

European food would have been far cheaper had we got our tinned goods from England, and made arrangements to take more fresh food.—E. E. S.]

It is an interesting event in the annals of mountaineering that Mr. Shipton, within 6 months, achieved the first ascent of Kamet and other peaks in the Himalaya, as well as the higher summits of Ruwenzori.—*Editor, 'A.J.'*

THE ALPINE CLUB PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION, 1931.

THE Club is to be congratulated upon the interesting and comprehensive show of Alpine photographs exhibited in the Gallery during December 1931. Almost all the virtues and some of the defects attendant upon this difficult form of the art-science known as photography were to be found amongst the prints upon the walls.

Alpine photography may be divided into two main classes: (1) The pictorial. Here the pictures represent some scene of beauty, or some mood of nature whether charming, impressive or awe-full. In this case, bad photography, whether in the negative or in the print, can neither be overlooked nor forgiven, and its counterpart might be *Hamlet* with the title-rôle played by an East-Enders with a violent cockney twist to his tongue! (2) The photograph may have been taken to represent an ascent, a route, or particular incidents; it may have as its objective a geological formation, or the rendering of physical features—in such a case pictorialism is not looked for and, indeed, is seldom attained. A heavy foreground showing no detail is accepted, and snow and sky correction are of secondary account, for the salient features must not be sacrificed to anything subsidiary. With this brief foreword, a glance at such of the pictures as illustrate the points at issue might be useful.

In some of the photographs we may notice a general lack of modelling in the snow. In 'The Jungfrau from the Jungfraujoch,' by Miss Horne, the snow is woolly, and in Mr. Morrish's 'Ramolhaus' there is insufficient high light and the snow equals the sky in tone. The correct photographic interpretation of such a scene could be seen in Mr. Howson's 'Ben Sgriol,' where the snow and sky have their correct respective tones and the quality is good.

It is very doubtful if the high-latitude type of emulsion, or the double-coated plate or film is the best for this exacting work. A photographic emulsion obeys the same type of law as the eye—i.e. the relationship between the light intensity and its effect is a logarithmic one. Good emulsions, or double-coated emulsions, usually show a very extensive linear relationship between exposure (intensity \times time) and the densities produced by increasing exposure.

Thinly coated emulsions and some emulsions of the roll film and portrait types do not show such an extensive linear relationship, but leave the straight line and fall over in a more or less flattened curve. In practice this means that the densities in the negative which represent the snow and the sky do not pile up, but remain of a lower and more printable value. This point is worth noting by all who may have extremes of high light and shadow in the subject we are photographing. There is such an immense range of printing papers to-day that it is not difficult to select one suitable for any negative, provided that it is not outside their range by being clogged up in the high lights, or almost clear in the shadows.

It is impossible always to 'reconstruct the crime,' but it appears as if Dr. Amstutz's 'Piz Bernina: the Shoulder,' were taken upon a plate or film of too great latitude.

The Foreground.—In the writer's opinion the foreground is the *bête noire* of mountain photography. The landscape photographer has this most important part of his picture more or less under his command, he can change his point of view, and wait for the hour or the day when the lighting is right; but much of all this is denied to the mountaineer. Nevertheless, if it is pictures he is after, his foreground must neither be uninteresting nor clogged up. Instances where this defect can be seen, for example, are Mr. Oldham's 'Eiger' and Mr. Howson's 'Cimone della Pala,' where the foreground is clogged, and in Mr. Botha Reid's 'Mount Amery—Mont aux Sources,' where the foreground is out of focus in order to obtain sharpness for the mountains, and in Mr. Howson's 'Cimone,' where sky and peaks are good, but the foreground of a deadly dullness. The foreground is never out of focus, and the photographer must not overlook this fact.

Sky, Cloud and Snow.—The tonal relationship of these to one another is very important, and must on no account be neglected. It is quite common to find otherwise competent camera-men employing a filter which overcorrects. There is much to be said for the use of orthochromatic or panchromatic emulsions, but the correcting filter should normally be a pale one, increasing the exposure not more than 3 to 4 times for the orthochromatic and 2 to 3 times for the panchromatic plate. For distance photography where haze elimination is necessary, heavier filters may be employed, and the panchromatic plate plus a red filter can accomplish wonders, but the results are grossly overcorrected.

Mr. Skrine's 'Peak III of the Shiwakte Group,' for instance, has a much overcorrected sky; nothing has been gained by it; and the picture looks false. Dr. Marshall's three pictures over the fireplace show the same defect.

Shadows.—Where snow is concerned, modelling is most important. To look at one huge unbroken snow slope, such as the writer has seen on the N. face of Les Rouies, is very impressive, but *not* in a photograph. The lighting must be right and the snow somewhat

broken; it was a common dodge with landscape workers in the past to do this by tramping through it, or making ruts in it. Mr. Gait's 'Piz Roseg,' otherwise a good picture, shows this defect, and looks as if it had been taken in early morning or evening. Mr. Speyer's 'Sunrise on the Fiescherhorn' may be compared with this; it is a good photograph, it is picturesque, and the shadows show the right lighting.

Over-printing must be avoided, and examples of prints which would be much improved if they were not printed so heavily are Dr. Marshall's 'Copper Mountain,' Mr. Skrine's 'Rakaposhi' and 'Baltit.'

Unity.—All pictorial photographs must possess a certain unity, matters of subsidiary interest must be depicted as such, and there must be no sacrifice of the main feature. Mr. Speaker's 'Grand Darrei' supplies an example of too broken a subject.

The following are selected, in addition to those mentioned, as examples of good Alpine photography:

In Mr. H. Pasteur's 'Sunset over the Aiguille du Tour' the sunset effect is very good and this picture shows cloud and sky in correct relationship.

Colonel Hills' 'Wyddfa from Crib Goch' is an example of good photography; the solidity of appearance and the modelling are first-class.

Mr. Amery's 'Eastern Peak of La Meije,' his 'Main Peak of La Meije,' Mr. R. Morrish's 'Snow arête on the Ramolkogel,' Mr. Speaker's 'Petit Clocher de Planereuse,' Mr. Smythe's 'Kamet,' and Mr. Courtney's 'Kebnekaise, Lappland,' are all examples of first-class work.

A word in conclusion. Sepia tones do *not* suit Alpine subjects, and Dr. Amstutz's 'Santnerspitze' was a warning to those who hanker!

A most interesting show, especially to a man who knows something about it, who makes the materials which so many photographers spoil, and who is generally unable to take a decent photograph himself for love—no one being likely to offer him money for it!

As usual, the Club is indebted to Mr. Spencer for the care he has displayed in the hanging and framing of the exhibits. What a pity that this consummate mountain photographer has taken to other and baser forms of art!

A NOTE UPON PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPOSURES AT HIGH ALTITUDES.

It is generally well known that glass such as is used for lenses and filters is transparent to ultra-violet radiation (invisible to the eye) from a wave length of 3200 Å. to the visible violet. This radiation