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A RIDE IN ICELAND

By E. W. HODGE

The parsonage of Skutustadhir, a pretty little concrete house in the Dutch style, stands on the shores of Myvatn. The tenant, like most of his clerical brethren, is telephone operator, sheep-farmer, and occasional inn-keeper, in addition to his apparently quite nominal parish duties. Here we came on pony-back, gradually ascending the green slopes above the many-legged Eyjafjordhur, till we looked down two thousand feet on the little town of Akureyri opposite, backed by the snowy Windheimajokull, which rises more than twice as high. Most of the little streamlets among the meadows were bordered by a blaze of pansies, and every half-dozen miles we would pass a farm-house, sometimes a new concrete one, and sometimes one with walls and roof of growing turf. These houses are wainscotted inside with wood, and have passages running through the thickness of the turf, with an effect (from the outside) like the tumulus of a Celtic hero, or (from the inside) a coal mine. Over the wild stony heath and down into Fnjoskadalur, where grows one of the only three woods in Iceland which rises more than man-high.

Myvatn is one of the beauty spots of Iceland. The late Mr. Collingwood maintained that the island's scenery, at any rate that of the inhabited regions, closely resembled that of the Lake District, but the only point of likeness one can easily call to mind is that Iceland is a sheep country; yet neither sheep nor men in Iceland live on the hills, and apart from an immense difference of human geography, plant-life, and orography, Iceland, owing to the manifold effects of the present-day action of volcanoes, glaciers, and high winds, has a certain desert sharpness of form and colour. Skye (except the Coolin) is a nearer parallel to some parts.

Myvatn is in some ways an epitome of the country. Round the shallow, shapeless lake, with its flat shores and forty miles of black-stranded coast-line, isolated mountains of several rather absurdly contrasting shapes and materials stand at intervals. There are several small extinct volcanoes, for all the world like pit-dumps. There are rather uninteresting whale-backed hills, like Pendle, the snow-wreaths trailing down their bare sides

like the letters of some Mussulman alphabet. In the distance a cone, lonely, high, and graceful, has no need of steepness to lend it grandeur. Eight miles away, opposite us at the far side of the lake, is Hlidharf jail, a curious replica of Great Gable, even to the semblance of the Styhead Pass ; but the Napes Ridges are far short of those of the original. Thousands of ducks are allowed to breed by Myvatn, for their eggs. Squadrons of phalaropes ride at anchor on it, whilst swans, thirty-pound projectiles, hurtle through the air with long neck stretched straight out in front, emitting their much-admired note, which nearly resembles the sound of a cheap, rather high-pitched bulb motor horn.

The parson had negotiated for me with a local farmer to guide me to Dettifoss, perhaps the biggest waterfall in Europe. These local guides are expensive—all the short summer is for them busily occupied in getting in their hay crop, for their sheep and cows have to be housed throughout the winter. A pound a day is the least they will take. This guide of mine is a very rough specimen without a word of English or even Danish, but perhaps broad Cumbrian might go down with him—for did not the Reverend Mr. Ellwood publish a little book (English Dialect Society, 1877), in which he listed nearly four hundred words of Cumbrian, Westmorland, and North Lancashire use derived from the Icelandic ?

• * *

Along the East side of Myvatn we ride, through the maze of lava, with some of the biggest and most fantastic lava shapes I have seen: a really delightful territory, with occasional birch thickets in its shelter and deep pockets of turf, soft and lawn-like as those in the recesses of the not-dissimilar Quiraing of Skye. Our dog bays off the troops of wild ponies, who would invite our own horses to play with them. Like all other Iceland farm-dogs, he is a prick-eared animal with short sturdy legs and a tail curling over his back. His colour is black, like most of his kind, though a drab brown and a silvery-grey are, perhaps, more truly the original colour of the species. I suppose he will have to run the better part of a hundred miles to-day and to-morrow.

We call for a bite at the last farm. They are busy weighing some hampers of the red lake char, on which they largely live. The two dogs of the farm at once take our own dog in charge,

as a couple of policemen would deal with a dangerous criminal, one on either side of him, half a pace behind, growling savagely, their muzzles close to his throat, and sniffing him contemptuously. He dares no more than to shew his teeth, for they would be on him at once if he were to attempt to escape or bark. To keep him out of trouble he is shut, a very unhappy dog, into the room where I am eating skyr. He does not notice me till I speak to him, and is then pathetically grateful to be spoken to. From that time on he regards me with strong affection, which is not altogether to my taste, as I don't want to catch liver parasite from his dirty mouth.

Soon after leaving here, we begin to climb the low pass, Namaskardh, gloomy as Whinlatter. The sulphur-stained hillsides are of bare, porous tufa, of a pale salmon colour. **Just** here and there, a tiny steaming runnel can be seen, its sides, within a few inches of the water, green with a little slimy-looking vegetation. This pass is the gateway to the plains of East Iceland, of which there is a glimpse ahead. But we bear left at the bottom, along the base of the hill we have descended, and gradually the space between this hill and the one opposite narrows into an ascending valley. The slants of the evening sun yellow and lengthen, but hours of riding lie before us to a satisfactory camping place, and we must put our best foot foremost.

The green turf over which we have passed for a few minutes, soon disappears, and we are on black cinder and greyish sand. Every shallow valley is terminated by a short rise, whose summit only discloses the beginning of another valley, not much more interesting. The hills are unimpressive, like those of the Scottish lowlands, but their total absence of vegetation gives them a certain boldness—the eye must needs travel, for there is little detail to entice it to rest. My horses persistently lag behind—when urged they spurt momentarily and fall into their slow gait almost at once, or else merely pretend to mend their pace with a silly, stumbling trot, that makes one think of a malingering child. Not used to this going among cinders and rocks, I am uneasy at the thought of laming them. The farmer ranges far ahead, as is the custom of Iceland guides, not bothering his head much about his companion. Gradually, gradually, we rise to a level with the dirty white snow patches. But we do not come at the same time to verdure, not even to a stream. This is

what one misses more almost than anything else in Iceland, the greenness of hills. Had he known Iceland, Wordsworth could not have said that there were there "two voices, each a mighty voice" for the mountains are desert, and there are no mountaineers. They are the resort of trolls alone. Every hour we halt a few minutes, at the nearest approach to pasture we can find. One of such places is almost on the col, where lies a lakelet, over which a solitary tern flutters and dashes. From here we can look back south-west. Boarfell, Sellandafjall, and their sisters, lie far off, great hog's backs, in isolation, seeming near in the clear air, over the vast plains. At last we have a clear view to the east over the plains through which the great river Jokulsa á Fjollum somewhere flows and on which is situate the Dettifoss which we seek. The group of hills among which we are is more jumbled. The southern extension is a ridge, utterly bare, and sharply outlined, the very corpse of a mountain. Under its eastern flank steams a row of sulphur pits; as they might be the sores which caused its death; but it has none of the precipitousness or shattered pinnacles of a true mountain. One could almost lead a pony up it.

We descend a gully which, so far as appearance goes, might be in hell, a bottom of pale slime, between deep banks of sharp-edged scoriae and black cinder. Up to us, picking our way over this difficult bit, swirl tongues of mist which, with the end of day, have materialised in a twinkling. We must hurry or we and our horses will never reach our destined patch of grass, and will have to spend the night up here among the cinders, without water. My horses do not make the speed of the farmer's, so, at the foot of the steep place, he lends me his big white one, nearly the size of a European horse. As before, I lead my baggage horse by the halter. My new mount is perfectly fresh. What commands he understands and obeys I do not know. He ambles, swinging both legs of the same side together, as Icelandic riding horses are taught to do. This is much more comfortable than the incessant trotting, to which the speed of the baggage horses otherwise condemns one. As we scramble out of each of the gullies the timid old baggage horse hesitates to descend the opposite brink, and nearly pulls me out of my saddle. (These animals always seem to go uphill much more cheerfully than down). On the level, too, he can hardly keep up. My spectacles

are quite obscured by the thickening mist, and so I can't see what is coming. Every now and again my foot is knocked out of the stirrup by scraping past a large boulder or a rootlet in the dry gully which for the most part forms our road. But what is really occupying my mind is the prospect of a drink. At last we are there. We find ourselves in the midst of grass, close under the mountain-side; there is the sound of clear water, chuckling aloud in its hidden, narrow bed; and suddenly, of all unlooked-for things there looms out of the mist the shape of a deserted farm-cabin. With what delight one sees such simple things, cannot be imagined without the impression of preliminary hours of desert travel. A trip to Iceland is worth while alone for the keenness which it gives to one's appreciation of common English landscape. Indeed, one admires with an almost too grateful humility.

Now the few minutes of unloading are impatiently endured, whilst one longs to throw oneself down and sleep. And after a cautious inspection, by matchlight, of the inside of the hut, to make sure there are no hidden snags such as dirt, dead sheep, or even a dead man, one forgets, in the shelter of four walls, the lonely landscapes of the day, and hardly thinks of anything more at all until, in the early morning, the cold of the earth floor striking up through the bedding convinces that there is no advantage in lying longer. The view outside, on the side away from the hill, discloses in the sunshine a wide plain of hummocks of thin grass, willow-roots, and patches of sand. Perhaps in two, or perhaps in three hours riding over this we shall come to the great river. I breakfast off sandwiches of leathery brown bread, eggs, smoked mutton, brown cheese made of whey—rather gritty—and the greasy dried lake char, with its red flesh streaked thinly with white fat. It is a very satisfying meal, and appetising if one happens to have earned it, but so strongly-flavoured that one is not likely to overeat. Towards mid-morning the landscape, rather against expectation, gets barer still, and the sun oppressively hot, until we are in a wilderness of more or less cubical blocks and columns of light-grey basalt. On its sandy floor, at long intervals, one sees a pink or white flower: thyme, sea-thrift, sea-campion, lyme-grass, mouse-ear chickweed, or the lovely little deep-red German catchfly with its erect, tubular stem tinged with purple. The going is very tedious here on account of

the stone debris. Climbing on a pile of boulders, one sees close at hand the river, but not a vestige of green on its banks. The colour of soap-suds, it ambles between banks of the same colour from nowhere, by way of nowhere in particular, to the empty, blue, sunny Arctic Ocean, receiving no tributary above ground in the last sixty-five miles of its course. Scrambling among sand-floored mazes of rectangular boulders, we come in another twenty minutes to the great fall. This is, in pattern, just like other Iceland waterfalls—or rather, it is one of the two alternative types which there are here. Everything in the scenery of this land is clear-cut and hard, as if on the morrow of Creation. Hills have vertical sides and flat tops or else are symmetrical cones. Only the lava keeps its feast of misrule, and even its wild disorder is only apparent in its details, not in the great sweeping lines, glacier-like, of its flows. This river seems to have little in the way of a valley, but suddenly it comes to a deep rift extending longitudinally up its bed, at once tumbles into it and continues its course between perpendicular, symmetrical cliffs of three hundred feet or so. (In the other type of waterfall, as one may describe it, there is a sudden transverse step of cliff, instead of a longitudinal one). All that remain of the half-conscious hopes with which one has been consoling oneself for hours are finally dashed. Not here the mysterious charm of damp mosses and ferns, of swirling bottle-green depths with their dance of bubbles; none of that which, in other places, attaches to waterfalls a sentiment not to be accounted for by the notion of so much mere water obeying gravity. No troths, I am sure, are plighted here. The opaque flood is not fit to drink : full of greyish clay and large grains of black sand, with pieces of pumice-stone floating in it, like dirty bath-water. A carpet, consisting exclusively of dandelions and yarrow, oddly clothes in places the black sand on top of the cliffs. At one place which it is possible to reach, the spray of the fall accumulates into a rivulet, where the wafer is slightly more drinkable than in the main river. I come across two or three old food-tins, very much rusted. Is it a month, or a season, since the last human being was here, or have whole years passed without intrusion?

It is time to be off. Leading the horses with difficulty up the slopes of deep black sand and through the rocky gates above the river, we emerge at last on the unbroken heath. Hours pass,

whilst the mountains of yesterday seem to maintain their relative position almost unchanged. Herdhubreidh too, the " broad-shouldered " mountain, with its vertical dark sides and cone of snow, looks but a few hours' ride over the green savannahs, but who knows what laborious sands, lavas, cliffs, fodderless deserts and rivers, lie hid in the folds of the intervening plateau ? My guide, with his own horses again, gains on me and gradually draws nearly out of sight. His hair a foot long, and the tent-pole, looking like a rifle, slung across his back, in silhouette remind one of the pictures of Buffalo Bill. Dozing on the horse's back in the blinding sun, only opening my eyes from time to time to orient myself, and to prevent the horses stopping altogether, I try to memorise Icelandic phrases, or just to think of nothing. Sometimes I glance down to see whether there is any change in the prevailing flora. Glaucous willow-scrub, black bear-berries, a thin sprinkling of grass, the lovely white *dryas octopetala* with its twisted bracts, the viviparous bistort and thyme, are the commonest plants on the drier places, whilst in the moister or more sheltered spots, one sees speedwell, the mauve-lilac-coloured alpine coltsfoot, the little pink stonecrop (*villosum*), the tiny and intensely blue alpine gentian, and the yellow bedstraw. The English moor-plants are not very much in evidence anywhere in Iceland. Probably the ground is too dry. The swamps only bear bog-bean or cotton-grass. The common butterwort is occasionally found, and rather rarely the frilly pink lousewort, but the milkwort is not found at all. As for birds, ptarmigan chicks scuttle in the undergrowth, and the golden plover, in his black summer waistcoat, hops about, and now and again a whimbrel. If one looks carefully, one finds the crackly brown Iceland Moss, which is really a lichen.

The white horse which I am leading is continually trying to nuzzle his fellow, and pushing his head round. This, repeated for the fortieth time in the hot sun, becomes annoying, so I change the saddle on to him; but he is not such a trier as the brown horse, although stronger. At last I give up all effort to urge him on, in a timeless content. Then, in the late afternoon, looking over into a dip of the ground exactly like all the others, I see a telegraph wire. These stand to Iceland almost in the relation of main-line railways: the firmest imprint of man on the whole landscape, so devoid even of bridle-

tracks, and a very useful guide in thick weather. This is, in fact, the main road to N. E. Iceland. The Namascardh, however, at present constitutes a barrier to the progress of motors any farther than Myvatn. A semblance to a railway is made closer by several parallel lines of runway made by the feet of horses. As we have now come level with the endmost spur of last night's hills, we change direction on joining the track, and a cool breeze meets us face to face. The horses, that one might have supposed tired out, take fresh heart, extending their noses to the breeze, as if in competition. Soon the track runs alongside a lava field, like an army of giant snails on the march. A dozen gentle switchbacks of the road, taken at a rapid trot, and we cross a clear stream four or five feet wide, tumbling between luscious grassy banks. Man, horse and dog greedily wet their noses in it, for we have seen no water at all since the great Jokulsà—no drinking water since last night. Not long after this we rejoin our route of the previous day, and hail its landmarks one by one with weariness and satisfaction.

The night sees us back at Skutustadhir, just as the evening mist puts an end to the burning day in half a dozen minutes, like a grey nebulous djinn suddenly let out of a bottle. I am in bed almost at once, without a thought back for the varied glories of the ride's scenery, which during the ensuing weeks loom larger and larger in the mind.

CARROCK FELL

BY MABEL BARKER

In the extreme north-east of Lakeland, the last or first of its mountains according to our direction of approach, stands Carrock Fell. It is part of the Skiddaw Massif, but surprisingly unlike the rest of that great group of moorlands, both in appearance and structure, for it is formed by a mass of intrusive volcanic rock, as though a part of the Borrowdale series found itself isolated here, far from home. Carrock is in fact one of the most interesting of all our fells, and that largely because of the variety of interests which it offers to its lovers.

It has no great cliff face for the climber, yet just misses having one, for the eastern face is steep and craggy enough. The rock is of excellent quality, and here are numbers of short climbs, varying from "very severes" (some still waiting to be led) to easy scrambles, and boulders upon which children may climb with tolerable safety. It is a good place for a short day or an "off" day, its climbs being more easily accessible from the road than any others in Lakeland; and yet this road is so little of a highway that the climbs on Carrock are known to only a small group, and have never yet, I think, been written up anywhere.

From every aspect, except the west, the fell is beautiful and striking in outline. On the west it is joined to High Pike by a long rounded shoulder, curving to the north and traversed by an ancient ridge-way, and several mining tracks; and cut into on the south by Brandy Gill, and on the north-west by Drygill and Driggeth—all of mining fame.

Carrock is, perhaps, known most intimately to the geologists and mineralogists. Its structures are very complicated. Sufficient here to say that it is a mass of granophyre and gabbro, cut off to the north from the Drygill Shales and Eycott lavas by the valley in which runs Carrock Beck; and to the south and east bounded by Skiddaw Slates in the Caldew Valley. The Caldew curves round to the north under the steep eastern face, the valley here being full of the peat and alluvium of Mosedale Moss, and abounding in evidences of violent glaciation. Most of the lower part of this face and the boulders beneath it ("The Apronful of Stones") are of splendidly coarse gabbro; nearer

the summit is the hard, pinkish granophyre. These dovetail into each other, and a geologist once described Carrock as being probably very like, in section, to one of those puzzling jazz sponge cakes. These main rocks are cut by faults, mineral veins and dykes; and there are now living in the villages at the foot of the fell families whose fathers came from Cornwall to work in its mines. Wolfram, tungsten, molybdenite, bismuth, tourmaline, corundum, copper pyrites, calcite in many forms, mica, and various ores containing lead, arsenic and iron are among the minerals found here—and some are found here only in all the British Isles.

But for many of us, the continuous human interest of this wonderful little fell outweighs that of its structure, for man has made his home here from a far distant past. Upon its summit (2,174 feet) is an enclosure of about seven acres. Its origin, purpose and age are unknown as yet. It may be an Iron Age Hill Fort, and if so is the only one in this part of Britain. All we are sure of is that the great dykes of loose stone were made by human hands, as was the double tumulus towards the east end of the enclosure. But on the moorlands round the feet of Carrock are very numerous tumuli and artificial heaps of stone—over 200 having been noted and mapped—and this last summer we had the thrill of a small bit of excavation. One tumulus proved to be a burial, containing burnt bones and much charcoal with a scrap of copper among them and some copper slag; while the other, originally a saucer-shaped depression, is a beautiful little stone structure—a hut, we hope. Carrock teems with unrevealed secrets and unsolved problems.

I climbed Carrock in deep snow, more years ago than I can quite remember. But I first went there to look for a playground with Franz Knefel on May 1st, 1927, and found one, and went again in August with George and Arthur Wood-Johnson; since when we have had many a day on its kindly rocks.

The climbing is all on the east face, and its rocks are divided into three groups, the best of them as yet explored being the farthest south. There is one gully, which I climbed in 1927 with Fred Power. I think it is often climbed by shepherds and seekers for the falcons which nest there; but it is wet and loose and not worth attention as a climb. North of it is a good buttress, giving three pitches of 30 or 40 feet each. I have only done it

alone and under bad conditions last September, and it is not yet measured, nor were the best routes taken.

South of the gully and starting from its scree is the "Eighty Foot Slab," a pleasant little climb, perhaps "difficult" for the lower part, but only deserving of its name if continued rather artificially by some ledges to the right. This mass of rock is bounded to the south by Further Gill Sike. Just north of this and exactly above Stone Ends Farm is one of the best climbs on Carrock; we call it the "Three Tier Climb," by virtue of making three pitches of it. The lowest of three small outcrops is an overhang, and only a moderate boulder problem; the second is a small buttress, negotiable in several ways from easy to very difficult. The third outcrop is the gem of the collection, having a chimney which long defied us, and cost at least one sprained ankle. The solution was found by Tony Musgrave last year and the whole climb led.

South of the Sike, the face of the hill is traversed by "The Trod," an old track which is lost in bog towards the top, but is evidently making for the south gate of the Fort. Below, it is traceable nearly to Linewath Ford (where a fine bronze spearhead was found), being cut by the present road. Above the Trod is an outcrop we christened "The Glacier," because when we first visited it in March, 1931, it gave pleasant ice-sport, and we longed for the axes we had not got. T. Musgrave, N. Ridyard and I climbed it on July 9th, 1932, and made the following notes:
The Glacier.

A variety of fairly difficult routes can be made up 50 feet of waterworn slabs. Whichever line is taken, it will end beneath a large overhang. A way from under this can be made upwards to the left. At the right end of the overhang it seems that a route could be made straight over it. The present party followed the crack beneath the overhang into the second of two small gullies, which was descended with difficulty (T.M.) and followed up to the top by 40 feet of easy scrambling (M.B.).

On the same day we explored some of the finer climbs to the south and beneath the Trod, and made the following notes:
Juniper Crack.

Situated just above a thorn tree above the largest boulders, a very obvious V crack. 10 feet difficult to a mantle shelf. 25 feet of slab.

Start in the corner and keep in it for 10 feet; then take to the wall on the right and work up a slanting crack to the arête. Exposed finish. Severe. 10 feet of easy scramble to a good belay on the right.

Crag Fast Arête.

A little north of the crack. Start to the right of an obvious black slab. About 40 feet, severe, to a belay. The wall above it is as yet unclimbed.

Slape Crags.

A slab face, south of the crack, obvious from the road, but a good way up. Route I. Arête on the left. 10 feet of easy climbing. 60 feet difficult. Continue for 20 feet to a holdless slab on the left marked by black streaks. Return to the arête and finish over the nose on the right. The finishing holds are bad, but there is a good belay on a large boulder. Route II. Slab to north of the arête. Start towards the right at the lowest point of the slab. Work up left, then right, then left again, all over small ledges to a fairly commodious ledge in the centre of the slab. Continue up towards the left, on exceedingly small ledges, to the arête just below the nose. Finish up the arête, or up the slab on the right.

The boulder problems are very numerous and varied. Three large boulders, A, B and C, south of the Sike and low down, are obvious, and the routes on them are now well-scratched. C has a tantalising traverse, not yet fairly led. "The Avenue" is a line of boulders parallel with the road. "The Chapel Stone," also near the road, is the most conspicuous of all the boulders and gives some easy routes. Further south than this our exploration has not yet gone. There is also much scrambling and many boulder problems on small outcrops at the top of the Trod.

A day on Carrock ends with a visit to Mrs. Lister at Stone Ends Farm. She ranks high indeed among hostesses for climbers. And for those who camp there is a site so lovely that I shall say no more about it here.

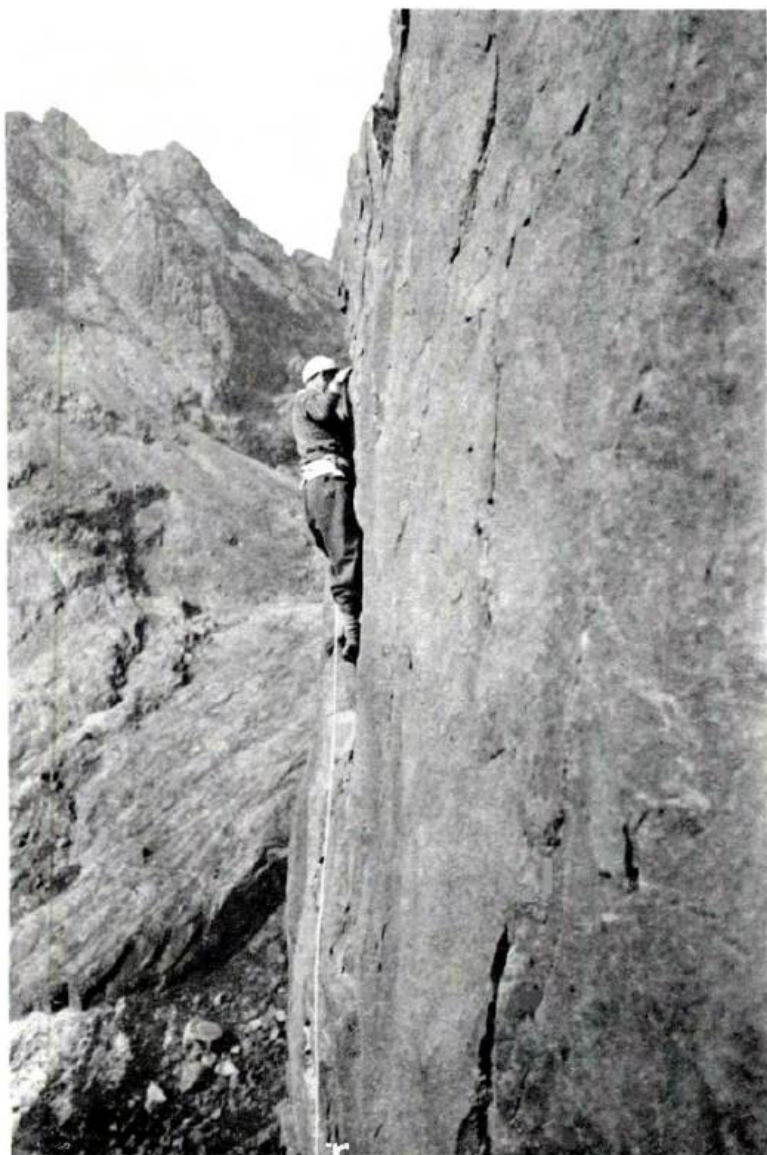


Photo In

E. Wood-Johnson

SRON NA CICHE—WEST CLIMB. THE GANGWAY.

" The leader was asked to stay a few minutes while a film was changed. "

SOME NEW CLIMBS IN SKYE

BY C. ASTLEY COOPER

It seems the fashion in a mountaineering article to speak of the reactions produced in the mind by the scenes and episodes of the tour, and to fill up space with vague platitudes on sunsets and other natural phenomena. Since I am lacking in dramatic talent, and have not sufficient imagination for writing fiction, I do not propose to conform to fashion except to state that the grind up the Corrie on a hot day is the most exhausting trudge I know, while after one trip to Sgurr nan Gillean I registered a vow never to climb from Sligachan.

As we climbed throughout in rubbers, it may be advisable to forestall criticism from those who credit rubber experts (whoever they may be) with the mental equipment of rock-climbing robots by stating that owing to the economic crisis my boots were unfit for serious climbing. Moreover, if anyone cares to tackle in boots one or two pitches described hereafter, he is quite welcome but may be unfortunate. This is particularly the case with any Scotsmen who may read this article, since they appear to regard rocks as an easier and slightly more interesting method of attaining Munro's than by the ascent of steep grass or scree.

Starting our holiday this year on the 18th June, we arrived in Skye just as the long period of drought was ending. In consequence, we were fortunate enough to enjoy several perfect days, although not quite so lucky as previous visitors who experienced no rain whatever.

This was particularly welcome, because we had planned several new ? ascents during our visit in the previous year, and were very anxious to put them to the test. Our first day was devoted to a new route on Sron na Ciche, lying on the western side of the rock and giving some 500 feet of very enjoyable climbing. It was chiefly notable for its exciting finish. A traverse across a steep wall proved much harder than anticipated, and the difficulties increased with the square of the distance. On arriving at what appeared from below to be a stance, but was found on acquaintance to be a sloping knife-edge, the leader was asked to stay a few minutes while a film was changed. Being very

doubtful of his ability to remain *in situ* for even a much shorter space of time, the leader put his own interests before those of the photographer and struggled to the top. Fortunately, the photographs taken give no indication of his state of mind.

The following day, *Monday*, we toiled up the corrie in smoke and dust to the loch where we rested until late afternoon. A tour round the N. Buttress of Sgumain was made, but no one appeared desirous of making any inroads on his residual energy by attempting an ascent. After some hours the party reached the top of Alastair.

Tuesday was again scorching, and the party proceeded up Coire na Creiche where one of its members was left in a comatose condition. The others succeeded in attaining the ridge, and after crossing Bidein, examined the rocks on the Coruisk side. Finding it impossible to effect an ascent without the aid of a long ladder, the party returned to the Corrie.

On *Wednesday* we returned to Coire Lagan with the intention of climbing the slabs above the Central Gully to the right of Mallory's route. We had inspected the route, and had been unable to discover any likelihood of belays at reasonable intervals, so carried with us a reel of fishing line for emergencies. Starting at the lowest point of the slabs the leader soon ran out 120 feet of line. He then tied on the fishing line and proceeded another 40 feet before reaching a stance and belay. The second climbed up on the string but had no necessity to test its strength. The rest of the climb went without great difficulty and, on reaching the W. Central Gully, we traversed into Mallory's route and descended by the Amphitheatre. After tea we ascended Mallory's route for comparison and considered the slabs more severe than the difficult portion of Mallory's.

Thursday was devoted to an expedition to Portree for supplies and the ascent of Sgurr nan Gilleann by the Pinnacle ridge. Rain set in during the day and continued all Friday.

On *Saturday* we went into Coir' a Ghrunnda where we made a route up the right-hand corner of the South Crag. We spent some time attempting to make a direct start to the climb, but found the rocks too difficult and were obliged to make an inferior start up easy rocks on the left. Later in the day when a slight rain was falling we attempted a climb on the buttress flanking the Thearlaich-Dubh gap, but were defeated. There is no doubt

that the route would go under good conditions, but the leader's morale was insufficient in the prevailing dampness.

Rain continuing, the next day was spent in camp with Edgar Wallace and a bannock.

Monday was again a perfect day, so we decided to have another look at the N. Buttress of Sgumain. Close inspection did not prove encouraging to two of the party, but the Skye enthusiast refused to be overawed and dragged his unwilling companions after him. During this climb, as on others, the leader refused to be hurried, and his knowledge of the rock structure of the Coolins must be profound.

The wind on the summit proved chilly, especially for the member in shorts, so a rapid descent of the scree was made.

When the first two were well down the scree several large blocks were observed to be rapidly descending upon them. Avoiding these with difficulty the startled climbers watched them disappear down a gully through which they were about to pass. The fall proved to be due to the collapse of a dyke beneath the last climber and illustrates the extremely loose character of the rock hereabouts.

The next day, *Tuesday*, being our last, was devoted to giving the Skye novice a chance on the standard climbs. The Cioch direct and the Crack of Doom were climbed, but further efforts were abandoned in favour of a farewell dinner at the Post Office, where a friendly soul provided beer—the first for nearly a week.

It is very difficult to estimate the quality of new climbs particularly on Coolin rock, since first thoughts are usually found to err on the side of severity, but having done most of the standard ascents in the Glen Brittle area we think that both the Sron na Ciche climbs are harder than any, while one section of the climb in Coir' a Ghrunnda is certainly severe. The route on Sgumain is probably no harder than the Cioch direct, but the difficulties of route-finding, etc., made the ascent for the leader distinctly more severe.

It should be stated that the ascents to be described have, so far as we can ascertain, never been made before, and no traces of previous passage were found. We, therefore, consider ourselves justified in recounting them as new, but are aware that it is quite possible that they have been done before, but have not been recorded.

WEST BUTTRESS, SRON NA CICHE.

In the line diagram of Sron na Ciche in the S.M.C. Guide there are two areas untouched by lines. The climb here described is in that area which is bounded by the Western Gully and the West Central Gully.

The route commences at the foot of a steep slab about 50 ft. to the right of the foot of W.C. Gully and just to the right of two small overhangs.

The slab is climbed until lack of holds forces the climber to its left edge, a stance and belay being reached a little higher (90 ft.). This section can be made very difficult if the slab is adhered to as long as possible.

From the platform the route lies slightly to the right; fairly easy climbing leads in 140 feet to a large grass platform, situated above, and midway between, two conspicuous grass patches.

From this point it should be possible to continue directly upwards, but since we wished to make the climb finish at the highest point of the Buttress we were forced to the left. A short upward traverse in this direction leads to a big ledge at the foot of a steep wall. This is best climbed on the left and leads, after 50 feet of difficult climbing, on sloping holds, to a wide dyke, which, at this point, traverses almost horizontally across the face. Above the dyke is another slab. The dyke is crossed, and a traverse made across the slab to the left and over a low wall, a belay being found on a sloping ledge low down. The position is very exposed, lying as it does on an overhang overlooking the foot of W.C. Gully. The rocks above appear rotten, and on the first ascent the outlook was not too cheerful, but a short, steep crack can be climbed without difficulty, the holds being actually quite reliable.

The ascent of the crack and a few feet of easy rocks leads to the foot of a very steep wall, easily identified from below by its light colour.

This wall was first attempted direct until the disappearance of all holds led to a rapid descent. The route taken lies on a steeply sloping gangway, which appears to lead to a good stance on the left edge of the wall. It is very difficult to effect a lodgement on the gangway, and its ascent is very difficult. At two points it is necessary to use small holds on the wall below to get round bulges, and it is very difficult to get back to the gangway.

Central Slab

Gangway



←Gangway

←West Climb

Photo by

SRON NA CICHE.

↑ E. Wood-Johnson
West Climb

The whole pitch is very hard on the arms, since the rock above is so steep that the climber is always pushed outwards.

This pitch ends the climbing, the summit of the Buttress being attained by easy scrambling. If desired, the last pitch may be avoided by easier rocks on the right.

The climb was done in rubbers, and should be considered severe, particularly above the first two pitches. The last pitch seemed to the leader exceedingly severe, though his judgment may be at fault, the climb being the first of the trip and the pitch occurring after 500 feet of climbing. In any case he has no wish to repeat it without a further inspection on the rope.

C.J.A.C, E.W.-J., D. Lewers (non-member).

N. BUTTRESS OF SGUMAIN.

This Buttress faces west into upper Coire Lagan, and is cut off from the West Buttress by an easy gully. The wall of the Buttress, above the gully, is undercut and teems with overhangs, and it appears very doubtful whether any route can be made up it. At the lowest point of the Buttress the rocks are more amenable, while the quality of the rock is, at this point, the best on the Buttress. This side of the Buttress is conspicuous on account of two terraces which traverse across the face in an upward direction from left to right.

Starting at the lowest point of the Buttress, just to the right of the gully separating the main crag from a pinnacle, the route goes up to a platform by way of a steep crack and the wall on its left (90 ft.). The rock at this point is not very reliable, and all holds must be tested.

The rocks above the platform overhang and, though it should be possible to climb directly upwards, the way taken was a traverse round the corner on the left, where an open chimney was climbed. The climbing is complicated by overhangs, which are difficult to overcome, since the holds, though good, are not usually obtainable until each movement has commenced. After 50 feet of climbing a stance and belay is reached by climbing an overhang on the left. The rock is very sound, and the holds, when reached, are jug-handles.

From the belay a partial hand traverse of 15 feet to the right, followed by a short ascent, leads to the left-hand end of the lower terrace. The terrace is followed for about 150 feet until the foot

of a steep crack is reached; this is climbed to the second terrace (40 ft.), the finishing holds being excellent. Another traverse is made to the right, nearly to the edge of a gully. The rock above this terrace is exceedingly rotten, and great care should be taken in testing all holds. An ascent, directly upwards from a point a few feet short of the gully, leads to the top of the Buttress.

The climb took 5 hours, and proved very interesting. The lower section is very steep and severe, the upper section being mainly difficult because of the very poor quality of the rock. The climb was done in rubbers, but should not be much more difficult in boots.

E.W.-J., C.J.A.C., D.L.

CENTRAL SLABS, SRON NA CICHE.

This route commences at a grassy patch in Central Gully, just above the point where the gully becomes almost horizontal, and lies over steep slabs to the finish directly above in West Central Gully.

It is similar in character to the slab on Mallory's route—but steeper.

The first pitch is 150 feet of steep slabs, ending at a narrow, sloping grass ledge with belay; a ledge lower down can be used to bring up the third man on 100 feet of rope.

The next section is over an overhang by a steep crack, the holds in which need careful testing. A belay is reached a few feet above the overhang on the left (50 ft.).

The final pitch lies up slabs at an easier angle, and finishes in W.C. Gully, just under the crack in the upper overhangs. From here a variety of routes may be followed.

The climb is about 300 feet in length, and lies entirely over steep and exposed slabs. The holds are usually sloping, but the roughness of the rock makes the climbing much easier than on similar slabs in Cumberland. Rubbers worn.

E.W.-J., C.J.A.C., D.L.

SOUTH CRAG, COIR' A GHRUNNDA.

This route lies on the extreme right of the crag.

The start is on the left of the extremely steep rocks at this end of the crag, the first pitch leading diagonally to the right to a belay above the steep initial section. From this point the slabs

above are climbed slightly on the right, avoiding easier ground on the left.

The final pitch is up a steep little wall, ending at the top of a pinnacle overlooking a wide gully. This pinnacle is extremely rotten, and liable to disintegrate at any moment.

The climb is rather artificial but interesting if the route is adhered to; rubbers are distinctly necessary for at least one point. D.L., C.J.A.C, E.W.-J.

There is undoubted scope for further exploration in Skye, the standard of rock-climbing being at present very low. It is true that large areas of the Coolin are unsuitable for first-class climbing, the rock being too broken or at too easy an angle, yet sufficient remains for numberless routes of any desired severity.

Skye and the Scottish Mainland are the only remaining outlets in these islands for the exploration of new routes, apart from a few super climbs remaining in the Lakes and Wales, and it will not be long before the standard of climbing becomes as high as in these districts.

TWO NEW CLIMBS

BY A. T. HARGREAVES

In 1928, when first doing the North West Climb on Pillar, my companion drew my attention to the splendid sweep of slabs to the left of the lower buttress of the N.W. Climb and suggested doing a new climb on them. The fact that this was our first "very severe" made us shy of tackling what to us seemed an obvious route and, what seemed equally obvious, must therefore have been tried by other and better climbers.

Acquaintance with the rock grew, and as nobody but George Basterfield seemed to have considered the possibility of a new climb hereabouts (and he, with unusual optimism, had gone so far as to christen the unborn child the Nor'-Nor'-West), I had always kept it in view for a good day and good form.

In June last Macphee and I had both. We did Savage Gully to get warmed up, meeting on the way down the North an amiable gentleman who asked us how it had "gone," and then assured us that it was a different proposition when greasy. When Macphee tactfully asked him how many times he had done Savage Gully under such conditions there was a marked fall in the temperature.

We started off intending to get up the slabs by some means and then to work up and left to a good ledge at the top of an impending buttress projecting from the sheer wall which extends all the way from Stony Gully. We reached a ledge below the wall, but not by the slabs; they were too formidable, and we used a chimney on their right for the first part and the slabs only for the last twenty feet.

After some ineffectual attempts on a line of weakness in the great wall above, we traversed to the right and joined the N.W. on the almost level ridge where stands the cairn at the top of the first section.

A long and interesting upward traverse now led to our ledge, which is finely situated. To look down its sheer supporting walls gave a feeling of unbalance. Ahead, a line of slabs led with delicate steps here and there to another wall and, thankfully, **the** Girdle Traverse. As all progress in an upward direction

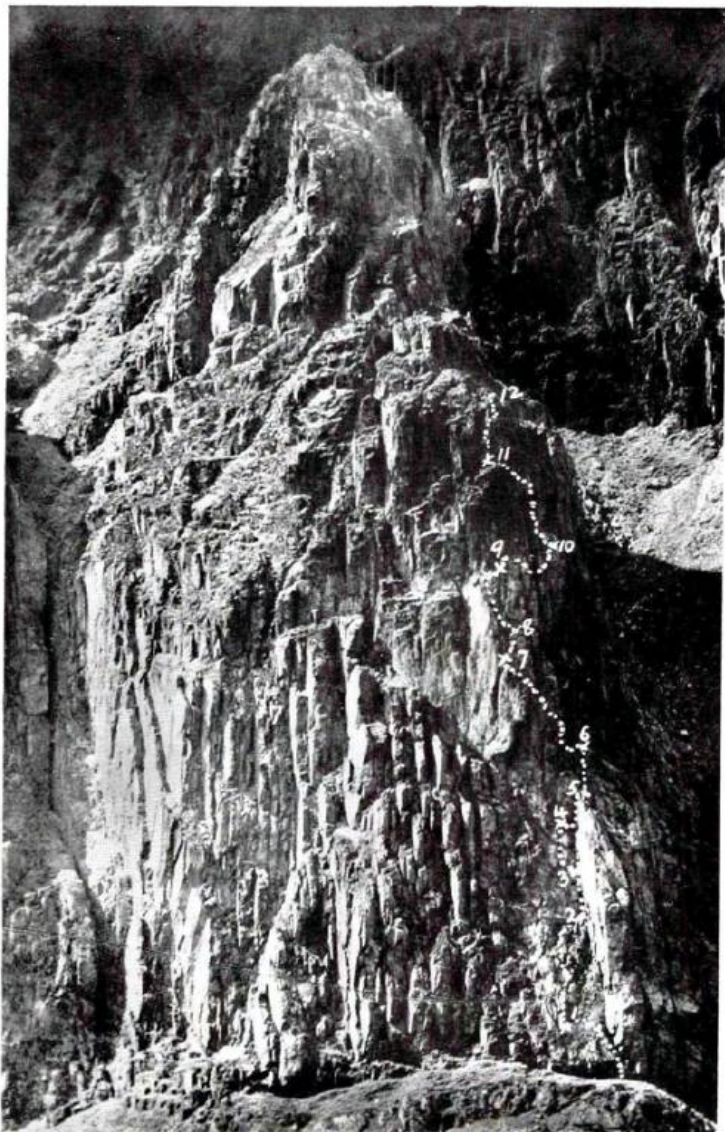


Photo by

PILLAR ROCK—NOR' NOR' WEST CLIMB.
(Telcphoto.)

T. Bell

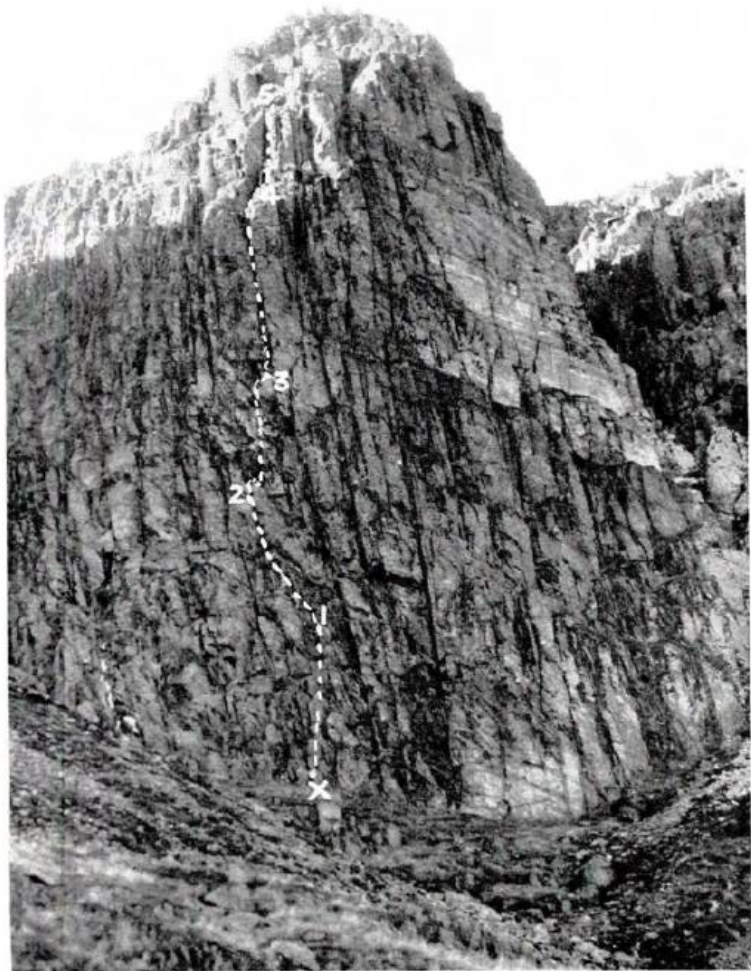


Photo by

BOWFELL BUTTRESS—SINISTER SLABS.

7. P. Vny'''

seemed hopeless we followed the Girdle to the recess at the top of Lamb's Chimney.

It looked as though we were going to be forced to finish up Oppenheimer's Chimney, but whilst taking in the rope I noticed several holds on the left wall of the recess. With Macphee firmly lashed to a good belay I tried to get up round the corner to the left, but just failed to reach an essential hold. By starting more to the right a strong pull on small finger holds brought the good hold within reach, and a movement onto a small ledge led to a grass traverse leading to the left to a detached pinnacle and easier rocks on the crest of the main ridge of the Low Man, above the cairn at the top of the N.W. Climb.

Not having repeated the climb it is difficult to form an opinion, but it certainly seemed harder than the N.W.

* * * * *

A new climb on Bowfell, which Macphee and I were fortunate enough to do, was really the result of our ignorance. We had gone to Bowfell intending to do the Central Route, one of Kelly's new climbs. We knew that it started up the first chimney on the ordinary way and then went more or less straight up. Having ascended this chimney we found scratches going up the overhanging chimney and awoke to the fact that the slabs on its left, heavily overhung on their right, were virgin. However, they looked climbable, so we continued up them, first left, then up, then left again. The final movement over the surviving overhang proved very awkward, but a stance and belay turned up immediately. Very steep rocks blessed with nice rough holds led back to the nose of the buttress.

After we had climbed a steep gully with a large loose-looking splinter in its middle the angle eased off and comparatively easy rocks led directly to the large cairn at the top of the original route.

As the climb is towards the left side of the buttress, and is mostly up slabs, Sinister Slabs suggested itself as a name, and was finally adopted.

THE DIAMOND MOUNTAINS

BY DOROTHY PILLEY

The rock-climber in the Far East is not very well supplied with climbing grounds. A few enthusiasts have discovered some not very stable outcrops of rock in the Western Hills within reach of Peking; and further South, twenty hours away, there are some fine cliffs on T'ai Shan. Notably, the famous Cliff of the Suicides, over which disappointed scholars used to leap until a compassionate Ming Emperor in the fourteenth century put up a wall to prevent them. The wall still stands, a solid, not impregnable, red-washed defence winding along the crest of the precipice, waiting for the day when it will become only the last pitch of some of the best climbs in Eastern China. But T'ai Shan is not merely a holy mountain, but actually a god to whom millions still make their offerings, and no one, I think, has yet had the temerity to make this use of his noble shoulders. Further inland, in Shansi, for example, there are plenty of ten and eleven thousanders, and there must be good climbing on them. Unluckily, at present, there are usually bandits on them too !

In Japan there are volcanoes, some of which can be more dangerous than any bandits ! One of them, Asama, only failed to blow me sky-high one morning through my sloth in sleeping through my alarm watch—so I speak with feeling. There must be some moral in this incident, but I have not yet discovered it ! There are also some hundreds of miles of splendid ridge walking at about the 9,000-foot level; and the snow climbing in spring is magnificent; but the rock climbing is disappointing. Even the most fervent native enthusiasts, patriots very eager to make the best claim possible for their local cliffs, admit defects, and are now turning their eyes to the scores of unclimbed granite pinnacles of Kongo San, the Diamond Mountains, the rapidly developing holiday region of Korea.

The name seems to come from a fairy tale, to suggest a sleeping princess and talking birds in an inaccessible summit palace, and gallant knights slipping to perdition down long gleaming slopes of implacable smoothness. Investigation showed that only the smoothness and hardness of the slopes

corresponds to the picture. When I first heard of them I was inclined to place them somewhere between the Witwatersrand and Mountains of the Moon, but that was before I knew any geography and I happened to be continents out! Actually they are strangely accessible from either China or Japan. From Seoul (the capital of Korea) the journey is a shade less troublesome than going to the Lake District from London. Six hours in a comfortable through train, with sleeping cars, then an entrancing motor-ride, and there you are. Nothing could be simpler. And pleasant modest inns await you which are placed not too far from your climbing.

But the climbing when you reach it has many surprises to offer. The cliffs are of an uncompromising granite, a granite moulded by the sea winds and the extremely heavy seasonal rains into a disconcerting smoothness and roundness. Before you have advanced far, you will find yourself wondering whether normal climbing technique is really adequate upon such a terrain. Mr. Archer has described (in the *Alpine Journal* of May, 1931) how useful he found a 15-foot bamboo pole with a steel hook tied to its end and an Alpine rope tied to the hook. No one who has tried Korean climbing will feel that he need apologise for this innovation. Unfortunately we did not see his article until we reached home! My only amendments would be that a longer pole would be even more useful and a rope ladder instead of a mere rope would be still more convenient!

The reasons for these strange developments of the cragman's weapons are geological. The rock has weathered into huge seamless uncracked masses on whose rounded faces one looks in vain for any sort of retentive hold whatever, even the proverbial rugosity is lacking. The clefts between these masses are often as rounded and holdless, they close in with curving edges too rounded to grasp and are extremely difficult to jam in. And the steepness is commonly all or more than anyone could desire. Here and there, tough and stunted pine-trees maintain a seemingly rootless and un nourished (but secure, though miraculous) existence, offering points of vantage, often the key to the whole ascent. Without some means of establishing a connection with the next tree higher up, it seems nearly certain that a great number of enjoyable climbs will never yield to mortal rubbers.

So far, perhaps, this merely technical description will not sound tempting. But the accompaniments and the scene much more than outweigh these unconventional peculiarities. These mountains have a nobility of form, their ridges a daring in their lines that—from a distance, or near to—will capture any climber's imagination. They rise to their 5,000-odd feet, at places, almost straight up from sea level. Their lower slopes and valleys are a tangle of brush and forest that in Spring or Autumn (the best seasons, for appalling floods afflict them in July and August) blaze with colour. Above the thickets, with still plenty of height in hand, the bare ridges sweep up with all the outrageous audacity of granite, articulating with the summit aretes in scores of wildly contorted pinnacles which shift and change bewilderingly and intriguingly as you advance towards them.

The long valleys which run into the very centre of the range are as alluring. The bed of the valley for a mile together will be one smooth sheet of clean and flawless granite, over which fleets or ripples or foams an unbelievably clear water—Diamond water, indeed ! You walk up stretch after stretch of this noble highway beside the stream, passing enormous boulders cut with Buddhist texts in magnificent characters, or, in some valleys, with gigantic figures of the Buddha himself. Towards you come parties of Koreans, very much a people of holiday-makers. Tall, wizard-like men in long, flowing frock coats and peg-top trousers of fine white nettle-linen. Their feet in pale rubber slippers peaked like boats at the toe, and on their heads those fantastic black gauze top-knot cages—in shape like a Frenchman's top hat or a Welshwoman's with the peak cut off. Inside you can just discern the sacred black nob of twisted locks which the hat, if it can so be called, exists to shelter. If rain threatens, out comes an extra headgear, a tiny oiled-silk lampshade that concertinas together like a fan when not wanted, and is balanced on top of the gauze cage with strings to hold it tied beneath the chin. Picture, looking out from under such habiliments, long, lean, sour visages adorned with scanty black beards, and you will see that your companions on the path do not let down the scene you meet them in.

Appearances apart, no one has many good words to say for most of the Korean men. They are idle, disdainful and

conceited; at least, so they are said to be in the plains. The mountain men, however, showed to better advantage, and the women seemed very fine people. We were camping on an island of grass in the middle of one of those wide smooth floors of granite under the Sushenho precipices (a row of spear-like peaks, very reminiscent in form of the Chamoni Aiguilles or the Bregaglia, and offering just as formidable climbing), and were beginning to collect firewood for the night when suddenly a string of white figures—very mysterious in their voluminous linen—came forward from the trees. One old man and five peasant women. Old and young, they carried impossible looking burdens, and were slung round with frails of mushrooms they had been picking. They were overcome with astonishment at the sight of the two of us in our tiny tent; it moved them to roars of friendly laughter. Conversation—entirely by gesture—went on with great success. Two of the girls began to be busy with their choppers at the forest edge. Good-looking strapping wenches, hacking away at the thick boughs. We could not imagine their purpose. Were they perhaps going to camp with us? They then came down across the granite, carrying, it seemed, whole trees with them in their arms. With smiles and laughter they showed us that it was for our watch fire through the night! They had been amused by our modest idea of a supply of fuel. Then, with parting good wishes, on with their burdens again, and off through the shadows into the trees.

We slept well that night. The act of generous-hearted friendliness warmed one as much as the fire that blazed and roared in the night wind and sent its gleams far up among the dark roaring crags above us. Next day we got up our peak, an unclimbed minor summit of Sushenho, after many false leads, by a route that it would be fallacious pedantry to describe. Several times, climbs that on most cliffs would have finished easily took us only on to huge perfectly smooth reaches of rounded slab, from which circuitous tree-to-tree traverses gave the only escape. The confusion of ridges in the upper part of Sushenho is Alpine in its intricacy, but reminiscences of Skye come when, as you crest them, you catch sight of the sea so near and so far below you. But the colouring is different. A Mediterranean blue in the gulfs is streaked with the thin, long foaming lines of reefs, and little steamers puffing away rounding

the capes. Between you and the shore, low, bare red hills, flecked with the purple of the granite, and bristling sometimes with pinnacles.

We were late in getting down, late enough to remember vividly that this Paradise unfortunately has its snakes. They are so plentiful and so deadly that during our stay we heard of no less than five deaths from them—one that of a Japanese millionaire bitten in the main street of one of the resorts! We also saw many more of them than we liked, including one which a Korean chauffeur boy chased and killed, pinning its head down with a screwdriver and strangling it with a piece of long grass! The Korean hotel keepers are apt to pretend that there are no such things till you point one out to them! And their advice that a red hot poker should be applied immediately is not helpful to a climber in mid-pitch! Against snakes in the brush nothing is better than climbing boots and thick puttees. Unhappily, we had left our boots on a ledge early in the day, and had come down elsewhere in rubbers just as dusk caught us. It seemed safest not to try to reach our tent, but to go straight to the nearest path and on down to sleep at a neighbouring monastery. So making as much noise as we could with sticks, and exhausting all our repertory of songs, we tripped along down, doing our utmost not to imagine what a snake would feel like, through worn-out rubbers, under foot. The result was an excellent demonstration of the process of emotional repression. With a gasp of relief we reached our monastery safe and sound and very glad of our kind welcome from the intelligent and refined-looking abess (in Korea nuns and monks are indistinguishable in their grey habits, and share their institutions), glad of the hot bowls of rice we received, glad of the warm sheltered cell, on whose oiled paper floor we stretched ourselves to sleep. Cockroaches trotted over it, but what were they to us? The moment we fell asleep we both simultaneously woke up again with joint cries. All the snakes we had not trodden upon were wriggling through our dreams! This went on happening through half the night, until at last we got bored even with snakes. But then at four the morning service began; for us a distant sound of chanting and a nearby study in complex rhythms beaten upon a bell just outside our little room. We lay listening and watching the shadow of the bell outlined on

the paper lattice of our door. At six a wooden bell took up the strain. Then we slept.

The name of Korea is "The Land of Morning Calm." Stiff from a first rock-climb of the season we sat outside in the monastery garden watching the coming and going of the inmates—in comparison with the squalor of the villages everything was delightfully neat and clean. The fantastic line of pinnacles of Sushenho seemed to hang in the air above the tree tops as we wandered up late to regain our boots and bring down the tent. On the way we met a sturdy old fellow with an immense bundle of faggots on his back who stopped us to show his wrist. It was puffy, swollen and discoloured, and yes, to close inspection there were some curious little punctures visible. Having snakes on the brain, I suppose, we concluded that he had been bitten. With much fumbling he produced a rusty but sharp skewer from inside his draperies somewhere and proposed evidently that we should do some jabbing at his wrist with it. This seemed hardly likely to be very helpful. However, he became so insistent that we did our best to meet his wishes—expecting him meanwhile to show some of the further symptoms of snake poisoning of which we had been developing some crude ideas. But our best efforts seemed to him very feeble. Taking the skewer away from us with impatience he set to work himself, driving it in with great satisfaction and squeezing out rivulets of blood. By this time we began to see what had happened. The wrist was sprained, not bitten, and he showed us how, in falling with his burden, he had thrown all his weight on it. If so, then the only serious risk seemed to be poisoning from his very dirty skewer, so we stopped his puncturing and smeared his wrist with iodine ointment to his great delight. Too great, for later in the day we found ourselves being approached as a kind of perambulating dispensary. Some of the sights we were shown were not pleasant; the country districts of Korea are without any kind of modern medical aid whatsoever.

But the chief resorts of the Diamond Mountains are well arranged for visitors. Onseiri, on the North side, the centre for Sushenho, which has probably the best climbing to offer, has a well-run little Government Hotel with a billiard table, and not altogether unlike Wastdale Head. Good paths lead through the range ; a magnificent one (with ladders on it here and there)

leads up and over Biraho, the highest point of the range. Only on one section, where the path winds up a gentle slope, one is forced to conclude that the contractor must have bargained for some excessive price *per foot*, so heartless and unnecessary are its windings. And a thick growth of brush prevents any escape by short cuts.

Ours was an Autumn visit. Moving up through 5,000 feet every degree in the glory of the changing leafage was displayed. Often at a turn of the path its splendour under the mellow sunlight would hold the travellers still in admiration. Down the Seven Dragon Waterfalls the water swirled. Deep pools invited frequent bathes, enlivened by thoughts of the giant salamanders which are said to haunt them. I do not know yet whether they bite, for I never saw one. Evening found us passing over further floors of water-polished granite, under the calm face of a 40-foot high Buddha, under at last a temple so perilously perched that only a strong romantic passion could explain it. Here is its legend :

" In the eighth century there was a monk whose consuming desire was in his lifetime to meet Kwannon, the Goddess of Mercy. One night an old woman appeared to him in a dream and told him he could meet the goddess at Mokkotsuo, a village in another part of the province. After much search, he found a cottage where the village was supposed to stand. He knocked. A beautiful girl opened, and in answer to his inquiry replied that she was Kwannon living as a human being. She read his mind so truly that he was convinced. But now her father, a huge and savage giant, approached. The girl hurried to explain that her father was so cruel he would kill anyone he met, but that since he was most anxious to secure a husband for her the monk could save himself by saying he had come to marry her. He consented, and they were married at once. The girl, however, would not allow him to live as her husband, saying he must remain celibate as a true monk of Buddha. One night, blinded by passion, he approached her bed. Instantly, his wife and house disappeared, and he found himself lying on a bare rock. He returned to his monastery, striving to lose himself in religious studies; but ever and always he was haunted by the vision of Kwannon in the form of his wife. One day, while meditating by the river side, he saw Kwannon washing her



DIAMOND MOUNTAINS—TWIN FEARL POOL.

face in a pool. As he ran towards her she vanished. Wondering if his eyes had deceived him he walked on, and again saw Kwannon reflected in the clear water. Glancing up, he beheld her standing in a cave on the cliff. As he went to her, calling, she withdrew into the cave, admonishing him to put aside all thought of her and devote himself wholly to an ascetic life and the service of God. He erected a monastery upon this spot, naming it in honour of his wife."

The present structure was built about 250 years ago and there is still a monk inhabiting it. Poised at the corner of a rocky ledge on a bronze pillar it overhangs the void. Such legends as this surround nearly every boulder, every pool, every cliff of the way. And the rock-climber who cares for folk-lore will find the tales as unexpected and as repaying as the mountaineering, or as the glimpses of other kinds of lives than ours.

Here is one such glimpse: we were walking next day over another pass back to Onseiri. The sun was hot and the air stormy; the zig-zags of the path many and steep. As we trudged up, sounds of heavy breathing came to us from behind. **The** Koreans, who are famous carriers much exploited in Japan because of the immense burdens they can support, have a way of making a painful hissing and sobbing noise under the stress of their packs. We assumed that some Korean was overtaking us, and one of those half-conscious races that afflict path-walkers (even in the Lake District!) developed on the last half-mile to the crest of the pass. We came out, winners by a short neck, on a grassy bay in the forest where a low shrine-decked stone wall, just at the right height for the sacks, faced to the drop of the other side, the winding depths of the valley, the pine clad slopes and the range of fantastic granite pinnacles that crowned them.

As we backed against the wall to rest the sacks, our defeated competitor ranged up silently alongside, and for the first time we looked round at him. This was no Korean; as we gazed the grin that grew to meet us was too friendly and understanding to belong to any but one Eastern race. Almost involuntarily the conventional Chinese greeting came to my lips " You eaten, not eaten ? " " Have eaten." And next, " Where are you going?" and back came the equally conventional answer, in Pekingese, " To the East! " Exchange of names, ages and histories soon

followed in a torrent of delightful talk. He was a Peking man who had been living for years alone among the Koreans, making a moderate living by a tiny trade in the fish he carried over the pass thrice weekly from the market in Onseiri to the inland villages. He was overjoyed to hear his native tongue again—even in my toneless and erratic accents—and all the long way downhill to Onseiri was enlivened by his stream of gossip. How he disliked the cold, unfriendly Koreans and how he longed to be home again in China! A deluge came on us and he insisted on taking my heavy sack from me and tucking it into the top of his basket under the tarpaulin out of the wet. As we bounced down the path discussing whether it would be worth while to shelter from the storm, he might have been an Alpine peasant met in the Valpellinc or the Zillerthal, so friendly and free was he from any sense of racial strangeness. I felt positive affection towards him. How I hope that he escaped the wave of anti-Chinese violence that swept Korea next year !

These sketches may show a little of what travel in the Diamond Mountains has to offer. Their crags, when the required modifications of technique have been mastered, will show sport for the most determined. In fact, the Japanese experts are already exploring hard, and when more paths have been made through the thick underbrush, the climbing visitor will be able to get on to the best cliffs of the district the very morning of his arrival. Good new routes of all degrees of difficulty will long remain for those with a taste for pioneering. And on the way to them a local life, centuries behind that of the world as we know it, continues in its immemorial ways. By comparison, the inner heights of China, Szechwan or Kwei Chow are matters for long expeditions. The Japanese Alps, though convenient and much frequented, are geologically unfortunate. Thus any mountaineer stationed in the Far East will find in Kongo San the most accessible and the most challenging, the most refreshing and the most repaying playground within his reach.

IN JOHN PEEL'S COUNTRY

SHEPHERDS' MERRY NIGHT

BY W. T. PALMER

When hounds meet in the John Peel country, there is joy among the shepherds. Reynard is a pest all the year round, so that a little hustling and retaliation is a pleasure. Thus, when hounds come into the hamlet and are quartered at farm or inn, there is great excitement; every man, woman and child is thrilled and elated in a manner unknown on other occasions. The inn and other places of common resort like the smithy and the shoemaker's shop receive their interested crowd. For months every shepherd has marked the foxes on his ground, and the huntsman is early informed that the " li'le black 'un " from Muker End will run fast toward Welter Craggs and there go to ground.

A fellside fox hunt is a lively, desperate affair: it begins with the going-out of earth-stoppers long before dawn; the hounds are astir as soon as they can be seen; and the chase often does not end until dusk. A bit of rain or cloud makes little difference in these moist quarters. Men and hounds are quite at home under such conditions. We mountain lovers see much of foxes—if we choose to do so. There are impregnable earths in Mickledore and about Pillar Rock, as well as on Great Gable. The shattered piles at the foot of the crags attract wild creatures to make a home, and in summer we often come across their " binks " or resting places on the sunniest part of the buttress. I am not going to say whether any climb has been pioneered by foxes, but certainly there are traces in queer places, and we know that their light bodies, strong claws and sinewy legs can make easy ascents of high angles, and they do run along narrow, uncertain ledges. When a fox is chased into the crags, the huntsman has an anxious time. Most of the fell packs suffer serious loss in hounds every winter when those keen but heavy and clumsy creatures push into dangerous places and fall down the rocks.

A day after the foxes is a wonderful stimulus to mountain-

jaded interests : there's nothing like it among the crags, and the way the whole community joins in, the yelling and screaming and encouraging of favourite hounds is amusing.

Glorious indeed such a day among the hunters : with a start on a misty morning ! slow hunting along a cold drag to the moor, then a sudden burst of music, and the pack are away. For an hour they travel fast, then slow, then fast again; there is a check for a few minutes until a new line is struck, and then away they stream into the mist, and are lost. And then, too, we find that lunch-time is long passed, that we are hungry and somewhat faint. This is altogether different exercise, and the muscles improved by fell-walking and rock-climbing do not always meet the strains.

There is a sudden distant call, a halloo of a moving fox and a cry of hounds, then the hunt comes in sight, gliding along the edge of a deep gorge of the fellside. By the time we pant up, the fox is deep aground, and a terrier is loosed, to do battle with Reynard in the darkness. This time there is a tremendous fuss : the little rascal having a big fight in the passages of the broken rocks, moving and finally dislodging the fox. The hounds have been gathered and taken away in the hope of such a success and after five minutes' law, they are brought round the hill-end and stream away on a fresh scent. In the open Reynard has but little chance against a speedy hound, and there is jubilation among the shepherds when the fox is brought down in the open, jubilation which is quite outside their usual reserved ways.

How the hillside rings, and old Skiddaw and Blencathra, lying back in the Forest, seem to lean into the rosy sunset and to throw back a hunter's echo as the last horn calls the wearied but excited pack together.

However, I am rather concerned with the memory of an evening after a fox-hunt, such an evening as any climber can enjoy if he gets to know the dalesfolk.

After the day's work is over, the fox-hunters foregather in some old village inn, a host of merry lads, young and old. This dark evening we are driven from the hills by driving snow, and even in the valley the flakes hover, then scud in the frequent gusts. Our little inn among the tall sycamores, with the mill wheel clacking near, is very welcome. Hounds are fed and bedded down, after which a great bowl of hot-pot, mutton and

potatoes, comes on to the board. At the top table, there is a semblance of service, but "below the salt" manners are rather primitive, and each man "howks" for himself—generously. The next dish is apple dumpling, but it does not quite go to the end of the crowd. "We can allus dea wi'out wate what we don't git, missus; I maed a belly-ful at that tatie-pot."

"Let's mak a merry neet on it," is declared; "by gow, but it's wild outside." Certainly by this time the gale roars in the bare trees and rattles the windows. So, after various futile arguments, the best supporter of the hunt is voted to the chair, and the tray goes round. "There's a goodly bit of sma' silver coming," hints the chairman; "some of these lads are badly off for wark." He gives a good share to redress the balance. "They're decent chaps, and nut ale-cadgers: they'll sup quiet and gae haem quiet, that they will, I'll upho'd the."

The little gathering is interesting to a student of character. "That chap with a face like a red moon'll walk back near to Skiddaw Forest, dark and wild as it is." Shepherds, quarrymen, a raffish fellow like a gipsy or potter, farm-hands, the postman in uniform, a few visitors, and the huntsman in his "other" pink coat sit round the table, smoking and talking quietly, until the real fun begins. Then the chairman rises "I'se nut gaen to mak nae speech; ay, lass, just see whedder twea gallon o' ale will gi'e 'em glasses round, and than, Jim, thou mun sing."

After a rattle of mugs and glasses, to me—"thee tak' a sma' glass if thou can 'cos it doesn't dew to fill pots agenst some of these ale-suppers." (Then and now, water is my drink)—comes a local hunting ditty. The soloist turns his eyes and chin towards the ceiling, and then "gi'es mouth" as the chairman calls it. But really he is only a bit in the lead of the rest, for practically every man is audibly following on—"just so as to be in time for t'chorus," says the miller lad with a wink when he finds that the practice has been noted. "Noo, chorus, lads," he yells, "an' give it weft." If there had been more chorus, the windows would have cracked, for at a certain catch note the whole gang screech, howl, and hallo their hardest like a pack in full cry on the hillside. And the huntsman joins in with his horn.

When the applause ends in a thumping of ironbound shoes on the flags, the old chairman fills another measure for the perspiring Jim—"Thou's desarved it, lad; one-and-twenty verses, and

nivver boggled at yan on em." Another empty pot is pushed forward : " Nay, nay, them as doesn't sing mun wait for t'next round. I keep this jug for the singers." The next " merry " item is a soldier song from Flanders, at the first words of which the old chairman calls, " Noo, Jack, that wain't dea here ; there's some o' t'lasses aboot." But Jack merely grunts " Aw reet" and waves his hand. He omits the broader verses. " That's clever, lad," says the chairman, " thou can sing 'em as thoo gans ower t'moss, if thou's any wind left by that time."

The old room rings to the marching chorus : " We're dewin' nicely to-neet! Whea'U sing next ? Ey, Willy." This latter to a big lad of a shepherd, who clears his voice and in a too-high tenor warbles a very, very sentimental song. ' That's my' nevvie," says the old man, " but he might ha' sung summat wi' a bit o' sense." Next follows an argument about the weight and stamina of mountain foxes, in which a variety of dates, figures and runs are quoted. " That was the biggest o' a'." " Nay, na, it wasn't; ther's a bigger yan fand droon'd in t'lake ; surely that's counted, for the dogs were oot hunting it a' night afore."

The merry lads are getting a bit out of hand, but the chairman calls them to order. " Ye're makin' that much row as they can't hear me ordering more drink; there's plenty o' brass left in t'kitty." A sudden silence fell. " Nay, I's nut gaen to spoil good quietness that way, anyhow. Postie, come on wi' ' Sally Gray.' These new-fangled sangs arc ayther durty or daft to me, but ' Sally'—cush man, it's like a swipe o' cold watter on a het summer day in haytime."

The postman's voice is just of that dainty, old sweetness which suits the blythest love plaint a Cumberland lad ever sung about his lass : as the chairman says, the dialect words were written over a century ago (in 1802) by Robert Anderson, a poet who lived in this country between Skiddaw and Carlisle.

SALLY GRAY

Come, Deavie, **I'll** tell thee a secret,
 But tou mun lock't up i' thee breast,
 I wadden't for aw Dalston Parish
 It com to the ears o' the rest;

Now I'll hod to a bit of a weager,
A groat to thy tuppens I'll lay,
Tou cannot guess whee I's in luive wi',
And nobbet keep off Sally Gray.

There's Cumwhitton, Cumwhinton, Cumranton,
Cumrangen, Cumrew, and Cumcatch,
And mony mair cum's i' the county,
But nin wi' Cumdivock can match ;
It's sae neyce to luik owre the black pasture,
Wi' the fells abuin aw, far away—
There is nee sec pleace, nit in England,
For there lives the Sweet Sally Gray !

I was sebenteen last Collop-Monday,
And she's just the varra seame yage ;
For ae kiss o' the sweet lips o' Sally,
I'd freely give up a year's wage ;
For in long winter neets when she's spinnin',
And singin' about Jemmy Gay,
I keek by the hay stack, and lissen,
For fain wad I see Sally Gray.

Had tou seen her at kurk, man, last Sunday,
Tou couldn't ha'e thought o' the text;
But she sat neist to Tom o' the Lonnin,
Tou may think that meade me quite vext;
Then I pass'd her gawn owre the lang meadow,
Says I, ' Here's a canny wet day ' !
I wad ha'e said mair, but how cou'd e,
When luikin at sweet Sally Gray.

I caw'd to sup curds wi' Dick Miller
And hear aw his cracks and his jwokes ;
The dumb weyfe was tellin' their fortunes,
What! I mud be like other fwokes !
Wi' chawk, on a pair of auld bellows,
Twee letters she meade in her way—
S means Sally, the wide warl owre,
And G stands for nought else but Gray.

O was I but lword o' the manor,
 A nabob, or parliament man,
 What thousands on thousands I'd gi'e her,
 Wad she nobbet gi' me her han !
 A cwoach and six horses I'd buy her,
 And gar fwok stan out o' the way,
 Then I'd lowp up behind like a footman—
 Oh ! the warl for my sweet Sally Gray.

They may brag o' their feyne Carel lasses,
 Their feathers, their durtment, and leace ;
 God help them ! peer deeth-luikin bodies,
 Widout a bit reed i' their feace !
 But Sally's just like allyblaster,
 Her cheeks are twee rwose-buds in May—
 O lad ! I cou'd sit here for ever,
 And talk about sweet Sally Gray.

After " Sally Gray " there is demand for a frog-step, a quaint old dance which still lingers in some of the dales ; this is tried by two youths who sit almost on their heels and then spar at uncertain intervals at each other with their feet. They are not experts, and in a moment the fun is over. " Afore it began," comments the chairman drily. " It's a pity the dance is being lost, but us old uns can't quite manage to get down to it now. Fetch in another jug, lass; we want summat to slocken our throats." He scrapes together the last coins in the tray before him, then declares : " It's tuppence short—I'll pay it."

While the glasses are being charged, there is a shepherds' discussion about some flock ailment. The man with the red moon-face is sure—" it cu's and it gaes; it doesn't bother iwery farm ner ivvery ship'erd. Old Jack at the Owlriggs hed a fine cure for it, but he's dead, and it's lost." Up speaks the chairman. " Lost—nut it. I can tell the, Ike, what his cure was, for he telled me. ' Don't thee ga'e off to them chemists for it—it's nobbut a stink o' paraffin in a bit of gr-ease.' That's what he said to me. If the ship'erd took it to every sheep iwery day, what they were cured." " Well, by gow; I h'ard it was simple." " Ike, old Jack dudn't care a toss whether his ship'erd salved the flock wi' it er nut; he said to me it's the ship'erd's

foot that maks the difference. If ship'erds leuk well after their flocks, ther's never such trouble at all."

A hard-faced quarryman leans forward—" It's just on closin time ; be sharp, man, and propose the health of the chairman as the last afore good neet." The hint is taken, and a few words clear the way for a " standing drink—the chairman." " Nay," says the old man, " I'se nut gaen to answer him; he's telt ower many lees about me and ta ma face at that." (No doubt the flattery was a bit strong). " I've been at many a shepherds' meet in this house, and at many a good hunt fra Helvellyn to Carrock fell, from Skiddaw to Cross Fell across the Eden. W've hed some rare jovial times here, and to-neet has been as merry as they mak 'em, but that's your job and nut mine. The lads have had a fine hunt, and a merry neet, and what else can a man want. Here's Bob the landlord howivver, ettling about like a hen on a het girdle, and that means that it's time to go. Why-a, Bob, be a bit patient wi' the lads, ould uns as well as the younger end. We knew this pub when there was no closing time except when everybody was asleep, and the police won't grudge a minute or two to-night."

In a few minutes the old inn was almost empty, and the old man took his departure, bemoaning a little the days when strength was great and the pub didn't close except at its own behest, when a " merry neet" might be kept up till morning, and ended when, in the words of Robert Anderson :

Now full to the thropole, wi' head-warks and heart-aches,
Some crap to the clock-kease instead o' the dure;
Then sleepin' and snowrin' tuik pleace o' their rwoarin';
And teane abuin' tudder they laid on the fluir.

SOME PYRENEAN WORDS

BY W. P. HASKETT SMITH

The chief difficulty for strangers when picking up a foreign language by word of mouth is to decide how much of what they hear is national, how much provincial and how much individual. Picture to yourself a Frenchman in Yorkshire. He would hear a great deal of everyday English, some expressions which would puzzle a South of England man, and possibly a phrase or two peculiar to the man to whom he happened to be talking. In France, language is much more uniform than it is here; but in the provinces you will often come across expressions or pronunciations not in accordance with normal French.

In the S.W. the chief peculiarity is one which rather helps an Englishman; for the final letters of each word are clearly given, as they are to some extent in reading French poetry, and it is curious to recall that Count Henri Russell, the great walker and climber, though he spent part of every year in Paris, and wrote admirable French, told another Frenchman in my presence that he had never noticed any difference of this kind in the treatment of prose and verse. He was so much accustomed to hearing the final letters in the South, that they passed unnoticed when he heard them in the North. More strangely still, he was so familiar with the Pyrenean use of the word *colline* for a 'little col,' that, when other Frenchmen gave it the usual meaning of 'hill,' he was quite puzzled. To a stranger asking his way it is certainly bewildering when he sees scores of *collincs* all around him to be told to continue up the valley until he sees a *colline*; yet in a surprising number of cases the two senses come to very much the same thing.

The nearness of Spain often influences a word. In Spanish, passive participles often have an active force. Thus, *divertido* means not only 'amused,' but also 'amusing' and *cansado* not only 'tired' but also 'tiring,' and this affords a possible explanation of an odd use of the word *connu* to express "well acquainted with." It is a sort of inversion of the common French *il s'y connait*.

A stranger who, by previous poring over the map, has made one or two good guesses at the names of surrounding peaks,

may be told by a shepherd that he is *bien connu id*, which only means that he is well informed and not that he is famous.

There is a sort of parallel in the English word 'learned,' which may be applied either to the person or to the thing.

The Spaniards have a peculiar sound intermediate between B and V, which has to do duty for both and J (especially when following N) is not liked on either side of the range. On the S it is hardened to K and on the N slightly aspirated, so that it sounds like SH. There was an active young fellow at Gavarnie whom his comrades always called "Bon Chemin," which strangers imagined to be a nickname earned by his excellent walking powers, until some Spaniard addressed him as "Ben Kamin," and disclosed the fact that he had been christened Benjamin.

There are several spots on the French side called *Les Gloriettes*, which must have some connection with Spanish *glorieta* (arbour). One place of this name is near Gedre, at the foot of an ancient ice-fall, which has left the rock in great steps with nooks here and there, which may have been thought to resemble arbours. This is more likely than the explanation once suggested to me by a native: "Mais ne trouvez vous pas, Monsieur, que e'est un endroit tant soit peu glorieux ? "

As showing how oddly phrases spring up and pass away, it may be worth while to record that in and around that valley a precipice is called a *chapelle*. A young hunter, who was out with me, turned away from such a place, which we had prudently decided not to cross, with the words, " C'est une veritable chapelle." Asked what he meant he said that it looked like the wall of a chapel. He did not know the meaning of his own phrase, for during many years it was the custom, when declaring a rock face impossible, to add : " except for Chapelle," Henri Paget of Heas, dit Chapelle, having been for some decades the most agile hunter in the whole range.

Jardin is familiar everywhere in the sense of garden ; but in the mountains it more often bears the meaning of a clearing in or at the edge of a wood, being the equivalent of *artiga* or *artigou*. Here, the alternative gender of the endings shows the word to be adjectival or participial in its origin and we see from the form that it is Spanish. In that language participles ending in -ado or -ada often drop to -aou or -o and -ada. A bill is often

receipted with the word *pago*, standing for *pagado* (paid) and, in the same way, *eradicado*, may have passed into *artigado* and *artigou*. In English the middle vowel of 'eradicate' has been shortened; but the Latin languages all retain the stress on it.

Canaou, a name applied to several passes, has a similar history. It is often said to be a form of 'canal'; but more probably it is a contraction of *canado*, as it has a feminine form *canada*, and the sense appears to be 'pipelike.'

Marcadaou, a pass near Cauterets, may owe its title, like the Stake in Cumberland, to its having been staked out for the guidance of travellers.

An amusing instance of this termination is disguised in the *Taillon*, near the Breche de Roland. The French surveyors enquired the name, were told that it was Tallou, and later misread the final letter as an N. It is simply *Tallado* (cloven), and refers to that amazing cleft said to have been carved by the Paladin's good sword, Durandal.

A similar blunder on the part of the Etat Majeur bestowed **the** name of *Posets* on the Spanish mountain, Lardana or Ardrana, near Luchon. The story goes that two local men were engaged by them as porters or chainmen, one of whom was called Pausset (a surname which also appears as Paget and Passet), and the other man, when asked to give the name of the mountain, understood that the name of his comrade was required and gave it, little thinking that he was thereby rechristening the peak.

Especieres is the name of a valley near Gavarnie which has caused some speculation. It simply means "The Peppercots." Even now you may hear pepper called spice, being the only condiment of the sort which, till recently, reached the upper valleys. The place seems to have got its name from certain round hollows there, which were considered to resemble the holes in a peppercot.

Jasse has been of late years adopted by some geologists without perfect appreciation of its meaning. The true *jasse* is the filled-up basin of an ancient tarn and usually forms part of a series where a valley happens to have been cut through alternating layers of hard and soft rock. Thus, a single valley may contain a chain, or staircase, of jasses. People who belittle or deny the erosive action of ice have some difficulty in accounting for these. The



Photo by

LA CIRQUE DE GAVARNIE.

Brooklyn Beethoven

Spanish name for them is 'pleta,' which is somewhat suggestive of filled in.'

Another common word in that region is *pouey*. Henri Passet once told me that it meant simply 'hill'; but another guide who was present said that it was only applicable to a sharp rise in the course of a valley or in a road. Perhaps it is only the Spanish *pozo*, said to represent the Latin *podium*.

There are many examples of *espoug* or *espugue*, which some (reading the second U as N) have tried to connect with the Latin 'expugnare' and understand it as a sconce. It is, however, not a defence but a shelter and, as it sometimes takes the form of *esploug*, and is especially applied to large caves for cattle, the Latin *spelunca* looks a more probable origin.

Words descriptive of running water are numerous, but it is not easy to say how an *arrieu* differs from a *couret*, a *nest* from a *gave* or a *noguera* from a *bat*. The last-named is interesting because on one theory it may be a cousin of our Cumberland *becks* and left behind by the Vandals or other Germanic invaders. That rugged mountain, the *Baletous*, gets its name from the glacier stream which issues from it, *Bat-laiteux*, a name precisely parallel to our northern Sourmilkhill.

Of pastures again the nomenclature is varied. A *solatia* is simply one with a southern exposure, *Estibo* or *Estibette* one suited for use in the height of summer, *Sarrat* or *Sarradet* is used also to describe a buttress hill whether it provides pasture or not; *cortal* is not so much a pasture as a system of sheepfolds, and to *bassia* I have never heard any special meaning assigned.

There are certain stock phrases in the Pyrenees which one does not seem to hear elsewhere. One is "deux choses inutiles," used by way of comment, more or less sarcastic, on a proposed marriage. The full phrase seems to be, "Deux choses inutiles. Besoin de les marier," and it is also applied metaphorically to things which supplement each other. It was once rather neatly used by Francois Salles, the strong man of Gavarnie, when the other porters had saddled him with the heaviest and most awkward load, a big iron stove. They were standing round to enjoy his disgust when it was discovered that by mistake a 10-kilo. bag of charcoal had not been assigned to anyone's load, and everyone feared that a redistribution might have to be made, and so the joke might be turned against himself. However,

the genial giant, out of sheer bravado, uttered the above phrase, and calmly added the charcoal to his already ponderous load !

Another widespread saying is, " Grands mollets, Belle femme." The first time I heard the phrase I was walking on a good mule path with a knickerbockered youth of muscular build and calves of bold design. At a curve we came suddenly upon a merry-faced native, riding an unusually good horse. He greeted us gaily and, eyeing my companion, cried out, " Mon Dieu ! Monsieur, que vous allez gagner une belle femme," and added a few words which we could not catch, though I fancied that the word ' mollet ' was among them. Though mystified at the time, after we had once learned to recognise the phrase, we seldom passed a day without hearing it. There are two main uses, one literal, to remark that women like a man to have big calves, and one satirical, hinting that fat or flabby calves are unworthy of a man, and only fit for a woman. This latter meaning is popular in the mountains, where it often happens that a particularly strong man is singularly destitute of leg muscle.

A common name of places or fields is *capourat*, which Henri Passet assured me was, in his youth, the most usual word for a hill-pasture, especially those which follow the line of a valley and overhang the most recently eroded part of it. The word is the local equivalent of *coiffe*, and may simply mean the pastures which crown the first line of cliffs. This is the more probable for the fact that *Maucapourat* is also found, and this is the patois for ' malcoiffe.' Discussing the word once, round a camp fire, I asked the men whether speaking of a woman you could say that she was *maucapourate*. They pondered deeply and at last one of them said, gravely : " On a Sunday certainly you could ; but on a week-day, no ! "

" Is it then that a word changes its meaning from day to day ? "

" No ! Monsieur, it is that on weekdays there is work to be done, and the welfare of the cow and the pig and the goat to be considered, so that, except on Sundays, women do not think about such things as hats."

My companion told him, at once, that our women think about such things every day, and all day long and, by comparison, devote very little interest to the welfare of the cow and the pig and the goat !

The curious taboo or superstition which forbids mention



Photo by

THE CASCADE—CIRQUE DE GAVARNIE.

A. Ellvind

by name of the bear seems to allow *ossaou* (the local form of *oso-ursus*) to be used metaphorically as in naming a valley or a dog. It is a favourite name for the big white mountain sheep dogs, with their shaggy coats and wide paws, from which another common name, *Patoot*, is drawn.

In conclusion it may be said that though peasants, when asked for the meaning of a name are inclined at first to give the stock answer : "Ah ! Monsieur, c'est un nom comme un autre," they soon begin to share the interest of the enquiry, and are delighted when their knowledge of the local patois enables them to give a clue to the origin of a name.

TWO SUMMERS IN THE PYRENEES

By A. E. STORR

For the preliminary inspiration, for a general view of the whole character of the range and of travel in it (but not for details of the paths), there is still no book to take the place of Hilairc Belloc's *Pyrenees*, for these mountains *are* in some way unusual and even fantastic and their quality is not to be conveyed in a self-conscious and pedestrian recital of times and distances and heights. It would not occur to the ordinary climber to write of the Val de Soussoueu that "it is a lonely place, not without horrors, and is perhaps haunted," yet it is not the only Pyrenean valley which is more accurately described thus than by a page of painstaking topography. But in addition to the first inspiration, the climber, at any rate if he is to be guideless, needs a little further information unless he is to waste a great deal of time, and the existing guide-books—Soubiron and Ledormeur—the only ones I know of that are at all recent, are not entirely satisfactory. Herein lies the excuse for a short account of what two small guideless parties found it possible to do.

One should go to the Pyrenees more for the sake of wandering among mountains than for the ascent of peaks, and it seems to me essential to camp for two reasons—one being that the camping is so good and the other that the full charm of the range is only experienced on the Spanish side, where villages are few and primitive and the cabanes of the upper valleys are extremely hard to find and not much use when found. Almost everywhere there is abundant wood and good water. It is possible to bivouac rather than camp—Belloc for example suggests a blanket and a good fire at night, and Soubiron in his Guide plans out a series of short tours of four or five days' duration, involving one or two high bivouacs for which he suggests carrying "papier bisulfite" to wrap round one's chest at night, and starting each day at 3 a.m. in order to avoid the worst of the cold. These methods imply a return to inns or hotels at frequent intervals, while with very light camp equipment one can sit out bad weather if necessary and be perfectly mobile and perfectly comfortable.

The plan which we found practicable was to carry tents and blankets in rolls tied to D-rings on the shoulder straps of our rucksacks, and, buying five days' food at a time in the high villages of the Spanish side, to trek along the upper valleys, which on this side usually turn to run east and west just under the main watershed, so that it is not difficult to reach the peaks on either hand, while the number of passes which have to be crossed with a full load is reduced to a minimum. The weight was considerable, but we were enthusiastic enough to add a formidable Canadian wood-axe by means of which whole forest trees were added to the fire at night, nor was the food usually confined to "chorizos"—the loathsome blood-fat-and-garlic sausage of the Spanish village. Thus equipped R. C. H. Cox, M. H. Slater, C. H. Thompson and I made our way from Gavarnie to Ax-les-Thermes by the following route: Port de Gavarnie, Val d'Arazas, Col de Gaulis, Bielsa, Col de Gistain, Venasque, Col de Malibierne, Port de Viella, Viella, Port de Bonaigo, Llavorsi, Col de San Juan, Seo d'Urgell, Andorra, Port d'Embalire. This route goes through the best of the Perdu, the Posets and the Maladetta groups and some parts of it give a good idea of the difficulties and pleasures of travel in the Pyrenees, notably that between Gavarnie and Bielsa.

After camping for two days at Gavarnie on a little wooded bluff from which we could watch in seclusion the ebb and flow of that tide of Catholic humanity which makes the path to the Cirque so strange and varied a spectacle between the hours of ten and five, we followed a good mule-track over the Port de Gavarnie to Bujaruelo and through the gorge below it to the Puente de los Navarros. Here, a much rougher track climbs into the Val d'Arazas on the left. Sunk deep in the earth beneath towering cliffs of limestone, clothed in forests of silver birch, pine and fir, the Val d'Arazas sweeps to the east for twelve miles and opens out at its head into a wide amphitheatre ringed round with forbidding precipices which make the heart of anyone carrying a heavy pack sink within him. In the centre of the cliffs there is a conspicuous gully overhung by the rock on the right. This has been provided with pitons and above it cairns lead to the grassy Col de Gaulis. The way is now barred by the deep gorge of the Val d'Anisclo and there is no way of avoiding a descent of some 2,000 feet into it. A stream falls direct from

the Col de Gaulis into this ravine, but is surrounded by the most troublesome precipices. We could find no path, but by going a long way to the right found a zig-zag route down a series of ledges and eventually discovered a climbable gully in the last portion of cliff. We spent the night in a cave in the bed of the stream. There are two ways out of this very lonely and savage ravine to Bielsa, one following the stream (the Rio Vellos) upwards to the Col d'Anisclo and over it into the Cinca valley, the other up a gully in the east wall leading to the Col d'Escuain, and it was this latter which we had decided on. It was impossible to find any definite path and the climb up one of the gullies in the east wall was long and steep and finished with the party roping up and supporting the leader while he justified the purchase of a very beautiful and expensive pocket-knife by using the saw-blade to make a large enough gap for us to emerge through the dense brushwood which fringed the edge of the cliff. The Col was not far away up grassy slopes and the village of Escuain lay two hours' march further on. It was a picturesque defensive-looking cluster of dazzlingly white houses, desperately poor, where it was difficult even to buy bread. In the yard of the Posada a young girl was singing a long melancholy refrain as she drove three ponies round and round trampling out the corn. The way from Escuain to Bielsa is puzzling more from the multiplicity of paths than from the lack of them.

I am indebted to L. A. Ellwood for the following suggestions for this route: From the Col de Gaulis descend beneath the cliffs on one's right some 500 feet, then skirt them nearly on the level to a rounded ridge well above the right bank of the stream. Follow this rounded ridge straight down, bearing slightly right at the bottom. Then find a rake leading to the stream obliquely leftwards. At the bottom cross the stream (the Rio Vellos) and follow it down for two hundred yards to where, facing the east wall of the Val d'Anisclo, one will see a steep rake leading leftwards into a gully. Climb this where possible and find a way out on the right.

The Néthou (11,168 feet), the highest point of the Pyrenees, can be climbed from a comfortable provisioned hut, the Rencluse, on the north, or from the Val de Malibierne on the south. We made a camp in this valley at the foot of the gorge of Eroueil and climbed the mountain by ascending the gorge past the two

lakes of Eroueil and then over a small snow slope to the Col de Coronas. On the far side of the Col we gained the Nethou glacier, turned to the right and without difficulty crossed a short rock arete, the Pas de Mahomet, to the final snow slopes of the summit. The whole ascent from the camp took four hours.

The road over the Port de Bonaigo has been completed since our visit and an autobus service links Viella and the Garonne with the Noguera Pallaresa valley, and thence Seo d'Urgell and Andorra. We crossed the low wooded Col de San Juan from the Magdalena valley to Castellbo and after a month's camping tried our first inn, the Fonda Bartolo, at Seo. It used to be said that a good example of the diet of the country was "sopas a l'aigo," made by adding slices of black bread, two ounces of lard and a pinch of salt to four quarts of boiling water, but no such fare was tolerated at the Fonda. The menu for lunch was :—

Hors d'CEuvres of anchovies, tomatoes, gherkins, olives, onions.

A great dish of savoury macaroni.

Chicken with fried mushrooms.

Boiled lamb.

Cakes and pears.

Dinner was even more remarkable and our walk through Andorra and over the grassy Embalire pass provided little more than the exercise necessary to digest these Gargantuan feasts, which we shared with a number of very noisy, very thirsty and very hungry Catalan priests from the Seminary, all expert in the Spanish way of drinking by casting a jet of wine into the mouth from a thin-spouted flask held on high.

Two years later, with G. R. and T. R. Smith, I returned to visit some of the peaks further to the west. Starting in the Val d'Ossau we climbed the Pic de Midi d'Ossau and the Balaitous and then trekked eastwards to Gavarnie and ascended Mont Perdu and the Marbore. Our route was from Gabas in the Val d'Ossau to Salient by the Val and Col d'Arrius, the Col d'Arremoulit and the Val d'Arriel. The Refuge of Arremoulit had been destroyed by storm, but a new one was built in 1925. We camped just below the Balaitous by the highest of the lakes of Arriel at about 7,400 feet, and climbed straight up from the camp by scree and snow slopes past the Gourg Glace and finally by a couloir to the south-west ridge. From this point a commodious ledge—the Grande Diagonale—slants upward across

the west face of the mountain, and after sufficient height had been gained by this ledge we struck directly upward and found good steep rock all the way to the summit (10,326 feet). The ascent from the lake took 3½ hours. In order to traverse the mountain we descended to the Breche Latour on the south. The Breche is a deep cleft gained from above with moderate difficulty from the east side. Crawling under a vast jammed boulder we emerged on the west or Frondella side. A steep gully filled with very loose scree led downward but ended in chockstones and an overhang some forty or fifty feet above the snow in the lower couloir. The side walls of the gully looked very unpleasant, but it was not difficult to abseil onto the snow from a stout boulder in the gully, and with a little step-cutting and a short glissade we gained the level Frondella glacier above the camp. The Balaitous is a magnificent granite peak which can be ascended by many routes either from the Refuge d'Arremoulit on the Lac d'Artouste or from the Refuge du Balaitous in the Pla de Labassa, the more difficult climbs being on the north face. It is a favourite objective for "courses collectives" among which surely the most enviable must have been a midnight assembly on the summit of the Section des Pyrenees Centrales of the C.A.F., of which the official account says: "... here one prepares grog, there punch. Glasses chink. One sings...."

The task of getting down to Salient from the Balaitous is more difficult than climbing the actual peak. There were no fewer than five lakes of Arriel to pass, then a troublesome cirque to negotiate before the level pastures were reached, where the Agua Limpia joins the Rio Arriel. The combined waters plunge at once to a great depth in a narrow, straight and most difficult gorge. There is no path and after crossing the rocks of the Paso del Oso the secret is to keep very high on the right hand side, 600 feet or so above the stream, and struggle along steep slopes through the brushwood as best one can. At Salient there is or was an excellent inn kept by one Enrique Bergua. We then went through Panticosa and the Balnearios de Panticosa and crossed the Breche de Bramatuero to Bujaruelo, and the Port de Gavarnie into France. At the Balnearios we were delayed two days through one unfortunate member of the party suffering acutely from digestive troubles. The resources of the place were not great and the best we could do for the patient was to

give him plenty of " bismutho " and a bland diet of semolina and water.

Leaving the tent at Gavarnie we moved to the Refuge de Tuquerouye. This is a little vault-shaped hut perched in a gap in the Tuquerouye ridge with a magnificent view across the lake to the glaciers of Mont Perdu. Wood has to be carried up to it almost from Gavarnie and water can only be obtained by descending 300 feet to the lake, but it is an excellent spot for exploring the limestone massif. There is another hut below the lake, but it is very ruinous and decrepit. The peaks around this valley are rather puzzling to identify at first. Mont Perdu is obvious and on the right of it is the Cylindre. The Marboré looks no more than a shoulder of the Cylindre, while still further round on the right, looking up the valley, the Grand Pic d'Astazou completely hides the Petit Astazou and neither of them looks more than a very minor elevation in the ridge. It is possible to make a ridge tour of the two Pics d'Astazou, the Marboré and the Cylindre in a day, but owing to a late start we had to be content with the Marboré. It should be ascended from the Col d'Astazou by a steep but not difficult ridge. We made the mistake of trying to gain this ridge by climbing a gully on the east face of the mountain and spent three exceptionally unpleasant hours in negotiating two or three hundred feet of desperately loose and treacherous rock, where the flakes of rock were set vertically like so many books on sloping shelves, ready to come clattering down at the first touch, and each shelf in turn lured us into struggling on with a deceptive appearance of offering security at last, could it only be reached. The exit into the safety and glorious sunshine of the open ridge was unforgettable—with a hundred feet of rope out, the whole party in hopeless insecurity, all had to be risked on two doubtful flakes, the only two that had not fallen at the first tentative grasp. From the Marboré it is easy to pass round the base of the Cylindre to the Col de Mont Perdu, thence descending by the glacier to the lake and so back to the Refuge. On the following day we returned to the Col de Mont Perdu, left the sacks by the little black tarn below it and climbed the Perdu by a scree couloir in intense heat. From the summit we gazed over vast extents of russet, yellow and purple hills, with here and there the silver flash of a river, to faint blue mountains far to the south. Just below us there came the dark

gorge of Arazas sweeping in a great curve up to the Col de Gaulis, then the narrower cañon of Anisclo, and Castel Mayor looking no more than a little hill guarding the arid valley of Escuain. Further still to the east, faint and quivering in the heat haze, rose the familiar shapes of the Batchimale, Posets and Néthou.

The descent into the Val d'Arazas over interminable limestone ledges seemed endless, but we revived as soon as we reached first the cascades and forests and then the open glades and trout streams, and lastly the excellent inn at the Casas de Ordesa, where well-cooked meals and clean beds awaited us. Here one more gastronomical lesson was enforced—not to drink absinthe as a liqueur after a generous dessert of wild raspberries.

From Ordesa one can return to France by two ways, either over the Port de Gavarnie or by the Brèche de Roland. The Port is the historical way, taken at different times by pilgrims to St. James of Compostella, by marauders of either race, and for many centuries by the Spanish shepherds, wearing their traditional silk handkerchief and sombrero, wide coloured waist-scarf and loose velvet jacket, who went each year to a formal meeting in the Cirque on July 22nd, when the agreements between French and Spaniards for reciprocity of pasturage were reaffirmed. Similarly the Marcadau was the meeting place for the men of Cauterets and Panticosa. The Brèche de Roland (9,165 feet) is the more interesting passage for the climber. After the thick pine forests of the lower gullies of the Val Salarus we climbed over grassy slopes, which even late in summer were rich with a wild profusion of flowers, then from ledge to ledge, to the bare upper valley. A large cairn marks the point at which to take a peculiar level stony corridor on the right to the top of the Cotatuero valley. Only a chaos of boulders remains then, below that vast cleft in the ridge between the Taillon and Casque named after the Paladin. We descended over the glacier in the late afternoon into the sombre glories and mysteries of the Cirque—

Où la cascade unit, dans une chute immense,
Son éternelle plainte aux chants de la romance.

Two days later, frozen, battered and soaked, we gladly abandoned the mountains to the approaching storms of autumn.

Note.—The maps used were the French Ministère de l'Intérieur 1 :100,000 and 1 :200,000.

Guide book: Guide Soubiron. Les Pyrenees en 30 Excursions.

Members of the Section des Pyrenees Centrales, C. A. F., receive the Bulletin Pyreneen, which gives details of everything new concerning " l'exercice du Pyreneisme."

"ALL DOWN THE VALLEYS"

BY K. M. BOOTHROYD

Of all the sounds dear to the lover of British hills, that welcome him back after absence, and weave themselves into the pattern of his day, the friendliest and the best is the sound of running water. Scotland may have its salmon streams, its foaming peat-brown torrents and still, dark pools; but for richness and variety of river scenery, for beauty of beck and ghyll and tumbling cascade, the Lake District is unrivalled. Many of these rivers are famous, and justly so; but more still are hidden, shy, undreamed of by the tourist, unsuspected even by some who know and love the hills. When every conceivable crag has been climbed by every inconceivable route, and the jaded fell-walker declares, "Oh, I've done all the 2500's," there will remain countless unexplored combs and tiny unnamed becks, leading onward and upward to the familiar heights.

For the man who is beginning to feel the passage of years, for him who is fat and scant of breath, or even for the constitutionally lazy, there is no more delightful way of attaining the tops than by following the course of a mountain stream. The steeper the fellside, the more numerous and lovely will be the succession of falls, each with its clear little pool, to distract the mind from the weary plod uphill; and one realises with surprise, as the stream narrows, that height has been gained almost without effort.

The twelve hundred feet from the Duddon to Seathwaite Reservoir may be climbed by the broad track leading to the copper mines; it is easy, unadventurous, dull. But he who forsakes the path for the bracken and rocks beside Tarn Beck will be well rewarded by its changing beauty. Steeper and less well known, but no less lovely, is the ghyll—unnamed on Bartholomew and the Ordnance Survey maps—flowing out of Angle Tarn into Goldrill Beck and Ullswater; and these two are only examples chosen at random. Again, who would choose to ascend Glaramara by Rosthwaite Fell, that heart-breaking, endless succession of hummocks, when Comb Gill can be followed from the wooded valley, through its treeless upper moraines, almost to the summit itself?

Within the dark cleft of Piers Gill is the most orthodox river rock-climb of the District; but there are plenty of sporting scrambles, where one can get sufficiently wet, up the rocky cascades of Whelpside and Birkside Gills, and many another less famous beck.

In these days of little leisure, when fast cars press onwards to their destination at the foot of the climbs, it is inevitable that some even of the loveliest spots between recognised centres should remain unfrequented and unknown. For every dozen men who from the Thirlmere road raise affectionate eyes towards Launchy or Fisher Gill, scarcely one would be found with a real and loving familiarity with the long, sliding cascades of Shoulthwaite Gill, retired and quiet in the valley behind Raven Crag and the Benn. Yet a whole day could be spent by its pools, and on the low, frowning crags that overshadow it; and there will be nothing but the raven's croak and the sight of a few chance bilberry-pickers to disturb the solitude.

On Bank Holidays, when charabancs roar through Borrowdale and deposit their troops of tourists at the falls of Lodore, there is silence and loneliness by the side of Appletreccworth Beck; and the River Lickle, with its broad green track running through the high bracken on either side, is a delightful starting point for a stroll over Dunnerdale Fells, and the lone, rocky summit of Caw. And when the daffodils at Duddon Bridge are in their pride, he is wise who forsakes their loveliness for the hidden woods of Colton Beck, where they grow in rival beauty, scattered, difficult of access, but unfenced and unforbidden.

The glory of the rivers of Lakeland is a tale that has no ending. Always there is something fresh to discover and to delight. One alone—the Derwent—affords many a lovely glimpse, from its source in the high hills, along its windings at the foot of Johnny Wood and through the birches of Borrowdale, to its slow, dignified entrance into the lake. On one broad reach of the river there I have seen the simultaneous flash of four kingfishers along the willow-fringed bank; and it is a green, pellucid stretch of the Derwent near Rosthwaite that comes unfailingly into mind at the words, "He leadeth me beside the still waters."

But perhaps the best loved, the most perfect of all the rivers is the Esk; the falls of Lingcove and Cowcove and the Upper Esk, and the pools, the pools! To descend from Bowfell or

the Scafells at the end of a hot summer's day, to plunge and swim in water in whose pure green depths every pebble is visible—surely life has no better thing to offer than this. Every sense is satisfied, the eye, the ear; heart and body are refreshed and exhilarated and renewed, and another hour is added to the sum of life's perfect moments.

There is an endless variety in the joys offered by the streams and rivers : the drink from the spring at the very source, lying prone and thirsty and hot after a summer tramp on the shelterless heights ; the sleepy, contented sound of the beck as one lies in the sun at midday ; the thunder of distant falls ; the joy when one discovers a single trickle of water, after following a dry river-bed with its stream running persistently and maliciously underground. There is one pool in Mill Beck, unremarkable, half buried in cool mosses and ferns, which, on a stifling August day, seemed very heaven, although it was so small that the four weary walkers who had descended from Skiddaw had to take their bathe in turns. There are few mountaineers who have not some similar unimportant, unforgettable spot among their memories.

The hills without their becks would be but half as inviting, half as beautiful. Nor is it in summer, when they provide refreshment from heat, that they are most valued. It is not everyone who is privileged to see them in the hard grip of frost, with icicles dripping from every rock, and the torrents a silent sheet of glittering ice, but he who has done so will not forget the sight. And after rain, that all-too-frequent visitor to the hill country, what sound of hurrying waters, what unexampled loveliness ! Any tourist, if he be dauntless enough to brave the downpour, may gape at Scale Force or Dungeon Gill in flood, but fine though they are, it is with an obvious grandeur, like an acknowledged beauty at a ball eclipsing her more unobtrusive sisters. Every hillside has its humbler beauties, its little, transient rivulets of water, each winding its silver thread through rock and bracken. Born in an hour of flooding rain, they will die when the storm is over; but for the time they have given their thousands of voices to the augmentation of the great choir of rivers, and their brief, unpretentious lives have not passed unperceived. There are some ghylls, like the White Lady of Yewdale, that are especially swift to show changes in rainfall. Variable as most of her sex are reputed to be, she will don a

graceful white robe for an hour, and doff it again as quickly.

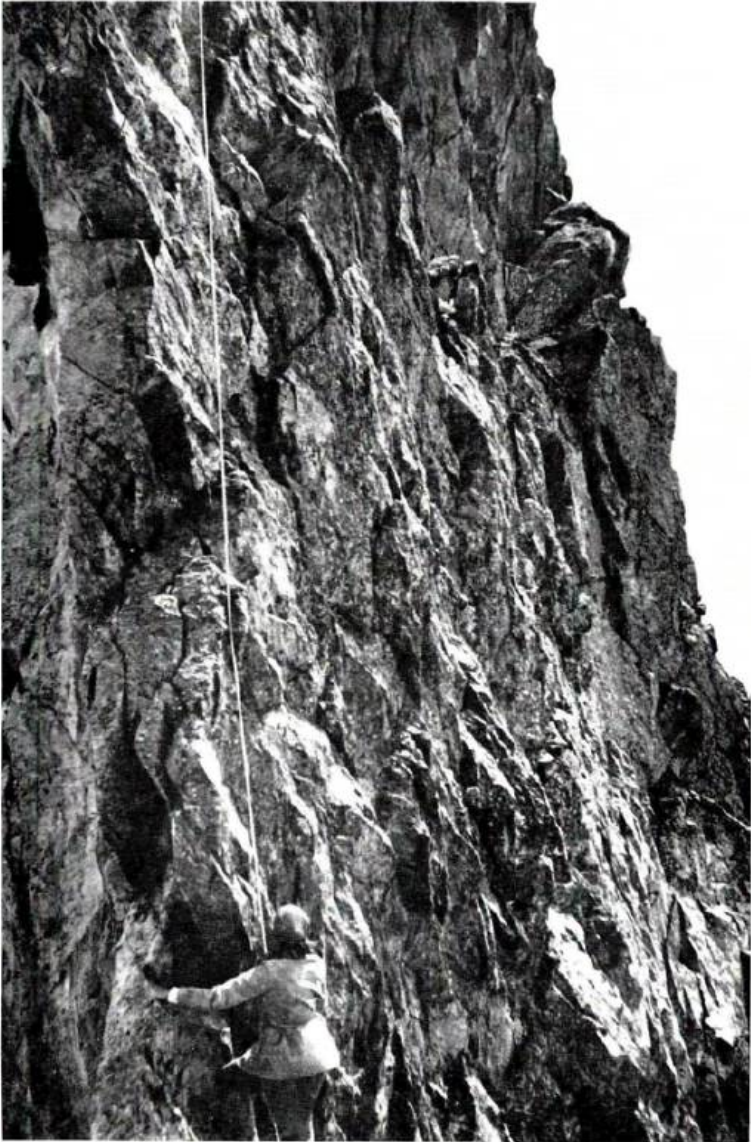
It is, perhaps, the crystal clearness of these mountain-born rivers that is their most striking and beautiful characteristic. Within the varying depths of Buttermere Dubs the water-weeds sway, perfectly visible to their very roots, while at the other end of the lake, near the foot of Scarf Gap, is a river-pool unequalled for its translucency. One could lean for hours upon Birks Bridge looking down into the rockgirt pool. And there are other stretches of the Duddon no less attractive : Troutal Dub, with its sheer sides upon which ferns and brave rowans find a precarious foothold; reaches where the water ripples over the shallows, thunders through its deep gorge, or flows quietly on, far from the road.

There are other valleys, each with its own stream, wide or narrow, its own appeal. There are the Eamont, the Kent, the Leven, haunt of herons; the slow Crake, on whose meadow-fringed bank fishermen stand patiently on summer evenings. There is that lovely half-mile, overhung with great trees, " Where Rotha dreams its way from mere to mere." There is Rusland Pool, threading its shining way through low-lying fields, which, in times of flood, form an immense lake. Nor should the lesser rivulets, the mere tributaries, be forgotten. The low Coniston fells, the woods on the west side of Windermere are veined with numberless becks and ghylls, which, shrouded for half the year in leafy forgetfulness, shine out on winter days through the bare birches and hazels, inviting the passer-by to linger and trace them to their source. The most barren and severe of all the northern valleys is saved from utter desolation by the wandering Liza; Upper Langstrath is relieved by its wonderful pool, perhaps the deepest of all Lakeland pools but for one, hidden away in woods where squirrels play, in Whillan Beck above Gill Bank. Caiston Glen, Deepdale, Bannerdale—one can think of a dozen valleys that would lack half their charm without their happy, leaping falls and small silver pools.

There is a generosity in the number and variety of these Lakeland streams ; the sound of their waters greets the ear at the beginning of the day, their shallow murmuring is the last evidence of the valley to be left behind as one turns to the height; and all day, through the wooded lowlands and over the open fells, their voice is heard. Whether one's way lies past the

shcepfold of Michael in Greenhead Gill, or up beside the deep, grim gorge of Hell Gill to Bowfell, or merely by Ashness and High Lodore to Watendlath, one goes companioned by their ever-present song.

Men are quick to vaunt the praises of crag and mountain top, of the pageant and panorama of cloud and distant view, but of the magic of the mountain streams one hears little. Perhaps it is because they are so essential a part of every day spent on the hills. Men do not talk to each other about daily bread: it is accepted without question or remark, but with thankfulness. The slow dignity of rivers, the hurrying streamlet, the high white waterfall, form a necessary background and accompaniment to the joy of mountaineering. Every beck, however small, has its place in the vast framework of the hills ; and their music, their friendliness and varying beauty **will** endure in memory as long as the hills themselves.



1908, i.v.

ARETE OF THE SOUTH PEAK OF THE WICHELPLANKSTOCK.

M. FitzGibbon

STEIN

BY M. FITZGIBBON

Very few people seem to have heard of Stein, but once discovered it is a place to return to. Each visit to Switzerland weaves the spell of the Alps more deeply into one's being, and at Stein the innate peace of a tranquil and well-governed country, and the charm of simple things and people add a golden thread to the pattern of mountain memories.

From Meiringen, the "Post" takes you up the Nesselthal as far as the village of Gadmen, skimming round the hair-raising hairpin bends in the usual gay and casual manner. From the village the road winds on in countless lacets up

" ... to the very base

Of the mountain, where, at a funeral pace.

Round about, solemn and slow,

One by one, row after row,

Up and up the pine-trees go,

So, like black priests up, and so.... "

to Stein, in the very heart of the Alps—just the hotel, with its cow-chalets, the glacier stream rushing past through the pastures, and the glacier curving up beyond the moraine to the white line of the Sustenhorn against the sky.

The best rock-climb in the district is the traverse of the Wichelplankstock, short, but a very good thing indeed. From the Siistli Hut it takes about three hours, over moraine and snow slopes, followed by easy rock, to the Scharte between the two peaks. The North Peak is good steep climbing on small holds, but the South Peak from the Scharte is a different proposition—a vertical start of 30 feet leads to a bulge, which has to be surmounted, then follows delectable climbing to the shoulder using the thin flake of the arete as a left hand-hold—in all, a lead of 90 feet, extremely exposed, overhanging in one place sheer to the glacier 1,000 feet below. The descent by the ordinary route is by a flake with good holds, again very exposed, ending with a little wall. If the Wichelplankstock was near Chamonix it would be a "bonne bouche" costing many hundreds of francs to ascend; few British people have even heard of it,

but it is certainly worth a visit; the rock is good sound granite throughout.

We spent two nights in the Siistli Hut, returning the third day to Stein over No. 1 of the Fiinffingerstöcke. The hut is in a marvellous position, and the long evenings were delightful.... perfect stillness, broken only by the faint jangling of an occasional cow-bell; it was twilight in the valley, lights blinking out in the little villages while yet the glow from the sunset lingered on the tops—and when the moon rose over the Mcién-Tal and sailed up through a herringbone sky, filling the valley with moonbeams, we sat entranced on the steps of the hut while M. G. Bradley sang to us from "The Immortal Hour."

By the east arête, No. 1, the largest of the Fiinffingerstöcke, is an interesting rock-climb with good pitches—it is well to hit off the proper line of descent which is difficult to find. Starting down the large couloir to the left of the main ridge, easy rocks are followed on to a steep face well-supplied with good holds, which is continued for about 500 feet until it becomes precipitous, then a way is found to the right, down a chimney and steep rocks to a very exposed traverse leading to a groove, from which it is necessary to abseil into another couloir—a band now leads across to a short chimney from which the glacier is reached. This group of the Fiinffingerstöcke is a very beautiful one, with its intriguing little horseshoe-shaped glaciers and fantastic "fingers" of rock.

The other peaks also give interesting ascents, all steep and exposed. The traverse of the three points of No. 3 is the best climb of all, the steep south arête of the middle point giving an interesting slab, followed by a difficult chimney up to the final point. No. 4, by the north-east arête, is also a good rock-climb, with a tricky little wall just under the summit. Weary *habitues* of the Monténvers who complain that the Alps are "played out" might find consolation on some of the rock walls in this neighbourhood.

Another interesting ascent which we did from Stein was the Mittlerer Tierberg, a good peak of 11,000 feet on the other side of the valley. From the steep snow slopes of the lower Tierbergli (which were in perfect condition for crampons) two hours of easy snow landed us on the Limmi, from where a steep ice slope leads up to the summit; an alternative to cutting up this is to

cross to the rock arete on the right, which is loose and requires **care**. We had a magnificent view of the Oberland peaks, the jagged Engelhörner, and the Lake of Brienz, a dim green splash far below in the valley of the Aar.

These are some of the best climbs, there are many others.

Rest days we spent basking in the sun, watching Bles, the cow-dog, at his everlasting game of pulling the calves' tails—unless lured on to practice slabs (which abound near the hotel) and impossible cracks, by the ever-energetic "Sage," or at the bathing pool, a perfect spot, with a rock traverse just over the deepest part—found rather wet when explored fully dressed by one member of the party !

A great thrill was the finding of the fairy forget-me-not—where, is a secret, in case some intrepid plant hunter should go and root it all up—*Eritrichium Nanum*, the rare and exquisite Blue Moss of the Alps, which only grows above 10,000 feet, of which Farrer says, "_____of all plants that grow, I think, the most maddeningly beautiful." The early summer flora of this upper valley must be on a par with its climbs—varied and delightful. The fascination of these "little mountains" will bring you again to Stein, to feel the cool breath of the glacier blowing in through the window, and to hear the tangled music of the cow-bells.

SIXTY YEARS AGO

BY G. GRAHAM MACPHEE.

In the Annual Report for the past year attention is drawn to the small use made of the climbing books provided in Club centres for members. The custom of recording expeditions and climbs appears just recently to have fallen into desuetude. Up till four or five years ago accounts of members' doings were put in these books as a matter of course, and it seems strange that the practice should have ceased comparatively suddenly.

One reason for this falling-off might be that no noteworthy climbs have been done recently. However, it is known that many new routes *have* been made, some of them exceptionally severe, others moderate, and many old climbs have been repeated, so other reasons must be found. Perhaps it is sheer laziness; or that climbers nowadays are so superior that they do not consider these climbs worth recording—surely the pride that apes humility. Let us hope it is not selfishness, for that pertains more to angling than to climbing, and nobody should want to keep secret some specially delectable scansorial discovery.

It was my luck last June to go to Wastdalehead for the week-end without previously arranging to meet a climbing companion. To my surprise, not only was I the only would-be climber there, but I appeared to be the only visitor at all, until a belated fell-walker or tourist turned up late on the Saturday evening.

A perusal of the Club climbing book was no solace for my solitude, as nothing fresh had been entered since my last visit. A glance at the old Visitors' Book revealed a different state of affairs. This contains most of Will Ritson's book, bound in leather and presented to the hotel by a benefactor whose introductory note is pasted inside the cover.

In those days people went to the opposite extreme and recorded the most trivial excursions, such as going over Styhead Pass, walking from Gosforth, or even visiting the shores of Wastwater. Many of the entries are incredibly banal, still more have childish orthographical faults which make Monsieur Perrichon's little lapse seem not only probable but almost inevitable. Nevertheless, among them is much good sense.

Mr. Haskett Smith has written of his personal experiences forty years ago when rock-climbing as we know it was just starting, but sixty years ago the Visitors' Book has nothing so daring to record, with one or two exceptions. Many of the entries are in the form of poetry or doggerel, and some are prompted by the bad weather and the leisure consequent thereon. Later visitors have embellished the entries or criticised the quaint spelling or even added rude remarks, again after the manner of le Commandant Mathieu. A few samples are given below.

1872, May. Robert Stewart, No. 8 Todmorden Road, Bacup.
do not intend to come any more.

1872 June 13. Francis H. West and Cecil West.

Following the precedent set for them they wish to record that they left Keswick on the morning of the 12th June and arrived here on the afternoon of the very day on which they set out. After due refreshment they proceeded on their journey but they think it unnecessary to say whether the refreshment consisted of eggs and ham or whether they were compelled to fall back on ham and eggs. The two great facts to be placed on record for the information of future generations are. First, that having set out for this place they in due time reached it : and secondly that having come, they went away again.

1875, June 19th. We had a bad time coming over Styhead Pass. Will never go again.

John Little }
Henry Forniby } Liverpool. Charles Campbell, Glasgow.
1872 June 19th.

Pity the sorrows of thes british snobs
who travel o'er our northern " nobs "
And coming here to Ritson's sore and lame
The shew their folly as the write their name.
Who can this book ere open without shame
To think how low is dragged " fair England's fame "
Brittania mourns with many a bitter sob
The sad degeneracy of such snob. Ecce signum.

1872 July 2nd.

Messrs F Williams London via Styhead Pass,
and J. Turner Cleator

One fool makes many (so) I'll record my view
In doggerel here (as others seem to do)
Regardless of the sneers of carpers, who
May criticise me until " all is blue."

The man who comes here via Sty Head Pass
Forewarned is little better than an Ass.
If ease he values in his feet or bones
He'll lose it over these infernal stones.

'Od rot the man who shied them o'er the way,
 I wish the beggar had to tramp it every day —
 I've spoken—Laugh ye horny-footed gang !
 The writer's gone. His critics may go hang.

Memorandum. I think it may be interesting to say that 36 years ago my Father performed a feat which I think has never been rivalled or imitated by any tourist in this district Viz. passing on foot along the water's edge from one end of Wastwater to the other on the *Scree's side*. I simply ask the reader to look at the scene of this exploit to estimate aright its difficulty Jos. K. Turner, Cleator.

Easy ! common ! pooh ! did it easily, very easy.

July 21. H. Wilding, T. Docksey, Southport
 found a very ~~shop~~ here can recommend the Shandy Gaff.
 July 28th.

Arrived here from Gosforth about Noon after driving along the High road and when coming near Buck Barrow pike it looked as though the peak was about to touch the sky and the scene of Grindal with the trees in full bloom told us that summer was in all its beauty with the scree's looming in the distant and the riple of the Lake which showed the verdant hue of Nature to the lookers-on, which draws from the minds of the company the thought that the Mountain and Lake scenery does far surpass the town and country viliage scenery. After having a good dinner the company took a stroll to look at the Parish Church which is the smallest edifice under the Dioice of Carlisle and not only the smallest church : But at the present time Having no pastoral Minister to occupy the Pulpit on the Seventh day : After the Company passing a few remarks one with another the Company took a stroll up Burn Wake the residence of Mr. Wm. Ritson, nephew of the Worthy and Noted Host and Hostess Who has lately Joined the Bonds of Matrimony, the Company was treated to refreshment by Mr. Wm. Ritson all wishing him Long Life and much happiness the Company returned back to the Fox and Hounds Inn where many tired traveller has got refreshed with plenty of beef and muton and also when required Brown Stout to the content of the weary traveller who goes and comes to see the Mountain and Lake Scenery. Before leaving having a social glass together the company all wished the late gentleman who has lately married that by the next summer He Will have addition to His family and that many happy days may be spent together. [Company of eight].

May 8th 1866.

F. W. Hayes, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Cheshire, came from Drigg this morning. Got wet through and some over. Thought it was no use going on to Buttermere, and so stopped. The state of the weather during the walk suggested the following.

Ode After W. Scott.

O Wastdale in thine hours of ease,
 Supplied with every charm to please,
 Such beauteous color light and shade,
 As ne'er kaleidoscope displayed.

When wind and rain kick up a row
 A favourable place art thou.
 Scarce was this piteous fact perceived
 When with umbrellas spread
 And for our lives we ran.
 Forgot were hatred, wrongs and fears,
 The splashing rain above appears
 Soaking the outer man.
 Our only solace was the can
 To soak the inner man.

A. J. Menzies Esquire with sister, cousin and two brothers, one a minister, visited this chaiming spot on Sept. 5th, 1872.

It is desirable not to visit this place without a portmanteau and tourists would do well always to bring one. It helps to steady one when walking up Styhead pass, and by sitting on it and sliding down on the other side, the descent can be much more rapidly made. A gentleman who was here in company with his portmanteau enjoyed not only these advantages, but also that of showing to the inhabitants of this remote district the pleasing spectacle of an elegant evening costume !

This is the experience of
 Miss Jeanie Menzies, Hoddam Manse, Ecclefechan and
 Miss Menzies, Woodslee, Penicuik who sat on the
 portmanteau (don't believe it ? ? ?)

Also The Revd. Allan Menzies B.D.
 The Revd. The Minister of Balfron
 Charles D. Menzies London
 A. H. Ballingall, Perth, he of the portmanteau
 A. J. Menzies, Edinburgh, vide supra
 We are VII.

Also Sept. 17th and 19th.—21st., 1872.

Sept. 21st, 1872, a glorious autumn day.

A notable exception to the general run of entries, at least from the rock-climbers' point of view, is the following entry with which we must close this note.

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 R. —————\Fredk. Gardner j Elverpool'
 Hy. B. Priest, Birkenhead.
 Sept. 22 Ascended the Pillar Stone to-day, and
 yesterday crossed Mickledore Gap and
 ascended Broad Stand on Scawfell.

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which are strewn over the tops of Scafell Pike and the Glyddrs—every Jotunheim Pass and every hogsback ridge is covered with them; *ore* the natives call them, and *ora pro nobis* we chanted over them. We had lived at those old cattle sabers high among the hills, where generations of peasants have squatted through the summer, log cabins which are now being turned into tourist huts to accommodate the enthusiastic Norwegian hikers. We had had marvellous days, too, when swirling curtains of cloud cleared off suddenly and you saw distant rock peaks, their wet ribs and faces shining like jet and casting sapphire shadows on the snowfields below ; when suddenly little tarns emerged from nowhere and seemed to hang for a moment among the mists like plates of blue-green lustre, hang there and then suddenly fit into the landscape, greener than ever against the snow and the long views of purple or yellow ochre hills beyond. I am not exaggerating, however, when I say that we had not seen a single cultivated field or lush pasture since we walked up to Turtagrø from the Sognef jord; not one, until the evening we left the Jotunheim, descending to Roisheim after a day of brilliant sunshine and views on the tourist-ridden snows of the Galdhoppiggen. Roisheim was a real valley village in a real valley bottom, cut up into patches of arable and grass. Coming down from the mountain we saw its fields enamelled in the evening light. There were real farms, the old ones of beautifully browned squared logs, the new ones of dressed planks, rather dolls'-house looking. Next morning a motor-bus took us to railhead at Otta, in the Gudbrandsdal.

It was a grilling afternoon in the train and very enjoyable to sit and frizzle for a while. In the wide reach of the valley, where the hills roll backward and upward on either hand, thunderclouds were drooping and the colour was intense, browns and velvety indigos on the hills and gleaming yellowish greens on the grassy meadows. The hay was all cut, and the neat farms stood serenely just on the first slopes of the hills. At Dombaas, where the lines for the Romsdal and Trondheim branch, we had time to eat surprising sandwiches in the station buffet and then we entered the Romsdal proper. The metals descended in loops and curves, slung along the hillsides at dizzy heights. Now, we were travelling in our true direction, then a tunnel, and emerging we found that with nightmare

improbability we were retracing our route up gorge again. Now, we rattled high over the bed of the gorge on a bridge with piers like stilts, a bridge that we had passed a moment before far below. And always there were glimpses of the Rauma, hurling itself downward to the sea regardless of gradient, spattered into foam against an upstanding boulder, or thrusting in great green knobs like swelling muscles over the more sunken rocks.

But the best of the Romsdal, perhaps, is after the gorge is past and the river is soothed at the fjord level and flows to its outlet quiet and strong, making salmon pools, or bathing pools if you prefer, on the way—clear pools, but where enough of glacier grit still lingers to charge the blue of the mirrored sky with intense green. There are the fields, too, not quite so brilliant as the Wasdale meadows, but sappy enough after the dun grass of Jotunheim, and there are the spangled birch trees with their white bark curled over into pale red at the cracks. And there is a little inn, the sort of inn one dreams about and seldom finds, where you can sit and drink beer, getting cool after the thundery heat of the valley, and look at flowers—begonias and so forth—growing as lusciously as if they were in a Cornish cove. Then there is the final serpentine of the jade-green river into the cobalt fjord, the fjord so gentle and blue and beautiful between green and wooded hills.

No!—best of all in the Romsdal are its mountains, the glamorous mountains which I remembered dimly from a visit as a child and which I would have come many more hours' journey to see again and this time climb. It isn't often safe to re-visit the places where one has left one's heart long ago; adult eyes so often fail to recapture the child's enchanted gaze. But the Romsdal mountains were safe; not only was their splendour maintained, it was enhanced. Twenty-five years before, the 5,000-foot precipices of the Troldtinder, capped by a score of reeling pinnacles and sheering right down to the valley bed in smooth buttress after buttress, had been precipices and nothing more. Now a more critical climber's knowledge revealed their astonishing quality. We spent an afternoon staring at them through glasses. We couldn't work out a single feasible-looking route up those scarcely cracked buttresses or the shallow, vertical-seeming couloirs which separated them. Wedges of snow, sticking at impossible angles, were pressed into these



TROLDTINDER AND RIVER RAUMA.

couloirs Whether the tigers of the Norwegian Alpine Club have forced a route anywhere up this face of the Troldtinder, I don't know. The normal way of ascent is to turn them from the rear over a high perched glacier and so on to one or other of the pinnacles.

The Romsdalthorn was very much as I remembered it, a mountain that once seen you can't forget, any more than you could forget the Matterhorn. It is all made of tawny rock; grass and bushes try to climb up its face from the valley, but they don't get far, the bushes cling precariously and the grass peters out exhausted. The Voengetinder stood back behind the Romsdalthorn with a raking summit ridge like a coxcomb. Up a branch valley to the north-west the twin peaks of Istradal made beautiful cones with graciously contoured flanks. Mjølner, finest and most difficult of all the Romsdal mountains lay behind Voengetind unseen.

We had but one climbing day and we elected to do the Romsdalthorn. It is an interesting mountain, from an English point of view, since, like our own Pillar Rock, it was first climbed by a dalesman, and about the same time that Atkinson climbed the Pillar. One evening, in their cups, two young fellows dared each other to make the ascent. And they succeeded, after much mutual pulling and pushing, in getting to the top. The Romsdalthorn is not at all a difficult mountain; if you strike the correct route there are few pitches much harder than the upper reaches of the Old West above the Low Man. Nevertheless, the Romsdalers' feat makes Atkinson's effort look rather pale. For the Romsdalthorn is a mountain and not a rock, it is nearly 5,000 feet high, and if you miss the intricate scrambling route you can land yourself in rock-climbing of any degree of difficulty to your heart's content. Atkinson could see his route almost from start to finish, the young Norwegians had to work out theirs, and they had to keep their courage up, not for a few hundred, but for several thousand feet of rockwork. On the top, indeed, their courage suddenly ebbed—they built a huge stone man, then they looked down the sheer precipices to the Romsdal valley far below and saw the great river that they knew like a thin winding blue riband. They looked down the way they had ascended, and that seemed pretty terrific, too; they dared not face it, and for two days they remained on top,

until, goaded by hunger and cold, they trusted themselves to the rocks and somehow made a safe descent.

The Romsdalahorn was not climbed again until Carl Hall, the Dane, made the ascent in 1881. Meanwhile, the dalesmen's feat had become almost legendary, and people seeing their stone man from the valley had begun to believe that it was a natural pinnacle on the top of the mountain. Three years after Hall's ascent the Horn was climbed by the first woman, Mrs. Cecil Slingsby.

You don't approach the Horn from the Romsdal valley, you have to work along towards the head of the fjord and then go up the Voengedal; this enables you to attack it much more conveniently from the back. And the Voengedal is a beautiful dale. On the left Voengedind builds up to its knife edge ridge in a fine sweep of buff rock. Ahead the Romsdalahorn fills the valley end—from the shoulder to the top like a sturdy Doric column with the capital cut off. The correct modern route is to follow the Voengedal past a little lake and on to where it comes to its head abruptly at a tarn and a rocky wall, and then turn on to the mountain and hunt up a sort of path by which you scramble rather tediously over very easy rocks until you come to a gully leading up to the cleft between the two peaks. Here, the real climbing—what there is of it—begins. You quickly work up the gully to the cleft and then you climb the right-hand peak over very satisfactory big, rough blocks. The summit is quite flat and round, as if the tip which it ought to have had had been neatly sliced off. There are five immense stone men on it now.

We, however, knew nothing about the modern route, and were attacking the mountain from Slingsby's rather sketchy directions. All we knew was that we had to make for a great yellowish pink round scar on the mountain, and that from somewhere near this scar, the gully, which is the key to the climb, started. We climbed out of the valley, soon after passing the first lake, much sooner than we ought to have done, on to the Lillefjeld, a narrow saddle between the Voengedal and the Romsdal. The view from this saddle was superb. We looked straight across space at the smooth, plunging walls of the Troldtinder. We looked down to the Romsdal far below, and from this height the meadows glowed with a green so fiery that even Lakeland standards were surpassed. We looked up at our mountain, steepening now, and

round and well above us to the left saw our pink patch like an irruption of unpleasant skin disease on the mountain's clean rock face.

We worked up to the shoulder and then took a leftward diagonal line to reach the pink blotch. We soon found ourselves started on a series of amusing traverses and roped up. The traverses became more difficult, here we had to work downwards to avoid a snag, there we had to climb up for a bit. The angle was nowhere specially steep, but the rocks curled down and over like waves, so that you got the impression of tremendous spaces below you; you got a dramatic kick out of wandering alone across that great rock face with the grim wild views out towards Mjölñir which the actual climbing hardly warranted. It took us a good deal longer than we had anticipated to reach the skin disease, and on the way we found hundreds of little pieces of mica stuck in crevices or on ledges. Innocently, I began to think that numerous parties must have been this way before us and one and all sent their glacier lanterns sliding down the cliffs ! However, when we reached the pink patch, the mica was explained. The rocks below were full of it, and the patch proved to be the raw place where a great quartz avalanche had peeled off.

Just above and to the left of the quartz patch we struck the gully and followed the orthodox route to the top. At the patch, too, we found the cairns of the route which we ought to have taken from the foot of the mountain, and by which we eventually descended. Our route, however, was a great improvement; it provided us with some amusing climbing and a certain excitement of the unknown. There is probably a fine route for a strong party straight up from the shoulder, carrying on from where we began traversing round to the pink patch.

The finest part of the view from the Romsdalthorn is, perhaps, the sight of Mjölñir which you get from the cleft with the grand walls of the gully as a foreground. The photograph unfortunately doesn't half do justice to those gallantly-raked summits, as tall and thin-looking as Chamonix Aiguilles. Mjölñir is a hard mountain ; it took Cecil Slingsby and Charles Hopkinson, who first climbed it, sixteen hours; they likened it in character to the north face of the Ober Gabelhorn, but said that it was altogether finer, more difficult and also longer.

Down in the Voengedal it began to rain—heavyish clouds had

been accumulating all day—and it was here that we had our only mishap during the whole holiday with language. This is a compliment to the Norwegians, not to ourselves, as we hadn't a word of their language and relied entirely on signs or on their, as a rule, admirable attempts at English. We had to make for a certain farm, on a flattish hillside just out of Voengedal and well to the left of the main stream (going down), where we had arranged for a car to meet us to save us the six miles or so of road tramping back into Aandalnaes. On the way up we had stuck to the farm side of the stream all the time, but in so doing we had landed ourselves in a tiring and disagreeable fight with acres of brushwood which fringed the shore of the lower lake. Coming down, we tried the other side of the lake and were, therefore, still on the wrong side of the stream when we reached a group of SEeters. The owners of the sasters were pottering about beside the pathway, chopping wood and mending things. We asked hopefully where the bridge was. They looked quite blank. "Brig" we tried, remembering Slingsby's exhortation to talk Yorkshire. Blank. "Brucke" we tried. Then I attempted to draw a bridge with a bit of stick on the pathway. They shook their heads.

Finally, after two or three further casts, something that we took for comprehension dawned on their faces, they grunted and unmistakably waved us on. . . . The noise of the stream receded further and further to the left of us, we plunged down through woods on and on, until we realised that now we must be below the contour line of our farm. And where was that warm milk and cheese we had been counting on and the car which was to save our tired legs? We made a desperate move to the left through the wood, only to be brought up against an impassable ravine into which the stream had now descended. Gloomily, we gave up all happy thoughts of tea and cars, cursed the peasants and their mythical bridge and tramped down the main valley, ever sheering further and further away from home. The six miles of road would be increased to about ten before we could strike it. We were in a great pinewood on the flat now with a maze of paths and a map which made little or no attempt to work. And then the miracle occurred. Suddenly we came upon a clearing—and a farmhouse. And down the lane which led to it, a car was lurching over the bumps. I rushed at the

driver. He, too, hadn't a word of English, but he did seem to know what two wet and weary-looking tramps who kept saying "Aandalnaes " meant. He grinned, and opened the rear door of the car. Inside was a very old peasant woman, immensely interested in us. We tumbled in on top of her. Conversation was impossible, but she smiled and pointed to our ropes and sacks and we said " Romsdalthorn." Then she smiled again and cackled and that was the furthest our intimacy got, but there was an immense amount of good will on both sides ! We could never explain to the driver, whom we took to be her son, how we came to be there, nor could I ask him, which I was even more anxious to do, how the springs of his car could possibly survive the corrugations of the forest track we went along.

We saw no more of the Romsdal, one of those dales so lovely and remote that you feel it ought to have some " Happy Valley " legend woven round it. Next morning the weather had broken again, and we left by boat for Molde with everything smothered in blankets of mist. Within an hour the rain was streaming down so vigorously that I had to retire to the hold in order to find a dry spot to sit on while I wrote up my diary.

W. G. COLLINGWOOD

A MEMOIR

BY R. B. GRAHAM

" I think he knew the Lake District better than anyone else."

This simple epitaph, casually spoken on the death of W. G. Collingwood last October, will express the sense of loss felt by many of us at the passing of a kind and learned man.

As a boy, he spent long holidays with his artist father in a fisherman's cottage on Windermere. And for forty-two of his seventy-eight years he lived at Lanehead, Monk Coniston, a house built on the site of the old Halfpenny Alehouse, where Hawkshead and Langdale farmers of former years used to call for a drink on their way home from Ulverston market. His heart, too, was in the District: he came to be as thoroughly a part of it and of its people as anyone can be who has neither farmed in it nor been born in it.

Of his " first" in Greats at Oxford, his companionship with Ruskin (for whom his admiration was always " this side idolatry") and of his Professorship of Fine Arts at Reading, there is not space to speak. We are concerned with him as a Lakeland figure, and above all as the Lakeland historian, by far the fullest and surest repository of knowledge about our hills and valleys, mines and churches, farms and villages, and about the folk who in times past have left their mark upon them. As a boy, he came here, like most of us, as to a great playground in which to walk and climb. There is no one now alive who shared the climbs of his youth ; they happened a long time ago and were for the most part solitary and experimental scrambles in places that had not then been explored. But he had a combination of lightness, coolness and muscular strength which enabled him to go alone into a number of places which are now recognised " climbs." And he much enjoyed these scrambles. Almost to the end, he would rise from weeks of sedentary work to do long walks at a great pace over the hills ; and he had a habit of sitting sketching on the tops of mountains in the middle of winter when anybody else would have been frozen to the rocks.

He saw our District with the eye of an artist, and could put



The courtesy of

W. G. COLLINGWOOD. *"The Waterleaf Gazette"*

it down as he saw it with skilful brush and pen. His paintings are good to live with, for they have in them his humble love of the beauty of cloud or hillside. His writing is more generally accessible in such books as his *Lake District History*, or *The Lake Counties* (newly re-issued in the month of his death), both of which should be in all our Club Libraries, or in his novels *Thorstein of the Mere*, *The Bondwoman*, and *Dutch Agnes: her Valentine*.

Here are some quotations, almost haphazard, from his writings about the scenery:

" ' It's a' nabs and neuks, is Windermcr-waiter/ but you cannot see the nabs and neuks from the steamer; only from a small boat and at leisure. Some of them are gone for ever, filled up with fancy boat-houses and landscape gardening; many are still unspoilt, sweet little rocky coves, wooded above and fringed with ferns, where the fishermen in old days used to draw their nets and boil their gipsy kettles for breakfast in the sunrise. That is Windermere ; not the sky-line, for it has no great mountains near, but the shore **line**."

Of a place more familiar to most of us, he wrote :

" I often wish Gray, of the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, had been dragged up here; he found the Jaws of Borrowdale so terrible that it would have been pleasant to watch him accumulating adjectives half-way up Dow Craggs."

And in *Dutch Agnes*, his schoolmaster priest says:

" For a wonder Christmas Day broke fair; and when it's fair at Coniston it's liker Heaven than earth, though I say so. When I went forth to ring the bell, over the Heald there was a glow like the colour of Lent-lilies, and Thurston water grey and still as the glassy sea before the Throne. When I rang folk in to church (it was hard on nine of the clock) of a sudden a fire broke along the brow of Brimfell. There's a red wild rose comes on some of our hedges in June; there's the blush on our lasses' cheeks; there's the thin flame of the peats when the smith blows ; yonder gleam of the dawn on the snow was none of these, but jll at once, as soft, as bright, and as clear, betwixt the pale green sky and the pale grey fell, frosty and misty in the hollows of the hills."

The dialect, too, he wrote faithfully and naturally, in prose and verse, as readers of that book will know. What a pleasure and a peace it is to turn to writing such as this from the strained productions of others who have been lately writing up to—and beyond—the full limit of their knowledge of the district.

The reason for his eminence as a Lakeland figure lay first in his single-mindedness and reverence. To the District that he loved, he brought, moreover, a scholarship both careful in method and far-reaching in grasp. He cared immensely for historical truth and did much to establish a sound tradition of antiquarian and historical research, especially as he was for many years President of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian Society and Editor of its *Transactions*. The time I saw him most put out, more than some would think reasonable, was once when the Carlisle Pageant authorities had sacrificed historical accuracy to dramatic effect.

If there is a place where such men after death meet with those whom they have served, W. G. Collingwood has assuredly been welcomed by many good men of the past, some of them not at all like himself, whose names or doings he has saved from undeserved oblivion. It is pleasant to think of him, short of stature, dome-like in forehead, with the friendly yet penetrating blue eyes of the scholar, passing his time with local worthies of whom he told the bare truth—or with the South German miners of *Dutch Agnes*, who brought prosperity in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries—or with those magnificent Northmen of *Thorstein* who sailed up the creeks a thousand years ago to clear the lovable green fields in the bottoms of our valleys and to leave their thwaites and howes and saeters in many a well-loved name.

Collingwood joined the Club in 1913.

IN MEMORIAM

MARY E. THOMAS

Mary Thomas joined the Club late in life (in 1928), but had always been keenly interested in it, and in the pursuits for which it stands. She was generally to be seen at the Grasmere and the Windermere meets, and for many years had a Whitsuntide party at Kilnhow, Rosthwaite. To be one of the twenty or more members of that party was a privilege greatly appreciated by all.

Living near to Manchester, with her brother Eustace, she was always in close contact with the Rucksack Club, and was almost worshipped by many of its members. Indeed, if that Club had admitted ladies to membership she would have been made an honorary member long ago for her invaluable services.

A brilliant pianist, holding the degrees of L.R.A.M. and A.R.C.M., she delighted to play at its concerts. She threw her house open to its members at all times, and on one ever-memorable evening when we acted a home-made play she served coffee and cake to 63 members and friends. And above all she acted as hostess to any "celebrities" who came to Manchester to see either "Pinnacle" or "Rucksack." She was, indeed, the perfect hostess, she delighted in entertaining, and in her week-end visitors' book are to be seen the names of Martin Conway, Raymond Bicknell, Capt. Farrar, Frank Smythe, H. W. Nevinston, Walter Amstutz, Howard Somervell, Haskett-Smith, and many more. She had more of that indefinable quality which we call charm than anyone I have ever known, and it will ever be one of my greatest pleasures to feel that I have enjoyed her friendship.

H.E.S.

COLIN BENT PHILLIP

The Club has lost a distinguished member by the death of Colin B. Phillip last year. He joined the Club in 1909, two years after it was founded, and two years later consented to become a Vice-President. Since that date he lived at intervals at Coniston, Elterwater and other places in the District, and was able to attend a number of Club Meets and several Annual Dinners at which his presence was always much appreciated. As a mountaineer,

he was first and foremost a lover of the Scottish Highlands, of which he had a detailed knowledge equalled by few, if any, and it was on his suggestions that exploration was first made, some forty years ago, of remote cliffs that have since become popular climbing grounds. By the time that he joined this Club he had abandoned active rock climbing, which in its modern form would hardly have appealed to him, but he never lost his enthusiasm for the Lake District Fells. He was an artist by profession, and a walk with him was a delight as he pointed out the beauties of the landscape; but he was more than a painter, he was one of the few men who could teach others how to look for and to appreciate the lights and shades, the buttresses and hollows, and the wooded hill sides with the rivers winding down them. His knowledge was so minute that often when he knew of the intended route of a party he would tell them where to go so as to obtain the best view of a particular feature, and he was seldom wrong. All will regret that they may no more look forward to hearing his cheery greeting at a Club Meet. G.A.S.

F. W. JACKSON. 1907—1932.

E. MANNING. 1914—1932.

W. E. DOWNEY. 1923—1931.

We very much regret that the name of W. E. Downey, who was lost on the Jungfrau in August 1931, was omitted from the In Memoriam notices last year. An account of the accident in which Downey was killed appears in the *Alpine Journal* for November 1931.

H. C. JENKINS. 1913—1933.

Since going to press, too late for any notice in the current Journal, news has come of the death of H. C. Jenkins.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

BY CHARLES F. HADFIELD

It is a "far cry" from London to Cumberland, and this makes it difficult for a President living in the benighted metropolis to record the doings of the Club with befitting detail. With the best intentions opportunity has only allowed attendance at six of the dozen meets and even that has involved between three and four thousand miles motoring.

Patterdale, Nov. 1931.

After last year's successful dinner at Windermere my first lapse was the Autumn meet at Patterdale. From information received it appears that my absence was shared by many others as very few members put in an appearance. For this reason Patterdale has once more been replaced by Langdale for the present year.

Wasdale, Dec. 1931.

At Christmas, Wasdale gave a hearty welcome to the few members who were able to tear themselves away from the delights of traditional fare in the bosoms of their families. Of these the President was not one.

Buttermere, Jan. 1932.

New Year at Buttermere, although weather conditions may not allow much climbing, is always one of the best meets in the year. There seems to be a special feeling of good fellowship left over from Christmas which pervades the gathering of forty or fifty members and their friends whose cars brave the traverse of the possibly ice-covered Whinlatter. We arrived on a bright frosty afternoon with a sprinkling of snow on the Fells and the prospect of brilliant weather. Alas, it rained almost continuously for the next two or three days. However, the sturdy ex-Editor managed to accomplish his regular New Year ascent of the Pillar for the umpteenth time and after all what else is the Buttermere meet really for ?

One familiar face was missed in the absence of Solly, but all were glad to hear that he was well on the way to recovery after his recent illness. It was sad to be deprived of his excellent port; it was sadder to miss his genial presence !

Wasdale, March 1932.

At Easter, Wasdale was as crowded as ever, or perhaps, even more so. This was due to the fact that our meet coincided with one arranged by the Midland Association of Mountaineers. Perhaps it was fortunate that the Midlanders did not appear in quite the numbers that had been expected, but the dale was quite full enough for comfort. With the increasing number of climbing clubs holding meets at holiday times, it will soon be necessary to appoint some sort of "Clearing House" to allot meeting places. On the other hand, it is pleasant to have the opportunity of meeting other clubs. The weather was reasonably good.

Borrowdale, May 1932.

Whitsuntide at Borrowdale always presents the Lake District at about its best. The weather, although rather uncertain, finally decided to treat us kindly. I had thought of camping, but upon arrival was glad that the idea had been given up. The whole dale gave the impression of an Army Corps under canvas, and there seemed to be no vacant site anywhere. Nor did this lessen the demand for accommodation elsewhere, as there was not a bed unoccupied in the valley. One evening there was a good deal of mist, and a strong party of members and friends, after completing their climb, spent much more time on Scawfell than they really intended. They do not receive further enquiries on the subject very kindly !

Wasdale.

The elements were less favourable at Wasdale in August. We arrived very late one evening as darkness fell, quite intending to camp. It was streaming with rain and any possible site was almost under water. So wiser counsels and Mrs. Whiting prevailed, and we decided that in such weather a roof was preferable. Next day it still rained in sheets, and I have never seen the Fells so wet. On the way to Hollow Stones we had to leave the track and stumble up Lingmell screes for a quarter-of-a-mile or more before it was safe to cross the beck on to Brown Tongue. Perhaps for this reason very few members put in an appearance. Next day, as no improvement was in sight, we gave it up and sought the drier climate of the Highlands!

Eskdale.

Early September in Eskdale found more members and better climate, and consequently, a most enjoyable gathering, but one which, with the Dinner so near, I could find no adequate excuse for attending.

Windermere, Sept. 1932.

And so round the calendar again to the Annual Meeting and Dinner at Windermere. There we received our usual kindly welcome from Miss Briggs and her staff. Considering the hard times and the earlier date there was an astonishingly good turnout of members and their friends. Although we have in the past accommodated more, the room was quite full enough for comfort. The Annual Meeting was chiefly remarkable for the creation of a new office—that of an Assistant Secretary. This was necessary in order to provide a position for H. F. Pollitt, who has kindly acted in that capacity unofficially for some time, but who by the Rules was ineligible for re-election on the Committee as an ordinary member.

Among the guests from other clubs we were fortunate in having with us, in the immediate ex-president of the Alpine Club, that doyen of mountaineering, Dr. Claude Wilson. Although his incomparable little Primer on mountaineering was published so long ago as 1893 Dr. Wilson still declared himself willing to be taken up almost any climb on Gimmer. Unfortunately, the weather proved too inclement to grant his wish. In his charming speech at the Dinner, after many reminiscences of climbing in the district, he entertained us with extracts from an old book on travel and mountaineering in the Lake Country. The author seems to have been gifted with some prophetic vision of the formation of our Club, for he took care to be invariably accompanied on his climbing expeditions by one or two charming young ladies. On their advice and assistance he relied entirely to extricate himself from the terrifying and appalling situations into which he not infrequently strayed. Dr. Wilson finished by presenting his copy of this rare and interesting volume to the Club Library, and also promised to send us one of his few cherished copies of *Mountaineering*, which has long been out of print. Both these books are now available and, as the Librarian reports, in great demand.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Accidents.

There have been three bad accidents on Lakeland crags this last year. I have tried to collect first-hand information about them, since it seems of the first importance that reports of accidents in a mountaineering journal which, therefore, naturally carry authority should be accurate as to what happened and technically reliable as to why it happened.

The first of these accidents occurred in the spring on Dow Crag. Details have been given me by J. C. Appleyard, who led the rescue party.

The climbers were Mr. J. S. Brogden, leader, Mr. H. W. Tilman and Miss V. Brown. They were climbing Jones's Route, Easter Gully, and Brogden was on the grass ledge at the finish of the climb. He cannot have been belayed as the rope was not broken and the only belay is a large bollard of rock. Tilman was at the bottom of the final scoop on a bad belay and Miss Brown was traversing from the bandstand into Hopkinson's crack. From what she told him, Appleyard is fairly sure that she had an attack of nerves and simply fell off backwards. She was quite inexperienced. Tilman had climbed in the Alps, Wales and Central Africa, Brogden had done a good deal of climbing including, apparently, the Atlas. He was said to rely overmuch on his strength.

When Miss Brown came off, she pulled Tilman's belay off and he followed. They hung for a few seconds whilst Brogden was being dragged from his stance and then fell to the scree above the pitch of Easter Gully. The leader was killed and the second and third seriously injured. Tilman managed to climb down to the cave, but he found no one there, so he climbed back to Miss Brown again to say he was going to Coniston for help. Partly walking and partly crawling, he succeeded in reaching Coniston—a deed of wonderful endurance and heroism. Appleyard was called up from Torver and fortunately Dr. Lapage happened to be with him when the message came. The rescuers had considerable difficulty in getting up in the dusk to where Miss Brown lay; and but for the fine work of

Appleyard would probably have failed. Appleyard led up and got three quarrymen up after him. They then tied the rope round Miss Brown under her armpits and across her chest, helped her to the edge of the pitch and lowered her straight down to Lapage, who was waiting to receive her. She was semi-conscious and able to follow instructions to hold her arms close to her sides to prevent herself slipping through the rope. The dead man was let down in the same way and the rope kept on both of them until the bottom of the gully was reached. The descent had to be made in complete darkness.

The conclusion to be drawn from this accident in the opinion of those on the spot was that Jones's route should never have been attempted by that party on a cold, wet and windy day—in fact, the girl, a complete novice, should never have been on that climb at all. It is also probable that the accident would not have been fatal had the leader been belayed himself or had Tilman's belay been an efficient one.

At the Borrowdale Meet, the Committee passed a Minute recording the Club's appreciation of the services rendered by Appleyard and Lapage. The former, who was quite out of training, had to tackle the climbing practically in darkness and his effort on this occasion must make one of the finest bits of rescue work on record.

The Dow Crag accident drew the Club's attention once more to the question of stretchers. The one from Coniston was found to be of little or no use in conveying the injured woman down the scree from the foot of the rock. One of the several difficulties that become awkwardly obvious on steep and difficult ground is that the bearers are unable to see where they are putting their feet and are therefore liable to trip and so jar the injured person perhaps very seriously. The problem of designing a stretcher suitable for all occasions seems to be insoluble. Dr. Hadfield obtained details of a wonderfully efficient stretcher in use in the United States Navy. This was in the form of a duraluminium cradle. Even had these stretchers been obtainable here, which is more than doubtful, their cost would have been probably prohibitive. A Sub-Committee, composed of Wilson Hey, Lapage, Harlow and Pollitt, has been appointed to consider the whole matter afresh.

The second accident occurred in October on Gimmer. I

have been furnished with an account of this accident by Mr. J. Brady, of Kendal, one of the rescuers.

Two youths, Wayles and Tyson, both of them only seventeen, set off for Doves Nest Caves on Glaramara from Langdale, but eventually turned back finding the distance too great. They returned "over the tops." Arriving above Gimmer, they tried to descend the crag, although it was their first visit and they had had almost no previous experience of rock work, barring pure scrambling. They knew little or nothing of what may be called the technique of safety when roped to others.

Some time was spent in the attempt, which, of course, proved more difficult than they had anticipated. Whilst casting about for an easier route, and at a time when neither of them was belayed, Wayles slipped and fell to the bottom of the crag, dragging his companion with him. Wayles must have fallen a hundred feet and Tyson a hundred and fifty. It seems incredible that this should happen without their being killed outright, but when found next day they were alive and astonishingly self-possessed in the circumstances. They had borne their terrible ordeal with fine fortitude. Tyson was trying to descend the steep hillside with a broken leg to find help. The shock, injuries and subsequent exposure proved too much for Wayles. He died from pneumonia the morning after he was rescued.

After their fall, the boys managed to cut themselves clear of the ropes and they spent the night on the open mountain side in a more or less comatose state, the accident having happened about five o'clock on Sunday evening.

Their absence was reported to Mr. Walmsley of Kendal on Monday morning and he and Mr. Brady set out to find them. Their bicycles were located at Middlefell Farm—it was known they had gone up Langdale—but no one had any idea what route they had taken on the fells. Pavey Ark was very thoroughly searched and then a move was made to Gimmer, rather perfunctorily as the rescuers did not believe the boys would have gone there. However, from the "finishing balcony" Tyson was discerned, trying to get down.

Owing to the boys having had no previous acquaintance with Gimmer, it has been very difficult to reconstruct the accident or to place it exactly, but the position in which they were found

and various evidences of their line of descent discovered on a subsequent visit a week later, point clearly to their having fallen down the slabs and blocks forming the lower part of S.E. Chimney. The reasons for the accident are unfortunately self-evident ; it could have been avoided if proper precautions had been taken and the lack of precautions was due not to slackness, but to technical ignorance.

The boys were found about 1-30 p.m., and Walmsley then returned to the valley and organised a rescue party. The " Tourist Route " was chosen for the descent to Dungeon Ghyll and the boys were got down at about 6 p.m. All credit is due to the volunteers from the valley who untiringly exerted themselves in this work of mercy. Mr. Brady, since he has furnished me with the account, naturally does not refer to his own work or that of Mr. Walmsley, but it is obvious that where credit is to be shared out they ought to get a lion's share of it. The speed with which the rescue party was collected and organised, got up to the crag, and got the boys down is alone proof of this.

The third accident to which I have to refer occurred at Christmas on the Napes and I am indebted to Dr. Wakefield, who has collected information from one of the climbers on the spot, for an account of what happened. This accident occurred on Tophet Bastion. There were two ropes on the Bastion, both working quite independently. Mr. D. G. Ritson was leading the first rope and Mr. J. A. Whitehead was second. Miss K. O'Brien was leading the second rope with Mr. E. F. Haslam second. Mr. Whitehead was carrying 100 feet of line in case Miss O'Brien found any difficulty with the second lead. Ritson reached the belay at the top of the third pitch and brought Whitehead up. He vacated the belay and left Whitehead to fasten up. It was during this process that Whitehead slipped. His own story was that he slipped on a loose stone whilst looping the rope over the high belay and overbalanced. Ritson endeavoured to save himself and Whitehead by jumping over the east side of the ridge into the crevasse. Whitehead fell about 80 feet, not in a direct fall, but bouncing at least once on the way. He was then held up by the rope and left swinging over a further big drop. The make of the rope is not known nor the length between the two climbers.

Mr. Whitehead, the climber who fell, has since died. He

sustained severe internal injuries from the jar when the rope came taut.* And there was also a double compound fracture of the forearm and a compound comminuted fracture of the femur.

Fortunately, others were climbing nearby at the time of the accident and came to the party's help. Whitehead was got on to a ledge, where he lay in a pool of mud for two hours nearly. The protruding femur was replaced and he was kept as comfortable and warm as possible until a stretcher with ambulance men and other helpers arrived from Borrowdale. By this time it was almost dark, and Dr. Wakefield says the utmost credit is due to the St. John Ambulance men and other helpers for getting him down alive under such circumstances.

These accidents have been weighed up with complete frankness in the light of the evidence available. I feel that if descriptions of accidents are published at all in mountaineering journals, this is the only right course to pursue. Too often the causes of an accident are slurred over if a technical error or a carelessness has been committed; this is done from the generous motive of saving the feelings of the survivors and the relatives concerned. But it is surely a wrong thing to do, firstly because it brings mountaineering into disrepute with the general public, who conclude that accidents are probably almost always due to forces we cannot control and that therefore mountaineering is a fool-hardy sport; and secondly, and this is of much greater importance, because the accurate weighing-up of the causes of an accident may save the lives of others on future occasions through preventing them from making the same type of mistake and demonstrating how fatal a small technical error may be. I have in mind one of the most serious accidents of recent years in the Alps. I was told by an eye-witness of this accident, a member of another party, exactly what occurred. And it was clear that this accident was entirely due to preventable causes, a bad line of descent in one detail of the route and two or three technical errors, each one small in itself, but fatal in their cumulative effect. I do not think this particular accident has been frankly and fully discussed either in the *Alpine Journal* or elsewhere, yet such discussion, in teaching others the vital importance of ice and snow craft, might prevent similar tragedies

* This suggests that the rope was secured round the climber's waist and therefore raises the important point as to whether it is not safer to tie the rope round the chest; or would other and equally serious injuries be likely from a severe jar on the chest?—Ed.

in the future. One feels that any relatives concerned would far rather that some good should issue from their tragedy even at the expense perhaps of their personal feelings.

There is another point in connection with accidents. Since the inauguration of the Youth Hostels movement, the crowd of young hikers through the Lake District has increased enormously. Parties of fantastically irresponsible young scramblers have been met on the crags—of course whether those my informant saw were actually Youth Hostellers one doesn't know—and it is quite clear that the ratio of accidents to climbers will go up by leaps and bounds if this sort of thing goes on. Of course there isn't much that we can do about it; the Club doesn't want to appear officious and interfering. But individual climbers could probably help a good deal here and there with a piece of tactful advice in season when they come across such parties, and the Youth Hostels themselves would perhaps consider putting up a list of safety first rules for those who want to make their first essays on rock.

J. W. Robinson's Climbing Diary, etc.

Richard Hall has written a very generous letter to the Club in connection with a number of old Climbing Books, Cuttings and Journals which he has in his possession. I will quote it in full.

" As Exor of the late Mrs. J. W. Robinson, I now have in my possession (my own) many valuable books on climbing, old editions and so on. But I have two particularly fine books of old newspaper cuttings going back to the 1870's—all connected with mountaineering.

" I also have a copy of J. W. Robinson's Climbing Diary (which latter I have left in my will along with my ice-axe to the F. & R.C.C.).

" I want these books to be of use to Members and will at all times be glad to lend. One of the books of newspaper cuttings is far too big for a bookcase; the other is handier. I am inserting in the front page a notice that I wish them eventually to belong to the F. & R.C.C. Dr. S; m Prior has arranged the larger book and written a table of contents. For the student of the pioneering period of our art these cuttings are of value and I would like Members to know they may always be had on loan here.

" Someday I may hand them over to the Central Library (the cuttings), but I wish you to understand that they *are now* the property of the Club, but stored temporarily for members' use, including my own, at this address—7 Castlegat Drive, Cockermouth.

" I am retaining the other old books as my own property, but shall as stated be always glad to lend and show to any Member who may wish to refer to them."

There are not many left now who climbed with or even knew J. W. Robinson, but many are the stories one has heard of him from the older generation and one and all these stories show him as an intrepid explorer of our crags, and not only that, but as the finest type of " statesman," gentle and strong, which the Lake District can show. He lived at Whin Fell Hall, Lorton. The Club should feel proud indeed to come into possession of the journals of his climbs and fell walks.

Lake District Preservation.

During the last few months Keswick has won its hard-fought battle with the Electricity Commissioners over the line of pylons. The Commission have been induced to abandon their original idea and the pylons will not now be erected on the line that was going to spoil the lovely background of Keswick.

During the last few months, too, Manchester has decided to hold up its Hawes Water scheme—but how far this can be regarded as entirely matter for congratulation is another thing. The real good would have been had the scheme never been started.

An Ullswater Preservation Society has been lately formed and will no doubt find plenty of opportunity for putting in good work in saving the shores and environs of perhaps the most beautiful and unspoilt of the Lakes.

The Emily Kelly Hut.

Members will be interested to know that the Pinnacle Club have obtained a cottage in Cwm Dyli, Nant Gwynant, which was opened as a Climbers' Hut in November last and most appropriately named in honour of the late Mrs. Kelly, one of the finest women rock-climbers, who was killed on the Welsh hills in 1922. Mrs. Kelly was a notable member of our Club, and besides being a most brilliant climber herself she was always ready to spend her time helping beginners. I myself shall always remember the kind invitations she gave me more than once for Sundays in Derbyshire when I was just starting to climb.

No one has left a better memory behind them than she, and I feel that we of the F. & R. C. C. should take a special interest in this Memorial to her.

The Mount Everest Expedition.

Four members of this Club are with the Mount Everest Expedition—C. R. Greene, E. E. Shipton, J. L. Longland and George Wood-Johnson. We wish them good luck, good health, and the last of the trio—good courage—we do not need to wish them, knowing their records either on previous Himalayan adventures or in the Alps.

White Hares.

Last New Year I was on Grasmoor one day in company with various others and we started a hare—a white one. I can't say that this phenomenon struck me as very wonderful, but one of the party who is a bit of a naturalist reported it to the pundits and was told that a white hare has no business in the Lakes. At that altitude it would be almost certainly a Scottish Alpine hare and quite distinct from the English brown hare. Apparently attempts have been made to introduce these hares into the northern counties, so perhaps our hare was one of the unfortunate immigrants.

International Congress.

Early in the year, the Club was asked to send Delegates to the International Congress of Alpinism which was held in August at Chamonix under the auspices of the French Alpine Club. Unfortunately, although the President approached many members, he was unable to find anybody to represent us. **The** Congress seems to have been a very representative one, and our abstention would have been the more regrettable had it not escaped the observation of the officials! From the detailed report of the Congress, the President was credited with attendance, although he was at the time enjoying life in the Scottish Highlands! This appears to be the first time that the Club has been asked to take part in the International Congress.

The Mountaineering Journal.

This is an entirely new venture in the realm of mountaineering journalism. The Journal is, apparently, run on professional

lines, it has a magazine *format* (and therefore makes a striking contrast to the sober and dignified get up to which we are accustomed), and its aim is to take a general view of mountaineering activity and not merely some given Club view, to be in touch with everything that goes on in the mountaineering world and to produce articles of real technical authority. On the whole, one rather likes the gayer bookstall *format*—for a change; though the type used is irritating and one could wish that the editor had stuck to one of the customary types with serifs. It is curiously difficult to accustom oneself to reading continuously from any of the types without serifs. The conception of the Journal is admirable—there is real need for such a paper.

One does feel, however, that much more care ought to have been taken with the Reviews which, in a Journal of this kind, should occupy a very important place. For instance, surely somebody with proper knowledge of the history of Alpine Climbing ought to have been put on to review such an important contribution to Alpine literature as Christian Klucker's book. The reviewer makes no attempt to discuss the book seriously and his description of Klucker as a guide who " appears to have been well above the average " is merely laughable.

It is unfortunate, too, that the reviewers adopt quite so *ex cathedra* a tone; this is particularly the case in technical criticisms of production. The Wayfarers', for instance, are given a detailed lecture on how to produce their Journal which one feels is out of place here though it might be admirably suited for a bunch of typography students from an expert in the subject. Certainly it doesn't come well from the pen of a contributor to the B.M.J., which has a number of aesthetic faults of its own. It is, for instance, a bad mistake to print photographs with no margins; or to back advertisements on to a page of letterpress. These Journals are well worth binding and how annoying to have to bind a lot of out-of-date advertisements with the valuable matter of the Journal.

One feels at liberty to make these strictures since our own Journal came out most unexpectedly well, but for an exhortation to use 150 screen blocks and to print but four blocks at a time. In regard to the second admonishment, anyone who knows anything about half-tone block printing is aware that the ideal

way is to print one block at a time and so ensure an individual inking which suits that particular picture. If the Hon. Treasurer will permit me, I am more than willing to meet the B.M.J. criticism here and indeed to go one better. In regard to the second admonishment, it is unfortunate that the reviewer didn't examine our plates more carefully ; actually we have been using 150 screen blocks for the last five years or more. The two numbers of the B.M.J. are reviewed elsewhere.

Correspondence.

A good deal of trouble would be saved to the Club officers if correspondents would write to the " Competent Authority " on any subject they wish to bring up and not haphazard to the first officer whose address happens to catch their fancy !

The Hon. Secretary deals with all matters relating to the Rules, Year Book, Meets, Annual Meeting, Membership and matters of general interest.

The Hon. Treasurer deals with matters of general finance.

The Hon. Librarian deals with all matters connected with the borrowing and presentation of books and lantern slides and kindred Club Journals.

The Hon. Editor deals with all matters concerning the production of the Journal, literary, technical and financial, advertisements excepted.

The Assistant Editor deals with the sale of Journals, both current and old, and with the advertisements in the Journal, and with the distribution of the current Journal to members and kindred Clubs.

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

BY A. T. HARGREAVES

WASDALE 25/6/32. Starts at a small cairn below a
 Pillar Rock, crack on the east of the lower main buttress
 Nor'-Nor'-West of the N.W. Climb, below a stretch of slabs.
 Climb.

- (1) Ascend crack and walk to the left to the foot of some slabs.
- (2) Avoiding the grassy gully on the right, climb the smooth easy-angled slab upwards and to the right, finally scrambling into a corner on the right with a belay.
- (3) Ascend the crack over a large chockstone to a thread belay.
- (4) Traverse upwards and to the left for a few feet, then up a thin crack to a large grass ledge, where will be found a tremendous belay.
- (5) Walk to the right and climb a steep little crack to the level ridge above the first cairn on the N.W. Climb.
- (6) Climb the steep groove immediately in front: belay.
- (7) Traverse down to the left, then ascend a corner; step left, then up; left again, crossing the top of a very steep crack, when easier slabs lead to a good belay on the skyline.
- (8) Easier corners on the right, followed by a traverse to a belay.
- (9) Climb the slab ahead to a good ledge and take an awkward step round a corner on the right to a good belay on the wall.
- (10) Traverse almost horizontally; then up to the belay at the top of Lamb's Chimney.
- (11) Ascend the steep corner on the left of the recess to good finishing holds, and follow a grassy traverse to a pinnacle on the left. On a ledge above is a cairn.
- (12) Follow easier rocks on the left to the top of Low Man. 120 feet of line necessary for pitch 7. (This climb crosses the Girdle Traverse, pitch 10 forming part of that route.)
 A.T.H., G.G.M.

SCAWFELL 21/8/32.
 East Buttress.

- (1) Easy: Start at an opening about 15 feet to the right of the

lowest point of the crag below Mickledore Chimney. Ascend 15 feet and walk left to stance and belay.

- (2) Hardest pitch: Proceed up and to the left for about 25 feet without difficulty, then climb the overhang; commencing with a lay-back, a very good right-hand hold is attained on the right wall. Poor stance with good belay.
- (3) Traverse left across the slab, ascend the crack in the corner, and step round on to the face on the left; then straight up to a good stance and belay.
- (4) Short steep cracks to grass stance with belay. A large "roof" impends.
- (5) Cross slab to the right, and go up the "step." There is a large but inconspicuous flake belay about 20 feet further to the right.
- (6) Ascend a little on good holds, some of which may be unsound, then continue upward and to the right to a small crevasse.
- (7) Move a little to the right and ascend to a grass ledge.
- (8) A short easy chimney.
- (9) Right and up round a corner on good holds. Finish on a ledge at the top of the Great White Slab : remote belay in chimney. M. Linnell, S. Cross (non-members).

Esk Buttress, 10/7/32. The climb starts from a ledge Route 2. above a large detached block some 30 feet to the right of the foot of the shallow gully which forms the southern boundary of the central wall of the crag.

- (1) 50 feet: A slightly zigzag course is pursued up very steep grassy rocks to a grass ledge with belay.
- (2) 30 feet: An easy crack behind a flake on the left leads to the top edge of the flake, which is followed to a ledge and belays on the left.
- (3) 70 feet: A steep and difficult crack immediately above is ascended to the level of a fine spike. A delicate traverse to the right, rounding a block of doubtful stability, leads to a line of ascent up easier slabs to the left, finishing at a conspicuous grass ledge beneath the overhang, where are excellent belays.
- (4) 45 feet: Descending slightly, a horizontal traverse leads

into the shallow gully, whence a chimney leads to a large ledge on the left (true right) wall: thread belay.

- (5) 50 feet: A rising traverse leads to a pinnacle on the edge of the buttress.
- (6) 40 feet: A mossy groove directly above is followed without incident to the final ledges.

Route 2 involves the handling of much doubtful rock and turf, necessitating extreme care throughout. A. W. Bridge, (non-member), A.B.H., M. Linnell, W. S. Dyson (non-members).

LANGDALE 24/9/32. Starts from a cairn 20 feet to Bowfell Buttress, the left of that marking the ordinary Sinister Slabs. route.

- (1) 60 feet: Fairly easy rocks lead straight ahead to a ledge : then left and up again with slightly more difficulty to a grass ledge with flake belay.
- (2) 40 feet: A shallow chimney slanting left is climbed to a niche under the overhang. By climbing well up into the corner good small holds can be found to surmount the overhang and gain a ledge on the left. Line belay.
- (3) 40 feet: Almost vertical rocks are climbed, working right to a small ledge, gained by a somewhat awkward movement. Good notch belay high up on left.
- (4) 70 feet: Stepping round the rib on the right a shallow vertical chimney is climbed until it is possible to break out on to a good ledge on the left. The steep but easier continuation, followed by grass, leads to a good stance and belay.
- (5) 50 feet: Steep rocks just above lead to grassy ledge, followed by a steep slab which is climbed near its right edge to a ledge, whence a pull-up brings one to the cairn at the top of the ordinary route. A.T.H., G.G.M.

MiddleJell Buttress, 30/7/32. The route starts from the gully West Wall. to the left of the buttress level with the third section of the buttress climb.

A short traverse to the right leads into a groove, which is followed up to, and past, a shallow recess. Above the recess move left over small ledges. The arete to the right is used for a few feet, but about ten or fifteen feet from the top a small

ledge, with perfect hand holds above, is followed out on to the wall for a sensational but easy finish up to the big boulder at the top. G. Todd, G. C. Williams, V. G. Jack (non-members).

BTJTTERMERE No entries.

CONISTON No entries.

Key to Initials used:

A. T. Hargreaves.

G. G. Macphee.

A. B. Hargreaves.

THE LONDON SECTION

We are presenting the doings of the London Section in a new form this year, promoting them, in fact, to full size type !—but at the same time omitting the detailed list of walks which we have published in previous years. These meticulous domestic details cannot be of interest to outside members and are, therefore, better left out. On the other hand the London Section is **now** such a large—it has eighty-seven members—important and very ah've part of the Club that we feel its general activities are probably of more interest to members from all parts of die country than the small type in which they have hitherto been described would suggest.

There is nothing Cinderella-like about the London Section—as evidenced by the splendid attendance of non-London and particularly of North Country members at our annual dinner functions. The Northern contingents bring a good atmosphere of home and heartiness—particularly to those who like the writer like to nourish their Northern patriotism after a good many years' residence in the South ! Long may the Northerners continue to come, and in increasing numbers.

Neither have we who live in London any desire to make a clique out of the London Section—a Club within a Club ; **and** here, again, I think the support of the non-Londoners at our functions is very sound proof of this.

One word more. Members coming to London ought to communicate with G. R. Speaker, the Section's Secretary. **For** the modest sum of half-a-crown, which the Secretary frequently forgets to collect, they can join the section and get the benefits of its lectures and arranged walks, etc.

And a postscript—please note that the kernel of a communication is proverbially always to be found in its postscript. It is, of course, the leadership and untiring work of Speaker that have made the London Section and its Dinners the success they have been. He has put all the vigour and generosity of his personality into this job and he deserves not only our gratitude—which we hope he realises that he truly gets—but the thanks of the Club generally.—ED.

During 1932, members have shown a keener desire than ever before to meet together, and there has been an unfailling supply of volunteers to arrange and lead walks and so forth. The average attendance at the fifteen walks held during 1932 was sixteen—a more or less ideal number to most of us. But at that most popular of all walks, the Dinner walk, which always ends up with a splendid Lake District tea at C. F. Holland's school in Reigate, there was an attendance of over fifty. It is perhaps fortunate that we only invade the countryside *en masse* like this once a year—and no doubt the hospitality at Holland's is largely responsible. Rum butter, scones and tea, which Mrs. Holland somehow contrives to brew like the suave, soft-watered Lakeland tea, though her water actually must come from a chalk catchment!

Next to the Dinner walk, in point of popularity and numbers, was an autumn one led by Mrs. Garrod through the Harpenden country and winding up at her house with another admirable tea. Similar pleasant finishes were provided for two more walks, one after a sweltering July day by Dr. and Mrs. Hadfield at Dunmow, and the other, later in the year, by Mr. and Mrs. A. Anderson at Runfold. Another pleasant memory of last year's walks was the supper-time entertainment given by the Chorleys at Stanmore after a ramble over the surrounding country in the fading evening light. And certainly not least among the year's fixtures was the midnight walk organised by that redoubtable partnership, Nancy Irons and Joyce Chapman, starting at Didcot and finishing at Goring-on-Thames with a much appreciated bathe, mid-day.

An excellent addition to the activities of the Section was the starting last year of evening gatherings during the winter. In January 1932, George Anderson generously provided a hall and refreshments and Haskett-Smith gave us, what mountaineering audiences appreciate so much, a number of climbing reminiscences. No one can excel Haskett on this line, either in his matter or his manner.

Later, in February, George Anderson again stepped forward with the hospitality of a room and cakes and coffee, and so we were enabled to listen in comfort to a fascinating lecture by Dorothy Pilley on her experiences in China; unfortunately the Club's projecting lantern proved recalcitrant and refused to do justice to the many interesting slides which she had to show.

This year, 1933, we have already had one lecture from Dr. Finzi on the Bregaglia, illustrated by admirable photographs, and we are hoping for another lecture from Professor Graham-Brown shortly. We have been very fortunate in having the hospitality of the Alpine Club Gallery extended to us for these lectures. The hard frost of January which was in full swing on the date of the first of them had very effectively penetrated the Gallery, and the temperature added an agreeably realistic sense of Alpine rigours to Dr. Finzi's descriptions of some hard days !

The annual Dinner took place in December at the Connaught Rooms. It is the General Meeting of the London Section, who proceed to re-elect their Committee and officers in the genial atmosphere produced by good food and good wine, with a maximum of expedition and a minimum of friction which other Institutions might well envy. Dr. Hadfield was again made President and G. R. Speaker Secretary and Treasurer, and the Committee was re-elected *en bloc**

Since the Fell and Rock Club has five of its members in the Everest party, it was decided to invite all those taking part in the Expedition, who expected to be in London at the time of the Dinner, to be the guests of the Club. Ample proof of the popularity of this step was given by the large and loyal support of the function by non-London members. In all, 155 were present. Mr. Hugh Rutledge responded briefly to the toast of the Expedition. The other representatives present were Mr. Frank Smythe, Eric Shipton and J. L. Longland. Dr. Wakefield came from Keswick to represent previous expeditions. Unfortunately, General Bruce could not be present owing to a motor accident in which he had been involved the previous day. The Alpine Club was represented by Mr. Sydney Spencer.

The toast of the Guests was proposed by Wilson Hey and replied to by Mr. P. Monkhouse, and Col. Hills replied for the kindred Clubs. George Anderson proposed the health of the Chairman, Darwin Leighton came from Kendal to lead us through the Club songs (how should we ever manage our singing without Darwin ?) and McNaught supported him at the piano. So ended a singularly successful and enjoyable evening.

*J. W. Brown, R. S. T. Chorley, W. P. Haskett-Smith, R. H. Hewson, G. C. M. L. Pirkes, Miss D. E. Thompson, J. B. Wilton, George Anderson, Miss Joyce Chapman (co-opted).