-electric district heating scheme in London, that of the Westminster City Council's Churchill Gardens Estate at Pimlico. He also served from time to time on various committees of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and was on the General Board of the National Physical Laboratory from 1922 to 1927. He was President of the Institution of Civil Engineers 1937-38, Chairman of the Association of Consulting Engineers 1927-28, and again 1943, and President of the Association of Supervisory Electrical Engineers 1925-31. He was elected a fellow of University College in 1946.

He does not seem to have kept any regular record of his Alpine ascents. They included a good proportion of big peaks. Monte Rosa, the Zinal Rothhorn, the Matterhorn (traverse) the Dent Blanche and the Dom were certainly among them. And he was, perhaps, just as happy wandering guideless among and over lesser summits with the half-plate stand camera with which he produced such fine effects, and which he carried on all his climbs in his younger days. Among such summits that he is known to have ascended are Mont Vélán, Ruinette, Pointe de Bricolla, Aiguille de la Tsa, Portiengrat, Laquinhorn, Weissmies, both Aiguilles d'Arve, Türnerkamm, Grosse Mösele, Grosse Greiner, Furtschagelhorn, Oberalpstock, Grosse and Kleine Windgälle, Bristenstock, Elmauer Halt, Gross Mörchner, Ahornspitze, Zsigmondyspitze (this delightful climb, which we

did in 1896, he repeated thirty-nine years later) Schwarzenstein, Durreck, Hochgall, Gross Litzner and Piz Buin. On the dozen or so last named of these I was with him. They, except the Zsigmondyspitze, were done without guides, as were the majority of his climbs. There were certainly very many others. Many of his climbing companions have left us. Among those with whom he climbed more or less frequently were Unna, Myles Matthews, M. K. Smith, Mordey, Henry and Charles Candler and A. J. Clark. Others of them still happily with us are A. W. Andrews, Corlett and Sir T. K. Rose.

I first made Donkin's acquaintance in or about 1894 ; and in 1895 I was lucky enough for the first time to share part of his Alpine holiday, at the Col du Lautaret ; and we had delightful days on minor summits near the pass, the Combergnot, Grand Galibier and others. Then came for him a notable week with my brother E. R. Clarke and the guides Clemenz Zurbriggen, father and son. On a traverse of the Meije to La Bérarde from a bivouac on the Rocher de l'Aigle which they had left rather late (6 a.m.) on little or nothing but cups of hot coffee, the whole of their provisions were lost before they had breakfasted, *vin compris*. This happened owing to the younger Zurbriggen's sack, one of the old villainous hook and ring kind, falling from his shoulders while he was making the difficult descent to the Brèche Zsigmondy. The exhaustion caused by the abstinence thus enforced so much reduced the pace of the party after they had reached the Grand Pic that even with the aid of a moon that enabled them to continue climbing through the next night until 2 a.m. they were unable to get down to the Glacier des Etancons till 6-30 on the following morning, and only reached La Bérarde and food at 9-30.

Two days later, on a traverse of the Ecrins, they had descended the steep and icy upper part of the north face, and had, fortunately, just crossed the bergschrund, when a falling stone hit the elder Zurbriggen on the nape of the neck and stunned him, and he fell, pulling after him the rest of the party except Donkin, who happened to be unroped. The three fell about 350 feet on snow before young Zurbriggen and my brother could get their picks in and arrest the descent, when the elder Zurbriggen was seen to be lying unconscious at the end of the rope below them. He was not long in coming round ; but it was then found that

one of his knees had been injured in the fall. Getting the party down proved to be a very difficult and arduous job in the course of which Donkin went on ahead, carrying two rucksacks and all four ice-axes, to fetch a mule up as far as possible. When at length the others reached easy ground at the Pré de Madame Carle Donkin met them with the mule, but without the ice-axes, all of which, during an attempt he had made to cross the Saint Pierre stream in order to reach the Refuge Cézanne, had been carried away by the force of the torrent, which had all but carried him away, too. The axes were subsequently found ; and three weeks later Zurbriggen had completely recovered, and was climbing again.

Either of these climbs might have ended less happily if it had not been for the magnificent weather of 1895. I remember my brother saying that on the top of the Ecrins there was not a breath of wind, nor a cloud to be seen, nor the least haze to obscure the view in any direction ; and they spent two whole and glorious hours there.

I have mentioned these two expeditions in a little detail because it is possible that they were the most adventurous that Donkin ever had. Of adventure in the sense of coming near to disaster he had, I think, very little. He was above all things a safe climber. I do not think I have ever climbed with anyone whose presence in a party gave one a feeling of more absolute security. It seemed impossible that he could have an accident ; and, apart from what I have mentioned, I do not think he ever had one. His competence as a mountaineer was of a high order on every kind of terrain, and whether it were a question of finding a route or of overcoming any difficulties met with upon it. I never saw him make even a slight slip, except intentionally in descent. With this there went in his earlier days a tireless physique that I especially envied, and always a sound judgment that in any difficulty was never obtruded, but was always sought, and, I think it is safe to say, always followed.

It was not likely that so enthusiastic a mountaineer, and one to whom summer holidays in the Alps meant so much, would be slow to take advantage, on shorter holidays such as Easter and Whitsuntide, of the opportunities provided by British hills ; and I have bright if rather jumbled memory of many delightful days spent with him at these times, mostly in North Wales. It

seems to my recollection that the Easters of the nineties not infrequently afforded that combination of brilliant weather with a generous relic of snow on the heights which can make a few days in North Wales so wonderful a promotion from a London winter, and so delightful a start of the mountain year. I seem to see him now leading me in brilliant sunshine up the snow-covered ridge from Crib Goch to Crib-y-Ddysgil (before there was a path there) with mist boiling up almost to our feet from Cwm Glas, suggestive of incredible depths below. Another recollection is of the impression he made on me on the first day of one of these short holidays by a perfect lead up the Slanting Gulley, when I happened to know that he had hardly had time even for a walk for very many weeks past.

Such experiences he wanted shared by more than in those days shared them. It was partly with this in view that he took part in the formation of the club in 1898, and later took a great interest in the inauguration of Helyg and of the R. W. Lloyd Hut. It is to him that the club owes the provision of electric light, cooking and water heating at Helyg. He was of course on the committee of the club, 1908-11, again 1929-36 and again 1939-43, and was vice-president 1926-29 and president 1936-39. He was on the committee of the Alpine Club in 1933. He married in 1902 Miss Phoebe Smiles, a grand-niece of Samuel Smiles, and survived her by less than eight months. He and his wife were at all times very faithful friends to all who had been his companions in the mountains. By these, and by his many friends in the club, and by many others, he will be greatly missed.

L. W. CLARKE.

GEORGE ANSLOW LISTER—1879-1952

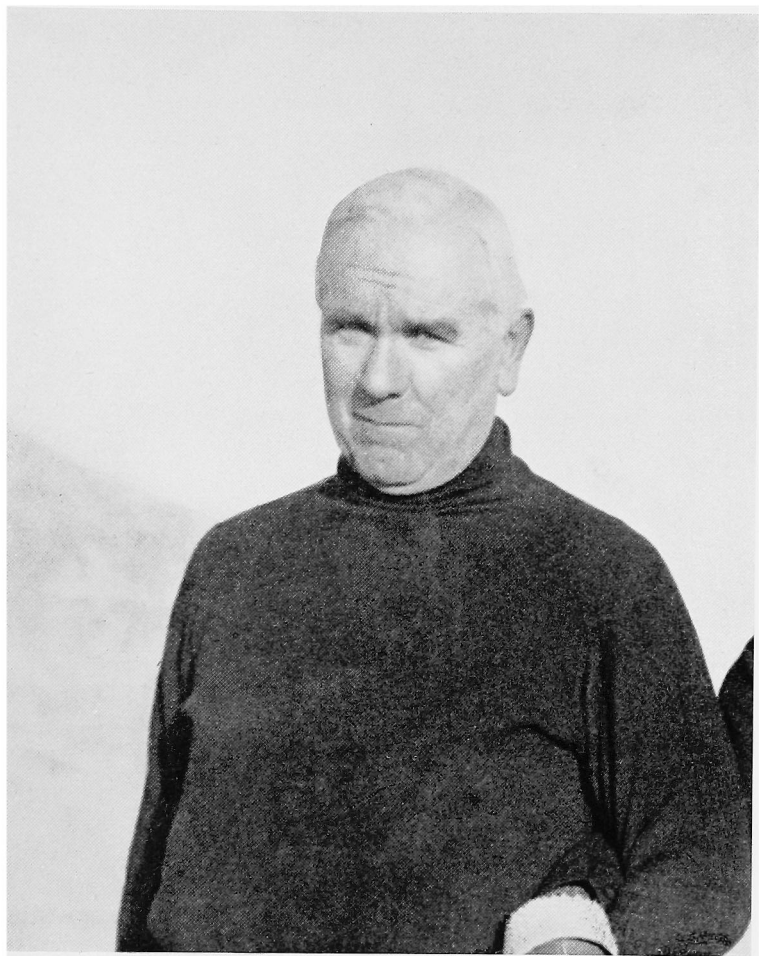
Though he came to the Northern Dinner at Capel Curig in 1951, and aided the little scheme of "barefaced robbery" by which we tried to support the supposedly crumbling edifice of the Club's finances, it is unlikely that George Lister was known to many of our younger members. The heavy strain of his war work had affected his heart, so that he was unable to continue active mountaineering in the post-war years, but he was still full of energy and enterprise ; after piloting the second edition of

the *Mountains of Snowdonia* through the press, and undertaking all the business management of the little *Walkers Guide to Snowdon* (already sold out), he was devoting himself during the last two years to an essay on the early iron industry in South Wales.

A Birmingham man, he took his degree in electrical engineering and after acting as lecturer in this subject at the University, he entered industry in 1906 as a manufacturer of electrical equipment at Coventry. During World War I his firm did pioneer work in the production of magnetos (hitherto a German monopoly) and in 1930, the M.L. Magneto Syndicate was acquired by Joseph Lucas Limited ; after holding various posts in this firm, George was on the point of retirement in 1939, having built his charming house Plas Aran, just outside Beddgelert on the Caernarvon road, when, on the outbreak of war, he was appointed to be General Manager of the Lucas factory in South Wales, a post he held throughout the war years.

He married in 1914 Miss Annie Williams of Plas Colwyn, a grand daughter of the famous landlord of Pen-y-gwryd, Harry Owen ; their only daughter, Eira, is now the wife of Dr. W. Jones Morris of Portmadoc.

George's connection with Snowdon dated from the decade before the 1914-18 war, when two Swiss friends led him into the Kingdom of Romance, first of mountain adventure, and then, later, of a happy married life. I met him first in 1915 but it was not until 1919 that, on a succession of sunny September days on the Welsh rocks we began to discuss the book which was so fully to occupy the leisure of the next five years. Only those who have experienced the burdens of editing an ambitious volume, will appreciate the extent of the task we had so lightly undertaken. George was a wonderful man to work with ; patient, painstaking, resourceful. The book brought both of us many new friends and provided an excellent excuse for delightful week-end journeys to Wales. Then came the Alps ; with an eye to a high-speed A.C. qualification, George joined our meets in 1923, 1925 and 1927 continuing his visits regularly until 1934, when he organised a meet at Saas Fee for the Midland Association, of which he was President from 1931 to 1933. He also visited the Alps for skiing ; on one of these holidays he was buried by an avalanche and escaped death, by a



G. A. LISTER

hair's breadth. He also had climbed in the Lake District, Scotland and in Skye.

He was a big man, in heart and in body ; kind and generous ; loving laughter and the mountains with a staunch simplicity which endured through the years. No man could ask a truer friend. It is good to know that he has passed swiftly and peacefully to his rest, and that he lies beneath the ancient walls of St. Mary's, Beddgelert, beside the many who, through the long centuries, have loved and served that mountain land.

H. R. C. CARR.

P. C. P. RIDLEY

Patrick Ridley, who was elected to the Club in 1951, met his death on Carreg Wastad on 11th May, 1952. The ledge on which his leader was standing suddenly collapsed, and Patrick was killed by the falling rock.

He was just 21 and in his last year at Oxford. Son of Sir Jasper Ridley, eminent in banking, artistic and educational affairs, he was an Oppidan Scholar at Eton, and he came up to Christ Church in 1949 with a major scholarship in mathematics. He got a first in mathematical Mods. and was about to take final schools when he was killed.

He had not done any serious climbing before he came to Oxford, but he joined the O.U.M.C. on arrival as a freshman and quickly became one of its most prominent and active members. He was on the Committee at the time of his death.

In these three years, Patrick did much climbing. With great natural ability and ready confidence—as a beginner confident perhaps almost to a fault—he quickly came to lead hard climbs, and at the time of his death he was an accomplished and experienced leader, skilful and notably rapid in movement on difficult rock. And he was not only a rock climber. In two March visits to Ben Nevis he had done most of the standard winter climbs there, and he had been twice to the Alps. There, alas, each visit was marred by bad weather, but in 1951 he took part in at least one notable climb, the North-West Ridge of the Blaitière.

Patrick was an asset to any climbing party. He brought to it not only technical skill but good humour. No one could sulk for long while Patrick was about. He climbed mountains and also enjoyed them, gaily and infectiously. The short figure and disproportionately long stride, the faintly aggressive cock of the head, the explosive speech spluttering with amused indignation, and above all the disarming air of tousled absurdity—he was an endearing companion. His friends miss him ; and we send a special word of sympathy to his mother, for Patrick's death followed his father's by only a few months.

A. K. RAWLINSON.

We have also to record with great regret the deaths of A. P. Harvey, L. K. Pagden, C. W. Barton and G. R. West.

A. P. Harvey only joined the Club in 1949 and has been lost at a tragically early age.

L. K. Pagden was an original member, and became an honorary member when the Club attained its Jubilee. He attended and spoke at the Dinner in that year.

Claude Barton, another original member, did much early exploration, particularly in the Lakes, with his brother and the Abrahams. He was the author of the note on Ashley Abraham in our last number.

NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES

EDWARD C. PYATT

NORTH WALES

I am indebted to A. J. J. Moulam for the sub-section on the Carneddls and to J. R. Allen, D. Belshaw, D. Penlington, E. Byne, and G. W. S. Pigott.

TRYFAN

A number of new climbs have been made here by members of the M.A.M. and details will be found in Glan Dena Log Book. These include Anniversary Twin (300 feet, difficult) near the North Ridge and Easter Ridge (300 feet, Very Difficult), Anniversary Girdle (445 feet, Difficult), Glandular (420 feet, Difficult) and Giants Steps (200 feet, Very Difficult) on the rock mass lying between Milestone Buttress and Glan Dena.

LLANBERIS PASS

DINAS CROMLECH

CENOTAPH CORNER. 120 feet. Exceptionally Severe.

First Ascent: 24th August, 1952. J. Brown, D. Belshaw.

150 feet of rope necessary for a good belay. On the first ascent four pitons were used just above the scoop at 100 feet, but two inserted securely would probably be sufficient. The climb is protected by several natural running belays.

Start: Scramble up to the corner, keeping to the right.

(1) 120 feet. Climb the corner for 20 feet to a running belay (awkward thread), climbing now becomes more difficult. At 50 feet the crack closes and the climber is forced on to the left wall for some 10 feet, whence the crack appears once more. At 100 feet the crack finishes and a shallow scoop is gained with difficulty, the next two moves require pitons, continue up the thin crack with difficulty to the top of the climb.

Scramble up the corner for 30 feet to good stance and belay. Alternatively, a restricted stance at the top of the corner may be used. The latter is better for safeguarding the second man.

JERICHO WALL. 245 feet. Very Severe. (Hard.)

First Ascent: 28th September, 1952. J. Brown and D. Cowan.

The route follows the break up the edge of the right wall of Ivy Sepulchre. Steep and exposed with loose rock.

(1) 70 feet. As for Horseman's Route to the foot of Ivy Sepulchre.

(2) 65 feet. Traverse downwards to the right, along the ledge, to a damp scoop. Climb the steep wall above until it is possible to step

left to a niche below an overhang. Step up and to the right to a large ledge, the last few moves being difficult. Stance and belay.

(3) 110 feet. Traverse left for 15 feet, ascend to holly tree, (running belay). Traverse right and up to a scoop, continue upwards until it is possible to traverse left to a small pinnacle, ascend direct to the Valley, finish up Ivy Sepulchre Crack.

NOTANDA. 140 feet. Hard Severe.

First Ascent: 7th September, 1952. E. Marshall, M. J. Ridges, D. Penlington.

Start: On the right of the gully to the right of Castle Gully is a steep narrow nose of rock. Start at its base.

(1) 35 feet. Climb the corner, awkward, to a small stance.

(2) 105 feet. Up the corner above until at 30 feet a short traverse left into a crack can be made. Up the crack to the top.

CARREG WASTAD

OVERLAPPING WALL—VARIATION FINISH. 90 feet. Very Severe.

First Ascent: November, 1951. J. Brown, R. Moseley.

Start: From the tree stance at the top of pitch 2.

A rising traverse to the right. Ascend the overhang and continue to the top of the cliff.

SKYLON. 200 feet. Very Severe.

First Ascent: 13th April, 1952. R. Handley, E. Phillips.

Starts as for Wrinkle but, instead of the long traverse to the right, goes straight up the wall ahead by means of a shallow crack with a small overhang at its beginning. (For full details see Glan Dena Log Book.)

BOLE WAY. This climb is reported to be in a dangerous condition following the collapse of a ledge.

RIBSTONE CRACK. This climb is hard very severe and not extremely severe as reported here last year.

CLOGWYN Y GROCHAN

SPECTRE—DIRECT START. 40 feet. Hard Severe.

First Ascent: 12th April, 1952. R. Handley.

(For details see Glan Dena Log Book.)

CENTRAL GULLY—LEFT HAND VARIATION. This climb is severe and not very severe as reported here last year.

DRWS GWYNT

LEESLED. 120 feet. Severe.

First Ascent: 16th December, 1951. J. R. Lees, A. J. J. Moulam, D. Fisher.

Start: Up at the high right hand end of the cliff beyond the wall. Beneath a birch tree.

(1) 30 feet. Up the little wall via a wobbling spike to a grove of belays.

(2) 90 feet. Cross a mossy slab and move up right to a ledge. Awkward steps up left lead to the foot of twin cracks. Up to the holly and finish out on the left or in the right corner.

CRAIG DDU

ZIG-ZAG. 225 feet. Severe.

First Ascent: 17th June, 1952. D. Belshaw, J. Brown.

Start: A rocky bulge under a prominent overhang, between the Crown of Thorns and Canol.

(1) 30 feet. Climb up to the left to a grass ledge. Stance and belay.

(2) 55 feet. Up diagonally right to a grass ledge. Traverse left into a groove which leads back again to the right and a large sloping ledge. Belay.

(3) 50 feet. Move left into a groove. Climb the groove to stance and belay.

(4) 90 feet. Climb up to the right for a few feet, then directly up to the top of the cliff.

CANOL. 240 feet. Very Severe. (Hard.)

First Ascent: 16th June, 1952. J. Brown, D. Belshaw.

The route is situated in the centre of the buttress between Short Tree Chimney and Garlic Groove. A cairn marks the start.

(1) 45 feet. Climb the break to the right, to grass ledge with a holly bush.

(2) 45 feet. Move left up the grass ledges to a ledge with two large blocks.

(3) 80 feet. Move up left for 15 feet to an indefinite crack in the steep wall. Layback up the crack to a good hold which gives access to a glaciis. Move right, along the glaciis to running belay below the overhang. Climb the overhanging wall moving first left then right to a long ledge, move along the ledge past a tree to an enormous block.

(4) 70 feet. The groove behind the tree is ascended to the shattered overhang, which is turned on the left to finish the climb.

CANOL—DIRECT START. 65 feet. Severe.

First Ascent: 16th June, 1952. D. Belshaw, J. Brown.

Start: 30 feet to the left of the original start. Straight up the wall to the two blocks at the top of pitch 2.

ANTHROPOLOGY. 200 feet. Very Severe. (Mild.)

First Ascent: 29th March, 1952. J. Brown, J. R. Allen.

The route lies up the left flank of the pedestal, the main features of which are two slabs joined by a vertical corner, the route joins the first slab just below the vertical corner.

Start: Directly below the grassy bay on Pedestal Route.

(1) 30 feet. Climb diagonally leftwards on easy rocks to ledge and belay below the top right hand edge of the slab.

(2) 35 feet. Move along the ledge and climb upwards to the top of the slab, then down across the slab to stance and belay below the corner.

(3) 35 feet. Climb the corner with difficulty.

(4) 60 feet. Continue up the easy slab to the top of the Pedestal.

(5) 40 feet. Climb leftwards up to the foot of a steep corner, step

awkwardly out left on to the bulge, then up the rib on large holds to finish.

CLOGWYN Y DDYSGL

RING CLIMB—VARIATIONS

First Ascents: 21st and 22nd August, 1952. J. M. Edwards, R. W. Beard.

A few yards left of the start of the Ring is a group of chimneys. At the right hand end of these are two spikes of contorted rock in the ground. From these step up into the first chimney, up, traverse left into the next chimney and up this to an overhang at 30 feet. 60 feet of scrambling now leads to pitch 3 of the Ring.

Between the Gambit and the Ring near the top is a ridge forming the left edge of the final corner of the Ring. The skyline edge of this is about 100 feet. (Severe.)

ROUTE OF KNOBS. Hard Severe.

First Ascent: 26th August, 1952. J. M. Edwards, H.C.B.

The Fallen Block Crack is bounded by steep walls. The right wall is the climb.

(1) 25 feet. In the crack itself.

(2) ? feet. A hold on the right wall enables the outer edge to be attained and so on to the wall. Up the wall edge 10 feet to a wide rock ledge. Traverse right past a tall narrow crack into an open groove which is climbed to ledges. Soon one can traverse back to the centre of the face again.

(3) 35 feet. Up the central crack to the ledge of arrival of the Fallen Block Crack.

(4) 50 feet. Traverse left across Fallen Block Crack and go straight up the left wall to finish.

CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU

OCTO. 160 feet. Extremely Severe.

First Ascent: 15th June, 1952. J. Brown, M. T. Sorrell, D. Belshaw.

The route is situated on the East Wall of the Pinnacle about 40 feet from its right edge, and is flanked on both sides by clean cut vertical walls.

The route takes a direct line up the cliff, the first pitch being a steep groove and the second pitch a short deep chimney followed by a long steep crack.

Start: Scramble up the East Gully moving right to the groove. The last 70 feet being up very steep grass.

(1) 50 feet. Climb the groove to stance and belay in the chimney.

(2) 110 feet. Ascend the chimney to the overhang till it is possible to gain access to the crack above, this is jammed strenuously, with running belays at intervals. At 80 feet severity lessens, and soon it is possible to pull out to the left and easy climbing to a grassy platform and good belay.

Easy scrambling to the right leads to the top of the East Terrace.

THE SPILLIKIN. 135 feet. Very Severe. (Hard.)

First Ascent: 7th June, 1952. J. Brown, D. Whillans (alternate leads), J. R. Allen.

Start: At the foot of the groove directly above Sunset Crack, on the face of the East Pinnacle.

(1) 50 feet. Climb up diagonally to the right on friable holds, to stance and belay on the edge of the wall.

(2) 50 feet. Continue up on a direct line until a step right can be made into a shallow groove. Climb the groove to stance, etc.

(3) 35 feet. Traverse along the ledge to the right until ledges lead up to the Meadow.

PINNACLE FLAKE. 135 feet. Very Severe. (Hard.)

First Ascent: 6th June, 1952. J. Brown, D. Whillans (alternate leads).

Start: At the foot of the direct finish to the East Buttress.

(1) 50 feet. Traverse left on to the face of the Pinnacle. Climb up on good ledges close to the arête to running belay, an awkward move enables more good ledges to be reached. Move left to the foot of the flake.

(2) 35 feet. Climb to the top of the flake.

(3) 50 feet. Step left on to grass ledges, continue up to large grass ledge (The Meadow), stance and belay. Easy scrambling to the right leads to the Eastern Terrace.

LLITHRIG. 245 feet. Extremely Severe.

First Ascent: 14th June, 1952. J. Brown, J. R. Allen.

The route is situated on the wall between Sunset Crack and Pigott's Climb. Starting in Sunset Crack, the first two pitches are mainly traversing. The final pitches take a direct line up the cliff via the most prominent corner at the top of the face.

(1) 45 feet. Pitches 1 and 2 of Sunset Crack.

(2) 70 feet. From the stance step right, climb the groove until a step right can be made on to the arête, traverse right below the overhang to a bottomless corner. Climb the overhang and continue up the rightwards break to a running belay which facilitates the crossing of the blank wall to the grass ledge on the right. (Rope move.) Piton stance.

(3) 70 feet. Traverse right to a vertical break directly below a steep corner. Climb the break to the foot of the corner, the last 10 feet being difficult and strenuous.

(4) 40 feet. Climb the corner for 15 feet to a ledge on the right wall. From the ledge traverse left to a prominent crack, which is climbed with difficulty until a step left enables a large ledge to be reached.

(5) 20 feet. Climb the wall to the Green Gallery.

THE CORNER. 180 feet. Extremely Severe.

First Ascent: 20th June, 1952. J. Brown, J. R. Allen, D. Belshaw.

The route takes a direct line up the corner to the right of the Pedestal. The corner is reached by the first pitch of Pedestal Crack.

(1) 60 feet. As for pitch 1 of Pedestal Crack traversing into the corner instead of going to the top of the Pedestal.

(2) 120 feet. Climb the crack in the corner for 30 feet until it closes. Move on to the left wall and up a flake until it is possible to hand-traverse back into the corner. Straight up to the top. This pitch is well protected by running belays.

THE BLACK CLEFT. 345 feet. Extremely Severe.

First Ascent: 3rd May, 1952. J. Brown, D. Whillans (shared leads).

The black corner between the Boulder and Longland's Route. Usually wet; boots recommended.

Start: Scramble up to the large ledge between the corner and Longland's Route.

(1) 40 feet. Climb the groove direct to stance and belay.

(2) 80 feet. Climb the crack, which is continuously difficult.

(3) 90 feet. Continue up the groove to the first overhang (running belay). The overhang is turned on the right. Climb the groove above until a step left can be made to stance, etc. (the Boulder).

(4) 50 feet. The groove is followed to the second overhang. Climb this by the crack on the left to a large grass ledge.

(5) 70 feet. Continue up the corner to stance, etc., in the gully.

RED SLAB. 300 feet. Exceptionally Severe.

First Ascent: 10th June, 1952. Led by J. Streetly.

A well-known feature of the West Buttress to the right of all the present climbs.

Start: At the extreme right hand corner of the slab at an obvious flake.

(1) 190 feet. Diagonally left at first, then up to a little flake (running belay). Straight up from this to the centre of a small triangular overhang (100 feet). A handhold below this is used to turn the overhang on the left, leading to a good ledge with no belay. Climb the crack above the ledge to an unstable flake (running belay). Return to the ledge and, with the assistance of the rope from the running belay above, a semi-horizontal abseil can be made across the smooth slab to the left to a grassy crack. A traverse is then made diagonally across the main slab over grassy cracks to turn the major overhang on the left.

(2) 50 feet. Up the rib on the left to stance and belay.

(3) 60 feet. Left again till broken rocks lead to the top.

CLOGWYN Y BUSTACH

In order to follow the new routes here it is necessary first to describe a climb done here in 1934, which was omitted from the Llanberis guide-book.

FOREST WALL. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 1934. J. C. G. Tilby, W. R. Reade.

"Start as Lockwood's Chimney, but this route takes the left angle of the cliff. 30 feet of arête and chimney leads to a ledge which is followed to a large grassy slope with trees. Then climb 20 feet of steep ivy-covered slabs to an easy terrace leading to a detached flake. Continue up vertical rock via two small trees until the final stance is reached

in a large holly tree. A pitch of easy scrambling finishes the climb." (Helyg Log Book.)

Three of this year's climbs are also on the cliff left of Lockwood's Chimney.

THE TENTH RIB. 130 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent : 28th August, 1952. J. M. Edwards, H.C.B.

Left of Lockwood's Chimney there is a wide and steep right-angled corner similar to Cenotaph Corner. The climb takes the left edge of the whole corner.

Start : In the wood along from the foot of the corner.

(1) 40 feet. Diagonally up left in brambles, trees, etc., to ledges at the foot of the main rib.

(2) 20 feet. Up the crack immediately left of the nose to a ledge below a big belay tree.

(3) 40 feet. Up the crack by the edge to land on a ledge with a fine old Welsh oak tree.

(4) 30 feet. Traverse left from the oak tree and up the immediate edge leftwards to the top.

CORNER OF ROOTS. 150 feet. Severe.

First Ascent : 28th August, 1952. J. M. Edwards, H. C. B.

The corner left of Lockwood's Chimney.

Start : 12 feet out left from the corner at the foot of the slab.

(1) 60 feet. Up almost in a straight line up steepish slab to a tree a few feet out from the crack (30 or 40 feet up). Then up to the next ledge coming into the corner itself.

(2) 20 feet. Up the corner to the next ledge. Vegetation.

(3) 30 feet. The corner again. Up its chimney greasily and not too easily. Brush past fallen tree to a great ledge with a small forest.

(4) 40 feet. From immediately left of the back corner traverse diagonally up left across a slab into the bottom of a crack going up to behind a large detached block. Follow the crack to the top.

SIDE ENTRY. Severe.

First Ascent : 31st August, 1952. J. M. Edwards, H.C.B., A. Shutt.

Forest Wall goes up (above the cave of Lockwood's Chimney) by an open groove over the main left wall and into a slope of mixed trees and ivy. Side Entry from here goes on to the left wall and diagonally up it across the Main Oak Ledge.

(1) 90 feet. Belay among trees. Go left just under the smooth eruption. Then up, steeply at first, just on its far side. A gangway leads to a ledge, up to belays at the top end.

(2) Forest Wall takes the right end, Corner of Roots the left, so this climb takes the centre. The ancestral oak marks a subsidiary pillar formation. Up this and with hands on its top traverse to its right side and thence on diagonally right to join the left of the ancestral holly tree. Here is Forest Wall again. This route still keeps left.

MATCHLESS BUTTRESS. 140 feet. Severe.

This buttress is the top tier of the long prominent rib on the opposite

side of the gully from Lockwood's Chimney: it is the uppermost buttress on the right of the route from the latter to Teyrn Slabs. (For full details see Beudy Mawr Log Book.)

THE CARNEDDS

THE PINNACLE CRAG OF CWM CYWION

As with many "new" Welsh crags this one has been discovered several times, and has on occasions been known also as the Tower Buttress of Y Garn. Of course, Barlow and Steeple found it first when they did the first ascent of the gully in 1915. Colin Kirkus was next and on the 20th and 23rd July, 1932, did two routes—The Crack and the Central Face. These climbs were rediscovered by Lowe and their best pitches combined to form the climb described as Little Woodhead in the Guide.

YSGOLION DUON

Details of Roughcast Flutings (Carnedd Guide, p. 23) are now available. Both Roughcast Wall and Roughcast Flutings start from the oblique terrace 'guarded by the tricky turnstile.'

ROUGHCAST FLUTINGS. About 400 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 11th January, 1937. R. A. Hodgkin, A. D. M. Cox, C. Crichton Miller.

Start: By some large detached blocks at the western end of the oblique terrace.

- (1) 40 feet. A grassy groove to belay.
- (2) 40 feet. Traverse left by slabs and then up to belay.
- (3) 25 feet. Bubbly groove.
- (4) 60 feet. Continue up the groove and then traverse delicately right across a sloping shelf to another groove, up this to a grass terrace and a large belay.
- (5) 50 feet. Traverse left and up to a large block. Scramble 200 feet to the summit.

CREIGIAU GLEISION (COWLYDD)

The details of the last climbs are now found! They all lie on the wall to the right of the one with Autumn Buttress on it.

From right to left we have:

AMPHITHEATRE SLAB. 180 feet. Just Severe.

First Ascent: September, 1936. C. H. S. R. Palmer, J. H. Bechervaise.

Start: At the lowest point of the slab at the foot of two thin cracks.

- (1) 70 feet. Climb between the cracks until easier angled rock with better holds is reached. Continue to a heather patch and belay.
- (2) 60 feet. Bear slightly left then up a short wall to the right. The gangway above this still bears right to easy ground.
- (3) 50 feet. Climb the wall on the left and up a clean rib to the top.

BLACK CHIMNEY ROUTE. 150 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: September, 1936. J. H. Bechervaise, C. H. S. R. Palmer.

The groove up the right hand of the two largest buttresses hereabouts is followed.

(1) 40 feet. Up slabby rock to the foot of the Black Chimney.

(2) 60 feet. Climb the chimney and continue till the groove steepens.

(3) 50 feet. Straight up the groove to the top or, the groove may be quitted at 20 feet and the wall on the left climbed.

THE TRIDENT ROUTE. 180 feet. Severe.

First Ascent : September, 1936. J. H. Bechervaise, C. H. S. R. Palmer.

This follows the groove between the two large buttresses.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the gully and then chimney to a stance beneath the overhang.

(2) (a) 60 feet. Traverse right then up steeply just short of the edge.

Or (b) 60 feet. Follow the steep slab under the overhanging left wall.

(3) 50 feet. Either the rib or the gully to the top. Loose.

BIRD'S WING BUTTRESS. 200 feet. Severe.

First Ascent : September, 1936. J. H. Bechervaise, B.D., J.F.M.

Start : At a cairn at the foot of the buttress left of Trident Route.

(1) 100 feet. Up the slab and then cross to the right over a fallen block. Climb a steep pocketed wall to a ledge, and then on to a leaf belay.

(2) 70 feet. Up a slab above the belay then move left and straight up to a prominent bollard. (Bird's wing found here.)

(3) 30 feet. Easy slabs above.

CRAIG YR YSFA

The last great problem of the Carneddws has been solved. The imposing Lower Amphitheatre Wall has yielded a magnificent route in Mur y Niwl, the Wall of Mists.

MUR Y NIWL. 250 feet. Hard Very Severe.

First Ascent : 26th April, 1952. A. J. J. Moulam, J. B. Churchill.

Start : Some way farther down the Amphitheatre than the direct start of Pinnacle Wall where the lowest continuation pitch of C Gully is cut off from the main amphitheatre by a rotten rib of rock. An obvious feature on the wall at this level is a horizontal grass-topped pedestal.

(1) 40 feet. Straight up the wall to the traverse line. Take this rather below the large flake straight on to the ledge. Piton belay and piton to protect the traverse.

(2) 40 feet. The wall above is steep. A rest may be had in the little niche where there is a loose flake. Exit and move up much more easily to a poor belay just below an obvious groove.

(3) 65 feet. Move out right along the upper of the two ledges (piton). A very delicate reverse mantelshelf lands one on a small but adequate foothold. Move right and up an obvious line to the "perch." Poor line belay.

(4) 20 feet. The crux. A very hard finger tip traverse to the right under the overhang, then a layback move up. 15 feet higher is a spike belay.

(5) 35 feet. Move left. A high step, then grass, to a belay.

(6) 40 feet. Up to the groove and climb it. Easily up left to the top of the flake.

(7) 10 feet. The cracked wall above.

The route has already been repeated by three parties, two of which also disdained to take the detour of the Quartz Ledge. They approached the Pinnacle direct:

(a) 30 feet. The straight crack just right of the base of the Pinnacle. It leads to a ledge which is gained with difficulty and so to the Quartz Ledge. (J. Streetly and E. A. Wrangham.)

(b) 30 feet. This gains the Quartz Ledge at the middle of the base of the Pinnacle from directly below by overhanging grooves. (G. C. Band.)

Since the guide was published, many of the climbs only once previously ascended have been repeated. Generally the standards have been correct but notably the crack of Widdershins and the wall on Custodian's Creep are rather harder than is indicated in the guide.

SOUTH AND WEST SNOWDON

All new climbs will be described in the forthcoming guide-book. Anyone interested in the Ogof Direct Route (the nose of Craig yr Ogof, Cwm Silin) will find an account in the Beudy Mawr Log Book.

THE OUTLYING CRAGS OF WALES

I am indebted to E. H. Lane for the sub-section on Radnor and to R. E. Lambe, M. J. O'Hara and J. P. O'F. Lynam.

LLEYN PENINSULA

THE RIVALS

A narrow sheep-track runs along the base of the Trevor Mountain crags. The base of the first big buttress is marked by a sheepfold and the last patch of level ground suitable for a camp site. The first buttress lies well forward from the rest of the cliff from which it is separated by a long diagonal gully well seen from just beyond the sheepfold. (See *C.C.ŷ.*, 1950, p. 54, for an account of one climb hereabouts.) To the right of this gully there are four large buttresses. The climb described below went up the first of these (No. 2 Buttress) to the right of the slanting scree and heather gully. The lower nose is steep and a little loose but rising from the gully on the right hand side of the buttress (looking up) is a long easy-angled rib.

WEST RIB. 380 feet. Difficult.

First Ascent: 4th August, 1952. M. J. O'Hara, D. Esmond.

Start: At the base of the rib which here is two small ribs.

(1) 50 feet. Up the right hand small rib. Steep but good holds.

The last move over a bulge at 40 feet is on dubious rock.

- (2) 40 feet. Up rib to a flake.
- (3) 40 feet. Up to a broad grass ledge.
- (4) 80 feet. Over loose rock to a second broad ledge.
- (5) 140 feet. Easy scrambling past a huge window in the rocks on the left to the base of a short wall.
- (6) 30 feet. Obvious crack in the centre of the wall. 200 feet of walking leads to the top.

The other buttresses appear heavily vegetated. In fact their remote or western faces are generally much better than they look. The rock is granite and is either good or obviously bad. The west face of No. 5 (Trwyn y Gorlech Buttress) offers plenty of scope—500 feet of steep rock. Any attempt to approach this buttress from the west (i.e. around the slopes from Nant Gwrtheyrn or Llithfaen) and any attempt to escape up this way is very dangerous. Blasting operations at the head of the scree shoot render the walk very hazardous.

CADER IDRIS GROUP

TWR DU

GREY SLABS. 210 feet. Difficult.

First Ascent : 2nd June, 1952. J. P. O'F. Lynam, Mrs. N. Lynam.

From East Gully at the point where the angle begins to ease a grass ledge leads out to the left (east) getting wider as it goes. Beyond it are some slabs markedly lighter in colour than the surrounding rock.

Start : At the foot of the slabs where they drain into a narrow gully.

- (1) 65 feet. Easily up the slabs and over a step to a good stance.
- (2) 75 feet. Up right, then traverse left and go over a bulge to the foot of a second step, which is climbed moving diagonally right. Easy slabs above to a stance.
- (3) 70 feet. The slabs peter out below an unpromising wall. Traverse right below the wall to easy ground beside East Gully.

ARAN GROUP

CRAIG COWARCH

CENTRAL ROUTE, SOUTH BUTTRESS. 250 feet. Severe.

First Ascent : 30th August, 1952. R. E. Lambe, Miss M. A. Dunn.

The route makes its way up three steep walls to a wide heather ledge at about a third of the height of South Buttress.

Start : Directly above the second plantation the South Buttress starts with a steep black wall. A large pinnacle which has broken into blocks and fallen against the wall marks the start of the route.

- (1) 20 feet. Climb to the top of the pinnacle by a crack on the right.
- (2) 30 feet. From the top of the pinnacle make a delicate traverse right and burrow through heather to the foot of a crack which slants up to the left.
- (3) 25 feet. Move right, around a large block and ascend the corner of a deep overhanging chimney. Move right into the chimney.

(4) 30 feet. Leave the chimney by climbing either the left hand edge or the wall. From the top of the wall the upper part of the chimney narrows to a deep crack trending left and is ascended with the right leg inside. Move right to stance in a small chasm.

The next wall is about 30 feet back.

(5) 50 feet. Up an obvious break to the right of the overhanging section of the wall. After moving over the bulge at the top of the break delicate slabs are followed first right and then left to a belay where the rock steepens again.

(6) 20 feet. Move right and then up, finishing on heather once more.

(7) 50 feet. Climb slightly to the left and then straight up. (The crux.) Move right and over the heathery edge (safeguarded by a piton on the first ascent). Cross the wide ledge and find a belay at the foot of the next wall.

From here, the route may be extended to double its present length by keeping on straight up the upper walls. This ledge however runs right across the face and forms a natural termination.

The following way off goes :

Move right along the ledge until the gully wall drops steeply beneath and then scramble up to the foot of another wall. A narrow chimney, filled in its lower half by an oak sapling makes an obvious break in the wall. Climb this, moving out leftwards on to the face higher up. The cliff relents and scrambling leads to the top.

RADNOR

The discovery and exploration of a crag of the calibre of Careg Ddu in the Elan valley is an unusual event in British climbing these days. Unknown until 1952 it has now yielded more than a dozen fine routes, 150-200 feet long and of standard to suit the average climber.

CAREG DDU

SITUATION. Map Ref. 916656. On the west flanks of Y Foel, overlooking the Careg Ddu Reservoir.

APPROACHES. Easily from the Rhayader-Elan valley road. After passing the bridge between the Caban-coch and Careg Ddu reservoirs the crag is soon in sight.

DESCRIPTION AND CLIMBS. The rock is Ordovician slate of schistosity quality ; a few loose holds exist and there is some vegetation. Indiscriminate use of boots should be avoided.

The crags consist of three buttresses, from left to right, North, Central and South. North Buttress is more broken than the other two, and is isolated from them by a wide bay of broken rock and heather. To the left of this buttress is a gully (Red Gully) with a stream which flows down to the road. Central and South Buttresses, forming the main mass of the crag, are divided by a narrow bay of earth and grass. Below South Buttress and separated from it by a heather knoll, is Triptych Buttress, on which three sharp ribs stand out.

From the heather knoll, a descending traverse leads into the long gully (Great Gully) of boulders and scree, which lies below the sheer wall of South Buttress. The gully, which steepens considerably at its narrowest part and again at its exit, is bounded on the right by a series of steep slabs and ribs.

FANDANGO. 65 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 26th July, 1952. E. H. Lane, J. P. O'F. and N. Lynam.

To the left of Red Gully, about level with Pizzicato is a short buttress with a birch tree at its foot. Cairn.

(1) 20 feet. Up the slab to the right of the birch tree.

(2) 25 feet. Up a few feet, then swing out to the right edge and go straight up.

(3) 20 feet. A few paces right climb a slab on small holds.

RED GULLY. In its higher part, the bed of the gully, or the slabs on either side provide moderate scrambling. One good route should be distinguished:

PIZZICATO. 100 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 12th July, 1952. J. P. O'F. Lynam.

On the right side of the gully, is an obvious series of steep slabs. The climb goes up the centre of these. Cairn.

(1) 20 feet. Over a lip and up a short slab to a ledge.

(2) 40 feet. The crux. Straight up the main slab on small holds, then slightly right up a smaller slab.

(3) 40 feet. Back towards the gully and climb the slabs on its right edge.

Now comes North Buttress:

TRIUMVIRATE. 225 feet. Difficult.

First Ascent: 17th May, 1952. E. H. Lane, J. P. O'F. and Nora Lynam.

Start: At the lowest point of the slabby face of the buttress and just below a birch tree growing out of the rock.

(1) 50 feet. Follow the slab edge for 30 feet, then bear left up a second slab to a stance at the foot of a wall containing a crack on its right edge.

(2) 50 feet. Climb the crack to a stance and belay (25 feet). Then scramble to the foot of a slabby wall.

(3) 35 feet. Climb the slabby rocks straight ahead to a stance and belay on a heather clad knoll overlooking a short side gully.

(4) 30 feet. Step off the boulders at the top of the side gully and go up the right edge of the slab face.

(5) 20 feet. Climb a pleasant slab straight ahead to a stance on the edge overlooking a narrow gully.

(6) 40 feet. Climb the slab a little to the left.

TRIGONOMETRY. 140 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 30th August, 1952. J. P. O'F. and Nora Lynam.

This route insinuates itself between Larceny and Triumvirate, but uses only one stance of the latter.

Start at the foot of the side gully by pitch 3 of Triumvirate on the same sweep of slabs as Larceny, but at its left side.

(1) 75 feet. Up easily for 35 feet, to where the face steepens. Then climb a succession of steep narrow slabs moving left to a stance etc. just beside the Triumvirate slabs.

(2) 20 feet. Climb easily bearing left to a stance below a corner a little to right of Triumvirate pitch 6.

(3) 45 feet. Climb the corner. About 15 feet up there is an awkward layback on an undercut hold. Higher up the angle eases.

LARCENY. 180 feet. Difficult.

First Ascent: 14th June, 1952. J. P. O'F. and Nora Lynam, and E. H. Lane.

Start to the right of the short side gully beside pitch 3 of Triumvirate at the extreme right edge of a sweep of slabs.

(1) 70 feet. Go up a few feet then move left on to the main slab which is climbed to a grass ledge. Climb the flake ahead and from its highest point (on the left) go straight up a slab to a heather ledge.

(2) 50 feet. A short slab leads to a triangular buttress, which is climbed to its apex on its right side.

(3) 60 feet. Scrambling straight ahead to a slab which leads to easy ground.

CLIMAX. 150 feet. Severe.

First Ascent: 6th July, 1952. E. H. Lane, J. P. O'F. Lynam and N. Lynam (leads shared).

On the right side of North Buttress, high up, is a prominent tower. Below it is a tongue of heather, bounded on the left by a clean-cut wall.

Start at the top of the heather tongue, on a bulging slab, just right of a side gully full of trees.

(1) 40 feet. Climb the bulging slab, moving slightly right. The angle eases, and then steepens again into a wall. Up the wall to an insecure patch of grass, then bear right to a stance and belay.

(2) 50 feet. On the right wall of the tower is a gangway and narrow crack. Climb the gangway to a ledge, then go up the wall ahead right of the crack until it is possible to escape left to the top of the crack. Stance.

(3) 60 feet. Step round the corner on the left and gain a lodgment on the right edge of the face of the tower, which is climbed to a niche. A line of staircase holds leads left to a groove and a bulging slab. Up this and on up the groove to the top of the tower.

ORION'S BELT. 405 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 5th October, 1952. N. Lynam, E. H. Lane (leads shared) and J. P. O'F. Lynam.

A diagonal traverse linking together some of the best pitches on the North Buttress.

Start: As for Triumvirate.

(1), (2), (3). 135 feet. As Triumvirate.

(4) 20 feet. Up pitch 4 of Triumvirate to below the mantelshelf.

(5) 40 feet. Go up a few feet right, then swing on to the narrow

slab of Trigonometry. Cross this to a running belay, then descend a few feet into a recess, climb out the other side, and cross a slab to the top of pitch 1 of Larceny.

(6) 50 feet. Pitch 2 of Larceny.

Walk round the corner to the right to a ledge with trees.

(7) 10 feet. From the left far corner of the ledge, descend an overhanging wall, and go a few feet left into a cave.

(8) 40 feet. Ascend the slab from the cave, move right and continue along a ledge with trees to the top of Climax pitch 1.

(9), (10). 110 feet. Climax pitches 2 and 3.

In the bay between Central and North Buttresses is :

PILASTER. 55 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent : 14th June, 1952. E. H. Lane, J. P. O'F. Lynam and N. Lynam.

About the centre of the bay is a short isolated buttress of rock which seen from the north shows as a pinnacle. Start at the foot of the short slab in the centre of the buttress. Climb the slab to a crevasse, then up on incut holds until stopped by an overhang. Swing left over the corner and go straight ahead to the top.

CENTRAL BUTTRESS. No routes have been made so far on this, the steepest and most forbidding of the buttresses.

Now comes South Buttress :

HAWK'S NEST CHIMNEY. 205 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent : 29th August, 1952. D. B. Binns, E. H. Lane. Leading through.

On extreme right hand edge of the bay between Central and South Buttresses is a sweep of slabs below a rib, which is marked by a diagonal line of three trees. Start on an easy-angled slab at the lowest point.

(1) 35 feet. Climb the slab and the wall above on small holds. Stance and belay on the right.

(2) 60 feet. Climb the rib for about 15 feet, then the slab on the right which ends at the foot of a chimney leading back to the rib.

(3) 35 feet. The chimney is climbed by bridging, facing right to the hawk's nest below a large chockstone. Exit right of the chockstone to a stance and belay on the rib crest.

(4) 75 feet. Scrambling to the top of the crag.

DIMINUENDO. 170 feet. Moderately Difficult (first pitch Difficult).

First Ascent : 26th July, 1952. E. H. Lane, J. P. O'F. and Nora Lynam (leads shared).

The climb starts in a recess at the top of the heather knoll, on the right. The recess is identified by a chimney on the right and a wall containing a crack on the left.

(1) 30 feet. Climb the wall at the back of the recess via a flake crack, moving first right and then left and up to a good stance overlooking South Gully.

(2) 30 feet. Climb easy rock straight ahead and up a broken glacis to a stance behind an oak tree.

(3) 60 feet. Move right to a flake at the foot of a rib, which is climbed bearing left.

(4) 50 feet. Continue up the rib and easy slabs to the top.

Below is Triptych Buttress :

ADAM. 125 feet. Severe.

First Ascent : 5th October, 1952. E. H. Lane, J. P. O'F. Lynam (leads shared) and N. Lynam.

This is the left hand sharp rib on the buttress.

Start : At the foot of a square groove a few feet left of the rib edge.

(1) 20 feet. Climb the groove by bridging until it is possible to swing over the left wall. Then straight up to a stance.

(2) 30 feet. Up a few feet behind the belay, then traverse right along a ledge. Climb the edge of the rib to a stance behind a flake.

(3) 15 feet. Go up the rib for a few feet and traverse into the gully on the right just below where the rib steepens.

(4) 40 feet. The crux. Traverse back a few feet, and go straight up into a crack, which is followed to stance etc.

(5) 20 feet. A flake and a groove lead to the heather knoll.

EVE. 205 feet. Difficult.

First Ascent : 24th May, 1952. J. P. O'F. Lynam and N. Lynam (leads shared).

The centre rib of the buttress.

Start : At the foot of the detached buttress below the rib proper below and right of a chimney.

(1) 55 feet. Straight up on small holds, then move left into the chimney. Go up this to easy ground and scramble 15 feet to the foot of the next pitch.

(2) 65 feet. Over a series of flakes to where the rib steepens. Chimney up the first step and then go left up the wall beside a rowan, on to a heather ledge.

(3) 60 feet. Up to the next ledge, then move right on to the rib crest, which is followed until it disappears at the foot of a broken wall.

(4) 25 feet. Slightly left and up a rib.

THE SERPENT. 160 feet. Difficult.

First Ascent : 29th June, 1952. J. P. O'F. and N. Lynam.

The right hand rib of the buttress.

Start : A big flake leans against the foot of the rib. Just to the right of it is a chimney split by a flake.

(1) 60 feet. Go up the chimney left of the flake for 10 feet, then step round to the right branch. Bridge up this until standing on top of the central flake, and so on to the top of the chimney. Continue up a wall on the right to a belay.

(2) 20 feet. Straight up a slab trending right.

(3) 40 feet. Easily up the crest of the rib to a flat boulder.

(4) 40 feet. Gain a lodgment on the slab on the left, then continue up the rib to the top.

OSIRIS. 100 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 18th October, 1952. J. P. O'F. Lynam and E. H. Lane (leads shared) and N. Lynam.

To the right of the rib of the Serpent is a prominent series of winged flakes—the Temple of Isis.

Start: Around the corner from the Temple of Isis is an area of vegetated slabs split by a crack.

(1) 50 feet. Up the crack, then diagonally left via a second crack to a stance and belay below a clean wall.

(2) 50 feet. Climb the wall by its left edge and pull into a grassy nook. Step left and follow a rib to the top.

EVE'S GIRDLE. 215 feet. Severe.

First Ascent: 18th October, 1952. J. P. O'F. Lynam and E. H. Lane (leads shared) and N. Lynam.

Start: As for Osiris.

(1) 50 feet. Pitch 1 of Osiris.

(2) 15 feet. Climb the wall into the grassy nook, then walk left along the ledge to the third pitch of the Serpent.

(3) 40 feet. Pitch 3 of the Serpent.

(4) 20 feet. Move left into the gully and pull over the edge of a sharp flake on the left. Follow the slab face to the top.

(5) 30 feet. Descend pitch 3 of Eve for 20 feet, then traverse easily left for 10 feet to the stance and belay below pitch 4 of Adam.

(6) and (7) 60 feet. Pitches 4 and 5 of Adam.

Next comes Great Gully:

CONCERTO. 200 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 4th October, 1952. E. H. Lane and J. P. O'F. Lynam (leads shared) and N. Lynam.

The wall on the right of the narrows of Great Gully supports a slab which is deeply undercut at its base. Below it and to the right is a clearly defined stepped rib.

Start: At its lowest point.

(1) 55 feet. Follow the rib on its left side until the angle eases, then walk 10 feet left along a ledge and go up a neat slab. (This ledge can also be reached direct from Great Gully.)

(2) 20 feet. From the top of a flake climb up and pull over the corner on to the slab crest of the rib.

(3) 20 feet. Climb the wall just right of the crack, finishing in the crack.

(4) 55 feet. Walk a few yards to the left and gain a footing on the right edge of the undercut slab. Traverse left to the crack which is climbed to a wedged boulder.

(5) 50 feet. Traverse across to the edge of the rib, which is climbed straight ahead to a nose. Swing round to the left and continue to the top.

CORNWALL

At last I have been able to get up-to-date details from the Commando Cliff Assault Wing of the numerous routes at Pedn Mên Du and elsewhere which have been done in recent years. I am grateful to Major A. D. Macpherson and to Captain J. Barry for their help and for permission to publish the air photograph of the Chair Ladder cliffs which appears in this Journal.

Their information on Chair Ladder is given below ; that on Pedn Mên Du, which needs further investigation on the spot to co-ordinate it with the guide-book and with other published accounts, is held over until next year.

I am indebted also to M. J. Ridges for notes.

WICCA

A girdle traverse of the Pillar has been made about 15 feet below the top by A. J. Imrie and R. Goodier. Severe.

GURNARDS HEAD

GREEN STUFF GULLY. 100 feet. Very Difficult.

First Ascent : 1st April, 1951. A. J. Imrie, R. Goodier.

Start : At the middle of a broad sloping platform near the north-west corner of the cliff, 50 yards right of the coastguard steps.

(1) 50 feet. Climb up to the block on the ledge and then right up the gully to a ledge below an overhang.

(2) 50 feet. Traverse left for 10 feet, then up the vegetated gully to the top.

CARN LÊS BOEL

THE GROOVES (Guide-book, p. 118) were led on 16th September, 1952, by N. E. Morin and E. H. Marriott and are Severe.

CARN BARRA

A. J. Imrie, who made a number of routes here in 1950 (briefly mentioned in the 1951 Journal) has added further routes during the past year. A detailed account of all this work will be published at a future date.

CHAIR LADDER

A rather unsatisfactory route on the left-hand end of Bulging Wall is noted in the guide-book. This has now been straightened out and forms a fine addition to the Chair Ladder climbs.

BULGING WALL, BRIDGE WALL ROUTE. 230 feet. Very Severe.

First Ascent : 27th June, 1952. R. Handley, E. Phillips.

Start : On the left-hand side of Bulging Wall, a prominent crack with two overhangs faces Zawn Rinney. This is the route.

(1) 100 feet. Climb the crack by hand jamming using holds on the left wall to overcome the overhangs. After the second overhang swing right on to a flat ledge. Traverse for six feet until it is possible to climb to a good belay.

(2) 30 feet. Climb the sloping crack in the corner to a stance.

(3) 100 feet. Up corner and slabs to a belay. Scramble to the top.

The same party made another route on Bulging Wall which probably coincides in part with the Bulging Wall—Great Slab Route described in *C.C.ȳ.* 1952, p. 106.

CENTRAL BUTTRESS CHIMNEYS. It has been pointed out that this climb can be taken more directly without visiting the Cleft as shown in Fig. 8 of the guide-book. After the 60-foot chimney traverse left (exposed and perhaps mild severe) below the Cleft Route into the direct line of the Chimneys.

PENDULUM CHIMNEY. The Commando Route for this climb does not use the lower part of Cleft Route to reach the foot of the chimney, but takes an independent line up the lower slabs and walls, crossing the Cleft Route on the way.

WOLF BUTTRESS CHIMNEYS. The first ascent of this climb, described in *C.C.ȳ.* 1952, p. 107, must be credited to the C.C.A.W. (their name—Leaning Chimney).

BISHOP BUTTRESS. The climb described in *C.C.ȳ.* 1952, p. 106, taking the variation start in the right-hand chimney between Wolf and Bishop Buttresses must also be credited to the C.C.A.W. (their name—Flannel Avenue). The direct climb (*ibid*) has been repeated this year and claimed as a first ascent.

TERRIER'S TOOTH. As pointed out in *C.C.ȳ.* 1952, p. 107, the Wolf Buttress Climb of the guide-book actually describes an ascent of Terrier's Tooth from sea level. The Commandos also have a climb which follows more or less the same line. It is probable that the first ascent is correctly ascribed to the C.C. party in 1940. This year two more first ascents have been claimed here. These various routes most probably overlap and investigation on the site is needed before any judgment can be made.

RUNNEL STONE BUTTRESS. This again is a Commando climb and first ascent must be credited to the C.C.A.W. The prominent chimney which splits the upper tier of rock is known as Dodgers Chimney.

GIRDLE TRAVERSE OF THE CHAIR LADDER GROUP. 675 feet. Hard Very Difficult.

First Ascent: 14th April, 1952. M. J. Ridges, A. E. Simpson, R. Morden, alternate leads.

Variations on the described line can be made, but the whole is a splendid expedition, across the upper part of the cliff, reserving the finest (and most difficult) pitch to the end.

Start: Cross the boulder bridge to the sea level ledges below Bulging Wall.

(1) 90 feet. Start up the left hand of Bulging Wall, up moderate ledges to where a double chimney splits the face on the right and 10 feet right a chimney splits a pinnacle from the face.

(2) 40 feet. Walk up the floor of the chimney behind the pinnacle to the chockstone beyond.

(3) 35 feet. Scramble down the other side.

(4) 25 feet. Step right on to a 35-foot long horizontal ledge, sometimes nearly two feet wide, with a small belay in the middle.

(5) 35 feet. A six-foot drop at the end of the ledge lands one on a rough slab. Go anywhere across to a belay 15 feet away up to the right.

(6) 60 feet. Go down about 20 feet to the right into Great Gully. Scramble up to belays. Scramble a further 50 feet up Great Gully.

(7) 20 feet. Go up a slippery crack on the right to a ledge with perched blocks, above the ledge with the conspicuous perched block (which latter is the ledge above the pinnacle). Round on the front is a broad ledge. Belay at the left end.

(8) 30 feet. At the right end of the ledge is a chimney. Go down this to block belays.

(9) 40 feet. Step round into the recess at the top of pitch 4 of Central Buttress Chimneys. Descend pitch 3 of this climb until the first pitch of Pendulum goes off to the right.

(10) 50 feet. Continue as for first pitch of Pendulum to the platform 10 feet below the Pendulum. Step two feet down (running belay) and on across South Face to the corner on the edge of East Chimney. Go across the vertical wall of East Chimney at the same level to chockstone belays at the back of the chimney. Harder than anything that has gone before, and Very Difficult.

(11) 25 feet. 10 feet down the chimney go out on easy ledges to the front of South East Buttress.

(12) 30 feet. Go up a crack near the top of S.E. Buttress and down the other (Ash Can Gully) side. (It might be preferable to descend S.E. Buttress and harder.) Scramble 40 feet down to the right towards Wolf Buttress until one can get onto it, fairly low down.

(13) 30 feet. Traverse across (passing the line of Wolf Buttress Chimneys) and up a short crack to a crack sloping steeply up to the right towards the front of the buttress.

(14) 20 feet. Go up the crack/chimney which is narrow at first. At the first big ledge go round the front to a belay in an exposed position.

(15) 45 feet. Go up slightly and into the gully. Belays on both sides of the gully. Alternatively, one could continue straight up the crack of pitch 14 past some perched blocks.

(16) 15 feet. Go out to the belays at the top of pitch 3 of Bishop Buttress.

(17) 45 feet. Step up and on the right is a thin ledge sloping down to the right. Go delicately down this a few feet to a place where a semi-hand traverse is necessary. Continue until a step up leads to a cavern. The best pitch, exposed.

(18) 20 feet. Move up cracks to the right until a large block slopes away to the right. Belays on left.

(19) 35 feet. Go round the slab on the right and down it until it steepens, when one moves down towards Terrier's Tooth and to the gully which ends the climb, and about five feet above the level of the neck between Terrier's Tooth and the gully.

REVIEWS

BERGE DER WELT. Seventh Volume. 1952. Zürich. Schweizerische Stiftung für Alpine Forschungen.

The seventh volume of *Berge der Welt* is on the lavish scale of its predecessors. Its comprehensive scope is here stated explicitly in the Preface: "In the course of years, what began modestly in the hands of Swiss climbers and researchers, has come to mean, for the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research, a world-embracing task." The Stiftung regards this task, of collating the mountain explorations of every country that it can, as a "vielversprechendes Gemeinschaftswerk," a mission almost, that shall encourage the common mountain interests and activities of the various peoples. For this reason, it has decided to publish its next volumes in parallel English, French and German editions.

We may prefer the modest hands of individual authors, the viewpoints of individual mountaineers, to a collective work that smacks, if ever so faintly, of planned mountaineering. We may regret the attempt to catalogue, as it were, our pleasurable wanderings. But there is no denying that the ground covered in the present volume commands respect. The work is too diverse to make a readable unity, but its range and detail is as impressive as before. From the obituary account of Otto Furrer and memories of Charles Simon, we are swept breathless to Mt. Kenya, to the structure of "dead" and "living" ice, to the ascent of Cerro Fitzroy and the three highest volcanoes in Iran, to the formation of an ice-berg. The *pièce de résistance* is of course the remarkable Himalayan survey by Marcel Kurz. This starts with a graceful tribute to Frank Smythe, and continues, over 57 pages, to review the whole course of Himalayan mountaineering from 1947 to 1950. No major expedition has been omitted.

Myself, I always turn with the greatest interest to the "Alpine Rundschau," and it seems a pity that this will be missing in next year's English edition, which appears under the auspices of Allen and Unwin. Besides expeditions in the Alps, Rockies, Andes and elsewhere, there is a most interesting account of the increase of mountaineering enthusiasm in the U.S.S.R. (may it continue to increase, at the expense of certain other enthusiasms) and of ascents made by the Russians. The "Rundschau" is a good quarry for accounts of little-known ascents. In the Himalaya we read, for instance, of the astonishing journey of the Dane, R. B. Larsen, to Mount Everest in the spring of 1951. With four Sherpas and the sketchiest of equipment, Larsen came up through Nepal and illicitly crossed the Nangpa La, having been turned back by conditions at the Lho La. Arriving at Rongbuk, he was so kindly received by the Abbot, that, when he was

on the mountain, the latter protected him from Tibetan officials, declaring that he had a pass. On 7th May, under extremely good conditions, Larsen came to within 300 feet of the North Col, evidently intending to camp there and make the summit and back next day. However a storm appeared, and as the party had not even a Primus, certainly no good sleeping bags, the Sherpas insisted on a return. Having cajoled and threatened in vain, Larsen was forced to come down, and took his revenge later by not giving them the full pay promised.

But I am falling into the favourite trap of reviewers, that of seizing upon a story. I must return to my muttons, by concluding that every mountaineer can find instruction and pleasure in this volume, even if he cannot read the text, from looking at the very complete illustrations and maps. We look forward to next year's English edition, with the exciting story of the two Swiss expeditions upon Mount Everest.

WILFRID NOYCE.

ANNAPURNA. By Maurice Herzog. (Jonathan Cape, 1952. 15/-.)

Maurice Herzog, the leader and chronicler of the 1950 French Himalayan Expedition, disclaims any ability as a writer ; but with a story of such dramatic interest it would have been difficult for him not to have written anything but a moving and absorbing book. He has, in fact, written it simply, vividly and on occasion, with remarkable frankness. He makes, perhaps, rather too obtrusive use of *oratio recta*, an artifice which is as likely to reduce as to heighten the naturalness of the narrative ; but this is a small point. The book is admirably produced and illustrated, and the complicated geography is made easy by excellent maps.

The expedition was in many ways a remarkable one. The six purely climbing members were recognised as the best mountaineers in France, including the three great Chamonix guides Louis Lachenal, Lionel Terray, and Gaston Rébuffat. The object was the ascent of the first 8,000-metre peak, either Dhaulagiri or Annapurna, whichever should prove the more accessible ; but, since neither of the two had even been reconnoitred, the expedition had first to discover how, or whether, either could be reached. These ambitious plans, which had to be realised in a season of not more than seven weeks, required very determined leadership, very competent organisation and, above all, a constant stress on speed. No one can doubt, reading this story, that without any one of these three factors the party could not possibly have succeeded ; even so, the chance was not great, and much of the fascination of the tale of the ascent—even though one knows the outcome—lies in the dramatic way in which the possibility of victory suddenly materialised at the eleventh hour and was eventually realised in an almost dead-heat race with time. Annapurna was climbed on 3rd June, one day less than three weeks after it had been decided to abandon Dhaulagiri. No approach route to Annapurna had then been discovered, and it was not

until 23rd May that the party committed itself to an attempt on the North face. The difficulties of the route, the approaching monsoon and the fact that at the time the decision was taken many of the porters and essential supplies were four days' march away, at Tukucha, necessitated prodigies of effort on the part of the whole expedition. The rapidity of action which was typified by the Sherpa Sarki's march to Tukucha in 36 hours and the response of the organisation at base as much as by the load-carrying work of the climbers themselves was undoubtedly what enabled the mountain to be climbed. This actual rate of climb, though fast, was perhaps no faster than that of some other expeditions ; what reads so impressively is the co-ordinated response of the whole machinery of the expedition once the decision had been taken.

Yet, with the reaching of the summit, the real drama was only just beginning. The weather broke before Herzog and Lachenal regained Camp V ; they were already both frost-bitten, but had the weather been fine next day it seems certain that Terray and Rébuffat, who had come up in support, would have been able to get them down without serious damage. Instead, the blizzard persisted for 36 hours ; after descending all day in mist and storm, the party was forced to bivouac in a crevasse almost within hail of Camp IV ; and below it there still lay nearly 4,000 feet of ice-climbing whose difficulty appears to have been as great as anything of the kind previously climbed in the Himalaya. By then the summit party was almost completely crippled and the others blind, and without the help of Schatz and Couzy, forming a second support party, the descent, one imagines, could never have been achieved. The new snow added danger to difficulty, though the serious avalanche in which Herzog's rope was caught seems hardly more than an interference in the desperate struggle to keep going. That the mountain was eventually evacuated without loss of life was due to the determination of the injured men, to the way in which support had been organised and, in particular, to the staunchness of Terray and the physical fitness of Schatz.

Inevitably the question arises whether the expedition pressed its determination to reach the top beyond reasonable limits. The members of the expedition were men who had successfully climbed many of the hardest routes in the Alps, of which English climbers still have hardly any experience. Such climbs undoubtedly mean new standards—of technical competence, of planning, of equipment, of self-reliance and (on the other side of the balance) of willingness to accept risks of bad weather and, possibly, other objective dangers. It would be surprising if the French party had altogether laid aside these standards in the Himalaya, even though they recognised, for example in abandoning their desperate attempt on the N.W. spur of Annapurna, that some concession must be made to the Himalayan scale. Nevertheless, the whole expedition was conducted with the calculated daring of a great modern Alpine ascent, meticulously planned and brilliantly executed, but characterised also by the acceptance of considerable objective risks.

The risk taken in relation to time and weather, which so nearly brought the party to disaster, was, so far as one can judge, a perfectly fair one ; with the monsoon expected on about 5th June, it does not appear that an assault which reached the top on 3rd June cut the margin of safety unjustifiably fine ; and in fact the storm of 3rd-4th June was not the beginning of the monsoon, which actually arrived several days later than had been anticipated. The real risk, which by traditional standards would probably not have been run, was the unavoidably dangerous nature of the route between Camps II and IV, particularly in the event of heavy snowfall. Although there was only one occasion on which a party was actually caught, there are many indications that over much of this long stretch avalanches were a constant possibility, of which the climbers were fully aware. It is perhaps beside the point to ask whether the degree of risk run, which is not of course measurable, was justifiable ; the fact is that very probably many of the greatest peaks can only be climbed if this kind of extra risk is accepted. This the French clearly recognised, and were justified by their magnificent success. The question of principle, however, remains : on a great peak additional hazards from the weather and long lines of communication are in any case inevitable, and the acceptance of still further objective risks can only be defended on the view that a really great climb justifies what a lesser one would not. This is a view which can certainly be argued ; it may even be the view with which the future lies ; but it does represent a step onto a slippery slope. The question " was it justifiable to go on ? " may be tiresome, but it is at least a healthier one than " was it justifiable to turn back ? "

To have devoted so much space to this point is to give an unfair impression of the way the expedition was run. There is no suggestion whatever in the book that the party took chances except because it had to if the mountain was to be climbed ; it did all that it could to minimise them ; and the general impression is certainly not one of recklessness, but of *élan*. No success could have been harder earned, and the story of it will rank among the greatest in the history of Himalayan climbing.

A. D. M. Cox.

MOUNTAINS OF TARTARY. By Eric Shipton. Pp. 224. Illus. (Hodder and Stoughton, London. 20/-.)

In the last two numbers of your Journal this reviewer has written on " This My Voyage," by Dr. Longstaff, and " China to Chitral," by Mr. Tilman. The present contribution follows in the same pattern. Both Mr. Tilman and Mr. Shipton, the two greatest mountain travellers of this generation, are direct heirs to the tradition established by Dr. Longstaff at the beginning of the century. Their outlook to mountain travel is the same—travelling light, living off the country, and being as independent as possible of what we might describe as artificial aids. It is natural in reading *Mountains of Tartary* to make comparisons with Mr. Tilman's book as it covers very much the same ground. It is as it were another view of the country from the other end of a base line

which is long enough to give a stereoscopic effect to the whole scene. At the same time there are certain difficulties. In repeating a journey for the second time one is never certain what is new and what has been seen before, and to this extent a reviewer's impression of the second book is less clear than it would have been if he were to treat it as a fresh subject.

Mountains of Tartary deals in its opening chapters with the author's stay in Kashgar between 1940 and 1942. At that time Russia had not entered the war and the suspicion aroused by his presence so near their frontier severely restricted his travel. I suppose that the ingenuity of the mountaineer in reaching his mountain is only equalled by that of the dipsomaniac in his search for the bottle, and Mr. Shipton is no exception. We are given an excellent description of a climb on Bostan Terek, one of several small expeditions which he managed to carry out during this period. In 1946 the author returns to Kashgar and to the Consulate at a time when the political situation was far from stable. The remainder of the book deals with travels and expeditions during the following two years, firstly with his return through the Karakoram, and various minor expeditions including the discovery of a magnificent natural arch in Tushuk Tagh. This amazing rock feature had long been seen by travellers from a distance, but there was no record of anyone having succeeded in tracing a way through the complicated system of rock canyons to its foot. In 1947 he attempts with Tilman an ascent of Muztagh Ata, and in 1948 Bogdo Ola and Chakragil. In September, 1948, he returns to India via the Hunza Valley.

This latter part of the book repeats Tilman's story of "China to Chitral," but in a different style. In place of the dry wit and caustic comment with which Mr. Tilman pokes fun at himself and the people he meets, Mr. Shipton has many more notes to his tune. He is not afraid of showing his feelings, and writes very understandingly of the different peoples of Central Asia. There is, particularly, one charming picture of a Turki who talks of the beauties of an upper valley full of meadows waist-deep in flowers. Throughout the book the mountain philosopher appears with astute comments on the enthusiasm which makes the climber break new ground, and the comparative merits of travelling hopefully and arriving.

Mountains of Tartary will certainly find its place on the shelves of mountaineering literature. It is a pity therefore, that there could not have been more and better illustrations. Photographs of the great rock slab on the main trade route above the Nubra valley and of the Shyok Ice Dam, for example, would have done much to gild the lily.

J. H. EMLYN JONES.

NEPAL HIMALAYA. By H. W. Tilman. (Cambridge University Press. 25/-.)

This is the account of three expeditions in the Nepal Himalaya ; one to the Langtang region in 1949, one to Manang in 1950, with as a

postscript in the autumn of the same year, a short visit to Solu Khumbu, the area south of Everest.

The Langtang expedition covers the drainage area of the Trisuli river in central Nepal and takes place in mid-monsoon, against a background of unceasing rain, which does not deter the scientific work, though it ruins an attempt on Fluted Peak (21,000). As Tilman remarks, it is solace to the wretched to have companions in misery. In a Nepal monsoon it is all bog, steaming dripping undergrowth, wet sleeping bags, and leeches which swarm up from the ground in their hundreds, unless they "choke themselves in the eyelets of one's boots." But all this misery which makes the reader marvel, sit vicariously shivering in front of his fire and pile coal upon coal, is dismissed as a commonplace, if not as a fraud. A Himalayan climber must on occasion—"live hard and exert himself to the point of exhaustion . . . but for the most part, his condition is one of ease bordering on comfort . . . he spends more time on his back than on his feet . . . his occupational disease is bedsores and books his most cherished load." It is this quixotic contrast, a modicum of truth in a welter of understatement, which is so much a delight of the book. But, and we must not forget it, the expedition also has scientific aims, which are vested in Polunin the botanist (whose work is summarised at the end of the book in an appendix entitled "The Natural History of the Langtang valley") in Scott as geologist, in Lloyd as surveyor, and indeed in the author, who has so far forgotten himself as to agree, on behalf of a friend, to make a collection of *meligethes*—a species of beetle. The method adopted, in default of a more selective approach, was "to make sure, by sweeping every beetle regardless of age, sex, or species into . . . a battery of belsen chambers." This science, this tearing of rents in nature's veil adds a new versatility and breadth of interest, while affording a heaven-sent opportunity for one of Tilman's dearest and most rewarding pastimes, that of "Don baiting."

The second expedition described, in 1950 to the Manang—Annapurna region—follows roughly the same pattern, with rather more climbing and rather less science. It comprises Tilman, Evans, Packard and Emlyn Jones, who after casting about for a prey at once small enough for the size of the party and big enough for their ambition, settle on Annapurna IV (24,688) a peak in the middle of the great chain never less than 20,000 feet high and several miles long, whose westward sentinel was climbed by the French in the same year. Their ascent to within 1,000 feet of the top and eventual failure owing to bad weather and to the various Himalayan imponderables cast a gloom over the party which is never quite dispelled. After an abortive attempt on a peak farther North, they break up into smaller groups and move severally homewards. All except the author who on reaching Katmandu, is invited to join an American party led by Dr. Charles Houston, to reconnoitre Everest from the South, an aim which is carried quickly to a successful conclusion. The entire trip is something of a pilgrimage with Namche Bazaar as its Mecca, for the country traversed is

Solu Khumbu, the home of the Sherpa porters who have formed the background of so many Himalayan expeditions.

This is a book of travel and not specifically of mountaineering, as the author is at pains to emphasise. The inmates of a welfare state cannot simply hope to go a-pleasuring in the high Himalaya, as they once did, without prospect of material advancement to themselves or to others. They must pander to the search after knowledge, and in short must harbour scientists and tolerate scientific ambitions. Only in this way and at the expense of swallowing "a strong prejudice" can expeditions nowadays be financed. Tilman has done this and he sets the results before us.

Little successful climbing was in fact accomplished. The only peak conquered was the small "Paldor" in the Ganesh Himal. It would however be churlish to harp on this: perhaps the surprising thing is that given the small size of the expeditions, the divided objectives and the often atrocious weather, anything in this line was done at all. In the Himalaya "climbing," as the word is understood in Europe plays a small part, and the enormous difficulties of travel present problems and a charm which are sufficient unto themselves.

The work as a whole, has much in common with its predecessors. Its style can really only be described as "Tilmanese," a unique compound based on an acute observation of people and events, salted with a dry wit, and illustrated by countless comparisons, apt quotations and proverbs, of such scope that the author lays himself open to envious charges of "well-readmanship."

The book's worth is not only literary. It makes definite contributions to our scientific knowledge of Nepal, in spite of the author's denials. Whatever the anatomy of its merits, this is a book which cannot be ignored by anyone interested in this the "largest inhabited country still unexplored by Europeans" and at the same time the principal focus of the exploratory mountaineering now being carried on in the Himalaya.

H. G. NICOL.

THE MOUNT EVEREST RECONNAISSANCE EXPEDITION, 1951. By Eric Shipton. (Hodder and Stoughton. 25/-.)

"This is a book of pictures and the brief account of the expedition is intended only to serve as a background to the photographs."

The pictures are mostly those that delighted the readers of *The Times* during the summer of 1951. But their brilliance is not dimmed by familiarity and is considerably enhanced by methods of reproduction better than can be employed in a daily newspaper, though still leaving much to be desired. The most striking and the most interesting picture is the splendid double page photograph of the view from a ridge of Pumori of the Everest massif from the North Peak to Nuptse, showing the whole of the old route from the North Col and clearly indicating the possibilities and difficulties of the new route to the South Col. A breathtaking view of Nuptse, taken against the sun, with the

giant flank of the mountain carved into magical ice flutings and flecked with translucent little clouds, is perhaps the finest in the book. Other outstanding pictures are several of the photographs taken amongst the seracs of the ice-fall, the views around the monastery of Thyangbochi which may give some idea of what must be one of the most enchantingly beautiful places in the Himalaya and a splendid portrait of Shipton, the bearded Himalayan traveller.

One of the best features of the book is the clarity with which the topography is presented. It is introduced with four aerial photographs of Everest accompanied by explanatory diagrams and a sketch map which make the structure of the mountain and the lines of attack crystal clear. There are also good sketch maps in the text and sensible captions under the photographs.

The author has been most successful in the difficult task of condensing the account of the expedition into 40 pages and has made it into much more than just a background for the photographs. He describes with the clarity, simplicity and charm which we have come to take for granted from Shipton the fascinating story of the discovery of the new route to the South Col and of its exploration. It is a story which has much of the romance of a previous account of the first entry into the Inner Sanctuary of Nanda Devi, and it is fervently to be hoped that the outcome of this reconnaissance will be as successful as of that previous one.

For all the quality of the brief account, the book remains a popular one—a book for these days when as Tilman says “so few people can be bothered to read.” Those who feel that this is a regrettable tendency and that the whole business of Himalayan exploration is at present bedevilled by the popular appeal of the “Everest Adventure” may find consolation in Shipton’s concluding paragraph about the journeys made after the attempt to reach the West Cwm had been abandoned—“These various exploratory journeys gave us an intimate knowledge of a stretch of 60 miles of the Great Himalaya Range, in a country hitherto practically unknown to Western travellers. This form of mountaineering, the exploration of unknown peaks, glaciers and valleys, the finding and crossing of new passes to connect one area with another, is the most fascinating occupation I know. The variety of experience, the constantly changing scene, the gradual unfolding of the geography of the range are deeply satisfying, for they yield a very real understanding, almost a sense of personal possession, of the country explored.”

P. BICKNELL

TIRICH MIR. THE NORWEGIAN HIMALAYA EXPEDITION. (Hodder and Stoughton. 21/-.)

Tirich Mir (25,263 feet)—highest of the Hindukush peaks—is the fourth highest mountain yet climbed. With the possible exception of the climbing immediately below the South Ridge it is not a difficult

climb technically. There is, however, a great deal of it and, if scaled down to Alpine proportions, it sounds reminiscent of the ascent of the Dom from Saas Fee.

The expedition was well planned and fairly well equipped, although Bugge states that much porter trouble could have been avoided had they been equipped on the same scale as the "Sahibs." The main strength of the party lay in the sound outlook of its members ; in their physical fitness through which they once claim to have escaped irate dragomen by outrunning them to the top of a pyramid ; and in the adaptability of their plans which were never too rigid. They impress one as a hard working team whose daily routine at the base started at 7 a.m. and finished at 10.30 p.m. Kvernberg's one-man first ascent of the summit showed great singleness of purpose tempered by sound commonsense, and Naess' and Berg's successful efforts to get loaded porters up the difficult climb from Camp VIII to the south ridge without the use of fixed ropes must have called for much patience, confidence and hard work.

The various chapters of the book were written by six members of the expedition. Each writer deals with Tirich Mir mainly in relation to his own subject, but, probably because the six authors employed only two translators, individual styles are remarkably similar. Although there is thus perfect continuity of style, there is, at times, a disconcerting lack of chronological continuity. The writer of one chapter may be half way up a mountain amongst the eternal snows, whilst in the following chapter another who reads exactly like the first man may be pottering around collecting flowers in the Barum valley.

Professor Arne Naess describes his 1949 reconnaissance which was something of an impromptu affair though by no means unsuccessful. He also deals with attempts previous to 1949, and in a later chapter describes the successful Final Assault. H. C. Bugge writes about Preparations, the move up to the base camp on the glacier, and experiences gained—mainly with regard to mountaineering equipment. Per Wendelbo tells of the journey from Norway to the Barum valley ; the base itself which was very properly named the "Idyll" ; and he also contributes a chapter on The Botanical Aspect. Kvernberg describes the first, unsuccessful, attempt to reach the south ridge below the summit. Jörstad describes the return journey, and briefly touches on the geology of the area. Dr. Lorentzen contributes an interesting chapter of physiological and medical conclusions.

The book is well set out with many photographs, some of which are excellent. It may not be a great literary achievement, but the authors have produced an intelligent factual report and as such it is instructive and makes good reading. As in *The Kontiki Expedition*, a pleasantly amusing vein runs through the book. This seems due to the fact that all members derived great personal pleasure from their undertakings. For this reason alone, the book is well worth reading.

J. M. KRETSCHMER.

ASPIRING. By W. Scott Gilkison. (Whitcombe and Tombs Limited.)

Scott Gilkison's *Aspiring* is, in the reviewer's knowledge, the first book by a New Zealander describing a single mountain. Nothing could be more appropriate. Outside New Zealand, *Aspiring* is a comparatively unknown mountain. Even by local standards it is of no great height—less than 10,000 feet. But to the climbers of that country, especially if they come from the south, it has a particular glamour, enhanced by many associations. It lies far to the south and westward of the great peaks. Beyond it mountains and bush-clad valley sprawl uninterrupted to the sea. But many New Zealand peaks are inaccessible and *Aspiring's* special attraction lies in its remoteness from mountains of comparable height and in its form. From some aspects it is very reminiscent of the Matterhorn, but it is encompassed by much greater glaciers.

In New Zealand the battle is frequently more than half over when the snowline on the peak is gained and Mr. Gilkison therefore devotes much of his book to descriptions of the various attempts which led to the discovery of the one relatively easy route onto the mountain and to its summit. Though the first ascent was made in 1910 the peak had only been climbed 13 times prior to the Second World War. Since then access to the mountain has been much improved—two well-sited huts, particularly important in the New Zealand climate, are now available. They were built at great labour, largely by the climbers themselves, and in a recent season a dozen successful parties made use of them. But the pioneering days on *Aspiring* are not yet over. All but two of the ascents of the mountain have been made by one of its four principal ridges ; two are still unclimbed.

Mr. Gilkison's story epitomises the development of mountaineering in the remoter regions of New Zealand ; Mr. Gilkison himself epitomises those New Zealand climbers who in the past 25 years have made their way, season by season, heavily laden with packs, to open up the mountain hinterland both for themselves and for those who follow. It is this combination which gives this short book special significance. Mr. Gilkison makes no pretence at fine writing but despite, or perhaps because of this, he gives us some descriptions of arresting beauty and sincerity. Few can have enjoyed their mountaineering more.

It is a pity that the format and paper binding, by a local printer, lack the quality which the mountain, the author and his excellent illustrations deserve.

R. SCOTT RUSSELL.

ESCALADES AU HOGGAR. By Bernard Pierre. (Arthaud, Paris.)

This book is a welcome addition to Arthaud's excellent "Sem-pervivum" Series. Bernard Pierre is to be congratulated both on his expedition and his book, for few people can have done so much good climbing and simultaneously amassed so much information during the course of a three weeks' Christmas holiday in a strange region. The book is divided into four sections : the first geographic, the second

historical, the third an account of the author's own journey, and the last a climbing guide to the district. This division gives both charm and practicality. One or two comments may here be added in the light of our own experience. The horrible venomous beasts of which the book speaks are not seen during the winter months. Prices have already risen since the time of Bernard Pierre's stay, and the excellent Dahmani may as well be given a camel, since he demands to be paid in any case for the one he doesn't use. The sleeping bag must be a good one: the nights are very cold indeed.

The grading of climbs is on the whole just, but an exception must be made in the case of the south pillar of the Issekrar. This is a very enjoyable climb, but by no means a T.D. We were unanimous that it was easier than the Davuda, which is rightly graded D. sup. It may fairly be called a D. The "artificial" pitch can be climbed free (we used one piton and no tension), and the dièdre of V. sup. cannot be called more than V. inf. at most, and is far from exposed: here too we used one peg, but it is a waste of energy to insert it, and the dièdre can be climbed quite clean. The rock is rather unsound, and it is very understandable that on the first ascent looseness should have been confused with difficulty. It is one of the best routes in the range for position.

Reading the book before leaving England, I thought the descriptions of scenery must be exaggerated. But they are not. It is impossible to describe the coming of night to the Hoggar without sounding like a minor Romantic poet: words are not superlative enough to depict those changing colours, the metamorphosis of those hills as the light fades, the almost unbearable immensity of the night, the lance-like shape of the mountains or the incredible rottenness of the rock. For the same reason monochrome photographs cannot really do justice to the subject, though these are well chosen. It is a pity that even one colour plate could not have been included.

To conclude, *Escalades au Hoggar* is a very readable and timely book, an ornament to any climber's bookshelf, and practically indispensable to anyone intending to visit the Hoggar. I am sure it will attract many refugees from northern mists to this clear warm climate and as yet barely touched forest of spires and peaks and hills.

G. J. SUTTON.

THEY CAME TO THE HILLS. By Claire Eliane Engel. (Allen and Unwin. 21/-.)

Mlle. Engel always writes with sympathy and enthusiasm; she further inspires respect by writing with apparent indifference in either French or English. The present volume contains a series of short critical biographies of leading figures in mountaineering history from Forbes to Smythe. They are not picked as a "first eleven" but as illustrating the development of the game over the last 120 years or so.

To most of us Emmanuel Boileau de Castelnau will be the least familiar of these figures. Although the only Frenchman in the book,

the reader is struck by a certain Englishry of outlook which appears, perhaps fancifully, to be common to other French Protestants. Some-time after his conquest of the Meije, he went to Stuttgart where he fell in with an American colony very keen on foot racing. "I was taken into a team and almost in spite of myself I had to race every day. I was massaged, rubbed with lemon juice, given unknown drugs to drink and I let them do what they wished, with the result that I was entered for the great Mile Race in Germany which was run in the month of July and I won it. . . . I was presented with a fine bronze statue but I can't remember how long I took." We are reminded of Richard Hillary's account of the Trinity eight in pre-war Germany.

Of Forbes, Stephen, Mummery, Mallory and Smythe (who was a personal friend), Mlle. Engel writes with special sympathy, indeed even the self-sufficient Whympers and the quarrelsome Coolidge engage her understanding interpretation. Only Ruskin, and perhaps Mrs. Aubrey le Blond, fail to stimulate this reaction in the author.

Apart from their addiction to mountains, whether as drug, religion, gymnasium or workshop, there seems very little in common between these seventeen—something of courage and determination, of course, but many have these qualities without being drawn to mountains. Apart from poor Ruskin, strangled in his mother's apron strings, they were all men of independent character, though not all of independent means. They were none of them mass-produced. They preferred to be beholden to nobody. We would have said they preferred to stand on their own feet, had it not been for the even greater joy most of them took in treading on each other's toes.

When her *History of Mountaineering in the Alps* appeared, Mlle. Engel was sharply taken to task by the *A.J.* for mistakes in dates and references. We have not checked the present volume in this respect, leaving that task to our more scholarly elder sister, the *A.J.* We did, however, observe a patent inconsistency between pp. 248 and 256.

Mlle. Engel writes so well in English that she will not mind us pointing out to her that schoolmasters are never "professors" in England. She is also perhaps a little unreliable (or very original) in some of her literary judgments of her heroes' writings.

For our part we look forward to a further volume dealing with somewhat less well-known or less well-documented figures, e.g. Oakley Maund, Middlemore, Farrar, the very early Oberland explorers, or the Schlägintweits.

BRITISH CRAGS AND CLIMBERS. Edited by E. C. Pyatt and Wilfrid Noyce. (Dobson. 21/-.)

This is a collection of mountaineering literature devoted solely to climbing in this country. Apart from a few extracts from books, it is culled from the Journals of the Climbing Clubs. As the editors remark, the past issues of these Journals are not readily accessible, and

there was obvious scope for reproducing a selection of this material in a handy form.

The reader, if he is a mountaineer, meets many old friends such as Archer Thomson's "Devil's Kitchen" and "Avalanche Route"; Edwards' "Great Effort," and Cox's "Sheaf Climb." The reviewer was glad to see recognition of Banner Mendus' account of his trip up the Great Gully of the Screes, and to discover good articles hitherto missed such as M. J. Ball's diversion from the Parallel Cracks, Sron na Ciche, and E. A. Baker's Ben Nuis Chimney, Arran. The first few extracts are all of historical and some of literary interest. It would be as well if some of the young people, practically unclothed and wholly unequipped, who embark on wintry ascents of Snowdon were to follow the example of Professor Tyndall and take a guide for the walk.

The book is prefaced by 25 pages of Introduction by Edward Pyatt, in which history, technique and equipment are covered remarkably well for so brief a summary. This Introduction raises the question of the public for which the book is intended. The blurb on the dust cover rather implies that the book will be all things for all men; it is, we are told, an anthology of literature, a collection of adventure stories, it explains the background and deals with technical, topographical and historical aspects. Of course it isn't quite so compendious as this, but the reader does feel a certain dichotomy of objectives. The book probably started as a straightforward anthology of well-written essays or stories of mountaineering in this island; then perhaps the compilers thought their material should be arranged to display the historical development of the game, and this, in turn, may have distorted the choice of material in order to illustrate some historical phase without much regard to the intrinsic quality of the illustration. The didactic impulse necessitated including very many items; to get them all in many have been rather brutally truncated. The poor author is given no space to achieve his effects. Archer Thomson has 13 lines from the Guide Book of 1910; Leslie Shadbolt 11 lines on limpets (need the editors tell us that this is lighthearted?); two paragraphs bring in bridge-climbing at Horspath; Pigott has a paragraph on Welsh grass, Linnell a paragraph on a piton, Cox one on Dartmoor granite. These snippets follow a habit illustrated by popular *Digest* periodicals and other potted publications for the illiterate. Apart from epigram or apophthegm, prose cannot be mutilated in this way.

This blemish apart, the book was well worth making and will be enjoyed by a wide public. A second collection might well follow in which the editors could forget their educational leanings and confine themselves to good writing about good climbs.

THE CUILLIN OF SKYE. By B. H. Humble. (Robert Hale. 30/-.)

Beneath a red dust cover bearing Mr. Humble's well-known photograph of a cloud sea below the Cioch, is gathered a fund of information on the Cuillin. From a brief introductory chapter, treating largely with

the etymology of the word "Cuillin," the author passes to an illuminating account of the hills and their visitors between the sixteenth, and the middle of the eighteenth centuries. Prince Charles Edward, Johnson and Boswell, Pennant, MacCulloch, Sir Walter Scott, J. M. W. Turner, Professor J. D. Forbes, and many less familiar figures pass in review. Mr. Humble is zealous in defence of realism in the interpretation of "Loch Coruisk," MacCulloch's prose, Sir Walter's poetry and Turner's painting all suffer, he feels, from an impressionism dwelling too deeply on gloomy grandeur and sterility. To Sherriff Alexander Nicolson and his adventures in the Cuillin, Mr. Humble has rightly devoted a longer passage.

We continue by way of the early explorations of the Alpine Club, successively by the great partnership of Collie and John MacKenzie, his guide, to the coming of the Scottish Mountaineering Club in the "nineties." The last part of the historical section describes the adventures and expeditions of the English visitors who, since the turn of the century have played so large a part in Skye climbing. The Abrahams, Steeple and Barlow, Archer Thompson and H. O. Jones, Pye and Mallory were, in their turn, the leaders of small active groups climbing in the Cuillin before 1914.

Mr. Humble devotes ample space to describing the traverse of the Main Ridge—"the Great Traverse," and the Main Ridge with Clach Glas and Blaven—"the Greater Traverse." Times and achievements are carefully analysed. A cross-section is provided to show the exact *denivellement* of the traverse, whilst in an appendix, the times of 17 parties on "the Great Traverse," and five on "the Greater Traverse" are tabulated. Several members of this club, whose achievements are detailed will be surprised to discover themselves not merely partakers in a fine ridge scramble, but "the great heroes who do the Cuillin Main Ridge in a day." It is curious how blatant a spirit of competition is acceptable in this aspect of British mountaineering, where it is so much eschewed in all others.

In the post-war years the volume of Scottish visitors greatly increased, whilst the English were as numerous as before. One reads with delight of a visit by the Pinnacle Club. "In 1925 a larger mixed party returned and camped in a rude hut then in existence by Loch Scavaig near Loch Coruisk." Mr. Humble ends with a three-page summary of climbing since the late war. Herein he raises his voice to condemn a new departure. "Cioch Grooves," he says, "is notable for the fact that it was the first climb in Skye in which a piton was used for direct progress. One hopes that this precedent will not be followed." After a brief description of Brooker and Dixon's fine new discoveries on Sgurr Mhic Coinnich he returns to the attack. "No pitons were used," (on the latter climbs) "proof enough that there are still many possibilities among the crags of Skye without resorting to artificial aids. True such aids are increasingly used elsewhere, but should we not leave unsullied our Cragman's Paradise?"

Here it should be said that the targets for these shafts are Ian McNaught-Davis, of this club, and your reviewer, "Cioch Grooves" being first led by the former in September, 1951. Whilst this is not the place to pursue the fascinating hare that Mr. Humble has started it would be interesting to know if he has any first-hand knowledge of the climb which he seeks to criticise. At all events the number of British climbers who have used and are using the technique (notably members of this club), raises the issue from Mr. Humble's dogmatic level to one of, at least, reasoned debate.

A few errors have unhappily eluded detection as, for example, the diagram to explain illustration 6, in which Gars Bheinn is labelled "Sgurr nan Eag." Smythe and Bell's 1924 climb (page 85) was not the "Trap Face Climb" (which was done 10 years earlier) but "West Trap Route." On page 107 "Visigill burn" should read "Vikisgill." In illustration 71, the caption "Sgurr Dubh Beag in the background" is misleading. The summit visible in the background is that of Sgurr a' Choire Bhig, only the lowest rocks of Sgurr Dubh Beag appear in the middle distance. "Crack of Doom" (page 129) should, from the context, read "Crack of Double Doom," though (with due respect to its authors) any reticence over printing such an unfortunate and meaningless name deserves sympathy.

The book is profusely and well illustrated, with photographs, reproductions of paintings and clear sketches and maps by Arthur R. Griffith. Its appeal will chiefly be for those interested in the history of the Cuillin, although its price may prove a severe test of their historical enthusiasm.

G. FRANCIS.

WINDSLAB. By Cochrane Stewart. (Hodder and Stoughton. 12/6.)

The scene is Austria in 1945. A series of improbabilities combine to assemble five men and two women in a climbing-hut, where they remain for 15 days because the path has been covered with snow. This hut, although equipped with electric light and a telephone, is carelessly sited at the bottom of a windslab slope overhung by a large cornice, which is (of course) liable to fall at any moment. Unfortunately, 244 pages elapse before it does so. In the meantime we get some sloppy writing and much superficial characterisation.

Roger, I know, has gone up to see Monique. He is much too free of inhibition, convention, or whatever you like to worry over anyone else in that small room. And he has never told her that he killed her husband. Life is too short.

Under such conditions, the reader will not be unduly surprised a few pages later when the guide attempts to rape both women in turn. Recommended if hut-bound for a few days with nothing else to read.

ROBIN L. PLACKETT.

GUIDE DES ALPES VALAISANNES, Vols IIIa and IIIb. Edited by Marcel Kurz. (Swiss Alpine Club.)

Many anxious climbers have had to change their plans on finding IIIa or IIIb out of print. We have even known of tattered copies sold at a premium in the mart of Saas Fee. Now the indefatigable, dependable and indispensable Marcel Kurz has brought out the Third Edition, and our thanks are due to him and to the S.A.C. for their enterprise.

These two volumes cover respectively Theodule-Monte Moro and Strahlhorn-Simplon. They will be in demand immediately for planning many a holiday.

THE ALPINE JOURNAL, May 1952 and November, 1952.

CAMBRIDGE MOUNTAINEERING, 1952.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY EXPLORATION CLUB BULLETIN, 1952.

JOURNAL OF THE IRISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB, Summer, 1952.

THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL, 1952.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB, 1952.

THE NATIONAL TRUST REPORT, 1951-52.

The two numbers of the *A.J.* give a welcome impression of alpine activity ; not only are there accounts in "Expeditions" of many fine routes, but F. R. Brooke on "Route Major by Moonlight," C. S. Tilly on "Via della Pera 1951," B. R. Goodfellow on "The Weisshorn Horseshoe" and G. F. Dixon on "A First Visit to the Zermatt District" write clearly, vigorously and enthusiastically. Useful information is offered by A. C. Niven on the Yugoslav Alps, the late P. J. H. Unna on fuels for mountain cooking and C. D. Milner on colour photography. Milner's article is illustrated by some black and white photographs, of which two—the Saleinaz glacier from the Chardonnet and the Grandes Jorasses at sunset from the Couvercle—are far and away the best in this batch of journals ; the latter, in particular, is fit to make us all tear up our own inevitable efforts at this subject. In a scholarly vein E. Coddington gives us Part III of his "Hydrographic Approach to the Alps" and Messrs. Thorington, Kurz, Blakeney and Dangar deal with nineteenth-century Führerbücher, hut records and journal entries. How comforting it must be for the shades of the pioneers to know that though they thought they were indulging in the—sometimes discreditable competitive—sport of peak-bagging they were really providing material for scholarly exegesis. C. R. P. Vandeleur, in "The Love of Mountains," fears that young climbers do not appreciate the mountains upon which they perform (the Editor dissents in a firm note) and re-asserts the character-building and "mystical" attitude towards the hills. I feel that articles of this kind might sometimes be reviewed by non-climbers ; what would they make of our assertions about the effect of our way of enjoying ourselves on our characters ? and would they not find, for example, in Vandeleur's "It is the duty of mountaineers to climb all mountains that can be climbed by the traditional

methods (*not* by the aid of pitons and karabiners) " a rather comfortable sense of the word " duty " ? That mountaineering helps us to know our weaknesses and exacts a discipline is obvious, but the reviewer of the biography of the infantile Aleister Crowley who speaks of " the saving grace that the mountains might have brought him " is pitching it rather high.

N. E. Odell opens *Cambridge Mountaineering* with similar philosophic reflections, but the Cambridge outlook is probably better represented by the Norway Travel Association's advertisement which seeks to lure visitors by detailing some first ascents which wait and which " Norwegian experts " say are feasible. This journal has, as usual, a large number of plain, decently written accounts of climbs ; G. C. Band is good on exhaustion on the Blaitière and the late C. M. G. Smith on the North ridge of Piz Badile. But the Cambridge vice is still undue brevity ; R. A. McDonald describes most vividly the (unroped and therefore nerve-racking) ascent of the Devil's Thumb in Spitzbergen and we feel with him the lengthening chain of difficulties separating the two climbers from their base, and then he shrugs off the problem on the summit with " The return route is another story." There may be a queue of enthusiasts outside the editor's door with descriptions of every mountain range in the world but this article is a good one and we want the whole story.

Some of the Oxford and Cambridge joint activities also find their way into the *Oxford University Exploration Club Bulletin*. This is a slim and businesslike publication—balance sheets and sledging rations take up a good deal of it. Anyone contemplating a car trip across the Middle East would be greatly helped by Philip Beckett's laconic " Transport for Overland Expeditions." There is also an article by Michael Huxley on how to write accounts of expeditions which can be sold to magazines, especially to the *Geographical Magazine*. He recommends the peppering up of articles by direct speech, reliance on the maxims of advertising copy-writers and addiction to what is known in other publicity fields as the gimmick—the usual tawdry vulgarities. If this is what the *Geographical Magazine* wants and expeditions need to help finance themselves by selling articles, then Mr. Huxley is giving honest advice with which it is not our business to quarrel. But if this advice affects Oxford contributions to mountaineering journals we shall have to go and hunt for scorpions to string our critical whips.

The *Journal of the Irish Mountaineering Club* is a cyclostyled and stapled production, but the air of amateurishness does not extend to the contents. There is a good deal of useful practical information—especially in R. R. Johnston's " Rock Climbing in the Mourne "—and the general level of articles is good. The Irish seem at the moment to be particularly addicted to moonlight walks and bivouacs. The Sassanach (for that is what they call us) heart is also touched by such euphonious titles as " Poulaphouca to Bohernabreena."

Modulating easily from the last title through Joyce's *Ulysses* we come to the *Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal*, which records an exploration

of Boulder Chamber Pot. An enormous number of caves, pots, sinks, rifts and swallets have been investigated during the year. One feels that the greater part of the energy of the Yorkshire Ramblers goes into caving, but the cavers, alas, are for the moment almost inarticulate. Therefore—despite such worthy articles as A. H. Griffin's on the legends of Little Langdale, where the Y.R.C. has acquired a cottage—the journal gives the impression of not being representative of the club.

The Journal of the *Fell and Rock Climbing Club*, on the other hand, is very representative. Good straightforward climbing articles are those of Nancy Smith on the North ridge of Piz Badile, R. W. Eldridge on Sutherland and J. A. Jackson on Kashmir, but we also find R. G. Plint describing the late neolithic Great Langdale Stone Axe Factory and Alan F. Airey giving a fascinating account of the birds of the Lake District, in the course of which he paints the magical picture of Whooper Swans in a secluded bay of Windermere in winter "busy upending for food and quietly trumpeting." A fine classical flavour is given to the journal by a song by John Hirst which was sung at the annual dinner and by W. A. Poucher's article (with the good photographs we expect) on Stac Polly, where mountains are "scaled" and "our Scottish friends" are visited by "members of the climbing fraternity." For a few nostalgic moments we can believe ourselves back in the days of the culinary quarters of his Satanic Majesty and the contents of certain flasks. When all the Führerbücher in the Alps have been investigated and every step of everybody who moved about on a mountain before 1870 has been tabulated, here is a piece of research for the Alpine Club—why should this periphrastic and facetious style be the one which attracted so many of the pioneers?

DOUGLAS HEWITT.

AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL, 1952.

CANADIAN ALPINE JOURNAL, 1952.

APPALACHIA, 1952.

ACCIDENTS IN AMERICAN MOUNTAINEERING, 1952.

JOURNAL OF THE MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1951.

BULLETIN OF THE MOUNTAIN CLUB OF KENYA, MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER, 1952.

Pride of place goes to the *American Alpine Journal*, both for content and for appearance. This number is published in the American Alpine Club's fiftieth year and is a happy ornament to their jubilee. It opens with Bradford Washburn's account of the ascent of Mount McKinley from the west in 1951. Previous ascents of McKinley had all been from the north-east and since the first ascent no other route had been suggested until 1947, when Washburn published in the *A.A.J.* an article indicating possible new routes from the north and west. In 1951 he put his theories to the test: stores were parachuted from the air and after a series of igloo camps, McKinley was successfully climbed from the west. The whole original and enterprising project was carried out with the smoothest efficiency, and the party's verdict was that provided

air support is available, their route is shorter, safer and easier than the old route from the north-east. The article ends with a confident suggestion of other possible routes on McKinley awaiting ascent. In addition to this, the *A.A.J.* has other accounts of exploration and first ascents in Alaska and Canada. The general theme is expeditions in the fullest sense, with problems of distance and remoteness tackled with elaborate ingenuity by air. There is also an ascent of Ruwenzori, and Hans Kraus recounts with vertiginous illustration sixth-grade climbs in the Dolomites, including the North Face of the Cima Grande di Lavaredo: "the North Face rises at a constant 90-degree angle, or even steeper. Rope belays or stirrups are necessary at every pitch."* Historical research is appropriately represented by a member of our own Alpine Club, J. Monroe Thorington, who delves into the Grands Mulets Travellers' Book, 1861-75.

The Canadian Alpine Journal also tells of Alaskan forays as well as of much good climbing nearer at hand in Canada. It records an impressive number of first ascents, including three by R. C. Hind, a member of our Club. For variety there is a piece about botany, a sermon, and a physiological treatise on "Dynamic Posture in the Mountains."

Appalachia has a picture of a motor road on the cover and is the journal of a club professedly devoted to New England. Nevertheless members have wandered from Alaska to the Cévennes and to the gorgeously named Mufumbiro Peaks of Central Africa. Local doings include canoeing.

Accidents in American Mountaineering, 1952, is the fifth report of the Safety Committee of the American Alpine Club. It contains statistics and a laborious judicial analysis of the year's mountain accidents in the U.S.A. This is not merry reading, nor to members of our Club will it be particularly instructive; but the number of fatal accidents has steadily declined each year since the Safety Committee was set up in 1947, which is the best possible evidence that the Committee's activities are both worth while and effective.

The Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa is a massive number to celebrate the Club's diamond jubilee; on this we congratulate them. The Journal is mainly devoted to the Club's home ground, to rock climbing on the peaks of South Africa, with an abundance of pitch-by-pitch description somewhat indigestible for the outside reader. However, there is also an ascent of Mount Kenya, and interludes on flora, fauna and a bird (the Rufous Rockjumper or *Chaetops frenatus*, with a notable close-up photograph), and a short story.

In contrast with the voluminous verbiage of other Clubs, the *Bulletin of the Mountain Club of Kenya* is no more than a slim pamphlet. Its matter is primarily and properly domestic, but everyone will admire the enthusiasm of a small Club, inevitably mutable in membership, which nevertheless produces a bulletin four times a year and holds a meet on its eponymous mountain.

A. K. RAWLINSON.

* See Richard Meyer's article herein.

Mountain View, 1952. This, the first annual of the Umtali Mountain and Outdoor Club, arrived too late for inclusion in the above review. As the name implies, the Umtali Club is not devoted solely to mountaineering, nor indeed wholly to outdoor pursuits since it also runs table-tennis and theatricals. In all these respects it evidently meets the needs of the Umtali area, but mountains are the Club's *raison d'être* and provide its main activity and principle of unity. It is very good to learn of this primacy in a country so young, but by no means surprising in a country so vigorous. There is plenty of exploring to be done in the Chimanimani range, but the club already looks forward to organising a party for Mt. Kenya, and to joint meets in the Magaliesburg and Drakensberg.

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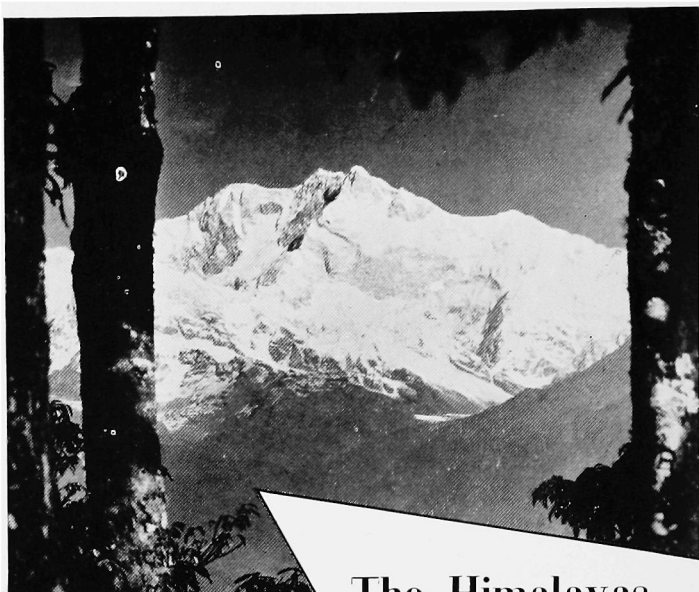
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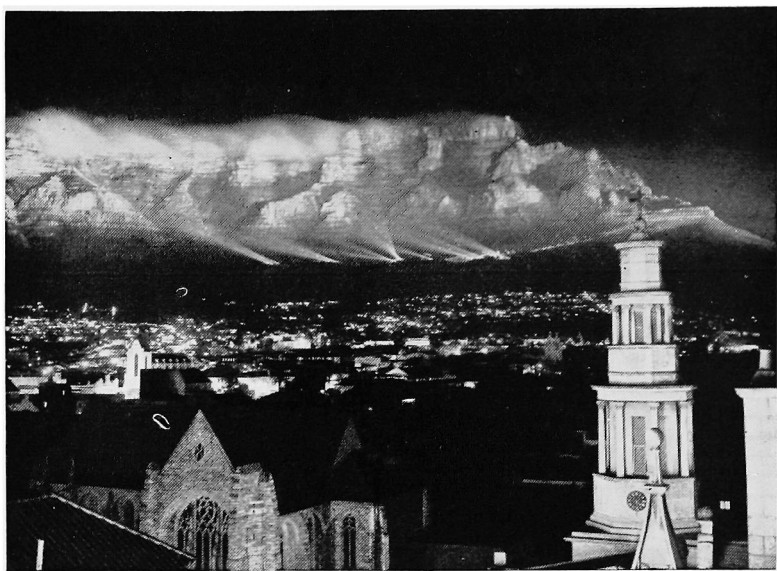
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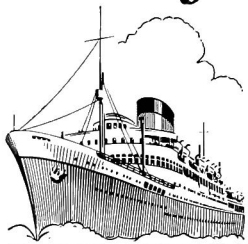
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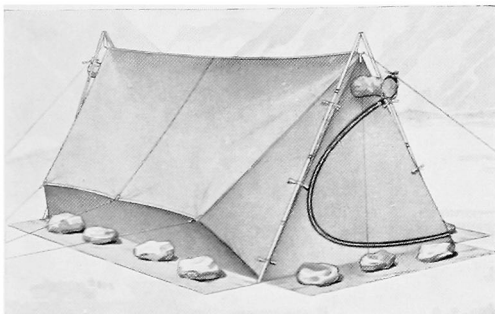
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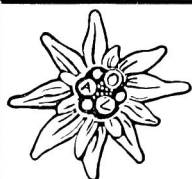


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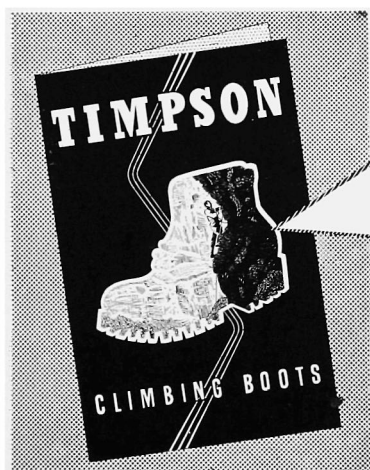
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