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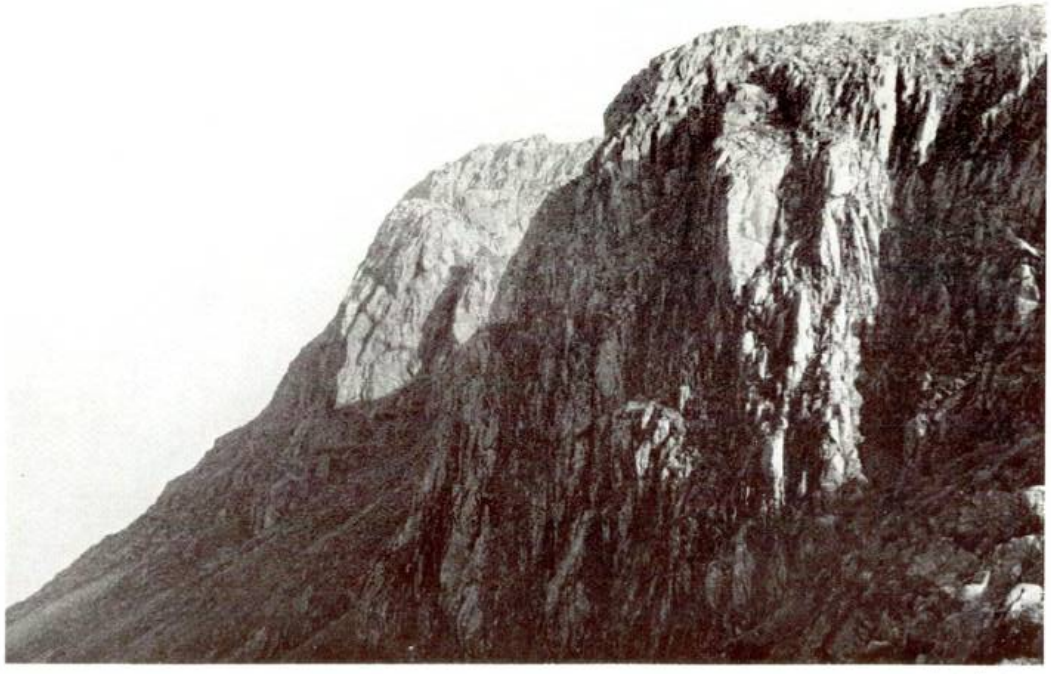


T. Graham Brown

BOAT HOWE CRAGS

looking E. along the face.

The *left* of the further crag is the top of the W. Buttress, but the part of the left hand edge which is in sunlight from just below the top downwards) is the face of the Boat, while most of the face of that crag is the W. face of the Boat. The lower buttress which casts a sharp shadow on it is the W. Fender. The lower part of the left edge which is in shadow is probably Breakwater Slabs.

The near buttress, in shadow save at the top and on the right, is the W. Buttress. Its left edge is roughly the line of the 'Horizon Climb.'

BOAT HOWE CRAGS, KIRKFELL

T. GRAHAM BROWN

It seems strange at first sight that Boat Howe Crags on Kirkfell were not discovered quite early in the history of Lakeland climbing. Once found, they appear to be prominent enough—the skyline of the Great Gable end of Kirkfell, above Upper Ennerdale ; the rock is magnificent and varied in character, offering many different kinds of climbing ; the two great buttresses and the central pillar itself are all grand cliffs which seem to offer climbing routes even when seen from a distance ; and the pillar—' The Boat'—is perhaps the cleanest and finest piece of isolated rock in the Lake District, and of considerable size. The reason for the late discovery of the crags probably lies in the fact that, prominent as they are from some points of view, they are not well seen from most of the hill routes which are commonly taken by climbing parties in their neighbourhood. A man may walk across Kirkfell from Beck Head to Black Sail and be unaware of the Crags ; they face away from Gable Crag and Great Gable, so that the Ennerdale flank of Kirkfell seems to lack climbing interest from that direction ; and the crags are almost completely hidden during the descent from Black Sail to Ennerdale—although they may be seen if you know when and where to look. It is true that Boat Howe Crags may be seen clearly from Scarf Gap and the Haystacks, and that many climbers must have seen them from these points. But it is likely enough that there was a sort of mental inhibition : ' If there had been anything up there it would have been found long ago, and it's a far cry to go there on a wild-goose chase ; besides, *is* Kirkfell the sort of hill to have good rocks ? ' That, or something like it, may perhaps account for the fact that the crags were not molested.

My own first connexion with Boat Howe Crags came on a walking holiday at Easter, 1912, when we crossed Kirkfell and I kept to the edge at the Great Gable end—to see what was to be seen, but not for climbing, which was to come into my life a little later. I saw the pillar and its shape impressed me, but not, of course, for its climbing possibilities.

A little after that came my introduction to rock-climbing in the Lakes, by Arnold Boyd and Jimmy Lindzell (whose name is on the Great Gable memorial). At that time there was a general feeling that the pioneers could not have missed much, and that there was nothing good enough to climb outside the ' classic ' crags, although fine routes were still to be made there—as Herford and Sansom were then shewing. But at Whitweek, in 1914, during my third or fourth visit to Wasdale, we saw from Upper Eskdale what looked to be a fine gully on the flank of Scawfell, and decided to try it. On June 4, having gone up the Keswick Brothers' Climb by the variation finish, Richards, Arnold Boyd and I went down the other side of Mickledorc and then along to the foot of the gully. This proved to be fine as regards rock scenery, but rather rotten as regards the rock. There were some good pitches, the first and second of which fell to me, and Richards led us up and out by the left-hand upper branch. We christened it ' Cam Spout Gully,' but it is now known as Peregrine Gully. The Pillar by the North climb a day or two later proved to be my last acquaintance with rocks for several years, because the war intervened.

Rock-climbing had laid a strong hand upon me, but the experience of exploring and ascending Peregrine gully, trivial although it may seem, affected me in a new and indescribable way. Since then, it has been my good fortune to go up an unknown glacier to find a way to a great mountain, and, on rounding a spur, to see one of the great mountain faces of the world, until then never seen by man. Yet the feeling which that first sight of 12,000 feet and more of ice and cliff then gave was scarcely stronger than the feeling given by my first taste of exploration. During the war, day-dreams of rocks had to replace the real thing. Because of that latest climbing experience, these dreams took the form of finding new crags and new routes upon them—delightful things. One of my ambitions, since fulfilled, had its origin then. That does not concern Boat Howe, but my dreams did ; because I remembered the pillar which I had seen before my climbing days, and magnified it. The thing even became a part of sleeping dreams —a pillar, quite separate from the fell, which out-pillared Pillar Stone and had a magnificent spiral route up it.

I was discharged from the Army after the war as a C3 man, and did not recover for several years from the illnesses which one picked up in Macedonia. My rock-climbing had necessarily to be mild, but I did not go up to explore Boat Howe. It seemed to me that the rocks must already have been examined by climbers, and that they would certainly have been mentioned in the talks at Wasdale Head, had there been anything there at all. Gillercombe Buttress, Overbeck Chimneys, The Screes, Birkness Combe, and many other outlying crags were talked about—but not Kirkfell. The Kirkfell Cliffs could, therefore, scarcely hold anything so good even as the Overbeck Crag. I was frightened to go up there and have what had been a delightful day-dream destroyed by the reality ; and for the same reason scarcely liked to ask whether the rocks had been visited. When I became fit again, I did indeed make a few tentative suggestions that we might spend a day looking for rocks on Kirkfell, but I could not make the proposal more definite, because it was difficult by that time to distinguish between my old memory of a pillar and the fantasy which it became. In any case, my friends preferred a day of good climbing on known rocks to what might be a mare's nest. Short holidays made that natural, and I went with them as naturally.

On the last day of 1924, George Basterfield walked over with me from Wasdale to Buttermere. Snow was lying on the Fells, and from near the top of Scarf Gap we could see the crags on Kirkfell. The central pillar was well shewn up by the snow in the gullies on either side, and its appearance was reassuring—my memory was obviously not entirely a dream. I pointed it out to George, and asked him to give a day to its exploration at Easter. He did not think that anything could have been overlooked there, but promised to humour me.

So Easter came in 1925, with much snow in the gullies. George Basterfield came up to Wasdale Head on the following week-end to fulfil his promise, but without much expectation, so he told me later. On the Sunday, it was April 19, we set out on our exploration, going by Black Sail, for we knew no better. From the pass, we went horizontally across the fell side to Red Combe—the shallow hanging valley which splits the wide summit plateau of Kirkfell on the Ennerdale side. There is a long shoulder on the

far side of this, which we reached up hard snow, then descending its outer flank. A horizontal scramble brought us at last to a flat rock round an ill-defined corner, and from this we saw the central pillar magnificently rising out of the snow in the gully. Up to that moment, so he told me, George had thought that we might perhaps find broken rocks up which it would be possible to engineer some sort of a climb artificially ; but there was now no doubt that we had made a real discovery, and I experienced the same sort of rush of feeling which Peregrine Gully had given and the north face of Mount Foraker was to give. We made our way along as fast as possible, pausing only to look up at the grand slabs of the West Buttress of Boat Howe, and so came to the foot of' The Boat ' (as it was to be christened).

The Boat.

' The Boat' itself is a fine pillar of scarcely broken rock, which stands in a sort of bay in the cliffs between the East and West Buttresses, and well separated from them. The outer face of the Boat is a wall of very steep rock, which is presented to the valley ; its two sides are similar (but slightly more broken) walls which converge towards the fell and thus pinch the junction of Boat and hillside into a narrow neck. Against the foot of each side wall there is a subsidiary and lower buttress (small on the left or east side), and between each of these and its side wall is a fine chimney. When we christened the central pillar ' The Boat,' we imagined it as lying in harbour stern outwards. The right (or west) chimney consequently became the ' starboard chimney,' and the two subsidiary buttresses became the Port and Starboard Fenders. But the left chimney was called the ' Hatchway,' rather illogically and simply because it looked rather like one.

The Sea Wall Arete, E. Buttress.

We saw all these things and scrambled along under the stern of the Boat, so coming to the near edge of the East Buttress. Here we came upon the ' Breakwater Slabs,' and, putting on the rope, went on to the lower part. But it was clearly a rubber shoe climb for a day when the rocks were dry, and we came off again, just to the left, across a grass gully, there seemed to be a possible climb up what might be called either the edge of slabs or an arete, which led to a cave pitch under a steep face. The start of the climb

was a short but steep pitch which was managed with some help from behind, and the better man of the party was wisely persuaded to take the lead just below the cave. The climb so far had been up the right edge of slabs with a curious niche to cross at one place. Now came the ascent of a wall on the left a few feet short of the cave (which is really a right-angled corner), and above that an exposed traverse to the left followed by an upward traverse to the right, and then a more direct ascent, completed the climb. We built a cairn, satisfied that the route was a fine one and different from anything which we had met before. Later on it was named the ' Sea Wall Arete.'

The Bilge.

We now walked along the top of the cliffs and then went on to the Boar, where we built a small cairn, although we had not yet reached it by a climbing route. After that, we went down to the west gully in snow, and, looking up, saw that it was divided from a more westerly branch by a fine needle—for so it looked from below. It fell to the weaker member of the party to lead this, and, while the scrambling was interesting enough with snow on the rocks, it is sufficient to say that his capacity was not overtaxed. What had looked from below to be a fine isolated pinnacle was found on arrival there to fade horizontally into the fellside, and the hoped-for needle earned its later name of ' The Bilge.'

After this comparative disappointment, we descended the west gully to its foot. It was completely filled with hard snow, and so steep that, having no axes, we put on the rope and I played George down carefully whilst he kicked rather scanty steps. I had the hope that hidden under the snow would be a fine rock hollow, something like the first pitch of Easter Gully, but that was not the case.

Starboard Chimney.

The West Gully brought us to the foot of Starboard Chimney, which, to our surprise, proved to be comparatively free of snow. George led up to it, and the two pitches gave very good climbing—particularly the upper one, which only just' went' in the conditions. The formation of the rock in this pitch makes it very awkward, and at the time we thought that the chimney should be classed as ' severe,' but later on we relented somewhat, because we thought that the conditions had been rather against us. It was a very fine

lead, conditions or no conditions. There was one very curious feature to be seen during the ascent of the chimney. Its left wall is very nearly vertical, and just above the top of the first pitch there is a curious long flake of rock, perhaps 3 feet wide and 3 or 4 inches thick, which is attached to the rock above and below, but is separated from the wall by a space a few inches wide for the greater part of its length (the ' Clinker ').

Having emerged from the chimney, we again went to the top of the Boat, now honourably ours, and then made a bee-line for Wasdale Head over the top of Kirkfell. As a name was needed for the crags, we consulted Jim, the huntsman, and he told us that the knoll lower down the fellside was called Boat Howe. So we christened the new rocks ' Boat Howe Crags,' and made arrangements for a more serious exploration at Whitsuntide.

The Crags.

It may be said here that the name of ' Boat Howe ' obviously suggested a nautical terminology for the rocks. The Boat lies in harbour, with its bows pointing in, and, in general, the names so far given have a more landward significance the nearer the rocks are to Beckhead and a more seaward one towards Black Sail. (Is there any connexion between the names of Black Sail and Boat Howe ? They are curious.) Thus the first prominent arete met on the way to the Boat from Beckhead has no good climbing upon it, fine although it looks ; the name ' Longshoreman's arete ' is therefore apt enough. Then comes a fine gully and its west wall forms the east edge of the East Buttress. This deserves the name ' Custom House Arete,' and a good climb from the gully to the arete was christened ' Coastguard Climb.' A route of less interest between the Custom House arete and the Sea Wall arete may appropriately be called the ' Esplanade climb,' and on the far side of the ' Sea Wall' are as fittingly the ' Breakwater Slabs and Lighthouse.' Then comes the Boat with its ' Fenders,' and the only route yet made on the West Buttress may be called the ' Horizon Climb.' I climbed the knoll of rock between Red Combe and Black Sail alone one day in the hope that there might be something there which would complete the terminology with an ' Offing Climb,' but found nothing worthy of the description.

The Hatchway.

Leslie Letts and I reached Wasdale Head that Whitsun a day before Basterfield was to join us, and 1 had spoken so much about the crags that we had, of course, to go up at once to see them. This was on May 30, and we reached the Boat by the same route as before. George and 1 had not examined the East face of the Boat at our first visit, and Leslie and I proceeded to do so. The chimney looked attractive and so we climbed it. It is a square-cur affair, and, although its logical name should have been the ' Port' or ' Larboard' Chimney, we could not resist calling it the ' Hatchway.' At the top of this we found ourselves in a sort of hollow with the fine east wall of the Boat rising on our right. A nearly vertical, but broken wall led to a sloping ledge with a spike belay. Above this was a quite smooth slab. But against the right side of the slab there was a square and flat-topped rock tower of nearly the same width from top to bottom, and there was a crack between it and the slab. We could not be sure that it was possible to get off from the top of the tower if we arrived there, and so we resolved to examine it from above.

The face of the Boat for a short distance to the left of the slab looks impracticable, and beyond that is a more broken but steepish scoop. I traversed to the foot of this scoop and went up to the top of the Boat. The climb did not seem worthy of a name after our next adventure (it might have been called the ' Gangway ').

The Rigging Climb.

Having looked at the rock tower from above, we found that it would be easy to get up from it, and therefore went down again by an easy way from the neck of the Boat to the top of the Hatchway. Leslie then led the steep wall on which we had already scrambled. From near the spike belay an awkward stride landed him at the foot of the tower, the ascent of which proved to be much easier than either of us had expected. As we had known, no further difficulty then separated us from the top of the Boat. This climb, which we called the ' Rigging,' is a sensational one with a character of its own. From below, its steepness is imposing, but the technical difficulty is less than would appear at first sight. The stride, however, is exposed, and the whole climb is a delightful one. It was a fine ' lead.'

As George and 1 had gone no further east than the Sea Wall arete, it was possible that the fine cliffs extended much further towards Beckhcad. So Leslie and I then went along to examine them. The serious rock seemed to end in the gully past Custom House arete, and we engineered and cairned a way to Beck head, finding that to be the better mode of reaching the crags; so we came back to Wasdale Head, where Basterfield had arrived.

Larboard Arete.

Next day, May 31, George, Leslie, Lee and 1 set out again for Boat Howe. We went by Beckhead, our chief object being to see if a route could be made up the outer face of the Boat. We walked underneath this, and then went up the west gully to the top of the Boat to examine it from above. As the rocks were not too dry, we gave up the idea and descended by the new Rigging climb. Lee and I then scrambled down the Port Fender whilst the others came down the scree gully on the east, and we then roped up again to attempt the Larboard arete of the Boat. George led, and the climb proved to be fine until we came to the last pitch—a severe one. The rocks were here too wet to allow risks to be taken, and so Lee and I descended and then went to the top of the Boat, where we gave George a loose rope in case of a slip. No slip came, however, and he and Leslie rejoined us, whereupon we all went down the East Gully and made towards Breakwater Slabs, for we had seen that they were quite dry.

Breakwater Slabs and Lighthouse.

Putting on our rubbers, George, Lee and I roped up, and then George led straight up the centre of the slab. The climb proved to be severe, and the lead was magnificent. Lee followed with no more than the moral assistance of the rope, and then I also did. Above us now rose a sort of tower, the face of which increased in steepness as it ascended, and the right side of which looked to be nearly vertical. We went up the right edge of the face, finding it to give an interesting and difficult climb. The top of this tower was sufficiently separated from a face of cliff on the left to justify the name of the ' Lighthouse ' which we gave to it. This whole climb—the Breakwater Slabs and Lighthouse—is the hardest, but not the most sensational, which has yet been made on Boat Howe Crags, and it has subsequently defeated some strong parties.

Whilst we were making a cairn on the top of the Lighthouse, Leslie rejoined us, and then we all descended by the Sea Wall climb, and so returned to Wasdale by Beckhead. It had been a splendid day to give us two such fine climbs as Larboard Arete (with a reservation) and the Breakwater Slabs and Lighthouse.

I could not return to Wasdale until Christmas, but George Basterfield visited the crags twice; on the first occasion making the first ' official' ascent of Larboard Arete, and on the second exploring the outer wall of the Boat with Cecil Wood. They had first repeated the Larboard arete, and after the exploration, they descended by the Rigging and Hatchway, then examining the Starboard arete from below. After that, they made the second ascent of Starboard Chimney and George attempted to climb its left (facing) wall from the top of the first pitch. I have mentioned the curious flake on the wall which we called the ' Clinker.' He went up beside this, but failed to find the traverse a little higher up, which Hazard and I subsequently used. So he traversed inwards and regained the chimney after a ' nasty' climb. They then descended the Sea Wall climb and went on to the Breakwater Slabs without climbing them.

My next visit was made with E. H. Pollitt on the last day but one of 1925. The rocks were too wet and cold for any of the better routes, and all we did was to climb the East Buttress by the Slabs between the Sea Wall climb and the Coastguard arete. The route had too little character to earn more than the name of the ' Esplanade Climb.' At Easter, I visited the crags alone with my camera, explored a sheep walk across the West Buttress above its slabs, examined all the rocks carefully, and finally went up the gully between Longshoreman's arete and the Custom House arete, there seeing some fine rock and possible climbs. Next day, I persuaded J. V. Hazard to come and look at the crags, and we explored the face of the Boat and the Starboard arete from below, and also a fine route up the west wall of the Boat which starts almost at the foot of Starboard Chimney. On the following day, April 3, 1926, we returned to the crags for more serious work. Although the climbs which we then made were entered in the climbing book at Wasdale Head, they have not yet been described elsewhere ; and no apology is needed for the present description, because some of them are of exceptional character.

Coastguard Climb.

We arrived from Beckhead and first went up and down Longshoreman's arete, finding little there of interest. Then we descended into the gully which I had explored a couple of days before, arriving a little below the foot of a fine chimney or crack on its right (facing) wall. This we reached by an upward traverse, to find that it was not easy to enter, but then gave a short and very good climb. From the top of the chimney (which I found later could also be reached by a sloping groove more to the right) an upward traverse on the wall of the gully led to the foot of a broken rib and slabs which landed us on the edge of the Custom House arete towards the top, to which we then went. The climb had been a good one, but without very much technical difficulty save at the chimney, which is perhaps almost severe. We called it the ' Coastguard Climb.'

Starboard Arete by the Clinker.

Having descended by the Sea Wall Arete we went along to the west side of the Boat with the intention of climbing up by the Clinker. The foot of this climb starts at the top of the first pitch of Starboard Chimney ; and the steep rock of the Starboard Fender offered an attractive alternative route to that place. The climb up the Fender proved to be good and difficult, its chief feature being an interesting hand traverse. Above this was a stance in a small niche, the left wall of which is a sharp and rather smooth leaf of rock which is set steeply and forms also the right wall of Starboard Chimney between the two pitches. We had reached this niche from the foot of the Fender, up and then to the left—the way is a forced one. From it, a possible route up and to the right seemed to lead to the top of the Fender, but our present object was to gain the chimney, and Hazard, who led these climbs, went over the leaf of rock to the left. This landed us in the Starboard Chimney between its two pitches (the rapid and complete change of surroundings as you go from niche to chimney is surprising), and then we went down a little to the top of the first pitch. The left (facing) wall of the chimney looks to be nearly vertical, but some holds offered a way directly up on the right side of the Clinker, and near to it. This landed us a few feet above the top of the Clinker on a small stance which is the right end of a

narrow ledge which runs outwards to the left on the fine wall far up above the foot of the chimney. The ledge runs slightly upwards until it ends suddenly where the smooth wall turns at right angles into a grass-floored niche high up on the west wall of the Boat (the direct climb up the wall from the foot of the chimney would land the climber in this niche). The far end of the ledge, which forms a sort of belay, is at some height above the grass, and the descent to the niche, more or less of a drop, is exposed and awkward. On the other side of the niche a short crack and scoop led up to the left on to the crest of the Starboard Arete, just above its very steep lower part, at a place where there is a proper belay. Above this, we climbed the arete to its top. This climb we christened the ' Starboard Arete by the Clinker.' We descended it next day, but the route has not again been visited, as far as my knowledge goes. Yet it gives a very difficult climb of great interest throughout, and one full of sensation and exposure with a character of its own. Having made this route, we were satisfied for the day and descended by the Rigging climb to reach Beckhead and Wasdale.

The Stern Girdle Traverse.

Hazard and I returned next day in order to examine the face of the Boat from above. After again exploring that face from below, we ascended the Larboard arete and made a delicate traverse across the upper face of the Boat from the top of the severe upper pitch. This traverse landed us at a fine block— ' The Capstan'—from which I played Hazard down the face on a rope, but it proved impossible that day to make connexion from above with the highest point reached from below, and the feat has not yet been accomplished. The route which we explored on these occasions is in the exact centre of the face of the Boat, where a narrow fissure may be seen in places. A logical name for it would be the ' Rudder ' or ' Stern' climb. Between this line and the Larboard arete are two broken scoops which lead up to the left. These seemed to offer routes of ascent when Basterfield and I first examined the face, and he later explored the left-hand one, but without success.

After this present exploration, it occurred to us that we might continue our traverse of the face to the belay on the Clinker climb, and make a sort of Girdle traverse by descending that route. This we did, finding that the descent was at least as interesting and

difficult as the ascent. When we reached the niche on the Starboard Fender, we ascended the Fender to its summit and then descended it down to the niche again and so by the hand traverse to its foot. The Fender gave us another fine piece of climbing, and the whole route—up the Larboard arete, traverse of the upper face, down the Clinker route, up to the top of the Starboard Fender, and then down to its foot—proved to be a long one. We named it ' The Stern Girdle Traverse.' Perhaps the ascent and then the descent of the upper half of the Fender makes the traverse a little artificial, but even if that part were to be left out, and the lower part of the Fender were to be descended directly after gaining the niche, the traverse would still be a very fine climb. Most of it is very difficult, some of it is severe, and all of it is extremely interesting, with the most enjoyable changes in the variety of the climbing.

Horizon Climb.

Having arrived at the end of the traverse, we then walked over to the foot of the West Buttress to have a look at its splendid slabs. These are rather deterrent, and have not yet been attempted as a direct climb, but we thought that we saw a way up the Buttress and proceeded to try it. The slabs themselves are bounded on the right by a buttress and tower. Ascending the right edge of the slabs we came to a stance in a corner, and an ascending traverse on the projecting wall of the buttress led to the right up on to its crest near a dwarf tree. This traverse was rather awkward, and it was followed by the ascent of steepening rocks which were somewhat loose. These brought us to the base of a steep tower at the level of the top of the slabs. Here we made a long traverse to the left across the top of the slabs and then ascending on steep grassy ledges ; and another ascending traverse to the right up grass, landed us on the sheep walk near a curious spike of rock (The Cleat) which I had found on a solitary exploration. Good rock then led up to the top of the buttress. We called this the ' Horizon Climb.' It is a fine route and a long one, perhaps the longest of all the climbs on Boat Howe Crags in actual height. It is, however, slightly marred by the presence of loose rock in the middle part, and by the absence of belays on the long traverse. But the climb is quite justifiable if the rock be treated with care, and the exposure is grand.

These two climbing days were the last upon which the crags gave me anything new. During a solitary ramble on December 31, 1926, I explored the rocks between Black Sail and Red Combe, where there might have been an ' Offing Climb,' but thought that it would be too artificial; after that, an examination of the gullies between the West Buttress and the Boat was equally fruitless ; but another exploration of the gully between Longshoreman's arete and the East Buttress shewed some good rock above the level of the Coastguard climb. On subsequent visits, usually at Christmas, we have only repeated some of the previous climbs. The rocks at that time of year are usually too cold for experiments.

Boat Howe is a fine mass of cliffs, and each climb upon it is completely different from others—not one of them is a ' variation ' or artificial type of route. The routes are far apart; they lead naturally up by obvious lines, usually forced ; and their variety is great. Starboard Chimney would have delighted the earliest generation of rock climbers, and it is remarkable that they missed it in the days when the district was hunted for gullies. Larboard arete is a fine ridge climb, such as might have gladdened the early explorers of the Napes. The Sea Wall arete and the Rigging climb are not quite like anything else; but the Breakwater Slabs might well have found their place on Gimmer Crag, and the Clinker climb (which also has unique features) is as exposed a face climb of the ledge variety as one might wish to have.

To these attractions, Boat Howe Crags must add that of possible new routes, some of them at the limit of severity. There are certainly some short and good climbs to be made on the west wall of the gully between Longshoreman's and Custom House aretes. The East Buttress offers severe variations of the Sea Wall climb between it and the Lighthouse. On the Boat itself there are three possible (or impossible ?) routes up the face—the two grooves on the left side near Larboard arete and the central route. The Starboard arete direct is another obvious line, which seems to verge upon the impossible ; but the ascent to it by the west wall from near the foot of Starboard Chimney to the grass niche reached by the Clinker route is probably less impracticable. The great slabs of the West Buttress are challenging, if also rather repellent.

These are perhaps the chief possibilities of the Crags, but there are others.

In any case, there the Crags are—with problems still to solve, or with a good day's sport on known routes. Perhaps the way to them is too rough and roundabout to make the climbs very popular, but what is to be found there is worth the journey many times over. It comes to me that perhaps all this is making too much song about it, and that parental pride may bias me. But then I remember Breakwater Slabs and Lighthouse and the Stern Girdle Traverse, and it seems to me that those who make these climbs will not have anything but respect for Boat Howe Crags. If, however, they are not yet satisfied, let them try the face of the Boat.

NOMENCLATURE

J. H. DOUGHTY

The christening of a child is a solemn affair which often involves protracted debate before the infant's arrival and a certain pomp and ceremony at the actual performance. Even the advent of a new puppy may throw the apple of discord into a peaceful household. And when it comes to a ship : well, I imagine that the total amount of money spent, one way and another, over the christening of the new Cunarder would have sufficed to build a handsome pleasure yacht for any of us, and left a sizeable sum over to pay the wages of the crew.

By contrast with all this palaver, the naming of mountains and crags is a casual, haphazard business. We can trace three main sources of mountain nomenclature. First of all are the traditional names whose origins are lost in antiquity : they are presumably the choice of those who lived in the immediate vicinity, and owe what virtue they possess to the fact that they could only have survived by appealing to the popular imagination as being reasonably suitable. Secondly we have the inventions of surveyors and map makers. Lastly come those names which we owe to explorers and, especially in recent times, to mountaineers.

When we consider and compare these various types of mountain names, we notice one curious fact which it is not easy to account for. I mean the fact that, on the whole, the traditional names are so much more pleasing than the rest. On the face of it, this ought not to be. They must so often have been due to rude, illiterate peasants, the product of their uncomprehending wonder or superstitious dread. How much superior should be the conceptions of those who have not only the advantage of greater culture, but also a deeper regard for the hills. For if there is one point on which that modest fellow the mountaineer feels himself immeasurably superior to the vulgar herd, it is not on his ability to reach the summits so much as on his far keener appreciation of their beauty and sublimity than is vouchsafed to those who stay below. You have only to read its literature to realise the unanimity of

mountaineering opinion on this subject, Ruskin's objection notwithstanding. But imagine a proposal that such names as Monte Rosa, Jungfrau, and Matterhorn should be obliterated from the memory of man, restoring to the Alps the innocence of Eden in preparation for a grand rechristening on modern aesthetic lines, with the committee of the Alpine Club (shall we say) in the role of Adam. Who would view such a prospect without the direst horror ? Certainly no one would object more strongly than the gentlemen I have mentioned.

It is difficult to formulate any principles of taste in this matter of names. You may argue that Monte Rosa is a beautiful name with romantic associations and that no conceivable substitute could be so pleasing. But this will hardly do, because many of the old names, for which we feel so much affection, are for us quite meaningless. Nobody but the learned can attach any significance to most of our English hill names, and the learned are apt to disagree among themselves. Yet the unlearned are just as passionately attached to the traditional titles. To them Penyghent is as sacred as Red Pike ; some of them prefer Blencathra, which they can't understand, to Saddleback, which they can. Alpine names may be, on the whole, more self-explanatory, but only to those who know the languages; and ignorance seems to be no impediment to love. How many Englishmen could say whether Grivola or Meije mean something definite like Great Gable, or are just obscure proper names. Who knows what Kamet means, or Elbruz, or Cotopaxi—and who cares ? The truth is, that our liking for these depends on nothing more reasonable than the fact that we are used to them. So much so, that whilst most people outside Italy consider it an outrage that Mont Blanc de Courmayeur should have been rechristened Monte Mussolini, they are complacently indifferent to the fact that the highest mountain in the world should have been given the name of a surveyor. Yet I have no doubt that a proposal to change its name to (say) Mount Houston would provoke loud expostulation.

There is one thing to be said for this devotion to the traditional names, namely, that in regions where such names were not available, the results of modern christening have not been very inspiring. When one looks down a list of peaks in certain parts of the world,

notably the Rockies, and sees the monotonous reiteration of purely personal names, one is inclined to be thankful that in Europe our forbears have taken the job out of our hands. Everest, Cook, McKinley; these, perhaps, by virtue of long association we may pass ; but when it comes to an endless string of Mt Adams, Mt Atkins, Mt Baker, Mt Begbie, Mt Tom, Dick, and Harry—culminating in such atrocities as Mt Wilfred Laurier, Mt Sir Sandford, Mt Quincey Adams, and Mt Bullock Workman—one feels the force of Archer Thompson's protest against all such attempts to establish ' a personal lien on Nature's freehold.' They manage these things better in South Africa, where such names as Sentinel Peak, the Rockeries, the Cathedral, and Monk's Cowl show that human imagination has not become quite so barren as one might otherwise have supposed. But the Mountain Club of South Africa has a special peak-naming committee, with the result that when its members make new discoveries, they do not dub them as sycophancy or personal vanity or mere poverty of invention may dictate, but suggest a name to the committee after due thought and with some sense of responsibility.

There is no work in this country for a peak-naming committee, unless, maybe, the Rev. Elmslie feels that those of his two-thousand-footers which now figure modestly as ' Anon ' or ' do. 2173 ' should be properly christened. But it is just worth considering whether we should not do well to set up a committee for the naming of new climbs, as these continue to pour upon us in unabated spate. At present the right of naming is generally conceded to the leader of the first ascent. This has certain obvious advantages and may be regarded as a harmless concession to *amour propre* so long as the names accorded are reasonably acceptable.

But are they ? That is the crucial point. It is, of course, largely a matter of taste ; but I think we shall be helped in deciding it if we try to analyse the general principles which have governed the naming of climbs in the past and the lines on which they seem to be developing. To this end I have endeavoured to classify about 300 climbs on the more important crags in the Lake District as given in the club guides and in recent copies of the *Journal.* My list is not exhaustive and my classification is rough ; but the results should serve our turn.

I find that the names can broadly be placed in four categories, viz. : *(a)* personal, *(b)* alphabetical or numerical, (,,) topographical, *(d)* descriptive. **Typical** examples of these are Gwynne's Chimney, Route i, South-East Gully, and the Grooved Wall. Some names are hard to fit into any of these classes. Such names as Joas and Asterisk may be truly descriptive ; if so, the allusions are beyond me—unless the last-mentioned was christened on the lines of Father Knox's famous acrostic light, which runs :—

The steeple-jack on chimney-pot
He * an awful lot.

Then there are others like May Day Slabs and the Cocktail Route, which are imaginative rather than descriptive. I have lumped all these in my fourth group (which should perhaps be styled ' descriptive, imaginative, cryptic and miscellaneous') because any further subdivision seemed unhelpful. I have, however, split the climbs chronologically, in order to discover the changing trends of fashion. The results are given below :—

	Personal	Alphabetical or Numerical	Topo-graphical	Descriptive etc.	Totals
Before 1900. .	. . 22	5	27	17	71
1900-1914 ..	. . 11	8	24	20	**63**
1915-1925 ..	. . 2	5	25	**65**	**97**
1926-1933 ..	. . 0	**9**	16	48	73
Totals	•• 35	27	92	150	304

This analysis brings out some significant facts. The most striking is the complete eclipse of the personal name. The early pioneers were not vainglorious men, and I don't suppose that names like Slingsby's Chimney and O. G. Jones' Route were the choice of those eponymous heroes themselves. But they were a fairly small coterie, and they passed the butter round pretty industriously. Well, that fashion has passed, and we need not be sorry ; though some may feel a transient feeling of regret that there exists no single major climb definitely associated with such names as Herford and Kelly. A curious off-shoot may be noted in the semi-personal name such as Doctor's Chimney. It appears at its best in Wayfarers' Crack and at its worst in the Oxford and Cambridge Buttress, though the latter may be forgiven if only because it gave rise to that delightful bit of debunking, Borstal

Buttress. Perhaps we shall have a Western Brothers' Climb before long.

Almost as striking as the decay of the personal is the steady persistence of the alphabetical style, surely the most arid, unimaginative, and benighted of nomenclatures. It is true that the total of nine in the post-1925 group is unduly swollen by a tidal wave towards the end of 1927, which swept G. G. Macphee several times up Green Gable in a surge of Hellenic inspiration, and left the crags pock-marked with divers symbols from the Greek alphabet, including that remarkable climb Ipseelon (it had degenerated to Epsilon by the following year).

The topographical system has kept up well, but is at last on the decline. This is inevitable, for after a time its extension depends on the exploitation of new climbing grounds rather than the discovery of new climbs on the old crags. You have your North Climb and your North-west. Then comes a new one in between, and we have the Nor'-nor'-west. By this time the mariner is getting a bit scared at the prospect of boxing the compass. Besides, there is always the likelihood that some of the new discoveries will render the old names less appropriate than they seemed at first. With such names as Right-hand Route and Left-hand Route the dangers of rapid bankruptcy are even more obvious.

Both the alphabetical and topographical systems are the offspring of the same unhappy union—a marriage of impoverished imagination with the scientific spirit. There is something attractive about the idea of a name which will help you to locate the climb, just as (I understand) the chemist who comes across a word like dimethyl ^-aminophenol knows at once the exact make-up of the substance bearing that fearsome title. If we really wished our climbs to be catalogued after that fashion, I have no doubt the scientists could devise a scheme which would meet all the exigencies of the case. But who wants such a cold-blooded classification ? Any climb that is worth its salt has a character of its own, a personality almost; it demands a title more eloquent than a motor-car registration number, a name on which the mind may dwell with affection, or, at the very least, respect.

If I am right in this, then it is clearly to names of the descriptive or imaginative type that we must look for our salvation.

Purely descriptive names which are also pleasing seem rather hard to come by. The Slanting Buttress, the Grooved Arête, the Giant's Crawl, and Scimitar Ridge—these are models of their kind, but it is not easy to go on adding to them. One popular essay in the descriptive depends on picking out a couple of salient features of the climb and harnessing them. The prototype of these names is the Slab and Notch Climb ; and it is curious that it was unflattered by imitation, in the Lake District at any rate, for more than half a century (that is, if we except that oddity the Arete, Chimney, and Crack, which is an inventory rather than a name). Then Holland and Kelly, with their Rib and Slab, and Nook and Wall climbs, started a fashion which has gained considerable vogue. The later imitations, as is almost inevitable, produce an increasing sense of artificiality, and it might be as well if the fashion were allowed to slumber for another fifty years.

When we go from the purely descriptive to the imaginative name, the task of analysis becomes harder. Harder, too, is it to say what are the requirements for a first-class title of this kind. First and foremost I should demand that it ought to be a good name in itself; it should have boldness and character, and come trippingly to the tongue. Some, such as the Devil's Kitchen or the Crack of Doom, are so superlatively good in these respects that one accepts them without further stipulation. Where the intrinsic merit of the name is less, we must insist, in addition, on a certain aptness either to the character of the climb or to some circumstance, not too obscure or trivial, connected with it. One of the best examples of this type is Tophet Bastion, so called, of course, because it guards one side of Great Hell Gate.

The reasons for the choice of any particular name may be very curious. Many years ago Kelly led a new climb at Laddow. It was neither named nor recorded on that occasion, but nearly a year later I led him up it and made a new direct finish. As far as we knew, it had not been done in the interim. We agreed that it could do with some drastic gardening and might then become a popular route, and we decided that it deserved a note in the *Rucksack Club Journal.* The question of a name arose, but we could think of nothing suitable. The next evening we were together at the opera. They were playing *Faust,* and while Mephistopheles was warbling

his seductions to Martha in the garden scene, **our** talk about gardening the climb came back into my mind. This odd concatenation of ideas produced an inspiration. Our climb, I said, must be called the Garden Wall, and so it was. It was not a specially suitable name for that climb, and the imaginative effort is not one which I look back upon with pride. I merely cite it as an instance of the strange, unguessable way in which a name may originate. An even more curious history lies behind the name of one of the Pillar climbs. A certain member of the Club was known to his inmates as ' Ap.' One day somebody suggested that it would be a bright idea for him to lead a new climb and christen it the Appian Way. It was some years before that idea reached fruition ; ' Ap ' did not actually lead the climb, but was on the first ascent. Here again the name is not particularly appropriate to the climb. The Appian Way, like its later neighbour, Hadrian's Wall, suggests something straight and uncompromising ; actually, both climbs are rather tortuous.

There must be several climbs whose names have an esoteric significance; they provoke one's curiosity. Why Rainbow Ridge ? Is it prismatic-hued ; was it first climbed on a showery day ; or does it, perchance, lead to another climb called Valhalla ? Did the first leader in Toreador Gully have a desperate encounter with a savage bull ? Others have asked what song the Sirens sang ; but I would fain know what curses first rent Blasphemy Crack, what orgies initiated the Cocktail Route.

I certainly think that climbers who invent names of this order should give their reasons, as they say in examinations. The Christian Church was founded on a pun, and I see no just cause why the name of a climb should not be founded on a joke, but it must not be a private joke. There is, for example, a climb on Ravenstones in Yorkshire known as Wedgewood Crack. It is not due, as you might suppose, to one whose love for the f.pplied arts was stronger than his spelling ; it does not derive from any special symmetry of form about the climb, or from a fancied resemblance between gritstone and porcelain. It simply, as the guide-book tersely remarks, " summarises instructions given during the first ascent." Without that brief explanation the name would be an enigma ; with it, it becomes an agreeable fancy, and to those

who knew that leader, awakens many pleasant memories.

Morley Wood was not very well known to the generality of Fell and Rock members. I don't think he ever wrote for this journal ; but those who are acquainted with his work in the *Rucksack Club Journal,* still more those who knew the man himself, will remember the charmingly unaffected humour which was one of his chief traits. There was a new route worked out at Castle Naze. It led from the foot of the rocks to a pitch on the Girdle Traverse called Paradise Corner, and Wood, with obvious aptness, christened it Pilgrim's Progress. Not content with that, he prefaces its description in the guide-book with the delightful remark : ' " Interesting, but steep," as Huckleberry Finn observes of Bunyan's book.' I have no doubt that the play of his gay and fertile fancy had much to do with the comparative freshness one finds among the names of the gritstone climbs.

It is not what one would expect on the face of things. The gritstone crags are for the most part unimpressive in appearance. From a distance they are barely discernible scars on the hill-side ; for any sort of dramatic view you must rely on catching them in profile. Closer inspection reveals a mass of rock of a dirty brown-black colour, rarely exceeding sixty to seventy feet in height and undistinguished by any special boldness of form. You would hardly expect them to be such a spur to the imagination as Doe Crags or Pillar Rock. But perhaps there is some subtle law of compensation at work. Perhaps mountain inventiveness, like mountain flora, will not flourish in too rich a soil.

Whatever the cause, the gritstone names are among the best. Laddow Rocks would never suggest a Grecian temple to the mind, but it has the classical touch. Here is Gallic Buttress, so-called because it is divided by twin cracks into three parts. Here are Scylla and Charybdis lying in wait to engulf such luckless mortals as fall from the Sirens' Rock hard by ; and a little further on the Anvil Climb nods to the Tower Face across the Garden Wall. The major crags, it is true, have some fine names among them: Savage Gully, Giant's Crawl, the Holly Tree Wall, the Gashed Crag—these could not easily be bettered. But I doubt if Lakeland and Snowdonia together could pick a team to beat the best of the Grits, when we recall that the names already cited might

be reinforced by such as Via Dolorosa, the Flying Buttress, the Green Streak, Caliban's Cave, and the Speckled Band.

Yes, on the whole, I think I shall plead for the institution of a climb-naming committee of the Fell and Rock Club. After all, our climbs are something we regard with a feeling akin to affection ; it is intolerable that they should be saddled with dull, cacophonous, or purely frivolous names—the products of thoughtlessness or indolence. We could begin with our own district, and then the good idea might spread. Perhaps the Climbers' Club would follow suit in Wales. That is, of course, assuming that there is any necessity ; for I am quite prepared to hear our hon. treasurer demonstrate that in this, as in all other respects, the Welsh are immeasurably superior to the Lakeland climbs.

And lest 1 be reminded how much easier it is to criticise than to create, I hereby make a few suggestions for names to the new body : The Ridge of Sighs, the Knight's Tour, Shelving Slabs, Parson's Pleasure, the Fox-trot, the Crooked Spire, and Hobson's Choice. These may not be up to much ; but, for what they are worth, they are offered gratis and free of all copyright restrictions. There is no great virtue in this, for I am extremely unlikely to have any personal interest in the naming of new climbs. All I ask is that the committee shall not use any of my names till the right climb turns up! An interesting inversion of the natural order of events, and one which, if I could only get some of our younger climbers to take it up, might add a spice of interest to my declining years.

RUPERT CUTS LOOSE

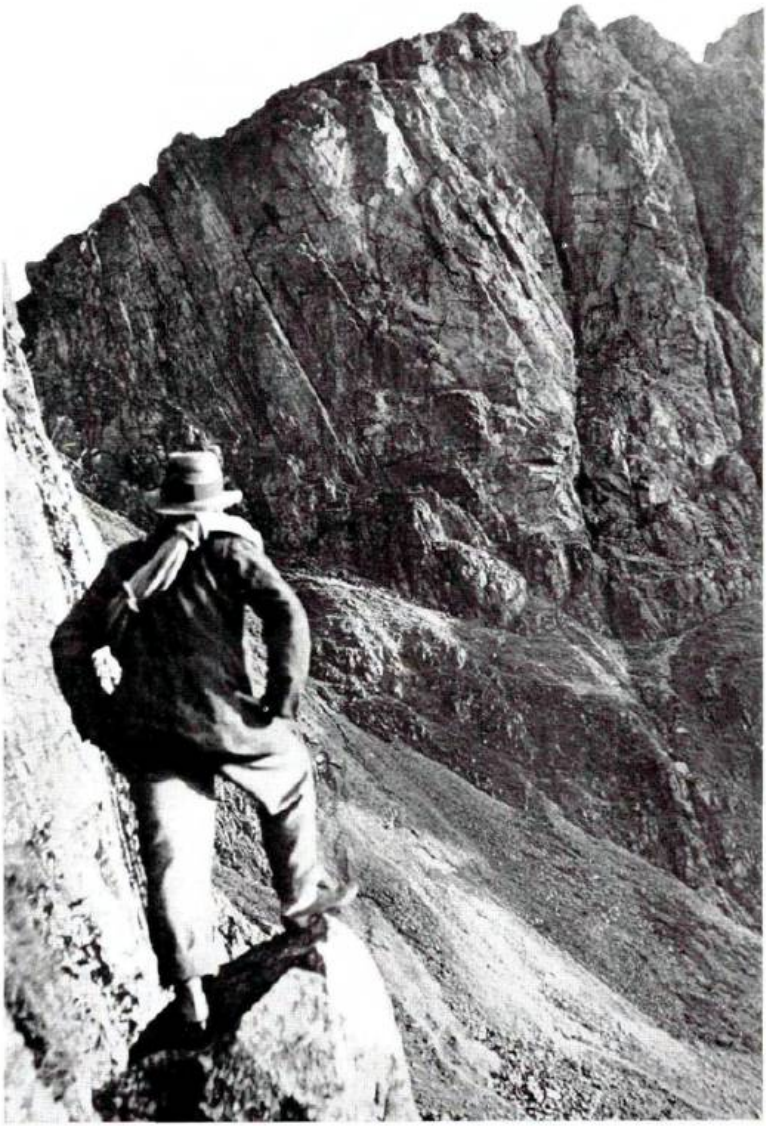
C. F. HOLLAND

When I was young I used to observe with intense interest a picture that hung in the study of my father's parsonage ; so often and for so long did I ga2e at that picture that every line and colour in it is still as plain to my mental vision as it was then to the actual sight. I will describe it to you. There is a background of palm-trees and lurid red sky with angry-looking clouds.

In the foreground is a pile of wood, and bound to it is an anaemic-looking lad piously casting his eyes upwards to a ferocious knife held by an awe-inspiring old gentleman with a long beard. On the left is a thicket festooned with long brambles, entangled in which is a large goat of melancholy visage, also endowed with a long beard. Hovering in the air is a strange being, clad in flowing white garments with a blood-red girdle, purple sandals, a sort of arsenic-green soup plate above his head, and a pair of inadequate wings supporting his *status quo.* Evidently an angel, and a cross-eyed one at that, his right eye fixing Abraham with a stony look, and his left gazing at the melancholy goat with a menacing glare. My sympathies were with the goat, whose sad look filled me with pity, and to a lesser degree with Abraham, on the ground that he was going to be deprived of the pleasure of assassinating Isaac.

For the angel I had nothing but loathing, which I felt also for an enormous and terrifying eye, stuck in the centre of a large red cloud high up in the background. Looking back I can realise that the only good the picture did me lay in the intense pity 1 felt tor the goat, materialising later in a tenderness for animals and even insects ; it is that goat's look that leads me to rescue worms struggling along a dusty road, release treacle-covered wasps, and give shillings to ragged tramps.

To return to the picture of the murder of the goat, I am using this as a kind of parable and applying it in a somewhat peculiar fashion to our club, with the moral coming right at the end anti-phonally.



C.B.

All the time my familiar demon, Rupert, is sitting on my shoulder, and he it is who is really writing this. He is, I fear, in one of his most impish moods, and I regret that much of what he says is quite unprintable, though undeniably spicy. He is plainly intending to end with one of his famous visions ; but we shall see. He wishes me to point out that this picture can be used as a parable of life in our club today, applying to, and capable of being used by, all grades and groups.

Taking, for example, the question of the new guides for a start, and supposing myself to be taking part in the discussion, which, by the way, I most emphatically am not doing, but only supposing myself to be annoyed by the supersession of the Scafell Guide, I could apply the characters in the picture to the situation very pleasantly. Abraham can surely be none other than Kelly, about to slaughter Isaac Speaker, who is, as usual, wanting to sacrifice himself for me ; he is, of course, different from the Isaac of the painting, who is supercilious and irritating, whereas Speaker is always benevolent and emollient. The angel represents the guide committee. I am, of course, not hinting for a moment that they are cross-eyed, far from it; in reality they see remarkably straight. The all-seeing eye, equally of course, belongs to the president. I, naturally, am the melancholy goat. I must reiterate that this is entirely a suppositional picture. I fully agree with the new guides ; I cannot see how any sane person can hesitate to say that they are an excellent idea, and, more than that, a vital necessity.

The Scafell guide is, I know, hopelessly out of date, and cannot possibly be patched or renovated. I am still grateful for having been given the privilege of producing the first edition, and of being one of the pioneers. I could elaborate and bring in my pet enemies as the angry clouds, the brambles, and even as the wood of the funeral pyre. In this connection Abraham's knife would come in very handy.

Other points suitable for this parabolic treatment are the Keswick guides, rubber shoes, or nails, ' severes only,' and the ever-debatable question of ' articles on English climbs for an English journal.'

When I joined the club, twenty-one years ago we were a very happy and united family, engrossed in climbing and generous in

our estimate of other people's performances and capabilities. As a very new and young member of the club I admired the great men of those days : Herford, Lyon, Sansom, the Abrahams, Aldous, with his attempts at a direct ascent of the Devil's Kitchen, Winthrop Young and his hardy band at Pen-y-Pass, and many another tiger.

As a schoolmaster I appreciated to the full the freedom from the littlenesses of life. My holidays were an escape from the stuffy atmosphere of school to the spaciousness of the mountains and the nobility of the men who frequented them. I have often asked myself in these later days : Can it be that some of us are becoming soft, and that the energy of earlier days is not so well directed ? Can it be that we are less noble than the men of old, that the after-war outlook still dominates our ideas, and that some of us have become less worthy of the name of climber, and are not, in the eyes of outsiders, adequately upholding the value and reputation of the noblest sport in the world ? Many of us look on it as something finer and higher even than that.

At this moment Rupert has intervened and the following conversation has taken place :—

Rupert : ' Steady on, that is amply sufficient. You'll have someone laying for you.'

Self: ' I guess I can look after myself.'

Rupert : ' You have said enough ; and now listen to me. A vision has transpired.'

Self : ' I cease. I am all ears.'

Rupert: ' Sh ' !

Rupert's vision as described by ' himself.'

' The scene is a better place than this. I refer to heaven. The characters of the picture are all there, and are sitting together at the same table, a scene strongly reminiscent of that outside a wayside inn on a Sunday evening. Abraham is there. Isaac is there, the angel is there, the melancholy goat is there, and the all-seeing eye. But Abraham is now a jovial old man and his beard scintillates with benevolence ; Isaac smirks superciliously no longer, but seems to have developed into a real lad of the village ; the angel is still cross-eyed, but his optics radiate mirth and good humour ; the melancholy goat has a distinct twinkle

in his eye, and is apparently a great success as a raconteur ; the all-seeing eye is now calm, majestic, tolerant. The party is distinctly noisy, and the liquid they are consuming from vast goblets may have something to do with it. Someone approaches. It is an old man, with a large bundle of keys jangling at his waist. Seemingly someone in authority coming to reprove our party for their noise, mirth and unseemly frivolity. I am mistaken. He has joined them and is drinking out of Abraham's mug ! He has cracked a terrific joke 1 All are roaring with laughter. Heavens above ! Under cover of the general cataclysm of mirth the melancholy goat has drunk the cross-eyed angel's nectar ! Is he annoyed ? No, a thousand times No ! He has merely summoned an attendant for further supplies and is playfully pulling the goat's beard. The all-seeing eye can only be described as grinning audibly ; a remarkable feat when you come to think of it. The vision fades ; perhaps it is as well.'

I am, as a matter of fact, strangely enough at this moment listening to a speaker on the wireless, and he is pointing out how absurd it is that we can't carry on our sports with less argument. He has suggested settling our differences by friendly discussion over a glass of beer. I think he and Rupert have the same idea ; on earth beer, in heaven nectar, both symbolic of kindliness and consideration for others in face of which all differences must cease, or at the worst turn to that wholesome pugnacity which induces respect and friendship for one's opponent.

I suggest that, as exponents of the finest sport in the world, we should set the rest of the world an example and give them a lead.

And now from the lowlands and their obscuring mists let us rise to the uplands, and the clear air and bracing atmosphere of the high country. What is climbing to us in our lives today, and what are we to climbing and also to those with whom we come in contact in our everyday life ? If we are goats need we be melancholy ? If angels need we be cross-eyed and difficult ? **Are** we supercilious, like Isaac ? Are we like Abraham, at times too ready to sacrifice Isaac on the altar of our own righteousness ? Like the all-seeing eye do we glower at all and sundry who happen to differ from us ? Or do we, like Peter, carry the keys that open

the doors of joyousness, tolerance, self-sacrifice, understanding of others, and general benevolence ?

It seems to me that the value of our climbing is bound up inextricably with its effect on our lives in the low country, and the extent to which it leads us to add to the happiness of others, and the uplifting of the lives of those who come into the pathways of our lives. As Walt Whitman says, everything vanishes into unimportance ' before the procession of souls along the roads of the universe.'

Do we add our quota to the volume of progress and give that little impetus which may be so much greater than we realise ?

1 can never forget how a rough and uneducated private soldier, during the war, had the courage to break through the trammels of convention one dark and murky night in the trenches, and how his remark turned me from an agnostic to a Christian. It did not do this all at once ; in fact, it took years to soak in ; but in the end it got home. Bishops had left me unmoved, but one sentence straight from the heart of an uncultured ruffian gave me understanding when all the hierarchy of angels would have failed to convince. I never did like ' angels ' anyway, and I do not suppose we shall find nearly so many of them on the other side as we imagine, but merely human beings like ourselves, though probably slightly sublimated, and certainly a great deal less self-important. All the great truths of life are simple, so let us try and deal with this matter in the **starkest** simplicity. Climbing seems to me to be in advance of other sports in that it is far more closely symbolic of life. There is the leader whose courage and strength make it possible for men of lesser calibre to attain heights otherwise impossible of achievement. To do this he is helpless without the use of the rope. He is also helpless unless those following do all they can to help themselves and are keenly desirous of scaling the heights.

Occasionally he will be able to do nothing unless one of his followers gives a shoulder to the man above him. In short, every member of the party is contributing in some degree to the success of the expedition, while some of the followers will become leaders in their turn, and those who have to drop out owing to age or ill-health can still be of use, provided that they put their

stores of experience at the disposal of the younger generations, and hold aloft the torches of their enthusiasm to light the way for those who come after. And is not this strongly symbolic of life ? There are those who have courage and strength and vision and hand these on to others, raising them from the flat and drab levels of existence to upland lawns, where life takes on a new meaning and conventional values are replaced by stronger and truer ones.

The rope is the power of love and sympathy that lies in such men, attracting their weaker brothers and holding them from falling back by the power of that love. Under the inspiration of their leader others are able to help those in the pathway of their lives, and may become leaders themselves, but only if they possess that power of love without which they cannot uphold the weak and lead them to the sunlit heights, to climb the topmost pinnacles where happiness is pure and unalloyed.

Are we not all capable of becoming leaders to the limits of our capacity, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred-fold ? Is not a thirty per cent, man who gets it better than a hundred percenter who only gets ninety-nine ? In meditation on any subject there are three degrees or stages ; apprehension, or understanding of what the subject means ; association, or identification of ourselves with the subject as affecting us ; application, or the formation of a resolution as to what we are going to do about it.

And so with climbing as our subject we can apprehend that it is not confined to our actual physical performances, but has a spiritual value which can be carried on to the whole of our lives, raising them up to spiritual heights even as our limbs raise our bodies to material ones, and that we can carry others with us, and this is associating ourselves with our subject.

And lastly, the application. What are we going to do about it ? This can only be done by each man for himself, but perhaps I may be allowed to give a few personal ideas as to how a man might set about it.

At this moment Rupert has reappeared, after refreshing himself, doubtless in some entirely reprehensible manner, in that hinterland of the sub-conscious where he spends most of his time. He has told me to shut up as he means to deliver one of his lectures.

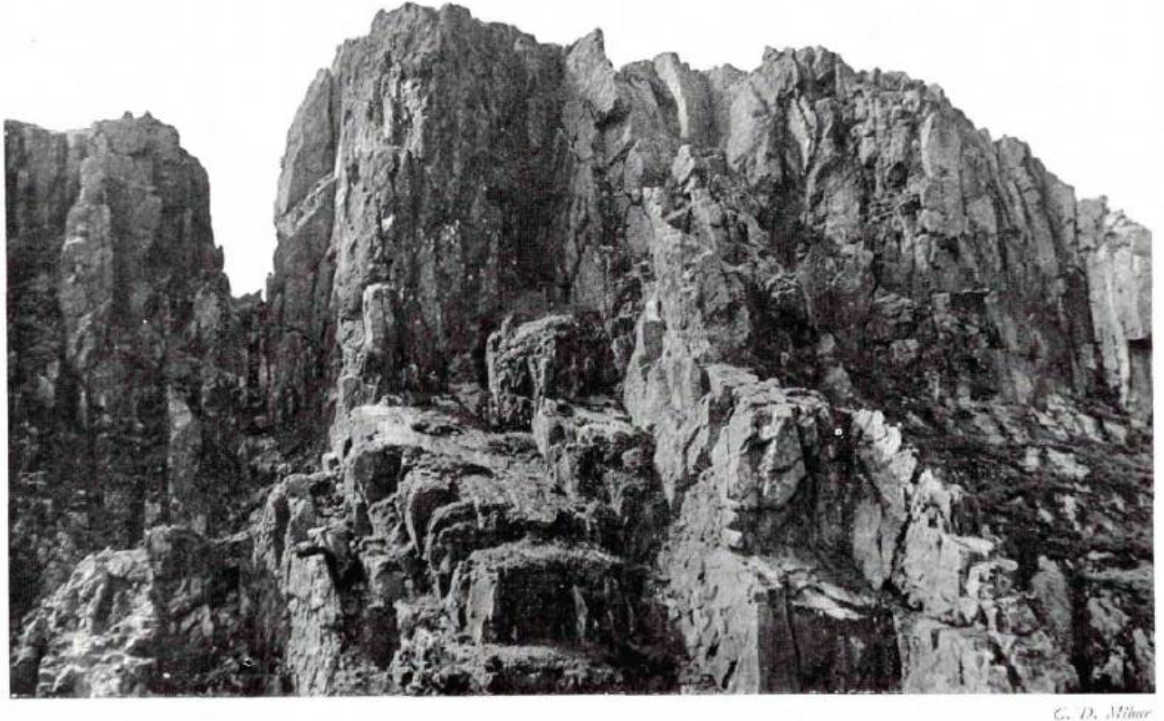
' You see,' says he, ' when you start a climbing holiday you are nearly always in bad condition, soft, your muscles clogged and interlarded with fat, short of wind, and excessively nervous. As the days go on you improve, becoming hard, and with that hardness comes the nerve to tackle difficulties previously far beyond your capacity. You can then lead your party with confidence, and so add to the happiness of others, a fact of which you are too fond of losing sight, preferring to bask in complacent admiration of your own performance, and feeling rather contemptuous towards those who find difficulty where you have not.

' People talk a lot about the inferiority complex, but precious little is said about its big bad brother, the superiority complex, a nasty fellow. You, at any rate, have no excuse for indulging in the latter.

' Unimportant as you know yourself to be, you are even so not nearly so important as you imagine. In fact, you are an absurd fellow. For instance, it seems to me quite absurd that you should lose half the value of your holidays by not taking the trouble to get fit beforehand. You end on the top note on which you might have started. Why on earth don't you keep fit all the time there is ? It is only a matter of taking pains ; getting up a little earlier in the morning and doing a few quite simple physical jerks. Surely you can find some piece of water somewhere in which to bathe every morning ? A bit of running there and back will do you no harm, and as a nerve tonic the bathe is unrivalled, so long as you do not dry yourself, but let the salts of the water sink in.

' Surely you can find some man who can box, and take him on once or twice a week ? For exercise it can't be beaten, and it does not matter if you do get a licking—you deserve it most times.'

And now you may ask me, my young friend, why I counsel you to live thus laboriously and endure all these discomforts. I will tell you. When you contemplate climbing you should make it your first aim to be the leader, the strong man of the party, if you should be needed as such. If you live the life I have indicated you will start your holiday at a high level and be capable of taking the lead straightaway if called upon to do so. You should also aim at living all your life at this level. And why so I Remember



C. D. Milner

PILLAR, E.

that it is axiomatic that you cannot give what you have not got. You cannot give a penny to a blind beggar if you have not got it. I tell you the real reason for and justification of your existence on this planet is that you should so live as to accumulate strength, not for your own glorification, but that you may give it to the weak ; to gain a store of courage to give to the frightened ; a fund of hardness from which you may give to the soft and an infinitude of love that you may be able to give sympathy to those in need of it. The keyword is ' give.' But you cannot give what you have not got, so get it.

No matter what position you have in a climbing party you have a job, whether as leader, or following a man who needs the stimulus of a confident second, or as last man in a strong party, when you can at least preserve a cheerful tone among your companions. And so in life you have a similar job, for life and climbing are parallel. If you give heed to my words you will attain happiness yourself by giving it to others.

You will learn the great secret of life, the secret that evil is only inverted good, that devils are but archangels that have taken the wrong turning, and that all things are working out for the best in the end. Do you know those lines by Kipling ?

> ' Teach us Delight in simple springs,
> And Mirth that has no bitter springs ;
> Forgiveness free of evil done,
> And Love to all men 'ncath the sun.'

Live the debonair life, bring love to everybody and everything, and you will find that there is nothing to forgive, and will be able to say with Whitman, ' I did not know I held so much goodness.'

And so, when you pass over, there will be many an old friend to welcome you and many another of whose friendship and help you were unaware, and they will lead you to the bigger job, to undertake which will be alike your privilege and your right, the job that will make you happy, the job of bringing with ever-increasing power happiness into the lives of others.

THE LAKE DISTRICT AS IT APPEARS TO A RESIDENT

A. R. THOMSON

One chilly December evening a Dauphine guide was being driven from Seascale to Wasdale Head. The moon was bright and he scanned our fells with a certain amount of interest. As he approached the Mecca of climbers he remarked : ' Where are 5'our mountains, these are mounds of grass.' Next day he sampled a climb, ' The Oblique Chimney.' The rocks were wet and cold and he found the ascent none too easy. ' The climbs are break-neck trifles,' he exclaimed. A visit to the Dauphine explained his point of view. How rough and steep the mountains were, and what an array of jagged peaks could be seen from their summits. But, to all of us, I think the Lake District has a charm and an individuality. Look at the photograph in Kelly's Guide of Pillar Rock. Well do I remember the awe and wonder that the view created in my mind when I first saw it in 1907. Then there was the visit to Scafell. Mists were circling round it and we only caught passing glimpses of the great crag. ' That is pinnacle face ! The last party that tried it were all killed.' ' There is Moss Ghyll.' ' That long sloping slab which is shining with moisture is Botterell's slab.' What a monument to one of the best and most daring of cragsmen. Then one remembers Gimmer crag—the bracken below it a glorious brown, the grey crags above, with their narrow sensational ledges, a joy to all expert climbers. To return to Manchester after a week-end in Langdale seemed to intensify the memory, by contrast.

But now for seventeen years the Lake District has been my home, and out of this window I can look out at Bleaberry fell. Its structure changes imperceptibly from year to year, and yet, owing to the effects of light and shade it changes continually. Walla Crag and its gullies constantly catch my eye, and sooner or later I have been able to explore them all. Two are difficult; the one nearest the summit was a disappointment owing to its rotten rock. Then from my back window I can see Barff, which overlooks Bassenthwaite Lake. A friend of mine lived for years just at its base, and

how beautiful the little fell looked in the moonlight, when seen from his front door. For many years I've been exploring Borrowdale, and the result of my explorations has been recorded in the guide. 1 have made no discoveries of any importance ; no climb that will compete with those already done there. A few years ago Black Crag Buttress—a discovery of Keswick climbers—was little visited. It is an interesting and sensational climb just bordering on severe ; one must admit that the rock might be better. But the gully on its left should be treated with respect. C. F. H. had many a narrow escape there from the barrow loads of stones raked down on him by the unskilful feet of the writer.

Some really difficult climbs have been recently discovered on Castle Rock of Triermain. I must confess that the first ascent of one of these was probably postponed for some years by my want of courage and enterprise. I had a leader, able and willing, but the look of the place daunted me and we chose a route of very moderate difficulty instead.

I have spent many a happy half-day on the Benn on the opposite side of the valley. Contrasted with its formidable neighbour, Raven Crag, it seems to afford little opportunity for sport. But it is a nice place for elderly folk. Long slabs and rock faces with plenty of holds ; comfortable grassy slopes on which to rest, well sheltered from the wind, warm even on a cold winter's day if the sun is shining. There don't seem to be so many climbers of moderates nowadays, but if any such happen to visit Castle Rock, and don't like the look of what they see there, let them cross the valley and enjoy the Benn. As an additional inducement I will add that their efforts are not likely to attract spectators.

OLD MAPS

E. W. HODGE

Mountaineers are accustomed to feel a certain interest in or responsibility for the surveying of their mountains, and although nothing now remains to be done in such a district as Cumberland, yet the mountaineer is usually still a more or less accomplished map reader.

A few notes, therefore, on the stages by which maps of the Lakes came first to be available, and on some features of the earlier maps may be of interest. The story is inseparable from some consideration of the needs the early maps were intended to serve.

It was late in the sixteenth century before any comprehensive effort was made to survey the face of Britain. Such few small scale maps as there had been were not built up from actual surveys, which scarcely existed, but had taken as their basis the rough outline furnished by the part of Ptolemy's map relating to Britain, and had proceeded by the correction of a few obvious deficiencies here and there, or the insertion of a few places of interest to the special purpose for which the map was prepared. But in the year 1574 Christopher Saxton, a Yorkshireman, set out on a perambulation of England, and by 1577 had completed a work which must necessarily have been very rough, although scientific in method and comprehensive. There is almost no direct evidence of the way he went to work, apart, that is, from the evidence afforded by his maps. An atlas (the first atlas of English counties ever published) was issued in 1579, [anc]^ facsimiles have recently been published by the British Museum at the price of 5/- per map.

Many of the maps of Cumberland and Westmorland in the editions of Camden's Britannia from 1607 onwards, also bear the imprint, ' Christopher Saxton descripsit, Wilhelmus Kip sculpsit.' They are about 13 in. by 11 in. in size and are originally uncoloured, as the paper is thin.

Much the earliest natural features to attract attention were the rivers. Their valleys were the seats of cultivation, and they were at once highways and the most obvious kind of natural obstacle.

PART OF WHSTMORLANDT-E COMTTATUS

t/lll ^/'w spccttwil ad Briganias (1607J

Consequently, interest even of a sentimental literary sort, gathered around them hundreds of years before the very existence of mountains excited any remark.

The maps based on Saxton are only thinly besprinkled with mountains, inserted in the most empirical way and without any consistency at all. ' Skiddaw Hill' and ' Helvillon Hill' are the only ones in the Lakes mentioned on Saxton's map by their individual names. The same semi-pictorial symbols as do duty for these serve also for road summits, such as ' Shire-stone* upon Wrynose,' and an unnamed one, intended, no doubt, for Honister, and which fills the gap between the headwaters of Buttermere and Borrowdale. Troutbeck village is set on the top of another such marking. Another appears as a sort of compromise between the positions of Scout Scar and Warton Crag, and there are a few more. No distinction is made as to height, and no representation of profile is attempted. Farleton fell is, indeed, a good deal bigger than ' Helvillon,' no doubt because of its prominence as a landmark.

Prominence in the landscape was no doubt the criterion in the rhyme quoted in Camden :

> ' Ingleboro, Pendle, and Penyghcru
> The highest hills between Scotland and Trent.'

On a map of 1771 Ingleborough is declared to be 1760 yards high, Penyghent 1740, and Pendle 1560 yards. This suggests that the map-maker was eager to do honour at the same time to Yorkshire's finest peak, and to the English statute mile, by making the number of yards equal in each.

It is only fair to Camden to say that he quotes, in the same work, another local rhyme :

> ' Skiddaw, Helvillon, and Casticand,
> The highest hills in all England.'

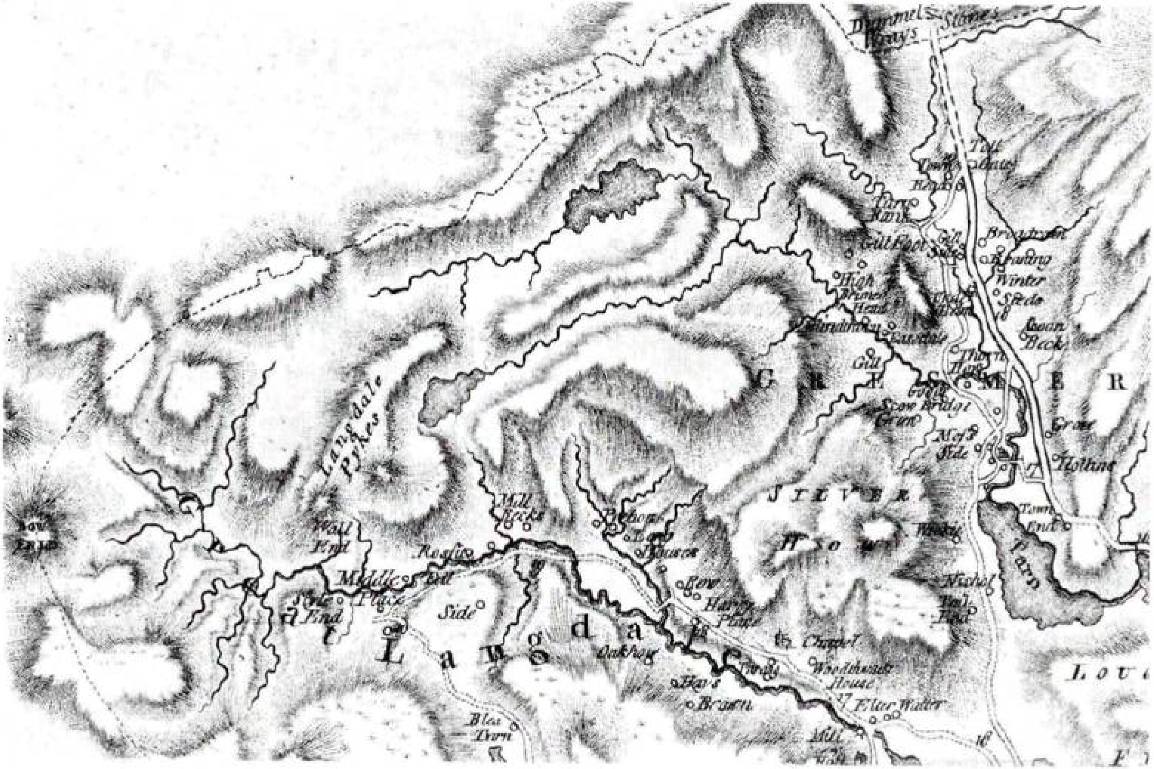
From the earliest maps onwards, private parks are indicated, but more, one feels for their political or jurisdictional than for their geographic interest. Conventionalised trees are frequently shown in parks and in other regions described as forests, like Copeland Forest, but are not to be taken too literally. The primary notion of a park is an enclosure, and that of a forest a waste, in either case with the added idea of game-preserving.

The liberal display of heraldry on seventeenth-century maps, and the names of the owners of estates on eighteenth-century ones, who would be almost identical with the magistracy, were then of vastly more practical importance even to the private traveller than now. A sketch-map prepared for the personal use of Lord Burghley, in Elizabeth's reign shows nothing at all but rivers and the names of the local magistracy and gentry. Map-making, on the county scale at least, owes its birth quite as much to political considerations as to interest in natural phenomena ; and the official Heralds, whose business it was to make their own local Visitations for the ordering of precedence, were sometimes inclined to regard the earlier map-makers as interlopers, or quacks.

Of course no roads appear at first, since until the turnpike era, roads were almost as much to be avoided for their badness, as followed. The frequency of dotted-line boundaries of roads, shows that they were not so much as now confined to narrow strips between enclosed properties. The traveller often had cause to rejoice when he was free to pick his own way over a common or waste. But the position of bridges is set down from the first, with accuracy and completeness second to that of no other feature.

The first separate road book of England was published in 1675, and the maps in the editions of Camden from 1695 onwards show (on the Westmorland but not on the Cumberland map) a few of the main roads : Lancaster to Carlisle, Shap by Tebay to Kendal, Penrith to Ambleside, and from Ambleside over Dunmail raise. These maps are about 14 in. by 17 in., on only slightly better paper than the earlier ones, and bear the imprint, ' by Robert Morden ' and ' sold by Abel Swale Awnsham and John Churchill' ; are originally uncoloured. The fine maps of Speed, Blaeu and Jansson (1610, 1645, 1646) are much more artistically produced and larger, but the same in contents. Blaeu's probably represent the high-water mark of artistic typography applied to English maps. The maps so far mentioned, that is, of the seventeenth century, as well as those of Lea, Overton, and Rocque (which are late reprints and of less value than those of Saxton, Speed, and Blaeu), have a strong family resemblance and all fundamentally rest on Saxton's survey.

Colouring, if found on any of these maps, is usually a modern addition. As it had in any case to be done by hand, it was sparingly applied in complete atlases until the end of the eighteenth century.



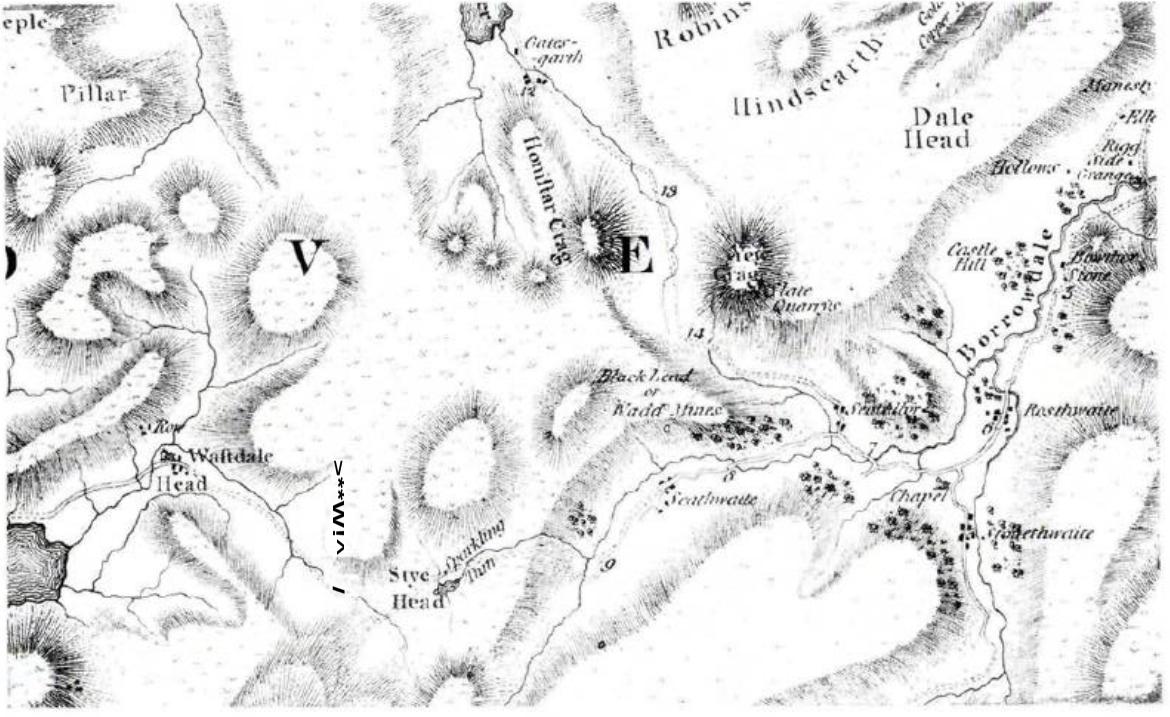
1 in. to 1 mile

PART OF JEFFERY'S WESTMORELAND (1770).

With the coming of the eighteenth century a change is felt. The publication, from 1694 onwards, of books of coastal charts, resulted in this feature beginning to present a fair approach to accuracy in ordinary maps. Herman Moll's maps belong to the first quarter of the century, but are very poor things. From about 1750 onwards some very prolific but often changing partnerships or competitive firms of London publishers and engravers produced good and interesting maps, most of which bear such imprints as Bowen, Bowles, Sayers, or Carrington. Though still infinitely far from accuracy, or even from fair approximation, the representation of mountains begins to bear witness of revision by many hands, and of attempts to distinguish between big and little ones with less regard to mere prominence, and to fix the position and shape of the areas of high ground. No heights are yet shown, and contemporary estimates of these arc absurdly erroneous. Lakes fare much better, but are a good deal mangled. The number and position of their islands is fixed rather upon decorative considerations than by regard to fact. It is hard to see why it should have been at all difficult to find by survey the shape of an inland lake, whatever may have been the case with a coastline, except for the reason next mentioned. The general impression which the maps of this period make, is that of having been drawn in a London garret, by capable and conscientious draughtsmen, and perhaps from the best available partial surveys or estate maps (which must have been getting commoner about this time) ; but that being produced primarily to hit the market, they were not based on adequate survey on the spot, and were rather below what one would expect from the state of civilisation at this date. But the maps of this date make up in general interest, particularly in marginal garrulity, for their defects. Names are abundant, and copper mines, etc., are marked. This title is typical : ' A New Map of the Counties of Cumberland and Westmorland divided into their respective Wards ; From the best surveys and intelligences; Illustrated with historical extracts relative to Natural History Produce Trade and Manufacturers ; showing also the Rectories and Vicarages ; with various other improvements.' The foregoing style is far from the simple dignity of the seventeenth century with its ' Cumbrian Comitatus vulgo Cumberland.'

But mountains and other areas of low economic value are now, and for a long while afterwards, the step-children of the map-maker. A study of the maps shows that it is their lower escarpments which are shown, where anything of them is shown at all. There is no evidence of liaison, if any, between the map-engraver and such rude fellows as actually climbed them to the top. But the poet Gray's statement that the Styhead route was kept secret by the dalesmen for their own purposes, is merely sensational journalism. The older track is clearly shown on the map of 1774 (illustrated), and on account of mining activity and the badness of more roundabout routes, was probably more generally known even than now. But local knowledge is one thing and scientific record another. The boundaries of hundreds appear as a novelty on the maps of Bowen, Bowles, etc., but suffer very much in their landward parts from this cause. On Bowles' and Sayer's map of 1760, the fells between Buttermere and Cockley Beck make their first bow jointly, as ' Darwent Fells Mountains,' but no others than our old friends ' Skiddaw Hill' and ' Heivillon Hill' appear individually. The word ' hill' is used in several places as ' Hardknot Hill' or ' Gresmere Hill' for a col, or road summit. The most remarkable feature of this map, found also in some others, is a road running in a line (straight on this map) from Whitchaven by ' Ennerdale ' (some miles below the much-shrunken ' Broadwater ') to Wasdale Chapel, and thence straight again to Hawkshead, passing some way north of the Three Shire Stones.

The more general faults already mentioned were felt, and in 1759 the Society of Arts offered a bonus of £100 for a new map at one inch to the mile, of each county in England, based on actual survey. This resulted in the production of maps of an altogether superior type, of Westmorland, by Thomas Jeffreys, in 1770, and of Cumberland by Messrs. Hodskinson & Donald in 1774. Now for the first time not merely a very few main roads, but all the roads, are shown, and with accuracy of the same order as that of the Ordnance survey. Most of the farms are shown by name, and the absence of encumbering modern detail allows many things to leap to the eye, most of which are printed, it is true, in modern maps, but, as it were, half buried, just as the old buildings, and the old



1 in. to 1 mile (six sheets)

PART OF DONALD'S CUMBERLAND (1774).

trackway, hedge, ford, and packhorse bridge themselves are physically buried nowadays under the flood of steel and concrete.

With these maps for the first time it is a shorter story to tell how they are wrong than where they are right. Fell names now appear in large numbers ; their position and relative importance falls into place, and only the shape is unreliable. Looking at them, one has rather more respect for the achievement of Walter Scott, Wordsworth, and company in climbing ' the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn ' (which, as Wordsworth remarks, with his customary propriety, is ' remote from public road or dwelling ') and successfully finding their way back again, when not merely venturing mapless, but so actively misled by their maps.

It is surprising that the name of Great Gable should be missing when such hills as Seatallan, Pillar, Steeple, Haycock, and High Stile are named ; although Scafell Pike is not differentiated from Scafell proper. One other interesting feature of the Westmorland map of 1770 is that an outflow of Stickle Tarn down into the Rothay is clearly indicated.

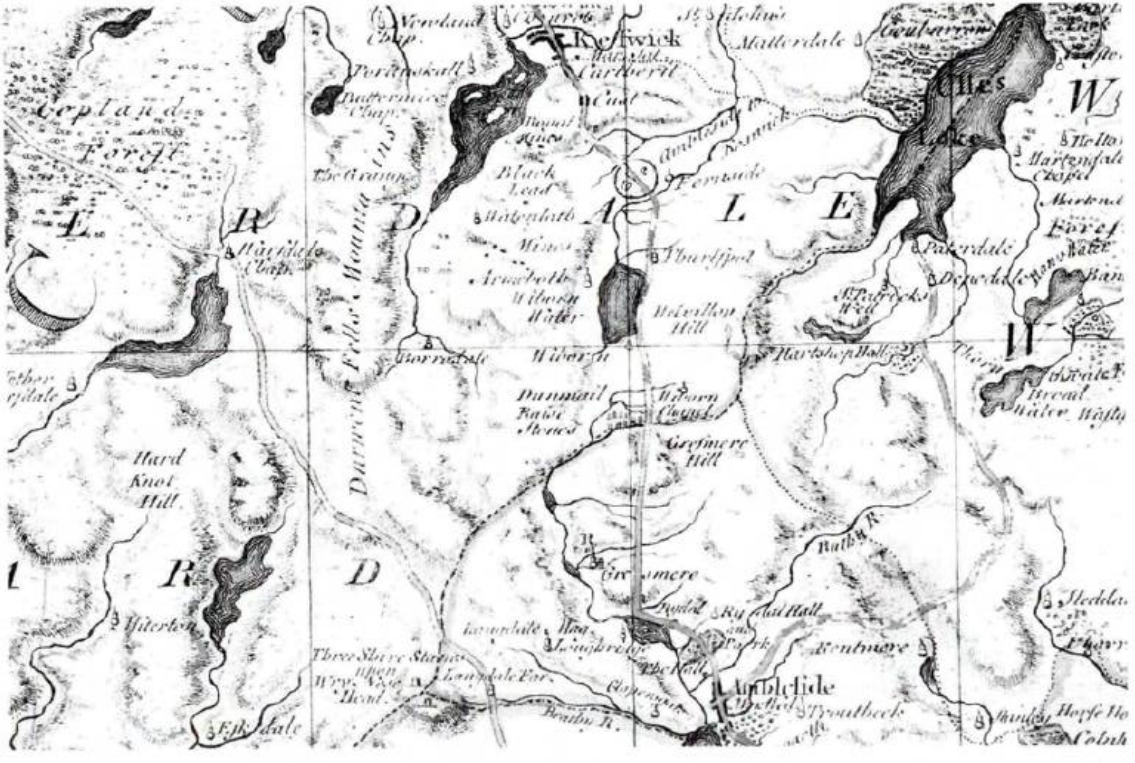
In the seventeen-seventies was also published the first of many editions of West's Guide to the Lakes, which has a small general map of the Lakes, with the principal roads and the names of a number of hills shown. It is no doubt taken from Jeffrey. In 1787 one James Clarke, land surveyor, of Penrith, published ' A survey of the Lakes of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire.' Besides the maps, there is a great deal of text in the book, about Border customs, game, family history, anecdote and curiosities. The maps do not cover the whole of the district by any means, but only (in separate plates) the borders of each of the principal lakes, and the roads between the principal towns, with the lands adjoining—all on a scale large enough to show clearly the position of buildings and the boundaries of fields. Of the lakes, Windermere, Ullswater, Derwentwater, and Bassenthwaite are each shewn on separate plates. This was an expensive folio, but smaller plans of lakes were published in 1783 by Peter Crosthwaite,' Admiral at Keswick Regatta, who keeps the Museum at Keswick, and is Guide, Pilot, Geographer and Hydrographer to the Nobility and Gentry who make the Tour of the Lakes.' By 1794, Crosthwaite had added plans of Coniston, Buttermere,

Crummock, and Bassenthwaite. Their borders are ornamented with views of gentlemen's houses, and of mountains as seen from the shores of the lakes.

Clarke explains : ' . . . the business of the following plans is to conduct the stranger to those places which furnish the views and landscapes of different kinds in the neighbourhood of these Lakes, and which the state of the times has been so pleased with.' After a disquisition on the connection between painting and poetry, he says, ' I may be told that many have heard of the scenes to be met with near these lakes, but where are the poets, or the poetry ? ' One notices he says nothing in any part of his long pseudo-philosophical introduction about conducting the stranger to the fell-tops ; they are utterly unmentioned. It seems plain that it was not the summits which the early visitors to the Lakes came to visit. Clarke only recognises their existence by the words which occur as a sort of headline along the top edge of his map : ' From here are very high mountains to Ambleside.' Skiddaw was, however, a recognised though rather sensational excursion, even at the time of Gray's tour.

The foregoing notes, it should be said, make no pretence even to mention by name all the published maps of Cumberland and Westmorland. For the sake of brevity I have not mentioned Lancashire, but in most cases Lancashire maps corresponding are to be found in the same atlases. No general survey of Lancashire, like Jeffreys', seems to have been made until 1787. The Ordnance Survey began issuing sheets in 1801, but the ones dealing with Lancashire came last of all the series in 1838. Contour lines are, of course, a later development still.

In many ways maps give an intimate view, and one in very good proportion, of the outlook of those for whom they were designed. Technical accuracy can hardly go further, perhaps, than in our present maps of England, but one has only to visit less developed countries to realize the wide possible difference between a pretty picture and the truth. Even technically, our method of representing really steep terrains, is primitive. No doubt posterity will be confronted by the same old puzzle, of why some things which they will be sure could not have been absent from our minds, do not appear on our maps.



Actual Scale

PART OF A NEW MAP OF CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORELAND.
Printed for Bowles, Sayer & Bowles

ROCK SENSE

AND THE CASTING OUT OF FEAR

GEORGE BASTERFIELD

January 3rd, 193—, was dull and wet. Mist lay on the hills round Wasdale, and as I sat in lonely meditation, in the old smoke-room, there came and stood before me the quaint figure of ' David Copperfield,' of the Chapelstile Dance. There he stood, purring at his fragrant cigar, just as he stood that New Year's eve so many years ago ; but this time minus the gaping, wondering crowd of country lads and lasses.

Whilst this David was just one of a mind-picture-gallery of men and women with whom I had climbed from time to time, he claimed special attention in that he held in those early days of our acquaintance a very bold philosophy of life. He held that every waking moment must be ' lived '—all ' meanwhile ' must be packed into dreams while asleep—that one must live dangerously to get the utmost joy out of life, and this meant the elimination of fear from action. This philosophy he demonstrated daily by a keen endeavour to live up to his faith.

The Chapelstile Dance was not a fancy-dress affair, as you will have guessed. This perfect woodcut from the pages of Dickens was his everyday character until his host's daughter became enamoured of his David,—when, in order to repel, David became an unwashed, dishevelled, stubby-bearded wastrel. Both these rôles were just the whim of the moment and perfectly acted while each whim lasted.

David's very first climb was a ' severe,' which he promptly offered to lead. He turned up on this occasion in a garb of mixed colours of rainbow harmony, his pedal extremities neatly ' gloved ' in mustard-yellow lace-ups and his jet-black mop adorned with a bright crimson beret. He stood out from a drab world as distinctive and as delightful as a big red poppy blooming alone in a field of yellow corn.

He feared neither critic nor criticism of his behaviour and was seemingly oblivious of every gibe and thrust his originality inspired.

The day following his first climb he sought a greater thrill by ski-ing down from the summit of Harrison Stickle over two inches of snow. Down into the steep and narrow depths of Dungeon Ghyll he lunged only to come up a few minutes later wearing a joyful and satisfied smile.

When we first met he told me he had been summarily driven from a home of affluence by a wealthy father, whom he had deliberately offended so that he might face the spectre of poverty and hardship ; and how the making-good on his own resources had been his crowning experience.

Strange to say, he survived unscathed and undismayed his many daring exploits out on the edge of life during our short acquaintance of some few weeks. He had the proverbial charmed existence of the reckless and gloried in living up to his possession.

Thus fully I describe David—of course, this was not his name—so that you may appreciate, though perhaps not as fully as I, his claim to some attention from myself in particular and from rock climbers in general.

In this reminiscence I was happy, too happy, to break away from the sunshine of pleasant thoughts that came to me, too content to face the grey, wet depression visible through the window, for the purpose of climbing rocks, and so I continued to enjoy my reverie. I remembered how, with the example of David in mind, the old Yewdale Group, of which I was a member, had time and again endeavoured to eliminate fear from climbing, and as far as we had overcome it we had certainly ' lived ' ; yet the ultimate and inevitable aftermath of fearless or reckless action caused us gradually to respect the warnings of reason, warnings given to us in experience.

Yes, we had gone out and got through in spite of heavy odds ; we had rejected the advice of authority more than once, and had touched with the uninspired hands of the novice the sacred rock of the adept; nay, we had in our immaturity trespassed on virginity—unpardonable sin ! Yes, we surely scattered to the four winds a motley crowd of fearful fancies in those early unenlightened days ; yet slowly and surely we gradually reassembled ; a host of healthy fears, based on reason and born of experience und observation. So came to us the vital necessity for constant

readjustment ; ir' we were really to ' live ' we agreed we must at least preserve life.

How many times in those early days ?—but there, no secrets.

This line of thought petered out and once again I looked out through the window and—as I breathe—there floated out there that evil thing known as Flu, grinning, threateningly at me through the wet fog. There it was, lurking, waiting to get me, to rack me with aching limbs and fevered temples ; dare I attempt an encounter ? I croodled closer to the fire like an old witch with eyes only for the reddest coals. I yawned and pulled out my watch—2-30 o'clock ! Again I lay back, and on a new line of thought I argued with myself as to whether Providence respected most a naturally fearless mind or a mind with an acquired rock sense in regard to climbing. Here was I with twenty-five years of rock climbing to my list, winged but twice, and then on the slight side only, yet still able to accommodate myself to an amiable severe in solitary fashion given good conditions. Had I ever failed ? Yes, many times. Not that I feared prior to the act, though the flesh may have crept at the moment of failure.

Luckily for me, my failures all ended more or less harmlessly, and the consequent fear registered, converted into a more capable and careful adjustment. For instance, leading a party of ' moderates ' up Deep Ghyll *en route* for *0. G. Jones,* and while moving, in indifferent fashion, up the long second pitch on the left, I suddenly became a prisoner, my nailed boot sinking hopelessly into a crevice. The climb has a favourable angle ; but I happened at the moment to be out of reach of a convenient handhold with which to hoist myself out of the trap. Instantly I bent my foot to right and left for release, but the full burden of my unsupported body simply thrust me further into captivity. My second, noticing my exhausted condition, ventured to my rescue, and after groping awhile was able to unlace my boot, allowing me to withdraw my foot, after a very painful and exhausting experience. I pictured that episode happening on a solitary attempt with no friendly hand near and the aspect transmuted my respect for ' Providence ' into a deep-seated affection.

' Still,' I mumble, ' I am thankful to be capable of following my cherished craft, when conditions are conducive.'

' So why not now ? ' said a voice, very like David's, somewhere in the offing. I had long since dismissed him from my reverie, and this second intrusion seemed to bring a sense of shame into my ' meanwhile ' attitude, evoking a personal challenge. ' Surely a man with such a mature and sound rock sense must turn idleness into action, despite the prospect of Flu.' ' Certainly,' came the reply. ' I *will* go out, I *must* go out into the mist-clad hills and singly scale a " severe," say Eagle's Nest or something similar within easy distance, because of the lateness of the hour '— past 3 o'clock. No sooner said than acted upon. I would go out and ' live ' once again.

Out in the hall all was silent. Both family and staff, no doubt, busy in some remote part of the old house. The season's guests had all returned home to the routine of the young year.

As I drew on my old ' Ironclads' I paused at the thought of Eagle's Nest in such battle-worn and battered hulks, and yet, I cogitated, how often had I sailed along so pleasantly in them. Of course they had become stuck now and again, but that was when my rock sense was sadly lacking in earlier days. Out I stole, unobserved, with no word to my host as to my intention, so that in case of failure to return I might be located. Perish the thought of anything but safe return, I reflected, as I swung gaily through the first gateway and across the mist-laden meadows. All the way to Burnthwaite and on to the bridge, at the foot of Gavelneese my path was strewn with cast out craven fears. My mind was occupied with past exploits on the Napes ridges.

On my first ascent of Eagle's Nest I was third man on the rope, and I recollected how, when breathlessly finishing the last fifteen feet of the arete my ears caught a slight sound arising immediately behind and below. On looking round I was horrified to see a diminutive grey-haired old man stretched horizontally across the severe bare wall I had just passed, an exposure that had just extracted from me a silent solemn resolve never to lead it. I looked down spellbound, but no, there was no sickening lurch, no hurtling body ; but instead of calamity there was, to my mind at the time, a very dramatic finish. For no sooner did I remove my ungainly obstruction from the path when R. L.—for it was no other—swung lightly into the perpendicular and advanced to

share my belay, with perfect ease and the congenial smile of a cragsman who knew his part. I was inspired by this thrilling incident to reverse my secret resolve. Later, I led the climb, and what a lead ! Wild horses could not have dragged me from that rock. I all but wrenched the aids to progress from their solidness in my eagerness to retain contact. My climbing was more than safe ; power rather than technique gave success.

Gradually, however, I gained a sense of confidence, and finally there came the body-clear, finger-and-toe ascents, bringing the added joy of mounting over a sunken world with the deliberate ease of a seasoned or natural climber.

I minded me also of one day when I belayed on the ' nest' while Billy negotiated the two cracks. Billy worshipped rocks with religious awe. This time *bis* foot stuck in one of the cracks, and oh how he pleaded for a twang on the rope, while his face turned vermilion, then purple, and finally a deathly white. Terror was in his heart until on my suggestion he bent his foot sideways, and in a moment or two he was gratefully grasping my legs while I belayed him safely to that alleged nest of an eagle.

But here is the bridge and now to the toil of the *neese.*

To prevent further brooding I added one monotony to another by counting my steps up to the cairn above ' Moses' Finger,' at the commencement of the napes trod—2,200 in all. I marked them up on an adjacent rock with a sharp stone. Briskly I strode the easier gradient of the trod, and as I progressed higher into the crags, the dense walls of mist and the eerie silence made the world seem a weird and lonely place to be born into. Not a soul, not a sound except the muffled rhythm of Piers Gyhll behind Lingmell. Yet stay ! Yes, I hear voices and I discern just below me, some few feet distant, three shadowy forms. They pass, without noticing my presence, as I have halted, and down they go into Needle Gully ; a dull trickling of scree for a brief space and I am alone, absolutely alone, with the eternities behind and in front.

I gaze up at the smooth dripping rock piercing the black rag a few feet above my head, and I think of sunny days which, under the mind pressure of these conditions, seem now so remote and impossible of return. They seem so far away just now, those friendly, windless, warm days with Jack or Billy or Bert, and

many another. But I must he moving up, for the silence shouts and the night begins to penetrate the murky greyness that clings so to everything around.

Good—a steady and deliberate rhythm, a few deft movements, and I am standing firmly at the big belay just below the two thin cracks that lead to the arete proper and to the ' nest.' My heart beats loudly in the stillness, but this is simply the result of physical effort, for had I not climbed deliberately and neatly thus far ? A little pause, again a glance upward, and follows a brief questionnaire: ' Will I get through before darkness blots out my path to safety ? Is it fair to mar the beauty of such a rock with nail scratches ? This is my first ascent in nails and under wet conditions ; what about the state of my footgear ? ' Bah ! here goes, this rock sense is becoming too much of a fetish and I mount the wall above with deliberate care, fondling for a brief space the two cracks. Billy's face, white and pleading, seems to materialise from the rock and immediately fades out again. Quickly I take the next step up and to the left, planting my right boot across the right crack rather than straight within its treacherous constriction, the left boot finding a side purchase for a single nail. I reach up for the flat topped hole that I see, my usual keyhold for arriving at the nest, the prying digits of my left hand beginning to creep on to the wet grip, but ere I can lift my right boot that lies across the crack my slightly altered poise causes a loose clinker to skid and in goes my boot! The essential key-grip is at once inches beyond the sliding fingers. I reach desperately, but to no purpose. I am held as in a vice ! I feel my fear-flooded body sagging backwards, then an intense spasm of despair as 1 lurch, to what vast depths I shall never know, for here and now a friendly voice from ' s;oodncss-knows-where ' calls : ' Tea is quite ready, sir ! '

I often wonder how David is faring these days. Is he still profligate ? Is he now utterly spent and become one of life's bankrupts ? Or has he, like unto the great majority, come to know and respect fear ? Does he still swill down life's brew fearlessly from great tankards, or does he sip gently the wine of existence from a frail glass ? I wonder !

ON SKI-ING

BENTLEY BEETHAM

If I begin by saying that I don't think our members do as much ski-ing as they might do, the remark implies no suspicion of reproach ; it is made only in the hope of calling attention to what seems to be another natural activity for the club.

At the Langdale meet in November the suggestion of ski-ing on the Sunday after a torrential night's rain was met with polite ridicule, a *non possumus* attitude and no starters, yet there was excellent ski-ing throughout the day on Helvellyn.*

The fact is that during an average winter the North of England provides many more opportunities for this sport than is generally appreciated. Crowds hurry out to the Alps every year at considerable cost and often at no little personal inconvenience, thanks to the eccentricities of the channel, yet they fail to take advantage of what is offered relatively almost at their doors.

On a dull, cold winter's morning, with perhaps sleet in the air and slush under foot in the town, a couple of hours' drive often carries one most unexpectedly into a new world—without any implication of another road fatality. Low though our hills are they are yet high enough to reduce the air temperature several degrees and so transform the noisome slush of the lowlands into dry snow on the fells. The proverbial fickleness of our climate makes it advisable to seize the day when it comes and not to plan for the morrow. Indeed, for ski-ing in England *carpe diem* might well be modified to *carpe horam,* for the morning may provide delightful Alpine conditions and the afternoon a dismal rain. It is interesting to recall that less than a hundred years ago, when lead-mining was still in full swing, the hardy dalesmen often went to and from their work on home-made skis; when on foot the ' out-by ' mines were quite inaccessible.

* Since that meet, and even since this article was written, quite an enthusiasm for ski-ing has manifested itself in certain quarters within the Club. Only a hard winter with plenty of snow is needed to set the ball rolling—or the skis gliding—with a vengeance.

Today the boys of Harwood, the highest hamlet in Teesdale, are again taking to ski but this time purely for sport and in imitation of us and not as a means of locomotion. Early this year I saw a dozen pairs of short-improvised barrel-stave skis in use in one field.

The three most promising ski-ing grounds of the North of England appear to be the Pennines, the Lakeland hills and that old igneous mass, the Howgill Fells. The last is the best so far as terrain is concerned. The steep, smoothly rounded grassy sides of the northern aspect of these hills might have been designed for ski-ing ; but, alas, they lack the height of the other districts by nearly a thousand feet, and so less frequently carry snow. In the Lakes splendid slopes occur high up on the Skiddaw and Helvellyn massifs and in other places, while in the Pennines the best ground is on Cross Fell, the two Dun Fells and Mickle Fell. In this country the snow is generally only a thin covering. Mercifully, the Lake hills have little heather on their slopes, though here stones and out-croppings of rock give the skier much concern ; but in the Pennines heather, which requires nearly as much snow as the Alpenrose of Switzerland to make it skiable, is in many parts abundant, so one gets the best running when the limestone comes near the surface and grass takes the place of ling.

But though we may snatch a few odd days ski-ing in England—• and sweet they are as stolen fruit—our thoughts naturally turn to the Alps. We write for particulars and are soon snowed under by a postal avalanche of laudatory literature from the tourist agencies. Each of a dozen places is obviously and undeniably the best. Bewildered, we seek the aid of friends. We have no need to seek. So soon as our state is known we are pounced upon by every skier of our acquaintance. Beware ! There is a strange, almost fanatical devotion on the part of winter sportsmen for their chosen resort; it is as if they held shares in the place.

On the way to the office you travel up with Jenkins. He is an old hand of some eleven winters. He pretends to be a little diffident at first. It is difficult, of course, to decide for another—tastes differ—and then it all depends on what you are after ; but (now warming to his work) as a matter of fact he has been to Klein Sitsmark for the last eleven seasons, and is convinced, from

Snow in the Pennines.

Bentley Beetham

what he has seen, that there is no place half so good. And it really doesn't matter a hoot what you want—ski-ing, bobbing, skating, or whatever it is, they are all there ; you simply can't go wrong. What a heaven-sent fellow ! You leave him feeling like Pilgrim with his rucksack gone.

At the club you happen to mention to the rather tangential Bellock that you are going out to Kleine Sitsmark. The effect is electrical. He nearly has apoplexy on your behalf. Who on earth advised you to go there. Do you know its only 3,984 feet up, and that it will probably rain hard at least every other day ? Have you realised that all the slopes face north-west ? It's awfully lucky you mentioned it, because I do happen to know the best spot in all Switzerland, Grosser Schuss ; you simply must go there. . . You take up your rucksack again and find that Mr. Bellock has unintentionally slipped therein a hefty brick.

I have stayed in more than twenty different winter sports places scattered over Switzerland, Italy, Norway and Austria, but none stands out in my mind as pre-eminently the best, and nearly all have some merit of their own. Even if we confine our thoughts to ski-ing, this one sport has so many different phases—langlauf, touring, mountaineering, ski-joring, jumping and racing in its many forms—that no single place is ideal for the practice of them all.

Over the stony ground of the respective merits of these different forms of ski-ing, and of ski-ing as a whole in relation to mountaineering, I do not propose to go. Much of the misunderstanding and even bitterness which has existed among devotees of these sports has been quite unnecessary, and due chiefly to lack of appreciation of the other's point of view. None is right and none is wrong ; they are all good, and it is for each of us to choose that which appeals most and to avoid decrying the others.

Looked at from the standpoint of our club it seems probable that touring and ski-mountaineering will be the activities most likely to appeal to our fell walkers and rock climbers.

To the vast majority of people who go out to winter sports, ski-ing—the art of skilful movement on skis—is the be-all and end-all of their desires. They practice, hour after hour, day after

day, with surprising diligence and submission ; they veritably go back to school, and in response to the clanging of some bell or other summons, line up in their respective ski-classes, and are then duly put through it. I think they subconsciously enjoy this return to discipline, and as a result of it often become expert performers. Too frequently, it seems to me, they remain mere performers of the exercises rather than become practitioners of what these exercises have taught them. I think this attitude will pass, is passing, in fact, and more and more people are beginning to indulge their wanderlust on ski.

To most Fell and Rockers ski-ing will be but a means—a delightful, exciting and sporting means to an end ; like rock climbing it will but be part of the great whole, mountaineering. They will not long be able to resist the call of the glittering ranges and snowy cols which hem them in ; they will be impelled to leave the crowded nursery slopes and to go up there and over into the unknown spaces beyond.

And here a personal note may be useful as providing data on which others lacking experience may make their plans. My first season at Davos I was early, and few people had as yet arrived ; but there was already in the hotel a delightfully keen little group of enthusiastic skiers, old habitues of the place, who immediately adopted me, as skiers do any willing tiro.

That night we talked of wax and bindings, sticks and skins, Christianias and Telemarks till the small hours, and in the morning, at a seemly hour, I was duly taken to the nursery slopes. The child, though somewhat wayward, was apparently not wholly lacking in promise, for on the way back it was told, by way of encouragement, that if it stuck in on the nursery slopes for a fortnight it would probably then be fit to be taken on the tours. The child thought hard. It had exactly fifteen more days left to be in Switzerland. It did not appear on the nursery slopes that afternoon—tired, no doubt—but strolled round Davos instead, buying some skins and other fitments. Next morning it awoke earlier than its elders, as children will, and toddled off alone up the Fluela Weisshorn, a ten-thousand-foot pip lying invitingly near ; and so it has been ever since. The child, now, alas, grown old and decrepit, still toddles off making its way up the surrounding peaks and over the passes.

And what do we learn from these simple data ? This. For that one holiday the child scored heavily. It lived on the mountains amid the grandeur of the winter solitude instead of on the noisy nursery slopes ; but the price paid has undoubtedly been heavy. All through the years, on every expedition, the lack of ski-ing skill (not acquired at the beginning and never subsequently attained) has lessened the enjoyment and satisfaction on the run down. And so it will be to the end, for once one has tasted of the wondrous solitude of the Upper Alps in winter, one cannot willingly remain below on the crowded slopes. Hence, though it is quite possible to do even the great peaks without being able to ski even reasonably well, if one intends to go out often it would seem advisable to devote oneself at first to mastering ski-craft; but if, on the other hand, one considers only the present, the individual holiday, the case is different, and one may then reasonably indulge the inclinations.

Lastly, a word as to place. If we confine ourselves to generalisations some useful facts stand out.

If you can choose your time, then do not go out till February, for by then snow is usually plentiful, and its condition is more likely to be good than it is earlier in the season ; also the crevasses will be more extensively and more securely bridged, the days will be longer—an important point—and the sun will be gloriously warm.

If, however, circumstances compel an earlier visit, say at Christmas or New Year, then make altitude a *sine qua non*—do not go below 5,000-6,000 feet, but as much above as you can.

When the holiday is short, or the maximum amount of ski-running in the minimum of time is the chief concern, then a place witn a funicular is indicated, as by that invention of the devil more than twice or thrice the normal amount of running may be obtained in a given time.

A place situated near the top of a pass which is crossed by rail or motor-buses from the lower valleys on each side is very good, for by making the short climb from the pass to some point on a flanking range, one can ski down the long descent to the valley bottom, taking a conveyance back after tea—Wolfgang, Parsen, Kublis, or Sestries, Col Basset, Oulx, are good examples of this very pleasant type of ski-ing.

REFLECTIONS ON GUIDELESS CLIMBING*

NOEL E. ODELL

' The mountains are so kindly and so great that they reject none of those who turn to them, and they are good to all; to the men of science who come to study them ; to the painters and poets who seek an inspiration in them ; to the sturdy climbers who zealously seek violent exercise, and to the weary who flee from the heat and the turmoil of the city to refresh themselves at this pure source of physical and moral health.' Such was the verdict of that great mountaineer and poetic thinker Guido Rey. And the same true thesis applies to mountains the world over and of all magnitudes.

From all high places of the earth there is to be derived just that store of refreshment and recreation so yearned for, consciously as well as unconsciously, by the large sections of modern populations pent up under urban and industrial conditions. And it is this class of manhood and womanhood that comprises the bulk of out-modern alpine and climbing clubs throughout the world. Exiled during the greater part of the year from the sight of much else than bricks and mortar, and entrapped perchance daily within the confines of noisy train and dismal office, even though access to the open, tamer expanse of the country may occasionally be vouchsafed—it is they who, unable to resist the inner impulse, that hidden flame perhaps once lit long ago when fortune revealed to them the vision, make headlong for the high hills, there to worship in varied fashion, but in no uncertain earnestness, at the shrine of Nature so remotely removed from many modern cities.

Earlier mystical philosophers undoubtedly were drawn to the mountains, fully conscious of the spiritual benefit to be obtained by sojourn and solitude among the sublimest of Nature's works ; but these were necessarily men of predominantly contemplative habit, dreamers or sentimentalists mainly from religious house or from oriental clime, in whom was no desire to test their strength and nerve on fretted summit and ice-slope. The few who earlier than the eighteenth century ventured in Europe to pit their skill against

* From the American Alpine Journal. Vol. I. No. 2., by permission

the might of the mountains were in truth ' rarae aves,' who would, in consideration of the ' useless folly' or ' insanity' of their pursuit, be subjected to an even greater amount of incredulity and ridicule than has in more recent times been accorded to advanced followers of the creed. Such of the former were men like Petrarch, Gerner, and Professor Josias Simler, of Zurich, the latter figure being of considerable historical interest to mountaineers, since his writings give us first mention of the rudiments of the art of snow-craft as early as the year 15 74 !

We have to wait until the mid-nineteenth century to see the advent of a community of virile men and women ready to hold strenuous converse with high mountains, its spirit of romance and adventure restive under the conventions and restrictions of growing cities, yet imbued with a more practical philosophy than that of the earlier mystics. They laid siege to the Alps in particular, a region geographically accessible to the large centres of commerce and industry, and as the years went by and devotees increased, the greater summits were one by one attained. It was the invariable custom for these travellers to be accompanied by local peasants, often mountain hunters, who, as time went on, became recognized as professionals with expert knowledge of the peculiarities of the ascents, and with whom it was deemed inadvisable if not impossible to dispense.

Before long it was realised by the most keenly active of this band of mountain knights and worshippers, that there were within easier reach of home, just the means, though in miniature, of practicing and keeping acute one of the most important weapons of their warfare. The rock bastions and crags, of Britain particularly and of some other Continental countries too, though built on much smaller lines than those of the Alps, were albeit speedily found to yield ways of ascent that could only be accomplished by the exercise of the greatest skill, and the development of an advanced technique. Moreover, it was soon evident that, apart from rock-climbing, it was possible in addition, during the winter, to obtain conditions of ice and snow sufficient to test the mettle and capabilities of the highest exponent of ice-craft.

But the cult of rock-climbing for its own sake may perhaps be said to have had its inception during the early years of the present

century. Gradually, as time has gone on and a deliberate and specialised style has been evolved, local rock climbing has claimed the attention not alone of ultra-gymnasts, but of many with confirmed Alpine habits and propensities. It may well be, like some other forms of human activity, a specialisation, often with confines artificially imposed ; yet, on the other hand, the mountain devotee may be economically debarred from all but the indulgence of climbing on his own home rocks, his resources not allowing of his visiting the more distant Alpine ranges.

In general, however, it may be stated that the specialisation of rock-climbing is only the result of natural development, or evolution. For, as Arnold Lunn has said with much truth and succinctness, *a propos* of the broad issue of mountaineering specialisation : ' Mountaineering in its ultimate essence is not merely mountain travel. It is a duel between inanimate nature and the spirit of man, and the first duty of the mountaineer is to preserve the reality of this contest. A virgin peak is a problem, but once the peak has been proved climbable, new conditions must be introduced in order that the struggle, which would lose all significance if its outcome were certain, may be renewed with redoubled zest. Guideless climbing, the forcing of virgin ridges on peaks which are no longer virgin, winter mountaineering, and ski mountaineering, are all modes of the same mental attitude. Difficulties, artificial difficulties if you will, are invented in order that the game may continue, for a game in which one side is assured of a walk-over will soon cease to find players.' *

Surely this should be a sufficient answer for the most pragmatic sceptic, who asks the purpose of a cult that toys with danger or invites annihilation, and who prefers the demoralising motto ' Safety First ! ' However, ' mountaineering means different things to different people,' and while rock-climbing for its own sake can satisfy the most exacting demands of the gymnast or acrobat, the circumstances and surroundings under which **the** pursuit is conducted are likely to make a definite appeal to those of healthy philosophic proclivity. For our smaller hills are often no mean hills, and in season have most of the attributes and all of the proportions of real mountains, and mountain lore in many of its

* British Ski Year Book, 1926, p. 563.

varied and fascinating forms can be indulged by pilgrim, student, and mere visitor.

This matter of the historical background of rock-climbing in Europe has been especially emphasized as being the parent in large part of the modern practice of guideless climbing on the higher glacerized ranges, particularly the Alps. The rock enthusiast, perhaps with some years of experience and the attainment of a very high standard of skill in his specialised code, with resource and self-reliance engendered by leading his own expeditions entirely without professional assistance, at last finds his way to the Alps. There, with a confidence born of experience on smaller, harder passages at home, he essays those peaks where rock-climbing is the sole or predominating craft. Should he have climbed under winter conditions on his home hills, then the encountering of icy and snowy passages will but offer the more variety to his rock-craft. He will find the lesser Alpine peaks, the ' smaller fry,' in numerous cases surprisingly easy and not sufficiently exacting to test his powers and skill. And then, naturally, as sure as fate, if he has any ' stuff' in him at all (and should it be a season of good weather and conditions and not, let us hope, his first visit to the Alps) he will be tempted to try the ' bigger fry ' the greater peaks, and those involving far more in speed, in continuous endurance, and all-round mountaineering knowledge. He may, and possibly in numerous cases will, succeed in reaching his objectives, and if he goes about his self-tutelage in snow and glacier craft in the right way, he will quite early attain an all-round proficiency, directly proportional to his own inherent ability.

On these lines, not a few young mountaineers have, during the last two or three decades, acquired their training and accomplishment in all branches of the craft. Many of them have scarcely climbed at all with guides, and yet have carried out expeditions involving as high a degree of skill in ice-craft and rock-craft as any ever accomplished by professionally led parties. By reason either of the psychology of the case involving the individual's independent outlook on his pursuit, or perhaps on account of obligations of economy, he has from the beginning dispensed with guides, though from the best of them he might no doubt have learned the rudiments of the art of ice and snow work, in any case,

more quickly, and probably more thoroughly, than on his own responsibility. For it must be frankly admitted that as far as ice and snow-craft is concerned, few amateurs have acquired its finer points except at the hands of professionals. Yet be that as it may, unfortunately such amateur climbers, who have been content to serve their gradual and reasonable novitiate on lesser peaks before essaying the more, and indeed the most, arduous ascents, are all too few.

To that brilliant climber, A. F. Mummery, is often attributed the distinction of having broken away from the prevailing tradition of climbing with guides. Historically, however, it is perhaps more correct to say that by his guideless ascent of Mont Blanc the Rev. Charles Hudson, who lost his life in the tragic, and more than amply guided, first ascent of the Matterhorn in 1865, may be called the ' Father of Guideless Climbing.' But whichever may rightly hold the title, each in his time, before assuming the responsibilities of conducting his own expedition, had spent several seasons of apprenticeship behind first-rate professions, and by this, as well as by natural aptitude, had necessarily acquired a high degree of skill and resource.

What do we find nowadays ? We find, as has been rightly said elsewhere, that ' the High Alps are overrun by incompetent guideless parties who have not learned even the elements of mountain craft, and whose sole qualification is an enthusiastic desire to emulate the deeds of expert mountaineers. Many guideless parties coming straight from civilisation arrive in the Alps out of training and unacclimatised to altitude ; they possess little reserve of stamina and energy to be called upon in the event of any emergency requiring a sustained effort, and they are often insufficiently clad or equipped. Mountains do not suffer fools gladly ; hence the accident list, which now runs into hundreds of casualties every year.'

Perhaps as an aftermath of the Great War, to which it is the fashion nowadays to ascribe so many troubles and problems, there seems to have been a large increase in competitive climbing and ascents made merely to emulate the hairbreadth escapes and successes of other parties, or what is worse, the escapades of solitary climbers. Perhaps in the opinion of some ' c'est magnifique ';

we may add ' mais ce n'est pas de l'Alpinisme.' In the recent words of a statesman, ' one grows tired of the modern cult of success,' the boomed records, and the advertised stunts. And who can say that alpinism has not been afflicted with these elements, which are not so much a necessary stimulus to courage and high endeavour as a canker in our midst at the present time ?

And this is not to throw a damper on initiative and adventure, which never were so necessary as in our present state of excessive civilisation. If we need anything in these days of indulgence and comfort, we need a pursuit that calls forth the best of our mental and physical faculties in an atmosphere of adventure and romance. And where, we flatter ourselves, can we find any that provides such a plethora of emotions and sensations for our quickening, as on the grim precipices and the sky-borne heights ? Moreover, it is undoubtedly a fact that only in leading and conducting his own expeditions can the mountaineer develop to the full all his faculties and sensitivity.

Linked to a first-rate guide during his novitiate, the traveller will no doubt the more quickly, and perhaps the more thoroughly, acquire a large portion of the technique of mountain craft, i.e., particularly a seasoned judgment as to avalanches, the condition and reliability of the snow, and what not; but it is not until he is faced with the responsibility of conducting his party safely over a complicated mountain terrain, very possibly in bad weather, that he realises the full import of the game ; he himself, perhaps more or less unsupported, versus the combined forces of Nature.

Frankly, the writer is not one to deprecate the practice of guideless climbing *ab initio* by the aspiring alpinist, if only the game is played fairly and squarely, and not with the abandoned recklessness and disregard for all graduation in the school of experience that has been so prevalent of late in the Alps. Even the ignominy of eventual rescue by professionals seems not to have impressed many unfledged acrobatic youngsters, who have been pounded and marooned in places where they ought never to have been until two or three seasons more of experience were behind them. The whole trouble rests with excessive ambition and impatience of serving a due novitiate. An earlier training in home rock-climbing will, as it has been said above, be an immense asset

to the alpine aspirant, but this on the other hand easily tempts him to neglect that all important and so oft forgotten branch of our craft, namely, mountain reconnaissance. A day or more, according to the particular region, cannot be more profitably and pleasurably spent than in careful examination of the several aspects of a mountain face and the various suggestive routes as seen from distant points of vantage. This is obviously as important with rock peaks as with those involving ice and snow, and is as beneficial for one's instruction in the case of minor peaks as with Alpine giants, and indeed whether they be seamed with known routes or not. When the guideless leader has duly gained his experience of *all* branches of the craft on the lesser peaks during his first several seasons, and this must clearly depend on his individual ability and capacity, he may justifiably essay the higher summits, or those involving greater skill and endurance. But it cannot be too strongly impressed that before embarking on such higher courses he should have had ample opportunity to judge of his companions' ability on less exacting excursions. Too often an experienced amateur has got into difficulties on some high ascent through one or more of his party being less than a novice. Probably there are few amateurs who have such reserves of physical strength and resource to meet emergencies as Alpine guides.

Guideless climbing has, with some notable exceptions, tended to interest itself more and more in recent years with the forcing of difficult routes up rock peaks, and though many brilliant ascents have been admirably carried out, which have, perchance, involved a modicum of ice or snow, the real importance of ice and snow-craft has in comparison tended to be slurred over. But the mastership of the latter is equally as important to him who would call himself mountaineer, and there is more than sufficient in its acquisition to engage the guideless climber during his whole career.

How often in our youthful passion for adventure and sensation do we impulsively conclude that it is mainly, and perhaps only, in the rock-climbing branch of mountaineering that the real thrills are to be obtained ; that ice-climbing is a frigid and unsatisfactory pastime ; and that snow-work is mostly unmitigated boredom ! Much has been written on the philosophy of mountaineering in its various aspects, but to the mind of the present writer one of the

most significant and timely ' outbursts ' appeared last year from the pen of a former climbing companion.* Herein can be seen the process of complete conversion of the egregious doctrine of the ultra-rock-specialist into the mature and mellow philosophy of the mountain seer ; the passionate appeal to followers of his own erstwhile narrow cult not to perjure themselves by excessive devotion to a mere limited recreation ; the call while there is yet time, and ere ' the years that the locusts have eaten are irretrievable,' to take a wider vision and a truer perception of what really matters in a pursuit which to most of us may become nothing less than a genuine and trusty religion ; and finally, and perhaps of chief import, an imprecation to spurn the demoralising lapse into a comfortable and unadventurous type of mountaineering, but rather to adopt the vigorous and stimulating motto, *Toujours 1'A.udace* ! for our own moral and spiritual salvation.

Mummery in the last chapter of his classic bookf describes the true mountaineer as a wanderer, in the sense of one who loves to be where no human being has ever been before, who attempts new ascents, and who equally, whether he succeeds or fails, delights in the fun and jollity of the struggle. And this, be it noted (in spite of sundry expressions of opinion amongst certain of our specialists in craft), must apply to all branches, whether the exploration be of a forest-girt virgin summit, approachable only after weeks maybe of laborious packing, or on the other hand, the scaling of some beetling precipice by the most artificial and sensationally acrobatic ' variant.' The same theme has been well expressed lately by G. Winthrop Young,% than whom in the knight-errantry of mountaineering none deserves a more attentive hearing : 'And we ourselves know at heart that by a mountaineer we mean fundamentally, one who has the *feeling* for mountains, who has the undefined and unreasonable impulse to see mountains and try conclusions with them at any season and in every fashion ; and that he has the best understanding of mountaineering to whom any and every method of approach seems equally sympathetic, provided that the motive be a genuine desire to be among hills, and that the

* ' Climbing Philosophy,' by C. F. Holland in ' *The Climbers Club Journal*,' 1929, New Series, Vol. IV, No. 1.

f *My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus.*

X Foreword to ' Climbs and Ski Runs ' by F. S. Smythe.

object remains the mountain and not a personal vanity of success in one or the other technical fashion of approach.' Many by nature and attribute will be specialists in all walks of life, but as true mountaineers should we not take the larger view of our high calling ?

For ' the mountains are good to all' ; the languid and the robust, the specialist and the more catholically minded, are each entitled to ask whatever they require of them in proportion, for their inspiration and restoration and most active operation, whether it be quiet contemplation, less strenuous roving, or more hardy climbing. In the mountains at any rate they will all be enabled to rise above ' the foul miasmas that cling to the lowest bottoms of reeking valleys.'

AN EASTER IN THE CAIRNGORMS

GEORGE ANDERSON

Readers of this brief account of a tramping week-end in the north country must be warned at the outset that what is here told of feeble endeavour and frustrated hopes belongs to the hoary past, otherwise those who carry on to the end must do so with the conviction that never was a more prosaic record of trifling and insignificant episodes penned.

But that such things happened years ago may, and should, make a difference, for do not we all permit time to throw a strange glamour, not to say mantle of romance, over the most trifling incidents of days long past ?

How, otherwise, can one account for the curious fact that the majority of people of middle age, or over, persist in maintaining, in the face of the records that the seasons are changing and, particularly, that our winters are now less severe than they were in their young days ?

We suspect the simple reason to be that we remember one or, perhaps, two really severe winters which have impressed themselves so vividly upon our memories that we associate all the winters of our youth with such, entirely forgetting all the mild, ' muggy' ones which were probably the uncharacteristic rule rather then the exception.

This harmless trick which time plays upon the memory likewise accounts for the ever-ready supply of prolix, garrulous old gentlemen of the reminiscing sort: readers will therefore conserve their breath whilst they read this tale of a grandfather ; a tale of days when snow showers were blizzards and mountains bigger and brighter things than they are today.

It was in the course of one of the writer's summer visits, as a youth, to the Cairngorms, that a large and beautifully arched snow bridge was observed spanning the Féith Buidhe at the point where it breaks into waterfalls in its thousand feet of descent, from the plateau of Ben Macdhui to Loch Avon.

The date was August 5 th and it is probable that such a spectacle

could have been witnessed at few, if any, other spots in Great Britain on such a date, save perhaps in one of the several wild corries on the north face of the neighbouring Braeriach—one of the giants of the Cairngorm massif.

Immediately above the snow bridge lay a considerable snow field which, from a northerly aspect, is about as permanent a feature as the rocks and summits which surround it; at any rate, the writer has never viewed the Cairngorms from the north—spring, summer or autumn—with the view of this snowfield absent, and its practical permanence is evidenced in that it bears a local name : the pleasing one of ' The Dairymaid's Apron.'

As one stood contemplating the scene on that fine, warm summer day, the question suggested itself whether an Easter visit to the Cairngorms would not provide some, at least, of the pleasures of an Alpine holiday without leaving one's own country—one can scarcely say ' without going further afield.'

The question once presented would not be dismissed, and although the idea of an Easter visit simmered short of boiling point for a number of years, there came a day when opportunity became the handmaid of desire, and we at last drew open the drawer containing the odds and ends of mountaineering outfit more precious to behold than the jewels of a duchess, and packed as for Alpine requirements : all save the crampons and a half-tin of ' Sechehaye.' Of all the ecstatic moments which hill lovers and wanderers enjoy, those we spend over this preliminary to a mountain pilgrimage stand so high that it is matter for comment that no wizard has, so far as we know, caught up and described for us, whether in prose or verse, the emotions attending the packing of a rucksack.

Our approach to the Cairngorms on this occasion was via Aberdeen, where the writer, accompanied by ' A,' discarded the rags of respectability and—need it be added—put on others.

The change from train to coach at Ballater for the journey to Braemar was a welcome one, and as we sped on past Balmoral into full view of Lochnagar, we felt a pang of regret that it was not feasible to take it in our stride and return with it in our pouches, together with the ' big five ' of the Cairngorms which, in our enthusiasm, we hoped would all be ours within the next few days.

The turnpike beyond Braemar continues for another half-dozen miles as far as the Linn of Dee, and so does a much older one of pre-Macadam construction lead to the same point along the north bank of the Dee, and we gave it unhesitating preference over the south road.

A keeper going the round of his traps ferried us across the river just below Braemar (there is now a bridge), thus enabling us to start our first day's tramp dry-shod. Beyond the Linn of Dee lie the wilds, and our route thence lay up Glen Lui, at whose junction with Glen Derry stands a keeper's cottage, which was to be our habitat during our Easter trip.

Excursionists going that way after viewing the celebrated Linn do well not to make straight for Glen Lui, for if they double back on their tracks a little towards the confluence of the Luibeg and the Dee, and follow the former for a mile along its rock-bound sides and bed, they will be diverted by a series of little waterfalls, cascades and laughing waters, which those who keep to the road miss.

The day was fine and bright and as we wended our way up the Glen enjoying the view of the hills standing against a clear, blue sky, we little dreamt what was brewing, or that this was all we were to be privileged to view, either of sun or tops, during our brief visit to the Cairngorms on this occasion; but this is anticipating somewhat.

The shapely cone-like summit of Derry Cairngorm stood out in clear silhouette under a mantle of spotless white. But appearances from this aspect notwithstanding, Derry Cairngorm, which is not to be confused with its bigger neighbour, Cairn Gorm, is no more a cone, or a peak, in any true sense, than is the Devil's Point three miles distant: like so many other mountain points that look the part from one aspect, they prove to be frauds when looked at from any other, and are, in fact, the culminating points of more or less steep ridges.

If, indeed, a peak in the present sense may be described as the upper portion of a mountain having a steep approach to its summit on *all* sides, how many mountains of the peak order do we possess in the whole of Great Britain ?

Certainly none in the Cairngorms and few, if any, in the whole

of Scotland outside the Coolins, in Skye, where there is a nearly perfect example in Sgurr-nan-Gillean.

If there are any in the Lake District, they have so far escaped our notice. Cnicht, in Wales, might pass muster, whilst if that delightful little mountain, Tryfan, is to be ranked amongst the frauds, it is—looked at from one aspect—the most perfect example of a mountain top masquerading as a peak, which we know. Of nothing, surely, is it more true than of mountains that things are not always what they seem.

But if such strayings from the tracks of a first day's outing are permissible, it may be more to the point to describe, briefly, for the benefit of readers who are strangers to the district, the region we are now entering, thus providing, incidentally, the sole justification for this contribution.

To refer to the Cairngorms as a group of mountains would be less correct than to describe the region as a heaved-up mountain mass cloven from north to south by a great gash, and penetrated by three main glens (Eunach, Avon and Derry).

Fill up the gash and the resultant would be a vast plateau, above the general 4,000 ft. level, of which would rise but a little higher the swellings known as Ben MacDhui, 4,296 ft. ; Braeriach, 4,248 ft. ; Cairn Toul, 4,241 ft. ; and Cairn Gorm, 4,084 ft., with a subsidiary mass extending eastwards, with swellings known as Ben Avon and Beinn-a-Bhuird falling but slightly below the 4,000 ft. level.

From this description of what is unquestionably the largest and most elevated mountain region in Great Britain, it will probably cause no surprise to add that this mountain mass makes no great impression upon the eye when looked at from a distance of several miles as, for instance, from Aviemore, though it is quite otherwise when one is in its midst.

The aforementioned gash is, of course, the wild pass known as the Lairig Ghru, through which there is right-of-way from Braemar to Aviemore, a distance of nearly thirty miles, the pass proper being about eight miles in length and rising at its highest point to 2,73 3 ft.

Lying within the mountain region proper are Lochs Eunach and Avon, both of which lie off the beaten track of all except the mountain pilgrim and the deer-stalker, and upon which may

sometimes be seen, in the late spring, little " icebergs " floating about. Higher than these are numerous Lochans, which remain ice-bound far into the spring. Seton Gordon, the well-known naturalist, has frequently alluded to the Cairngorms as resembling Spitzbergen in character and appearance.

Undoubtedly the most interesting approach to the Cairngorms is from the north, or Aviemore, side. Between Aviemore and the foot-hills lies the fine Forest of Rothiemurchus, set with such jewels as Loch-an-Eilan and Loch Morlich and other lesser lochs.

Here one may walk with soft tread along miles of pine needle pathways admiring the while noble specimens of firs and enjoying the delicious aroma which pervades the atmosphere.

Here, too, juniper, blaeberry, cranberry and heather flourish amazingly, and with the raw material for the building of ant hills in such abundance, these may be seen of a size not commonly seen elsewhere. The whole of this forest area is rich in historical associations and legend connected with clan feuds and raids and with such ruthless characters as the Wolf of Badenoch and with freebooters such as Rob Roy.

Nor is it lacking in associations literary and artistic ; here lived Dr. Martineau, also the author of that delightful book, *The Memoirs of a Highland Lady* ; and here, too, the famous Scottish artist, MacWhirter (for there are lovely birches here, besides firs), and Landseer resided at times and executed some of their masterpieces in surroundings well calculated to excite their genius. One of the disadvantages, though also one of the attractions, of the Cairngorms is their comparative remoteness from centres of habitation.

The most centrally situated summit, Ben MacDhui, is ten miles from Aviemore and two or three miles further from Braemar.

But if it be true to say of the modern mountaineer that he never goes on foot where he can go in a car, these distances can, of course, be considerably reduced, especially on the Braemar side of the massif, where one can go in a car on a road of sorts as far as Deny Lodge, which is within five miles of Ben MacDhui. Tourists with hill-wandering proclivities do well to avoid visiting the district during the months of August and September, when keepers and ghillies jealously guard the preserves kept for grouse shooting and deer-stalking.

Moreover, such hotels and other accommodation as exist for visitors are generally over-run by a leisurely and sometimes ostentatiously respectable and well-to-do class during those two months, when prices for accommodation tend to soar.

From a rock-climbing point of view it cannot be said that the Cairngorms are worth a visit from the south side of the Border with rock-climbing as a main objective. The rock structure is red granite, and though pleasing to look at in a setting sun, does not lend itself to satisfactory rock-climbing. The eastern face of Sgoran Dubh overlooking Loch Eunach is the only crag where extensive climbing has been done. The principal rock faces on the Braeriach side lie in the practically continuous line of precipice in the corries surrounding Garbh Choire between Cairn Toul and Braeriach, but owing to their remoteness their possibilities have not yet been fully explored. The three-mile walk along the edge of this precipice is a very fine one and, at Easter, one may see snow cornices comparable with those one sees in the Alps.

It remains to be added that the views, such as from the top of Ben MacDhui, are very extensive. Towards the north one looks across the Moray Firth to the hills of Sutherland, beyond, and it is said Ben Hope, ninety-eight miles distant, is seen on a clear day.

To the west lies Ben Nevis, fifty-four miles away, and to the south the Pentland Hills and the Lammermuirs are said to be visible, ninety miles distant. Our authority for these distances is the indicator on the Ben MacDhui summit, concerning which, as of others, we never fail to ask ourselves who put it there, and why ? We like to see the mountain tops we visit so innocent of man's defilement as to make it possible to court the illusion that no foot of man, save ours, has ever trod there. For the same reason we have no liking for the triangulation posts on Alpine summits, though these may, and do, serve a more useful purpose.

From the point of view of attraction to the mountaineer it may be said that, given a spell of clear, crisp Easter weather, a visit to the Cairngorms at that season of the year is well worth while for those wishing to taste a few of the pleasures of an Alpine holiday without going abroad. But it must be added that clear, crisp weather in the Cairngorms at that season of the year is a pretty large assumption, of which the particular visit which we will now

resume giving some account of provides some little proof.

The morning of our second day opened ominously, so much so that our good hostess, observing signs of activity and preparation on our part, made the restraining observation that it was not like to be a day for man or beast to be out of doors.

The weather prospects seemed doubtful, to say the least, but we struck up Greag ant Scabbaig—the western spur flanking the entrance to Glen Derry—and proceeded along the steadily rising ground between it and Cam Crom. Here we struck deep snow and visibility was poor, and a momentary glimpse into the Lairig Ghru was all we had before becoming enveloped in thick mist.

The summit of Derry Cairngorm—our first objective—could, however, hardly elude us if we nursed the head of the Glen Derry slope, and in due course were soon ascending what was obviously the summit slope. In Summer the mountain is rough and boulder-strewn ; in fact, Derry Cairngorm might be described as the Glyder Fach of the Cairngorms, but now our progress was unimpeded and not a boulder shewed. ' A ' went ahead here and disappeared in the impenetrable mist, but his tracks were followed until one descried a dim figure belabouring with his ice axe, a ghostly protuberance from which chunks of ice were flying in all directions.

Asked for an explanation of his onslaughts, he replied that he reckoned it was the summit cairn and was making sure by investigating its ' innards.' I opined there could be no doubt about it and beseeched him to cease knocking the Cairngorms about. ' Judging by your vigour,' said I, ' one would think you were venting your spleen on some ultra-modern piece of sculpture,' whereat his eye gleamed expressive of ' I wish ~~to~~ — '

Our next objective was Ben MacDhui, still some two or three miles distant, and than which there is no more elusive summit in misty conditions. A compass bearing showed that the ridge continued in the right direction, so we followed it until it petered out in a snowy waste, with no visible landmarks around. Groping forward now as two blind men, matters were not improved by a rising wind and oncoming snow, and we could only hope that we were outflanking the precipices overhanging Lochan Uaine, which lay between us and our objective.

Wandering thus for some time, the doubt was eventually raised, what useful purpose would be served even if the summit could be found in such conditions and on such a day. Fatal question !

Seeking what shelter could be found behind a snow-bound boulder, we brought out some rations and—forgetful about youthful lessons against gobbling—partook of a hurried meal and then beat a hasty and ignominious retreat, following our tracks back to Derry Cairngorm in a raging storm of wind and snow and escaping into the comparative calm of Glen Derry and so back to the cottage and a true Highland welcome. We could at least console ourselves in the manner of golfers when off their game—we had had some fresh air.

Next morning found us trekking up Glen Derry and speculating whether the order of the day in the matter of weather was to be ' the medicine as before.' Our objective was Loch Avon, including a pilgrimage to the Shelter Stone—the latter recalling with genuine pleasure numerous thoroughly miserable nights spent under its protection from the elements, though not from a low temperature. And here one must comment upon the numerous hill wanderers in the south one has met who have visited the Cairngorms without, apparently, having seen that wildest and innermost of all their recesses—Loch Avon.

To the writer, such neglect seems like that of a countryman back from his first visit to London and confessing not to have visited Tussauds or other of London's great' sights.'

That is not to say that the view from the Shelter Stone at the head of Loch Avon is the only one worth seeing in the Cairngorms, but it is doubtful if there is a more wild and solitary spot in these islands.

Striking up from the glen, which was alive with grouse and curlew, we followed the usual route up Coire Etchachan and had scarcely reached the head of the corrie when the mist fiend gave his cauldron a vigorous stir, completely enveloping us.

Loch Etchachan being our immediate objective, the burn flowing from it was our sure guide until it disappeared under the snow, after which we could only grope our way erratically towards the loch. Finding ourselves eventually on suspiciously level ground, which proved upon investigation to be solid ice, our

suspicion that the loch we were looking for was under our feet was confirmed, and we were thus somewhat in the position of the Scot looking for the Caledonian asylum on his arrival in London and being told by a policeman : ' You're in it, my man, you're in it.'

Taking now a compass-bearing for Loch Avon, we had not proceeded far when blizzard conditions set in good and hearty and the cold was intense. We had lost a good deal of time, and it soon became evident that even if we could reach the Shelter Stone we stood a fair chance of spending the night there, with no provisions beyond our immediate needs, so once more we retraced our steps, reflecting the while that of the numerous damnabilities of this life—major and minor—thick mist accompanied by blizzard conditions was no minor one.

So down the snowy slopes of Coire Etchachan ' hell for leather ' and back to the cottage, to find not only a glowing fire but also the guidman's woollens airing before it against our expected return, and in these and his tartan breeks and coats we spent an evening of profound content.

And here, touching upon the matter of clothing, one may do well to emphasise the importance of taking not only an adequate supply, but of the kind proper for a winter visit to such northerly mountain districts as the Cairngorms, practically all the fatalities in this district in recent years having proved to be due, primarily, to neglect in this respect.

To be caught on the plateau of Braeriach or Ben MacDhui by a high wind of low temperature is not an experience to be lightly courted by anyone, least of all by those lacking a fairly windproof body garment. A good margin of safety in the matter of food is also advisable for all-weather roaming in the spacious upland districts in the far north. If one were to lapse into anecdotage on this subject, one could tell of incredible follies and youthful sins of omission in days when one was gammoned into believing that a few of Blank's meat lozenges were fit substitute for a loaf of bread ; of how, in consequence, one had escaped lethal designs—so one was told years later—because one was suspected of having a scrap of chocolate left in one's rucksack. And how one had to crawl, supperless, under the Shelter Stone

with nothing to bunker upon in the morning to take one to the nearest port except a mouthful of tea leaves ; and what resulted from the quaffing of a double draught of usquebaugh on arrival at said port before one had broken fast.

So far, three thoroughly enjoyable days, but the plans for two completely baulked. What of the fourth, and last ? We had hoped to be sufficiently fit on the fourth day to cross the massif to Aviemore via the Devil's Peak, Cairn Toul and Braeriach, but the weather was such that that plan had to be abandoned from the start, and we had to console ourselves with the hope that the seventeen miles' walk to Aviemore via the Lairig Pass, in winter conditions, might provide us with a day of mild adventure, even though that meant finishing with an empty bag in the matter of peaks.

Taking leave of our truly kind host and hostess, we started out at 7 a.m. under strict injunction to send them a post card *if* we got safely through. Passing Cam Crom, an eagle hove in sight, occasioning a remark from ' A' with, I thought, a touch of Sassenach jealousy, about one having been seen on his side of the border hovering over some drab London suburb like Peckham or Stoke Newington. I could show him no more eagles after that, and when, later, a herd of deer appeared on the sky-line, I was glad there was no allusion to Richmond or Bushey Parks or the soot-begrimed, mangy beasts which one may see there eating buns out of children's hands.

The track leads round the lower skirts of Carn-a-Mhaim and joins the River Dee track near the Corrour bothy. It was clear we were in for a ' coorse ' day, but we were, fortunately, back to wind as we made height towards the Lairig. The track soon disappeared under the snow and the stone ' men ' could not be readily followed in the obscuring mist, but once into the pass we could not go astray, and in due course reached the first of the Pools of Dee, into which we all but walked. Here snow lay in great quantity, accountable only by the probability that much snow is blown from the steep slopes of the Pass into its bed ; but what was less easily accounted for was a number of quite respectable little crevasses round about the Pools of Dee.

Upon reaching the summit of the Pass (2,700 feet) the full force

of the wind was felt, and we were content to leave this natural resting place in possession of the numerous ptarmigan, which ambled aside from us in the most leisurely fashion.

Half-way down the pass we came upon ski tracks, and learned later that a party of skiers had been out that day recovering their skis, which they had left a day or two before on the Lairig edge of the Ben MacDhui plateau.

Better and clearer weather greeted us as we emerged from the Pass and gained the upper fringe of the Rothiemuchus Forest. Once across the turbulent Bennie, the walk to Aviemore is a forest one and we deviated in order to view the charming Loch-an-Eilan *en route.*

So *au revoir* to the Cairngorms whose high shoulders we have softly trodden but whose features have been so completely veiled from us. I was naturally apologetic towards ' A ' who, like the good fellow he is, protested that he had had a glorious time, so much so that he vowed one day to return and *see* the Cairngorms.

A HOLIDAY IN THE DOLOMITES

MARGARET SIDE

This is an attempt to put together, in compact form, imormation which we gleaned from an infinite number of sources, and which is likely to be of use to other climbers planning a comparatively inexpensive holiday in the Dolomites for the first time.

The best months to go in are June to September. In June there is the additional beauty of late snow on high ground. Most mountains can be climbed, particularly south walls, but chimneys are likely to be iced, and before the middle of July the South Wall of the Marmolada usually has a continual stream of water pouring down it from the melting cornice of the glacier above. In June and]uly all the valleys are carpeted with the delicate glory of the meadow flowers, and the hillsides are gay with alpenrosen and the brilliant blue stars of gentiana verna. In July and August the long daylight gives opportunity for either very long climbs or several short ones to be made the same day. The disadvantage of these two months is that, being the high season, everything is more expensive, and huts and hotels are crowded with climbers, walkers and tourists. In September the weather is supposed to be most settled; prices are down, climbing is excellent, the fields are full of autumn crocuses, and the alps are carpeted with gentiana campestris. In this month, too, the wonderful rose-glows of sunrise and sunset are at their most brilliant.

As regards language, a fair knowledge of either German or Italian is necessary, as English is only spoken and understood in the big hotels and by a comparatively few guides.

S.A.D. buses run several times daily between the important centres, but the services are very much curtailed before July ioth and after September 2nd, and almost nil before July 1st and after September 16th. In addition to this service, the Post-auto buses and a few private services run until the passes are blocked by snow, but these bus-times must be found out locally. For a party of five or more it is cheaper to hire a private car than to go by bus. S.A.D. time-tables can be obtained from the E.N.I.T. offices at 16, Waterloo

Place, London, S.W.7. Maps can also be got more cheaply here than elsewhere in London, the best being (1) Cortina d'Ampe2Zo e le Dolomiti Cadorine, (2) Val Gardena, Marmolada, etc., (3) San Martino di Castrozza ; published by the Italian Touring Club, price about 3/-, and varying slightly according to the rate of exchange. There is no good climbing guide in English, but two good ones in German are : Galhuber's ' Dolomiten ' in four volumes, at present obtained direct from the publishers (Artaria G.m.b.H. Vienna (Wien) Austria) more cheaply than in England, and Meyer's ' Reisebuecher : Hoch tourist, Vol. 7.' In Italian a good guide is : 'Le Dolomiti Orientali' by Antonio Berti; and I understand that the C.A.I, also publish a guide to the western Dolomites.

For those going for a fortnight or longer, it is a good investment to join the Italian Alpine Club (C.A.I.) Trento section, their address being, ' Via Roma 31, Trento.' This entitles members to a 50% discount on beds, and 10% on food in all C.A.I, huts ; also to 20% single, and 30% return reduction on buses, if the membership card is shown to the conductor before the ticket is punched. There is also a special reduction on train fares in Italy.

Scarpetti (kletterschuhe), a special cloth-soled boot, can be bought for about 35-45 lire in most villages, those in Cortina being very much more expensive than in the smaller places. A little shop at the summit of Costalunga pass sells scarpetti on Sundays. A solid sole of white or greenish material about half an inch thick grips the rock better and lasts longer than soles made of layer upon layer of felt stitched together. The best soles should last about a fortnight with care, and can then be replaced at a moderate cost. They have the advantage over rubbers in being perfectly safe on wet rock.

Letters are delivered daily to some huts, such as the Rifugio Sella and Principe Umberto, and less frequently to others, such as the Vajolet, Tre Cime and Mussolini. Letters can also be sent Poste Restante to any village, addressed ' Name, Uffizio della Posta, Name of village, N. Italy,' and marked ' Lettera ferma in posta.'

This year, owing to the expensive railway fares in Austria, and the very big reduction on Italian railway tickets, it was cheaper

to travel the long way round, through Lausanne and Milan, instead of the direct route via Zurich and Innsbruck. The price of all meals on trains and at station restaurants is exorbitant; for instance, a few items we noticed on the tariff were : lod. for a currant bun, 8d. for a tiny jar of honey, and 6d. for a buttered roll. It is advisable, therefore, to take sufficient food in the rucksack to last from Newhaven to Bolzano.

Camping would be quite feasible in the Dolomites, as there are endless beautiful sites, and at any rate in September midges and horseflies are non-existent. Maps should not be relied upon too much to indicate the presence of water, as many streams are completely dried up in summer. Also care must of course be taken not to camp among hay, however much this may appeal to the aesthetic sense of the camper. Hay is a very precious commodity to the hard-working peasant, successive crops being cut until quite late in the year, and every tiny bit carefully raked together and tied up into enormous bundles with sacking and cord. These bundles are hoisted up on to the head and back of a man or woman, who, looking like a walking mushroom, toils up the hillside to the log hut where the hay is stored for the winter.

A handbook giving the tariff of nearly all climbs, also names of guides, and all information about huts, etc., can be obtained from the C.A.I, for 7 lire. The tariff for the best climbs varies from about 300-600 lire, and if it is intended to climb almost every day, it is much cheaper and more satisfactory to arrange a guide's fees at so much per day for the whole period. This, as a rule, does not include their keep. Joliann Demetz (31) of Villa Dolomiti, Santa Cristina, Val Gardena, is a most reliable and competent climber, a delightful companion, and most reasonable in his requirements and charges. The main difficulty of guideless climbing is route-finding, as scarpetti leave no marks on the holds of even much-frequented climbs.

In unsettled weather, Rifugio Sella and the Principe Umberto hut are better centres than San Martino or Cortina, as the huts are so near the foot of the rocks that the climber can nip out of the hut, bag a climb or two, and be indoors again, drinking rum punch, before the rain realises that advantage has been taken of its temporary absence.

From Sellajoch there are a number of first-class climbs to be made, including the south wall of the Grohmannspitze, a varied and interesting climb, including a foot traverse with no handholds, and, a little way further up, a short hand-traverse with no footholds. The south wall of the Illrd Sella Tower is a sensational wall climb with an airy but well-belayed traverse. The Langkofeleck, Langkofel north wall, Schmidt Kamin on the Fiinffingerspitze, north arete of the 1st Sella Tower, and Murfreid on Sella are all exceptionally good climbs within easy reach of Sellajoch. It is well worth while making a detour from here to Grodnerjoch (Passo Gardena) to climb the Adang Kamin on Tschierspitze. This is one of the best chimney climbs in the Dolomites, particularly if finished by the Dibona route, which keeps in the chimney for the latter part of the climb, instead of traversing out on to the wall. Also there is a splendid climb, but more severe, on the Schiefer Tod, an isolated tower in the Sella group immediately opposite the Adang Kamin.

There are enjoyable climbs, though somewhat loose, on the Kleine Fermeda, south wall, and the Grosse Fermeda, in the Geislers. This is a lovely group of peaks at the head of the Cislestal, above Santa Cristina ; and, being on the northern outskirts of the Dolomites, it often enjoys good weather while everywhere else is in mist and rain. The south wall and the arete on Punta Fiammes are both good climbs to be made from Cortina, but it is necessary to have boots carried to the summit by a porter (about 40 lire). Tt is disappointing that there is so little climbing, and so much scree-slogging, on Sorapis, Antelao, and Monte Cristallo from Tre Croci, as they are all so beautiful in appearance that one would like to become more closely acquainted with them.

A happy two days can be spent up at the Croda da Lago hut, above Cortina. It stands on the edge of a small green lake of great charm, set among pines, and overshadowed by the long, jagged ridge of Croda da Lago. On still days the small but entrancing Becco di Mezzodi is reflected in its waters. There is a remarkably entertaining climb up the Barbaria Kamin on the Becco, and a short but pleasant route up the north arete of the Croda da Lago. From both of these there are incomparable views of Pelmo, Monte Cristallo, and the snowy pyramid of Antelao. It was while climbing

Crock da Lago that we first saw a lovely little bird with red, black and white wings, fluttering about the rocks like a cross between a humming-bird and a butterfly. We saw these birds on a number of other occasions, always about the rocks on high peaks. Several times we saw eagles wheeling round among the mighty crags, or circling up and up till they were too small to be seen any longer. And once, when we were at the foot of the Kleine Zinne, a flight of fourteen ptarmigan whirred over our heads.

Another climb not to be missed is the South Wall of the Marmolada, which is full of variety, beginning with magnificent pitches on walls and in chimneys, and decreasing in difficulty in each of its three stages. The views from its gleaming summit extend over the whole of the Dolomites, and away to the snowy ranges of the Octztal, Zillertal, and Stubai Alps. The descent of an easy wall, and a run, jump and slither down the long snowfield, completes a very good day. No—I forgot—a brimming plateful of ' gemiise suppe ' followed by ' omelette mit confiture ' at the Venezia Hut is the grand finale.

The Principe Umberto Hut, under the Drei Zinnen, is an excellent centre from which to climb. The north and south walls of the Kleine Zinne are both good climbs, though the difficulty of the Zsigmondy Kamin on the south face has been much overrated. Two other good climbs are the east wall of the Grosse Zinne, and the Dimai route up the Croda del Rifugio, one of the summits of the Wcstliche Zinne. This latter climb is a short one suitable for an odd half-day. The gem of this group is the Preuss Riss on the Kleinste Zinne. This starts from the Paternsattel and ascends perpendicularly up an almost holdless twelve-foot wall, a short riss, and a series of lovely pitches in an absolutely vertical chimney. The descent is made down a magnificent schlucht on the opposite side, in nine consecutive abseils, some requiring the full length of a doubled 200-foot rope.

But the climb which is held by many to be the finest in the Dolomites is the Schleierkante route up the Cima della Madonna. We made the journey from the Sexten Dolomites to the Pala on a motor-cycle and side-car in the pouring rain, solely for the joy of making this climb the following day, and were well repaid by a wonderful day's climbing and by the beauty of the sunset, which

lit up all the lovely summits of the Pala group as we returned up the Rolle Pass on our homeward journey. A two-hours' walk through woods leads to the foot of the climb, then by easy rocks to the riss, which is a very difficult and strenuous pitch, with a severe wall immediately above it. Then comes a succession of airy wall pitches, extremely exposed, but on magnificent rock. An interesting pitch comes where the climber has to bridge a wide gap, by leaning forward and falling with his hands on the opposite side. ' lch bin zu klein,' said I to Demetz, while measuring the gap with my eye, but he laughed and assured me that I was ' lang genug,' and that he had the rope held quite safely. A wall with scanty holds follows this, and then another series of exposed pitches decreasing in difficulty until the summit is reached.

Those interested in colour photography or in colour for its own sake should not miss seeing the lovely Karer Lake, a vivid gem of every shade of green and blue set among dark pine woods, and reflecting the grey and gold towers of the snow-flecked Latemar.

For beauty of form and colour it is inconceivable that there can be any mountain region more lovely than the Dolomites, with their sheer walls and fantastic mist-enchanted pillars, sometimes silver-grey, sometimes brilliant orange, rising above dazzling white scree, then lower down the dark pine-woods, and in the valleys the flowered meadows. But their glory is greatest at sunset, when every mountain-top is flaming red, soaring above valleys already sunk in the purple bloom of evening. Gradually the fiery colours rise, and the rocks are left cold and greenish-grey, the lights begin to twinkle in chalet windows, and in the huts the climbers talk over the day's experiences and make their plans for the morning.

MORE OF CANADA

DOROTHY PILLEY

A modern British mountaineer, said to me the other day. ' I have a chance of going to Canada. What would I do in the Rockies ? Would they be worth while ?' He was one of those men who look rather to Clogwyn du'r Arddu than to Scafell for ' really *interesting* climbing ' and an answer was not quite easy to find. When I asked W. P. Haskett-Smith the same question in 1925 he replied : ' The Rockies are like a child's castle of bricks—not very cleverly built.' In spite of which he strongly recommendea me to go. I went, agreed with him wholly, and have ever since felt grateful.

Thanks to the recent prominence of expeditions in the British Columbia Coast Range and the concentrated efforts of several speakers at the last Annual Dinner, Canada has at last been heard of as a climbing ground ! In spite of which the Editor, without taking any responsibility himself, urges me to continue.

Well, what kind of climbing ground is it that Canada offers ? Several kinds ! Here is one. You get off the main trans-continental Canadian Pacific Railway line at Lake Louise, half a dozen miles short of the Divide. A car takes you up in a few minutes to a lake that has colours in it you have never seen unless you have been in the Rockies before. Yellow Iceland poppies fringe its nearer shore and its more distant banded reaches lie between dark green hemlock. Beyond, above, glacier-capped walls of sheer, pale-hued cliffs, obviously very high and a long way back, close the prospect. In their middle you can make out that a remarkably deep, narrow corridor passes through them. You can see where the level glacier floor turns in, but the rest is hidden behind the portals. This is Abbott's Pass, one of the most dramatic and the most accessible climbing centres in Canada. Let us go up it. On its summit (9,598 ft) there is an exceedingly good imitation—made by the Swiss guides—of an Alpine Cabane.

We go up by the Plain of the Six Glaciers. Here at the edge of the forest among open bilberry-crowned knolls is a small high

Alpine Chalet Hotel, as it might be overlooking the Findelen, Aletsch or Miage glaciers. By sleeping here several peaks are within reach. Mitre (9,480 ft), for example, which gives you, after an agreeable hour or two of glacier, real moderate rock climbing on ground where the route takes some finding. Mitre is not one of those mountains on which you can take a mean advantage by a shale slope round the corner. You must climb to reach its summit, and after the view from it of Lefroy's Northern perpendicularities, of ice-hung Temple, and of Hungabee and the range of the Ten Peaks, you will agree that the Rockies are worth looking at even if, under the hand, they are not everything you would wish.

It is customary to start for Abbott's Pass in the late afternoon with only a comfortable allowance of evening light. This is because the precipices between which the way goes are overhung with glaciers, from which, in the heat of the day, seracs sometimes fall. The guides who built the Cabane and took up its timbers have lively stories to tell of narrow escapes from these projectiles. At evening you can expect them to stay quiet, though your eye will wander speculatively from time to time, along the line of toppling towers high up on their remote shelves, especially when a thunderous roar breaks out and echoes beat awesomely round the enclosing cliffs. A thin white trickle of falling ice-blocks ' a safe mile away' shows you where it comes from. Deep in the ravine, where the crevasses, always much more innocent than in the Alps, make a rope seem the right wear, your way leads from time to time across worn-down piles of serac debris, warnings of what might happen. But they are soon past, and with the last of the light you are out of the ' Death trap,' winding up the final snow slopes with Lake Louise shimmering more unbelievably than ever below you, the first lights of the vast Canadian Pacific Chateau shining like a liner beyond it, and the near white masses of Victoria and Lefroy close at hand, promising great things for the morrow.

Victoria (11,365 ft) is in no way difficult but has a long, narrow, lofty snow-ridge broken at times by pleasant sound little rock stretches. The traverse of it onwards to the North had, when I was last on it in 1933, a misleading reputation. It had only been done from the North and it was reported to contain unclimbable overhangs. However, Miss Georgia Englehart has since shown that

these steps are fraudulent and offer little resistance. I wish I had known this, for I was last there on a perfect day with more than enough time in hand. The usual route is so bewitching that the complete traverse down to the Plain of the Six Glaciers must be an expedition quite worth the visit from England—at least to an ordinary Alpine devotee.

Opposite is Lefroy (11^30 ft), its long ice-slope haunted by the figure of M. D. Geddes, one of the pioneers of the Canadian Alpine Club, who unluckily misjudged its angle, tried to glissade it and lost his life. Starting from Abbott's Pass one can get down before the snow over the ice has become slushy. From Abbott's Pass you drop to the South down an extremely long stone-filled gulch. Your reward comes with a series of upland meadows and lakelets, so entrancing that it is hard to push on to Lake O'Hara in time for supper. But Lake O'Hara is thought by even the most experienced to be perhaps the gem of the whole Rockies.

I was fortunate enough to have my introduction to Canadian mountaineering here at the Annual Camp of the Alpine Club of Canada in 1925. This is another kind of climbing ; highly organised, full of good fellowship and marvellously hospitable to the English visitor. But you do not have to find your own way. Far from it. You list on a board the mountains you would like to go up, and if luck and the Committee are in your favour you are added to parties who are going up them. This can be a piquant situation for a selective Alpinist. What should you do if your leader, some strong young man with an Alpenstock beginning his second season in a sort of Excelsior spirit, and ' guiding ' twelve miscellaneous women up a loose, shalc-fillcd chimney, commands you to come oft the slabs at the side, to which you have fled from the bombardment, to take your place in the line of fire ? Hard is a woman's lot! Every serious Canadian climber of course knows well how difficult it is to keep up the supply of trained and responsible leaders. The best are naturally ear-marked for the big peaks. However, I was spoilt by my charming hosts and all the peaks within reach of Lake O'Hara, big and little, fell to my share. The culmination was great Hungabee (11,457 ft) which, like the Matterhorn, can be unclimbable for weeks on end some seasons. And at evening after Wiwaxy (8,870 ft), or Odaray (10,175 ft), or the graceful

snow ridge of Huber (11,051 ft) there was the camp fire, the songs and the bear stories, tales of the trappers, the prospectors, the Indians, all the flavour of the life of the ranges, before seeking the deep peace of a balsam pillow. They are so soft and fragrant that Canadians take them home to scent their rooms in winter.

But what can one do alone ? The camps are the best way of beginning and give one a hundred advantages—open trails and snug bell tents already packed in for you, packers, and cowboys and horses and cooks, endless contacts with some two hundred members who are in and out of camp, in addition to the climbing. But they are held only during the last two weeks in July. What can a climber by himself in the Rockies manage ? Even I found I could get up things like Mt Stephen (10,495 ft) from Field alone —it is plastered with trilobites—and Mt Temple (11,636 ft) in Paradise Valley, where the last 500 ft of step-cutting in hard snow felt repaying in the glorious isolation of the summit. I have done it since with a crowd which, as they would say, lessens ' the kick.'

For bigger expeditions the Swiss guides, excellent in every way, are available ; and, at Banff, you may be able to persuade Lawrence Grassi, of Canmore, a local miner with a passion for Mt Louis to go up that sensational pinnacle with you. First led by Conrad Kain, it is the hardest well-known rock climb in the Rockies and is done direct from the Alpine Club House at Banff. This comfortable, well-run headquarters is a good place to rest in, if you need it, before or after the journey, to dump luggage at and collect letters.

But, if you have time, you will want to get away to the remoter ranges. Except for the climbing immediately off the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways, these involve you in fairly elaborate arrangements and considerable expense. You need an ' outfit,' horses and men to look after them and keep camp, for as long as you are going in for. If you have abundant time and do not mind very heavy carrying and trail cutting, you can force your way in without horses in some regions, but you may then have little more than a glimpse of your peaks as a reward for prodigious labour. With an outfit, there are a large number of groups—the Freshfields, for example, are only four or five days in and the Northern Selkirks have recently become much more accessible through the new Columbia Highway—which can be reached without undue

trouble. Some of the best of these groups have been visited once or twice only and offer great opportunities for new climbs and explorations. But most newcomers will want to sample the nearest summits. For them the Yoho Valley, an hour in a car from Field, is the place. In 1933, after the Paradise Valley Camp, I.A.R. and I went up most of its peaks with A. M. Binnic, and a sketch of our doings will show the kind of thing to be expected.

Twin Falls Cabin is a massive log shack—very comfortably appointed—at the foot of a narrower Niagara. A white column of water smoke climbs and drifts incessantly between you and its varying thunder. As a centre, few Alpine stations can beat it in the choice of expeditions offered. We began with a look-out point, Isolated Peak, first climbed in 1901 by no less a man than Whymper, along with Klucker, Pollinger and Kaufmann. It was hardly worthy of such conquerors. But we were there to get an idea of the general lie of the land. The view would have given us more insight if a thunderstorm had not crept up from the West and discharged several bolts uncomfortably near us as we gained the summit.

We rushed down again in a deluge which blotted out the world about us. This was why, in trying to make a more direct route down to Twin Falls we got into trouble, which will illustrate one of the special difficulties and charms of untamed mountains. We were trying to cross a valley in which we knew there were two streams (creeks rather) which join lower down before they leap over Twin Falls. We had to follow the bank of the first for a mile over rough ground before it could be crossed and then only succeeded with the aid of a snow bridge obligingly left by some Spring snow-slide. Once across we ran down in glee another mile and then found ourselves trapped ! The other tributary creek was equally impassable but unprovided by snow bridges ! Our choice was to go up to the glacier again, half a day's journey, or some desperate struggles in the icy, foaming waters. Not that by this time we minded getting wet! We couldn't be wetter. But there was a fierce turbulence about the wide, white waves of the torrent, and now and then a rumble as of rolling boulders in its bed that made circumspection necessary. In the end we managed to wedge a tree trunk across. It was under water and seemed likely to wash away at any moment. The trode looked tickle, as Spenser aptly says.

We roped up for the venture and provided one another with an enthralling balancing turn. Nobody, however, quite came up to one's hopes by falling in ! How often one strolls over a Swiss glacial torrent by a bridge without a thought of its effect on the region.

Marpole (9,822 ft) was our next peak. This is the best rock climb in the Yoho Valley. A pretty ridge not unlike the Grooved Arete of Try fan, brings one to the summit but it reserves its best fun for the descent. A guideless party like ourselves, without local knowledge, may reasonably be puzzled as to how to get down from the East ridge to Emerald Pass. But with enough peering over the lip of its last big overhanging section a line of concealed fissures can be made out and the climb down is as amusing as it is spectacular.

The return from Marpole lies through the Little Yoho, a long valley full of park-like stretches. Meadows, starred with Indian paint-brush in an unbelievable range of hues from crimson to flame, pink, cream and orange, lead on from one forest vista to another. Lower down we dropped to the secret, still waters of Marpole Lake, where we surprised a moose swimming. And for a mile of the trail there lolloped and scuttled ahead of us a large and agitated porcupine. Certainly one of Nature's oddities for whom I had no affection. In my first Canadian season one came into my tent by night and ate my climbing boots !

Next noon saw us up Mt Habel—a long and pleasant snow walk with a view. Recent rains had washed the air and drowned the forest fires. Gone was the thick blue haze in the valleys and the brown smear in the sky, which at its worst often makes even the nearest peaks mere pale shadows—underdeveloped photographs of themselves. We could see as far as the speckled shield, which we thought was great Robson in the North, its snows dim and yellow with extreme distance, while to the South the jagged silhouettes of the Selkirks, that sister chain to the Rockies, seemed almost near at hand. Dominating them was a wide-spreading snowfield with a salient black peak in its midst and a flanking range of fierce-looking aiguilles. These caught our fancy, they are the Bobbie Burns and the Bugaboo ranges—of which more anon.

Immediately below us lay spread enamelled meadows, set with

turquoise and jade mountain lakes. The wide stretches of the Yoho Glacier swept round the base of our peak, surprisingly free from crevasses. And from the middle distance Mt Victoria, Hungabee and Temple saluted us.

But what most held our eye was Mt Balfour, that rarely visited peak. It towers up like a fortress on the opposite side of the Yoho Valley, throwing out in the direction of Twin Falls, a spur, capped with a postern turret. Balfour, we resolved, should be our next expedition. It proved a long one, chiefly through the difficulties of crossing the torrent. We were involved in several hours of glacier-worn rocks—slabs with abrupt little walls joining them shelf to shelf. They were not difficult but delayed us, so that when we came to the heavenly series of former lake basins, full of flowers and linked one to another by gaily dancing streams, which, step-like, take you up to the point where the real climb of Mt Balfour begins—afternoon had unfortunately begun also !

The climb itself was pleasant—a series of steep snow-slopes, between fine serac bands, took us onto the South ridge at a point which left us still a good hour's scrambling over broken rocks to the summit ! There is one great difference between the Rockies and the Alps. There, you can usually, if you wish, plan a descent into another valley to some village where food and shelter or even hotels and comfort await you. Here, even if you traverse your peak, you have to arrange to get back to your starting point. For as you look over uncountable multitudes of ridges—black and grim to the North, snowclad and scintillating to the South—or peer down into opalescent valleys about you, the absence of humanity and its work is the chief thing which strikes you. If you went down into most of the other valleys you would not find human habitations, or even, in most cases, as much as a trail to lead you, after much journeying, back to your kind. You have the thrill of the pioneer as you fight your way down through the trailless forests, which may take hours to the mile in ranges where miles are many.

In this case we did have a choice open to us. In the same valley, in addition to Twin Falls, was the Takkakaw Falls, the main Yoho Bungalow Camp, for which we might make. It seemed nearer. The only flaw was that we mistook our line below the glaciers and let ourselves in for some hours ' bush-whacking '

after dusk. This is a horrible strain on the temper at any time, beating your way through undergrowth and clambering up through spillikin piles of deadfalls which often let you down with a crash. In pitch darkness you have to have a strong motive for going on. We had, and the welcome at Yoho more than fulfilled our cheerfullest anticipations.

We rode back up to Twin Falls in the morning and the next day left these hospitable quarters with regret, to cross the President Range to Emerald Lake. We took the long ridge that leads down from President to Summit Lake and found it very sporting. It will be clear from this list of expeditions, which by no means exhausts the district, that the Alpine way of climbing from a centre is perfectly possible in the Rockies. But let no one expect that the routes are like those in the Zermatt Super Circle. For any climbing comparable to that you must move Westwards, a day in the train, to the Selkirks. The Rockies are more like the Tarentaise or the Pyrenees.

I fell in love with the Selkirks round Glacier at once, when I first saw them in 1925 and went up Sir Donald (10,808 ft), and they seemed no less splendid on the way back from China in the autumn of 1931. But the season in Canada is short. Snow begins to fall early, and that year the Illecillewaet River went on the rampage, leaped its bed, dashed through the seven-mile Connaught Tunnel of the C.P.R. and made for the Atlantic instead of the Pacific as heretofore ! This ended all climbing, but we had fitted in Uto (9,610 ft) and Tupper (9,229 ft), both sound minor peaks, Egginergratish or Veisivi-like in character, between the showers. Glacier offers you as quarters the friendly roof of Mr. and Mrs. Hartley—the Game-warden and his wife from the Old Country. He can tell you what it feels like to wrestle unarmed with a wounded bear and is helpful in every way. She can make rum butter and every kind of cake. From his house, after doing Sir Donald, a fine peak of the Rothorn order, you can either go up to the Hermit Hut under Tupper or over to the Circle Hut for the much less well-known Dawson Range. But it would be well to have a strong and fairly experienced party for this. The snowfall in the Selkirks is very heavy, the glaciers (though sadly receding of late) are vast, the rock is sound, the faces steep, the ridges bold and there are great

things to be done. It is strange to recall how many tempting unattacked peaks wait there, pinnacle crested and ice-hung, only a day's hard packing away from the C.P.R. line. And Southward again behind Bishops' is the Purity Range. How much there still is to do ! How easy it would be, comparatively, if you had time to spare, to play in them.

Farther off, more coyly retired from the main routes, in the South-Western Chain of the Selkirks, in the Purcells as they are often called, are the Bobbie Burns and Bugaboo Ranges. These were the peaks which had caught our eye on Habel. We went into them from the Upper Columbia, that empty beautiful Rhone Valley that still waits—after the failure of the Indians, the miners, the cattlemen and those who sold its alkaline benches as orchards, threading new potatoes on the aspens to be photographed as apples—for the coming of the tourists.

This lovely, lonely, ruined, memory-haunted land was Conrad Kain's country. That great Austrian guide lived at Wilmer—doing a little mixed farming and ranching on what used to be his fur farm before the bottom fell out of that, trapping in the winter and studying the homing instinct of the mouse. He was a great man ! The farthest-ranging and one of the most brilliant of all the Pioneer Guides, with more big new peaks to his credit than any other man will ever have, a rare naturalist, a legendary raconteur, adventurous, embittered, generous, sagacious, a bundle of contradictions and yet a fundamentally simple character ; he could damn a " peen-head boliteecian ' or a ' mushroom mountaineer ' out of existence with an intonation, or flood a whole valley with a tender glow of love-lorn reminiscence by a mere shrug of the shoulders.

With this unbelievably romantic and attaching figure we went, in September, 1933, into his own peculiar preserve, on what was, alas, to prove the last of his inummerable trips. He died on the 2nd February, 1934, of encephalitis ; but of this there was then no sign. Most of our days spread out to twenty-odd hours of steady going, from the camp back to it again. With what a delight would Conrad settle down under a boulder on the way home, to light his pipe for a philosophic interlude, pointing out that the moon was rising and our way down the glacier would grow brighter if we waited. He was like a young man in the rhapsody of first mountaineering.

After some nearer peaks and explorations we got with him finally, just before the weather broke, the first ascent of the culminating point of the Bobbie Burns Range *(unsurveyed,* 10,500 ft). A first attempt failed. We had known that there would be a lot of country between us and its base but there turned out to be a whole valley more than we had bargained for—the wide and deep ice-draped head of the innermost of the many tributaries of Vowel Creek. We halted at the point where it opened out beneath us. There was our hoped-for Peak—a week's travel away it seemed—beyond a tangle of rock and ice ridges whose geography is confusing anyhow and was then further obscured by what seemed a bodeful and watery haze. There was no choice but to turn about and go back again under the terrific walls of Bugaboo Spire which Conrad counted the hardest thing he had ever climbed and was eager to try again. I have nowhere seen anything more formidable.

Next time we left a dump at our point of defeat at the head of the Warren Glacier and went all out for our peak. About 12 hours later, feeling like a hundred miles on, so much scenery had passed by, we were ploughing up its North ridge through the late afternoon snow-slush. Naturally, after this, getting back to our dump and heading down Warren Glacier for the tree-line and a bivouac was a helter-skelter business. There may have been a touch of hallucination on us for we tad been going hard for a longish time. We certainly agreed afterwards that we saw in the moonlight a Cabane in good order on a bluff above the glacier and that the surface of the ice throughout the miles we plodded down seemed to be strewn with broken branches just when we most wanted fuel. But we none of us remarked aloud on these things for fear of seeming queer!

After a while the most splendid display of Aurora that even Conrad could recall came on to cheer us. We hopped over crevasses before a flood-lit curtain that waved as though a god were dancing with it. Searchlight shafts swept and wheeled. Whip-lash gleams darted half across the sky. As the glory faded we came to the glacier snout, and apparently interminable smooth-worn slabs tilting steeply to the moraines. But beyond at last were the trees and soon a fire was blazing. We hung up our boots (out of the way of porcupines) and wriggled down to sleep beside it. Next day we went by a new Pass and an unvisited lake back to our Bugaboo

camp. New peaks all round and the weather going bad ! For days the snow fell and hopes perished. Winter had come. We lay in our sleeping bags while Conrad sat on a log and told us the story of his life. But in the end we were driven out, promising to return in other years. The final curtain had fallen on Conrad's last first ascent.

A PILGRIMAGE TO NANGA PARBAT

T. HOWARD SOMERVELL

It has for many years been one of my greatest desires to see Nanga Parbat, and to see him from really close quarters, for nobody who has done that has ever failed to be immensely impressed. Though I had tried conclusions with Everest on several occasions, and climbed many of the peaks which surround Kangchenjunga, besides having had a few real close-ups of Nanda Devi in 1926, the longing to meet Nanga Parbat on similar terms remained unsatisfied until 1933, when I found myself in possession of six weeks' leave and free to do some climbing. Unfortunately, my work is in the extreme South of India, and a long railway journey—the longest possible one in the Indian Empire—is necessary to get to Kashmir. However, this can now be done in four days, from Cape Comorin to Rawalpindi, and i| more in a bus to Srinagar, and that left over a month for climbing.

At Dr. Neve's house in Srinagar a room and a welcome awaited me. Here I stayed for three days while arranging a ' bandobast ' for some mountaineering. Dr. Neve has over forty years' experience of Kashmir, to the people of whom he has given his life, relieving their suffering and showing them an example which cannot fail to inspire and uplift many thousands of them. His help and advice were invaluable to me in making my arrangements. As I could get no Britisher to climb with me, he introduced me to his shikari, Abdulla, a middle-aged and pleasant man, with a son, Aziza, who can cook and can talk English, and has a great experience of mountaineering in these parts. Between them they have been on all the big expeditions in this region ; the Duke of the Abruzzi's and all the Bullock Workman's expeditions, the German expedition to Nanga Parbat, and various others in the Pamirs, Karakorams, and the Himalayas themselves.

After a preliminary expedition up a few of the lesser mountains in the neighbourhood of Srinagar—Kotwal and Mahadco and the adjacent peaks—during which the ever-willing Aziza was trained in the use of the rope and the axe—we were ready to set out for

a longer trex to Nanga Parbat. On May 17th Abdulla, Aziza, and a henchman whose qualities had been noted on the smaller mountains, set out with me on our pilgrimage..

So we started—Abdulla, Aziza, and myself—as soon as permission was obtained from the powers that be. The voyage in a kishti or covered boat from Srinagar to Bandipura was, I think, the most lovely experience I have ever had. It was a perfect day of sun and cloud ; and it takes one through forty miles of one of the most beautiful countries in the world. On one side is the distant row of snowy peaks of the Pir Panjal, an unbroken succession of fine mountains, continuously white and gleaming. On the other side is the ever-changing view, as one passes one after another of the great buttress-like ridges that come down to the Vale of Kashmir on its northern side, Kotwal and Mahadeo, and soon the shapely Haramukh appearing now above a ridge, now at the head of a valley, and again disappearing again. The poplars of the river bank provide a perfect foreground, and the houses one passes are almost without exception quaint and old. I cannot imagine a more completely beautiful river trip, and I doubt if there is one in the whole world.

We reached Bandipura at dawn on May 18, and were soon struggling up the steep road to Tragbal, with two ponies and a coolie to carry our baggage. After surmounting all the zigzags, we reached the Tragbal rest-house at 3 p.m., in a most romantic little glade among the pine trees, with views of snowy peaks all around, to the north being our 12,000-foot pass for to-morrow. I did two sketches which kept me till sunset; but in this beautiful place one could have done a dozen, each of a splendid subject, if one had had time.

Friday, May 19.—We started at 5-30 a.m., just as dawn was breaking, and trudged for two hours up the pass. It is an unusual pass, for one walks almost entirely up a ridge ; then, at a height of 11,800 feet one goes down the same ridge gradually until the actual pass of 11,500 feet is crossed. It was a glorious morning. The sky was cloudless in all directions, and as we got higher peak after peak appeared, until at the top (when I climbed a small adjacent mountain to get a better view) we saw one of the finest mountain panoramas I have ever witnessed.

I remember one day on the top of the Gran Paradiso in perfect clearness and sunlight seeing almost the whole of the Alps ; it was just a similar day, and an even grander view, for the circle of the horizon was complete with snowy summits. The mass of Haramukh was near by on the east; the whole Pir Panjal range was visible to the south; a long succession of summits to the west, and towering above everything else Nanga Parbat rose clear and majestic to the north. A bitterly cold wind was blowing, so we could not delay on the top longer than enabled me to take a few photographs and do a rapid sketch of Nanga Parbat. But for two miles the same view surrounded us as we walked along the ridge, leading gradually down to the pass itself. Then of a sudden we plunged down a steep slope of snow into the valley which leads to the Kishenganga. The pack ponies managed this piece of the journey with great skill, and never once slipped or fell. We soon gained the bottom of the valley, which is full of old avalanche snow, obstacles fifty feet high and several hundreds of yards across being often met with along the valley bed, where some avalanche has come down in the early spring. But the snow was all fairly good to walk upon, and soon after noon we reached the Koregbal Rest House, in as unromantic a situation as our bungalow of the night before had been in an ideal one. But it was warm ; in fact, very hot, in the valley at 8,000 feet, and a bathe and washing of clothes were done without discomfort (to the astonishment of the villagers, to whom washing was inexplicable) ; the clothes dried in less than an hour.

Altogether, this was one of the most enjoyable days ; the only pity is that I had no companion to share the good things which nature so bountifully bestowed on a solitary traveller like myself. I had, of course, Abdulla and Aziza, and the former certainly has an eye for the beautiful, and has several times pointed out to me a mountain as ' bahut khubsurat,' with judgment too ; but I doubt if his son has the same appreciation.

Exactly a year ago today the two of them crossed this pass on the way to Nanga Parbat with the German expedition ; they told me there was no snow at all, whereas today we hardly travelled half a mile on the bare ground in the fourteen miles from Tragbal to Koregbal.

Saturday, May 20.—Today a valley walk of thirteen miles, with no great incident by the way. A trader from Yarkand has joined us (he knows Aziza, apparently), with a picturesque fur hat and a face exactly like a young Englishman ; a face which seems to prove our Aryan descent if there were no other evidence of it. He is a nice agreeable chap, and sleeps, eats and lives entirely out in the open air. He stops at our Dak Bungalows but never goes inside any of the buildings.

Gurais is a valley four or five miles long with a good deal of flat country—I suppose an old lake bed—from which the mountains rise abruptly on every side, one of them in particular dominating the valley just as the Tofana de Roces dominates the Cortina-Falzarego road. The form of the mountains hereabouts is exactly like the Dolomites, and I was interested to see that their rock is exactly similar, and probably is magnesian limestone. Gurais would provide an excellent climbing centre for rocky peaks, and in many ways reminds me of Cortina, except that there are only wooden buildings, and only three people in it who speak English—the postmaster, the tahsildar and another official (? doctor). Here I managed to get a ten-rupees note changed to single rupees ; I have now got eighty single rupees which I hope will do the whole trip, at any rate till we reach Gurais again. Beyond this place five and ten-rupee notes are useless. But the coolie-charge is terrific. The next four marches will cost nearly three times as much as the last three. The tahsildar's house is exactly like a Westmorland farm ; the village itself is a large concourse of Swiss chalets ; on the north is a bit of the Dolomites, and on the south side of the valley a pine forest leads to a typical bit of Switzerland in winter, very like the hills above Davos.

Sunday, Alay 21.—A series of magnificent gorges, which makes the road very up-and-down and rather tiring. But the coolies did very well and bode well for the difficult days ahead. Ended up at Pushwari bungalow, in a dull but sheltered place, and with a fine mountain opposite that is so foreshortened as one looks up that it ceases to be fine. The entire ballet of Prince Igor has just arrived, traders from Turkestan who might have stepped straight out of a Russian opera, except for the fact that stage clothes are usually clean or fairly so. One delightful old fellow, just like

Genghis Khan, but with a Russian complexion—fair ginger hair turning to white, and rosy cheeks and nose—white breeches, long Gilgit boots and the usual dark blue padded coat and fur-trimmed cap. A most picturesque old chap ; the moment he arrived here he lay straight down outside the door and fell asleep. His saddle is on an exquisite old Persian numdah ; but I can't give him an offer, as cash will only just do the coolies. We met some Gurkhas coming down from Gilgit ; it was so nice to see their faces again, and they were surprised to hear me trying to talk their language, and asked me when I had learnt it. When I told them on the Everest show they (or two of them) claimed to know General Bruce. I said : ' What does he look like ? Like a great big bear ? ' And one of them laughed, so obviously knew him or had seen him. As usual, on arrival I washed myself and my stockings, to the astonishment of the coolies. They will get used to it in a day or two. Chaliapin, as the old boy in Khovantchina, has just arrived, perched on top of his luggage on a fiery long-suffering little pony. His luggage is very large ; I hope it's light. Later—it is. I helped him take it off the horse ; and the horse, too, was in very good condition, with no sores, as, indeed, all these Yarkand horses seem to be.

Monday, May 22.—A short march but a very fine one, ending up at the Burzil Rest House, over 11,000 feet high, surrounded entirely by snow, and in a glorious situation half-way up the pass. A view very like that from Maloja, looking down the valley, and a general impression of Switzerland in winter. Such glorious ski-ing snow all around. And very cold the moment the sun goes down. I was awakened by the sound of a violent quarrel, and got up to find out what it was. I feared a coolie strike ; but it was not that. The mild and peaceable Yarkanders wanted coolies for their loads over the pass, and the headman of the village was trying to charge them a rupee a mile for five coolies. The Yarkanders were far too peaceable and suave to quarrel about it, but Abdulla took up the cudgels for them, and was telling the headman what he thought of him in no measured terms. Finally, I said I would report the matter to the Commissioner at Gilgit if the rates didn't come down to the proper figure, which is 1/2 per coolie per day's march. It came down after a bit to 1/8, and

was settled at that; the headman is a nasty bit of work, and I was told the German expedition of 1932 beat him. I don't blame them. I wish I had been there to see.

And away out of this sordid quarrelling to go up to this glorious place, surrounded by nature at her most gorgeous and peaceful on a beautiful, sunny, windless day, which augurs well for the pass tomorrow. I collected firewood two miles below the rest house and made a fire in the evening. The sticks boiled beautifully but would not burn, and so I now go early to bed unwarmed ; we start at three tomorrow morning, so it's perhaps as well to get off early to sleep.

Tuesday, May 23.—Off about 3-30 a.m., up the hard snow of the pass. It is a gradual ascent for the most part, and we were a thousand feet from the top, where the sun broke upon us at 5-30, and warm clothes were taken off for the last mile or so. There is a great expanse of open valley just below the top, all covered with deep snow and looking for all the world like an extremely good ski-ing place in Switzerland—but without the hotels. We reached the top (13,800 feet) soon after six, and I proceeded to climb up a snowy peak of some 14,500 feet on the eastern side of the pass, and took some photographs. Even from this summit the view was disappointing, as there are a number of mountain tops of 15,000 feet or so in the immediate neighbourhood of the pass, and only two small spaces, north and south where distant mountains can be seen. From the pass itself there is no view at all of anything more than two miles away. I glissaded down from my peak, having made sure that there were no hidden cliffs, and soon rejoined the party. It was a long and weary trudge through snow, getting softer and softer as the sun got higher, and when at last we caught sight of the Chillum Rest House, two miles away, we began to wade through slush and muddy snow until we crossed the bridge just south of the bungalow. At once we reached dry land, and as far as we can see the march for tomorrow will be quite free from snow. Looking north from the house, all is grassy and wooded, looking south there is hardly a patch of land not under snow. At the moment we are (at 11,000 feet) exactly on the snow-line. In a normal year we should be 2,000 feet below it at this time in May. The coolies all did

their eighteen miles, including the pass, very well indeed and without a grouse. But I was sorry for the Yarkanders' ponies, floundering in the snow, in which they often sank 18 inches or more. They are now recovering in a pasture and look quite happy.

Wednesday, May 24.—A varied march, at first through rather ordinary scenery until the terraces of cultivated land at Das Khirim are reached, and then the Nanga Parbat begins to appear. I went high up on the valley side so as to get a good view, and was rewarded by a magnificent one. What a mountain it is ! Quite unlike any other I have seen, so far above everything else—26,000 feet in a district where most things are 13 to 16 thousand. Clouds were flitting about, but occasionally the whole mountain was visible—all, that is to say, that was above a very trying ridge on the opposite side of the valley, of ugly rock and cypress trees—but the top five or six thousand feet showed itself above this ridge, and was gloriously white in the sunshine. I never saw such a white mountain. Everest is exceedingly rocky ; Kangchenjunga shows a good deal of rock, especially near the top ; but Nanga Parbat seems to hold the snow, even in incredibly steep places, and only little bits of cliff here and there venture to keep off the beautiful white covering that clothes the -whole southern face of the mountain. Having sketched and photographed Nanga, I had to rejoin the party, which by that time was some two miles ahead ; but I caught them up at last, resting in a glade of pine trees five miles from Gudhai, our destination. Just after this point the road dips down and continues till Gudhai is reached, in the face of the trough which the river has carved out of the old moraine of the valley bed. For six miles one sees no mountains, nothing but large and small boulders imbedded in sandy earth. In places this gorge is nearly 1,000 feet deep, and is by far the thickest deposit of this nature that I have ever seen. As it was just after noon, with a fierce sun overhead, when we were in this part of the march, the heat and stuffiness of the narrow, dusty gorge was incredible. At last the valley opened out, owing to a side-valley coming in from the east, and rounding a corner we saw Gudhai bungalow, and above it the village on a green level shelf—the top of the moraine-mass, here much lower in

relation to the river. The village is entirely of mud houses with flat mud roofs, some of them of very large size, but none more than ten feet high, exactly like similar villages I have seen in the borders of Nepal and Tibet, on the way from Everest to Gaurisankar, in 1924. Several families live under this one roof, and the interior is very dark and very smoky, just as is the interior of the Tibetan houses I have mentioned. Clouds gathered in the afternoon in the usual Kashmiri way, but all disappeared again after sunset. The climate is very warm ; I write this sitting in the veranda, in a cotton shirt, at 9 p.m., although we are 9,000 feet high and the sky is cloudless and starry. The coolies were all paid off and got eight annas backshish each, which sent them away contented ; we have hired horses for tomorrow, a much cheaper form of transport. But they were good sorts, the coolies, and I was sorry to say good-bye ; they worked well and never grumbled.

Thursday, Aiay 25.—A short but varied and interesting march from Gudhai to Gurikot. First through a narrow defile, which, after a few miles, opens out into a large expansive valley with the most gorgeous views of Nanga Parbat, sixteen miles away to the N.W. It was cloudless and absolutely clear, and every detail of Nanga's magnificence was plain. (Needless to say I tarried here for sketching and photography, and never rejoined the party until reaching Gurikot.) The valley then contracts again into a gorge so deep and narrow that there is only just room for the road and the river ; the rock scenery is very fine here, and high up in one side of the cliff is an old pathway containing engineering feats which put Heath Robinson completely in the shade. I would insure my life heavily if 1 were to go along that path. In several places there is a single tree-trunk supported on very groggy-looking brackets of wood, which seem to rely only on friction for their function. This path goes along some 100 feet or more above the torrent, and never seems to make use of grassy slopes, etc., but keeps a dead level. For this reason I thought it must be a water-conduit; but I examined it and it is not. It must have a most interesting history, and I wish I could find out how old it is, and for what purpose it was constructed so high above the stream, where there is plenty of room for the present roadway

entirely on terra firma. The old path is constructed of wood and stones, and contains no iron rivets, stanchions, or bolts.*

We suddenly emerge from this defile into a new world—the wide Astor valley, all sand and scrub and of a tropical appearance ; the river has carved its way through a remarkable alluvial or old moraine formation—I am not enough of a geologist to say which—which reaches in places nearly 1,500 feet in thickness, forming shelves above the river bed of varying heights, and so irregularly disposed that I can't make head or tail of how they came to be. The only thing they have in common is that the tops of these shelves are level. The road goes along close to the river bed for the most part—very hot and dusty—but later gets on to one of the lowest of these shelves, 70 or 80 feet above the river, and from this crosses over, by a fine suspension bridge, to Gurikot, which is a flourishing village, well watered by springs and conduits, also on the top of this same lowest shelf. The Dak bungalow is surrounded by an orchard, and I have spent part of the afternoon watching the birds and trees at their work and play; I never saw so many birds as are in this fertile green oasis surrounded by rocks and sand and snows for many miles. The remarkable axe-head summit of Dophnian is visible to the north, and a fine triple peak rather like the Piz Palii to the south. Both are about 18,000 feet high. Close by is the village polo ground (every village here has its polo ground), about 200 yards long by 30 yards wide. They are all of the same si2e and shape, and though I saw one village boy practising, I have not yet seen a game.

In the evening I went up to a shelf 1,000 feet above the river-bed and found there a large village, and poplar trees, etc., with good cultivation. Glorious views, including Haramosh (40 miles to the north), and a finer view of that marvellous peak, Dophnian. I saw now, quite clearly, that these shelves are not perfectly level, but are at just the angle of a fan-shaped bed of silt at the foot of a mountain stream, and must have been formed in this way. The one I went up was 1,000 feet above the river, which is presumably still carving its way through the same stuff; how deep is it altogether ?

* I have since come to the conclusion it must be an old water conduit, disused as such but kept on as a path.

Friday, May 26.—The great day has come, to which I have looked forward for years—the day of entering the Rupal Nalla and seeing Nanga face to face. And a beautiful day it is. We started in early morning sunshine with wonderful blue shadows over the barren hills of Astor ; and the road soon got into difficulties, being cut out of an almost vertical clift of rubble and sand which necessitates constant repair ; we saw several gangs at work on it. How it manages to exist I don't know, but there it is a good eight-foot path most of the way. We go up and down a number of times to avoid obstacles, and along a cliff face with a series of galleries made P.W.D. style, not Heath Robinson. Then we cross a large two-span cantilever bridge and go up the Kamri valley for a mile, cross another bridge, and turn off to the right at the top of a hill. As we rounded the corner just before the first bridge, Nanga Parbat burst into full view in all his magnificence. What a mountain it is ! The main peak at the western end sends down colossal 15,000 feet precipices to the Rupal glacier, and the ridge extends to the east for some ten miles, presenting a succession of beautiful subsidiary peaks, with the wonderful ice-architecture only to be seen in the higher Himalaya. The atmosphere was sparkingly clear, not a cloud in the sky. For two miles we went westwards to the village of Rampur, and as there was good water and a fine view here, we camped. I did some sketching in the afternoon, and tomorrow Aziza and I are to go up a mountain right opposite the face of Nanga Parbat. The villagers are very friendly, and one of them was with Aziza on the German expedition to Nanga last year, so he has found a friend and we are therefore accepted by the villagers. The boys are just like Italians in appearance, the men like rather dark Levantine Jews, and they seem pleasant folk. They say they have never seen Nanga so clear for years ; there are nearly always clouds on this southern face.

Saturday, May 27.—Up at 4-15 and starting at 5 with Aziza to climb a mountain opposite Nanga. The mountain proved very good fun, took us nine hours, and provided a good long ridge with several interesting gendarmes—and an ideal top, like a Chamonix top, with great bits of red granite piled together and only obtainable (on our side) by climbing. On the other side we found we could walk off the top comfortably ! Nanga Paibat

from here was simply amazing. I cannot conceive how the south face manages to be so steep without falling off, so to speak. It is a wealth of little ridges and slabs and hanging glaciers—really hanging, and one can't think how they stick on.

The mountain is rather like an exaggerated and steeper Brenva face of Mont Blanc, and in shape very like the Grandes Jorasses as seen from the Mer de Glace, but, of course, three or four times as big. The actual precipice, from the top to the Rupal Glacier, is over 15,000 feet high. We stayed over an hour on top, and during that time Nanga put on his clothing of clouds, and was very beautiful while he was doing it. Now we are down again (having traversed our peak, and thereby had a long valley walk back) ; the clouds are wonderful, but almost hide the mountain. We are lucky to have got these magnificent two days, and the mountain we climbed is far the best view-point for Nanga Parbat, and a jolly climb, very like a Swiss mountain. In the evening the clouds gathered around Nanga and presented, I think, the most beautiful sight I have ever seen anywhere. It was simply indescribable. I tried a sketch, but though it was a fairly successful one, it was impossible to get an inkling of the beauty, as so much depended on the actual luminosity of the clouds.

Sunday, May 28.—A day of rest in the Rupal Valley. Sketching, and a walk to Tashing at the foot of the eastern glacier, the largest on this side of Nanga Parbat, not marked on the map, presumably because, being covered with stones, the surveyor thought it was dry land. It is an extraordinary walk, as one has to go down 600 feet to cross the river and at once up again, the same height; then along a flat shelf, with houses and cultivation, and down into another nullah, then up a long zigzag path to a point over 1,000 feet above the river, and down again to Tashing, which is a large village of 200 houses. From here one looks right up into the eastern mass of Nanga Parbat, culminating in a peak of 22,360 feet on the east, and the end of Nanga (about 24,000 feet) on the west. Except on the south faces of Everest and Kangchenjunga I have never seen such marvellous ice and snow effects. I stayed there long enough to do a sketch and hurried back to see a game of polo at 4 o'clock. It was delightful to see how these out-of-the-way village folk

enjoyed the game. Our village of Rampur was playing a neighbouring village, and they played five-a-side, all of them marvellous riders ; several of them, if they dropped their stick, could pick it up at full gallop. The very narrow ground and the poor quality of the sticks (ordinary birch), made the game rather congested and prevented any big hits, which was as well, considering each chukker lasted half an hour ! The players were all ages, from 14 to 50, and one chap, rather like a thin edition of General Bruce, was exceedingly good, and hardly ever missed the ball. I wonder how he would do at Ranelagh ; not so badly, I think.

Most had stirrups—a few rode bare-back with only a namdah on the pony. There were several quite good saddles. If the ball went ' behind ' the defending side took the ball at full gallop, threw it in the air and hit it, sometimes a good way, at least half the length of the ground (which was 250 yards in this case). Altogether, it was most interesting seeing polo at home, so to speak, in the places where it has been played for hundreds of years every week by the simple village folk simply as a sport.

Monday, May 29.—Good-bye to Nanga Parbat, magnificent and beautiful mountain. All good things come to an end, and here we are on the way back by a different route (the Kamri Pass).

NANDA DEVI AND THE GANGES WATERSHED

ERIC E. SHIPTON

Perhaps the principal object I had in mind when I decided to take an expedition to the Himalaya in 1934, was to prove, to my own satisfaction at least, (i) that in mountain exploration the best results can be obtained by an expedition consisting of tht minimum numbers, and (ii) that a season of mountaineering exploration can be carried out in the Himalaya, with useful results, for a sum of less than £150 per head. Tilman and I were ambitious, and we set ourselves tasks which would involve the abandonment of our base for months at a time. In order to do this we considered it necessary to allow ourselves the luxury and expense of three Sherpa porters from Darjeeling, also extra food luxuries which were not really necessary. Our expenses, including all money spent in England and India, purchase of equipment, light survey instruments, passage out, telegrams, postage, etc., came to £143 10s. each. We were in the mountains for slightly under five months. Of course, if one wished to climb from a centre one could spend a similar time in the mountains for far less.

Our principal object was to force a route into the hitherto untrodden country at the foot of Nanda Devi, which is enclosed by a gigantic 70-mile barrier ring of high mountains. For over half a century attempts had been made from every conceivable direction to penetrate into this sanctuary, and to reach the foot of the great mountain which is the highest in the British Empire. (25,645 feet). On Dr. Longstaff's advice the chosen line ot attack was the mighty gorge of the River Ganga.

The party, which consisted of H. W. Tilman, three of the 1933 Everest ' Tigers,' and myself, left Ranikhet (in the U.P.) early in May, and marched for nine days over the lovely forest-clad foot-hills to Joshimoth. We halted for one day here in order to collect supplies of food and to make our transport arrangements. We left Joshimoth with eleven Dotials and eight Bhotias. We were early in the season and there was much snow on the lower passes. The desertion of the Bhotias after the first day produced a serious

crisis which threatened to wreck our plans at the very outset. But the Dotials seemed to have taken a liking to us and carried the abandoned loads of the Bhotias as well as their own ; their loyalty undoubtedly saved the situation. We floundered for two long days through snow waist deep before we could get across the first pass, and we had an unpleasant week before we reached the junction of the Rhamani stream with the Rishi. There we pitched our base camp, and discharging the Dotials, we were left to our own resources. We were now only four miles from our goal but it took us nine days to force a route through the fantastic canyon which lay between. Early in June our little party of five emerged—from the gorge into the ' promised land.' The beauty that was our reward I shall not attempt to describe in this brief account. The country was surprisingly open, with great areas of rich pasturage, on which grazed large herds of wild sheep and goats which regarded us merely with curiosity ; there were lakes on whose deep blue and green surfaces were reflected the icy crests of the great peaks ; birds, too, of great variety and brilliant colour. We had with us enough food to last us three weeks .... and what a wonderful three weeks it was ! Though we concentrated on the Northern section of the basin we had not got time to cover anything like all the ground we wished, while, of course, the supply of virgin peaks would last a lifetime. All about us was mountain architecture, more magnificent even than the great Southern battlements of Everest.

The Monsoon broke on June 24th, and on 25th we started our retreat. We had left dumps of food down the Rishi against our return, but we were held up by the swollen rivers which had swept away our bridges, and we had to make a long series of forced marches against the exhaustion of our meagre food supply.

During July we journeyed northwards, made our way up the Bhagat Kharak glacier and spent three weeks exploring the water-shed between the sacred Hindu shrines of Badrinath and Gangotri. We also succeeded in making the first crossing of the range between Badrinath and the mount of the Gangotri glacier, thus connecting up the sources of the two holy rivers.

In August we set out from Badrinath and made our way up the Satopanth glacier, and with considerable difficulty, pitched a camp

on the crest of a col at its head, after five days' work. Then we spent two days worrying our way down a 6,000 ft. ice fall on the other side. This landed us in bad jungle through which every inch of the way had to be cut. Frequently it took us as much as an hour to cover twenty-five yards, and we were hard put to it to cover more than a mile a day. We now struck really bad weather and all our kit got waterlogged early in the proceedings, which made the loads very heavy. Passang, too, had a small bone broken in his foot by a boulder falling on to it. This put him out of action for any work, and the task of keeping up with us over the precipitous country which followed must have caused him frightful pain. Our food ran short nearly a week before we reached the first habitation, but we found a supply of bamboo shoots and forest fungus on which to live. We eventually reached Okhimath in the Kedarnath valley.

When we returned up the Rishi Ganga in September, we found that many landslips had occurred in our absence. The rains must have been terrific. Some small, steep side nalas,* normally dry, and with very little collecting capacity, showed signs of having had as much as 7 feet of water coming down them. We were now able to appreciate the tremendous advantage of local knowledge when traversing difficult country. Across places which had previously cost us hours of anxious toil, we were now able to lead our party in safely in half the time.

The exploration of the southern section of the basin was much less complicated than that of the northern, and we covered the ground quickly. Also we climbed a 22,360 ft. peak on the southern ' rim ' of the basin, from which we saw into the mighty ranges of Western Nepal, a wonderland for some future generation to explore. We have named the peak Maiktoli, and it was the fourth summit we reached this year, though of course, we had no time, and little inclination, for ' peak bagging.' We reconnoitred what I think will prove to be a practicable route up the great southern ridge of Nanda Devi, and reached about 21,000 ft. on it.

Then came a fitting climax to our little season of supreme happiness when we escaped from the basin by a gap by which Hugh Ruttledge had attempted to get into the basin in 1932, with

* Small valley or gully.

the guide Emile Rey. The ice-fall on the southern side proved to be almost up to the standard of that on the Satopanth Pass , and again took us two days of hard work to descend. While the Col provided us with a means of escape from the basin, it would be a very much more severe task to tackle it in the reverse direction.

Autumn was well advanced. There followed the marches back over the wooded foothills, whose ravishing beauty must leave an indelible memory with all those who travel amongst them.

So ended, at Ranikhet, five crowded months amongst some of the most glorious mountains of the world. May it fall to the lot of Englishmen to play a major part in the exploration of that 2,000 miles of virgin peaks.

THE BUTTERMERE APPEAL

R. S. T. CHORXEY

No more attention-compelling achievement has so far been accomplished by the National Trust than the preservation of the valleys of Buttermere, Crummock and Loweswater. It necessitated in addition to the collection of fourteen thousand pounds within a very little time, what was even more difficult—a great deal of diplomatic negotiation with a number of diverse interests. Not only has the preservation of this unique countryside been secured, but in its accomplishment a technique has been made use of on a large scale which may mark a turning point in the fight to acquire beautiful stretches of countryside for the nation. A short record of this event may therefore be of interest to members of the Fell and Rock.

About Easter time, 1934, the prominently advertised decision of Mr. Martin Marshall to sell his estate in the Buttermere district caused something like consternation to all lovers of the Lake country. This property, which comprise some 5,000 acres includes the three lakes of Buttermere, Crummock and Loweswater, and also most of the land surrounding these lakes—indeed, between Lanthwaite Green and Honister there are only some half-dozen other properties, and these for the most part small in area. It is obvious that the breaking up of this estate must have led eventually to sporadic and probably unplanned building, for at that time the district had not been town-planned, though it is understood that the Cockermouth Council have now submitted a provisional scheme to the Minister of Health.

A spontaneous and remarkable outcry against even the possibility of desecration in this perhaps serenest of Lakeland valleys arose, and in this the Club, through its officers and committee, took a leading part. Naturally, appeal was made to the National Trust, since the efforts of that body had already been instrumental in preserving many beautiful areas in the district. The Trust was only too willing to lend a sympathetic ear, and to examine every proposal, whether practicable or impracticable.

Two very serious difficulties were at once apparent. The cost of buying the whole valley outright would have involved such a large sum that the possibility of a successful appeal for it at a time of severe economic depression seemed hopeless. To have purchased part and left the rest was not possible, and in any case would have been unsatisfactory, since quite a small rash of ill-considered building might ruin the whole valley. There was also the fact that even the purchase of the whole of the Marshall estate could not achieve the desired objective unless an arrangement could be come to with the other landowners.

Fortunately, the officers of the Trust were able to devise a scheme which at a comparatively small cost has provided a solution for all these difficulties. This involved the purchase of the whole of the Marshall estate and the resale of all the agricultural portions of it under restrictive covenants, by which the land would be kept in its present state. Happily, a great Oxford College was at the time looking for an investment, and Professor G. M. Trevelyan, than whom no historian has rendered greater services to his country, was ready to step into the breach. Both were prepared to take substantial portions on just such terms as the Trust desired to obtain. With this start no difficulty was met with in finding other purchasers ; usually, indeed, they were the tenants already in occupation.

This side of the scheme having been provided for, it was necessary to look to the other properties. Happily the owners, at any rate in the most crucial area, with great public spirit, at once signified their readiness to enter into restrictive covenants upon the same lines as those proposing to purchase from the Trust, have agreed to. The negotiations were therefore complete, and it remained only for the nation to find the money to enable legal effect to be given to them.

The appeal was launched at the beginning of June. The response was splendid. By the end of September the necessary £14,000 had been given or promised. The contribution of £500 from our Club, a sum almost as large as that raised for our war memorial, was excellent, especially as many members had already contributed before the Club's circular was received, and some of these pulled themselves together and sent again. The newly formed Friends

of the Lake District was instrumental in collecting over £600, and thereby at once indicated its existence. It remains only, therefore, to arrange the formal contracts and conveyances, though these will no doubt take some little time. Some people have asked what it is which has been bought with this large sum of money ? What the Trust was principally concerned to do was, of course, to buy out building rights. This, however, was not all. The beauty of the valley depends in part on its extensive woodlands, which are not without economic value. These had to be bought. In addition, there were the three lakes, which have quite a considerable value. Crummock is, of course, already a reservoir let at a substantial rent. Only a comparatively small fraction of the whole sum, therefore, need be placed against building values, and the nation can congratulate itself on a good business deal.

Even if the finance of the scheme had been less successful its achievement would nevertheless have stood out as one of the great events in post-war England. Should England's beauty perish the soul of the nation would at the same time wither away. But here our people have triumphantly made known that some part at any rate of their heritage shall remain unspoiled. In this great work there was missing one whose heart would have rejoiced profoundly in its accomplishment. I cannot close this note without mentioning the name of Herbert Porritt Cain, to whose prophetic imagination the nation owes its first wide stretch of Lakeland fells.

FRIENDS OF THE LAKE DISTRICT

T. R. BURNETT

The fact that you are reading these lines in this Journal is evidence that you and the Lake District are friends ; but this does not necessarily mean that you are one of the ' Friends of the Lake District'—in inverted commas ! Well, it is my purpose to give you some indication as to who these ' Friends ' are, what they are doing, and why you should become one of them.

It is assumed that we are all lovers of the District, and we are in the best of company in our taste, for are we not associating ourselves with many of the greatest of our countrymen, both past and present ? The face of the countryside may have been modified somewhat by human activity since Wordsworth meditated by the shores of Rydal, or Ruskin watched the play of light and shade on the slopes of the Old Man, but the essential atmosphere of the District remains. This is our prized inheritance, and it is our bounden duty to hand it on inviolate to our successors.

Frequently in the past, especially when some beauty spot has been threatened, successful efforts have been made, and abundant thanks are due to the National Trust and to many generous donors for having preserved in perpetuity wide tracts of country. But for a number of years there has been a growing feeling that some large-scale action was called for, and at that most representative meeting of the C.P.R.E., held at Ambleside, in 1928, a wider audience became interested, the imminence of disaster was sensed, the public conscience was stirred, and a seed was sown which is now coming to life.

There is now a large and growing number of people who realize that as a national playground the Lake District is unique ; that by its very nature it is exceptionally liable to injury, and that it is an absolute duty to preserve it. Even the National Parks Committee, who were extremely cautious and reserved, made the definite recommendation that the Lake District should become a National Park.

Before stating more definitely what we want, it is appropriate to say what we do *not* want, and it must be clearly understood that we do not want to interfere with the legitimate rights and occupations of the inhabitants, nor with the reasonable development of the district. But we do want to be assured that any development will be ordered and in good taste ; that it will be controlled in a disinterested manner for the ultimate welfare of the District and its guests, and that no vandalism of any kind will be tolerated. To give concrete examples. Few would object to the recent improvement in the Blea Tarn Road, but who could approve of a funicular railway up Rosset Ghyll or a blatant hotel on Sty Head Pass ? Or, again, good luck to the folk who have had the means and grace to erect tasteful homes, built with local materials and in traditional style in the lower valleys ; but woe betide the speculator in pink tiles and concrete whose activity has already marred many a hallowed spot.

The ideal is to have an independent body endowed with statutory powers to govern the district so far as development is concerned, and it is hoped that one day this may be realized. Pending the arrival of this millennium, the most promising line of action is under the Town and Country Planning Acts, which give wide powers to local authorities. Should the three County Councils concerned agree to come together and set up a joint advisory planning committee, it is the intention of the ' Friends ' to lend their aid, both moral and financial, to approved plans. Assistance will also be given to private individuals who are willing to co-operate in preserving amenity.

While there is no proposal to put a ban on development of an appropriate type, cases are bound to arise in which change is undesirable, and in which an owner will have a legitimate grievance if he is not allowed, for example, to cut down trees or build on his land. And while the law provides for him to be compensated from the rates, it might well be unreasonable for an area of low rateable value to bear unaided what is in effect a national charge. It is in just such a way that the " Friends " might come to the assistance of the local authority and demonstrate at once their genuine interest in the District and their cordial desire to co-operate in its preservation. Plainly, any such action **will**

involve a considerable expenditure, and will depend on a large membership and liberal support.

Who, then, are these ' Friends ' ?

Briefly, they comprise all those who are interested in the Lake District and its preservation and who are willing to prove their *bona fides* by subscribing not less than 2/6 a year. The association was formally inaugurated at a meeting held at Keswick on 17th June, 1934, and it was introduced to a wide public by the letter to the Press which is reprinted below. The signatories to this letter ought to be a sufficient guarantee to the most sceptical. A representative committee conducts the affairs of the association and invites your co-operation. The membership is large and increasing, and it is confidently hoped that the basis of the ' Friends ' will soon be so wide that it will be impossible for its voice to go unheard.

Reprint of Appeal letter sent to the Press.

14th Juno, 1934.

SIR,—

We appeal for support for a Lake District National Reserve Association of Friends of the Lake District. The objects of the Association will be three-fold :—

1. To keep before the public the policy laid down in the Report of the National Park Committee (1931), in so far as it concerns the Lake District, and particularly press for a unified policy for the District as a whole ;

z. To mobilise local and national opinion in order to secure energetic and consistent application by the planning authorities of the powers already given them under the Town and Country Planning Act (1932) ; and

3. To create a fund which may be available to assist local authorities to provide the compensation necessary when potentially valuable land is to be reserved under the Act for Agriculture, or as private or public open space.

If the Lake District is to be planned in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the wishes of those who would preserve existing amenities, some compensation is inevitable, and it is neither reasonable to ask local authorities to shoulder the full burden of a responsibility which is largely national, nor likely that they will consent to do this.

Public opinion is awake to the need for preservation of natural beauty, and not since Ruskin's day has there been such an opportunity for Everyman to build up a friendly and protective Association of guardians of the Lake District.

Membership is open to all individuals subscribing 2/6, and to societies paying an affiliation fee of a guinea, but it is hoped that Friends of the Lake District will send additional contributions to augment the fund.

A meeting of those who subscribe will be summoned in the near future at a suitable time and place.

Yours etc.,

(Signed)

DERBY, Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire
S. H. LE FLEMING, Lord Lieutenant of Westmorland
WILLIAM EBOR
HERBERT CARLIOI.
F. S. CHANCE, High Sheriff of Cumberland
F. C. SCOTT, High Sheriff of Westmorland
BALNIEL, M.P. for North Lonsdale.
W. NUNN, M.P. for Whitehaven Division of Cumberland
OLIVER STANLEY, M.P. for Westmorland
GEO. H. PATTINSON, Chairman Westmorland County Council
ALFRED SUTTON, Chairman Cumberland County Council
JAMES TRAVIS-CLEGG, Chairman Lancashire County Council
CRAWFORD & BALCARRES, President Council for the Preservation of Rural England

ROCHDALE
MABEL HOWARD
S. H. SCOTT
CHARLES TREVELYAN
G. M. TREVELYAN
JOHN ASPELL
PATRICK ABERCROMBIE
W. F. ASCROFT
R. NOTON BARCLAY
NORMAN BIRKETT
R. S. T. CHORLEY
LAWRENCE CHUBB
T. A. LEONARD
GEOFFREY LE M. MANDER
HENRY W. NEVINSON
EVELYN SHARP
ELEANOR F. RAWNSLEY
CHARLES ROBERTS
ARNOLD S. ROWNTREE
H. H. SYMONDS
A. W. WAKEFIELD
GORDON G. WORDSWORTH
GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG

J. W. CROPPER, Chairman Lake District National Reserve Committee
KENNETH SPENCE, Hon. Sec. „ „ „ „
(Sawrey House, *via* Ambleside) to whom subscriptions should be sent.

THE BLACK MAN OF MONT PELVOUX*

By HENRI DARCHEUX

My friend, Ch. Artrois, has sent me the following curious letter. From every point of view it seems to me to be sufficiently interesting to justify its publication.

. . . .Last summer I had a curious adventure which was so incredible that I have hitherto hesitated to tell you about it. Ever since I have been wondering whether the events that I am about to relate were actual facts or nothing more than a series of hallucinations. I have not even mentioned them to a single friend for fear of making myself ridiculous. But these events have made such an impression upon me and all the details are so clearly imprinted on my mind that I have decided to tell you about them.

Possibly some one of our friends may be able to refer the incident to some actual occurrence which is within his personal knowledge. It is the question of the disappearance among the mountains of a climber on July 13th, 1922. I have myself been quite unable to obtain any news of such an event, but then, of course, the man may have come from a distance without any one being aware that he was in the region where I met him.

However, here are the facts ; they are as clear to me now as on the day when they occurred.

During the morning of July 13th, 1922, I made an unaccompanied ascent of Mont Pelvoux. In spite of my solitude, and in defiance of all sound mountaineering principles, I had made up my mind to try and discover a new route for the descent. My intention was to follow the ridge which dips steeply to the north of the Pointe Durand and then, if the ridge became impracticable, to make my way across the wall overhanging the Glacier Noir. Those who have seen the grim wall connecting the Ailefroide with Mont Pelvoux will remember that it is one of the most sinister and imposing precipices in the Alps. Never exposed to the rays of the sun, the blackness of the wall is relieved only by sheets of ' verglas ' and steep ribs of rock, like knife blades, separated by icy chimneys.

* From ' La Montagnc,' 1924, by permission.

Reaching the Pointe Durand quite early I gave myself up to the enjoyment of the truly wonderful weather. There is a great joy in lying alone in the sunshine on a summit of 4,000 metres. One feels the pride of a sovereign surveying from the roof of his palace, all the fair country which he has conquered. Then a great restfulness banishes all else. Not a sound reaches to this height, and lying at full length upon the rock one's breast seems filled with a sense of life and freedom.

But it would not do to remain too long in this condition of delicious torpor. The Glacier Noir which I had planned to reach before nightfall was far below, and the ridge which I hoped would lead me thither seemed to take a sudden and uncompromising dive into nothingness. A start was soon made. There was no difficulty at first, but I was soon at the upper edge of a narrow chasm, to the bottom of which I had to climb over nasty steep slabs. I was now no longer in the cheering sunshine and the resulting chill in the air made me settle to my task in more serious mood. Following the ridge but a short distance further I was brought up by a steep gendarme. However, it was surmounted without much difficulty, but the further side proved so vertical that a descent had to be made by the western face. On the slabs of the face it seemed much safer to make use of a doubled rope. So, looping it over an apparently firm knob of rock I proceeded to climb down, depending from time to time entirely on my support from above. All seemed going well when suddenly my knob of rock must have come adrift. I fell . . . a momentary feeling of terror. My breast heaved and my hands convulsively clutched the rope. I tried to open my horrified eyes. Then nothing more. I must have struck my head against the rock.

When I came to myself I found that I was on a narrow cornice, which had providentially checked my fall almost as soon as it had commenced. My head was aching severely and my hands were covered with blood.

Soon I began to look about me. My astonishment can be imagined when I saw a man coming along the cornice towards me. He was a short man wearing a large cap which at first almost hid his face. He advanced slowly making his way carefully along the narrow ledge. He was soon close enough for me to make

out more of his features, a broad brow and large and deep set black eyes. These dark and sombre eyes affected me most curiously and seemed almost to fascinate me. He did not utter a single word, but, taking one end of my rope, he secured it round his waist. So great an influence had he already established over me that, without demur, I tied on to the other end. He silently pointed out the way and began to descend. Mechanically I took in the slack of the rope, passed it round a rock, and payed it out as he advanced.

On the way down we met with no serious difficulties. The rock was dry and the angle not particularly steep. We had been going for perhaps an hour when my companion signalled to me to look at a small cloud capping the summit of the Pointe des Ecrins opposite. Then he went on at a faster pace. I soon saw that we should be caught: a storm was about to burst. Only a few minutes later a huge yellow cloud came surging up behind the Pic Salvador Guillemin. In a moment it was on us, disgorging a hurricane armed with sheets of hail. So strong was the wind that we had to claw hold of the rocks to avoid being blown off.

There we remained unable to stir, our brows glued to the rock, seeing nothing and hearing only the uproar of the hurricane and the crash of the stones falling on all sides of us. My cap was snatched from my head and lost in the mist.

Little by little the wind decreased, but snow began to fall in its place and the rocks became covered. A move had to be made and we started down again. The mantle of snow grew deeper and deeper, my feet kept slipping in the hidden and icy steps, and my hands were too frozen to grip the holds.

Our progress was slower. Suddenly we were held up by a vertical wall of rock falling away directly under our feet. Anxiously we diverged first right and then left, trying to find a way down, but finally stopped on a narrow terrace on the very edge of the abyss.

All at once my companion began to show symptoms of most feverish excitement. He made wild and meaningless gesticulations, and then suddenly stood stock still and seemed to transfix me with wide staring eyes alight with madness.

He pointed to the abyss with outstretched arm. His intention

was plain even to my disordered imagination ; thither he meant to go.

Plunging forward he leapt into the gulf. Fascinated, I was about to follow. Just in time my sanity returned and my mind rebelled against the mad act. I threw myself back and snatched the rope round a projecting rock. There was a terrific strain, then nothing more. The rope had broken. A hollow sound reached me from below and, leaning far over, I saw through a rift in the clouds, a body sliding rapidly down the slopes of the glacier. Struck with horror and quite powerless I was afraid to move.

Time has passed. The snow is abating, the mists open out and then disappear. The sun has set behind the mountain. Night is falling. It is too late to make another start. There is nothing for it but to find a safer place in which to sit and wait.

Night is now supreme, a fine summer night with the clear sky of high altitudes, full of countless twinkling stars, a night silent, freezing and endless.

I hovered between short sleeps and sudden wakenings, during which I did not know where I was. Again and again I wondered what I was doing in this horrible spot. I looked round about me, and then it all came back to me just at the moment when, in spite of the shivering cold, I fell asleep again.

During one of these intervals of wakefulness I fancied I saw a glimmer of light below me. I leant over the edge and was able to make out plainly one, two, three lights, one following the other over the glacier in the valley bottom. No doubt a late party coming down from the Col du Temple. I seemed unable to take my eyes off these three little flickering gleams. On they came, slowly, making numerous zigzags to avoid the crevasses. They were just below me ; now they should reach the corpse of my companion. I was just going to call to them when I saw the lanterns stop. Then they began to swing to and fro, like censers, and to my stupefaction and horror, the notes of a chant came floating up to me : ' *De profundis clamavi* . . . ' I seemed to see these travellers of the night wind a rope round the body of the dead man and lower him into a crevasse. Then pieces of ice were heaped into the cleft. I clearly heard the noise of the ice blocks striking the walls of the crevasse, and each blow resounded like a

passing bell. The sombre voices went on *'Requiescat in pace . . .'* Then once more silence, a silence even more mournful than the chant. The lights resumed their journey ; they were soon lost to view behind a rocky spur.

Succumbing to faintness and fatigue I later fell asleep, once more to be roused only by the dawn of the morrow. Torpid in brain and limb, the sun, already guilding the Pointe des Ecrins, decided me to move. Looking downwards I could see no sign of my companion and could find no practicable route. There was nothing for it but to retrace the whole of the steps traversed the previous day. The ascent of the wall, still covered with fresh snow, proved not only difficult but dangerous. Once the summit was reached the descent of the other side was without incident. I passed through Ailefroide without pausing, and at once turned towards the Glacier Noir and walked up it as far as the point at which my companion had fallen.

There I saw nothing. Nothing but virgin expanses of snow, slopes of black ice, and gaping crevasses. I turned back to Ailefroide. With calmer mind I tried to puzzle things out as I walked. I passed in review all the details of my adventure, details so incredible as to suggest those of a nightmare. Were these extravagances nothing but hallucinations ? Finally, I came to the conclusion that I must have been dreaming. . . . But the details are so clear, so clear. . . . I do not know what I am to believe.

CH. A.

This letter has made me very thoughtful. Is my friend's story just the result of one of those solitary climbs which we never sufficiently reprobate, combined with a real accident which had some unusual effect upon his nervous centres ? Is it the result of a dream and of an auto-suggestion which has made him believe it to be a reality ?

I should add that Ch. Artrois was born in one of the high valleys of the mountains of Savoy. As a child he must often have been lulled to sleep by a nurse whose belief in dragons, wizards and black men was as firm as the rocks of her native mountains. Is it owing to some obscure recollection, to a return to a primitive atavism, that he, a brachycephalic, has recreated in his brain the memory of the dolichocephalic, the black man ? According to

H. Muller, the authority on Alpine Folklore, the belief in the existence of such beings is still active and vigorous in the districts of Oisans and Maurienne.

I cannot make up my own mind and must leave the decision to others.*

* The above was contributed **by** Dr. C. **F. Hadfield** who **also translated** it from the **original.**
The lion. Chief Editor of ' La **Montagnc** ' (Journal of the Club Alpin l-'ranfais) in allowing publication of this account which **appeared** in **their** 1924 issue, very kindly added the following interesting data :
' This is the inner history of thL article. One clay 1 received an **extravagantly** worded description of an Ascent of Pelvoux, in which the author described a vision or hallucination he had on the summit; **he** added a postscript, asking me whether 1 had not had information regarding a fantastical descent of some climber across the North Face of Pelvoux. I wrote to an address at Beaufort in telling him I had had no report *of* any such descents. The description of this **hallucination** seemed to me very curious and worthy of being published. I had been **engaged** in writing the introduction to die " Guide Bleu " of the Dauphinc and reading up the history of the Province and also discussed the matter at great length with the lamented Prof. Muller. It was with'this legendary idea of the " Black Men " in mind that 1 decided to take advantage of this account received from my unknown contributor. That is how it came to be published and in the result it was much appreciated and made a considerable impression.*

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

New Year started at Buttermere with a very good muster of members. Saturday was a wild day with plenty of snow, but Sunday was as perfect a day as could be wished and plenty of walks were done, but there was not much climbing. Although New Year's Day was wet and cold, a small party of diehards managed the usual pilgrimage to Pillar—under Chorley's aegis, of course.

We missed the usual sing-song, but McNaught introduced us to a charming couple, Marmaduke and Ermyntrude. After the introduction, two Ex-Presidents looked more like dalmatians than staid members of society. Burnett solved some knotty problems and R. B. Graham and Darwin told us stories. The New Year was let in with appropriate ceremony, and afterwards some members, of whom we thought better, were found groping—looking for a gas-leak—so one of them said—in the wine cellar.

It was particularly pleasant to have Pryor with us again, and to see him looking so well and cheery after the very trying time he had gone through. May it be the first of many visits.

Easter was, as usual, crowded, the hardy ones hoping to find warm, dry rocks, and the hibernators awaking from their long winter sleep by the promise of spring. The promise was not quite fulfilled, and one of them, after waiting for over an hour on the North Climb for a party in front to get over the nose, began to wish that he had prolonged his sleep till a warmer day.

Many parties were in the Great End Gullies, and one or two parties went up Moss Ghyll, after a considerable amount of work with the axe on the Collie Step.

The smoke-room in the evenings was ' very severe ' but stances were found from which to enjoy a very good lead by Basterfield who was in great form; so was J. Wray, until he was threatened with ejection by the assembled crowd.

The April meet in Langdale was attended by a few who were favoured with good weather and good climbing.

Borrowdale at Whitsuntide let us down badly. It was one of the wettest Whitsuntides for years, and few people did any climbing and even walking was not too popular. Longland, Edge and Hargreaves ascended Sargeant Crag Gully via Glaramara. The wetness of the gully was such that upon one pitch Hargreaves swelled to falstafiian proportions as the water streamed down the sleeves of his upraised arms and on the next pitch the party had a good view of the unusual sight of water spraying out from within the leader's breeches as from the rose of a watering can.

Campers had a poor time, and at least one party had to remove their tents in the middle of the night and seek shelter in barns. The concert on Sunday night was a great success ; Mrs. Wakefield, Darwin Leighton, Pape and a party of Swiss maidens from Colbeck helped to make things go with a swing.

Buttermere in June favoured us with better weather, and climbing was done in Birkness Coombe, and walks and bathes were enjoyed by others.

The first all-night walk, on June 30th, attracted about thirty-five members, who had, thanks to Lawson Cook's cleverness as well as his brilliant organisation a good night complete with full-moon—to start with. The crowd at Kirkstone was enormous, but the later hours saw a little thinning out. However, in spite of such side attractions as a bathe in Grisedale tarn 'led' by the President, quite a few finished the course and all agreed that it was an unqualified success and quite an addition to the meets.

Coniston in July was too hot for any but the most energetic, and most people spent the time either sun-bathing or in the water. One party of irrepressibles, including two ladies, went to Gimmer and managed to put in a very good day on some of the harder scveres.

The next outstanding event was the holding of the first meet outside the Lake District. It was held in Wales and although for many the date was inconvenient, a good many came—seventeen to be exact—and it was agreed by everyone present that it had been a great success and was well worth repeating. A great debt of gratitude for the success of the meet is due to the Pinnacle Club and the Climbers' Club, who generously placed at our disposal their huts in Cwm Dyli and Helyg-Ogwen respectively, and of

course to A. B. Hargreaves for all the work he did in arranging the meet.

Wasdale was a quiet meet for the few who had not gone to Scotland or the Alps, but Eskdale in September was well attended, and everyone enjoyed the glorious weather and the beautiful colour effects of the changing leaf that wonderful week-end.

The Annual Dinner saw us in our new quarters at the **Old** England. The genial old world comfort of this hotel was in sharp contrast to the discomfort of the weather, which was particularly poor on the Saturday, and only fair on Sunday.

The A.G.M. passed off quietly as usual. Graham Wilson succeeded Appleyard, whose untiring and devoted services to the club have been invaluable, and we all hope that the recent indisposition which has compelled him to give up the secretaryship will soon be a thing of the past. The dinner was followed by speeches on such interesting topics as exploration in Canada by Sir Norman Watson, mountaineering in Canada by H. F. France, and Canadian mountaineering by Dorothy Pilley; Graham Wilson's toast then of Club and President, resisting with great but skilful effort the fascination of transatlantic mountains. Most of us got wet on both days, but happily not until we had secured some good climbs, some on Dow and others on Gimmer.

Langdale in November was wet and cold. A good crowd turned up and climbing was done on Gimmer, Pavey Ark, and Bow Fell on the Sunday. On Saturday, conditions were so miserable that G. A. Solly was able to claim to have done the biggest day with a walk to the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel and back.

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

A. T. HARGREAVES

1934 is now notorious for the good beginning and wet finish to its summer. No doubt this is largely responsible for the poor crop of new climbs.

WASDALE No entries.

CONISTON North Wall of North Gully. June 17, 1934.
DOE CRAG G.G.M., E. H. Holliday, A. Burns (non-members). This climb, which starts (cairn) near the foot of North Gully, rises steeply on the north wall. A steep upward traverse left under a slight overhang, leads in 60 feet to a triangular grass stance. There is a good stance, but no belay. The climb continues along a traverse to the right for 15 feet to the foot of a steep chimney, near the top of which a sensational step is made on to the face of the buttress which leads to a roomy grass recess on the right, 30 feet above the traverse. (Belay). From here a traverse left round the exposed, undercut buttress enables a mantle-shelf to be attained from the right of wliich a grassy shelf is reached. Above this a short crack leads to a large platform in 30 feet. A direct finish is made up a vertical razor-edge of rough rock which leads to a 25 feet slab, belay and cairn.

BUTTERMERE Moderately difficult. L.H.P., F.F.S. The start
GREY CRAGS is 40 paces north of and below the ' Rock
JANUARY CRACK Corridor Pinnacle ' cairn.

(1) 45 feet. A wide easy crack slants up to the right for 15 feet to a grass stance. Thence straight to a grass terrace finishing by a horizontal flake. (Belay round stone in front, at foot of next pitch).

(2) 60 feet. First slightly right for 40 feet, then a step is made on a projecting boulder from R. to L., and the final 20 feet is climbed facing in. Belay 10 feet distant.

N.B.—This climb coincides with A.R.T.'s location of King John's Chimney, but R.W.H. says it is lower down.

L ANGD ALE In this book will be found a description of what purport to be two new climbs, one on Bowfell and one on Flat Crags. On investigation both these climbs appear to have been previously described. The Flat Crags climb is obviously the one described in the Langdale guide and the other, on Bowfell, has been named the Central Route by H.M.K., and party, who made the first ascent.

GREAT GABLE
GABLE CRAG
ENGINEER'S SLAB

F. G. Balcombe, J.A.S. (non-members), C.J.A.S. Starts left in a groove in the centre of a sweep of steep slabs on the right of Engineer's Chimney, and goes up to and through the V-notch on the sky-line. A cairn marks the start.

(1) 20 feet. Ascend wall on small holds bearing right to good stance and belay above groove.
(2) 60 feet. Climb crack above belay for 15 feet, then ascend two cracks on right to obvious chimney above. Belay below sentry box.
(3) 55 feet. Traverse right for five feet into parallel crack. Ascend crack for 25 feet to base of overhang. The crack in the side of overhang is used for a lay-back up to a grass stance at 15 feet. Finger and toe it over the upper section to a good stance at 10 feet higher. There is no belay at present, but a chockstone can, and should, be fitted in crack at the back of the sentry box now attained.
(4) 45 feet. Follow chimney to exit. Cairn. Very Severe.

THE UNFINISHED ARETE

Very severe. F. G. Balcombe, J.A.S. (non-members). This route starts to the right of above, where the grass patch begins to fall away to the right and goes up the right-hand corner of the slabs to the overhang.

(1) 45 feet. Traverse right and up. Under a sentry box to a small ledge. Up right and up to a small groove and good landing on big grass ledge. Pinnacle.
(2) 3 5 feet. Up corner to small overhang. Traverse right and up to grass ledge and belay. A traverse left into the crack on the face is to be avoided, as this crack is loaded with insecure blocks.

(3) 35 feet. Follow corner to grassy haven with shattered blocks. Belay. Exit on right.

NAPES Very difficult. F. G. Balcombe, J.A.S.
LUCIFER RIDGE (non-members). This is the ridge on whose right wall Lucifer Crack is to be found.

(1) 40 feet. From the lowest point of the ridge broken rocks lead to a large platform, right of a detached pinnacle. Belay.
(2) 20 feet. Descend a few feet, then get out on to pinnacle face, then straight up. Belay.
(3) 30 feet. Step on to arete and straight up to belay.
(4) 40 feet. Scrambling to foot of next section.
(5) 50 feet. Steep rocks to cairn at top of Lucifer Crack.

HELL GATE RIDGE Severe. F. G. Balcombe (non-member), C.J.A.C, M.M.B. On Hell Gate Pillar.

Starts 20 feet above lowest point of ridge to left.

(1) 20 feet. Straight up slab to belay.
(2) 60 feet. A 10 feet traverse right to corner. Continue 10 feet at slightly lower level round corner to a scoop. Ascend scoop to wall. Ascend wall to ledge. Up corner on left to arete. Belay a few feet higher.
(3) 30 feet. Easy rocks to summit.

KERN KNOTTS Very severe. F. G. Balcombe (non-member),
THE BUTTONHOOK C.J.A.C. Starts as for K.K. buttress.
ROUTE

(1) 25 feet. Upwards and right to lowest part of overhang. Flake above gives exit to ledges on right. Straight up to stance and belay.
(2) 50 feet. Traverse left round nose 15 feet, upwards bearing left 15 feet, upwards right 20 feet, to belay at pinnacle on edge of buttress.
(3) 25 feet. Straight up finishing at the crack belay.

SCAFELL CENTRAL BUTTRESS Very severe. Direct finish. F. G. Balcombe, J. Wright J. R. Fyles (non-members). June, 1934. From the belay on the V-ledge.

(1) 90 feet. Follow ledge co extreme edge by miniature BotterilPs Slab. Start up edge of this. Good incut hold high up is used for pull up. Over ledges slightly right to an easy 'gangway' rising to right to overhanging crack with clumsy landing to large stance with belay.

(2) 90 feet. Crack in corner above to easy ledges and summit boulders.

Key to initials :

Miss M. M. Barker.
C. J. Astley-Cooper.
G. G. Macphee.
L. H. Pollitt.
F.F.S.

IN MEMORIAM

L. HARDY

In L. Hardy we have lost one of our earliest members. He joined the Club in 1910, and in fact used to dimb with the founders of the Club—Charter, Gordon Craig and others. On many a Sunday morning before the war I used to accompany him and the rest of the Barrow contingent to Torver or Coniston, when it was our delight to shock the inhabitants of Barrow with our strange climbing garb, patched at the knees and other places in varied colours, and decorated with ropes and climbing helmets.

Most of his climbing was done before the war, when he was a very keen member. I well remember a holiday spent with him and Cain in Skye. We stuck torrential rain for a full week, and then decided that the flesh pots of Edinburgh, and golf, would suit us better.

The Editors of our Journals are greatly indebted to Hardy for many fine photographs, and I am sure all the older members who used to go to the dinners at Coniston will remember with pleasure the sing-songs in which Hardy took such a leading part.

He had unfortunately not been in good health for some time, and died at the early age of forty-nine.

He was a good companion and will be greatly missed by his many friends.

W.G.M.

WILFRID VARLEY COOPER

Wilfrid Varley Cooper was one of those rare beings who combine the secret of perpetual boyhood with the capacity for concentrated and deliberate action characteristic of maturity.

He died young, but he would have died young at any age.

Slight in frame and of very youthful appearance he had unusual energy and determination. Sure of himself, but willing to defer to the opinion of others, with a manner full of grace and charm; never wasting a moment, but seeming always to have time for others.

He was a fine rock climber with the ambition to make himself a great mountaineer, which he certainly would have done had more time been available. He had only two short seasons in the Alps, two fortnights, both in very bad conditions, but they sufficed to show what he might have achieved there, and how much he loved them.

He had other recreations into which he threw himself with equal 2est, such as tennis and skating, but he never allowed any of them to stand in the way of his work in which a brilliant career lay before him.

He was liked by everybody he met and loved by all who knew him well. He appreciated the good things of life, but faced it with Spartan simplicity. Orderly in his tastes and habits and with a great sense of duty, he was keenly alive to the beauty of the world, humorous, and adaptable ; easy to get on with, but firm as a rock.

In short a personality that none would forget, and a friend such as all would desire.

C.G.M.

MORLEY WOOD

Morley Wood was an example of all that is best in a climber. He appeared to be more cheery and climb better, if that were possible, when conditions were bad. Sleet, rain, wind, and mist only served to key him up to a better standard. I recall many occasions when weather conditions justified a retreat, but the indomitable Morley laughed the party out of their pessimism and the climb was completed.

Wood was a member of the Club from 1926 till his decease in 1933 and was well known to the rock-climbing fraternity. I was privileged to be with him and Fred Pigott on an early ascent of the Flake Crack. He ascended and tied on below the Flake whilst first Pigott and then I climbed over him, using his body, shoulders, hands, and head to enable us to surmount the overhang. Not a word of complaint, only encouragement and help given to the full to the weaker member.

Clogwyn du'r Arrdu was in a filthy condition that October day Henshaw, Wood, and I were prospecting Pigott's crack. The rocks were cold and wet and the grass ledges slimy and slippery. When the famous chockstone, which was serving Wood for a hold, came **out** of place and he was precipitated on to a grass ledge below, he made some joke and laughed the affair off. Undaunted and unshaken by the fall he prospected for an alternative route over the slabs to turn this difficult crack. This proved impossible and a descent had to be made.

For several years Wood served the Rucksack Club as one of its joint Secretaries and used his persuasive energies to secure many outstanding lecturers for the monthly meetings at the Club Rooms.

The Club is the poorer for the loss of men such as Morley Wood and his memory will be a tradition amongst his many friends through the years to come.

J.B.M.

EDITOR'S NOTES

With Buttermere safely vested in the National Trust, the Club's next and chief concern must be the needless extensions of motor-roads through the Lake District. That the danger is real is no longer open to doubt; a beginning has already been made with the widening of the road over Honister, and other schemes appear to be under discussion.

A road over Styhead would not help to attract new rate payers, nor would it assist the creation of prosperous industries, even if it did shorten the speeding motorists' passage by an odd hour or so. But it would strike a deadly blow at the very heart of a glorious sanctuary—a secret place in which to find peace and inspiration in climbing—this most satisfying of all means of expression sought by lovers of the Cumberland fells.

Unceasing watchfulness and concerted action with all other interested bodies, such as the National Trust, the C.P.R.E., and the Commons and Footpaths' Preservation Society, among others, will be necessary. With these, the newly constituted Friends of the Lake District under the Presidency of Lord Howard of Penrith, a strong Committee, and an enthusiastic Secretary, work in closest co-operation. Members have therefore every reason to give their individual support to this organisation, which the Club has already done collectively on their behalf. The case is admirably pleaded in these pages by Dr. T. R. Burnett—himself an untiring apostle of this cause with which the Club is so intimately bound up.

The Forestry Commission have recently acquired Brotherelkeld Farm from which the sheep-runs extend as far as Bowfell, Crinkle Crags, Hard Knott, and Harter Fell, and the prospect of the entire character of these dales and fells being irretrievably marred by the planting of quick-growing conifers, closely spaced in straight lines, is one that will move every nature lover to join in a protest against any such vandalism.

The Commission may claim to have changed for the better the ' barren wastes of moor and mountain slope ' in Ennerdale and

elsewhere in the Lake District, but surely no such excuse exists for extending their activities to Upper Eskdale and the more recently acquired portions of Wasdale and Borrowdale.

Is it too much to hope in these enlightened times that the State's tree-planting may be done with some regard for the particular character of the district ? To ordain that conifers—non-native at that—should be planted equally in Ennerdale, Buttermere and some arid and desolate area given over perhaps to mineral or other industrial exploitation, seems to beg the question. Even so, hardwoods, such as oak, ash, birch or beech, planted judiciously in groups or stretches on the lower slopes, would yield a better return in the long run, while the colouring and the turn of the leaf would add another glorious charm to the singular beauty of these dales. Moreover, birds and sheep would not be driven from these remote places to which they belong.

Upper Eskdale, however, known the world over as one of the most beautiful dales in Lakeland, and, with Wasdale and Borrowdale, guarded by all and sundry as a national heritage, should be outside the scope of the tree-planter—private or official—and preserved as it is for all time for the unrestricted enjoyment of everyone.

In this new age with its fewer working hours and greater leisure, the State will be expected to provide something more than bread, and a beautiful countryside is surely the simplest way of satisfying the hearts of men.

While hopes of another Everest Expedition are being entertained, our member, Eric Shipton, chose a good way of keeping fit by spending five months last summer in a reconnaissance of Nanda Devi (25,645 feet), which he describes very briefly in these pages. Ruttledge characterized the final descent of Shipton—Tilman was with him—down the Sonadunga Col as a ' masterpiece of icecraft and one of the finest exploits of mountain exploration.' Shipton is to be congratulated on his fine achievement.

1. Graham Brown went to Alaska and made the ascent of Mount Foraker, some 17,400 feet high, and separated from Mount

McKinlay (20,300 feet) by a gap and a glacier system, so imperfectly mapped that a great deal of exploration had to be done, before a feasible route revealed itself. The six members of the party each carried a load of not less than 60 lbs. on his back, —some as much as 90 lbs. Graham Brown and his companions reached the summit in three weeks from base camp, having spent another three weeks getting to the mountain and back to the coast. He has made another valuable contribution to mountaineering history.

The weather conditions in the Alps were on the whole not so favourable as in 1933, and the list of achievements by members is correspondingly smaller. Graham Macphee climbed the Bieshorn, the Zinal Rothorn and Grand Cornier. Then with Frank Smythe and Parry he traversed four tops of Monte Rosa and later climbed the Tete de Lion and the Italian Ridge Route up the Matterhorn, where a snowstorm overtook them just before they reached the summit. It lasted over 48 hours, spent without food at the Solvay Hut, from which all the emergency food rations had been taken by ' tourists.' In spite of adverse weather and conditions generally, Brenda Ritchie and a party of friends, which included Geoffrey and Christina Barratt, crossed the Meije. A magnificent and hard rock climb in perfect conditions, it is definitely severe after snow, and they are to be congratulated on their fine work in completing the traverse in safety.

Miss M. R. FitzGibbon led by Joseph Georges crossed the Bouquetins from S. to N. (Second Ascent).—I. A. and D. E. Richards climbed in the Dauphine and the Tarantaise.—R. S. T. Chorley chose the same district, and Bentley Beetham explored the Austrian Alps.

The Alps claimed a very heavy death roll in 1934—146—of which over half, on investigation, were shown to be due to carelessness, and the rest with one or two exceptions, to inadequate training for high altitude mountaineering, and to attempting severe and arduous routes in doubtful weather without guides and overloaded. It should be remembered however that Swiss statistics show that some 80,000 frequented Alpine huts last year.

The German Nanga Parbat Expedition under Willy Merkl, Welzenbach and Wieland, having got within 200 feet of the first summit on the 6th July, met with terrible disaster. A storm broke over the mountain on the 7th and raged with ceaseless fury until the 13 th, during which time the three leaders and seven porters had neither food nor shelter. Only one man, the porter Angstering, reached Camp IV alive on the 15 th July. After Wieland's death, Merkl and Welzenbach might have reached Camp IV in safety if they could have trusted the porters to make their way down alone. But with one of the men snowblind and the other utterly spent they stayed with these faithful porters and died with them. Such devotion and bravery is on a level with all that is best in mountaineering. Splendid, too, is the report that the surviving porters have volunteered for service with the next German expedition.

Early in the year W. Varley Cooper lost his life in a very tragic manner, while climbing with a friend in the Cheddar Gorge. Cooper, who was leading, decided to climb a small and easy rock-buttress (rising from a grassy slope), while the second belayed him from an adjacent cave. He had climbed about 12 feet up the vertical rib, when the portion he was on—about 6 feet high and 2 feet wide—collapsed, throwing him on his back on the grass, his head striking a stone caused instant death. But for that, he could not, in the opinion of his second, have suffered serious injury. The Club mourns the loss of a promising young climber who was greatly liked by all who knew him.

In June another member, C. J. A. Cooper, had the misfortune to fall from the top pitch of Abraham's finish on Mouse Ghyll down to the scree immediately above the ' big pitch'—a distance altogether of some 75 feet. A heavy rucksack swinging across his back through the unhitching of one shoulder-strap, threw him off his balance on the hardest part of the climb. He escaped with a broken wrist and sprained ankles, and is now, happily, almost completely recovered.

Yet another member, J. P. Walker, scrambling alone, on the Ennerdale face of Gable, climbed down a gully when a block, about 4 feet square, became detached from the wall and fell upon

his leg, causing a comminuted compound fracture. Admirable rescue work was done by willing helpers from Honister Quarry and Borrowdale, who had been told of the accident by fell walkers, and he was safely brought down and taken to Keswick Hospital. Now he is slowly, but surely, recovering from his ordeal.

The Fell and Rock and Rucksack Joint Stretcher Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. C. Paget Lapage, have sent in their final report. A great deal of work has been done in producing a new stretcher of the single track type, invented by Eustace Thomas. Exhaustive tests have proved its suitability and four of the Club centres, namely, Wasdale Head, Doe Crag Climbers' Hut, New Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, and Thorneythwaite Farm, will each be equipped with one Eustace Thomas Stretcher, together with a complete First-aid outfit and two Club rucksacks to hold it.

A special Neil-Robertson Stretcher for lowering an injured person down gullies or off ledges has been acquired and will be kept at Wasdale Head.

The Club's First-aid organisation is now complete and the equipment will be available for use in case of all accidents which may occur in any of these climbing districts.

The Club is greatly indebted to all members of the Stretcher Committee for their invaluable services, and especially to Eustace Thomas for his great work in devising a stretcher which will obviate unnecessary suffering.

The ' Guides ' Committee set up to revise in appearance and other important particulars the series of climbing guide books to be republished by the Club have virtually completed their work. Their most important decision was the standardization of the grading of climbs and the description of the pitches, to be modelled upon the original Pillar Guide by H. M. Kelly. The far greater task, that of assembling and ordering the information, brought in by hard-climbing volunteers, was left in the proved hands of their chairman, H. M. Kelly, who besides having accepted the honorary ' Guides' editorship, also undertook to make his own Guide

up to date; there is every prospect of the first of the new series, namely, *Pillar & Neighbourhood* (No. 1 Vol.), being published in the early part of the new year. The other volumes, Nos. 2, 3 and 4, will then appear at intervals ; it is expected that the series **will** be completed some time in 1936.

The format adopted by the committee—6 in. by 4! in.—is specially designed for the convenience of climbers, while the strong cloth cover and binding makes for hard wear. Presumably most climbers will wish to possess one copy for the library and another for use on the climbs ; with the oiled silk pocket-and-flap cover slipped over the opened pages, it may be consulted even in wet weather without fear of damage. Members may buy their own two copies at the reduced price of 1/3 or 1/9 with oiled silk cover, post paid, but they may not order copies for outside buyers at that price. To these and all kindred clubs and institutions the price is 2/6 or 3/- with cover, post paid.

The Committee have in preparation a *Climbing Manual* by J. H. Doughty, and are contemplating the publication of a *Felhvalking Guide to the English Lake District.* Further information regarding both these volumes will be available shortly.

In June, 1935, the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club (Room 121, Great Central Hotel, London, N.W.i) will be publishing at about 2s. 6., an English translation of the U.T.O. section pocket manual entitled, *Technique of Mountaineering* (use of rope, compass, **dtc),** complete with diagrams. This should prove exceedingly useful to those visiting the Alps for the first time.

Very little of new climbs has been recorded in the climbing books during 1934, and for that, bad weather and mishaps to several climbers were at least in part responsible. These books also reveal the fact that the newer climbs are not repeated very frequently and Prof. Graham Brown's excellent description of Boat Howe may help to remedy this neglect as far as these climbs are concerned. In his own words they are ' completely different from others—not one of them a variation or artificial type of route,' with every degree of difficulty and even severity on sound and steep rock faces.

Reference has been made to the tendency among some members to take novices on severe climbs, with the result in several instances that these newcomers felt thoroughly disinclined to climb again with experts. Without wishing to detract from the merit of those kind-hearted members to whose help many novices owe their first climbing experience, it may perhaps be observed that a graduated introduction through less difficult courses would be a happier way of initiating the enthusiastic beginner. It would certainly be easier for him to emulate his leader's technique and to appreciate the character of the climb. The Club would gain a good climbing companion and the mountains an unchanging friend.

The good all-round standard of the illustrations in last year's *Journal* has been well maintained in this year's, and several contributions of lakeland scenes give ample evidence of their donors' artistic eye for a fine scene or an imposing rock face. The best of these have been given to the Club's collection of slides, but a great many more are yet needed to make the collection representative of all parts.

Not for many years have so many interesting and important books on mountaineering subjects been published, and a perusal of the reviewing pages will well repay the trouble. Works like Ruttledge's *Everest* or Dr. Kiigy's *Alpine Pilgrimage* and Irving's *Romance of Mountaineering* will no doubt become the treasured classics of many. With more intimate appeal and of unusual interest to members will be Dorothy Pilley's *Climbing Days.* But where the choice of good things is so great it would be invidious to stop at a few—no Club Library will be complete without them all.

The Club was presented by W. Brunskill with three copies of *Mountaineering* to be placed in the Club's bookcases, an excellent way of making interesting and helpful books available for a wider circle of readers.

Another, if less important, need has been filled by the provision of a Club bookplate which will be placed on the inside cover of every book in the Library and the bookcases. It is an engraving

of the Club Emblem, The Needle, and is the work of Una Cameron ; the overall size is 5 in. by 3 J in. A presentation copy on art paper will be found inside the *Journal.*

1934 must surely have been one of the happiest in the annals of the Club. It saw the marriage of no less than eight fortunate members : Miss Nancy Walker (Mrs. Donald Richardson), Miss E. Hadfield (Mrs. Roger Stenning), H. N. Fairfield, Edgar Freshman, J. A. Musgrave, G. J. Kidd, E. Wood-Johnson, E. O. Ransome, to all of whom the Club offers sincere congratulations and good wishes.

The Club activities, recorded elsewhere in these pages, show that the Club's first ' extra territorial' meet was well attended. The Committee now intend placing before members an offer to organise a Swiss meet if no less than 15 members can be got together. In August a 30 per cent, reduction of Swiss railway fares will be in force and special reduced hotel charges can be arranged.

At the moment of going to press comes the tragic news of the sudden death of Dick Hall. A memorial notice will appear in the next Journal.

Errata : Vol. 9, No. 3, No. 27 of series.

1. Title of photograph facing p. 292 : For Gordale Scar read Malham Cove.

2. Title of photograph facing page 296 : For Malham Cove read Gordale Scar.

;. In list of illustrations, p. 397, the same corrections should be made.

CUMMERLAN SPRING SONG

Sun's aboon an' dale's aleet
Thowen sna's on t'fell,
Liggen whist lang winters neet
Thunner doon tha dell.

Beck's i' spate wi' swollen ghyll,
Medders showan green,
Spikes o' ditherin' daffydil
Iv'ry yan a queen.

Copses wakken oop an' sproot,
Trees bross inta leaf,
Birds ga chitterin' in an' oot
Nuff ta mack yan deaf.

Yow's i' lamb, an' fox i' cub,
Litters i'tha sty,
Spownin' troot lig i'tha dub,
Ravvn's flushen 'igh.

Bull i' paddock bellers strang,
Coos ga oot ta grass,
Yan i' cauve do 'eavy 'ang,
' Coom mi bonnie lass.'

Laak's astir, wi' spreddin' rings,
Chirpen 'ens fra nest,
Fells au wick wi' creepin' things,
Nowt mun bide or rest.

Ow'r 'ead's blue an' fair,
Au things lukin' gud.
Wind an' sun's i' Sallie's 'air
Chassin' in ma blud.

Starlit, moonlit, faws tha neet,
Fells stan' caad an' calm.
' Sal,' thy een are fu' o' leet
Busum's saft an' warm.

Tharl be sic a churchin' soon,
Lass tha mun be sed,
Soor as thars a God aboon
Thew an' I mun wed.

Yow's i' lamb an' vixens cub,
Ravvn's flushin' 'igh,
Minners dartin' thrue tha dub,
Mudders hushabye.

An' foak cosy i'tha newk
Dreamen days o' yoer,
Younguns to tha stars mun lewk
Burnin' ivver moer.

Harken ! soun' o' thunder Ghyll
Rummlin' doon tha pass,
Silver moon tips yonner 'ill,
Kiss, ma bonnie lass.

GEORGE BASTERFIELD

LONDON SECTION

LIST OF OFFICERS :
President: Dr. Chas. F. Hadfield

Committee

George Anderson	W. P. Haskett-Smith
J. W. Brown	R. H. Hewson
Miss Joyce Chapman	T. M. Hardwick
R. S. T. Chorley	J. B. Wilton

Hon. Sec. & Treasurer : G. R. Speaker.

That the London Section is rilling the need its founders had in mind is fully borne out by its steady membership roll, and also by the large attendances of members at all meets, whether outdoor or indoor.

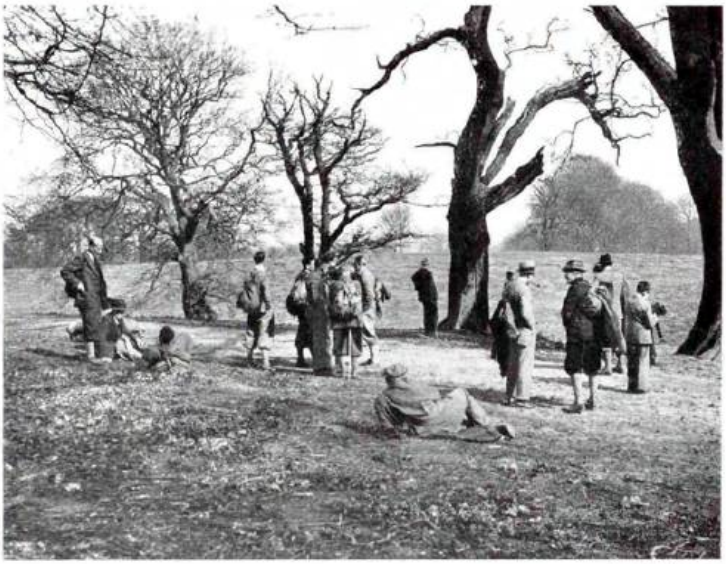
There were, during the year, nineteen walks arranged by the committee, all outside the suburban area and beyond the 25-mile radius, where happily there is still a vast unspoilt rural belt in which to roam at will in all directions.

Of walks farther afield, George Anderson's, from Guildford to his brother's house, The Spinney, at Runfold, may be singled out on account of the fine wooded country it traverses, and still more for the cordial reception accorded to the party at that charming retreat among the Scotch pines ; after tea there was leisure to admire the rock-garden and its wealth of rare alpines.

June walks attracted great numbers, and of these the Chorley's walk, which ended in their' fairy ' grounds, was a special treat reserved for garden enthusiasts. Another was the annual midnight walk, carefully planned by H. C. Amos for a week-end with the moon at the full and cloudless ; it was on the night of June 23rd—24th, and was held under most realistic Lakeland conditions, as soon after leaving Lewes at 11-30 p.m. a torrential downpour pursued the party to the top of the downs, where ' lunch ' was consumed at 1-30 a.m.—in record time ; then the walk was resumed for another five hours over four of the ' Seven Sisters,' bringing the party to Birling Gap shortly after 7 a.m., where breakfast and bathing provided welcome refreshment; a 6-mile walk following the shingly seashore to Eastbourne completed this 26 mile course.

Miss Stoker's walk, later—in July—led a considerable number from Sunningdale to Woking, in glorious weather. The party were invited to take tea with Mr. and Mrs. Hodgson at Horscll, and spent the late afternoon resting in their garden—altogether an occasion to remember with pleasure and gratitude.

For various reasons only two indoor meetings were possible. On February 9th, A. B. Hargreavcs gave a lantern lecture on Modern Climbs in Cumberland and Wales—a very fine collection of slides heightened the enjoyment of the very graphic description of some brilliant climbing exploits by the lecturer and others.



T. M. Hardwick

A LONDON" SECTION MEET.
Vi incisor I oral

THE WEDDING GROUP AT THE DOVE HOUSB, DINMC

Upon a later occasion John Poole entertained the Section and kindred clubs who had been invited, with an amusing account of his and McNaught's climbing holiday in the Dolomites and showed some very good slides from their own collection.

For both evenings, the committee of the Alpine Club had placed their hall at the Club's disposal, a kindness greatly appreciated by all members.

The 2nd of June was of special interest to the Club—a day on which Dunmow rangwith the happy peals ofMissHadfield's wedding bells. The large gathering of family friends had been augmented by a strong and representative Fell and Rock contingent, as shown in the happy group taken around Dr. Hadficld, his daughter and his son-in-law, Roger Stcnning.

The 15 th Annual London Dinner was held at the Connaught Rooms, on Saturday, 9th December. If the attendance of Club Members from all parts of the country is to be taken as an indication of the popularity of this event, then it may claim to have touched another high-water mark this year, when 160 members and their friends attended. Perhaps this was the more heartening because a tentative proposal to alter the rule as to dress had evoked a good deal of adverse comment from all sides ; needless to say it was not proceeded with.

The guests of the Club were, Sydney Spencer, representing the Alpine Club, Mrs. Bernard Allen, President of the Ladies' Alpine Club, A. E. W. Mason, Swiss Alpine Club, Ishikawa, Japanese Alpine Club, E. Noel Bowman, Climbers' Club, and J. H. Doughty, President of the Rucksack Club.

Geoffrey Howard, in a witty speech, proposed The Guests and Kindred Clubs. F. Gurdon Palin replied for The Guests, and J. H. Doughty returned thanks, most amusingly, on behalf of the Kindred Clubs. C. F. Holland then proposed the Club and the Chairman. As usual Darwin Lcighton sang his club songs, wholeheartedly supported by the entire audience.

The General Meeting of the Section confirmed the President and Committee in office for another year, and approved the co-option of Wm. McNaught to the Committee.

Next day Mary Glynne undertook to lead 35 members from St. Albans to Harpenden, a very pleasant walk, but marred—especially in the afternoon—by heavy rain. Though the party arrived at Bankcroft drenched through, a kindly host and hostess had conjured up a change of dry things for all; after that the sumptuous tea was doubly enjoyable and the time to return came all too soon.

Dr. and Mrs. Garrod's hospitality will long be remembered as much for its all embracing completeness as for the warmth of their reception.

A Committee meeting held later in the month decided to introduce a modification of the rules as to subscriptions. It was felt that there were many members whom distance prevented from attending Club functions more than once or twice a year, and for these it was decided to create an associate section membership, involving a subscription of 2s. 6d. per annum. This decision has already been published in section circulars issued to members, and it is hoped more members from all parts of the country may be induced to give their support to the Section in the capacity named.