This route had been first accomplished by Monsieur Julien Gallet, our Honorary Member, with Abraham Mueller, senior, and J. Kalbermatten, in 1899,[6] and has been followed several times since, although steep and not devoid of serious difficulties. A brother of Buser, an aviator, first perceived the bodies from above, flying down as low as 30 m. above the snow. They had fallen about 1000 ft.

Auguste Mottet was for a number of years a partner in the sporting firm of Th. Bjoernstad & Co., Berne. He had climbed without guides most of the great Alpine peaks, usually by their more difficult routes and many of them in winter on ski. With his close friend Gysi (killed last year when they were climbing together on the Rottalhorn),[7] he had made a very daring attempt on the S. face of the Gspaltenhorn, traversing eventually over on to the Tschingelspitze. Other new ascents of his are the Tschingelfluh (point 2826 m.), the Gstelliburg (Engelhörner), the first descent from the Silberhorn over the Rotbrettgrat (Sir Seymour King's route), first traverse of the whole 'Mittelgruppe' (Engelhörner),[8] first entire ascent of E. arête of the Breithorn from the Schmadrijoch, Spillgerten (S. arête, N. face and W. arête), Teufelsjoch from the Ochsental, S. descent of the Klein Simmelistock, etc. ; the descent of part of Blümlisalp-Morgenhorn E. arête, and then down the S. face to the Kanderfirn. He was a small, sturdy man of about 47 years of age, very enterprising and of great powers of resistance and determination. In the face of all kinds of difficulties he never lost his optimism, invariably retaining that gay disposition of mind which procured him so many good friends. Although not a very fast climber, he bore a high reputation among mountaineers. A captain in the Swiss army, he led some years ago the whole International Ski Congress, some fifty men, in very foggy weather from the Jungfraujoch to the Concordia over the Lötschenlücke in the most masterly manner. Two years ago, in winter, while unroped on the Lange Glacier, he fell into a crevasse some 50 ft. deep. He was suspended on a block of ice, and, never daunted, contrived to climb up three-quarters of the wall by himself, making holes with his ski sticks, before a rescue party arrived. R.I.P. P. M.

REVIEWS.

Sur les crêtes du Mont Blanc. By Jacques and Tom de Lépiney. 7½ by 5½. Pp. vii + 178. Illustrated. Dardel, Chambéry. 1929.

'Mont Blanc yet again.' Any work by the MM. de Lépiney, who have done so much towards modern mountaineering in France, is

[6] 'Dans l'Alpe ignorée,' pp. 155–63.

[7] *A.J.* **40**, 424–5.

[8] Two of his excellent photographs appear in this volume.

welcome. When we add that the book is admirably written, beautifully illustrated and of surpassing interest, we are merely telling the simple and unvarnished truth. But with the lessons of 1928–1929 still fresh before our minds, with the outcry in France, the consternation in certain circles, is not the book, frankly, a dangerous one ?

The brothers' literary style is restrained, straightforward and cold-blooded ; the tales of mountain prowess, and, we fear, of mountain rashness, are all the more impressive for that. Here is the list of the principal ascents described, many of which, including even the names of certain peaks, unknown before 1919 :

La face italienne du Mont Blanc.
Les Clochers de Planereuse.
La Pointe de Lépiney.
L'Évêque.
Le Trident et le Clocher du Mont Blanc du Tacul.
L'Aiguille du Peigne.
La Pointe Lagarde et l'Aiguille Verte.
L'Aiguille du Plan.
L'Aiguille de Blaitière.

These comprise many of the most difficult and dangerous ascents ever attempted in the Alps. Is it ' mountaineering ' ? Or is it desperate acrobatism ? We must, deliberately, incline to the latter. The parties actually set out to attempt new scrambles entailing the certainty of a bivouac—for all their skill, for all their speed—in weather not fit for an ascent of the Aiguille de l'M.

Throughout these pages we find but one ascent—Aiguille du Peigne—in which reasonable weather is encountered, and but one, Col de la Brenva, a magnificent exploit, carried out in accordance with the best traditions. What can be said of the descent of the Petit Clocher de Planereuse, in which two of the party rope themselves down into space with no idea of where they will land, or of the Aiguille Verte from the Argentière side in shocking weather, with a descent by the ' Whymper ' couloir, smothered in avalanches ? ' C'est magnifique mais ce n'est pas de l'Alpinisme.' Such incidents, or the unbelievable episodes—did we not know that they are less than the truth—of the night ascent of the Chamonix face of the Aiguille du Plan, where for hours in total darkness, across that terrible slope of ice, Henry de Ségogne followed heroically his leader, his sole support—a pocket knife : such dramas, we are obliged to say, should not be allowed to see the light of day. All the younger school of mountaineers in France, and not only in France, have looked up, and with admiration, to the example of the brothers de Lépiney and their friends as the ideal of modern mountaineering. But in this work, alas, we fear it is ' Death or Glory ' that is quietly and modestly preached.

The book will be read with interest as thrilling as the study of that chapter of Geoffrey Young's describing the nightmare of the Täschhorn. Thousands will purchase it, none will lay it aside unfinished; most, as the reviewer did, will devote a continuous sitting to it. But have not the MM. de Lépiney, fearless and accomplished as they are, incurred a grave responsibility towards the G.H.M. and the younger school of mountain-scramblers throughout the world?

Climbs and Ski Runs. By F. S. Smythe, with a foreword by G. Winthrop Young. Pp. xx + 307. Illustrated. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh. 1929. Price £1. 1*s*.

THIS book can be reviewed in one phrase—good and productive of good. Many of the articles, or at any rate similar accounts, have appeared already in the ALPINE JOURNAL, but these should appeal greatly to the general and intelligent public, since there is no one better qualified than Mr. Smythe either to describe a difficult climb or to give his opinion on mountaineering, avalanches and the ethics of both. He writes in a lucid, straightforward style, but we prefer him when certain flourishes are omitted. On the whole we like his chapters on the Fervall (Arlberg) and Dolomite districts best. The night descent and adventure in the Langkofel Group is admirably described, while Mr. Smythe never fails—where necessary—to point out his own youthful follies and indebtedness to what Mummery described as the Great Goddess Luck. The book, of course, relates again, and the tale is well worth repeating, the tremendous expeditions on the S. side of Mont Blanc and the superb climb up the E. face of the Aiguille du Plan. Mr. Smythe once made an attempt on another part of that mountain's anatomy and we might wish that he could have added that chapter, if only to point a moral.[1] The storm on the Schreckhorn with its baleful 'green ray' is exciting reading and only a party of real mountaineers could have extricated themselves successfully. The ghost on the Brenva face is new and eerie.

As to the winter and ski chapters, at last we have something written in English by a mountaineer and about *mountains*, as opposed to ski-runs. It is very well written too. Would there were more Smythes or Amstutzs in the winter Alps as there were in former days. A revival is coming, however.

The book is very well brought out and excellently illustrated—for a British publisher—and the loose paper cover is instructive as well as beautiful.[2] But few of our firms can do real justice to Mr. Smythe's splendid photographs, at a reasonable price.

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[1] The omission is doubtless right; a dozen die-hards would have been 'at it' by now.

[2] The reference to Edward Whymper on the said cover should be deleted.

As the book is sure to go through further editions, we feel compelled to point out a list of consistent mis-spellings, which the proof-reader has passed: Lognon, Argentiere, Rhone, Höerlin, Gugliamina, Höhe Tauern, Gelb Wand, Mer de Glâce, Brêche, Réquin, Grande Gendarme, Aiguille du Grépon, Grands Jorasses, Kaiserschmarren, etc. These should not have been overlooked.

Guide des Alpes Valaisannes. Vol. II. Col Collon to Col de Théodule; second edition. By Marcel Kurz, assisted by Count Aldo Bonacossa. Published on behalf of the S.A.C. Pp. lxxx + 344. Profusely illustrated. Payot et Cie, Lausanne, 1929. Price 10 fr.

It has been our luck to review many Climbers' Guides, good and indifferent, but this, the latest, seems to us to be above ordinary criticism. Monsieur Kurz has had great experience in preparing similar works and has reduced the science to a veritable fine art. The book marks a fresh departure: the numerous useless variants, so well described in the late Mr. Raymond Bicknell's classical phrase: 'Those mistakes which it has now become the fashion to classify as variations,' and to which he at the end, alas, fell a victim himself, are ruthlessly excluded. The admirable illustrations, the best we have seen so far in any Climbers' Guide, are not defaced by intersecting lines; only the main and proper routes are indicated and that with remarkable clearness. We are compelled to quote in full the third paragraph of the author's preface. It is full of prophetic wisdom and appears to us to sum up—perhaps pessimistically—the future of Alpine mountaineering:

'Toute exploration utile étant désormais terminée, l'ère des casse-cou va commencer sans transition bien définie ni caractéristique. A vues humaines, c'est, dans l'exploration de nos Alpes, la dernière phase et la moins intéressante: celle du "fignolage," de l'interpolation des routes, amenant à inventer et à réaliser des itinéraires absurdes et dangereux, ceci pour la pure gloriole. Singulière déviation de l'alpinisme, à l'heure même où les routes importantes, classiques, perdent, trop rapidement le prestige du danger, par suite des commodités modernes et des perfectionnements techniques. Témoin cette arête de Z'mutt au Cervin, gravie une douzaine de fois seulement avant 1911 et qui actuellement est devenue, selon l'expression de Mummery, "une course facile pour dames."'

The book is divided into nine sections, of which the last and not the least useful, *Chaîne des Grandes Murailles*, is by Count Bonacossa.

We will make no attempt to analyse any of these sections, the mountaineer can do this readily himself, but we will add that they are of extraordinary interest and that the geographical note at the head is given with the skill that only topographers such as a Kurz or a Bonacossa could impart. What gives us extra pleasure is to note under *Tête du Lion* (from the N.) and *Col du Lion*: 'Il est immoral de recourir à des professionnels pour suivre ces itinéraires.' Quite so; let the foolish amateur break his neck there, preferably alone.

The following are the sections:

I. Groupe des Bouquetins.
II. Groupe de la Dent Blanche.
III. Groupe du Grand Cornier.
IV. Groupe du Gabelhorn-Rothhorn de Zinal.
V. Groupe du Weisshorn.
VI. Groupe des Barrhörner.
VII. Groupe des Diablons.
VIII. Groupe du Cervin.
IX. Chaîne des Grandes Murailles.

The *Notice Toponymique* is doubtless of great value, but its forty pages are not suited, to our mind, to a Climbers' Guide carried in the pocket on a mountain; it has, moreover, delayed greatly the publication of the book. The *Notes Pratiques* are most useful, but will be difficult to keep up to date: they describe the communications to the various valleys mentioned in the text.

We have not searched either the Guide or our memory for errors; M. Kurz assures us that such must exist. Enough to say that we have found little or nothing to criticize and a vast deal to praise. Perhaps the 'simplicity' of the book is its chief asset, no mean advantage in a Climbers' Guide. Gone, as we have remarked, are the numerous inane variations perpetrated of late years, especially on the *Dent Blanche*—where even in the ALPINE JOURNAL we can read of Finlayson's 1863 variation, if not Kennedy's original 1862 route, given as a new and guideless expedition in 1912! Similar atrocities on the Weisshorn, Zinal-Rothhorn, and Gabelhörner are likewise no more.

Of all these sections that of the *Barrhörner* must have given most trouble; some of it was compiled, doubtless, before the existence of the new Topali Club hut, but that has in no ways marred the clearness or excellence of the text.

In the *Addenda*, pp. 337–9, we note the construction, or intention thereof, of three new Club huts: 'Tracuit,' close to the col of that name, which will prove of great service; 'Guillaume Rossin,' at point 3729 m. on the S. arête of the Dent Blanche, which will prove just the reverse; and 'Col Collon.' Some of the 1928 new routes are mentioned in these *Addenda*. The 'Theytaz' variation of the N. arête of the Dent Blanche is tersely and justly described as 'route dangereuse à souhait, constamment balayée par les pierres.'

M. Kurz begs all mountaineers to communicate any errors in the text to him, personally, at Neuchâtel. Very few will be found, and we congratulate him most heartily.

The Himalayan Journal. Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1929. Records of the Himalayan Club, edited by Kenneth Mason. Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta. Pp. ii + 150. Illustrations and maps. $8\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Rs. 5 or 8*s.*

THE successful launching of the Himalayan Club reported in the ALPINE JOURNAL for May is consummated by the issue of the first

number of the *Himalayan Journal*, to which we extend a most cordial welcome. The Committee of the Club, with the Editor, are to be congratulated on their decision to indulge that catholicity of interest which is the outstanding characteristic of the attractions of the Himalayan region. It is indeed directly due to the variety of attractions offered to the traveller in the Himalaya that so few actual mountain ascents have been accomplished. It is impossible for the intelligent visitor merely to regard the Himalaya from the point of view of the confirmed 'alpinist.' In this, the greatest mountain region of the world, diversities of race, of animal and plant life, of climate and of geology are greater than in all Europe. Every faunal association, from tropical to arctic, is represented. Then there is shooting—a barbarous pastime, I am told: but amongst big-game hunters there appears to be a consensus of opinion that in the Himalaya stalking attains its ideal type. Nowhere does the sportsman work so hard for so small a bag, partly owing to the wise restrictions on the shooting permits which allow only one or two of the oldest bucks to be killed, and partly owing to the scattered distribution of the game. Nowhere will he find more difficult quarry than the markhor, ibex and sheep of the Himalaya. Four months' 'leave,' four months' poor living, four months' daily fatigue, and four good heads to bring back! I sometimes wonder if we really are such barbarians after all. But even more insidious to the moral of the real Simon Pure is the lure of exploration. Owing to its vast extent, and to the peculiar difficulties of transport and supply, the topographical mapping of the Himalaya is very far from complete, and the region offers an ideal field for the mountain explorer which will remain unexhausted for many years to come. The would-be climber, intent originally only on the conquest of new peaks, is beset by temptation on every hand, leading him along a variety of other paths, each of which leads to the unknown.

From the dawn of literature Himalaya has been accounted a sanctuary, and happily its devotees need not fear that the blighting hand of development or progress will mar its virtue. Indeed, in some respects it is likely to become less rather than more accessible; for example, the cost of transport is increasing and the practical abolition of village responsibility for passing the traveller along makes arrangements more difficult; while an extreme sensitiveness to any appearance of a policy of 'expansion' or any suspicion of political motives—which have never had any foundation!—has caused the Government of India to place increasing difficulties in the way of travellers, especially its own officials and officers on leave, who wish to explore the frontier zones.

The many diverse charms of the Himalaya are admirably typified by the variety of contents of the first number of the *Himalayan Journal*. Our fellow-member, Sir Geoffrey Corbett, opens with an account of the formation of the Himalayan Club. The same author contributes a finally authoritative paper on the word Himalaya, which settles once and for all that the word ought to be pronounced

with the first *a* long and the last two short—Himālăyă. Mr. Ludlow follows with an all too brief description of his visit to the great Shyok ice-dam caused by the recent advance of the Chong Kumdan Glacier across the gorge below the Rimo Glaciers, which has led to the formation of a ten-mile lake, the sudden bursting of which would cause disastrous damage in the lower Shyok and Nubra valleys. The writer doubts if this huge barrier can be suddenly broken: it appears more likely that, probably this summer, the lake will 'lip' the barrier of the glacier and the running water will then quickly cut down an outflow channel. There would certainly be a bad flood in the Nubra Valley, *up* which the flood-waters would penetrate. The whole flood-plain opposite Thirit and Deskit would become a temporary lake, owing to the holding up of the Shyok flood-water in the gorges about Biagdangdo, and still farther down the orchards of Khapalu might be overwhelmed. Major Kenneth Mason follows with a useful summary of the history of the Indus and Shyok floods, which in the past have been confused with one another (see *Geogr. J.*, June 1910: vol. xxxv. p. 648). Mr. Hugh Whistler contributes a most readable paper on the birds of Kashmir, and Mr. Kingdon Ward on the botany of the Mishmi Hills, both emphasizing the zoning of communities according to altitude, which makes High Asia such a delightful field for the naturalist, who may explore a series of new faunal regions one after the other by merely (save the mark!) walking straight up the side of the valley in which he is encamped. Dr. de Graaf Hunter takes us off into the pure air of physical science in his article on 'The Attraction of the Himalaya': his name and authority are so widely known that we do not fear sentimentality, but get at the egg-meat of gravity and isostacy! One of the difficulties of calculating the mathematically exact height of any very high peak is the horizontal pull which the actual mass of that peak exerts through its own gravity on your instrument, which is graduated for normal places where gravity only acts downwards. Short notes of prospects and possibilities in unknown districts ought to be a great feature in such a journal as we are reviewing, and we look for more in the manner of Colonel Schomberg's note on the Urta Saryk Valley, north-west of the Tien Shan, and Mr. Maclagan Gorrie's on the Haran and Runang passes of Kanawar.

Mrs. Lethbridge in 'A Journey Through Spiti and Rupshu,' and Major Shewen in 'The Way to the Baspa,' contribute two short but excellent papers, plain, well-written narratives of travel in the maze of mountains and states beyond Simla. Though there is no particular mountaineering achievement to record, both of them should be learned by heart by any Alpine aspirant to Himalayan honours. Study them with the Survey maps before you. Gradually it will dawn upon you that this part of the Himalaya offers an unlimited field to the mountaineer, although it contains few named and hardly any famous peaks. It is just the place

for two or three climbers with a bare two months at their disposal. Every peak is virgin, except the Nela peak, 19,069 ft., in Bashahr, and Shilla, 23,050 ft., both of which were climbed by Surveyors ('A.J.' **25,** 400). The papers before us give an excellent picture of the daily realities of Himalayan travel, from the luxury of the region of rest-houses to the rigours of the Parangla. It will be obvious how a large party with an expensive caravan would impede success. With a decent servant and a smattering of Hindustani expenses should be about the same as in the Alps. Ship your climbing kit, fly to India, climb three new peaks, and be home in nine weeks! It would be interesting if the *Himalayan Journal* could see its way to publish a brief list of the different groups of peaks in these districts, grouped as to geographical accessibility.

Mr. Ruttledge contributes a note on his first attempt with Brigadier Wilson and Major Carfrae on Traill's Pass in 1925, but we have already had the privilege of publishing an account of this and of the second and completely successful crossing of the pass in the following year in the JOURNAL.[1] 'Himalayan Expeditions,' and 'Himalayan Notes,' are most useful and informative, together with a dozen 'Reviews,' while the 'Proceedings and Club Notes' show a multitude of activities. The get-up of the Journal is good and the frontispiece is the view of K2 from Staircase Peak by H.R.H. the Duke of the Abruzzi, in the judgment of the writer the best mountain photograph ever taken.

In extending a sincere welcome to the *Himalayan Journal*, the Alpine Club cannot be completely altruistic: for the formation of the Himalayan Club and the publication of such a journal is of the most direct assistance to any Alpine climber intending to visit High Asia. The organization of the Club, with a dozen local secretaries and local correspondents, besides scientific and technical correspondents and local assistant editors, instead of into local sections as on the Continent, seems admirable, and produces an excellent organization for that collection and publication of information which forms so important an element in the objects of the Club. Finally, we would heartily congratulate the members of the Himalayan Club and of the Mountain Club of India on their mutual amalgamation. India is a very big place and Calcutta is far from Delhi, but even so each unit will benefit by that union now so happily achieved.

The American Alpine Journal.

WE welcome very heartily the appearance of the first number of this new publication. It is not actually the first publication of the American Alpine Club in its twenty-six years of life. At various times it has published finely illustrated 'Alpina americana.' Nor is this the first mountaineering club in America. There have

[1] *A.J.* **40,** 33–7.

been many others, beginning with the Tramontane Order in 1716 —the members of which were annually to climb Mount George in Virginia and there drink to the health of the King—but it is the first distinctively Alpine club in the United States, and this is the first American Alpine journal. It is an excellent number in matter and in plates. It is concerned chiefly with climbing in Canada, for, as an interesting article explains, the climbing in the United States is rather excursion mountaineering than climbing more proper: 'Owing to the comparative absence of snow and ice, alpenstocks and ice-axes are seldom carried [on the United States ranges] . . . The climbing is on the whole a matter of rock rather than snow and ice work.' Other articles are on the ascent of Mt. Redoubt, on the Fairweather Mountains; the first ascent of Nettie L. Mountain, new ascents near Maligne Lake, Mounts Charlton, Sampson, Warren, The Thumb; the Whirlpool Mountains; Purcell Range. There is an interesting article on 'Moods of the Mountains and Climbers,' which deals with questions not yet to be answered: 'Why do we climb? Why do we go to all the trouble? What do we expect of climbing and what do we get?' We get this excellent journal and many others similar, and we leave to our descendants the more proper answer to the questions put.

It is with great pleasure we give a hearty greeting to this new publication, wishing it and the Club a long and interesting life.

THE ALPINE CLUB LIBRARY.

By A. J. Mackintosh.

The following works have been added to the Library :—

Club Publications.

(1) **Akad. Alpenverein Innsbruck.** Bericht 1927–8. 9 × 6.
Appalachian Mn. Club. Register for 1929. $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$: pp. 141.
C.A. Belge. Bulletin, t. 6, no. 14–15. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$: pp. 89 : plates. Mars–juin 1929
C.A.F. Guide des porteurs brevetés 1292 Alpes-Pyrénées.
C.A.I. Bergamo. Mario Bernasconi, Itinerari sciistici della Zona Formico-Grioni. $6\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$: pp. 52 : map, ill. 1929
Colorado Mountain Club. Local walks and short outings. $6\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$: pp. 39. 1929
(2) **D.u.Oe.A.-V.** Zeitschrift. Bd. 59. $10\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$: pp. vii, 292 : ill. 1928
(2a) —— **Berchtesgaden.** Die Grill's aus der Ramsau. Eine deutsche Führerfamilie. 9 × 6 : pp. 20 : portraits. 1929
Notes on Johann Grill-Köderbacher, father and son.
—— **Freiburg im Breisgau.** Nachrichten, vierteljährlich. $8\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. 1928–9
Deutscher Alpenverein, Berlin. Tätigkeitsbericht 1928. $8\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$: pp. 13.
(3) **Himalayan Club.** The Himalayan Journal, vol. 1, no. 1. $8\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$: pp. 150 : maps, plates. April 1929