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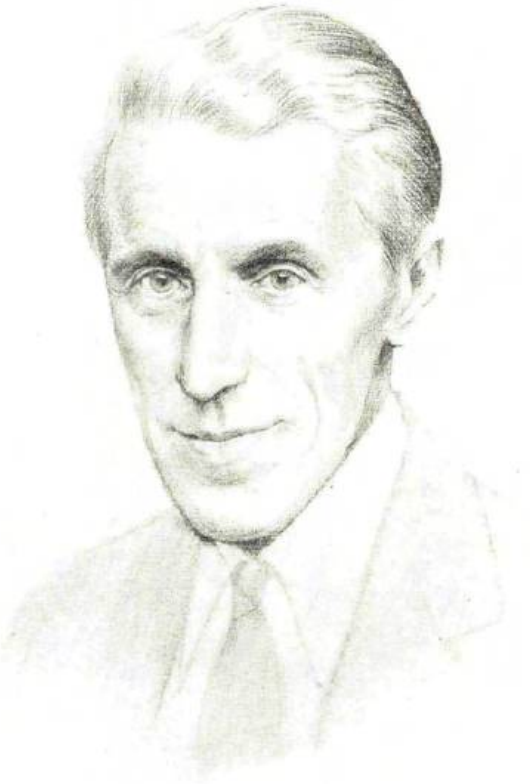

G. H. SPEAKER

PRESIDENT 1937-1939

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OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

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BRACKENCLOSE

OPENING OF CLUB HUT

Ever since a decision to have a hut at Wasdale was reached members have waited with varying degrees of patience and impatience, of optimism and pessimism for its completion. Not a little dissatisfaction was expressed at the delays which seemed interminable ; but, at long last, the work was finished and the postponement had at least the advantage of enabling the inauguration to coincide with the date of the Annual Dinner and to make possible the presence of many who otherwise would have been unable to attend. During the summer it became clear that by the exercise of constant pressure and energy things could be ready for October, and the prediction was just—only just—realised. As the date approached the rush became greater and greater and it is hoped that the result achieved will be some recompense to those who were mainly responsible for it, notably E. Wood Johnson, who lived and worked on the premises when he was nominally having his holiday, and H. M. Kelly, who went so far as to desert the fleshpots of Windermere on the Dinner night so as to put the finishing touches to his work.

Usually on the day following the Dinner, parties leave the Hydro in every direction to walk or climb in all parts of the district, but on Sunday, October 3rd, 1937, the one objective was Brackenclose. And naturally so, for was not the Club about to celebrate an occasion unique in its annals, epoch making in its history ?

Windermere and Wasdale are by no means adjacent, October weather is apt to be fickle, so arrangements were made for all to be transported the whole distance by car if desired, and it is a remarkable fact that the organiser had placed at his disposal more seats than there were folk to fill them.

As it turned out the day was fine, and while the majority made the whole journey by car via Newby Bridge, Broughton, Ulpha, Birker Moor and Eskdale, not a few took the opportunity of walking over Sty Head or Esk Hause.

The opening ceremony was timed for one o'clock, but by noon there was already a goodly gathering of members and their friends, who filled in the waiting time by lunching in the delightful surroundings of the hut, photographing it from every possible angle and by making a preliminary inspection of the interior. Even the sheep showed surprise at the number of cars invading their sanctuary, and the general stir attracted not a few of the dalesmen, whose presence was specially welcome. Amongst the latter were the builder and others who had been engaged on the work and it was a happy idea to entertain them to lunch at the farm.

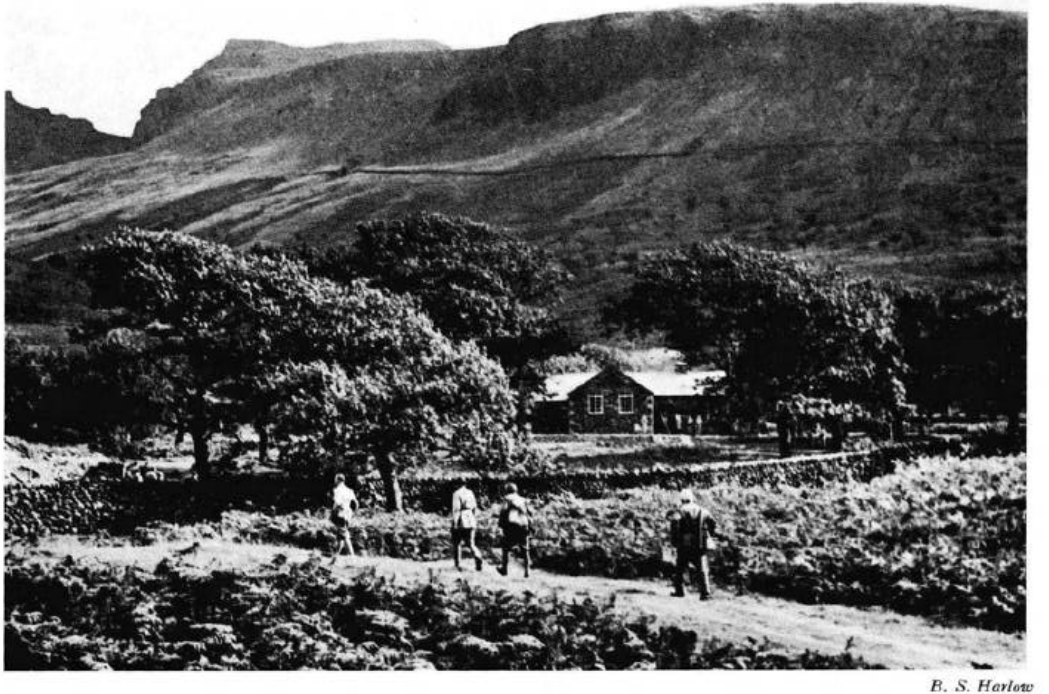
Sharp at one the formal part of the proceedings began. The hut was cleared and its doors closed: the steps outside the main entrance became the focal point occupied by the principal actors, while the throng fell into a semi-circle around them. The stage was set, the sun shone out, the still autumn air breathed peace and the music of the beck was the only sound when G. A. Solly, whose dignified figure and sonorous voice are so well known throughout the mountaineering world, opened the proceedings with an appropriate prayer.

Thereafter Professor R. S. T. Chorley, the retiring President, addressed the company, as follows :—

> ' Fellow members : We are met here today to dedicate this hut—" Brackenclose "—to the youth of our Club. Built out of the very rock on which we have delighted to climb, upon a site of which our District has nothing more delightful to offer, it has grown, under the fostering care of those to whose charge it has been entrusted, and under the skilled workmanship of local craftsmen—Mr Tyson and Mr Moffatt—into the fair building which you see before you, which might almost have sprung out of the mountainside itself.
>
> ' The great days of post-war rock-climbing are now receding into the distance. There are some, however, who have renewed their

BRACKE LOSE
After the ening

Gerald Lacey



BRACKENCLOSE

B. S. Harlow

youth in the work put into this building, and it is symbolical of what the building stands for. We hope that the youth of our Club, and the youth of England, will find it a jumping-off place for days on the hills, and that they will be enabled to build up memories of radiant days, of high endeavour and success achieved, on our crags and fells.

' We ask you to take this key, and to give this hut to the youth of the Club.[1]

With his concluding words Professor Chorley handed the key of the hut to his wife, who had been asked by the Committee to perform the act of unlocking the door. No more appropriate choice could have been made, for not only is Mrs Chorley the wife of the retiring President, but she is also one of the Club's most active members, and one who has lent unstinted support to the hut project, including the gift of furnishings for the common room.

She said :—

I am told that my official duties consist merely of opening the door and handing the key to our President. But before I do this there is one thing I would like to say. This key represents far more than the physical means of access to a private hut; it represents the means of access to the fells and crags, and makes it infinitely easier for young members to walk over the fells. As one grows older one realises more and more with each fresh visit how much they have enriched one's life, in friendship and otherwise. There is just one sentence which comes to my mind, which, though actually applied to the Alps, I believe, expresses just what I want to say. It is this :—

' The fells are more than a gymnasium; they give you friends, health, and happiness, and to have known and loved them is indeed a liberal education.

' Good luck to all who climb from here ! '

While speaking Mrs Chorley performed the ancient rite of spilling beer on the doorsteps, remarking humorously that this would make yet another job for Kelly !

Having unlocked the door, the key was handed to the newly elected President, who completed the formal part of the proceedings with these well-chosen remarks :—

' I now take possession on behalf of the Club, and hand **the** key over to the **hut** warden for safe custody.

' I should like to express our heartfelt thanks to all who contributed, and to all who were concerned **with** the erection of the hut. There **are** Mi'ligan and Hargreaves, who first of all made the land available. Those who provided donations so generously, and those who **advanced** loans so freely, and those who built so **enduringly** and well—Mr Tyson and Mr Moffatt. And especially we must thank **Hargreaves** and Kelly, and Wood-Johnson, who have spent all their time and energies to make this hut a happy and comfortable home.

' May God bless all who come here, and may they find peace and comfort within these walls, and be imbued with the spirit of true hospitality, and knit inore closely the ties of fellowship which have united us in this very happy enterprise.'

Loud cheers followed and the company filed through the building. The visitors' book was duly signed, every corner of the hut and every piece of its equipment was minutely inspected, the beds (but not the spray baths) were tested, and the refreshments, consisting of tea, beer and birthday cakes, were quickly consumed. The excellence of the service and the ample supply of hot water were subjects of favourable comment, and many visitors showed their appreciation by placing subscriptions in the hut safe.

And so was consummated one of the greatest endeavours in the history of our Club. The project could hardly have had a more auspicious send-off. It remains for the members to make the fullest possible use of their latest acquisition and to preserve it and its surroundings as a precious heritage.

T. R. Burnett

HORIZONS

F. H. F. Simpson

' Ponder the paths of thy feet and let all thy ways be established'.' Prov. iv. 26.

The first hazy outlines of these reflections took shape in a railway station waiting-room, draughty and redolent of carbolic soap, a combination of favourable circumstances which has unfortunately not recurred. A gleam of inspiration, detected in the series of broadcast talks, entitled ' I was There,' failed to materialise in the next eagerly awaited item. An erudite person laid bare his emotions on observing the eruption of a volcano. Exciting perhaps, but of no assistance, for first hand knowledge of volcanic activity was only such as a member of the Committee of a climbing club might reasonably hope to acquire. Nor was there the advantage of such a satanic secretary as C. F. Holland has in Rupert, who periodically furnishes his employer with an extensive balance sheet of mountaineering recollection and experience.

Ultimately the solution was manifest in the operations of the domestic fowl. I remembered having observed as a small boy, that before scratching in the ground the hen examined its surface very critically, and that, so far from watching the subsequent process of excavation, she raised her head and neck in an attentive search of the distant landscape. A brief visit to some neighbouring poultry runs confirmed this childish recollection. The tenants were carrying out the same manoeuvre.

The explanation of this routine is no doubt anatomic, but there lies in it a message of prime importance to the climber in general and to those members of British Clubs resting on Alpine and other laurels in particular. Both the tiger stalking over slabby severities and the fell-hound who takes a county in his stride, have received publicity enough.

There is yet another group of no particular significance whose members just shuffle along and stare about. They are to be observed leaving the headquarters, say at Borrowdale, their boots crunching the gravel magnificently ; they may be discovered several hours later smoking quietly just beyond Stockley Bridge. One of their number will be lying on his back using his upraised knees as an easel for the support of a map. He will point vaguely with his pipe stem, and the others, raising themselves on their elbows, will follow his gaze. They are the Disciples of the Director-General of the Ordnance Survey Office. A treatise on their social habits is not intended, but this note on so leisurely a way of passing a day among the hills, coupled with a word about the things they sometimes observe among them, may serve to remind the belaurelled ones of certain aspects of mountain travel which have recently become obscured.

A particular school of thought avers that maps should be carried but not consulted, and scorning even that doctrine are the die-hards who maintain that maps and guide books should be left at home, or better, destroyed. Who but these will deny the irresistible appeal of a map of a mountain tract, with its rebellious contours ; memory-stirring names ? Santon Bridge, telling of the chuckle of the Irt and the hint of high fells in the Eastern cloud gloom ; John Bell's Banner, where compasses are discredited ; Braithwaite, where those Buttermere-bound have sometimes to swerve to avoid a maniac with a lorry-load of milk cans. The smell of the ink on a new Bartholomew brings crowding in the earliest recollections of the hills, in the days when the names Pillar and Steeple, isolated in a flood of dark brown ink, first spelt the secret places of the earth.

A map of the hills of Britain hangs always upon the walls of my sanctum. Sometimes of Wales, occasionally of the Pennines ; more often of the Highlands or of Cumberland. A day seldom passes on which I do not stand before it, reviving an experience or shaping a plan. Should the house

BRACKBNCLOSE : Moscdale View

D. N. Boothroyd

tremble in the clutch of a gale roaring in off the sea, I meet the same bracing tumult on Haycock. When the weather pundits say, ' snow on the high ground in the North,' I turn again to my map and see through the mist trailing over Dollywaggon a tell-tale luminosity ; on the Armboth fells the softest milk-blue sheen.

To change these maps from time to time is to go journeys, strange and familiar, and in the dark days of flatland thraldom a past pilgrimage can be revived and the triumphs and disappointments of unfettered liberty reviewed with the detachment they deserve. Here, then, is a frame of mind which if entertained among the hills themselves, will at length induce the habitual comparison of time and place, and stimulate a lasting appreciation of all that is seen and heard there. It may be branded by the realist as the creed of an escapist ; it is at least a challenge to the unimaginative.

On a wild day in April I saw the landmarks of the Fylde from the novel view-point of a window high in a Preston office building. A smoke smudge identified Fleetwood ; close to it I detected a faint blue bulk.

' Look,' I said, ' you can see Black Combe from here '

The tenant stared for a moment. ' So you can,' he replied.

For thirteen years a hill had been peering in at that window, trying to attract the attention of a man, offering cheerful and unexacting companionship. Thus do the hills, with next to no encouragement, follow the exile into the plains ; when he returns to them they are equally ready to afford him isolation from civic din and restlessness. There is no need to see Bowfell to believe it ; the vision of its arresting shape, viewed from the shores of Windermere will stand out in recollection just when the tawdry embellishments of an advertisement hoarding make it most desirable. Into the sequence of concentrated thought bestowed upon the clamorous crossing of a scree chute, will sometimes blunder the random consideration, ' how fares the rest of England this day ? ' Perhaps the chimneys of Whitehaven tell of

industry or the silver strip of Morecambe Bay, blazing in September sun, hints at the textile towns, but no more. Nothing reveals how many urchins play cricket in the back streets of Birmingham, nor is there indication in the Southern sky that an inspired foreign press has noted with satisfaction the recent diplomatic utterance of a Government official, already returned to crawl behind a gun in the fastnesses of Ross.

I sat one evening astride the parapet of the stone bridge crossing the stream which falls from Buttermere to Crummock. Dusk filled the shadows with a wash of dark blue. The clocks on the mantelpieces of England struck six, but there was no sound save the protest of water as it met an obstructing boulder ; no movement outside the slowly marching ranks of pearl grey cloud on a high and frosty wind. Born of an approaching rainstorm a chill contrary breeze poured down the Sail Valley, faintly stirring the columns of wood smoke. The shaly summit of Robinson, bleak on the brightest day of June, flew a banner of mist in token of the cooling earth. Astride the valley hung the dark outpost of rain cloud ; the thin fabric of a shower hanging beneath it swept unhurriedly across Crummock. The faint sound of raindrops came on the wings of a blast of cold air ; for a minute they whispered in the biscuit coloured stubble, ceasing as the wind pressed the core of the shower eastwards. With the passing of its jumbled fringe, a solitary star stared down. Darkness slowly absorbed the relics of an Autumn day of warm sun and dawdling cloud shadows. It happened also to be the day on which England went off the Gold Standard and electrified the world. In the lap of the hills neither noise nor apparition heralded this momentous decision. As the foundations of finance had trembled, the consumption of half a pound of raisins in a sunny rock nest on Haystacks had been pursued without distraction.

The last day of June 1934 saw the sun sink unhindered by cloud, so that the shadows of those who ran from Ramsgill

Head to Kidsty Pike strode before them as long blue ghosts. A rising wind tripped through the grass of the swelling fell top which terminated in a yellow southern haze. Beyond that haze mankind sought the flimsy security of a sheet and blankets. Darkness spread from the East to fight an indecisive battle with the long Summer twilight. Cold gripped the upland emptiness ; not a cold to be dispelled by wool or windproofs, but a tangible frightening cold, brief visitor from the sunless space which Earth faces daily. A space of black sky and blazing stars. Down where the neon gas tubes hawk patent medicine the icy glance is set at naught. On the wide fell there is no mistaking the challenge to man to come forth in his naked white skin and say, ' I will not perish.'

The faint aureole which marked the hidden sun, paced with the rolling earth and strengthened to stain a cloud tower top with faintest rose. Thin rain fell from an errant mist, and the sunrise came, flooding a sky shining like hot metal. Into it a raven sped on black out-reaching pinions ; a grey ribbon of track wound clear and even in the dale bottom. In his great cities man slept on, hair ruffled, mouth agape. The raven greeted a new day while the unappreciative reached for their health salts, and the printing presses rolled out the news of the political murders staged abroad that so lovely night. Among the quiet hill shapes no sign showed how man served man. The tranquillity of a summer night will always symbolise the horror of the later discovery of that slaughter.

The road from Santon Bridge dipped into a sun-filled hollow, its surface glistening with fresh pools of rain water. Spring had its hand among the tilled fields of rich brown soil ; wheeling gulls screamed behind the plough. Sun patches drifted up the long swell of intakes rising to the rugged hump of Buckbarrow. The same spirit of open welcome embraced the wanderer as greeted the Norsemen when for the first time, his longboats furrowed the sands.

The wind slid through the grass of fallow land beneath Muncaster Fell ; in a thousand whispers it told of the wild sea. The strident song of the circular saw came faintly from the mill on the banks of the Irt, which was clouded for half its breadth by the gold of fresh saw dust. Down the granite surfaced road to Wasdale the inverted images of the scree fans invested the depths of the dark water with a sinister world of stone. The fells wore each a fluffy mist cap, and as the day wore on, cloud streamers drew with them a high pall racing from the West to close the blue ways of sky, signalling the arrival of the Eastern rim of a whirlpool in the ocean wind-stream. The chiselled details of the distant crags withdrew behind a smoky veil.

New grass sprouted in the verges of the narrow lane to Burnthwaite. The wind here still carried the freshness of the sea from beyond the dunes near Eskmeals. Blundering gusts hurled themselves unseen across Kirk Fell screes, spending their energy in a wild disorder of sighs. Viewed from the Sty track the Napes topped the head of the great stone chutes, a goblin-haunted castle ; whisps of mist grew and died on their gaunt walls. The more lusty of this wind-borne brood skimmed the shattered crests, which nodded a greeting to the flying shapes. The grey shadow of the coming rain reached swiftly across the zenith, detaching from the valley floor the network of stonewalls, hanging them in the haze-filled space like a vast cobweb. The first derisive slaps of rain merged presently in the hiss of millions. The gale piped a lay of triumph in the rock ridges. As the temperature fell before the united onslaught of air and water, rags of mist coiled and rose to join the cloud layer, forcing a way through the restricted valley head in frenzied haste. Countless tons of water descended in that brief hour while the early Summer freak of moist air floundered over the gaunt hill ribs.

Barometers hanging in the halls of Seascale hotels rose in obedience to the pressure of a new and cold windstream from the North-West, and the rain ceased as it fought for

mastery of the inert mass of warmer air trapped in the troughs of the valleys. Its coming was indicated by a mighty whirlwind, which descended Aaron Slack, filling the sky with a dull rumbling as it encountered the opposing air-current from Wasdale. From the surface of Styhead Tarn there rose a pyramid of spray ; it swept across the fell with the spinning vortex. This turbulence, bred on the slopes of Starling Dodd, strode in vast confusion up the furrow of Ennerdale, driving the vanguard of polar air through Windy Gap. This task concluded it died, its ghost crept meekly in the mist over Esk Hause. So ran the currier of the weather, noisy offspring of the wind and sun. In its wake hailstorms hurried, pouring vials of ice into the rain-washed air, climbing with effortless grace to the high rocks of Glaramara whereon sudden bursts of sun dyed their trailing threads. Rising air-columns fashioned great luminous caverns in the disrupting mists, whence the light came across the water-soaked fields in broad bands separated by regions of transparent gloom. The becks called to each other the news of the fresh burden of nut-brown flood.

Morning papers had spoken of the brisk passage of a depression over North Britain and of the similar movement of an associated trough of low pressure. This trite announcement had brought a forest of umbrellas to the city streets while the hills renewed their youth at the behest of the wide Atlantic. Travellers in the Keswick bus, peering through the mosaic of the wet window, glimpsed at Rosthwaite the bold rectangle of an evening newsposter. It made known that the blast of high explosive carried knowledge and wisdom to the Ethiopian.

Incredible it was that the butchery of women and children had been pursued, while this climatic spectacle was enacted. Whether one has probed the universe with H. G. Wells or Sir James Jeans it is not difficult to understand why no celestial body has been detected on which life, as at present understood, might exist. The habitability of this Earth may not be an

isolated occurrence in an orderly but mystical universe, and the atmosphere of Jupiter, in spite of its temperature and the reputed presence of a liberality of gaseous ammonia, may well support some supernormal form of life. In certain circumstances such beings might find a congenial recreation in slaughter, in which case mankind has perhaps no monopoly of brutality. History suggests that there has always been someone **with** a mission to carry to his less enlightened fellows, whose skulls he was prepared to crack to accelerate the adoption of his tenets. That humanity has always suffered from an exaggerated sense of its own importance is more than evidenced by the pleasing custom of praying hard in the face of the most vigorous of bad weather systems to avert a disastrous termination to the harvest, or a school outing. Individuals with experience of the impersonal assault of a June rainstorm on the fells will have sensed the grandeur of the scale on which an oceanic climate operates, and with even this very minor manifestation of the impartiality of the elements as yardstick, the diminutive stature of human endeavour becomes at once apparent.

Leaving humanity to crawl in the debris of its own delusions, providence would seem disinclined to administer any harder rap on the knuckles than an influenza epidemic, though it has recently displayed a playful threat to fling an astronomic custard pie in the shape of Object Reinmuth U.B. 1937. The greatest mountain range in Europe is ringed by plains filled with men in coloured shirts who cannot agree with one another. Some have an axis, others a triangle to unite them. South of the Pyrennees there is neither axis nor triangle, only the argumentative boom of artillery. At home **the** daily press prints articles entitled ' Whither England ? ' and unseen lathes cut glittering nose-caps and driving bands, in case another zealous international missionary launches a crusade.

Man walks again in fear of man, oblivious of the wonderous things put in **Earth** for his delight and curiosity,

while each day brings colourful sky or breaking bud to measure the slow march of the seasons. None can spare the time to shuffle along and stare about, unless it be they who oil their boots, pack their rucksacks and turn towards the North. They perhaps hold the key to all contentment, and should the prophesy of strife, now daily shouted, become a stunning reality, they will in some measure be fortified. When again whirled southward on the ways appointed by the time-table kings, the value of the brief freedom will be at once revealed.

in *The Pageant of Summer,* Richard Jefferies said, ' there seems always a depth somewhere unexplored, a thicket that has not been seen through, a corner full of ferns, a quaint old hollow tree, which may give us something.' He died in 1887, the year in which he wrote those words. That was before modern transport had quarted distance, but the statement is no less true today.

I was a member of a party which emerged from a snow gully on Bowfell, at sundown on a February day. The East wind tore the loose snow from the bed of the gully and flung it over the cornice. It rose in the sunlight above in plumes of sparkling gold vanishing in the darkened sky. The final step fashioned by the leader collapsed as he gripped the cornice lip. The unprintable rose sharply above the wind note. Snow dust entered eyes and nostrils as the party followed. From an outcrop in the calm air of the ridge eddy, tobacco smoke drifted as in the confines of a room. The sun was sinking, a disc of rich red over the Irish Sea. At its command a dappled cloud band spreading across the zenith glowed with intense reflected light and chilled cheeks shone with a borrowed warmth. Snowfields reached in a great arc from the far Scafells, indigo in their own shadow, to the reddened surface at our feet. Blisco, like some Asiatic giant, raised a blunt cone from the gloom of evening into a fairy-land of colour. As we climbed to the cairn across crimson rippled purity, a random wind licked a fiery stream into the air about it. From the summit the aspect of sky and fell

was such as might not be witnessed once in a lifetime The rock outcrops a livid yellow green, ringed by sunflushed snow, reared broken teeth against the Eastern sky, whence spluttered the first stars. The frozen surface caught a tipsy imagery of both rocks and cloud, and repeated our antics faintly at right-angles to our enormous shadows. One of our number falling, shadow and reflection darted in unison towards him as if to stay a further slide. Powder snow poured down the slopes in naming cascades before hurrying feet. The colours faded quickly leaving a deathly pallor. A tiny voice seemed to urge that we dreamed, for here were only the sombre hues of everyday experience. I took heed of the voice, and of the twenty permitted minutes of a temporal vision of celestial beauty to be remembered as surely as the soft sizzle of fat which an hour later promised a supper among suppers.

Of that day deliberate plan produced ineffaceable recollection. All hill pleasure is founded on plan or recollection inaccurate at best, for though the map be closely studied and the guide book often read, whether the journey be old or new, the actual experience is never anticipated. The pitch is slightly steeper or the way rougher and longer ; always the wind is colder. The mental accuracy of a calculating machine may carry away an undistorted record of a day's adventure, but between them, map and guide book will provide for the ordinary man a nebulous bottom drawer to be rummaged at will. So much of the character of Earth itself is transfigured in the details of a map that he is unfortunate who cannot, even for a few unwanted minutes, lose himself in some enchanted corner. It is not enough to pay ten shillings to the Treasurer and borrow a book out of the library ; there are old valleys and ridges, and upon them things still undreamed of. New valleys and ridges there will always be, wherein lies still undiscovered, that which first prompted a letter to the Secretary for an application form. The impulse which first sent us into the hills is like to be lost in familiarity ;

that which we first went into the hills to see is just as fresh now and can give again as generously.

The hope that contemporary leaders of men will receive a lesson in humility as personal and private as the approach to Broad Stand from above can at times provide is an unwarranted optimism, but the more the dignity of this, the most comfortable of planets, be reflected in its inhabitants, the sooner will men smile at each other again. Some wander in its hilly places, others drive motor-cycles across its deserts ; there is something to see whenever we glance up. Perhaps the hen is not as stupid as she appears.

OTHER WAYS UP

W. Heaton Cooper

We were strolling down Ennerdale on a sunny morning in January, Doughty, Jim Cameron and I, discussing the variety of approaches to hills. The play of Doughty's creative mind was a delight to watch as it shaped the theme and apparently wandered away, to come back again at another angle. It kept recurring at intervals down the four miles to Gillerthwaite, rather like a chicken hammering away inside an egg, and between us it was kept warm till it emerged as a continuous rock route up Pillar Mountain.

As Doughty was being seen off to Manchester, Jim and I thought we would make it on the following day. We started on some deceptively easy-looking slabs nearest to the valley bottom, but found the first pitch too difficult in the icy rain. The splendid rock on the rest of the crag made us think it worth exploring later, but it was not until nearly eighteen months afterwards that we managed to foregather, this time only two of us, under favourable conditions on a morning in May.

We started with a shorter route on the right of the crag as a footwarmer, and found some amusement in chasing a centipede, which Jim swore was an earwig, up a crack, eventually losing it in the gardening operations, and steaming on to the top.

The central route started with a severe chimney, then after some easier route-finding, almost coinciding with the January attempt, took us on to some delightfully delicate climbing, a more direct line than the first route which included a thirt-foot hand traverse. The next outcrops of rock were separated by plenty of walking, till we got on to the Pillar Stone by the North-West climb, finishing up, not omitting Pisgah, on the top of the mountain as the sun was low over the sea and Red Pike looking a very black and

imposing shape against it. Out of 2,000 feet rise from the Liza there had been almost 1,700 feet of rock climbing, so we called it a day.

Harter Fell from near Birks Bridge provides a similar pleasure on a smaller scale, and I shall never forget arriving at the top through the mist and seeing the most perfect double Brocken spectre on two layers of mist with the heads identical but the length of leg greatly extended. As we came down the fell at the same slope as the sun happened to be shining the Brockens kept recurring in all sorts of odd sizes.

Another form of amusement is to be found in choosing some place in the Lake District and making for it by a British (or Herdwick) line and returning by a Roman (or Bee) line. Still another is the water route, to be found in Piers, Crinkle or Hell Gills among others, the only rule being that one keeps in the water all the time. This is not nearly as cold as it sounds even on a coolish day and is popular with the very young.

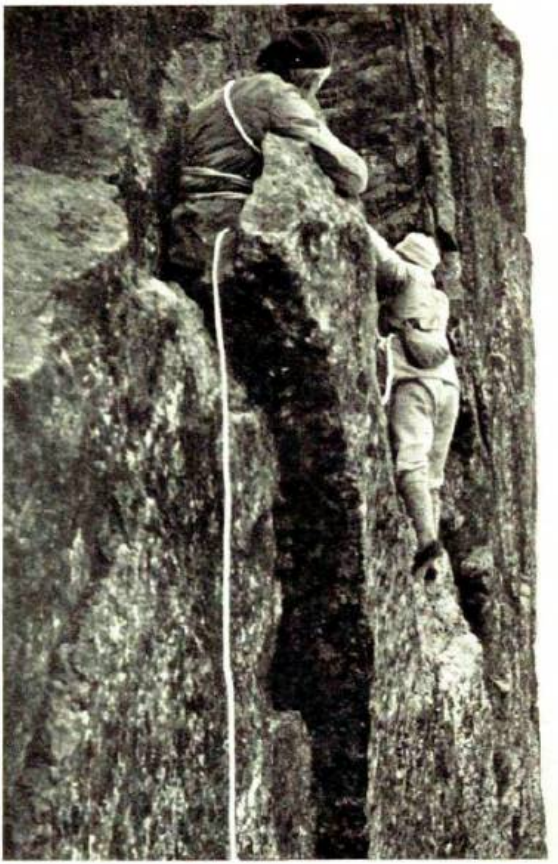
The last **two** winters have made snow routes possible, and it is one of my yet unrealised ambitions to do a few of them right across the centre of the hills, say from Grasmere to Ennerdale via Far Easedale, Esk Hause and Green Gable.

Picking sheep out of drifts on ski with the aid of a coal shovel and the wrong end of a ski stick combines a certain amount of utility with pleasure.

I remember a day, rare in England, of clear sparkling brilliance and intense stillness broken only by the distant conversation of some farmers trying the drifts around the lower intakes and moving very slowly in the soft deep snow. The February sun was just warm enough to melt the surface of the snow in Tongue Gill, and it was possible to climb on ski without skins at an angle of about thirty degrees. The waterfall had become a richly intricate design in glistening ice, some opaque, some translucent, smooth or mottled, here grass-centred spikes and columns against black moss, there glistening bulbs peeping out from the

blankets of snow. Under Seat Sandal the snow had avalanched into thousands of snowballs of different sizes. The smooth ice on Grisedale Tarn reflected Dollywaggon Pike in pale gold with whorls of blown snow dull blue across it. In a drift by the wall the knob of my ski-stick fell through an air space on to a soft object, and in a few minutes a rather disgruntled Herdwick was excavated with the coal shovel. After trying to jump back into its comparatively warm cave, it sauntered down towards Thirlmere. The farmers say that if sheep are driven immediately on being dug out, they are liable to collapse.

The sun had just left us and an icy sheen appeared on the snow. Below the saddle the first hollow looked surrealistically like a white cup sprinkled with a few tea leaves and in a few exhilarating moments, the darkness seeming to rush towards me, I was on the road sniffing the wood smoke of Grasmere.



Geoffrey Barratt

CENTRAL BUTTRESS
SfAFELL

WASDALE VIEW

The wind is a sword
sharper than all your armouries,
and stars have eyes
to pierce complacency.

Here on this summit is my Graal.
Be swift O wind, be sure O star.
I have seen Paradise
beyond this hill.

Shall we be gods, shall we aspire,
to steal Prometheus his fire,
and bind the setting sun
to heart's desire ?

Come with me down again,
braver than memory,
and be no pale moon fading
into the wave-tormented sea.

M. Scott Johnston

A DREAM OF THE ENGLISH LAKELAND

Chiang Yee

The English Lakeland has occupied my mind most of the time these days ! How has that happened I wonder ? I do not know.

It seems that I have been wandering again in the valley of Wasdale Head. I noticed a difference from what I saw in summer time two years ago : I was not sure whether this was the same farm-house as before, but I could see neither the young girl who fed chickens with so much charm of manner, nor the cowherd who used to lead a group of cows out to grass and stared at my foreign face so inquisitively. There were even very few sheep seen eating and nibbling at grass among the hills !

It was cold ; clear and calm in every sense. I walked along the same road from Wasdale Head to Wastwater. It was snowing, as you may imagine. Every bit of land seemed to be covered with a soft white blanket, although there were traces of footsteps along the road I walked. But clearly no motors had disturbed it yet. The cascading of the streams sent no powerful roaring into the ears, but just ting-tung, ting-tung, and ting-tung (sound of water drops) here and there ; apparently most of them were frozen. I was smiling and frowning in turn, because I had so much on my mind at this time and my feeling towards the scenery was entirely in accordance with the change in my thoughts. Though, to be sure, the scenery had not changed in itself.

Then, I was standing by the side of Wastwater afterwards. It seemed strange to me that I had managed to find foothold at the bottom of the Screes, for the slope of it was very steep and descended straight into the lake. How could I stand there ? I could not tell.

Soon, I felt some cold thing constantly touching my face, and then I noticed flake after flake of the snow flying towards

me. Let no one think me greedy, that I opened my mouth so that those tiny white flakes could fly in as they liked. I thought I was taking part in some sort of magic, as the flakes of snow in different sizes kept blowing into my mouth, and many more pressed and flew about my body as if they were products of it. In such a quiet and cool state, everything seemed to be standing **still,** but actually there was a visible-and-invisible movement of a great mass going on. It was not my magic. It was the magic of Nature.

I lifted my head and cleared my eyes, trying to pierce through the thick cloud of snow flakes, now falling more and more densely. They were falling very slowly, some hanging about in the air for sometime and some even floating sideways. In my mind and even in my sight, they were not snow flakes but swan's feathers. There might be an angel hiding in the clouds scattering down all these feathers, or the Russian dancer, Anna Pavlova, dancing ' Dying Swan' before mighty Nature and purposely letting the loose feathers drop from her dress. Suddenly a heavy wind came round from the side of Wasdale Head and made the snow fall down so rapidly, it seemed to form scores of white strings, no longer separate flakes. I thought they must be strings of a very old and mighty Greek harp, and even wished to play on it with my hands. Oh, this would not respond to my humble oriental hands, for I could play only my native Chinese instruments. There was so very little mist among the hills on both sides at this time, but the clear-cut outlines of the hills ranges or mountain-tops were indistinguishable from the sky, being almost the same colour, greyish white. The only great black spot was the surface of Wastwater peaceful and calm to look on. And my own minute black shadow was of no account. What a different scene from what I had contemplated two years ago !

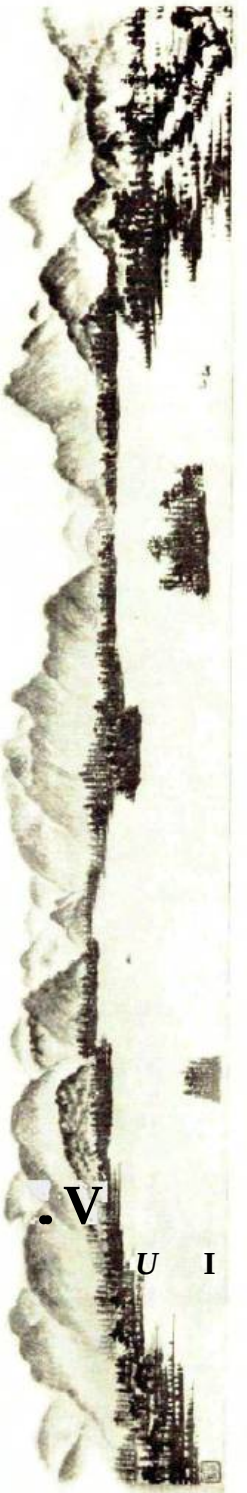
Then suddenly, I do not know by what means, I was standing along the Sty Head path. When I looked down the pathway, I saw most of the trees naked of covering, but some had

white blossoms on their branches. Among them all, the pine needles stayed always green ! I remembered I was once told some climbers liked to climb fells and rocks in Lakeland even in Winter time, and wondered why I saw none of them there that time. Perhaps they were on other mountain sides out of sight. I just walked on and on, and thoughts chased through my head in disorder. The more I thought, the more deeply was I bewildered. The longer I went on, the more I thought. Suddenly I realised I was on the top of Scafell. It was a miracle how I got there, as there seemed no easy way to the summit from Sty Head path. I hope my readers, if they are mountain climbers, **will** not ask me about the way I climbed, for actually I could not have climbed in their manner. By the time I reached the top, I was panting heavily. In one breath, I whispered to myself : ' Oh, Mighty Nature ! ' gazing round all four sides. The fell or mountain tops below where I stood, and far into the distance, were all covered with snow, but I could still distinguish the curved outline of their ranges. I could think of nothing to say except once again, ' Oh, Mighty Nature ! ' Moreover, I paid my high tribute to the snow in the following form of a rhyme :

' Oh my beloved snow,
How white and pure you are !
How deeply and earnestly is my heart with you !
You have hidden everything evil on earth,
You have given them new life.
I ask you to keep them white and pure always,
I beg you not to mind some minute spots on your surface.

Although you are made of such tiny and soft particles,
Yet you could change the hard and rough rocks beneath your arms.
After a time you **will** melt into nothing,
But you will return.'

While I was murmuring these verses over and over, my mind went far away, and I seemed to be back on my native



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mountain Lu. I stood there as I was standing here. Here all was cool, calm and peaceful, and there was quietness there too, but with sadness and horror overhanging. The next instant, I was terrified by noises of aeroplanes and bursting bombs, and suddenly I was awake. Alas ! it was entirely a dream ! It was a dream of my beloved English Lakeland, but a misfortune it should have ended in such terror. It was lucky for me though to have woken then ; I dare not think where the members of my family are now. Probably my English friends can hardly imagine the state of a Chinese mind in these days.

At the end of my small book *The Silent Traveller,* I described how extremely happy I was with the English Lakes and was only longing to renew my familiarity with them in the snow. Last winter I was busy with work, so I could not go. This winter I would not dare to go as I am afraid my mind would be drawn to strike the contrast between the peaceful English Lakeland and my dread native mountains and rivers. I have to thank Mr E. W. Hodge wholeheartedly for inviting me to stay with him if I would go to the Lakes again.

Before the winter came, I had thoughts of going to the lakes again if possible. After, my mind was filled with troubles, and my only desire about them was to meet them in my dreams. So it has happened ! The invitation to attend the Annual Dinner of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District from Mr Speaker might have started me dreaming. I enjoyed the dinner so much as I had the chance to hear more about the Lakes. Although my name ' The Silent Traveller ' indicates that I could not talk, I would have recited some poems of mine on the Lakeland in Chinese if I had been feeling happier. I only hope my English friends have excused me this.

When I was in my native city, I used to recite aloud a poem one of our great poets, Su Tung-P'o, of Sung dynasty (A.D. 960-1276) on Lu mountain, which runs :

' Ridge after ridge and peak after peak there are ;
From afar or near-by, from above or below, each has a different form.
The true features of Lu Mountains cannot be recognised,
Because we ourselves are always engulfed in these mountains.'

What more can I say about it now ? I had better keep silent !

HAVING CLIMBED TO THE TOPMOST PEAK OF THE INCENSE BURNER MOUNTAIN

Up and up the Incense Burner Peak,
In my heart is stored what my ears and eyes perceived.
All the year—detained by office business,
Today at last I got a chance to go.
Grasping the creepers, I clung to dangerous rocks,
My hands and feet—weary with groping for hold.
There came with me three or four friends,
But two friends dared not go further.
At last we reached the topmost crest of the peak.
My eyes were blinded, my soul rocked and reeled.
The chasm beneath me—ten thousand feet ;
The ground I stood on only a foot wide.
If you have not exhausted the scope of seeing and hearing,
How can you realise the widencss of the world ?
The waters of the River looked narrow as a ribbon,
P'en Castle smaller than a man's fist.
How it clings, the dust of the world's halter !
It chokes my limbs : I cannot shake it away.
Thinking of retirement, I heaved an envious sigh,
Then, with lowered head, came back to the Ant's Nest.

(From the original Chinese of Po Chii-I.)

JOHN WOODCOCK GRAVES

THE AUTHOR OF 'D'YE KEN JOHN PEEL'

Hugh Davidson

A hundred years ago two cronies, both in the prime years of manhood, were seated one winter's night in a cottage in the bosom of the Cumberland fells. One was a local worthy, John Woodcock Graves ; the other, John Peel, a popular huntsman in the Fell district. They sat in the parlour of Graves' home at Caldbeck, their minds roving over the fells, musing upon hunting runs and incidents and, perhaps, ruminating on the doings of Peel's favourite Southern hound, Ruby, or the favourite black and tan, Ranter. At the other side of the room Graves' mother was softly singing his eldest son to sleep. Whilst the two men were in reflection and the gentle intonation of the woman's voice filtered through the room, Graves' flaxen haired daughter came in and turning to him said : ' Father, what do they say to what Granny sings ? ' Graves told her it was an old rant called ' Bonnie Annie.' The girl's question had started him off on a new scent; carried away with inspiration from that old lilt, he walked across to the nearby table on which lay invitingly the quill and ink for hunting appointments—in fact Graves and Peel had actually met that night to arrange for earth stopping next day and an early morning hunt—and within an amazingly short time he scribbled extempore a lyrical effusion dedicated to Peel. But little did Graves think as he wrote the stanza of ' D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so gray ' that it would become a world famous hunting song, perpetuating the name of Peel and himself. However, he did in jest visualise Peel's immortality, when after reciting the poem to his friend he remarked, ' By jove Peel, you'll be sung when we're both run to earth ! ' Graves sung his song that night to Peel, who was deeply affected.

Next day Graves and Peel and their hunting confreres had a longish run over the face of Skiddaw and on their

return home a halt was made, upon Graves' invitation, at **the** ' Oddfellows Arms,' and over the tankards they jabbered and were happy. Pulling from his pocket some crumpled pieces of paper, Graves said : ' I've summat to sing ; 'tis a new song, called " John Peel " and this is how it goes ' :

' Did ye ken John Peel wid his cwote sae gray ?
Did ye ken John Peel at the breck o' the day ?
Did ye ken John Peel gayin' far, far away—
Wie his hoons and his horn in a mwornin '?

Chorus.

For the sound o' the horn cawd me fra my bed,
As the cry o' the hoons me often has led,
For Peel's view-holloa wad waken the dead
Or a fox frae his lair in the mwornin.

Did ye ken that bitch whose tongue was death ?
Did ye ken her sons of peerless faith ?
Did ye ken that a fox wie his last breath
Cursed them as he died in a mwornin'.

Chorus.

Yes, I kenn'd them aw and morny things mair,
An' could tell see teayls as to meayke yeu stare,
How we ran down foxes and of'ns the hare,
Ere the hoar left the hills in a mwornin'.

Chorus.

An we follot John Peel beath oft and far,
Over rasper fence and yett an' bar,
Frae low Dentonholme up to Scratchmere Scaur,
When we vied for the brush in a mwornin'.

Chorus.

Aye I know'd John Peel and his Ruby too,
Ranter an' Royal and Bellman as true,
Frae the drag to the chess, frae then to the view,
Frae the view to the death in a mwornin'.

Chorus.

Here's tae John Peel wie a heart and soul,
Let's freely brim into him another bowl,
We'll follow John Peel thro' fair and thro' foul,
Wheyle were wak't wid his horn in a rrrwornin'.

Chorus.

It is remarkable that this song, composed on the impulse of the moment, should be the product of a man with no literary training. Much of it is plainly told but its force lies in the use of strong stirring hunting language and the raciness of the wording That inspiriting emotional force has earned for John Peel a prominence in the eyes of rising generations which he otherwise would not have had. The author, however, is almost forgotten, and in fact to the countless multitudes who sing the song, the life and character of John Woodcock Graves are unknown. As the song still retains its popularity both at home and overseas a memoir of Graves deserves a permanent place in the records of Cumberland ballad writers. In the following notes an effort is made to show the background of the man in its varied settings.

A romantic devil-may-care character, a jocund and whimsical Cumbrian is the subject of this sketch. It was on February 9th, 1795 that John Woodcock Graves was born. He was the only son of Joseph and Ann Graves, his mother's maiden name being Ann Matthews. His father was an ironmonger, plumber and glazier. Both belonged to Wigton where ' J.W.G.' was born. Graves was a true Cumbrian, his forbears for many generations back having been born and bred in the county. His great-grandfather, John Graves, lived and died at Hesket Newmarket, while his grandfather, John Woodcock, belonged to the same district. When Graves was six years old he was sent to Cockermouth to live with his uncle George at an inn, and it was in this town that he received his initial schooling. He was nine years old when his father died, a pauper, leaving his young widow with a heavy debt to pay. As has been faithfully recorded she proved herself to be a woman of courage and strength of character, for she set out to clear her husband's name and pay his debts, taking the full onus of responsibility upon herself. ' I was his wife and by that compact am responsible ; though God knows that while I was saving he

was spending,' she is said to have confided to a friend. She lived to the age of seventy-nine, passing away in 1846. Graves returned to Wigton at the time of his father's death but he did not attend the funeral, ' which I did not see as I was off at the time playing at marbles with my cousins,' according to his own confession. He remained at Wigton and went to a little clay daubin school in a back-yard where he wrestled with the ' Three Rs,' soon learning to read quite easily. He appeared to be quick at arithmetic and according to his own estimation he could excel his teacher in writing. This was the only schooling Graves ever received, but for a lad of that time he appeared to be quite up to the average. He had a hankering after painting and sketching and when he returned to Cockermouth at the age of fourteen his uncle apprenticed him to the business of house, sign and coach painting. Graves, however, did not learn much at the job for he was often left alone and he soon wearied of it. The uncle and his wife kept a bathing hotel at Skinburness and the Cockermouth business was left in the hands of a foreman for whom Graves had no liking. On the expiration of his apprenticeship Graves forsook work to answer the call of the hunting horn. The first hunting days of his life were spent following the hounds of Joe Steel. The love of the chase and rambling over the fells was inborn : he gloried in that sport and it was while out on a run that he became acquainted with a man named Joseph Faulder who, learning that Graves had a leaning towards art and a yearning to make it his profession, developed the lad's skill and awakened in him a strong desire to go to France or Italy to pursue his aims and strike out for himself on general principles. With his passage booked and his belongings on board ship at Skinburness to go to Liverpool, he went to Wigton to bid farewell to his mother, sisters and friends. His mother and family begged him to stay with them and after much persuasion, and much against his will, he cancelled his voyage.

Graves celebrated his coming of age with his marriage to Jean Atkinson of Rosley, or Westward, to whom he was introduced a few weeks after his return to Wigton, but a year later he was a widower, Jean dying in child-birth at Market Hill, Wigton, where Graves continued to reside alone. His outlook on life seemed to have changed during his years of bereavement and in the company of a friend, Walter Simpson, he studied by voracious reading of library books, and composed several literary fragments. Like many poets he possessed an impassioned heart and within five years of the death of his wife he fell in love with a childhood friend, and was soon contemplating matrimony again. The girl was Abigail Porthouse, a young lady of charm, sterling character and a certain amount of culture, and they were married in due course, but the union was not a conspicuously happy one. She had a strong mind and a fair temper ; he also had these traits. Nevertheless, they were blessed with eight children.

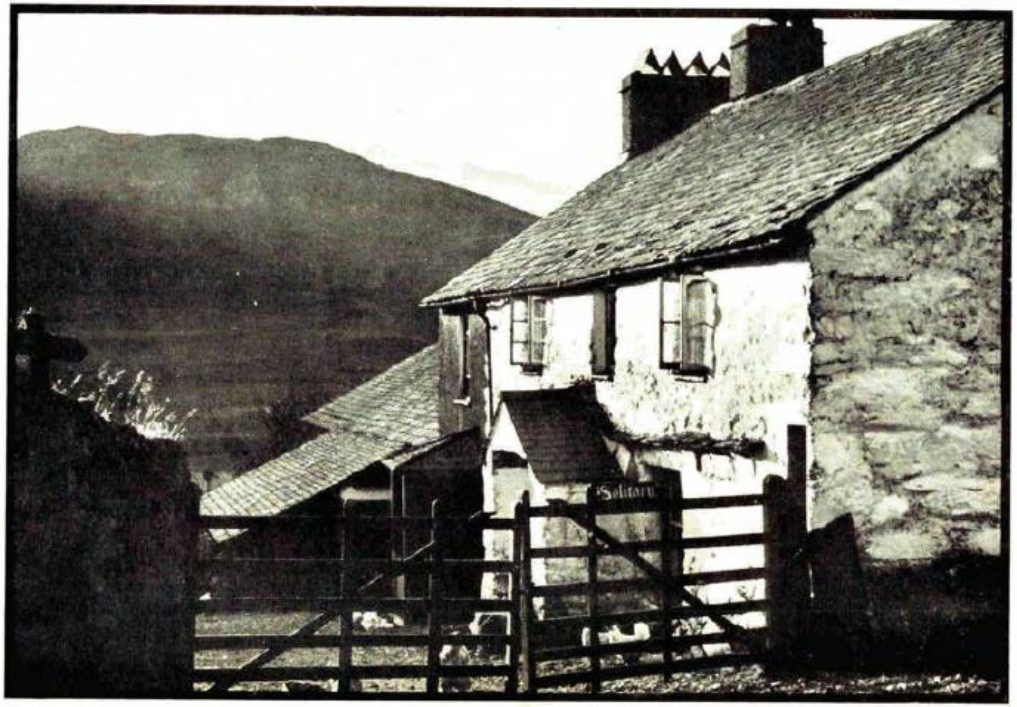
Their married life was spent in Caldbeck where he was connected with the woollen mills, a business venture which failed. He was not suited to the confined life of a factory where there was little scope for his rough-and-tumble habits. It was no wonder that he quarrelled with everyone at the mill and as a result of a brawl with the manager he was brought before the magistrates at the Local Police Court. He was pleased to leave the mill for he said he was cheated, robbed and galled to such an extent by those who ought to have been his friends that he looked on the place with profound dislike. Other schemes distracted his attention, notably a coal mining venture across the Border in which he was induced to speculate upon the advice of Mr Brougham, who later became Lord Chancellor. In this deal he was also left to repent. Graves was not suited to business, for which he had no interest, having only passing fancies to play with fresh ideas. But the ups and downs in his affairs had also another result. The cry of the pack and the sound

of the horn were to him of greater consequence than the whirr of the looms and so employment was neglected. His greatest delight was to take part in a furious run and no matter how hot the pace might be or how rough the country traversed, Graves always ended the day as 'lish' as any other of the followers.

His friendship with John Peel was firmly established at this time and often they would meet early in the morning to take part in the drag over the mountains while others still lay in their blankets. His affection for John Peel as a friend was as great as was his regard for him as a foxhunter. It was that hero-worship that prompted Graves while in his home at Midtown, Caldbeck, to compose the famous panegyric, a song now known the world over, though Graves did not suppose it would go farther than his own place.

The chorus of the song had an enthusiastic reception in Graves' neighbourhood and it was sung by all and sundry, but while he gloried under this little halo of local fame his spirits were being damped. He had a wife and a large family to provide for ; he had no trade ; prospects were ruined by the recent Court case—he was a poor wretch of a man. Graves' state of mind at this time can be best understood from a reference he made to it later on in his life. 'I resolved to go to the farthest corner of the earth,' he wrote later. 'I made a wreck of it all ; left machinery, book-debts, etc., in the hands of a relative to provide for my two dear daughters whom I left behind.' His wife, a distracted woman, was not anxious to emigrate, but as Graves was adamant that he would journey whether she accompanied him or not, she reluctantly acquiesced. In the August of 1833 Graves landed at Hobart, Tasmania, with his wife and four children and about £\o in his pocket.

In Tasmania he led a most varied and extremely storm-tossed life, his exploits abroad being certainly more colourful than those in England. His livelihood was derived from occupations such as coachbuilder, lighthouse keeper, journal-



'SOLITARY'
Blea Tarn

Gerald Lacey

' O heave not my heart, for this tear from mine eye
I would dash, were it not that I feel
That the time will be soon when all hunters shall die,
So **I'll** drop this one down for John Peel.
Then turn up the glass,
And so let the sand pass
From one end to t'other : it may be
Again death may strike,
But can ne'er on the like—
And the next stroke may fall upon me.

Whene'er in the chase, he was first of the field,
Who has gone to the land o' the leal :
What made the woods ring, till the stubborn oak reel'd,
But the hounds and the horn of John Peel ?
Old Caldew may roll,
And the shepherd may stroll,
To listen, but listen in vain ;
Who gave the horn blast,
Now has blown out his last,
And there ne'er will his like sound again.

Now Reynard may prowl in the wide open day,
Nor the hare out so lightly need steal ;
The hounds have all singled and slunk far away
When they boded the death of John Peel.
The herdsman may climb,
And no more hear the chime
That often has jingled below ;
But 'ware the moor-hen,
Of the fox's keen ken.
For he hears not the shrill tally-ho !

Each hound gave a howl and last look at the horn,
(Who saith that a dog cannot feel ?)
Then singled to pine, all dejected, forlorn,
And died on the death of John Peel.
But foxes that prowl,
In the graveyards to howl,
Keep **far** from his tomb when ye go,
Or to your surprise,
By Jove ! he may rise,
With a shriek and a wild tallv-ho !

Then hang up the horn on the blighted old tree,
That some hunter who passeth may kneel ;
And when the wind dangles that horn, it may be
That it looms the last sigh of John Peel.
Then fill up the glass,
And, though dumb, let it pass
To him in the land o' the leal ;
Like him far away,
Who has tender'd this lay,
Remember the hunter, John Peel.'

Graves did not return to his native land, much though he wished to ; neither did his wife. He died on August 17th, 1886 ; she some years before. In the closing months of his life he was tended by one of his daughters, a Mrs Hubbard.

To hunting on the Cumbrian fells he attributed his long life and vigour. In one of his last letters he speaks proudly of his rugged physique—' Unto this day I have never regretted the time spent in the field, for that was doubly regained by vigour of body and force of mind. I am gay at approaching the octagon (sic) and healthy and hale as " Ane an' twenty Tarn." While gazing into the fire, alone, I run over many an old burster, and check myself, laughing like an idiot, and daub out the scene with a sigh that would choke a saint.'

Graves left this world little aware that the glow of his affection for foxhunting would warm the hearts of future generations who have acclaimed ' D'ye ken John Peel ' as the greatest hunting song in the English language.

A COUNTRY COORTIN'

Ya Setterda neet, es I've heerd tell,
Young Bob cum ower frae Cartmel Fell
A coortin' a lass, th' cawd her Jane,
She leev'd at a farm doon Coomer Lane.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell dum day.

Bob donned his best, and he leuk'd gay smart,
For he knew this lass hed stown his heart,
An' he whistled hissel a lively tune,
For he'd sin three magpies i't efternoon.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Noo it happened as Jane was 't hoose b'hersel,
An' she thowt of her lad frae Cartmel Fell,
For her fwoak hed gone wi t' horse and gig,
Ta visit some nebbers at Bowland Brig.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Missus left her her orders o' serene,
Ta ren t' barns if they sud scream,
To keep a good fire, and leuk t' auld sow,
An' sarra two lambs 'es 'd lost ther yow.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Bob waited poor lad, his legs were like leead,
When a hullet flew oot just ower his heead,
He heeard it say ' to whit, to whoo
If thoo's ga'an to wed, thoo'l hev ta woo.'
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Through t'kitchen winda he tuk a leuk,
An' spied his Jane 't ingle neuk,
He thowt till hissel, I'll ex for a match,
An Jane fair jumped when he lifted t' latch.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Noo wasn't she fain, what a fuss sh' did maak,
Fetched cooslip wine and sweet currin caak,
And th're th' sat, b' a girt peaat fire,
Wi' his arm around his heart's desire.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Th' talked aboot ga'an ta't Crosthet dance,
If t'missis would nobbut gi' Jane a chance,
She'd a bran new blouse Bob bowt her at Fair,
An' yards o' blue ribbin ta tee up her hair.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Three magpies ya kna is a sign for ta wed,
Bob felt it was time as summat was said,
He caw'd her his rose, his jewel, his plum,
An' she promised ta wed him when Wissenda cum.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Th' took a lile farm doon Winster way,
An' the're th' leeved for many a day,
The'v horses, and coos, and pigs, and sheep,
An' th're o' th'r aan an i' gay good keep.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

You lads wat's keen on Canada brass,
Think twice afoor ya leeve yer lass,
Just tak a leaf frae Cartmel Bob,
There's a fortun' here if y'll mind y'r job.
Wi mi dummell dum dollykin, dummell, dum day.

Darwin Leighton

ART IN MOUNTAIN PHOTOGRAPHY

Gerald Lacey

In an essay on ' Hills, Plains and Painters ' in her delightful book ' Hills and Highways,' Katharine Chorley tells us that mountain landscape is one of the most neglected of all the subjects one would expect to inspire the painter. The art of landscape painting, as she explains, was developed most intensively in Belgium and Holland, two of the flattest countries in Europe, whilst only a few great artists, the greatest of whom was Turner, have

' summed up and set free the mountain genius.'

Leonardo da Vinci, who ascended quite a long way up Monte Rosa, was much more interested in the scientific aspect than the artistic appeal of mountains. Those who have visited art galleries in different parts of the world will probably have difficulty in calling to mind many outstanding pictures in which mountain scenery is the central theme. In the lovely new gallery at Basle in Switzerland, where pictures cannot be seen to better advantage, landscape work is conspicuous by its scarcity and not more than two or three pictures, by old or comparatively modern masters, would thrill the lover of mountains. The collection of pictures in the Alpine Club in London is an exception, and the members of this Club are among the most fortunate of mountaineers in possessing many fine mountain landscape paintings mainly of Swiss Alpine subjects. Apart from the other amenities of the Club this possession is a priceless one. But even if all these pictures were great works of art, the number is insignificant by comparison with any large collection of pictures.

There is a parallel to be found between the painters' art and artistic expression through the modern medium of photography. Just as landscape painters have shown a preference for lowland country and have filled their can-

vasses with great expanses of cloud scattered skies, so have artists in landscape photography done very much the same. We are growing accustomed to seeing photographs of a team of horses, a plough and ploughman, with gulls wheeling in flight around them, crossing a narrow strip of land against a background of dappled clouds that takes up four-fifths of the picture. Substitute a windmill and a line of trees for the ploughing team and you have a typical Dutch or Flemish scene. Such pictures convey a feeling of the vastness of space and of man's dependence upon the good brown earth and the universal radiance that kindles all life upon it. But this is not quite the same feeling as one gets on crossing the summit of a mountain or even a lowly hill, when

> ' The sky is deep blue ; the sun is over the valleys ;
> and the air is filled with a solemn hush.'

Ascending the mountain side we are usually more conscious of the physical side of our being and the exertion necessary to reach the top, until at last we set foot upon the summit and enjoy an exhilarating feeling of greatness in the achievement. But we may be as quickly overwhelmed by the magnificence and beauty of the scene that surrounds us only to become conscious of the infinitely small though integral part each one of us is playing in the divine purpose behind all Creation. We have won our way into the spiritual presence of the mountain top but we have not in any sense of the word conquered the mountain.

So in the art of photography, as in painting, mountains have rarely been the subject of pictures that can be described as works of art able to survive the fire of criticism and the ultimate test of time. In the last exhibitions of the Royal Photographic Society and the London Salon the number of mountain pictures could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Only one was really outstanding, an entrancing view of Tryfan, like a great cathedral nave with intricately chiselled buttresses and towers reaching high up to the sky.

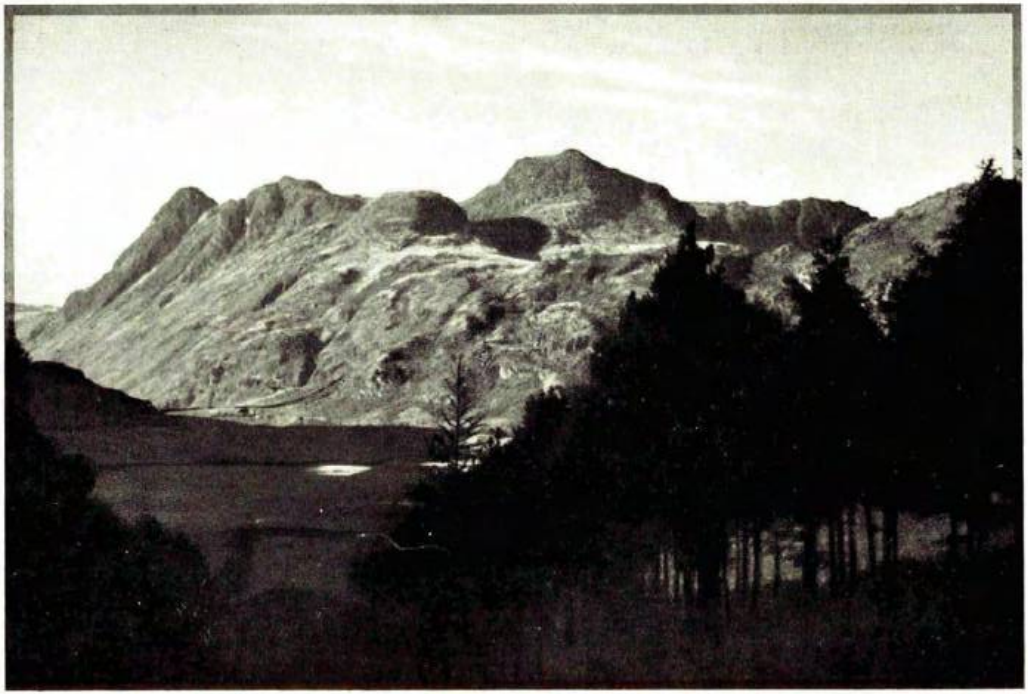
The picture had all the qualities of a delicately executed etching. What then is the reason for this ? In the first place, why have mountain scenes failed to captivate the imaginations of landscape painters ? Not a great many years ago mountains aroused a sense of fear in the minds of men. In their imaginations mountainous regions were peopled with evil spirits. Only in countries like China and especially Tibet, where artistic expression gives place to Buddhistic contemplation, have mountains been objects of reverence for centuries. The inspiration to be drawn from the hills has but recently come to civilised man and the revelation of the eternal spirit of the beauty and strength of the hills, transcending all the moods of the elements surrounding them, is a new emotional experience. How then can we expect men to have captured the enchantment of the mountain scene and to have expressed the quintessence of it on the painters' canvas ?

In mountain photography today we may have progressed beyond the fringe of artistic expression, but few works of lasting quality have yet been created. Nevertheless, artistic expression through this medium may perhaps lead the way to its counterpart in the fine art of painting, hitherto so sadly neglected. Frank Smythe has just given us his latest work dealing with the ' Mountain Scene ' in which are reproduced some of his choicest mountain photographs. Perfectly conceived and composed, most of them are not only a delight to the eye but they reveal the same spirit which pervades the hills in splendid array or in fury such as we have experienced on some unforgettable occasions ourselves. Glancing through Blodig's Alpine Calendar makes one wish to be transported to many of the scenes for the joys that hills can give us. But here and there, as we turn over the pages, a picture arrests our attention and we are carried beyond the mere recalling of physical joys. It stirs something deep within us. Lovely Alpine flowers play their part in the sun and wind with misty snow-

fringed summits for their drop scene : a high cross on an Alp stands out darkly against the winding valley below, whilst the clouds cast their soft grey shadows over lowland pastures promising refreshing rain to the thirsting earth : the white pyramid of a Himalayan peak stands shimmering in the moonlight like a precious jewel set between the dark walls of a massive gorge : these are works of art in miniature.

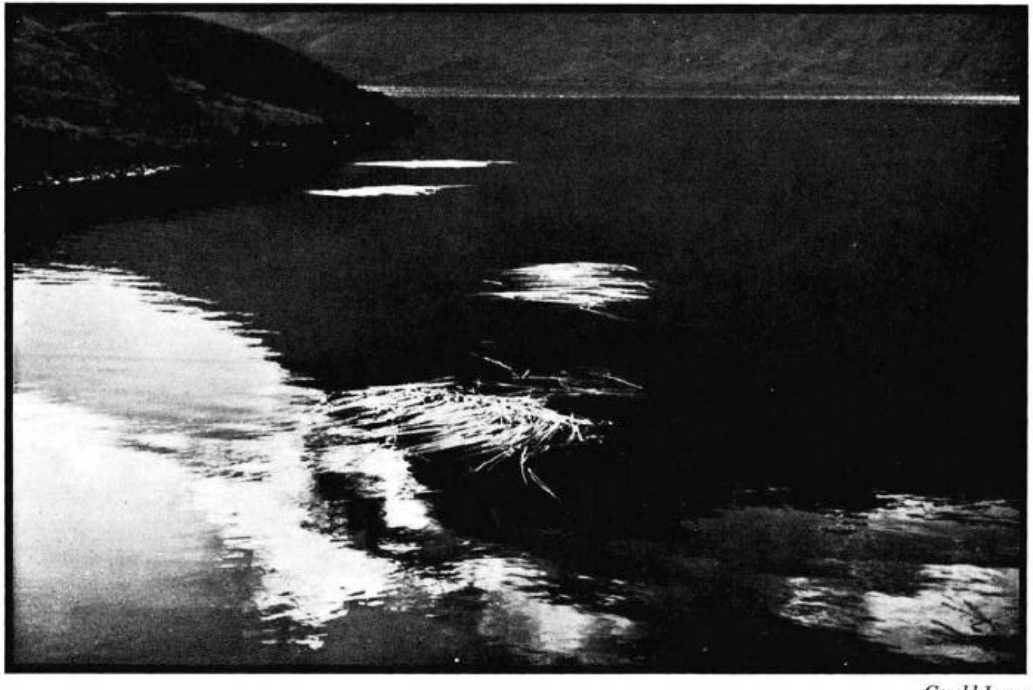
Although it seems America claims the art of photography to be peculiarly her own, it is to Switzerland we have to turn for the finest examples of mountain photography. The ' Golden Book of the Engadine' for instance, contains many pictures which in conception and technical execution are beyond comparison. They are literally electrifying to contemplate and make the same irresistible appeal on renewed acquaintance. Albert Steiner's picture of a Bergamask herdsman with his small flock of sheep, reflected in the still waters of a rock pool, looking across a valley of mist to snow-clad summits beyond, is worthy of the greatest painter's brush. It is a really superb creation. In another mood the same artist gives us a view from the Fuorda Crast Agiizza towards the Engadine which might have been taken in the early light of dawn when the valleys are filled with mist and the hills are featureless forms as though the earth were awaiting the quickening touch of life. The pictures are punctuated throughout with well-chosen quotations from well-known writers of many countries.

This is not trying to make out that art in photography is on the same high plane as the painters' art. It is not. The technique of ordinary photography limits the artist in this medium to working in monochrome. His pictures can only suggest the colours that can be awakened in the imagination. Yet the dramatic effect that can be achieved in photography may be as great as that attainable with brush and colour. The spiritual feeling that may be expressed in a picture in black and white can surely convey with equal intensity the mood of the hills, whether the atmosphere be charged with



WANING LIGHT : Langdale Pikes

Gerald Lacey



EVENING MOOD : Stickle Tarn

Gerald Lacey

storm and fierce winds are sweeping mists in swirling gusts up every gully in the mountain face, or the gentle zephyr hardly stirs the pinetops on the valley side while billowy puffs of cloud trail leisurely along the hill-crests like white sailed yachts almost becalmed in an azure sea. But it would be impossible to render the reflection of the soft pink light of sunset on snow such as Farquharson has done in his exquisite pictures of woodlands in snow, or again the same pink glow of the morning sun illuminating the sky-shattering peak of the Matterhorn.

This could probably be attempted by colour photography, but in its present state of development it is very limited in its use as an artistic medium. Colour photography as we understand it today means a colour transparency which must be viewed against the light or projected like a lantern slide, and it is very questionable whether one could live with an illuminated colour transparency for very long without tiring of its brilliance. The production of a colour picture on paper by photographic means is a complicated, if not difficult process, in which the fidelity of colour reproduction is remarkably good. But both processes afford only limited control of the rendering of colours and unless we are able to determine the depth and shade of colours just as we can the light and shade in a monochrome picture, in order to obtain the effects that we have felt as well as seen, the medium will remain a means of reproduction, capable of conveying the vividness of the scene but nothing more intense in feeling. However, landscape is not the only subject of colour photography and for the photographing of flowers the colour transparency is ideal, because flowers are seen at their loveliest when brightly illuminated.

Two other forms of photography may be considered here. Infra-red photography usually turns a heavenly view into a satanic creation in which lakes and skies are black and empty of light and life as a void, whilst the green mantle of the earth emits a blaze of dazzling light, a contrast that

may be intensely dramatic but which nature would disdain and mankind would find intolerable. The other is the stereoscopic picture, that exciting entertainment of Edwardian drawing rooms. It is a strange fact, on viewing a stereoscopic picture or transparency, that whilst it exhibits amazing depth and natural perspective, all life has gone out of the world it depicts. Nature seems to have been arrested. Living figures are transfixed, water ceases to flow and trees to sway in the breeze. One simply cannot contemplate a waxwork world, empty of all feeling, dispirited and dead. Take out the slide and look at one of the pictures and, if it is worth looking at at all, movement will come back to it. It will convey an impression of vitality as well as reality. No ! Neither infra-red nor stereoscopic photography can really be regarded seriously by the landscape photographer and artist.

So we come back to the straightforward monochrome representation with its infinitely greater scope for control of light and shade and to another reason why the mountain scene has eluded so many of us in our endeavours to portray its beauties photographically. Technically landscape, and more especially mountain landscape, is the most difficult of all camera subjects. It involves such a wide range of exposure in one picture, from foreground to distant sky, that no photographic emulsion is available with such latitude. If we wish to have detail in the shadows in the foreground, the more distant parts and particularly the sky will be hopelessly overexposed. And conversely if we expose for the delicate rendering of distant hills or clouds the foreground, unless it be very brilliantly illuminated, will turn out to be a dark silhouette. Yet to compromise and expose on the middle distance often gives a most disappointing result.

It is a relatively simple matter to decide upon the exposure for a building or a portrait to which there is little or no depth, and in these subjects the eye can rarely be misled by a welter of colours. The mountaineer has no studio with

artificial lighting at his command. His studio is the open air; his subjects are immovable, yet instinct with life, and may be sunless or obscured by clouds for days in succession. He is lucky if he enjoys more than a few really fine days during a holiday in the British Isles, though Switzerland with its clear atmosphere may be much kinder to him. Disappointment is often intense. Having reached a point from which he has long contemplated taking pictures his hopes may be dashed by a sudden change in the weather. When sometimes the clouds disperse and a lovely scene suddenly presents itself he may find himself in an awkward situation, possibly perched on a rocky ledge with hardly room to move his elbows, or he may have to search in vain for a suitable object for his foreground. In the twinkling of an eye, if he is to capture the inspiration of a moment, he must decide upon the right exposure to secure the desired result. Just occasionally he may have time to linger at one place waiting for the light to change or shadows to lengthen for the glorious opportunity to immortalise a moment in his experience which has filled his heart brimful with joy.

But the very deficiency in range of the light sensitive emulsion just mentioned can be used to considerable advantage in landscape photography to achieve greater simplicity and contrast, and even dramatic effect if the subject seems to call for it, than the scene itself may actually convey to the eye. So often we are attracted by a profusion of outlines or by the wealth of colours in a landscape. Ridge after ridge, stretching to the horizon, or the bronze of bracken clothing a valley side, illuminated by noonday sunshine, may make us think that a beautiful picture can be made. But more often than not, the photograph is dull and uninteresting because it is lacking in the vital components of a picture in monochrome : the interplay of light and shade and the balancing of dark and light masses in a simple arrangement, making a perfect unity and giving the picture that quality which arrests the eye and focusses it

upon the principal object or theme. It is necessary to simplify to give emphasis and even to exaggerate in order to gain force. Only by thinking in these terms can good composition be achieved.

One essential to the attainment of art in photography is therefore complete mastery of technique. The greatest masters of the painter's art have generally been first and foremost the greatest masters of their craft. And this is not to be lightly achieved in photography any more than it is in painting, though the two are so different in practice. We may progress through the taking of photographs as records of holidays in the hills from which to recall the faces of friends and views we have enjoyed in their company, to the making of pictures of topographical interest that display a high degree of technical perfection bringing back to mind the most cherished scenes such as are revealed on reaching a summit or the head of a valley affording the first glimpse of the world on the other side. To satisfy the other essential of artistic expression the picture must not simply portray what might have been seen by anyone from the same point of view : it must be infused with something from our own emotional experience and, executed with faultless craftsmanship, it should induce an equal depth of feeling in those who are alive to the enduring beauty of the hills. To them is presented an endless succession of new visions and discoveries—and that is really what the artist in the photographer is trying to present within the narrow frame of his picture for the delight of everyone.

SKYE SUMMER

(From the Summit of Sgurr Alasdair)

Look, the winged islands
poised on the sea,
a cleft shadow cast
by cloud-feathered pinions.
With water hands
the swift mermynions
bear them in ecstasy
out, out, and the silver sands
and the steel sea merge
in purple hills,
and the waves surge
cupped to a sky
too blue, too blue.
The west wind brings
with seabird dirge
imperial wings
of swirled-in mist.
Softly, softly the water croons
down from the hill's breast
brown, and the golden peat,
and the black rock runes
the crested horizon with
granite and scented heather
a summit cairn and a slow descent
in rainbow painted weather.

M. Scott Johnston

A CROWDED DAY

Gordon Lindsay Clegg

Some months ago, during a discussion on climbing against time, the question arose as to how long was necessary to enable a party to stand on the four highest mountains in the four countries of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

We had heard, of course, of Dr. Hadfield's party who stood upon the summits of Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon within the 24 hours, and we wondered how much longer would be needed if Carrantuohill—the highest in Ireland—was included as well.

At first 36 hours was thought to be a minimum, but after going into details we thought that this might be reduced, with luck, to 24 hours. Bearing this intriguing possibility in mind we decided to attempt the four peaks during the following summer.

We realised that everything would have to be planned down to the last detail and that the organisation of the travelling would be as important as the actual climbing. The party consisted of Dr David Molesworth, Mr Keith Porter and the writers.

The first thing to be done was to discover how long the actual climbing would occupy. During a rock-climbing holiday in Wales last Whitsun, an opportunity was taken of climbing Snowdon by the various routes against the watch. This showed that the Pyg Track path was the fastest, a modified Watkins path being about ten minutes longer. We reckoned that normally two hours would cover the double journey but as the party would be somewhat tired *2* hours should be allowed.

It was obvious that one, at least, of these mountains would have to be climbed at night, and after much discussion it was decided that Scafell Pike would be the most suitable. The various paths up were explored and it was clear that the ascent

from Wasdale Head would be the fastest in the dark, provided that the path, very ill-defined in places, was not lost. Some two dozen wooden discs about 3 inches in diameter, and painted each side with luminous paint, were 'planted ' along the route and compass readings taken. It was found that the Ordnance Survey Map of the district was far from correct. There was no opportunity of climbing this at night, but the up and down journey was done in under an hour-and-a-half in daylight: in the dark we considered two hours a minimum.

Carrantuohill was visited, tucked away in a lovely but inaccessible part of the Free State, and proved to be a difficult proposition as regards time. There is some four miles of level going before the climb proper is reached, and considering the tired condition in which we should be z\ hours was allowed.

Ben Nevis was easier as the descent only had to be made and we considered an hour should be ample. The climbing, therefore, we thought should occupy at least 8 hours.

The road section was then studied, one of the party exploring the possible routes by car, and it proved a far from simple problem. It was ultimately decided to start from Glen Nevis and thence to travel southwards, avoiding Glasgow and other traffic centres. The Ballachulish Ferry was to be waiting for us, and an all-night petrol station was found where we were due for a fill up.

Climbing Scafell from the Wasdale side entailed a considerably increased mileage compared with the Langdale side, but much of this could be saved if the road from Boot to Langdale was used. This meant the ascent of Hard Nott and Wrynose Passes—no easy matter in a large car in the dark. It was finally decided only to attempt this if well ahead of time, and we allowed for going round the coast in our schedule of times. The road mileage totalled 537 from the foot of of Nevis to the foot of Snowdon via Wasdale Head.

We then turned our attention to ways of reaching the South of Ireland. Obviously an aeroplane was the only thing, but the problem was to find a suitable aerodrome. This proved an unsolvable problem until the Air Ministry informed us that there would be no objection to our using the R.A.F. Aerodrome at Pwhelli. This was 33 miles from Snowdon and we arranged to leave our car in the town itself and proceed by a hired car to the aerodrome, as it was impossible to park a car there.

From Pwhelli it was necessary to fly to Speke Aerodrome at Liverpool, to pass the plane and ourselves through the Customs ; thence to Baldonnel for the Irish formalities, and then on to Killarney. Here another difficulty arose : the only aerodrome available was a privately owned one belonging to Sir Maurice O'Connell, Bt., quite suitable for light planes but a different matter for the 6-seater Dragon Rapide plane we were to use. It was finally arranged that if the weather was too bad to allow landing at Killarney we would go to Cork Aerodrome instead, where our car had been left the week before for traversing, if necessary, the final 56 miles by road. At the same time a car was to wait at Killarney to take us the 6 miles to the foot of Carrantuohill if a landing there was possible. We had, therefore, to travel 570 miles in one car, for which we allowed 10 hours, and another 12 miles in hired cars which would need half-an-hour. The distance by air was 400 miles, measured in a straight line, and as the direction was against the prevailing wind we reckoned 4 hours would be necessary.

The total time so far amounted to 22 hours. To this we had to add the time necessary for crossing the Ballachulish Ferry, changing cars, putting on and taking off climbing boots and clothing and make an allowance for the slight delays, which would be inevitable. An hour-and-a-half was allowed altogether. This brought the total time to 24 hours, and everything was included, except the time spent passing the Customs--an unknown quantity.

We considered if we had perfect weather, plenty of luck and no unforseen delays of any sort, that we could accomplish the whole thing in 24 hours. The only thing left to do was to try.

As the holidays of the various members of the party only overlapped on two days, the date was fixed automatically, and it was decided to start from the top of Ben Nevis at 7 p.m. on August 10—a date we realised to be unsuitable as there was no moon that night.

After a late and large breakfast in Fort William, we left the car in Glen Nevis and at 1-5 p.m. splashed though the stream and began the ascent. We climbed slowly prospecting carefully with a view to the descent. The lower slopes were covered in thick bracken and no clear route could be found through it, but higher up the firm turf was ideal for fast going. The last couple of thousand feet to the summit was loose and stony and difficult to run over, while the official track was far too tortuous for our needs. We finally decided on a roughly straight route from the top, using the path at the start but leaving it at the first serious turn.

The summit was reached at 4-0 p.m. and the party went to sleep on the remains of the Observatory Roof. At 7 o'clock exactly we left the Cairn, running as fast as the conditions permitted. It was a very hot but otherwise uneventful descent, except when one of the party did a perfect forward somersault and was nearly trampled on by the others.

We reached the Fort at 7-37 p.m. and two minutes later were drinking coffee in the car.

We arrived at the Ballachulish Ferry soon after 8 o'clock —earlier than we had arranged—and, unfortunately, the ferry was on the other side, but within ten minutes we were loaded on and across. The run South was uneventful, except for mist in places, and a little before 2 a.m. Wasdale Head was reached.

Having put on boots and equipped ourselves with a powerful electric torch each, we commenced the ascent at 2-2 a.m.

The night was very dark with no moon, but otherwise the conditions were good. After climbing about 500 feet one of the torches went out, and was quickly followed by the remainder. The fault in each case, as far as we could tell in the dark, was that the bulbs had failed. Unfortunately, we had brought spare batteries but no bulbs. It was too dark to see one's feet much less the path, and we felt our way through the darkness keeping to the stream, so avoiding going too far astray. As we ascended, the sound of the stream grew less and the faintly discernable skyline was of little help as it was difficult to tell whether it was a hundred yards or two miles away. After an hour-and-a-half, chiefly occupied in falling over and into things, we discovered one of our discs—of the rest all but three are presumably fulfilling some domestic use in a souvenir hunter's abode ; this one, however, gave us a clue as to our position and we ultimately reached the top at 4-5 a.m.

The descent was easier, although we again lost our way and we arrived at the car at 5-10 a.m. just as dawn was breaking. We had used up more time and energy than we could afford and were an hour and ten minutes behind schedule, but we managed to save a few minutes on the run to Snowden, arriving at the foot at 9-55 a.m. The car was left at the start of the Pyg Track, and it was decided not to hurry over the climb as our efforts at Scafell Pike had been rather tiring and we still had plenty to do.

We climbed slowly, keeping to the path, and at least one member of the party regretted that he had only had a week's training.

We were soon in the mist, which at least kept us cool. We had two short rests on the steep section but that did not seem to help particularly, and it was a relief to reach the summit at 11-44 a.m. We *then* adjourned to the Restaruant for a hurried drink and departed much refreshed, scree-running where possible. The going was wet enough to be thoroughly slippery and we took things cautiously. The path

seemed to go on and on through the mist and it was not until nearly 1 p.m. that the car was reached.

Incidentally we had climbed up and down the three peaks in less than 24 hours, despite the slow climb up Nevis and the 3 hour wait at the top. Some 30 miles of tortuous roads brought us to Pwhelli where we hurriedly changed to the local taxi that was to drop us at the aerodrome, and so finally at 1-50 p.m. the R.A.F. witnessed the unusual sight of four sleepy looking individuals with wet and muddy clothing, and very large boots, who poured out of an ancient car and into a large and spotless plane, only to appear again after a few seconds loudly demanding where the pilot had got to. Twenty minutes had gone before he could be found and then after warming up the engines for a few more, we took off for Speke Aerodrome, Liverpool. On arrival we found that our instructions had never reached the Customs Official concerned, who had just gone home. Half-an-hour elapsed before we were away. Flying across the Irish Channel in mist we landed at Baldonnel where we passed through the Customs and filled up with petrol within twenty minutes.

The flight from Speke Aerodrome to Killarney will not easily be forgotten. The weather was perfect, except for the clouds above us, and we flew low over the bogs and farms of South Ireland. From the air, at least, the absence of both hills and roads was very noticeable compared with the mainland, and the bogs could be picked out by their distinctive colour and occupied a far greater proportion of the country than we had ever imagined.

After an hour's flight the Kerry Mountains became visible on the skyline. We tried to pick out Carrantuohill from the surrounding peaks but discovered that things looked much different from the air, and finally gave it up and contented ourselves with watching the rapidly approaching lakes and coastline.

A few minutes later we were over the village of Killarney and were searching for our landing ground. From the air

this appeared to be about ioo yards square and had a large ditch across it, but our pilot seemed quite unperturbed, and after circling round twice did a good, if terrifying landing, at 6-15 p.m.

We scrambled out of the plane and in a few seconds the waiting car was off with its disreputable crew. The foot of Carrantuohill was reached at 6-30 p.m. and the practically level stretch of four miles seemed a very long way before the real foot of the climb was reached. There is no path and the climb culminates in a steep gully leading to the top of the ridge, and then distressingly loose shale to the summit. This was reached at 9-0 p.m. exactly 26 hours after leaving the summit of Ben Nevis. The party, tired but jubilant, slowly descended and after consuming tea at a farm, got to bed just before midnight.

We will not comment on the size of the breakfast that we ate next morning, but as it was the first square meal for nearly 50 hours we felt we had earned it.

But for the failure of the torches on Scafell Pike and the delays at the Customs—the former accounted for about an hour, and the latter, combined with the delay at Ballachulish, an hour and twenty minutes—we could have stood on the summits of the four highest mountains in the British Isles inside the 24 hours.

To those who know the fascination of mountains it is unnecessary to say that we enjoyed those 26 hours—although there were moments when we began to doubt it.

MONT BLANC —THE 17TH ASCENT

H. M. Atkins

Plongeon, pres Geneve,
Sept. 9th, 1837.

My dear E.,

You see I fulfil my promise of writing to you, although I believe I promised to write a French letter to my sisters first—but I have two reasons for not doing so ; first, because I cannot yet write French elegantly enough to express myself, and secondly, because I have rather an interesting subject to write on, which I think I cannot address better to anyone than to you. I know perfectly well that you will blame me for having done such a foolish thing (which, to be brief, is that I have been to the top of Mont Blanc) and I think that I may with great reason thank God for His having preserved my life, which I have twice, as near as possible, lost during the dangerous enterprise. I am perfectly conscious that I am to blame for so doing, as I know that it is wrong to risk one's life at any time, when you can well avoid it—and I was very well aware that the reason why I ascended it was because it was one of the most difficult and dangerous exploits to perform in Europe—and in which several persons have lost their lives or their sight. This last failure I am sorry to say that I have been witness to in the person of one of the Guides who accompanied us—a poor man with a large family, who did not take the proper precautions in protecting his eyes from the glare of the snow. Your forgiveness I am sure of—and it only remains for you to secure the forgiveness of the rest of the family and of Uncle Joe. I wrote the Journal of my ascent directly after my return, the whole of which I will give you in another part of my letter.

I have made a great many pretty sketches of the Lake, etc., etc.

About three weeks ago I went to the Valley of Chamonni at the foot of Mt Blanc, with three Englishmen—Capt. Gooch, son of Admiral Sir Thomas Gooch, a Mr Goad, who is living at Plongeon, and Mr Warren, a Naval officer. William had formed another party to go a different way, which was to see St Bernard and make the tour of Mt Blanc at the foot and return home by Chamonni—the party did not start until after we returned home.

We started at four o'clock in the morning in a sort of Cab, and arrived at Chamonni at 8 o'clock the same evening. The next day we went to see the Mer de Glace, and the following day returned home.

I was not satisfied with my trip, because my companions were all in such a hurry and did not sketch—and it required 3 or 4 days to see the Valley of Chamonni, the beauty of which you must have heard of.

I was so struck with the grandeur of the scenery of the Alps, that I resolved to make a trip by myself, on foot, with a knapsack on my back, to the same place again, in a short time after my return. It was on a Saturday that I returned, and William departed on Monday morning with his companions. He had been absent about a week when I set off a second time expecting to find him at Chamonni. I will now begin from my Journal.

I started from Geneva at six o'clock in the morning on the 20th of August by the Diligence to St Martin, about three parts of the way to Chamonni. The fare was 8 francs. We arrived there at half-past six in the evening, our stopping on the way to see the celebrated Grotte de Balme delaying us 5 hours. This Grotte is situate in the side of a mountain on the road from Cluses to St Martin, and is about 700 feet above the Valley—the opening is about 10 feet high by 20 feet wide and it extends 1,500 feet into the interior.

When we arrived at St Martin, the Hostess of the Inn tried to persuade me that it was too late to set out for the Valley of Chamonni and that the paths among the mountains

were difficult to find, but I knew she only wanted my custom, so I determined to proceed, and strapping my knapsack on my back I offered my services as Guide to six Frenchmen who had never been that way before and who volunteered to accompany me—not one could speak a word of English. After walking about an hour, it began to grow dark, but the stars shone beautifully and we began to ascend the mountain. In about two hours we arrived at a little village called St Gervais, where we had some bread and cheese and beer, which by the by, was all the dinner I had that day. After resting about half an hour, we again set forward, walking thro' a most romantic country. The full moon now rose above the snowy top of Mt Blanc, throwing its rays on our little silent party winding its way among the rugged rocks. On our left was a precipice several hundred feet deep, at the bottom foamed the rapid Arve. It was a curious thing that I passed William and his party just after I quitted St Martin. He was in a carriage and one of the party, a German Baron, declared that he saw me, but did not say anything at the time because he was not sure, and thought it might be my ghost.

We had to wade through several mountain torrents and, after three more hours, at half-past two, we arrived, very much fatigued, at Chamonni. Six hours from our quitting St Martin. We repaired to our several Inns, myself to the Couronne, the Frenchmen I know not whither, nor care.

I had not the least intention to ascend Mt Blanc when I started from home, and merely meant to wander about the Alps. The next day I thought I would go only half-way up and signified my intention to the Chief Guide, who said that I must have two guides for that purpose. But happening to meet with an Englishman named Pidwel and a Swedish Officer of Artillery named Hedrengen, who had agreed to attempt the whole ascent, I changed my mind and resolved to accompany them the whole way. (I hate to do things by halves.) The remainder of that day was spent in procuring guides (of which we were to have 10) and provisions and

other things requisite for the journey, which was to take three days.

The top of Mt Blanc is 15,000 feet above the level of the sea and is the highest point in Europe. The ascent is about 18 leagues. It has been ascended 17 times, and I am the youngest Englishman who has ever reached the top.

Everything being settled by 9 o'clock that evening, I retired to bed to meditate on the dangers I was about to encounter. I had read many accounts of persons who had failed in the attempt—some of them had their feet frozen—some had lost their sight—some their reason, from the effect of the rarefaction of the air in such elevated situations. But I am drifting from my account. I sent a note to William by Count Kroptovich to signify my intention. I arose next morning, after a sleepless night, at 4 o'clock, a most beautiful morning and everything looked propitious. An hour and a half was spent in collecting our things, which the guides carried in knapsacks, and after taking some breakfast, at 6 o'clock we set forward—all the village being assembled for the occasion to wish us ' Bon Voyage.' This was the order of the march. Six porters went first carrying the knapsacks, they were only to go part of the way to help the guides, and they left us as soon as the danger commenced—four guides went next, the Swede, Pidwell and myself followed—then six more guides and three volunteer peasants brought up the rear, all walking one after the other—a party of 24.

In half an hour we began to ascend the mountain and after climbing for about two hours, passing a few chalets or cottages (the refuge of shepherds when overtaken by storms), we turned to the right to cross a dangerous torrent, about three yards broad, over which we had to jump ; I placed my pole firmly on a rock, and then sprung across safe. The others followed. This was extremely dangerous on account of the loose stones all about. We then arrived at a little narrow path made by the goats about a foot wide, over-hanging a tremendous precipice, and on the other side a

GRANDES
JORASSES

G. R. Speaker

MT BLANC
from Couvercle

G. R. Speaker

perpendicular rock. I am thankful that I could keep my head steady and could even look down without its turning. In about an hour we arrived at an immense piece of rock called the ' Pierre d'Echelle,' where we stopped for an hour and ate some luncheon. We were then about 7,800 feet above the level of the sea. There were rhododendrons on all sides and pieces of crystal and spars, and plants of whortle-berries which were good to eat. After stopping an hour and admiring the view, we proceeded, and entered the dangerous passage of the Glacier des Bossons, which is an immense valley of ice, full of tremendous chasms and crevices—some 400 feet deep. It is about three-quarters of a mile long. Soon after we had entered it, our Porters left us ; after shaking hands and wishing us ' Bon Voyage '—we then proceeded.

It would take a volume to mention the dangers we encountered in crossing. We had to walk upon ice with frozen snow on the top, very slippery, and every minute we had to jump a crevice about three-quarters of a yard wide at the top and 50 feet deep, gradually decreasing in width till it met at the bottom ; we were in the most imminent danger. Sometimes we had not the space of half a foot to place our feet upon, trusting only to our balance—on both sides tremendous crevice. I recommended myself to the mercy of Him who preserves us in all dangers, and then planted my nailed shoes in the steps of my guides and proceeded rapidly across, which was the only way to preserve my balance—had I stopped, I should have been inevitably lost. Then we had to cross a wide chasm, on a small ladder stretched across—the guides held out their hands to help us.

But now I am come to the worst part of my story. I was passing on the edge of a glacier, on an inclined plane of ice, when my foot slipped. ' Oh mon Dieu, je suis perdu,' I cried. I never shall forget my feelings as I felt myself slipping down into a deep abyss of, I suppose, 100 feet, not 3 feet wide at the bottom. I thought that I was leaving the world behind me, when one of the guides in half a minute lashed

himself by a cord and, springing forward at the risk of his life, seized me by the collar, and we were then drawn up. Thus he saved my life. I was then joined by a cord and kept hold of the hand of one of the guides who walked before me. Sometimes we had to descend into vast caverns by the small ladder, large masses of ice impending over our heads—yet it was very beautiful to look into these immense halls lighted up by the rays of the sun, with arches, galleries and pyramids of ice reflecting the most beautiful colour. I now put on my green spectacles and veil, for I began to find the glare very painful. After two hours spent in passing this glacier, we arrived at the foot of some perpendicular rocks called the Grand Mulets, which appeared isolated in the middle of the glacier, like a rock in the midst of the sea about 900 feet high. We employed an hour and a half to ascend, the rocks being very dangerous to ascend from their looseness. Half-way up we discovered Chamonni, where we supposed many eyes were turned towards us. We passed a terrible place by the help of a cord. This was a wall of ice, like a waterfall between two rocks. It was necessary to cut holes with an axe for us to place our feet and hands in—a hardy guide passed first and stretched a cord for us to hold by. We then all followed in succession. When we were more than 400 feet above the glacier we turned to the right and arrived at a little ledge in the rock, where we were to pass the night. It was now past 4. The weather was beautiful, the sun hot, and there were white clouds in the Horizon, which soon began to disperse and scatter themselves far below our feet, opening to us a long extension of France. The line of the Jura and the Lake of Geneva like a little white streak. We were now half-way and it is here that most travellers are contented and return home.

I think it necessary to remark that my two friends had lived in Norway nearly all their lives and were accustomed to climb. Pidwel, the Englishman, had his wife at Chamonni, but was obliged to conceal the danger from her, and it was

with great difficulty that he could leave her. I will now describe what was to be our situation for the night.

There was a little platform about 10 feet long and 4 feet wide, on one side a deep precipice, on the other a perpendicular rock, with a parapet of loose stones on the side of the precipice. On this parapet the guides placed six poles, which rested in a slanting direction against the rock—over these they extended a sheet about 4 feet from the ground. After having made our arrangements for the night, we ate our dinner outside the tent with our legs hanging over the precipice. Our meal consisted of cold mutton, black bread, cheese, no salt, sour wine and brandy. After having dined with a good appetite, we drank some toasts and the guides sang songs, to which the echoes of Mt Blanc responded. The sun set in a most gorgeous crimson tint over the coast of France, was very beautiful. It lasted for about half an hour and then gradually disappeared. We now observed the thermometer. It was 27, in twenty minutes it fell 15 degrees, in ten minutes more it was at 5. I hastened to put on my double clothes, for the cold was piercing. The guides lighted a fire and sang their evening hymns. It was a picturesque sight to see the guides sitting round the fire with their great whiskers and weather-beaten countenances. Being now dark, I crept under the covering and wrapped myself up in a blanket—my companions and four guides doing the same, as the covering only sheltered seven persons. The others slept in different parts on the rock. I was wedged between a guide and my friend Pidwel, without room to turn and only four feet to stretch my legs out. It was half-past eight when we turned in. I did not close my eyes all the night. The roar of the avalanches like thunder, on all sides, prevented me doing so. Everything was quiet as death for 10 minutes—then an avalanche fell which lasted for about a minute. I thought of my home and of everything connected with it. The avalanches mostly fell from the Dome de Gouter, L'Aiguille du Midi and Mont Maudit. All peaks in the

range of Mt Blanc. We lay very quiet thro' the night, and were roused at 2 o'clock by the morning hymn of the guides, who wished us to start as soon as possible as the full moon was shining bright and the heavens were covered with stars. Below us in the valley were clouds and darkness. After we had arranged our baggage and eaten some frozen fowl, which took about three-quarters of an hour, we proceeded, leaving two guides. We descended the Grands Mulets in safety and entered the Glacier de Taconnaz, which was not very dangerous, the snow being hard enough to bear us up. We arrived safely at the Petits Mulets, which appeared to be a wall of snow not more than 70 feet high which took us more than three-quarters of an hour to ascend, being in fact 300 feet high. We passed some dangerous crevices on bridges of snow formed by avalanches, which were here impeded in their progress. When we began to mount this wall, we were all joined together by a cord round our waists. The guide who marched first cut steps in the hard snow with an axe and we all followed in the same steps. We now bade good-bye to crevices and saluted large perpendicular walls of snow and ice. Having passed a small plain called the Petit Plateau, after an hour's laborious climbing we arrived at the Grand Plateau, four hours and a half after we had quitted the Grands Mulets where we had passed the night. It was here we began to feel great fatigue and difficulty of breathing from the rarefaction of the air.

The Grand Plateau is an immense level plain of snow about half a mile long and a quarter broad, surrounded on all sides by formidable mountains of snow. We had hardly reached it when an immense avalanche rolled along the path we had only half an hour before quitted. It was about the size of a large hayrick. Had we been there we should nearly all have perished. Thus I had another lucky escape. After walking about three parts across the plain, we halted with the intention of taking some breakfast. The guides placed their knapsacks on the ground and produced some frozen fowls, frozen wine and frozen bread, all of which seemed delicious,

altho' we could hardly gnaw them—the thermometer being 3 degrees below zero. I had on a good pair of lamb's-wool stockings, two pairs of gaiters, two pairs of cloth trousers, two shirts, two waistcoats, a shooting coat, and over all, a blue woollen smock-frock, a night cap, three handkerchiefs around my neck, three pairs of woollen gloves, a straw hat, from which hung a green hood for my eyes, a pair of green spectacles and a green gauze veil. I suffered from cold in my head and feet, weakness of knees, bleeding at the nose and difficulty of breathing.

After stopping 20 minutes, we proceeded, a little refreshed by our meal. We spoke very little from fear of the avalanches just here, our guide saying that they were likely to fall at the sound of the human voice. When we had reached the end of the Grand Plateau, we came to the foot of an immense hill of snow, 1,000 feet high. It was here that the guides pointed out the place where perished in 1820 three guides of Dr Hamel by the fall of an avalanche. One of the guides named Julien Devonasseur was there at the time, but we were not inclined to ask any questions—so we passed over the crevices where their bodies lie buried and have never since been seen.

It was necessary to ascend this hill in a zig-zag direction, and we were obliged to walk with the greatest precaution, following exactly in each others steps and supporting ourselves on one side by our poles, which had long iron spikes at the bottom of them. I began to feel here a great drowsiness and inclination to sleep, with a parched mouth, which was the case with several of us—and we were obliged to stop every 20 minutes to catch our breath. I drank a mouthful of vinegar every time we stopped, to rouse me (for had I once gone to sleep I should never have awoke again) and was jerked by the cord very often. We sank at every step up to our knees here, for the sun had now arisen.

We arrived safely at a little plain called the Petits Mulets. One of our guides dropped here from fatigue and another was obliged to stay behind to take care of him till our return.

We began to ascend another perpendicular wall of snow, and when we stopped we had to fix our hands and feet into the snow—had either of the party slipped we should all have been rolled headlong together into a chasm on our right hand 500 feet deep. These were awful moments. The hill was 600 feet high, it was like going up a ladder. At length we arrived at another plain at the bottom of our last hill, which was only 300 feet high. The snow was very deceitful here—sometimes bearing us up and sometimes giving way, which made it doubly laborious. After stopping ten minutes here and drinking a little more vinegar and lemon juice, we began to climb to the summit, and after a most fatiguing ascent, stopping every two minutes to catch breath and using our utmost endeavours, we arrived at a quarter-past ten—17 persons on the Summit of Mont Blanc, on Wednesday, the 23rd of August, 1837—eight hours after our departure from the Grands Mulets.

The top is like the back of an ass (when I looked on myself and the rest of the party, I was again reminded of that animal), about 500 feet long and only 30 wide. We all crossed over to the Italian side, which was several degrees warmer than the other and sat down. I wrapped myself up in a blanket and, resting my head on the lap of one of the guides, went to sleep for half an hour. I then arose and taking a guide with me to the centre, I asked him to point out the places within view, whilst I put them down in my note book.

There I was on the highest part of the Alps having all the regions of Europe at my feet. Higher than the wing of the eagle ever soars, taking down notes. I must confess that I thought myself a great man then. The guide pointed out to me Piedmont, all the north of Italy, Monte Viso, the Maritime Alps, the Valley of Jura, to the centre of the Plains of Lombardy and Milan. At the end of this last extent, he pointed out what he said was Venice, like a little spot in the corner of the Adriatic. I saw all the chain of the

Appenines covered with snow, cities here and there, the Tyrolean Alps, the tops of Mounts of Carinthia and Carneola, nearer to me I saw St Gothard and the highest Pyramids of the Genmi, of the Altels, of the Moine, of the Jungfrau, the mountains of the Oberland, the Schrcckhorn, the Wetterhorn, the Eiger, the tops of Mt Rosa, the rival of Mt Blanc, all the chain of which we of course saw, and the Mer de Glace. At our feet was the Great St Bernard and to the right the Little, the Allee Blanche, the Valley of Aosta and Courmayeur ; Chamonni looked like a heap of stones. I saw all the line of the Jura, the Lake of Geneva, a long extent of France, Lyons and the course of the Rhone. I thought I had then seen enough as I was nearly dead with cold. The thermometer of Reaumur being 10 degrees below zero on the Savoy side. On the Italian side it was 5.

We then rejoined the party and drank a bottle of champagne to the health of our Friends in England and after stopping, on the whole, an hour and a quarter, we began to descend, (to give the words which my friend the Swede made use of on the occasion) ' That Mt Blanc, so terrible, so often attacked but so seldom overcome.' When we were all ready to start, the wind rose so suddenly, that away went my hat ' with a bound and a hop ' over the Italian side, and what with a cutting north wind and the thermometer 10 degrees below zero, I nearly lost my senses. I tied five handkerchiefs around my head as quickly as possible, and after taking one more look towards Italy and France, proceeded. The descent is more dangerous than the ascent from the liability to slip down the perpendicular hills of snow. I had a cord round my waist and was held back by two guides, while one took hold of my arm. We arrived at the Rochers Rouge in about one-fourth of the time we had taken to ascend ; for sometimes I sat down on the snow, and the guide placing himself between my legs, we slid down at the rate of 15 miles an hour. We met with a new difficulty. The sun had melted the snow so much that we sank up to our thighs

nearly, particularly at the place where the avalance fell. I descended one hill of snow in five minutes which had taken us an hour to ascend. Still there was much danger from the concealed crevices, but we arrived quite safe at the Grands Mulcts at nearly 3 p.m., three hours and a quarter after our departure from the top. Having been so extremely lucky in everything and the weather being beautiful, we determined to make a grand push for it and try to reach Chammoni that evening, tho' we were exceedingly fatigued, and I had begun to feel the effects of the sun on my head and face, my veil having gone with my hat, and I had reasons to apprehend a coup de soleil. The guides offered me their hats, but they would not fit me, so I did the best I could without one, and after resting an hour in our former sleeping place we began to descend the dangerous rocks of the Grands Mulets to the Glacier des Bossons, the dangers of which I had already spoken of. I thank God we crossed it quite safely at the Pierre d'Echelle. One of the guides began to suffer great pain in his eyes, from the glare of the snow—not having used any precaution in covering them, and this poor man, who has a family, I am sorry to say, lost his sight soon after his arrival at Chamonni, but if he can have proper advice, I believe he may recover it. I was the only person who did not suffer owing to my having taken greater care of my eyes than of any other part of my person.

After resting a quarter of an hour, we began again to descend, and were soon met by a woman and a boy carrying a basket, with milk, honey and bread, to which we did ample justice. I was inclined to rest rather longer than my two friends, for Pidwel had his wife, who of course was very anxious to see him, so they left me three guides and proceeded. In about half an hour I set forward and arrived safely at the bottom of the mountain, where I was met by the English gentlemen and ladies who were staying at Chamonni. The gentlemen shook hands with me, and congratulated me on my safe return, and I took the liberty

of presenting the ladies with some crystals I had collected. The Master of the Inn had in compliment sent his best mule for me to ride to Chamonni. I did not think myself worthy of half the flattery I met with. When I arrived at Chamonni there were I suppose a hundred people assembled to greet me, and tired as I was, I was obliged to shake hands with most of them, being the youngest Englishman who had ever ascended. It was the 17th ascent and the first this year.

On my arrival at the Inn I immediately went to bed, and the next evening set off for St Martin, which place I have mentioned in a former part of my letter. The next day I proceeded by the Diligence to Geneva and arrived at Plongeon at 8 o'clock in the evening. Everybody congratulated me on my safe return and all were eager to hear my adventures, but I was too tired to relate them.

I lost about a quart of blood from my nose that day, and was laid up for nearly a week without being able to move my limbs. I lost also the whole of the skin of my face, which caused me much pain, but I am happy to say that I am now perfectly recovered and have begun my studies again. Since my return I have received an address from the Cyndic of the Council of Sardinia, with the Royal Signature, and attested on oath that I had reached the Top of Mt Blanc, **but** it is expressed in too flattering terms. My expedition cost me 480 francs.

I would wish you to read the account of the ascents of Mt Blanc, of which there are two or three published, and you will then see better the difficulties I have overcome.

Our fame has been spread by the newspapers and has reached Hanover. I thought of your rock-work in **the** plantation and have saved a bit of granite to contribute towards it.

A little dog accompanied us the whole way, the first that has ever been to the Top.

Y.A.B.

H. M. Atkins.

MONTENVERS —A FIRST VISIT

R. M. Lupton

The rock-climber tolerably experienced in British climbing tends to stress the differences in Alpine climbing practice in his first season as the contrasts are then more striking.

In the present case a guide was engaged for the first five days of the fortnight, and it was natural therefore that we should observe closely his methods and generalize somewhat sweepingly from them.

First his pack : it was large and well filled, rarely removed even for leading the harder pitches. This argued that he must be strong and have good balance. Secondly his belays : brought up on sound Fell and Rock lines we were horrified to find that he never tied on, and rarely took in the rope over his shoulder, even at those few passages which were climbed pitch by pitch. If help was needed by those below he was capable of giving it from his free stance by arm strength alone. On one climb (the Mummery—Ravanel) he used ringspikes (pitons) and snapring (mousqueton) for belaying purposes—where, incidentally, the leaders of the following parties were able to find adequate thread belays—but he pointed out that the belays were merely theoretical, as the ringspikes would infallibly pull out and then—' Psste ! ' He was, however, careful to pass the rope behind projecting spikes to form a running belay, the more necessary as he did not give the second man time to pay out his rope. When his own party used a rock belay in a descent, he threw the rope off and urged us on. Time, he said, would not permit of such luxuries.

In nail technique he was certainly inferior to several of the English party. On more than one occasion he used an arm-pull with feet merely scratting the rocks, where it was quite possible to keep a nail steady against the roughness of

its texture—this is doubtless what was meant by the ' discolorations of the rock ' of which the left foot makes use in the ascent of the Mummery Crack on the Grepon. Thus he seemed to be making heavy work of some pitches, and when he referred to a climb as ' tres delicat,' it was at very rare points that the holds were really small.

At the rappel he was superb, and despite the practice we shall put in on the Needle and elsewhere, it will be a long time before we can dance down the rocks with equal ease and grace. We felt, in fact, that it would be a long time before we got the grooves out of our thighs.

In ice and snow work he was infinitely our superior. This was the more marked because our experience, practically limited to a Great End Gully, was hardly extensive. However, some improvement had been made by the end of our stay.

One other point as to the guide struck us as remarkable—that although he had frequently guided English parties, including members of ' Fell and Rock,' he knew only two English phrases, ' Come on,' and ' Left.' Is this evidence of the linguistic ability of his previous English clients as contrasted with ours ?—for we adopted the expression ' La Caravane Anglaise ' to save the trouble of giving our various room-numbers at the hotel. None of these remarks is intended to be a criticism of our guide's ability : he was safe, quick, cheerful and resourceful, and he kept an eye on all the parties ; even after he had left us for another engagement he was always ready to discuss our projected expeditions and give us advice.

On the merits of guideless climbing, it is even more difficult to discourse than on the subjects already mentioned ; **but** the five days guided, compared with the ascents made without a guide, point to the following conclusions.

The chief advantage of having a guide is the time saved by going direct to the foot of the climb, or finding at once the quickest way down. This was more noticeable in the snow and ice work, where lack of experience made us travel

slowly and with every precaution where a guide would have sent us down at break-neck speed. The latter was just what we were trying to avoid. On the other hand there is a thrill in being at the top of a couloir in the mist at 6 p.m. and not knowing whether it will take three hours or ten minutes to find a recognisable track on the glacier below. Such an occasion serves to point the warning that the unavoidable dangers are more insistent in the Alps than at home—those arising, for instance, from change of weather or falling stones. To send down a loose stone is a heinous crime on our fells. In the Alps Nature herself is prodigal in this respect, which may be the reason why such an offence at the hands (or feet) of a climber seems to be more lightly regarded. Our ascent of the rotten Aiguille de Gouter Ridge consisted largely of cowering ostrich-like against the rocks, and bestowing on the incompetent party ahead epithets which would have enriched their vocabulary, had they been able to understand. They shared with us the Refuge, so filthy that we christened it the ' refuse,' and the following day we repaid them by leading them back when they had got hopelessly lost in the mist.

Several other aspects of Alpine mountaineering besides the technique of the guide left their impression. The fitful sleep at the huts, their lack of ventilation, the difficulty of early rising, the welcome sound of thunder or rain in the small hours have often figured in Alpine literature. Most of us slept like logs at the huts, and were up at 4 a.m. with much greater alacrity than at home. Only once—after the first day—did we welcome the 2 a.m. thunderstorm. Even that morning seemed better at 6, when we were able to get up and make a late start for our original objective.

The second breakfast provided no difficulties of mastication, except on one occasion when the cold wind on Mt Blanc prevented our stopping to eat from 5 a.m. till 1, and then the bread crumbled to dust and our water-bottles were frozen at the neck in our sacks.

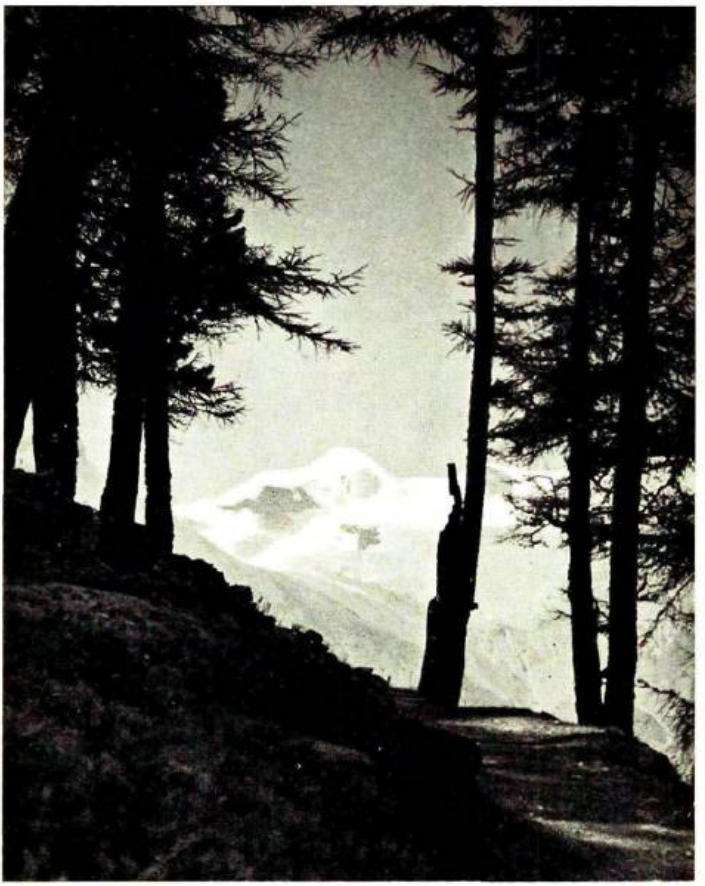
The mention of water-bottles brings home one of the deficiencies of the Alps, as compared with our own fells, where on all the major rock faces water can be found at convenient points, even when it is not being poured by a generous Providence on the thirsty climber. In the Alps one must carry one's own supply of liquid, and on the first climb or two it is certainly needed. The favourite beverage seems to be cold tea, unsweetened and milkless, which has, at least, this advantage, that you do not over-indulge. When we grew wiser we carried water and a squeeze of lemon ; and even an aluminium water-bottle can be laced.

We had been told that distances were deceptive and found that we got on pretty well if we estimated according to Cumberland standards and then multiplied by three. Shortness of breath, especially at first, was also expected, but what we did not anticipate was that after 15 hours' going we should be at least as fresh as after an ordinary day's climbing on Scafell or Pillar. The faithful ice-axe came in for considerable objurgation when it had to be carried for any distance on ' easy ' rock. Gone were the days of leisurely climbing, a smoke at this belay and a snap at that. The photographer hardly dared to drop his coils of rope and ice-axe and open his camera, much less attempt to arrange his moveable foreground. Perhaps the strongest impression was the need for getting on, and that there was some truth in accounts of those Alpinists who ' galloped,' ' cantered,' or ' plunged ' up or down the hills.

Even to one who climbs without pause it is clear that bird-life in the Alps is rare. The cheery wheatear, the kestrel, the buzzard, the jackdaw, the carrion crow and the raven, most of which are seen nearly every day on the Lakeland Fells are all absent. The only bird which was at all common was the chough, whose thin squeak seemed incongruous among the huge crags which it haunts. Plant-life, however, is prolific on the lower levels, but this we expected, being familiar with it from many an illustration in Alpine literature.

We had read that the view from Mt Blanc is disappointing because its height has the effect of flattening the surrounding country, but we did not find it so. It was a pity that the cold would not let us stay long to study it, but the view itself was magnificent, consisting, as it did, of billowing clouds far below, with every mountain peak (it seemed) for fifty miles around standing boldly out, and here and there a gap revealing an incredibly green valley or silver stream. Then there was often the sight of the dawn, which one so rarely sees on the fells, with all its colours made richer by a foreground of snow ; or the sunset repeating itself in fresh glory on the mountains long after darkness has come over the valleys. Perhaps the range of colours in Lakeland is wider, and the view more comforting to the soul, but even ' On High Hills ' had not prepared us sufficiently for the splendour and brilliance of the Alpine scene.

(The party of twelve climbed the Petit Charmoz, Grepon, Mummery - Ravanel, EvSque, Grand Charmoz, Blaitiere, Peigne, Aiguille de I'M., Pic Albert, Moine, Dent du Requin between August 9th and 20th.)



L. S. Coxon

PATH TO
WEISSMIES HUT

A HOLIDAY IN THE CARPATHIANS

George Anderson

A lecture delivered at the Alpine Club by T. Howard Somervell, best known for his exploits on Mount Everest, was what determined me to pay a visit to the Vysoke Tatry (High Tatras) if I could find two others to accompany me.

Fortunately, the first two I put the proposition to needed no persuasion for they, too, had heard Somervell lecture upon these mountains, so the transition from a subconscious to an active desire to see them for themselves was easily effected.

Consequently, the evening of July 31st found us seated in the Hook-of-Holland boat train bound for our holiday base, bearing, to English ears, the somewhat curious sounding name of Strbske Pleso, though not at all curious as Czech and Slovak place names in general go : doubtless a few other curious sounding names will fall to be mentioned in the course of the remarks which follow.

At this point, one has to consider whether to make any allusion to the journey thence : to preface a description of a holiday in, say, the Oberland, by a description of the journey to Zermatt or Grindelwald would certainly produce a shower of brickbats.

Considering, however, that the High Tatras have not as yet attracted a very large stream of British climbers but are likely to attract in the not very distant future a growing number of people desiring a change from the Swiss, French and Austrian Alps, I feel that no apology is needed for being a trifle informative concerning the journey thence.

The time taken by us was exactly three days, travelling in such leisurely fashion as to make the journey pleasurable, as travelling otherwise would certainly not have been, i.e., we travelled by day only, except on the night of crossing to the Hook-of-Holland.

We slept one night at Dresden and another at Prague—both interesting and beautiful cities—and in this way extracted out of our longish journey an amount of pleasure and interest which left us ungrudging of the time spent on the way out.

Nabobs desiring to curtail the journey and willing to pay an extra ^12 can do so by taking a short air flight to Amsterdam and another of five hours to Prague, the journey thence to Strba (the rail-head for Strbske Pleso) being one of eleven hours by train.

For ourselves, we travelled by boat and train at an entire cost for fares only, of £14, second class all the way.

The more direct, though less picturesque route, is via Berlin, which we avoided on the outward journey owing to the Olympic Games : this route takes one through Central Germany, which, from a scenic point of view, may be described as decidedly dull until one enters Bohemia, which became under the Treaty of Versailles a province of the new republic of Czechoslovakia.

The territorial changes brought about by the defeat of the Central Powers in the Great War is certainly brought home to anyone visiting this part of Europe and, doubtless, modern history and geography books teach every schoolboy what those changes were.

For myself, my ignorance was so abysmal that, prior to that holiday, I was not completely aware that this new European Independent State was fashioned out of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia and Sub-Carpathian Russia, at the expense, mostly, of Austria and Hungary.

As a result of the Peace Treaty, one town (Bohumin) which we passed on the way out has the unenviable distinction of straddling athwart three frontiers, and whether the inhabitants live in peace and amity, or like so many Kilkenny cats with their tails tied together, I cannot say.

The High Tatras constitute the loftiest group of what is known as the Carpathian Mountains which form part of the

frontier line between Poland and Czechoslovakia, the Tatras constituting, on their southern slopes, the national park of the latter country.

Their kernel is formed of granite with younger furrows and coverings transposed ; the outstanding characteristic of the group lies in the astonishing number of sharp ridges extending from the backbone northwards into Poland and southwards into Czech territory.

This accounts in turn for the number of valleys unequalled in any other mountain range in Europe within a similar area, and the same may be said of the number of lochs and tarns within the same area : the number are, indeed, said to exceed 100 throughout the High Tatras.

Another feature calling for special mention is the abruptness with which these mountains rise out of the plain on the south side.

Save for a curious, forest-clad shelf which skirts their southern base, they rise into the heavens without any preliminary foot-hills and present a striking picture of wild grandeur and ruggedness. The sudden uprising of these mountains as seen from the plain conveys an impression of loftiness which their 7,500 to 8,500 foot summits do not justify, considering that the plain itself is here over 2,000 feet above sea level.

At closer quarters, the Tatras, by the rugged grandeur of the rock scenery and fiercely serrated ridges and innumerable gendarmes springing from them, somewhat resemble, though on a large scale, the Coolin, in Skye.

Not being provided with the necessary visas for entry into Poland, we did not visit the Polish side, but it is evident from the maps that the mountains do not rise so abruptly on that side.

And, a-propos of maps, Polish ones seem much superior to Czech : one I looked at in the possession of a Polish climber seemed in every way as good as the Siegfried maps which every Alpinist knows so well. All the names are of course in

Polish, but this should make no difference to those who know neither Polish nor Czech.

As regards the bewildering array of ridges and branch ridges, it should be mentioned that these are mainly rock, and not grass ridges, and from this it will be apparent that their sides are precipitous.

Specially remarkable is the number of rock pinnacles one sees on rock faces : from one dolina, or valley (the Velica), I counted a whole cluster, eight or ten in number, all of them looking pretty severe propositions.

As I stood trying to count the number in this particular bunch between passing drifts of swirling mist, I could not help bethinking me of that pet ewe-lamb, the Napes Needle on Gable Crag so dear to the heart of every Lakeland climber, and how much of the petting and coddling it receives, would have to be shared with a good many score others if it ' lived ' in the Tatras instead of Cumberland.

Our holiday base was at Strbske Pleso, which is reached from the railway station at Strba by motor bus in summer and by funicular railway during the winter sports season, and stands on the aforementioned forest-covered shelf at an altitude of over 4,000 feet, and some 1,200-1,500 feet above the plain.

Strbske Pleso is neither town, village or hamlet, but simply an agreeable mountain holiday pleasance consisting of two principal hotels, State owned, and adjoining shop premises catering for the needs of the holiday maker even to the extent of a beauty parlour ; the whole forming an imposing range of modern buildings built upon a terrace overlooking, on the one side, the great plain and the mountains beyond and, on the other, a pine-enclosed lake in the immediate foreground, with the mountains of the Vysoke Tatry filling up the background very impressively.

What department of State owns and runs these hotels, I do not know, but one supposes it would be an appropriate function for a Ministry of the Interior.

Here, too, is the western terminus of the electric tramway which extends along the shelf or plateau referred to and links up the numerous spas and sanatoria which abound along this supposedly health-giving forest-clad region and, still more important to the mountaineer, enables him to keep in touch with his base and provides him with an easy means of return to it no matter where he descends from the mountains on their south side.

From the climbers' point of view, the only thing to be said against Strbske Pleso is that it is a trifle too civilised and luxurious. However, we spent the first five days there exploring the neighbouring valleys for training purposes and spending one off day by visiting the wonderful Dobsina Ice Caves situated on the slopes of the Nizke Tatry mountains, passing through, on the way, a very interesting Slovak village.

That these heavily-wooded mountains provided places of hiding, so it is said, for the people of the plain during the days of Tartar raids, can well be understood, and the fact that these caves were not discovered until as recently as 1870 is some evidence of this probability.

We were a trifle incredulous regarding the ice, thinking it would prove to be simply stalactite, but our doubts were soon dispelled by the sudden drop in temperature as we entered and began to descend into their icy depths.

The phenomenon is attributable to the caves being situated at an altitude of 3,000 feet, thus enabling the cold air within to exclude the warmer air without.

The ice is formed from the water which percolates through the limestone mountain and the floor of ice is said to be over 100 metres thick, whilst the weirdest kinds of ice formations ' grow ' from the ice floor and depend from the roofs, including a frozen ' waterfall.' Emerging suddenly from these subterranean regions, cold and shivering, into the warm air of a summer day, is something of an anti-climax calculated to produce a feeling of lassitude.

Full of zeal we set off next morning and climbed, or rather made the ascent of, Krivan (8,200 feet), for it is simply a grind, albeit a laborious one, up a steep and quite ungraded rocky track till within 500 feet of the summit, and even then, it is no more than an incipient scramble which one might chivvy any youngster up on his first ascent.

But, once up, one is on the summit of a real mountain, i.e. a mountain culminating in a peak and possessing an individuality and identity all its own. This mountain is the most easterly of the entire group composing the High Tatras and the one nearest to Strbske Pleso over 8,000 feet.

Next morning we packed up and, leaving our respectables and the flesh pots of Strbske Pleso behind us, we set off for the Propanske Pleso hut, carrying fairly substantial loads of spare clothing and other paraphernalia.

This hut is embosomed amongst the mountains and is lapped by a substantial lake well stocked with plenty of small, sweet trout which constituted a suitable diet for one of the party—to wit, myself—then afflicted with one of the minor damnabilities of this life, indigestion, and a major one at that particular time in that it put strenuous climbing, or climbing of any sort, out of court.

Some of the huts on the south side of the Tatras originally belonged to, and were used as shooting boxes by, the Imperial House in the hey-day of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and however one may regret the passing of that picturesque monarchy, one does thoroughly approve of the better use to which these ex-shooting boxes are now put.

No doubt the quarry hunted from these royal boxes was the chamois, of which we seldom failed to see numbers when one stopped to look for them in the sort of places where anyone with Alpine knowledge would expect to find them.

And, whilst on the subject of the fauna of the Tatras, the marmot seemed also to be plentiful, but we saw no bears, wolves or hyenas, said to be not yet quite extinct in those parts : one of our party saw a bison—so he said—but if it

be added that he saw it from the train, dragging a plough, the statement will be robbed of all excitement. As to the Tatras being the possible haunt of wolves, we made no enquiry, but judging by a horrible tragedy which occurred only two years ago at the eastern end of the country when seven children were torn to pieces on their way home from school, it is possible there might be some risk to the solitary wanderer after dark, suggesting the handiness of an ice-axe for other than its legitimate use. The almost impenetrable cover for such pests as may lurk about the slopes of these mountains is certainly such as would make their extermination a most difficult task.

This particular hut—the Propanske Pleso—can sleep no less than 150 people, at any rate there are beds for that number, which is perhaps not the same thing having regard to the somewhat close and friendly adjacency in which they are ranged.

For a trifle extra, one can procure a separate room with several beds but precious little else : doubtless the honey-moon couple, in honour of whose arrival and by a pretty gesture, a table for them in the salle was gaily decorated with wild flowers, found seclusion in one of those apart rooms.

We were rather favourably impressed by the crowd both of Czech and Polish climbers, of both sexes, which occupied the hut over that week-end, and judging by the whisperings and side glances in our direction, we judged that we Britishers were being regarded with as much curiosity as if we had come from another planet.

Next day, we set out for the ascent of Rysy (8,200), my two friends going all the way to the summit to be cheated by mist of a view into Poland and getting, instead, chilly blasts and snow showers—in which time I lazed lower down the slope of the mountain in blazing sunshine well into the afternoon.

Considering that the Tatras have not too good a reputation for fine weather in July and August, we must have been

lucky in that we got, next day, our only wetting during this holiday, in the course of an excursion to the Koprovsky Sedlo, or Pass.

Mists, mostly dry, could be depended upon to come down and sit upon the tops most afternoons, though not with quite the same clock-like regularity as in the Island of Madeira where the clouds descend upon the volcanic mountains in that island after midday with such time precision that one can almost tell the time of day by them.

Our next objective was the Sliezsky dom hut situated further east at about 5,500 feet altitude, and as this meant tackling from the start the zig-zags leading up to the Osterva Pass, I felt in no mood immediately after breakfast to carry my load up if I could find anyone to act as porter. My friends went on ahead to tackle the job whilst I waited, and eventually contracted for the job for a payment of 20 crowns.

Stepping jauntily up on to the summit of the Pass, what time my two friends were found sitting there trying to recover their breath from the ordeal of the zig-zags, I was cruel enough to remark that if I had known the zig-zags would prove such a baggatelle I would have carried my own load, to which remark a look of pained surprise and the stoniest of stony glowers were the only response, and I judged from this that my 20 crowns had probably been well earned.

From this Pass, a magnificent view of the Tatra range on the one hand, and of the great plain and mountains beyond on the other, is obtained. We had been on this Pass several days previously when we sighted our base hotel at Strbske Pleso, barely three miles distant, and wanted to bee-line down the mountain towards it.

Nothing doing, however, for although the mountain on that side was unbroken by rocks and could, for steepness, simply have been walked down, we could find no track leading that way and had to follow one leading to Vysne Hagy, at which place we were further from our objective than when we left the top of the Pass.

That this was inevitable is explained by the fact that there grows on the slopes of the Tatras a coniferous scrub which deserves the name of ' Public Enemy No. 1 ' to all mountain wanderers in those parts, since it effectively prevents, almost everywhere, the making of bee-line ascents or descents below the line of vegetation, which extends to about the 6,000 feet contour line.

Between that line and the forest belt, this scrub, known by its proper name of ' Pinus Mughus,' grows in the utmost profusion and density and forms an impenetrable barrier against passage through it except by such tracks as are available, and upon such tracks one walks at many places as much under as through it. So dense is its growth that when the winter snows come, the snow lies upon it like a thick blanket, when it can then be traversed on skis.

It can be said in favour of this scrubby growth that, for those who do not wish to go above 6,000 feet, it keeps people from getting lost in the mist for, up to that level, one cannot roam at will simply because one cannot get away from the tracks even if one wished ; on the other hand, such conditions do not provide much opportunity for acquiring mountain sense on the part of the inexperienced.

Returning to the Osterva Pass, a bitterly cold wind proved wonderfully potent in hastening the recuperation of my friends from their exertions, and we were soon heading along the high-level route which contours along the mountain sides, sometimes above the scrub, sometimes through and under it, and the going was decidedly rough although the large scree had been levelled after a fashion into something of a track resembling a rough causeway.

In the Alps one enjoys intervals of relief and variety, first on the grassy alps below and on snow and glaciers higher up ; not so in the Tatras where there are no alps in the Swiss sense, little or no snow in summer, and no glaciers.

The going on the slopes of the Tatras is consequently of a rough order and the scree is so large that, making an ascent

through it on the way to a climb would absorb much of the reserve required for the climb. I have certainly never found the ironmongery in my boots so much worn as after this holiday.

From the Propanske Pleso to the Sliezsky dom hut took us 5! hours steady going, and the din which met our ears before we entered the latter was suggestive of nothing so much as a Donnybrook Fair going on inside. In the half light, it was impossible to tell whether there was a free fight going on or what was the reason for such pandemonium ; it all came from a biggish company of cheery, hearty girls engaged, one must suppose, in ordinary conversation, but ' ordinary ' only in the sense of the din starlings raise before going to roost.

They were, obviously, not climbers and were dressed as for what might have been a national celebration of navy-week, with their sailor-like rig-outs, but this theory was difficult to square with the fact that Czechoslovakia possesses no navy. However, they turned out to be a group of girls on holiday tour in charge of matrons or mistresses from a high school in Poland and come to enjoy as one of their holiday experiences that of spending a night in a mountain hut. They were certainly a bunch of bonny lasses confirming the reputation of Poland for its beautiful women.

Next day we ascended to the Polsky hrebna ridge which proved a most interesting day, the rock scenery being superb on all sides : on the left the stark, forbidding face of Gerlach (8,700 feet) reminding one a little of the Great Scheidegg face of the Wetterhorn, and on the right a bewildering array of rock pinnacles, corries and rock faces plentifully seared with gullies and chimneys, the whole constituting a veritable rock-climber's dream of heaven.

On the face of Gerlach a continuous snow gully extended as far towards the summit as the eye could reach, and this gulley had at its base one of the biggest stone dumps I have ever seen ; this, together with the well-marked groovings

in the snow or ice embedded in the gulley, was proof enough that—like most snow gulleys—it was no health resort as a climbing route up Gerlach.

We continued our ascent to the Pass where we got a view of the country beyond and into a loch immediately below with numerous ice floes floating upon it. When we returned to the hut in the evening the ' flappers ' had gone and peace reigned.

As no subsidiary debouched from this fine valley, we did not remain a third night at the Slievsky dom hut but started off next morning, continuing our traverse eastwards along the high-level route, it being our intention to make the ascent of the Slavovsky stit, or peak (8,000 feet) en route.

Just as there are the Matterhorn and Finsteraarhorn and a score or two other ' Horns ' in Switzerland, and Bens by the hundred in Scotland, so, in the Tatras, there are numerous ' Stits.'

At the point where we had to break from the route leading to Hrebrienok and make for our summit, we dumped **our** loads, though not before fishing out of our rucksacks the day's rations which, on this particular day, included three glorious portions of succulent roast goose, the drumstick of my portion of which I continued to suck some nourishment from at odd intervals in the course of what proved an unusually toilsome ascent.

Mist unfortunately obscured all views and I, at any rate, felt that our five hours effort did not provide the reward commensurate with the output of energy. Our arrival at Hrebrienok, tired and weary, signalled our return to civilisation and the comforts of warm water, baths and such other luxuries as too soon tend to undermine the spirit of true vagabondage.

Anyway, I lazed next day while my tiger companions, still thirsting for more blood, went off to explore the Studena dolina whilst I went down (by cableway) to wallow in the fleshpots of Stary Smokovec, the whole layout of this

charming holiday resort being quite pleasing : flowers bordering the streets everywhere and along the balconies of the hotels and sanatoria, geraniums growing in the utmost profusion.

Next day provided us with our last outing in the shape of a walk up to the Ufalfa hut. The view from our hotel at Hrebrienok up the main and subsidiary valleys was one of true mountain grandeur : a scene of jagged peaks rearing their heads as if to the very heavens and giving an impression of height which their true altitude, according to Alpine standards, do not, somehow, justify.

A return to our base at Strbske Pleso to collect our kit, and a return journey via Berlin, where we spent two days sight-seeing and sampling the good German beer in the Unter den Linden, etc., completed our three weeks holiday.

It only remains to be added that we found the Czechs a friendly people even though we could not converse with them in their own language. It is an invariable custom in Scotland to comfort friends setting out nervously upon a foreign journey by telling them that if they have ' a good Scotch tongue in their head ' they cannot go far wrong. It must be said by way of warning so far as concerns a visit to the more remote parts of Czechoslovakia that neither a good Scotch tongue, nor an English one for that matter, would carry one very far. A little German, however, will carry one along quite well whether in that country or Poland : I have none, myself, but I saw to that detail in the choice of my holiday companions, or one of them.

I did, however, take the precaution before I started and in case of separation from my friends, to learn up the equivalent in Czech for beer and other such items of diet necessary for bodily sustenance.

A waiter, proud in the possession of a few English words, discussing an evening meal with us, suggested we should have with our principal dish what, to our ears, sounded like a ' pot-O-tea,' but having already had tea, we stoutly resisted

his apparent attempts to foist tea upon us for dinner until we discovered that what he meant was potato.

Those contemplating a holiday in this mountain region will do well to provide themselves with a Polish visa, acquiring thus the liberty to cross into Polish territory at will.

Thus provided, and with not less than three weeks holiday, one could do the entire circuit of the Tatras in more or less leisurely fashion and, by dependence, solely upon the huts for food and shelter—the food being good, plain and wholesome, as the school prospectuses say—one could, apart from the fairly costly journey, spend a very economical holiday in this interesting region.

THE LÖTSCHENTHAL

F. J. Monkhouse

From the Beich Pass, a high notch on the southern wall of the valley, we saw the Lötschenthal for the first time.

We had come from Belalp, over the stony wastes of a more than usually untidy moraine. For two hours we had threaded a tortuous path among the boulders and glacier-tables on the dirty surface of the Ober Aletsch Glacier. After zig-zagging leisurely up the smooth white slopes, which later in the season would doubtless present icy intricacies, we trod warily forward to ascertain the dimensions of the probable cornice. It proved to be a large one, so we adjourned to a neighbouring sunny rock, one of the shattered outcrops of the Beich Grat, and surveyed the valley below.

Somehow a pass may thrill even more than a summit : the latter is often a climax, but the former holds promise of something new and different. And it is a truism that the joys of mountaineering are largely due to contrasts ; not the least of these is the change from the harsh monotony above the snow-line, to the soft shades of vegetation. Behind us was the great Aletsch glacier system ; before us, in restful contrast, the light greens of the valley pastures and the darker patches of conifers ; above them, the snows and an intensely blue sky.

From our sunny belvedere we were able to get a good general idea of the configuration of the valley. It is steep-sided and ' U ' shaped, typically glacial, forming a re-entrant into the complex Oberland peaks and glacier systems. Its direction is approximately north-east to south-west, from the Lotschenliicke at its head to the narrow gorge-like exit into the Rhone valley.

The Lötschenliicke is a beautifully symmetrical white col, between the Anengrat and the Sattelhorn-Aletschhorn ridge. To the north-east of this col smooth snow-fields stretch

away to the Concordia and beyond, while in the other direction the Lange Glacier pushes its tongue into the Lötschenthal, where it merges imperceptibly into dead ice, moraine and pasture. From it the turbid torrent of the Lonza rushes down the valley to join the pale-green Rhône as it slides between the poplars on its way to the Lake of Geneva.

The green slopes opposite swell upwards into the long smooth snow-hump of the Petersgrat. Beyond it are the Tschingelhorn, the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn and several other peaks which we hoped to climb, and further away the black south wall of the Blümlisalp range. The other containing wall of the valley, on a point of which we were standing, consists of a long ridge at an average height of ten thousand feet. Numerous prominent serrations often provide difficult rock climbs. The outstanding features of the range are the three twelve thousand foot peaks, the Bietschhorn, the Breitlauihorn, and the Lötschenthaler Breithorn.

After lunching upon a rock out of the wind and in the sun, we began the descent into the valley. The first part was a winding scree-path through easy broken rocks. Then we glissaded down a long series of interconnected snow-slopes to the lateral moraine of the small Distel glacier, under the steep avalanche-scoured walls of the Lonzahörner. This moraine was rough, but starred with a profusion of vividly coloured flowers. Lower down we struck a winding path, and strolled down the valley over the soft turf, whereon grazed hundreds of friendly cows. There were several pathetic little hamlets of half-ruined huts, devastated annually by the avalances which sweep unrestricted down the featureless valley slopes. The transmigratory peasants, following the receding snow line in early summer, salvage the valuable slates, pile together a few timbers, and make a summer dwelling of sorts. Because of avalanches the valley is not permanently inhabited above Blatten, and for the same

reason the lower part of the valley, where the mountains converge somewhat to form a wide gorge, is often blocked in winter, and the Lœtschenthal cut off from the outside world.

On a little rocky outcrop in the valley bottom, protected by a natural avalanche-break of dense firs, is the Fafleralp Hotel. It is a large picturesque wooden structure, with all the luxury of a high-class hotel, although it is several miles from a motor-road. It was our centre for the next ten days and proved to be an admirable one in every way.

Although we arrived and departed by the mountains, Fafleralp is quite accessible to the climber arriving by train. The Lœtschberg-Simplon route to Italy affords quick access from Paris or Ostend to Goppenstein, a little station near the foot of the valley. But its unsophisticated and uncommercialised charm is not destroyed, as one might expect, by proximity to a great trans-continental railway. There are no motor-roads, no cars, no petrol fumes. A rough road of sorts enables small carts to reach Kippel, but beyond this little village one must walk, or ride more or less ignominiously on mule back. But few will regard the walk up the valley as other than pleasure, except when it is very hot. Mules come from Fafleralp once a day to Goppenstein, and convey luggage to the hotel.

The luggage problems of the climber coming over the mountains are solved by the cheapness and efficiency of the Swiss postes. Even a trunk may be posted at a very low rate. One of our party sent a heavy rucksack from Belalp to Fafleralp, involving transport by mule, post-auto, train, diligence and mule, all for one franc.

Even the climber concerned mainly with the heights will enjoy an off-day's stroll down the valley, past ornate and well-kept wayside shrines and picturesque little villages. Kippel, Ried, Ferden and Blatten are the largest. There he can see something of unspoilt Swiss rural life, where many of the old manners and customs still prevail. The houses are

large wooden châlets, often of great age. They have be-flowered balconies and heavily-beamed roofs with enormous overhanging eaves, giving the narrow unpaved streets a quaint mediaeval aspect. The wood-work is often ornately carved, especially with scroll-like mottoes and blessings upon the house.

Agriculture is small-scale, individual and patient, and typical of the simple economy of an upland valley, where each family must be almost wholly self-sufficing. The women, who have to work tremendously hard and seem as a result to age prematurely, can be seen bending over a few square yards of corn or potatoes, or grinding cereals in a little wooden hand-mill, or beating washing in a stream with stones. Clustered on the alpine shoulders or high up on the slopes are numerous little groups of huts. Tiny patches of meadow are scythed, and the man carries in the hay—a gigantic bundle—on his back. And high up on the Alp cows and goats graze, tended by a leisurely small boy, and gradually work their way down to the valley as autumn approaches.

But fascinating as the valley and its occupants are, it is the mountain rim which is the climber's chief attraction. One of the best features of Fafleralp is that there are several huts pleasantly accessible within a few hours. Each one is a good sub-centre for several climbs.

Our first expedition was the Bietschhorn, which we climbed from the hut of the same name. We left Fafleralp somewhat languidly after lunch in oppressive heat, and walked down the valley to Blatten. Here we struck the path winding through shady fresh-smelling pines, above which we zig-zagged up steep grass slopes dotted with parti-coloured goats, and crossed the foaming little Nestbach. We thankfully reached the hut, in a welter of perspiration, after two hours steady slogging.

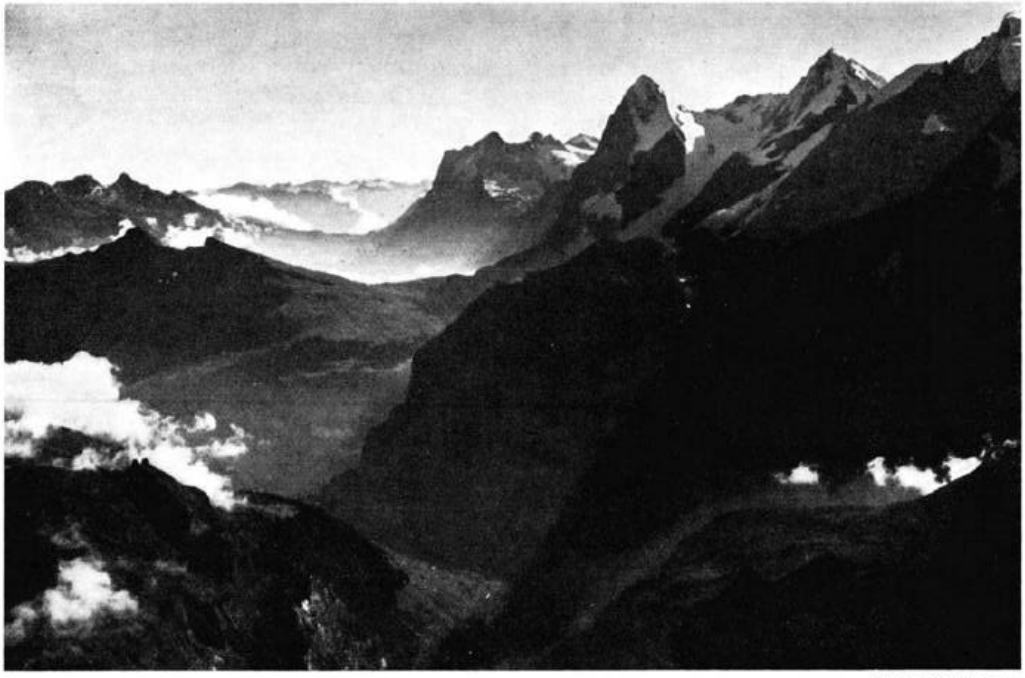
In spite of an ominously streaky sunset, we were up at 2 a.m. the following morning, and left an hour later. The

valleys were filled with cloud but the summits were clear, and palely lit by moonlight. We set off up the steep wall of the Schafberg behind the hut. It consisted of broken up ribs of rock and hard-frozen snow patches, which necessitated a fair amount of care in the dusk. The surface of the Bietsch Glacier was reached after about seventy minutes' climbing and we paused for a few moments in the cold dawn wind. The Pennine peaks were sharply silhouetted in a ragged rift of yellow light. Our confidence in the weather was rapidly waning.

We walked across the hard frozen snow, down a little ice slope to the Bietschjoch and reached the scree slope at the foot of the western ridge. Once on the ridge the climbing was interesting, with especially fine bits of steep sound arête. Occasionally we traversed across frozen snow-filled couloirs on the south face, to avoid some prominent gendarme, rejoining the ridge higher up. Near the summit the rock-ridge became increasingly steep and narrow, and not always sound, and an icy wind necessitated Balaclavas. At 6.50 a.m. we crossed the last knife-edge to the higher summit (12,970 feet), whipped by ice-particles in the wind, which made us begin the descent without a pause. We had hoped to traverse the mountain and descend the fine looking ice-ridge to the Baltschiederjoch, but as the weather seemed to be getting steadily worse we reluctantly returned with all speed by the route of our ascent.

At 9 a.m. we breakfasted just above the Bietschjoch and at 10.30 were back at the hut. Then, of course, the weather suddenly became brilliantly hot, and the descent to the valley was stifling. Heat, dust and blisters produced temporary depression, but beer and bed restored us.

Our next expedition was to the opposite side of the valley. We left in the still heat of a Sunday morning for the Mutthorn Hut. The path wound up the deep recesses of the Ausser Faflerthal, a deeply-incised little lateral valley, wherein lay deep snow patches in permanent shadow. We



MORNING LIGHTS OVER LAUTER-BRUNNEN

B. G. R. Holloway

plodded up the crisp snow-slopes, down which a few days later we were to glissade joyfully and speedily, and over the Petersgrat on to the wide expanse of the Kanderfirn.

The Mutthorn Hut is a commodious structure on the rocks of the south-east ridge of the Mutthorn, a little peak protruding from the snow-fields. The hut is the half-way house on the glacier route between Lauterbrunnen and Kandersteg, and as a result is usually crowded. There were over sixty people that week-end. That night we saw the Alpine glow on the Roththal face of the Jungfrau.

From this hut there are several fine expeditions. These include the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn by the west ridge from the Wetterliicke, the Morgenhorn and other Bliimlisalp peaks from the Gamchiliicke, the Tschingelhorn, and the Gspaltenhorn. Unfortunately a short spell of bad weather and shortness of time prevented us from accomplishing all our plans. One day was spent in an abortive attempt to climb the Tschingelhorn by the unclimbed and unpleasant north-east wall. But one of our best days was the ascent of the Gspaltenhorn.

We left the hut at 3.30 a.m. It was a wonderful morning, cold and clear, with a brilliant moon shining on the snow-world. Silhouetted blackly against its radiance were the familiar profiles of the Jungfrau triumvirate. We crossed first the Tschingel Pass, between the Mutthorn and the Morgenhorn, our boots crunching musically on the satiny snow, then the Gamchiliicke, between the latter and the Gspaltenhorn. There we paused and watched the glories of a perfect sunrise. At length we regretfully descended three thousand feet down the Kienthal. We walked past the new Gspaltenhorn Hut, which was in process of construction, and up a lengthy frozen scree-slope to the Biittlassenliicke. Here again contrast. From the weary monotony of treading painfully for nearly two hours on the edge of one's boot on frozen minute scree, we emerged into brilliant sunlight. We gazed from the col over the Lauterbrunnen and Grindel-

wald valleys, dominated by the imposing mountain wall which bounds the Oberland on the north. Below us perched on its little shoulder was Miirren.

After breakfast we set off up the north arête, which in the sunshine made a fine but all too short climb on splendid sound rock. At one place there are two long thick ropes fastened to iron spikes. I think this eighty feet of steep buttress would be possible to a Cumbrian expert were it transported on to the flanks of Gable, but as a single pitch on a long day's climb it is a very different matter. However much one may despise in theory these artificial aids, one may on rare occasions be grateful for their assistance, especially on the descent.

When we reached the summit, we sat for a long time in the sunshine on the warm rocks. Away to the right was the ' Rote Zahne ' ridge, a difficult climb, and in front of us the rock face of the formidable south wall fell sheer to the Tschingellirn. The summit is probably one of the finest viewpoints in the Alps, as it is central and has no immediate neighbours to limit the distant view. Besides all the Oberland peaks we could see the Pennine giants and Mont Blanc.

The return journey to the hut was a little wearisome, especially during the ascent of the ice-slopes of the Gamchiliicke. As we crossed he hollow of the Tschingelfirn we felt like insects under a burning glass, but after several cups of tea at the hut, we left refreshed, and got back to Fafleralp by tea-time.

The third hut which we visited was the Hollandia, which is situated finely on a little rock spur in the perfectly shaped Lötschenliicke. It is a palatial building, equipped even to the extent of rubber mattresses in the dormitory, and was recently erected in place of the old Egon von Steiger Hut. From it, in the heart of the Oberland snow-fields, the climber can reach most of the central Oberland peaks with ease, direct from Hollandia, or by way of the Concordia, Jungfraujoch or Bergli Huts.

We climbed only two peaks from here. The Ebnefluh, although over thirteen thousand feet high, and a formidable expedition from the Rottal Hut by the North face, is only a pleasant snow hump from here. The snow was crisp and the going good, and we stood on the summit at 5.50 a.m., shivering in an icy blast, which precluded photography. The chief merit of the summit is the view of the Rottal face of the Jungfrau immediately opposite.

A far better climb was provided by the Mittaghorn (12,779 feet), which we climbed from the Ananjoch. The ridge consisted of a sweeping curve of hard frozen snow and gave us good practice.

On our return to the hut we saw that Mont Blanc was flying his cloud-cap, a meteorological danger-signal which never lies, and sure enough the weather broke the following day.

Other huts readily accessible from Fafleralp are the Ober Aletsch Hut and the Baltschiederklause. From the first hut, one can climb the Aletschhorn by the north-west arête, but we found that ' four thousander ' to be long, easy and monotonous. We had no time to visit the second hut, but from it several peaks, including the Breitlauihorn and a fine rock-climb on the Jagihorn, are quite easily reached.

We left the valley, as we had come, over the mountain rim, by the Lötschen Pass, one of the oldest trans-Alpine routes. From Ferden the path meanders upwards through pine-woods, past the tiny village of Kummenalp, and across the small Lotschen Glacier under the fine eastern face of the Balmhorn. There are said to be traces of the old mediaeval paved path near the top of the pass, but in the thick mist and pouring rain we were thankful enough to keep approximately to the direction of the present-day path. A winding path led us down into the Gasternthal and so to Kandersteg.

The Oberland is acknowledged to be one of the finest climbing districts in Switzerland. But our visit to the Lotschenthal showed that the Oberland climbing centres

need not necessarily be synonymous with Grindelwald or Kandersteg. Beautiful as these places are, the climber likes to get away from dust and cars and shops, and all the commercialisation of scenery. Nor need Oberland climbs be confined to the Jungfrau or Schreckhorn groups. The Lötschenthal forms a wedge of accessibility into the heart of the mountains, while the other centres are well to the north. Peaks and huts can be reached with ease. The mountains, though not of great numerical altitude, are ' sporty ' and much more interesting to the guideless party than the lengthy monotony of the ordinary routes on the big peaks. And perhaps best of all, the quiet beauty of the valley, the little villages, the pines, the flowers and the pastures, combine to form an unspoilt paradise.

A MOUNTAIN PHILOSOPHER

Wilsofi Hey

The study of the intimate life of a man of character who was also a man of letters, and an investigation into the outlook of a philosopher, may prove as valuable as the simple perusal of his writings, which can at the best display only a very narrow glimpse of the extraordinary variety of thoughts which emanated from him. The graceful *artist* of the rocks is ever with us, and the many *scientists* of our Club continue to reduce in an almost organised fashion our mountains to an absurdity, treating the affair as a mere engineering problem.

But have we ever had more than one *philosopher,* a lover of mountain wisdom, who apprehended the essence or reality of things in contrast to the rest of us who dwell in appearances and the shows of the senses : one who strove to grasp the eternal and immutable ? He was concerned with the art of thought on mountains and mountaineers. He revelled in expounding the doctrines of mountaineering and exposing their fallacies. His clear understanding of the reasons underlying the application of technique convinced the mountaineering world that he was a great technician, and doubtless his capacity for lucid exposition would have made his unwritten book on Rock-climbing an epoch-making monograph. But in his inmost heart he thought little of technical details or the experiences of the senses, considering them to be but transient things. His mind had to descend to please us in the simply-worded essays he wrote in his exquisite style. He could always fascinate us, listening with wide-open ears, to catch every well-chosen word which fell from his lips across the silent smoke-laden after-dinner atmosphere.

Yet he was always striving to show us what he was not ; that he cared not for theory or argument. He would have us believe that first and last he was a practical man. ' Exact

science, not loose art, is my forte.' Although a leader in mathematics, mathematics, like chess and music, was merely a hobby to him. He dabbled in knots, and very beautiful and complicated ones too, to convince us. Because he knew we looked upon him as a meandering dreamer he would almost angrily thrust down our throats, with a take-it-or-lump-it gesture, ' I am a man of action, I am.' And then to confirm it, in some obscure, derelict mountain hut would proceed to cook a perfect dinner ! In his simplicity he wanted to leave his mark as a doer-of-things. Little did he know that he had already made an indelible imprint on our movement amongst mountains and amongst the dull plains of our everyday lives.

Synthesis was his ultimate objective and to reach it all our mountaineering conceptions had primarily to be subjected to a critical analysis. That was why ' Failures ' were more full of life to him than Summits : he enjoyed every going-down as much as every going-up. According to the mercenary standards of today his own life was his grandest Failure of all. Indeed, blessed with a finer brain, gifted with more talents than any of my circle of friends, he ended nowhere. To get *anywhere,* was not the object of our philosopher. ' It is going to the right places, with the right people and in the right mood ' : this alone gained merit in his eye. To have bagged the Peak of Worldly Success would have spoilt life for him, and him for us. His ambition was to get to the root of thought, not things.

I judge the merit of any game by the amount of pleasure it gives any player to teach any novice. If the expert will not play with the novice, then there is something inherently wrong with the game as well as the player. From this standard mountaineering as a game is obviously nearing perfection. Our philosopher made both mountaineering and life almost perfect. His pleasure lay in teaching, and none could teach better. ' The game rests with the young.' Seeing most clearly the futility of mountain records and rock

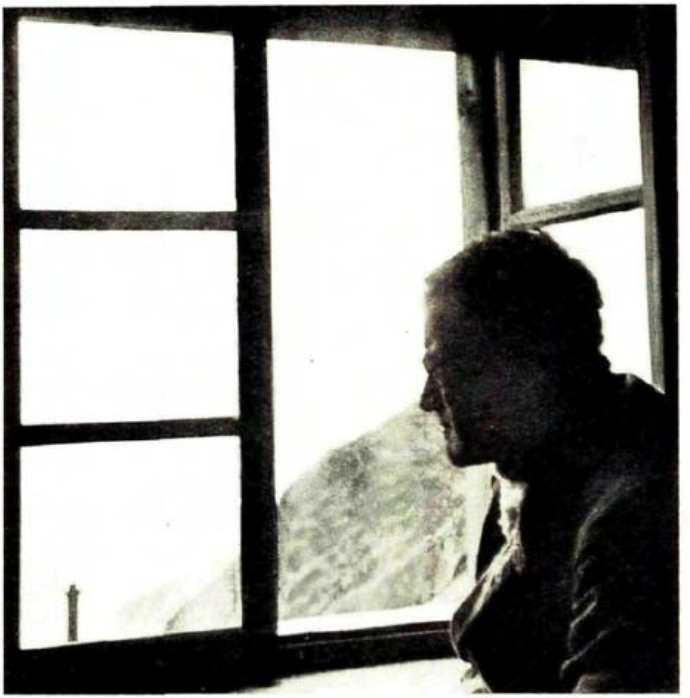
standardisation, nevertheless he looked upon them with benign toleration. ' It is an urge in every living thing to seek the limit of its capacity in every direction.' And indeed rarely or never do we mountaineers hear one who is capable of performing unusually difficult mountain feats deriding the record breakers.

He was finicky and exacting in trivial detail—but every philosopher has his frailty. For his powers he was unconscionably idle except in thought and observation, and, whilst living an extraordinarily full life, he acknowledged it. In his earlier days, thoroughly bored, he found it necessary to compel himself to lead the Nose on the North Pillar climb to advance his mental, not mountaineering, evolution. More than a trifle ponderous in argument, he infinitely preferred to wander round his subject rather than reach a final decision. Towards the end of his life to make a decision was as distasteful to him as reaching a Top. I suppose he was more capable of making a weary hill road appear shorter than any man with whom I have ever travelled—a great art. This varied conversationalist was a born raconteur, but the artist in him had first to create the proper atmosphere, and we sometimes had to wait long for the kernel. Perhaps because he was childlike he was intensely lovable, and for the same reason at times really naughty and occasionally tiresome. Why would he rather finish his argument than catch his train ? He backed rubber against leather largely because of the discussion—but also because he wanted the easiest route to his goal. Or perhaps his exquisitely musical ear revolted against the harsh scrape of nails on hard rock. If you do not believe all this read his ' Conventions,' his ' Alpine Cycle,' and indeed all those writings which have appeared in his Memorial book. In body and mind he was the reincarnation of Samuel Johnson. Our Johnson deserved a less critical Boswell. As a great editor of mountaineering literature no blue pencil would have made him run through this recital of his foibles. One can almost hear his impartial chuckle.

A great Alpine guide once said of him, ' A man climbs with three things : his head, his heart, and his feet. Look at Herr Doughty. Look at his lumps ! I have never made ascents of rocks with a more graceful climber.' So he had physical gifts.

An abstruse thinker suffers from a great handicap when he aspires to leadership. The perfect Second has yet to be adequately portrayed, but surely a certain quality of mind, which can take Heaven and Earth in the same long view, is more competent to support a leader than mere physical strength or capacity for enduring hardship. If you will agree in this, then picture our philosopher as a nearly perfect Second.

We mountaineers have two characters and live two lives, as unlike and remote as those of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Our philosopher, Doughty, has changed the waywardness of our mountain wanderings, and has made us fashion our lives to a different and more wholesome perspective.



J. H. DOUGHTY

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

The practice of collecting under this title all the Climbs recorded in the various climbing books at Club headquarters during the year, is now resumed after having been unavoidably held over for two years.

Out of the nineteen new Climbs described, five were included in the new Gable Guide published last year.

WASDALE

SCAFELL EAST BUTTRESS MICKLEDORE GROOVES—THE SLAB START

Very severe. 20th September, 1936. R. V. M. Barry, C. G. T. Collin (non-members). At the base of the final pitch, the Mickledore Grooves route emerges on to the face of a slab at a grass patch, which this alternative start attains by a traverse of the slab from a stance on its right-hand edge. As the first pitch is merely a scramble, the actual climb is much shorter and it is more artificial than the original start, although of about the same standard.

The lower part of this slab was explored by H. M. Kelly, C. G. Crawford, and C. F. Holland on the 28th July 1919, but, as the Mickledore Grooves route was not then known, they returned to Mickledore Chimney after climbing about 90 feet. Their exact route cannot now be defined.

(1) 70 feet. Beginning at the foot of Mickledore Chimney and keeping just to the left of it, a scramble follows the right-hand edge of the slab until it is terminated by a steep wall. The grass patch on the left edge of the Slab is then almost opposite. Grass stance and belay.

(2) 40 feet. A very severe rising traverse to the left across the slab leads to the grass patch and the original route.

DEEP GHYLL BUTTRESS GREY BASTION Very severe. S. H. Cross (non-member), A.T.H., R.E.H. (Pitches 4, 5, 6, led by A.T.H.). 21st June 1936.

250 feet. Leader needs 60 feet of rope. This route starts at a cairn just to the right of a prominent projecting corner which forms the left edge of a high and vertical wall just opposite to Hopkinson's Cairn Ledge.

(1) 35 feet. Climb the vertical rocks above the cairn at an incipient crack and continue in a corner to an excellent thread belay ; poor stance on the right or a sloping seat on the left. Just on the left is a good grass ledge (doubtful block). This point may be reached from a sloping shelf round to the left (cairn) by climbing the vertical corner and then making an upward traverse to the right. It is considerably easier than the way up the front.

(2) 20 feet. From the grass ledge climb the steep ridge above a stance and belay.

(3) 50 feet. Finish the corner and then climb to the right up broken rocks. Stance and belays below a steep grey wall (overlooking a vertical crack).

(4) 35 feet. The wall is climbed from a smooth ledge on the left by a gangway sloping up to the right. Care is needed in handling a flake which appears to offer a good handhold, but is only loosely stuck on. A grass shelf is reached. A sloping slab in a recess is climbed to a good belay below an overhanging corner.

(5) 50 feet. Traverse easy slabs to the right and continue over a series of ledges on the wall above. From the top ledge with a large block on it, cross a corner to the left and reach a belay near some blocks in a corner.

(6) 20 feet. Walk to the left about 10 feet and climb the steep rocks finishing to the left into a corner with a pointed flake belay.

(7) 45 feet. Climb the easy slabs to the right, pull up over the steep wall ahead to a shelf and an interesting crack then leads to a cairn on the summit rocks.

JACOB'S LADDER Severe. A.T.H., S. H. Cross (non-member, led alternate pitches). 20th June, 1936. 185 feet. Leader needs 60 feet of rope. The climb starts at a cairn on a ledge about 15 feet to the right of the foot of the Great Chimney.

(1) 15 feet. A short upward traverse to the right across the foot of a steep corner to a belay on the right edge of a ledge.

(2) 30 feet. Step up the corner and follow a sloping ledge back to the left. Then make a long step across a chimney to a small stance on a rib. Belay on the right.

(3) 20 feet. Climb the vertical crack in the corner.

(4) 25 feet. Easier rocks on the right are followed by a wall up a glacis to the foot of a vertical wall.

(5) 50 feet. The wall is climbed from near its left side by an upward traverse back to the left, to the right to a corner below an overhang, and a traverse back to the left is followed by a difficult entry of a sentry-box. The angle eases almost at once and good holds lead to another glacis.

(6) 45 feet. The steep wall is climbed just to the right of the edge. Cairn on the left.

ENNERDALE

RAVEN CRAG Raven Crag lies on the Pillar side of the River Liza. After crossing the bridge nearest Scarf Gap, walk up to the left. The crag is the lowest, on the other side of the fence.

SCARAB 260 feet. Very difficult. W H.C., D.J.C. Leader needs 90 feet of

rope The climb starts about 150 feet up to the right from the lowest point of the crag (cairn).

(1) 60 feet. Climb up slabs to a belay ; poor stance.

(2) 40 feet. Climb up 10 feet, then traverse to the right, under an overhang, and climb the slabs. Belay.

(3) 35 feet- Ascend the right-hand of two cracks for 15 feet. Then traverse into diagonal crack and climb this to the block on the skyline ; belay around block.

(4) 45 feet. Climb the rib to bilberry ledges. Belay on a spike on the slabs.

(5) 80 feet. Climb the groove straight ahead, then continue up the slabs to the top of the climb. Belay.

Variations to the last pitch :

1. 80 feet. From a corner about 25 feet above the belay of pitch 4 there is an exit to the left and the climb is finished on easy slabs.

2. 80 feet. From the belay on pitch 4 bear right and keep on the right edge of the crag to the finish of the climb.

CENTIPEDE Severe. D.J.C., W.H.C. 340 feet. The leader needs 90 feet of rope. The start is at the lowest point of the crag (cairn).

(1) 40 feet. Climb a sloping ledge to the right to the foot of a chimney. Belay.

(2) 70 feet. From three-quarters of the way up the chimney there is an awkward traverse to the left leading into a crack, which climb, and continue up the slabs to a belay.

The chimney can be climbed direct. Also, from the the belay, a traverse to the right can be made on to a bulge ; climb this to the overhang and traverse back into the chimney.

(3) no feet. Easy climbing. Belay at the foot of a rectangular overhang.

(4) 25 feet. A crack on the right which is best climbed using the crack as a lay-back.
(5) 40 feet. Climb straight up the slab ; belay at the foot of a thin curved crack on the left.
(6) 45 feet. Delicate climbing up a crack, in a shallow corner to the left of the belay.
(7) 10 feet. Ascend a crack by means of a lay-back.

Variation :

80 feet. From the top of pitch 5, climb the slabs to the right of the belay to an awkward corner under the overhang, then hand traverse left for 30 feet. (The rope can be threaded behind a flake under the overhang.) An easy slab finishes the climb.

PILLAR

PEDESTAL WALL Severe. R.S.T.C, F.G. (alternate leads). 350 feet. 1st Ascent, 31st August 1937. Looking up at the impressive crag below Green Ledge, the climb follows a line of rock running straight from bottom to top, ending at the foot of the Nor'-Nor'-West.

(1) 40 feet. Start nearly at the lowest point (cairn), **and** climb a shallow crack or groove straight up to a grass ledge. Belay.
(2) 35 feet. Continue up the crest of a slabby rib to another ledge. Belay.
(3) 20 feet. Easy slabs lead to a big grass slope.
(4) 60 feet. Almost straight ahead is another cairn in a corner. Start up the easy slabby rocks on the right, and go straight up for some 35 feet to a block on the left edge of the slab, over which a grass ledge above is attained. Belay.
(5) 40 feet. Continue up a ribbon of slabby rock to a grass ledge. A complicated belay can be contrived a few feet to the right.

(6) 30 feet. Returning to the left, climb a short wall on the left of a groove, to a grass stance and a small belay in a corner.

(7) 25 feet. It is now possible either to move up to the right and climb a pleasant steep slab to a grass ledge, or to reach the same ledge straight up the chimney from the stance. Small belay.

(8) 50 feet. Work up to the right to a small ash tree, and then break out on the left to a fine slab. The left end of a long grass ledge is reached, and a few feet up to the right is a small belay.

(9) 50 feet Return to the left and embark once more on the slab. Keep well to the right for the last few feet, which are exposed. (With 100 feet of rope the last two pitches could be done in one run-out.)

The climb ends now at the foot of the Nor'-Nor'-West. At no point are difficulties great, but the standard is remarkably uniform. The climb was done on fairly dry rocks in rubbers. By combining this climb with one of the ensuing routes up the Low Man, and, say, the Pulpit Route, one may have 1,000 feet of practically continuous climbing.

NORTH-WEST (KIRKSTILE VARIATION) Severe. F.G., R.S.T.C. (led last pitch). A variation of the first 200 feet to the Terrace, which, though not entirely devoid of artificiality, appears to have more character than the ordinary way. 1st Ascent, 31st August 1937.

(1) 30 feet. Start at a cairn on the edge of the buttress 12 yards to the right of the ordinary start. Straightforward climbing leads to a gangway slanting up to the left. At the top is a fine belay.

(2) 60 feet. Traverse to the left below the first chimney of the ordinary route to a sort of scoop with sideholds on the right. Ascend for 6 feet and continue

on the left up the buttress, finally bearing slightly right to a stance and belay.

(3) 25 feet. Climb diagonally to the right, enter a chimney (scratches hereabouts), and follow it, or rocks on the right, to the top. Belay.

(4) 50 feet. A few feet to the right is a steep wall, which is climbed *en face.* The holds are good, though widely spaced, and the climbing is strenuous. Long reach is an asset here, and a short man would probably need a shoulder, but in any case the wall is severe. From the landing move to the left and continue up to a pyramid, which is climbed by the crack. Stance in the crevasse.

Scrambling leads to the Terrace.

BLACK CRAGS SOLO SLABS — Very difficult. J. B. Chadwick (non-member). 27th October 1937.

Where the grass terrace (from which the climbs on the middle portion of Black Crags start) starts up to the Third Terrace is a steepish rough slab. Start just to the right of Wood-Johnson's Central Slabs Climb, of which this is really an alternative up to the last two pitches.

(1) 40 feet. Climb a rising traverse left to right, step round the corner and pull up into a corner which is climbed (on the rib on the left) to a grass terrace.

(2) 40 feet. The second slab across the terrace is climbed *in its centre* (keep right at the top) to a grass terrace.

(3) 70 feet. On the slabs ahead (Wood-Johnson's C.S. Climb uses the prominent crack in one), a very thin crack is utilised for finger hold in climbing to a small overhang. A very awkward step to the left brings one to a corner. Pull over the bulge to broken rocks which are followed to a deep easy chimney, which leads to a terrace.

The last two pitches of Central Slabs Climb can be followed to the top of the crag.

BUTTERMERE

HIGH STILE ENNERDALE FACE

These crags may be seen from Gillerthwaite, Ennerdale. The climbs are in a line with the Forestry Commissioner's fence running on the left of High Beck from Windgap Cove (between Pillar and Steeple) to the Liza. Skirting the foot of the crags from the direction of Gillerthwaite, a spear-headed boulder about 20 feet high on its longest side (called the Spear-head) may be seen just short of a steep upstanding buttress 100 feet in height.

THE CHRYSALIS ARETE

70 feet. Difficult. J.C., A.B., 8th September 1935. Leader needs 45 feet of rope. Starts from a ledge 20 yards to the left of the Spear-head and at a slightly higher level. (Below Luncheon Ledge.) Cairn.

(1) 25 feet. Rounded easy rocks trending slightly to the left lead to a corner on the left of the Arête. Small belay in a crack ; awkward stance. Alternatively a good belay high up at the back in a large grassy corner 15 feet higher.

(2) 45 feet. Climb on to a sloping ledge on the right, level with the first belay. An awkward step round the corner leads to a ridge which becomes progressively easier. Choice of belays.

BUTTERFLY CRACK

ioo feet. Severe. J.C., A.B., 8th September 1935. Leader needs 50 feet of rope. Rubbers. Goes up the centre of the steep upstanding buttress seen to the right of the Spear-head. Cairn.

(1) 50 feet. Follow a series of thin cracks up the centre of the wall past several doubtful blocks which proved quite safe with careful handling. Another 15 feet up a chimney lead to good hook belay on the left edge of the crack and an adequate stance.

(2) 50 feet. A parallel crack starts 6 feet to the left and in climbing the steep slab use is made of both cracks. After 15 feet pass to the left of an overhang and continue up the chimney to a choice of belays.

OUTSIDE EDGE, EIGHTY-FOOT SLAB BUTTRESS — 80 feet. Very difficult. J.M.B. Mendus (non-member), J.C., A.B , 29th September 1935. Leader needs 50 feet of rope. The Eighty-foot Slab Buttress is found by descending about 80 feet from the Spear-head and bearing to the right. Alternatively it is to the right of the steep upstanding buttress and at a lower level. This climb starts immediately to the right of an overhang on the left edge of the Slab Buttress.

(1) 50 feet. The climb starts awkwardly with a slight overhang and after 10 feet bears to the left. Continue straight up and round a corner to the left to find a poor stance on the extreme left edge of the Buttress. Small notch belay for line.

(2) 30 feet. A difficult scoop 12 feet high leads to a big belay.

ZIG-ZAG, EIGHTY-FOOT SLAB BUTTRFSS — So feet, one run out. Very severe. J-C., A.B., 8th September 1935. Rubbers. The climb starts at the foot of a conspicuous crack by a juniper bush on the right of the buttress. A good belay may be found above the juniper bush. A delicate traverse is made with a slight swing over the slab on the left to a triangular niche. Continue straight up to a slight pinnacle that from below seems a possible belay. Standing on this a delicate traverse is made 6 feet to the left finishing up at the first opportunity.

EASTERN BUTTRESS — i io feet. Severe. J.C., S. B. Beck (non-member). 5th April 1936. Rubbers. Leader needs 40 feet of rope. This buttress

forms the right-hand wall of the big gully near the Slab Buttress. Cairn.

(1) 20 feet. A short buttress which may be avoided.

(2) 30 feet. From the top of the large block the climb goes straight up the steep wall over a small pinnacle on to a narrow ledge. A good belay can be found in the chimney on the right.

(3) 3° f[ee]t. From the ledge continue up the middle of the steep wall to a grassy recess. Choice of belays.

(4) 30 feet. A shallow groove on the left of the pinnacle. This pitch can be avoided on the right.

The Buttress still further to the east, to the right of the chimney mentioned above, was climbed straight up (100 feet), but proved unsatisfactory.

BIRKNESS COOMBE

EAGLE CRAG BIRKNESS FRONT — Very severe. C. W. F. Noyce, J. M. Edwards. January 1937. This follows the most direct way up the Crag as one approaches it from the Coombe. It keeps as strictly as possible to the rib which has Pigott's West Route just round to the right and the Central Chimney off to the left. The length is the same as for the West Route, which it crosses. The difficulties are concentrated in the lower portion, which is dented by a groove whose rock strata slope down awkwardly, and with unsatisfactory belays. The climb was done under bad conditions, and was thought to be very severe ; possibly in good weather it would be hard severe, in rubbers. Leader needs 100 feet of rope. The climb starts where the crag juts out into the Coombe, beside the scree gully that comes down on the right. Start at the lowest point of the steep rocks.

(1) 20 feet. A V-shaped groove runs up to a large square ledge with very little for belay.

(2) 55 feet. The groove continues more steeply, and the holds begin to slope wrongly. Above on the right

there is a small uncomfortable ledge with a minute belay, but on the left, which is preferable, is a better ledge with large blocks, rather loose.

(3) 25 feet. Traverse round the corner to the right, and then up a crack corner above, surmounted by a semi-mantelshelf movement. This emerges on the large ledge above the chockstone on the West Route.

(4) 15 feet. Ascend the square-cut face above, as for the West Route, to the grass ledges.

From this point the climb becomes more indefinite, losing character. It follows the West Route as far as the grass terrace cutting across the face ; then goes right instead of left to keep to the edge. This entails a hard 40 foot pitch, and easier work above making straight for the top.

BORROWDALE

LINING CRAG Lining Crag is on the north side of Greenup Edge, to the west of the track where it begins to descend to Borrowdale. It is of the same type of rock as Gimmer, but in the form of a corner over 200 feet high, the walls steepening towards the centre. No direct route up the central wall has been recorded up to date.

ULLSCARF EDGE
EVENING WALL On the left, Ullscarf Edge provides some moderate scrambling with one difficult pitch. Severe. D.J.C., W.H.C. 1936. Leader needs 90 feet of rope. The climb starts 10 feet to the right of Ullscarf Edge.

(1) 35 feet. Wall. Belay on ledge.

(2) 40 feet. Wall, bearing right. Belay high up on edge left under overhang.

(3) 80 feet. Descend 4 feet to heather ledge on right. Make for the weakness just to the left of the grass tuft on the skyline ; take an exposed step on to a

slab, toe traverse left above the overhang and up on small holds to belay on second bilberry ledge.

(4) 65 feet. Traverse right and up a short chimney. Continue up the edge on right. Belay low down on final slab.

(5) 35 feet. Slab.

GREENUP EDGE Difficult. Leader needs 120 feet of rope. W.H.C. 1934. Starts at the lowest point of the right-hand end of the crag.

(1) 115 feet. Slab for 40 feet, then ledges. Belay in grassy gully.

(2) 65 feet. Keep left up two corners and a slab.

(3) 45 feet. Keep left up a shallow groove and slab.

TROUTDALE PINNACLE Severe. G.W., C.R.W., 17th July
HOLLY TREE CORNER 1937. A harder alternative finish to the Buttress Route. 140 feet of line needed. Start at hook belay before Slabs Traverse. Traverse right diagonally across to corner immediately below right end of overhang. Very awkward step over rib to the right, pull up on small hold to slab. Continue up slab to corner with stunted tree. Exit left behind tree ; straight ahead over overhang (rock needs care). Bear right to small rib to steep heather finish. Block belay at right of grass platform.

LANGDALE

GIMMER Very severe. R. V. M. Barry, E. G.
GIMMER TRAVERSE Harper (non-members). 21st September 1936. This climb connects the south-west pot-pourri with the climbs on the north-west face and continues the line of de Selincourt's Gimmer Traverse.

From the extreme left end of Ash Tree Ledge traverse left across easy ground and descend slightly to attain a grass ledge on the right-hand wall of The Crack in its unclimbed section.

Belay here. Cross The Crack (here a right-angled corner) by a delicate movement to a large detached block which serves as a belay ; this is an interesting 20 foot pitch. A grass ledge is followed to the pedestal belay at the foot of the 3rd pitch of The Crack route. This pitch was climbed by the party and then the Hiatus route served as a finish to the top of the crag.

GROOVES TRAVERSE Very severe. R. V. M. Barry, E. G. Harper (non-members). 21st September 1936. This climb is a variation of Hiatus. It dodges the overhang by traversing to the right instead of to the left, making use of two convenient grooves.

(1) 40 feet. From the coffin-box belay at the foot of the penultimate pitch of Hiatus a severe horizontal traverse to the right for 20 feet leads to the foot of a scoop which is ascended for 20 feet without difficulty to a stance and thread-belay (for line only) below a mossy scoop.

(2) 70 feet. The scoop is ascended for 5 feet and is followed by a very severe horizontal traverse to the right for 20 feet into another groove running up to the right. Easy climbing leads to the top of the crag and fine belays.

Key to initials :

A. Barton.
D. J. Cameron.
J. Carslake.
R. S. T. Chorley.
W. Heaton Cooper.
F. Graham.
A. T. Hargreaves.
Ruth E. Hargreaves.
Gilpin Ward.
C. R. Wilson.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

The year began with a good day on Pillar: several members followed the President's lead over the Nose that fine though chilly morning. On the following day the weather broke and those who walked over to Wasdale Head to inspect the building in progress at Brackenclose, caught the full force of wind and rain ; nevertheless, a particularly cheerful evening more than made up for it and helped to conclude this popular meet as happily as it had begun.

Good weather added to the enjoyment of Darwin Leighton's meet which was as well attended as ever. Several expeditions set out over the snow-covered fells, and at least one party going over Red Bank to Coniston experienced some of the severities of an alpine crossing. There was a full attendance at the Dialect Play in the evening.

The wintry weather continued well into March and, climbing being more or less in abeyance, some good ski runs were made during the March Meet at Langdale and also during the first part of the Easter Meet at Wasdale, when Esk Hause became reminiscent of Swiss nursery slopes owing to the numerous parties that had come up from every direction. The weather was unexceptionable from start to finish and of the climbing parties at least one, a long string of seventeen, ascended Scafell from Deep Ghyll, the first pitch of which had become a steep snow slope.

Towards the middle of April the weather deteriorated woefully and the Coniston Meet seemed to offer little prospect of getting any climbing done. It speaks highly for the enthusiasm of the fifteen members who came to the Dow Crag Hut, that, despite the streaming weather, in addition to the Buttresses, Woodhouse's, A.C. and Crack, both Giant's Crawl and Corner were climbed.

Fine, dry and warm weather in May favoured the Club Meet at Borrowdale during Whitweek and some very good

climbing was recorded, particularly Carswell's ascent of the Overhanging Wall on the Eastern Buttress of Scafell. Central Buttress was climbed twice in succession by Geoffrey Barratt, Brenda Ritchie, A. Medlicott and the Editor, and led to the discovery of a useful thread-belay at the foot of the Bayonet-shaped Crack on V-Ledge. G. S. Bower was back in his old form on Pillar.

The Buttermere Meet in June brought over twenty members to the Buttermere Hotel and some good climbing was enjoyed in good weather in Birkness Coombe.

The July Meet at Coniston, ioth-uth, was held under perfect conditions, with the result that such splendid climbs as the Eliminates A and B and Giant's Corner with the Simian Finish were accomplished by nine members staying at the Dow Crag Hut.

The meeting of the Brackenclose Committee, as well as the continuance of the dry weather, accounted for a good number of members at Wasdale Head on July 31st. Although many worked overtime on that occasion, climbing was not entirely neglected and in fact some good climbs were done.

Just about the same time forty-two members and friends were meeting at Saas Fee under H. J. France's leadership for the Third Alpine Meet of the Club, of which a detailed account has been compiled by E. C. W. Rudge (p. 132).

Rainy weather marred the Eskdale Meet on September 4th and most of those attending made the best of a bad job by offering their help to the four or five indefatigable members who were putting the finishing touches to the new Club Hut at Brackenclose.

The events of the Windermere Meet are fully set out in Katharine Chorley's description following these notes.

A good many members attended the Langdale Meet in November, but the weather was thoroughly bad and very little climbing was possible.

THE WINDERMERE DINNER MEET (K.C.C.)

The 1937 Dinner Meet, held at the Windermere Hydro during the weekend of October 3rd, saw the transference of the Presidency from R. S. T. Chorley to G. R. Speaker. Speaker was in the Chair for the Dinner, which went off with the special verve, good fellowship and good fare of feasts under his aegis. His efforts were splendidly backed by the Hydro Staff who, as usual on these occasions, had a considerable problem of organisation to solve. The thanks of the Club are more particularly due to those members of the Club who give up perhaps half the Dinner Meet and certainly many hours beforehand to working out the arrangements.

The Toast of the Club was proposed by T. R. Burnett. R. S. T. Chorley, the outgoing President replied, and gave a most interesting *résumé* of the various important activities that the Club has undertaken during the past year. These will be described and commented on elsewhere, chief among them of course being the completion of Brackenclose.

The health of the Guests and Kindred Clubs was proposed by Dr C. H. Hadfield ; and the response for the Guests was made by John Dower, whom we have since been delighted to welcome as a member ; and for the Kindred Clubs by John Poole who, for this occasion, had shed his membership and put his customary wit at the disposal of our fellow clubs.

It is perhaps slightly invidious to pick out individual guests for mention ; but it is a proof of the widening interests and influence in Lakeland affairs of the Club, that among them we had Mr Harry Greenwood, the Clerk to the Westmorland County Council, which has shown a really progressive spirit in dealing with the problems of Lake country amenities, and Mr Francis Scott, the purchaser and saviour of the Patterdale Estate—perhaps the last really first-class estate quite unspoilt but eminently ripe for the attentions of speculative builders. John Dower himself is of

course also closely connected with Lake District preservation.

The Club has passed its exclusively rock-climbing youth and come now to regard itself as well as one of the rightful custodians of Lake District life and traditions. If we can combine this with the old youthful spirit which gave us the rock-climbing and the comradeship of fifteen years ago, our future will indeed be a fine one.

The health of the new President was proposed by W. G. Pape in a speech full of praise and affection, feelings in which we all second him—this I think we showed in the applause following Speaker's reply. We wish him all good luck for his coming two years of office.

Sunday was of course given up to the opening of the hut which is described elsewhere. But on Sunday evening Speaker and Chorley showed a film, prepared by the Rubi brothers of Wengen, which gives a fascinating and really useful series of shots of snow, ice, rope and rock technique and ski-ing in the High Alps. There are a few ski-ing shots as well. This film was made even more interesting by Speaker's commentary. It could be procured from the Swiss Federal Railways.

So ended, officially, an excellent weekend. But several fortunate people stopped on through Monday and climbed in brilliant sunshine on Gimmer. Altogether, the weather was kind, and on the Saturday the usual parties visited the usual crags—Gimmer and Dow.

THE LAKE DISTRICT SKI CLUB

E. W. Hodge

This keen club, which has already about ioo members, and musters 30 to 40 at meets, is busily exploring every avenue, both literally and in metaphor.

It performs the valuable service of notifying snow conditions by postcard, and has already produced a Journal, arranged transport, and loan of equipment, devised a badge, shown cinema films, held (over and above outdoor meets) at least one tea-party, and, if granted a continued sufficiency of snow, may even outdo the Fell & Rock Club in numbers and activity.

So far, the Helvellyn Range (the North End especially) is easily the favourite playground, followed by Blencathra. Among the best expeditions is the round of the Dodds and Hartside, from Matterdale, although the approach from Thirlspot is commonest On the Dodds there is full variety of gradient, and a minimum of protruding rocks—indeed, everything but a funicular !

Another fine run is from the top of Great End to Rossett Ghyll. It may be extended down the Stake, to about 1,250 feet, or sometimes by traversing alongside Rossett. The summit ridge to Scafell Pike is commonly too rough, but a steepish descent may be made from the latter direct towards Lingmell, and thence along the Corridor if there is plenty of snow.

Skiddaw is popular, but the surface is perhaps rather uncertain, because of heather and exposure to wind, and, when frozen, its gradient may be found too unrelieved. A good descent is from Low Man towards Salehow Beck. Near the top of the Alston main road at Hartside, however, the slopes are hardly as steep as they might be.

The slopes of Brandreth towards Warnscale are excellent, but the traverse towards Seatoller is broken by crag, as also is the descent from Sergeant Man along the south east ridge towards Stickle Tarn. The Coniston fells offer choice of aspects and gradients. The round of Kirkstone, Troutbeck, and Skelghyll Lane down to Ambleside is a **run** for very snowy conditions.

FIRST AID

C. Paget Lapage, M.D.

A First Aid Committee has been formed which includes representatives from the following Clubs :

Alpine Club.
Climbers' Club.
Fell & Rock Club.
Gritstone Club.
Midland Association of Mountaineers.
Rucksack Club.
Scottish Mountaineering Club.
Wayfarers Club.
Yorkshire Ramblers.

Other Clubs who are supporting the Committee and who have given donations are :

Mountaineering Section of the Camping Club of Great Britain.
Tricouni Club {Manchester).
Grampian Club.

The object of this Committee is to promote co-operation between the Clubs and First Aid Posts have been established in the following climbing centres :

In NORTH WALES

At HELYG, *Ogwen Road, Club Hut of the Climbers' Club.*
At TAL-Y-BRAICH, *Ogwen Road, Club Hut of the Rucksack Club.*
At the Youth Hostel at Ogwen.
At the PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL, *The Midland Association of Mountaineers.*

In SCOTLAND

At the BELFORD HOSPITAL, *Fort William, The Scottish Mountaineering Club.*

At CLACHAIG HOTEL, *Glencoe, The Scottish Mountaineering Club.*

At GLEN BRITTLE LODGE, *Isle of Skye, The Scottish Mountaineering Club.*

At——————*Cairngorms, The Grampian Club.*

In the LAKE DISTRICT

At the WASTWATER HOTEL, *the Fell & Rock Club.*

At THORNEYTHWAITE FARM, *Borrowdale, the Fell & Rock Club.*

At the DOW CRAG *Climbers' Hut, Coniston, the Fell & Rock Club.*

At the OLD DUNGEON GHYLL HOTEL, *Langdale, the Fell & Rock Club with the Wayfarers' Club.*

At GILLERTHWAITE FARM, *Ennerdale, the Fell & Rock Club.*

At the ANGLERS' INN, *Ennerdale, the Fell & Rock Club.*

The equipment at First Aid posts consists of two rucksacks containing first aid appliances such as medical dressings, splints, and warmth coverings and suitable stretchers. *(See page* 128 *for complete list of contents.)*

The Committee is also making arrangements for Clubs to have periodic inspections and replacements of First Aid equipment. Uniform printed instructions for First Aid to be kept with the rucksacks have been compiled. *(Seepage* 129.)

Evacuation Routes :

The Committee has also prepared the following Evacuation Routes for North Wales and the Lake District with particulars and telephone numbers regarding ambulances, hospitals and auxiliary services. These will be included in the respective guide books.

Finance :

It is necessary for this scheme that funds should be supplied from the Clubs and all the above Clubs have

intimated their willingness to support the scheme. The Committee intends to allocate these funds so that they may be used over the whole of the British mountaineering area. It is obvious that the Clubs in the more widely scattered areas may be in need of more help than Clubs in the more closely grouped areas.

Funds will also be devoted to replacements, renewals and maintenance. Replacement expenses will, however, be recovered whenever possible from friends of the injured. Donations of this kind have already been received from the accidents already dealt with.

The Committee also points out to those concerned with the accidents, the need for the suitable remuneration by friends of the injured of any workers who really assist in the relief work in connection with an accident and for the payment of doctors' fees and other expenses. The suggested minimum for helpers such as stretcher bearers is 7/6. If the scene of the accident is remote and difficult of access, and takes up more than half a day, more should be given.

Development :

The scheme is now established on a firm basis and a large number of accidents has already been dealt with. The Committee would point out that individual members of the Clubs can help them :

1. by supporting the scheme in their own Club.
2. by making themselves acquainted with the first aid posts and evacuation routes of the districts they visit, with the first aid instructions issued, and with the nature of the first aid equipment supplied (actually it consists of one medical appliance rucksack and leg splint, one warmth-equipment rucksack and a stretcher).
3. by discussion of the scheme with other members and making them acquainted with it and by suggesting improvements or by letting the Committee know of

any new first aid appliances or stretchers they may have heard of or seen.

There is no intention of spending on first aid an undue proportion of funds from Clubs whose main object is after all the active pursuit of mountaineering, but the number of mountaineering accidents is increasing, and it is felt that a really efficient first aid and stretcher service is of the greatest importance. The scheme is, therefore, well worth support.

The Secretary and Treasurer of the Committee is A. S. PIGOTT, *Hill House, Tenement Lane, Cheadle Hidme, Stockport.*

SCAFELL AREA : SCREES

Nearest First Aid Post.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :

WASTWATER HOTEL, WASDALE HEAD. No telephone.

The proprietor, Mr Whiting, will take charge and organise rescue party.

Places at which Ambulance should wait.

For accidents on Scafell Group, at Brackenclose (Fell and Rock Club Hut).

For accidents on Screes, at head of the valley.

Additional Equipment.

None.

Ambulance : Cumberland Motor Service, Manager Mr Mageen. Tel : Whitehaven 381-2.

Police : P.C. Hodgson, Police Station, Gosforth. Tel : Gosforth 33.

Hospitals :

Whitehaven and West Cumberland Infirmary. Tel : Whitehaven 75.

Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle. Tel : Carlisle 590.

SOUTH FACE OF GREAT GABLE

Nearest First Aid Post.

Nearest Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :

WASTWATER HOTEL, WASDALE HEAD. Proprietor Mr Whiting. No 'phone.

Place at which Ambulance should wait.

Wastwater Hotel, Wasdale Head, or Seathwaite Farm, Borrowdale.

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
Thornythwaite Farm, Seatoller, Borrowdale. Tel : Borrowdale 37.
St. John Ambulance Equipment at Mountain View, Seatoller. Tel : Borrowdale 30.
Ordinary Stretcher at Honister Quarries. Tel : Borrowdale G12.

Evacuation.

Send for equipment to Wasdale Head. If condition of patient permits and if sufficient time and helpers, evacuate to Borrowdale ; Mr T. Brown or Mr W. Harrison, Mountain View, Seatoller, Tel : Borrowdale 30 ; or Mr Jopson, Thornythwaite Farm, Tel : Borrowdale 37, or Mr Todd, Tel : Keswick 21. Otherwise evacuate to Wasdale Head, sending advance news to Mr Whiting, Wastwater Hotel.

Ambulances :

Borrowdale : St. John Ambulance, Keswick. Tel : 21.
Ambulance at Keswick Motor Co., Keswick. Tel : 60.
Wasdale : Cumberland Motor Services. Manager Mr Mageen. Tel : Whitehaven 381-2.

Police :

Borrowdale : Keswick Police Station. Tel : Keswick 4.
Wasdale : P.C. Hodgson, Police Station, Gosforth. Tel: Gosforth 33.

Hospitals :

Borrowdale : Keswick Cottage Hospital. Tel : Keswick 12.
Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle. Tel : Carlisle 590.
Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester. Tel : Ardwick 1721.
Wasdale : Whitehaven and West Cumberland Infirmary. Tel : Whitehaven 75.

PILLAR ROCK

Nearest First Aid Post.

Stretcher and complete equipment at :
GILLERTHWAITE FARM, ENNERDALE.

Place at which Ambulance should toait.

Gillerthwaite Farm. A car can proceed much higher.

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at Thornythwaite Farm, Seatoller, Borrowdale. Tel : Borrowdale 37.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at Wastwater Hotel, Wasdale Head. Proprietor Mr Whiting.
1 ordinary stretcher at Youth Hostel Hut, Black Sail.

Nearest Telephone.

Anglers Inn, Ennerdale. Proprietor, Mrs Clayton. Tel : Lamplugh 202.

Assistance : If additional assistance is needed telephone :

Mr Brown, Mountain View, Seatoller, Tel : Borrowdale 30 ; or Mr Harrison (same address) ; or Mr Jopson, Tel : Borrowdale 37 ; or Keswick St. John Ambulance, Tel : 21 ; to organise help from Borrowdale. For help from Wasdale Tel Police, Gosforth 33, to send message to Wasdale Head.

Send for stretcher and helpers to Black Sail Hut.

Ambulances.

Cumberland Motor Services, Whitehaven. Manager Mr Mageen. Tel : Whitehaven 381-2.

Whitehaven and West Cumberland Infirmary. Tel : Whitehaven 75.

Police : Ennerdale Bridge. Tel : Lamplugh 222.

Hospitals :

Whitehaven and West Cumberland Infirmary. Tel : Whitehaven 75.

Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle. Tel : Carlisle 590.

Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester. Tel : Ardwick 1721.

GREAT END : BORROWDALE AREA : BUTTERMERE AREA

Nearest First Aid Post.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :

THORNYTHWAITE FARM, SEATOLLER, BORROWDALE. Tel : 37.

Mr Brown or Mr W. Harrison, Mountain View, Tel : Borrowdale 30, will take charge and organise rescue party.

Places at which Ambulance should wait.

For accidents on Great End. Seathwaite Farm, Borrowdale.

For accidents in Borrowdale area. Any convenient point on the Keswick-Scathwaite road.

For accidents in Butlennere area. Any convenient point on the Honister-Gatesgarth road.

Additional Equipment.

St. John Ambulance equipment at Mr Brown's. Tel : Borrowdale 30.

1 ordinary stretcher at Honister Quarries. A.A. Box on Honister Top, Tel : 612.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at Wastwater Hotel, Wasdale Head.

Ambulance :

St. John Ambulance, Keswick. Tel : Keswick 21.

Keswick Motor Ambulance, Keswick. Tel : Keswick 60.

Police : Keswick Police Station. Tel : Keswick 4.

Hospitals :
Keswick Cottage Hospital. Tel : Keswick 12.
Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle. Tel : Carlisle 590.
Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester. Tel : Ardwick 1721.

LANGDALE AREA

Nearest First Aid Post.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
DUNGEON GHYLL OLD HOTEL, LANGDALE. Tel : Grasmere 72.
Mr Bullman will organise rescue party.
Place at which Ambulance should ***wait.***
Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel. It may be possible to drive further up the valley.
Additional Equipment.
1 ordinary stretcher and ordinary first aid box at Dungeon Ghyll New Hotel. Proprietor, Mr Fothergill. Tel : Grasmere 13.
Ambulance : Police Station, Amblcside. Tel : 18.
Police : Langdale Police Station. Tel : Grasmere 39. (| mile east of Elterwater, on Ambleside Road.)
Hospitals :
Kendal Hospital. Tel : Kendal 71.
Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester. Tel : Ardwick 1721.

DOW CRAG

Nearest First Aid Post.
Thomas stretcher and complete equipment at :
DOW CRAG CLIMBERS HUT, PARK GATE, CONISTON. Tel : Coniston 30.
Miss Bryan or Miss Pirie will take charge and organise rescue party.
Place at which Ambulance should wait.
Dow Crag Climbers Hut. A car can proceed a considerable distance along the track towards Dow Crags if conditions are dry.
Additional Equipment.
1 ordinary stretcher at Dow Crag Climbers Hut.
I ordinary stretcher at Coniston Police Station. Tel : 51.
1 ordinary stretcher at Coniston Institute.
Ambulance : Ulverston Cottage Hospital. Tel : Ulverston 61.
Police : Tel : Coniston 51.
Hospitals :
Ulverston Cottage Hospital, Ulverston. Tel : Ulverston 61.
North Lonsdale Hospital, Barrow-in-Furness. Tel : Barrow 896.
Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester. Tel : Ardwick 1721.

WALES

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

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

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

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

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

HELYG. *(Installed by Climbers' Club.)*
About li miles from the point where the North Ridge of Tryfan comes down to the Holyhead Road, in the direction of Capel Curig.

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

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

If he cannot get through himself, written directions should be sent by him stating the name of the climb and pitch on which the accident has occurred and briefly the nature of the climber's injuries.

Four stretcher bearers at least are needed ; for long distances a relay of four more is desirable.

ASSISTANCE

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

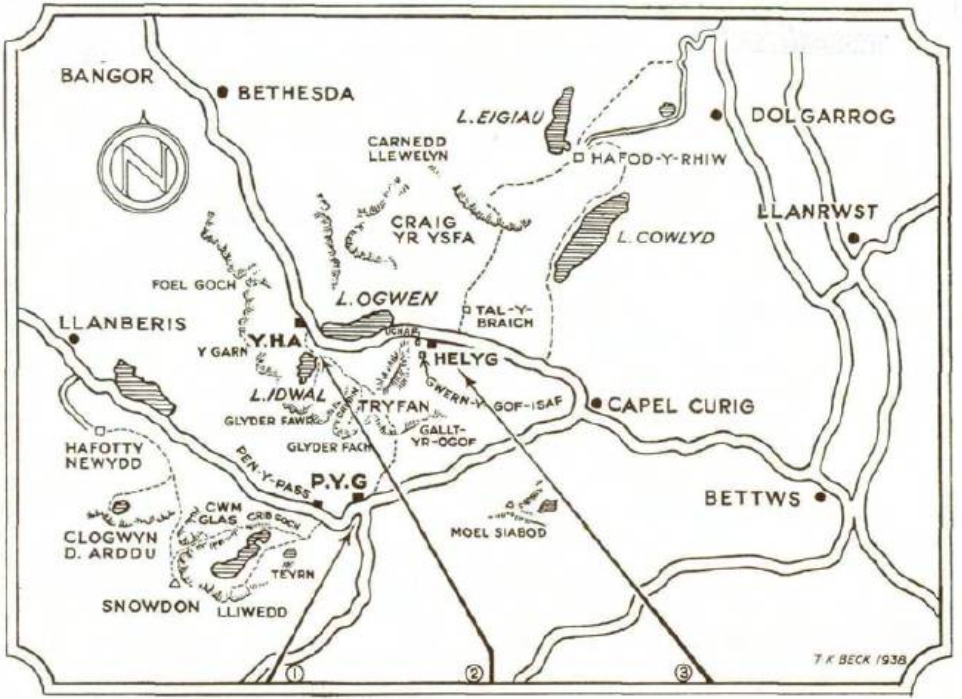
TAL-Y-BRAICH. *(Rucksack Club's Hut.)*
About 2 miles from Capel Curig Junction on the main Holyhead Road in the direction of Ogwen, about 300 yards from the road, on the right.
GUEST HOUSE, CAPEL CURIG. *(Mr Hughes.)* Tel : Capel 25.
BRYN TYRCH HOTEL. *(Mr Smith.)* Tel : Capel 23.
SIABOD VILLA. *(Mrs Roberts.)* Tel : Capel 29.
TYN-Y-COED HOTEL. Tel : Capel 31.
ROYAL HOTEL. Tel : Capel 30.
BEDDGELERT. *(Mr David Hewitt,* 'The Firs,' Caernarvon Road, Beddgelert.) Tel : Beddgelert 46.

CWM IDWAL : GLYDER FACH : AND MILESTONE BUTTRESS, TRYFAN.

Nearest First Aid Post.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
YOUTH HOSTEL, adjoining car park, OGWEN Cottage.
Miss Alexander will take charge and organise rescue party.
Public Telephone Box, on main Holyhead Road, about 200 yards below Ogwen Cottage in the direction of Bethesda (Tel : Bethesda 88), from which calls may be made for doctor, or ambulance ; or for additional stretcher and equipment.
Places at which Ambulance should wait.
For accidents in Cwm Idwal and Glyder Fach. Car Park, Ogwen.
For accidents on Milestone Buttress. By tenth milestone on main Holyhead Road.
Additional Equipment.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
1. Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel. (Tel : Llanberis 249.)
2. Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut.
Doctor : Dr I. G. Williams, Ogwen Terrace, Bethesda. Tel : Bethesda 18.
Ambulance : Tel : Bangor 490.
Police : Bethesda. Tel : Bethesda 20.
Hospital : St David's Hospital, Bangor. Tel : Bangor 159.

EAST FACE OF TRYFAN

Nearest First Aid Post.
2 Thomas Stretchers and 1 Army Stretcher, and complete equipment at :
CLIMBERS' CLUB HUT, HELYG, which is 1.1 miles from the point where



PEN-Y-GVVRVD HOTEL

*Tele : **Llanberu** 240. **Serving** all climbs on Snowdon massif, **also Craig-yr-** Ysfa.*

YOUTH HOSTEL, OGWEN

*(Public Telephone Box within **300** yards on main Holyhead Rd.) Serving all climbs in CtV7n Id-wal, Glyder Fach, Milestone.*

HELYC, CLIMBERS' CLUB HUT

Serving all climbs on Face of Try/an.

THOMAS STRETCHER AND COMPLETE FIRST AID EQUIPMENT IN RUCKSACKS INSTALLED AT EACH OF THESE THREE PLACES

the North Ridge of Tryfan comes down to the Holyhead Road, in the direction of Capel Curig. The hut is about 70 yards below the road on right-hand side (power lines leading to it across main Holyhead Road). If locked, key is obtainable from GWERN-Y-GOF ISAF FARM.

Nearest Telephone.

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

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

IMPORTANT :

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

Places at which Ambulance should wait.

Gwern-y-Gof Uchaf Farm.

Additional Equipment.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :

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

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

Ambulance : Tel : Bangor 490.

Police : Bethesda. Tel. : Bethesda 20.
Capel Curig. Tel : Capel Curig 22.

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

LLIWEDD : CWM GLAS : AND GRIB GOCH

Nearest First Aid Post.

Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :

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

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

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

NOTE :

For Lliwedd, drive (a small car) to Lyn Llydaw, first making sure whether road is clear of rock falls.

Place at which Ambulance should zoait.
Pen-y-Pass Hotel.
Additional Equipment.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
1. Youth Hostel, Ogwen.
2. Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut.
Doctor : Dr I. Wynn Jones, Bodafon and Plas Coch, Llanberis. Tel. : Llanberis 208.
Ambulance : Tel. : Llanberis 202.
Police : Llanberis. Tel : Llanberis 222.
Hospital : St David's Hospital, Bangor. Tel : Bangor 159.

CRAIG-YR-ISFA

Most accessible First Aid Post.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL. Tel : Llanberis 249.
Mr Lockwood will take charge, and organise rescue party.
Procedure.
Send one of party down Cwm Eigiau to house on east side of Eigiau Lake, marked Hafod-y-Rhiw, on 1-in. Ordnance Survey Map. If a second messenger is available, he should be sent over Helyg Ridge, and on to Tal-y-Braich or Helyg Hut, for further assistance and a car.

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

A narrow road, practicable for a car, leads from Hafod-y-Rhiw down to Tal-y-Bont near Dolgarrog, in the Conway Valley.

If first aid equipment and stretcher are required, transmit a telephone message to the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel (Llanberis 249) where such equipment is installed, and arrange for it to be sent up by the route indicated above.

Detailed instructions for obtaining full assistance are available at Hafod-y-Rhiw.

If the climber is not too badly hurt, and is able to get along slowly, it is an easy walk down to Hafod-y-Rhiw and it would be possible to leave him there until a car was obtained.

From Hafod-y-Rhiw one or more of the party could then walk back to Capel via Llyn Cowlyd.

Place at which ambulance should wait.
Hafod-y-Rhiw (if road conditions permit).
Additional Equipment.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
1. Youth Hostel, Ogwen.
2. Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut.
Doctor : Dr Meurig Williams, Station Road, Llanrwst. Tel : Llanrwst 36.
Ambulance : Police, Llanrwst. Tel : Llanrwst 32.
Police : Dolgarrog. Tel : Dolgarrog 222.
Hospitals : Llandudno and District (Cottage) Hospital, Trinity Avenue, Llandudno. Tel : Llandudno 7039.

CLOGWYN-DU'R-ARDDU

Nearest First Aid Post (via LLANBERIS).
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
PEN-Y-GWRYD HOTEL. Tel : Llanberis 249.
Mr Lockwood will take charge and organise rescue party.
Procedure.
Send one or more of party down to Llanberis and inform police (Tel : Llanberis 222).
Depending upon circumstances, it may be advisable to telephone from Llanberis to Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel (Llanberis 249) and arrange for the stretcher and first aid equipment installed there to be sent down, and also for the assistance of any climbers who may be staying there.
Nearest Telephone.
Victoria Hotel, Llanberis. Tel : Llanberis 9.
On main road almost facing Mountain Railway Station.
Place at which ambulance should wait.
Hafotty-Newydd Farm, which is an easy hour from Clogwyn-du'r-Arddu. To get there from Llanberis, fork right from the Snowdon path after third gate at a point where a signpost points the way to Snowdon.
Additional Equipment.
Thomas Stretcher and complete equipment at :
1. Youth Hostel, Ogwen.
2. Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut.
Doctor : Dr I. Wynn Jones, Bodafon and Plas Coch, Llanberis. Tel : Llanberis 208.
Ambulance : Tel : Llanberis 202.
Police : Llanberis. Tel : Llanberis 222.
Hospital : St David's Hospital, Bangor. Tel : Bangor 159.

FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

OUTFIT.

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

BEFORE LEAVING BASE, ADD STIMULANTS, MEAT EXTRACTS, SUGAR (IF NOT IN RUCKSACK) AND HOT DRINKS. TAKE PLENTY OF SOUND ROPE.

LIST OF CONTENTS OF RUCKSACKS 1 AND 2
(Standard Equipment for all centres)

Rucksack 1.

List of contents and instructions.
1 eiderdown bag with detachable waterproof cover and tie tapes.
1 toilet bottle.
1 hinged, iron Thomas leg splint with spat for attachment to boot, to be kept tied to rucksack.
1 case for medical appliances, containing :
6 Demctte bandages, 6 ins. : 3 triangular bandages : 1 roll, 18x36 Infirmary plaster : 1 roll, 1 in. 10 yds. Zopla plaster : 1 roll, 2.', ins. 1 yd. Elastoplast J. and P. dressing : ball of string or tape : 2 straight arm splints : 1 angular arm splint : Iodine : 2 first field dressings : Gauze : Cotton wool : Small Sponge : Scissors : Safety pins : 1 small hand towel : Sotol disinfectant tablets : 1 pair 5 ins. dressing forceps : 1 pair Spencer Wells clamp forceps.
2 TUBUNIC AMPOULE Syringes each containing j grain OMNOPON (morphia) in solution ready for injection.
Cube sugar in jar.
Flask of Brandy.
Meat Extract.

Rucksack 2.

Folding Glacier Lantern.
6 Candles.
2 Kettles.
3 Hot Water Bottles.
3 Cups (2 drinking cups and 1 feeding cup).
1 Monitor stove to be kept filled with paraffin.
Meta Fuel.
Spare jet and jet key.
Small Spoon.
jug.

' THOMAS ' STRETCHER.

Never take a Thomas Stretcher to pieces—it is better kept and carried assembled. Prospect route. Appoint a leader and a direction finder.

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSTRUCTIONS.

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

Warmth.

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

Pain.

Make injured comfortable. If pain unbearable, inject contents of ampoule (for persons under age of 12 only one-quarter to one-half of ampoule). Two hours later a second ampoule may be injected if pain continues.

Inject under pinched up skin on the outer part of forearm (avoiding any obvious vein) after cleaning or painting with spirit, if available.

Wounds.

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

Haemorrliage.

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

Fractures.

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

BROKEN LIMBS.

Arm.

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

Collar bone.

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

Leg.

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

Spine.

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

TRANSPORT OF INJURED

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

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

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

W. H. Hey, 16 *St John Street, Manchester* 3

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

A. S. Pigott, Hill House, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport
(Tel : Cheadle Hulme 257)

Criticisms of the equipment, and suggestions, are welcomed.

This ' WARNING TO HILL WALKERS ' has been inserted in all Scottish Mountaineering Club Guide Books :

' The Guide Books issued by the Scottish Mountaineering Club describe routes which range from difficult climbs to what are, in fine summer weather, mere walks. All must judge for themselves whether they have the experience necessary' for carrying out their intended expeditions within a reasonable time, remembering that conditions may quickly change a simple walk into a serious undertaking. Safe walking on the hills involves properly constituted and adequately equipped parties, reasonably prepared for unexpected difficulties, and having strength of mind to turn back when desirable. For full description of proper equipment see the " General Guide Book." Experienced climbers, even when merely expecting to walk, wear boots suitably nailed for rock climbing, and carry reserves of food and clothing, 1-inch map, compass, torch, a rope (unless it is certain not to be required), and an ice axe when there is any chance of meeting snow or ice. Others cannot afford to take less.

' Accidents in recent years call for this notice; for not only have local residents been called away from their ordinary vocations and caused trouble and anxiety, but experienced climbers have been summoned from long distances to form rescue parties. It will be understood that such assistance must not be regarded as always available, and that local workers may reasonably expect to be adequately paid.

' *Some Common Causes of Difficulty are :*

' Failure to judge length of time required for expedition. Unduly slow or incompetent companion. Illness : sprained ankle. Unexpectedly difficult ground. Mist: darkness: snowstorm: loss of way. High wind (especially on ridges). Extreme cold : frostbite. Members of a party becoming separated.'

THIRD ALPINE MEET

This meet was held at Saas-Fec, August 1st to August 15th, 1937 and attended by 39 people, all of whom were accommodated **at** the Hotel du Glacier or one of its affiliated buildings. First-rate weather, every **variety** of climbing, a spirit of ' laissez-faire ' and a sufficiency of humorous incident combined to make it a most successful event. To these must be added the genial and tactful leadership of France, who contrived to arrange things so that everyone got what he wanted and no-one felt that he was being in any way coerced, and the very efficient and painstaking work carried out by the two combined recording angels and bank managers, Coxon and Fanshawe. (It's almost time Coxon joined the Club !) Many a time one would return from a climb to find these conscientious persons, also just back from a climb, already hard at work : France amidst a shoal of guides (our party had five guides and two porters attached to it throughout the Meet), Coxon and Fanshawe in a sea of names and figures. ' Let us now praise famous men '

The almost unbroken spell of fine weather, in strong contrast to last year's conditions, enabled a very satisfactory climbing programme to be carried through. But it must not be supposed that the Meet was remarkable only for the number and variety of the climbs accomplished; far from it; other events of great interest and importance must also be recorded.

There was, for instance, the founding of two Societies whose influence will one day sweep the Alps from end to end—or perhaps a better description would be from top to bottom. Dr Burnett was the initiator of the Anti-Farly-Rising-by-the-Swiss Association, from which sprang shortly after the affiliated League of Anti-Bell-Ringing-in-the-Small-Hours. Both societies met with strong support, and it is believed that the entrance fees have already been increased.

Then there was the great Race for the Strahlhorn—in future to be an annual event for a trophy presented to the winning team by the Burgener family. This resulted in a win for the team led by Salomon Burgener, Webb's merry men being a poor second. They lingered over the first lap—casting longing eyes towards the Rimpfischhorn—and although putting up a great fight for it at the finish, had to acknowledge the superior haulage powers of their rivals. It is hoped that a large entry will be seen on the next occasion of this interesting event.

An episode which caused the greatest excitement in the Chancelleries of Europe, and has since made Mussolini acknowledge that ' When I come to reflect on the last two years of our relations with Britain, I come to the conclusion that after all there has been a great misunderstanding ' (see ' Morning Post '), was the Pilgrimage to the Closed Frontier—alias Monte

Moro Pass. The Pilgrims were led by France, and after undergoing great hardships they reached the Pass in severe hail and rain. Photographic records were made, a hymn was sung to II Duce, and the party returned. No tin hats : no casualties.

Two objects of special interest were encountered on the way up to the Pass. The first was the extraordinary tunnel hewn by the Swiss through solid rock, which takes the water deflected from Mattmark Lake and projects it forcibly down the mountainside about a quarter-of-a-mile (?) from the now dried-up bed of the lake. It was said that this scheme had been carried out to avoid the risk of the lake bursting its dam in flood-weather and obliterating Saas-Almagel at the foot of the valley. (N.B. What is 'A.B.C. Guffer ' shown hereabouts on the Siegfried map ?) The second object was the Largest Pebble in the World, discovered near the Mattmark Hotel. Braithwaite essayed an ascent, but after attaining—with the aid of a rusty piece of ironmongery left behind by a previous admirer—a height of about thirty feet, or half-way up, he wisely decided that the rest of it probably ' would not go,' and came down.

Appreciation must be made of Miss Ward's noble work in destroying the refuse on the Mittaghorn. In the course of several ascents of this mountain she is believed to have restored it to a condition which would be approved of by the Parks Committee of any U.D.C. It is sincerely hoped that visitors—both to Saas-Fee and the Lake District—will take her example to heart.

The exploration work carried out by a certain guideless party is noteworthy. From Weissmies Hut via the Weissmies to Almagel and back, from Britannia Hut via the Rimpfischhorn (north ridge) to Zermatt, and back by the Rimpfischwange—their energies never flagged. Whether victims of atrocious weather (visibility nil) on the Egginergrat, or knee-deep in daisies and edelweiss on the lower slopes of the Weissmies, whether discussing theology with representatives of the Church of England on the Rimpfischwange or seeing Brocken Spectres on the Portjengrat, they always returned to the fold (eventually) in a frame of mind both cheerful and elevated, having had adventures such as were denied to their less fortunate guided comrades.

On August 10th a guideless party, Coxon, Pochin and Rudge, forced an ascent of the Klein Allalin—10,900 ft—in hut-slippers. Time to summit from Britannia Hut : ten minutes (approx.). A very fine expedition.

Now the Official Records. Whenever possible, leaders of ropes are mentioned first, but in cases where it is not known who led, alphabetical order is used, ladies taking precedence.

August 1st. Party arrived at Saas-Fee. Egginergrat climbed by Kenyon and Edleston, T. H. Tilly and Pochin, who had arrived the previous day. Weather bad.

August 2nd. A party of 23 went up to the Weissmies Hut, and a smaller one to the Almagel. All found accommodation.

August 3rd. (From Weissmies Hut.) Sigismund and Siegfried Burgener led one party on the Jägigrat, and Alphons and Salomon Burgener another on the Flctschhorn. Fox and Rudge, with Alphons, also climbed the Laquinhorn by the north ridge, descending to the hut by the ordinary route. Jiigigrat party : the guides with the Misses Grosvenor, Philip and Rutherford ; Mrs Webb, Chorley, Grosvenor, McCrindell, Payn, Pottier, and Webb. Fletschhorn party : the guides with Burnett, Carter, Crosland, Edleston, Fox, Kenyon, Pochin, Rudge, C. S. and T. H. Tilly.

(From Almagel Hut.) Alfred Supersaxo, with the porter Blumental, led a party on the Portjengrat : Mrs Garrick, Braithwaite, Bryson, Cann, Garrick, Hughes and Shuter.

(From the Hotel.) Stanislaus Burgener took a glacier-party for instruction in step-cutting. Misses Ward and Wright; Middleton and Oldham.

August 4th. (From Weissmies Hut.) Siegfried and Alphons Burgener, with the porter Stanislaus Burgener, led a party climbing the Weissmies by the north ridge. Chorley, Coxon, Griffiths, Middleton, Oldham and Webb. Another party ascended the Weissmies guideless, by the ordinary route, descending by the south-east face to the Zwischbergenjoch and Almagel Alp, and returning to the Weissmies Hut by the lower slopes of the Weissmies. Kenyon, Edleston, T. H. Tilly. Two other guideless climbs were also made; the Jagihorn and Jagigrat by Milner and Marriott (A.C.), and the Laquinhorn (ordinary route) by C. S. Tilly, Sargent and Pochin. Milner had not yet joined the Meet officially, and Marriott never did.

August 5th. (From Mischabels Hut.) Miss Scott Johnston, Miss Welchman, Braithwaite and Shuter, with the guides Sigismund Burgener, Andermatten and porter Blumental, climbed the Siidlenzspitze and Nadelhorn.

(From Weissmies Hut.) Bryson and Cann, with Alphons Burgener, climbed the Fletschhorn. Middleton and Oldham climbed the Jägigrat guideless; while Marriott, Griffiths and Milner, also guideless, climbed the Fletschhorn and then traversed the Laquingrat, descending to the Laquinjoch.

(From Almagel Hut.) Salomon Burgener led a party on the Portjengrat. Misses Grosvenor and Wright, Fanshawe and Carter.

(From Hotel.) Grosvenor and Hughes; Burnett and Miss Ward climbed the Egginergrat guideless.

August Cth. (From Mischabels Hut.) Siidlenzspitze and Nadelhorn climbed by Miss Philip, McCrindell, Pottier and Payn, with same guides as the previous party.

(From Almagel Hut.) Chorley and Sargent, C. S. Tilly and Pochin made guideless ascent of the Portjengrat. T. H. Tilly, Kenyon and Edleston did the same climb, starting from the Hotel du Glacier. It was on this climb that they saw the Brocken Spectre.

August 7th. (From Mischabels Hut.) Coxon, with Sigismund and Stanislaus Burgener, climbed the Siidlenzspitze and Nadelhorn.

(From Britannia Hut.) Alphons Burgener led a party climbing the Rimpfischhorn by the north ridge. Miss Grosvenor, Braithwaite, Bryson and Cann. On this climb two ice-axes were lost—one permanently, but the other only temporarily, thanks to a brilliant piece of climbing on the part of Alphons. One member of the party unintentionally visited the interior of a crevasse, but emerged unscathed. Salomon Burgener led—or rather dragged—a second party up the Strahlhorn : Carter, Crosland, Fanshawe, Rudge, Webb. The intention of the amateurs was to traverse the summit and descend by the north-east face of the mountain, but **the** professional would not do this. He was also apparently under the impression that the rope was intended to enable the expedition to be completed in as short a time as possible rather than as a safeguard against crevasses. Net result : magnificent views of the Mischabels, Monte Rosa, Lyskamm, Castor and Pollux, Breithorn and Matterhorn, with fine close-ups of the great rock-faces of the Rimpfischhorn and Allalinhorn—but no climbing. Really wonderful cloudscapes over Italy were seen from the summit. A third party, led by Siegfried Burgener, climbed the Allalinhorn, descending to Saas-Fce by the Fee Glacier. Miss Rutherford and Mrs Webb, Grosvenor ; Burnett, France.

(From Hotel.) Milner and Peaker (who did not join the Meet) climbed the Egginergrat guideless.

August 9th. (From Britannia Hut.) Guideless ascent of the Rimpfisch-horn north ridge, made by Edleston, T. H. Tilly and Kenyon. They descended to Zermatt owing to the appearance of bad weather threatening on the mountain, leaving the summit late. At 10.30 p.m. they telephoned the Hotel du Glacier to say they were safe, and to ask that the Britannia Hut should be notified of this at once, to prevent search-parties going out. The hotel, showing some lack of consideration, took no notice of this request, with the result that the search-parties went out and a number of people lost a day's climbing. If messengers from the hut had not rung up the hotel from the Plattjen, no message would have come through. The same day, Milner, Marriott and Peaker made a guideless ascent of the Strahlhorn by the north-east face.

August 10th. (From Britannia Hut.) Coxon, Pochin and Rudge, with the guide Andermatten, gave up their intended ascent of the Rimpfischhorn by the north ridge, and did search-party duty instead. Pochin, with Andermatten, ascended the Rimpfischhorn by the ordinary route from the

Hubcl Glacier in the course of this work. (A fine piece of climbing was done on this mountain by the guides Imseng and Kalbermatten, who had joined the search-party. They climbed it by the north ridge, in dense cloud for a good part of the time and with the rock in difficult condition, descending by the ordinary route, in seven hours from the hut and back to it again.) The Allalinhorn party, Miss Ward and Miss Wright, with Salomon Burgener, also gave up their climb, and so did Marriott, Milner and Peaker.

(From Mischabels Hut.) Alphons and Stanislaus Burgener, with Bryson, Cann, Carter, Middleton, Oldham, and C. S. Tilly climbed the Slidlenspitze and Nadelhorn. Their original intention was to ascend the Dom from the Dora Hut on the following day, but this project had to be abandoned owing to bad weather.

(From Weissmies Hut.) Sigismund and Siegfried Burgener, with Blumental, led a party climbing the Fletschhorn : Miss Rutherford, Braithwaite, Fanshawe, France, Grosvenor, Hughes, McCrindell, Payn, Pottier. Bad weather in this case also caused the original project—an ascent of the Weissmies by the north ridge—to be abandoned.

(From Almagel Hut.) Mr and Mrs Webb, with Crosland, climbed the Portjengrat guideless. So did J. H. B. Bell and Burnett, making a direct descent from the summit to the glacier, by the west wall of the mountain—possibly a first descent by this route.

August 11th. (From Britannia Hut.) Coxon, Pochin and Rudge, with Andermatten, climbed the Allalinhorn and the Alphiibel, descending to Saas-Fee. A fine bergschrund was encountered on the Alphiibel, and from the summit a splendid panorama was seen, including the Matterhorn, Mont Blanc, Aiguille Verte, Dent Blanche, Weisshorn and other famous peaks. A good view of the upper part of the Teufelsgrat on the Tiischorn was also obtained, and of what was believed to be the higher part of Winthrop Young's famous climb on the south face of that mountain (see 'On High Hills'). The party which had descended to Zermatt from the Kimpfischhorn on August 9th returned to Saas-Fee by the Rimpfischwange and Allalin Pass. They encountered *en route* the English chaplain of Riffel, who was celebrating the 34th anniversary of his first ascent of the Rimpfischhorn by climbing it again, with the grandson of the guide with whom he had made his first ascent.

August 12th. (From Hotel.) Miss Ward and Miss Wright, Crosland and Hughes with Salomon Burgener, crossed the Allalin Pass to Zermatt, via Tiisch. C. S. Tilly, Carter and Fanshawe made guideless traverse of the Egginergrat *en route* for the Britannia Hut. Sigismund, Alphons and Stanislaus Burgener left for Zermatt with the Grosvenors, Miss Rutherford, Payn and Webb for an attempt on the Zmutt Ridge. Bad weather unfortunately prevented their expedition being carried out.

STRAIII.-
RIMPFISCH-
ALI.AI.IN-
HOERNER
Al-PHI'BEL

L. 6'. *Coxon*

Meanwhile Burnett, with Harrison and Gwelph, made a fine guideless expedition to Zermatt by the Allalin Pass and Findelen Glacier, climbing the Rimpfischhorn on the way.

August 13th. (From Britannia Hut.) Andermatten with Blumental, Carter, Fanshawe, McCrindell, Middleton, Oldham, Pottier and C. S. Tilly, climbed the Allalinhorn, their original intention of ascending the Rimpfischhorn by the north ridge having been abandoned owing to bad weather.

(From Hotel.) France, Braithwaite, Coxon, Edleston, Kenyon, Pochin and Rudge made an expedition to the Monte Moro Pass—now a closed pass on the Swiss-Italian frontier. Bad weather caused them to give up their original idea of climbing either Monte Moro itself, or the St. Joderhorn, and also deprived them of the hoped-for view of Monte Rosa.

(From Mischabels Hut.) Peaker, Marriott and Milner made a guideless ascent of the Ulrichshorn, having decided not to attempt an ascent of the Siidlenspitze and Nadelhorn because of a sudden snowstorm.

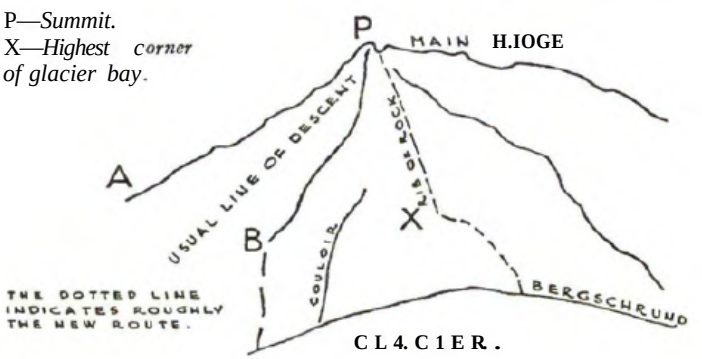
E. C. W. RUDGE

PORTJENGRAT

What is probably a new route, according to local opinion at Saas Fee, was made on August 10th, 1937, by Drs J. H. B. Bell, S.M.C., and T. R. Burnett by descending direct from the gap just short of the Summit block of the Portjengrat direct to the glacier on the Almageller Alp side. Viewed from the Plattje the route seems to be perfectly direct, and the shortest way down to the glacier :

POH.TJE.NORM , AS 5 6 EN F FLO M PLATTJE. .

P—*Summit.*
X—*Highest corner of glacier bay.*



Usual descent is to snovifield on angle **APB.**

Time taken from Summit to glacier about 3 hours.

The descent was to begin with down a long rib of slabby rock which appeared practicable as far as it could be seen from above, but the run out on the glacier below was not visible from the summit. On the right of the rib (looking down) in the angle PBX was a couloir, filled with ice and hard neve above and narrowing to a stream course below to the point where the stream poured over the vertical cliff above **the** glacier.

We found the rib a little difficult and traversing to and fro was occasionally necessary. The last man had one or two anxious moments at several points, as the rocks shelved outwards and holds were few. About two-thirds of the way down or more, we approached the end of the rib where it plunged down to the glacier in a vertical cliff.

Here it would have been possible, I think, to cross the couloir on our right (looking down), above the cliff, and try to find a way down on the next rocky mass on its right. However, we chose to look over the left edge of our buttress and found a fairly easy way down very steep rocks with good holds, though the rocks were a bit loose. We were then able to traverse more to the left and downwards on loose, debris-covered but easy rock and so reach the furthest-up tongue of snow from the glacier. This we descended carefully and finally had to negotiate a kind of double bergschrund with a steep snow face below it (uncrevassed).

J. H. B. BELL

THE AMENITIES FRONT IN 1937

The annual newsletter of the Friends of the Lake District contains an admirable and interesting account of all that has been done by that very active body during the past year. If all Fell and Rock members were to join the Friends, as they ought to do, there would be no need for me to make my own survey of the year's work, but the Editor thinks that until that consummation be achieved he must have his own pages on the subject.

The amount of actual preservation has been substantial. The National Trust secured the one outstanding gap in the Buttermere-Crummock preservation scheme by the purchase of Rannerdale Farm—which is still to be paid for if any wealthy member is looking for a worthy object for his money. The greatest portion of the Marshall estate at Ullswater was purchased by Mr Francis Scott of Windermere for preservation. The Club had the privilege of welcoming him and showing its appreciation at the Dinner. Several of the lots had been sold previously, and these are probably for the most part in no immediate danger of spoilation, though on a few of them building is quite possible. Only less important was the Robinson sale in Langdale. Here two important farms in Little Langdale were secured by Mrs Heelis, and Mr Norman Birkett, K.C., respectively for preservation. Mr Kelly, planning officer to the Lakes District Council bought the important Raw Head, near Dungeon Ghyll, but this is said to have changed hands since. Several lots sold in the middle part of the valley may eventually be built on, but the houses should be few and harmless if well sited. In Borrowdale our fellow members, R. B. Graham and I. S. Osborne bought the important Chapel House Farm in the fork between the Stonethwaite and Seatoller roads. Covenants against developments have since been given to the National Trust.

The formation of Lake District Farm Estates Ltd., the idea of which was conceived at the Windermere meet 1937, should provide a means whereby many lovers of the District can use part of their savings to make it safe from unsightly development. The company has been incorporated under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, so that the total share holding of any member is £200 in £5 shares. Debentures are however, issued at 2 per cent, or free of interest. The company will purchase farm lands at an agricultural valuation, and enter into restrictive covenants with the National Trust, thus protecting the countryside from sporadic building development, unsightly afforestation, quarrying and other activities which are only compatible with Lakeland amenities if properly controlled. It should be possible to pay about three per cent, on the capital, and as the assets will be farm lands and buildings, investors will obtain a good security. It is probable that there are many Fell and Rock members who would like

to support the scheme : they should apply to Messrs. Arnold, Greenwood & Son, solicitors, Kendal.

It may be mentioned that the company has already a strong committee of management, representing both local and outside interests :—Mr Francis Scott (chairman), Rev. H. H. Symonds (vice-chairman) Lord Howard of Penrith, Mr Norman Birkett, K.C., Mr C. S. **Orwin** (head of the Agricultural Department at Oxford), Mr A. M. Carr Saunders (director of the London School of Economics), Mr Austin Porrit (Grange-over-Sands), Professor R. S. T. Chorley, Mr Bruce Thomson (National Trust), Mr W. F. Ascroft (C.P.R.E.) and Mr. O. S. Macdonnel (author of ' George Ashbury,' representing the Friends of the Lake District). The first property, High Wallabarrow Farm, near Seathwaite Dunnerdale, was purchased in November. It is an exquisite corner of that beautiful valley, and is rumoured to have been under consideration by the Forestry Commissions for a nursery.

Substantial progress has been made by the Standing Committee for National Parks, on which the Club is represented by R. S. T. Chorley and the Alpine Club by G. R. Speaker. It is understood that the Government is favourably disposed to take action provided that a satisfactory financial basis can be found. The claims of individual areas have not yet come up for official discussion, but the advantages of the Lake District are well urged in an excellent pamphlet which has been published by the Friends of the Lake District.

The Forestry Commission is hard at work planting at Birks in Dunnerdale. Some attempt is being made to break the edges of the plantation with small groups of deciduous trees, and it will be interesting to see how this works. Meanwhile negotiations are still going on with the Commissioners as to the fate of this area, and it is possible that further concessions may be granted. The afforestation of the large new estate just acquired by the Commissioners south of Hawkshead is not so serious, as much of the area is already planted, and its scenery is not so typical of Lakeland.

There has been a great deal of trouble over electricity pylons, mostly on the outskirts. Two lines however, have been projected which come into the heart of Lakeland. The Ullswater scheme proves that a commercial undertaking can appreciate the importance of preservation, as the company in question buried the whole of that part of its line which goes along Place Fell, and would otherwise have marred the delightful view from the Lake. The Borrowdale scheme showed quite a different attitude. The undertakers attempted in the first place to come to an arrangement with the local committee of objectors under which if it had been carried out they would have got their line buried for nothing. The whole story of this remarkable transaction is set out in full in the News Letter of the Friends, and is well worth careful study. The undertakers, finding that if they proceeded they

would have to face a public inquiry, finally withdrew completely, after trying to put the blame for their failure on the Amenities movement. One of the most distressing features of the whole affair was the vandalistic attitude of the Cockermouth District Council. When a local authority which is supposed to be the guardian of the district can behave in this way the case for a National Park authority with overriding powers becomes irresistible.

The Club has also taken part in important discussions designed to prevent or restrict building development, at the valley heads. Negotiations are going forward with the various organisations concerned.

R. S. T. CHORLEY

IN MEMORIAM

J. H. DOUGHTY

In the passing of J. H. Doughty in 1936 many mountaineering Clubs suffered a great loss. It is always intriguing to know when and how and why a man felt the call of the hills. Usually it is a matter of chance—a chance of birth or environment or friendship. In Doughty's case it was the latter. Some of the greatest of mountaineers looked up at the mountains for the first time relatively late in life. Doughty was twenty-nine before he first went to the hills—the Lake District. From that time his holidays were invariably spent in the mountains both at home and abroad. He had an intimate knowledge of the hills and rocks of all Britain, and his fancy led him equally to the Low and the High Alps. Two years after this first visit to the Lake District he became a member of a mountaineering Club, and later joined others. He is one of the most brilliant examples of the value of the mountaineering Club to the would-be mountaineer, and in turn as the years went by he amply repaid his debt to his Club. Having served on many committees and having proved himself to be a great editor of the Rucksack Club Journal, he ultimately became its President.

His influence on the policies of his various clubs was phenomenal even when he was not in office. His powerful, genial, stimulating style of writing caused him to be eagerly sought after by editors of the journals of Clubs of which he was not a member. The *Manchester Guardian* took him as its reviewer of mountaineering books. He was the driving force of rock climbing guide books which do not bear his name. During years when his health was not really good he led mountaineering treks for the boys of his old Manchester Grammar School in various parts of this country and the Continent. Graduating at the University of Manchester, he took up the profession of teaching. His advice and help

were demanded by various eminent teaching bodies, and he was President of the Manchester Mathematical Society.

There were many other sides to his character and other spheres of activity, which can be easily found by anyone who cares to read the ' Hill Writings of J. H. Doughty,' collected by H. M. Kelly ; and a little insight into his outlook is contained in another article in this Journal. *W.H.H.*

WALTER BRUNSKILL

By the death of Walter Brunskill in the early part of 1937 we have lost another pioneer of climbing in the Lake District.

About 1890 and for some years afterwards he was often at Wasdale and was considered one of the best and safest climbers, and he often made expeditions with Dr Collie, Wickham King, John Robinson and others of that period. He was elected to the S.M.C. in 1892, to the A.C. in 1896, he was an Original Member of the Climbers Club, and he joined this Club in 1907, the year after its formation.

For many years he continued to climb both among the British mountains and in the Alps where his most frequent companion was Walter Barrow. He had for some years been unable to climb much but he kept up his membership of all the Clubs and frequently attended their meetings and Annual Dinners where he enjoyed seeing his old friends and hearing of the travels and expeditions of their successors.

Not very long after the great war he gave up his business at Darlington and settled at The Garth near Bowness. Mrs Brunskill (ne'e Miss Westmorland) who predeceased him had also been a climber and took part in one of the earliest ascents of the Pillar Rock (the third ascent by a lady).

He was one of those who helped to create and maintain the high traditions of the Club, and all of us are the poorer for his loss. G.S.

MRS J. R. WHITING

With the passing of Mrs Whiting of Wasdale Head on the 1 lth February, 1937, a well-known figure and a fine personality has gone from our midst. Her numerous friends will always remember her affectionately for her unfailing sympathy and practical help in cases of illness or distress.

She was born at Ulverston and on her mother's side came from Quaker stock, descendants of the Penns.

Through her brother, the Rev. T. Long, vicar of Brixham, whom she frequently accompanied on his visits to Wasdale Head, she came to know his great friend, John Ritson Whiting, and their marriage in 1909 was an ideally happy one. G.R.S.

The Editor has asked me, as one who has been privileged to enjoy the friendship of Mr and Mrs J. R. Whiting of Wasdale Head for more than 20 years, to write a few words in memory of Mrs Whiting, who passed to her rest last February.

To those of us who are entering or have already entered the autumn of life, visits to our beloved Lakes country must at times be tinged with feelings of sadness. The hills and the dales, it is true, are unchanged ; they mean as much to us as ever, and indeed, our affection for them increases as the years pass. But changes there must be, not in nature, but in ourselves and our friends. And the saddest of these is when someone whom we had come to think of as a permanent part of a much loved Lakeland setting is taken away.

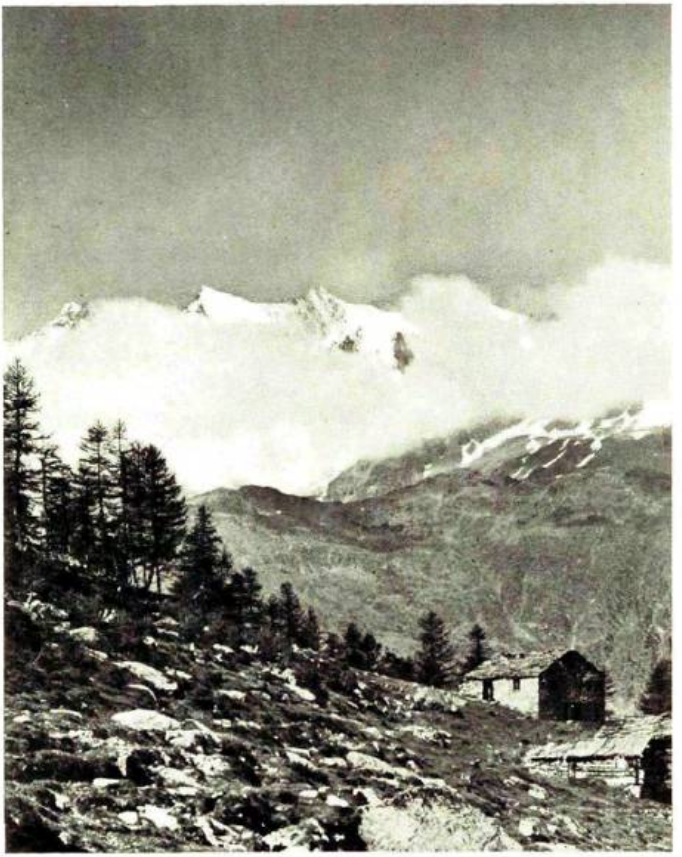
To some of us Mrs Whiting was ' Aunt Sally ' ; to many others, just ' Sally.' Devoted to children—she had none of her own—she was a second mother, and sometimes a very indulgent one, to many a small boy or girl. How often has one seen her coming suddenly from the storeroom to push an apple or a stick of chocolate into a child's pocket, with a quick ' There love ! ' Parents who were moving about the district or whose holidays were interrupted, would leave their children behind at the Wastwater Hotel, knowing that to the children it would be like another home, and to Mrs Whiting a real joy to ' mother ' them. And she mothered many who, like myself, were of her own generation. In a variety of little ways she showed us kindness born of the affection which we knew she had for us.

Impulsive by nature, she was too genuine to pretend that everyone's society was equally congenial to her. But her impulsiveness—accompanied as it often is in members of her sex by transparent sincerity and warmth of heart—was one of the characteristics which endeared her to her friends.

In the minds of many of us who look on Cumberland as our spiritual home, the memory of Sally Whiting will ever be linked with some of the happiest days of our lives. A.E.G.

' Now, go and wash your hands—properly. It's nearly dinner-time, and I won't wait.'

Even the President of the greatest of mountain-loving clubs is not exempt from reproof by our ' Mother of Climbers.' Well, she knew some of us as very callow novices among the fells, and though years pass and the



L. S. Coxon

MlSCHABEL
PEAKS

world changes we never forget the steady kindness she has so long continued to youngsters of our craft. We believe, yes, and know, that there is not a more kindly heart in the length and breadth of Cumberland.

Wherever climbers meet, the old brigade, the veterans, the middle-aged, the medium young, and even the new recruits will talk of her. And one has heard quaint yarns of her Cumbrian directness even when sheltering among the great boulders of Ben Nevis in far Lochaber. Well, then, other climbing districts may talk of their greater hotels, but there is only one ' Mother ' for climbers.

Not a word of petulance, not a protest has she for us, though she admits that the late return of climbing parties gives her many a worry. Often one thinks, after a ' night out ' on the fells, that it is the ' Mother ' of climbers who has had the worst hours. No wonder that some look back with peculiar emotion to the incidents which kept Wasdale out of bed to the hours of dawn, and the hot sustaining soup which was awaiting almost ere the threshold was crossed. ' We're very wet and dirty.' ' Yes, I know, but take that soup now and then get off to bed.'

Sometimes one wonders what tale our ' Mother ' could tell. Does she receive the confidences, business and otherwise, of climbing lasses just as she has always done of the climbing lads ? If she remembers all we have confided, what a memory must be hers ! Easily a winter will pass while she is ' thinking on.' Lads there are in far-off lands who regularly remember her great-hearted kindness, and there are sacred memories of those gallant lads, youthful and older, who never returned from the Great War.

' Mother's ' discipline is strong; she gives liberty of the kitchen to but few—and they are not always the climbers famous in the outer world. When you see one, standing calmly on the hearthrug, and peacefully garnering ' Mother's ' wisdom, think of him as one who knows something of the dale, of the happy old times, of Cumberland talk, though his ' twang ' may be badly mixed by years of misuse.

Well, well—in years past we thought of ' apron-strings ' when ' Mother ' expressed dislike of long and perhaps hazardous trips. She wished gently that we should ' learn to know better,' but alas ! we have not. It is still a delight to go the full limit of our strength among the hills, no matter how tired we may appear at evening. ' You'll never learn to know better,' says ' Mother ' in despair. One does not come to the Cumberland hills to remain in the hollows and mope.

To say good-bye to the ' Mother ' of climbers is impossible. ' Au revoir ' ; truly we shall meet again, as we have met her again and again in the long toll of years. Her name has always a sweet fragrance for the lovers, young and old, of Cumberland's eternal hills. H.P.C., 1926.

' Whitehaven News,' May 6th, 1926.

THE LONDON SECTION

Once again, during the year at all the outdoor meets there has been a large attendance of members, fully vindicating, if that were needed, the semi-detached existence of the London Section. There were no indoor meets or lectures because of the difficulty of finding a suitable hall while the Alpine Club was getting its new home ready.

For some time past there has been a steady increase in the number of new members, most of whom vocational duties have brought south, and they appear to be as glad to link up with the London group of exiled Fell and Rock members, as the London Section are to welcome them.

With only one or two exceptionally bad periods during March and late in November the weather during 1937 was good. In March both Fanshawe's walk in Essex and Graham Wilson's in Kent were spoilt by the founderous state of the footpaths. Equally unfavourable conditions underfoot, aggravated by incessant gale and rain, interfered with the enjoyment of that otherwise attractive country between Eynsford and Westerham in November—nevertheless it was held to be useful training for soft snow slopes in the Alps !

After the bad spell in March, the weather soon took up again and from April onwards almost every walk was favoured by fine weather such as for instance marked Ronald Walker's on the 2nd May, which ran through rarely visited Chiltern country by Rossway and Dudswell and back to Berkhamsted, where, at Whitehill Cottage, Mr and Mrs Osborne Walker entertained all to tea.

A week earlier many members, reinforced by quite a number who had come from Manchester to attend the Dinner of the London Section of the Rucksack Club, had joined the Rucksack Dinner Walk around Harpenden, an occasion that was welcomed by the many who were eager to make the most of their Manchester friends over the short week-end. It was a very well organised first lead for Herbert Coates.

On 23rd May Mr and Mrs Roger Stenning arranged a most successful housewarming party at the Three Oaks, Oxted, which was preceded by a circular walk based on Oxshott and led by Roger Stenning.

Perfect weather in June made the next two walks, one in country around Henley and the other into the Cotswolds, especially enjoyable. The latter excursion was the only long-distance meet held and it started from Kingham, touched Stow-on-the-Wold and ran through the most charming country, entirely unspoilt as yet by the speculative builder, for about 1G miles. That the unbroken score of happy strollers safely reached Moreton-in-the-Marsh in time for dinner which had been ordered, was due not so much to Hardwick's excellent knowledge of the country as to the skilful direction of Brenda Ritchie, whose home county it is.

After a few successful meets in September and October, the weather went from bad to worse in November, but it rallied sufficiently to make the week-end of the 4th and 5th December safe for the Section's Annual Meet—both the Dinner and the Walk.

The 18th Annual Dinner held at the Connaught Rooms on the 4th December was well attended by members from all parts who as usual brought many friends and helped in the happiest manner possible to bridge the long gap between Windermere and Easter meetings. The occasion gave the Club an opportunity to bid God speed and safe return to the Everest party represented by H. W. Tilman, the leader, Frank Smythe, Dr Charles Warren, and Peter Lloyd, as well as to welcome that intrepid explorer Ella Maillart, home from Central Asia, and also to honour a friend of the Lake District from China, Chiang Yee, who has expressed his admiration for it not only in prose and poetiy but in his charming paintings. Gen. Bruce proposed the toast of ' The Guests and Kindred Clubs,' to which Miss Maillart made a spirited and interesting response for the Guests, and E. S. Herbert an extremely witty and entertaining reply for the Alpine Club and Kindred Clubs. J. F. Huntington proposed ' The Club, the President and the Chairman ' in felicitous phrase and the President briefly replied. John Dower made an appeal on behalf of the newly formed London Section of the Friends of the Lake District. Dr Hadfield having as Chairman of the London Committee proposed and secured the re-election of that energetic body by this General Meeting, all joined in the chorus of the Club Song, led with accustomed vigour by its author, the indispensable Darwin Leighton.

Next day, Ronald Walker again took charge of a large party on the Dinner Walk from Tring to Dagnal for lunch and back over the Common to Whitehill Cottage at Berkhamsted where all were made heartily welcome at the Osborne Walkers' hospitable board, and full justice was done to all the good things they had provided for over thirty friends. A warm and satisfying note to finish the year on.

BROTHERHOOD

Miracle of miracles
stirring within me while asleep.
come, brethren, come, we shall create a new religion,
an inexpressible religion,
having something deeper than love,
something greater than sacrifice,
something more boundless
than immortality.

Kostes Palamas

(Translated by Theodore Gianakoulis.)

Kostes Palamas, one of **the** great modern Greek poets, has been translated into nearly **all** the European languages, and he is the only Greek writer proposed tor the Nobel **Prize** for **Literature.**

EDITOR'S NOTES

With the opening of Brackenclose the Club has given lasting proof of the earnest desire of its members to afford the younger members facilities to make fuller use of the Cumbrian Crags—the finest training ground for the greater tasks that await them in the higher altitudes of the Alps and elsewhere.

Also, by throwing wide the friendly door of Brackenclose to other clubs, it is at long last able to return the hospitality so generously extended to this Club in the past ; and by the further inclusion of clubs less fortunately equipped, as the Fell and Rock previously was, it will contact and serve an ever-widening circle of true and enthusiastic devotees of the fells.

No matter how difficult it may be for some to reconcile with their Club loyalty what to them may seem like an unwanted intrusion on the age-old peace of that sequestered dalehead, Brackenclose has undoubtedly increased the Club's usefulness to its members and all should loyally help to free the building from its remaining financial encumbrances.

The names of many will be remembered in connexion with the inception of the scheme, but none more gratefully than W. G. Milligan's, to whose energy and far-sighted determination its ultimate success was largely due.

The Club has done more than inaugurate a hut or a club-house as a mere addition to its amenities : like the ancient stone circles and the solitary remnants of the pre-historic scrub, the oaks, among which stand its solid foundations, Brackenclose, by which name it shall be exclusively known, is a symbol of fellowship which time shall not alter.

The provision of inexpensive club quarters, for **the** reduction of hut fees will not be long delayed, removes one of the difficulties which confronted younger members of limited means. But there remains an equally urgent problem : how to assist that numerous band of young enthusiasts eager

for their first climbing experience. To solve it a proposal is now before the Committee to authorize the establishment of special sections by groups of members, somewhat on the lines of the London Section. It is also proposed to create an Associate Membership which shall be open, without climbing qualifications, to properly proposed and seconded candidates who signify their intention to take up rock climbing or fell walking. A reduced annual subscription is suggested—no entrance fee—for an associate membership lasting normally for three years, during which the young associate would be expected to qualify. The right to attend Club meets and to use Brackenclose at the same rate as other members is advocated as a privilege of associateship.

The reappearance of Climbs Old and New reveals a healthy activity in the field of exploration during the last two years. Nineteen new climbs, most of them of a high standard of difficulty or even severity, and distributed over a wide range, constitute an unusually good effort for the short period under review. And the effort is enhanced by an almost complete immunity from accident. It speaks well for the fine judgment of the leaders, for the vigilance of seconds, and last but not least for the perfect ropes used, that slips were extremely rare and that when they did occur the safe manipulation of the shoulder-belay by an alert second was always in the end successful, as on Laddow, Clogwyn Du'r Arddu, and Mickledore Grooves. In the case last mentioned the sliding away of the entire grass ledge on which the leader had landed after climbing this exceptionally severe course, precipitated him down over 200 feet of the vertical cliff and only a good rope superbly handled by the perfect second, averted a fatal ending. Because of the lesson to be drawn from this accident to two outstandingly fine and safe climbers, the following details may not be out of place :

On September 18th, 1937, Wilfrid Noyce set off from Buttermere to climb on Scafell, deciding to make the attempt on Mickledore Grooves.

There had been rain and the broken rocks were running, even the slab face being still covered with water. He led up the first 130 feet into the turf ledge on the slab, just round from the large platform. The second man took a good position, with a belay just to one side of the turf and Noyce led up the slab and the groove, looping his rope round the doubtful belay near the top of the groove. The move out to the grass ledge on the right was very difficult under the conditions. Noyce changed his grease-choked socks for another pair let down to him by two friends who had been climbing on the main face. He then moved over, on to the grass ledge, and the entire ledge slid off. It is about 80 feet above the last ledge and with the longish loop over the belay there was at least a 90 feet length of rope out. The belay peeled straight off as Noyce fell and he continued down the wall some 15 feet to one side of the second man.

The second man had the rope round one arm, a little spare and then locked over the shoulder, with the outgoing rope laid along the back of the grass ledge. This took a little of the strain of the fall. The second held on for a moment taking in a little more rope, and when he too was pulled off the belay the ropes held. The stretch of the rope itself, now 100 feet or more of it, after an appreciable interval, took Noyce to the ground. The bones of the face were badly broken, one hand had bones broken, and one leg had cuts and scrapes. The face wounds were caused by an upward glancing blow from a ledge while falling free.

The two other climbers went at once to the rescue, did all they could and brought up a stretcher-party. The injuries and the shock were very severe, necessitating two major operations : but it is now certain that Noyce will be fit again before the end of the summer.

The rope consisted of a long length of new alpine club rope and a short length of a less-new rope tied together. In two places there was only one strand left, the other strands having parted.

The sodden state of the grass at the time is instanced by the fact that the turf ledge by the second man had detached itself right away at the back with the force of the rope dragging over it.

The work of setting up a First Aid Organization in all important British Mountaineering centres has been completed with commendable speed and thoroughness. An immense amount of detail work was put in by Dr Lapage, the chairman, and the other officers of the First Aid Committee of Mountaineering Clubs, for which all climbers will be profoundly grateful.

Dr Lapage's article contains information about First Aid,

its application, and the most direct lines of evacuation of casualties for the three largest climbing centres, i.e., the Lake District, North Wales, and Scotland, and it is proposed to issue a small reprint of these useful data to be issued with all Climbing Guide Books to be published in the future, so as to make them as widely known as possible.

W. Allsup, a Fell and Rock member since 1911 and a founder of the Himalayan Club, writing from Shillong, Assam, puts in a plea for its younger members eager to gain some rock-climbing experience while home on leave. There should be no lack of helpers and if intending visitors will write to the Secretary or the Editor, details of monthly meets of the Club will be sent. This applies equally to mountaineering clubs in New Zealand or Africa.

The contributors of articles and photographs in the Lakeland Number will no doubt be gratified to hear that over 600 copies were bought by an interested outside public. The first issue of 1,200 was soon exhausted and considerable inroads were made into the second printing of 500.

The Club is greatly indebted to the Custodian of Lantern Slides, F. H. F. Simpson, as well as to his coadjutor C. D. Milner, for bringing together a very useful and interesting collection of over 700 slides. There are great gaps however, such as the Eastern and the Julian Alps and the Carpathians, not to mention mountaineering centres outside Europe, which it should be possible to fill ; all that is needed is the loan of the negatives and the Custodian will do the rest. And now that colour photography has made such great strides the Club collection ought to be enriched by at least a few examples of Lake District scenery in colour.

The account of the Saas Fee Meet by E. C. W. Rudge makes good reading. The fullest advantage was taken of

good weather conditions and most of the major as well as the usual expeditions were made by various members and their friends. There were forty-two in all ! Such numbers almost exceeded the capacity of the leader and treasurers—exceptional though it must be—and the Club's warm appreciation is due to H. J. W. France and the two treasurers, R. H. Fanshawe and C. S. Coxon.

In order to lighten the tasks of these officials in the future, two meets running concurrently have been decided on for the Fourth Alpine Meet to be held from 30th July to 14th August inclusive, one at the Fafleralp, Loetschental, and the other at the Berliner-Huette in the Zillertal. (Details have been posted to all members ; the Zillertal Meet has since been cancelled.)

It is to be hoped that Himalayan exploration may be brought a big step forward in 1938, when attempts will be renewed both on Everest and Nanga Parbat.

The 7th Everest Expedition under the leadership of H. W. Tilman is composed entirely of men whose names are bound up with Himalayan exploration, viz., Eric Shipton, Frank Smythe, N. E. Odell, Peter Oliver, Dr Charles Warren, and Peter Lloyd, and given a succession of five or six fine clays the supreme struggle for the highest summit on the earth's crust may at last be brought to a happy and final conclusion ; with Everest climbed Himalayan exploration will then settle down to a long period of peaceful progressive expansion.

The German expedition to Nanga Parbat under Dr Paul Bauer is already on its way to Mansehra or Abbottabad where headquarters will be based. The American Alpine Club has sent an expedition out to Kashmir with the object of further exploration of the Karakoram Range.

All interested in mountaineering will follow the movements of these expeditions with the keenest interest and sympathy, and wish them the success they will all have richly deserved.

The narrative of an early ascent of Mt Blanc by H. M. Atkins was kindly lent to the Editor by Mrs C. M. Tatham, who found it amongst her grandmother's papers, and it made such interesting reading that it seemed worth while putting it into print.

Both as a poet and as a painter Mr Chiang Yee succeeds in his article in unfolding a delightful picture of Lakeland as he sees it. It will provide members with an excellent introduction to his book on the Lake District, which Mrs Winthrop Young has reviewed in this Journal. In Cumberland Mr Chiang found relief from the strain of scholastic work and he chose to express his appreciation of that by giving his original painting of Derwentwater, which is reproduced with his article, to the Club. His generous gift is greatly valued by members, who hope to welcome him in their midst whenever he turns again north for respite among the mountains.

As is well known, mountains have always deeply influenced the lives of our friends the Chinese. This is charmingly exemplified in the poem of another Chinese poet and philosopher, Po Chii-I, written over a thousand years ago, which has been reprinted from Arthur Waley's ' 700 Chinese Poems ' by permission of Constable & Co.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the ' Fell and Rock Journal '

SIR,

The object of this letter is to suggest that an effort should be made to rebuild the programme of smaller meets in order to bring a wider selection of our members into touch with Club life. For the present purpose I leave out of account the well-attended Bank Holiday meets.

The average climbing club may perhaps have a membership of two or three hundred, but an active membership of only fifty or sixty. Our own Club has scarcely more, if those who attend meets is reckoned.

A climbing club is held together by its members' personal knowledge of one another, and, apart from the difficulty of management, its very basis would be destroyed if its size were swelled beyond the few score above mentioned with the remaining hundred or two who represent past generations of similar character. (If an association exists not as a sociable one, but for definite public objects, such as preservation of the Lake District amenities, it may of course hold together satisfactorily although its members are not generally acquainted, but in that case its only *raison d'etre* would be the active pursuit of those objects.) In the case of a mountaineering club, however, mutual acquaintance and confidence is more necessary than for, say, a sports club, and it is presumed that there is a general wish to maintain this as a feature of our Club notwithstanding its large membership. We have no lack of young, enthusiastic and well qualified new members, but it might be wished that more was seen of them, and of the membership generally, at meets.

The popularity of a meet depends in the long run on the character given to it by its leader. If there is no real meet-leader, or if a stereotyped list of centres is merely set against the names of a number of committee members who may have no particular interest in the place, its programme or date, the result must inevitably be the gradual decline of attendance, or its restriction to a small coterie.

May I suggest, therefore, that volunteers from outside the committee should be encouraged to take meets, and to propose their own time, district, class of accommodation, and special programme ? The more diverse the accommodation and arrangements the better. Each such meet, however small to begin with, would possess a motive and a distinctive character, and would in time become popular, at least by serving the needs of some part of our membership, which is in any case a very diverse one. (There must at the present time be not one but many coteries of members who are in the habit of holding what are in effect informal meets.) Any additional trouble in organisation is no more than the necessary consequence of keeping up a living programme rather than a fossilized one ; and such trouble,

moreover, could be passed on to each separate meet-organiser, as is done by other clubs. I should like to see, for example, a meet in the eastern part of the district, a (perhaps high-level) camping meet, a training meet for novices (such as are so successfully held by the Wayfarers), a re-union meet for older members, or a meet with a special programme of fell-walking (like the Rucksack Club's Shap-Wasdalc walk last summer).

I can see no objection to meets anywhere outside our own district being made a part of the Club's programme, if it is thought that our own members would attend them. The Club's abandonment of its Grasmere Meet this year resulted in an informal meet in Wales. It is this sort of thing which offers the beginning we need.

No-one can say there is no demand for a given type of meet until the matter has been tested by providing the conditions which, as before mentioned, are needed for the success of all meets. It may safely be admitted that a merely perfunctory start is not enough, but each meet-leader should try to interest his own friends in attending the meet.

I hope it is unnecessary to say that no reflection is intended on the Committee by any of these remarks, which are only allowed to appear in this public form in order to stimulate suggestions from others.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
E.W.H.