

## NEW ZEALAND NOTES.

## THE NEW ZEALAND ALPS, THE SECOND ASCENT OF MT. SEFTON.

CAPTAIN HAROLD PORTER writes :

'On Wednesday, February 4, Milne and I alone—a most joyous combination—attacked Mt. Sefton and conquered it in six hours from the Sefton bivouac, getting down again in four and a quarter, and back to the Hermitage by 5 P.M. It is most emphatically a mountain for experts only, but, provided that a route has been prepared through the very broken and tangled Huddleston Glacier the previous day and that the party can handle steep rotten rocks with speed and safety, a perfectly sound proposition. Near the top there is a section of 150 ft. divided into three pitches of splendid firm rock, two pitches having an 80° inclination, but so wonderfully constructed that you can walk up them like a staircase—the difficulty being comparable with that of the New West on the Pillar. On the way down we picked out the two great pitons which Zurbriggen hammered in and brought them down as trophies, one for Milne and one for me ! What Z. wanted them for I can't understand ; either he was terribly shaken by Fitzgerald's fall or there must have been a high wind, as the places he used them at would not have deterred any competent Lakeland climber. Our day was very poor, but there was hardly any wind : we were in a cloud all the way up the ridge and got enveloped in a flurry of snow on the way down. The only nasty bit of the day, however, was a horribly soft snow arête with very steep sides which had softened since the morning and was quite unpleasant in the descent ; this was well below Tuckett's Col.'

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## CANADIAN AND AMERICAN NOTES.

**Mt. Logan Expedition.**—The whole of the estimated cost, \$11,500, has not yet been subscribed, and further subscriptions can be sent to Mr. A. L. Mumm, 23 Savile Row, London, W.1.

The R.G.S. has subscribed \$500, following the subscription of £100 by the A.C.

MR. DE VILLIER-SCHWAB writes :

'It might be of interest to the Alpine Club that there has recently been formed a *Harvard Mountaineering Club*. This is primarily an undergraduate association, having for its purpose the promoting of interest in mountaineering at the College, and the bringing of these

men into touch with Harvard graduates, who are experienced climbers. It is much to be hoped that this new Club will accomplish the purposes that we have in mind, and eventually that similar Clubs will be founded in other Universities, such as Yale and Princeton.'

THE INTERPROVINCIAL SURVEY.—Mr. Wheeler informs us that the survey field work in the vicinity of Mts. Alexander Mackenzie and Ida (*cf.* 'A.J.' xxxv. 421) was completed last summer, and that the maps, which, however, will not actually include the mountains mentioned, may be expected later.

Mr. A. O. Wheeler has been retired from the survey work of the Department after thirty-six years' service. He hopes to continue his work in interesting people in the mountains and 'spreading the gospel.' He is turning his attention to organizing parties to various points of interest in the mountains. One of his parties last summer travelled from Lake Louise to Mt. Robson *via* the Columbia Icefield, and back by a different route. There is no man now living who knows the Canadian Alps better than he does, while his experience of camping expeditions may be relied upon to ensure the comfort of any party who may decide to make use of his services.

We are glad to learn that he is continuing in office, for the present, as Director of the Canadian A.C.

His address is Sidney, Vancouver Island, or during high season Banff, Alberta.

MR. LAUPER, the well-known member of the A.A.C., Berne, writes from San Francisco:

'On January 2 I made the second winter ascent of Mt. Shasta (14,161 ft). The first winter ascent was made only last February. The climb was not difficult, but rather strenuous on account of a strong wind; very cold. One could hardly breathe on the final ridge.

'On January 3 I climbed the Western Peak, the Shastina (12,900 ft.), by myself, which is believed to be the first winter ascent. I made use of my skis to a height of about 11,700 ft. There, in the saddle between Mts. Shasta and Shastina, I was caught by a terrible snow-storm. I had to leave the skis in this saddle and climbed in another hour to the top of Shastina. In going down I had some difficulty to find my way through the fog and snow, but I managed to get to my skis, and then, ski-ing, I got down to the timber line in no time. I think this escape was due to my way of climbing (with the head!!). This is to be taken literally, for two or three times my skis went wild and I came down head first. But, after all, it was a fine climb.

'Mt. Shasta forms the northern end of the Sierra Nevada. It is an extinct volcano and rises from Sisson, the point from which to start for this climb, somewhat more than 10,600 ft., and, with the exception of Shastina, has no neighbour of any considerable height.

There are still evidences of its volcanic origin. Steam still emerges from some crevices, and boiling sulphureous water bubbles out about 100 ft. below the very top.'

ACONCAGUA, 7010 m. = 22,993 ft.—It will be remembered that Dr. Paul Güssfeldt, one of the best mountaineers of his time, was the first to attempt this mountain. His two resolute attacks (1883), pushed to 6600 m., fell short of success by 400 m. Mr. Fitzgerald's well-appointed expedition of 1896-7 resulted in the ascent of the mountain on January 14, 1897, by Mattäus Zurbriggen (by himself), repeated on February 13 by Mr. Stuart Vines with Lanti of Macugnaga. On December 7, 1898, Sir Martin Conway, with Antoine Maquignaz, reached the summit arête ('there was absolutely no difficulty between this point and the highest peak'). The next ascent was made on January 31, 1906, by Dr. Robert Helbling (by himself), the well-known Swiss mountaineer. Dr. Helbling is the author of a very valuable monograph of the Aconcagua-Tupungato group with elaborate maps (Zurich 1919), which chronicles minutely the various attempts on, and ascents of, these mountains.

Another ascent has now been made by Messrs. Mervyn F. Ryan, J. Cochrane, F. Clayton, and C. V. R. Macdonald, engineers of the Transandine Railway. Mr. Ryan had got within 2000 ft. of the top already in 1923.

The party left Puente del Inca, a station on the railway, in January, and first made the ascent of Almacen, between 17,000 and 18,000 ft., and of Tolosa, about 18,000 ft., by the N.W. ridge.

They then started for Aconcagua, following the established route. Transport difficulties were much reduced, as the very capable Chilean arriero, Carlos Lobos, managed to get two mules up to a high camp on the saddle, about 19,000 ft. They left their camp at 5 A.M. on February 14, temp. — 10° C., and reached the top apparently without any great difficulty, except for cold, at 6.30 P.M. 'The area on top was about the size of a tennis-court, absolutely free of snow.' Mr. Vines's record was found in the shape of a box placed amongst the stones and containing a visiting card with the words, 'M.W.S.M. Vines, Pinkerton Rectory, Lincoln,' in addition to a piece of paper on which was written: 'I am carrying a heliograph which I cannot use because of the clouds. I have left my ice-axe and maximum and minimum thermometer. Temperature 45 degrees below zero' [F.]. As the two thermometers were broken they were brought down.

Mr. Ryan has had considerable experience in the Alps. It is very satisfactory to find this development of mountaineering enterprise. (From *Buenos Aires Standard*, Feb. 18 & 19, 1925, presented by Mr. A. E. Cutforth, and *Review of the River Plate*, Feb. 20, 1925, presented by Mr. R. W. Lloyd.)