

ALPINE CLUB PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION.

AFTER an unwelcome interval of four years the annual Photographic Exhibition has again resumed its place as the most notable function of its particular kind in the Alpine world of London. In spite of the obvious difficulty of obtaining exhibits so soon after the War, it has this year attained a standard of combined excellence and variety seldom before surpassed, although the pictures numbered only about 150 all told.

While many were of value mainly for topographical reasons, there was an unusually large proportion of works of the highest order of artistic achievement. This was particularly true of those whose chief attraction lay in a sympathetic and skilful rendering of cloud effects. Moreover, in spite of the comparatively small number of separate photographs on view, the ground covered was very varied and extensive.

Had Alphonse Daudet been with us still, in spite of all his love of poking fun at the traditional Alpine English tourist of his day, he would certainly have felt impelled to extend considerably the scope of the compliment he paid in 'Tartarin sur les Alpes' to the ubiquitous enterprise of the British mountaineering brotherhood—'du fameux Alpine Club de Londres qui a porté jusqu'aux Indes la renommée de ses grimpeurs.'

Now, indeed, the very mention of that particular region tempts us to speculate on the revelations we may expect the next exhibition to unfold of that mysterious mountain world whose secrets are at last on the eve of disclosure. Shall we be privileged to look upon glorious panoramas such as Signor Vittorio Sella has reproduced, or that masterpiece of Professor Garwood's, whose 'Siniolchum,' with its vast curtain of dazzling slopes of snow and hanging glacier, is surely one of the noblest pictures of a single ice-clad peak ever made? Such an achievement alone would give the lie to the scoffer who depreciated his craft as a 'foe to graphic art'!

The exhibition may well claim as a whole to have offered a liberal education in physical geography, and we almost wonder that there has been no request to afford special facilities for visits on the part of enterprising teachers of that fascinating branch of useful knowledge.

With the exception of a charming view in Grindelwald by Mr. de Quincey, winter photography was not represented, a distinct deprivation when one recalls the exquisite work at that season by the late Clinton Dent and Hermann Woolley, and Mr. Sydney Spencer.

We were sorry to miss several familiar names from the catalogue, but were glad to welcome some fresh recruits within the walls.

Mrs. W. E. Durham showed a predilection for animate nature,



Photo R. S. Morrish

AIG. DE BIONNASSAY
FROM TÊTE ROUSSE



Photo W. T. Lister]

**THE MISCHABEL (E. FACE)
FROM THE BORTELHORN**



Photo G. Hüsler]

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particularly in some climbing incidents, in an effective 'Procession in Zermatt,' and in 'Cows on an Alp,' while Miss Sophie Tiarks' best things were a pleasing view in the Saastal and a striking study of 'A Crucifix near Saas Fee.' Mrs. Clive Smith showed a pretty little picture, 'The Almagellhorn from below Saas Fee.' Of Miss Drew's varied exhibits we were most pleased with the views in the Blümlisalp group, especially that from the Gamchilücke towards the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn, and we were glad to have Mrs. Geoffrey Howard's charming views of familiar Arolla peaks, and a cloud-wreathed Matterhorn displaying considerable artistic feeling.

Mrs. Walter Weston showed a photograph of the broad broken ice-fall of the Grindelwald Fiescher Glacier from an unusual point of view, just below the Mittellegi arête, while to Miss Margaret King we are indebted for one of the most beautiful pictures in the exhibition, 'Mont Blanc and the Arve.' The combined effect of distance and dignity in this deserves the highest praise.

Mr. Hugh Gardner's 'Rosengarten,' the result of just the right exposure, afforded the delightful contrast of a foreground of dark trees with a faint, almost phantom, line of distant peaks. A fine pair of enlargements was shown by Mr. R. Graham, 'The Taeschhorn and Dom from the Südlenzspitz' and 'The Nadelhorn from the Südlenz arête.'

Mr. Howard Priestman's study of the Black and Red Coolins from Portree, with its combination of land and water, conveyed a wonderful sense of repose.

Mr. Morrish's striking exhibits, from the point of view of artistic effect, impressed us as the most remarkable contribution on the walls. The cloud effects in three of them were of great beauty: one in particular, a noble prospect of the Aiguille de Bionnassay from the hut on the Tête Rousse, taken shortly before sunset, fully accorded with the title attached to it in the catalogue, and the effect of the dying sunlight shining on the vapour in the middle distance lent additional dignity to the towering snow-crests high above. This picture well deserves reproduction in the JOURNAL.

Other works notable for the excellence of their cloud effects were Mr. de Quincey's 'Storm on the Jungfrau'; Dr. Williamson's view of the Matterhorn (presenting a fine background to the intervening beautiful veil of vapour), and his early morning prospect of storm-clouds from the Mischabeljoch; the 'Cloud and Mountain from the Titlis,' by Mr. Arthur Gardner (whose Zinal Rothhorn also, though not in this category, is a fine example of the dazzling effect of new snow in a clear light); and a very beautiful view in the Val di Corteno by Sir Alexander Kennedy, where a rift in a near cloud-curtain lends additional height and distance to the peaks beyond. This last, with his view in the Val di Brenta, we thought Sir Alexander's happiest effort.

Mr. de Quincey's large pictures from Lo Besso of the Rothhorn and Weisshorn showed distinct technical excellence and were full of fine detail, but were perhaps somewhat lacking in atmosphere.

Of Mr. Stevens' exhibits we were especially struck with the pretty view of Mont Pourri, and the delightful pastoral landscape with the Saas peaks beyond the Triftalp.

Mr. Francis Ellis sent six excellent pictures, of which the most noteworthy were from that favourite 'bellevue' the Wellenkuppe, of the Obergabelhorn, and of the Matterhorn with telling contrasts of foreground with a distant peak.

Canon Dawson showed much artistic sense in his beautiful study, from the Findelen path, of the Matterhorn vignettted in graceful firs, and in the characteristic valley scene at Cogne, but, above all, in the delightful afternoon view of the Mischabel from the Almagellalp, where the effect of the delicate film of clouds on the tall peaks was enhanced by the foreground of firs above which they rose.

Of Mr. Hasler's contributions there stood out, as one of the gems of the whole exhibition, 'A Tower on the Grindelwald Dru.' This lovely picture illustrated to perfection the effect of the dazzling sunlight of a late May morning on the half-transparent edge of snow just ready to melt.

Sir William Lister's noble prospect of the Mischabel group from the Bortelhorn was another worthy illustration of mountain majesty, and his 'Aiguille de Lépéna from the Glière' displayed fine contrasts between a striking foreground and the distant peak. The first-named was chosen for reproduction in the JOURNAL.

Mr. Gover's 'Obergabelhorn,' with its effective shadows and broken lights, deserves notice, and even more so his fine view of the Grand Cornier from the Pigne de L'Allée. Dr. Thurstan Holland was worthily represented by a beautiful scene on the Col du Géant, and a view of the Matterhorn and the Lac Bleu. That favourite subject of the Arolla photographer, Mont Collon, was charmingly varied by the Rev. F. C. Bainbridge-Bell, while interesting and varied scenes came from Mr. Wynnard Hooper and Mr. Finzi.

Mountain gymnastics were adequately illustrated by Mr. G. D. R. Tucker on 'Tryfaen,' and by Mr. Alan Greaves on the 'Fröneli, Isenfluh'; the latter also caught from near the Röttalsattel some magnificent cloud effects towards the Gletscherhorn.

Of familiar scenes in Skye, we had a pleasing prospect of 'Sgurr Alastair' by Mr. G. S. Bower, and a fine landscape, full of light, by Mr. Hugh Gardner.

Mr. R. W. Lloyd showed two views of considerable interest and topographical value—the French side of the Col de Bionnassay, and the Oberschalligrat from the Weisshorn gîte, illustrating two fine new expeditions made by him in 1919 and 1920 respectively.

The landscape near Oberstdorf, Bavaria, by Mr. Benson Lawford, was full of repose. An excellent series of postcard views by J. Gaberell of Zurich was shown by Mr. F. W. Bourdillon, of whose death we now regret to hear.

The Rev. Walter Weston can always be relied on for good work, and his contributions included a very artistic little picture, 'The Jungfrau from the Obersteinberg,' with the snow-peaks peeping



Photo G. Hasler

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above a bank of cloud and in the foreground the corner of a mountain slope on which haymakers are resting from their labours in attitudes of picturesque repose: altogether a most natural and happily grouped composition. Another exhibit, 'The Lauterbrunnen Breithorn from below the Schilthorn,' was more than a mere photograph, making a really charming picture with the straggling flock of sheep wandering across a grass slope in the foreground.

Mr. Sydney Spencer's Swiss Alpine pictures displayed that skill and effectiveness which we have learned to look for from him in the highest degree. The Grandes Jorasses from the Tour Noir was an imposing prospect, and even more so was the splendid panorama from the Büttlassen, so striking a feature of a former exhibition, with its wonderful combination of softness, dignity, and clearness of detail.

The Canadian Alpine regions have seldom been more effectively represented than at this exhibition. To the President we were indebted especially for a very beautiful sunset scene on the Yellow-head Pass and a splendid waterfall on Mount Robson, both most artistically rendered. Mr. Julian Osler exhibited an interesting series of autochrome slides, besides three enlargements, of which the best was 'The Valley of the Ten Peaks,' where the great torrent contrasted finely with the ghostly forms of the distant heights.

Mr. Mumm, who must now possess a very fine and comprehensive collection of photographs of the Canadian Rockies, contributed seven pictures of this region, all of very high quality. We liked best 'Howse Peak,' the fine view of Mount Pilkington, and 'Mount Eon &c. (Assiniboine Group).'

Turning from the New World to the 'immemorial East,' Japan claimed more attention than usual. Mr. Spencer seemed unfortunate in his weather conditions, or he would have produced worthy rivals to the splendid pictures such as Mr. Ponting sent to a former exhibition. We were most struck by his view of 'Fuji from Lake Shōji,' but this famous mountain is a notoriously difficult subject in the heat and haze of a nearly tropical summer sun.

Mr. Weston sent a small study, 'The Norokawa Valley in the Southern Japanese Alps,' giving a very characteristic impression of that interesting country. Mrs. Weston also showed a small coloured view of Fuji by a Japanese gentleman, Mr. N. Gwahō, which attracted attention. It was considerably touched up, but it was very skilfully done in the manner which seems to be a secret of that clever people, and in this case it was justified by the result, which gave us a very charming picture conveying at first sight the impression of a water-colour.

The Club has for so long gratefully accepted and taken for granted Mr. Spencer's unique services in arranging these exhibitions during so many years, that few members probably realise how much patience, diligence, and organising ability are called for to ensure the unqualified success he has never failed to attain.

To him once more there is offered our best thanks for his kindness: our gratitude is unbounded.