

surely one of the longest and most beautiful gorges in the whole of Europe.

The Camping Club of Great Britain has established a centre at Espinama in the Picos; and we found that the new Aliva Refuge visitors' book contained as a result some seventy British names—more than the total number from all other countries.

W. T. E.

THE KANGCHENJUNGA EXPEDITION, 1931.—From a dispatch to *The Times*, dated 'Camp VI, September 28,' we learn with much regret that retreat has become inevitable. On September 17 the highest point of the great N.E. spur, something over 26,000 ft. in height and some 4 hours distant from Camp XI, was attained. The crest of the spur, which from certain photographs, *e.g.* 'A.J.' 42, facing 185, appear to bend to the left, S.W., before joining the main N. arête, in reality bears to the *right*, N.W. It then sinks abruptly some 200 ft. and merges into a snowy plateau abutting against the slope of the N. arête. This formation appears to be shown on the 'Sella' photograph in Mr. Freshfield's *Round Kangchenjunga*, facing p. 114.²³ The said slope forms an enormously steep ice-wall, plastered this year with masses of incoherent snow of a most dangerous nature.

With the porters exhausted and demoralized as a consequence of continuous exertion and the fatal accident, with several of the party suffering from high altitude and one from heart attacks, retreat was obviously the only reasonable solution of a highly critical situation. This resolve, trying as it must have been at the time, will be reckoned as a further proof of the skill and good judgment displayed both by the leader and the party throughout in a terribly arduous undertaking.

The expedition was leaving Camp VI on September 29, homeward bound.

MATTERHORN, S. face.—On October 15 Signor E. Benedetti, with Louis Carrel and Maurice Bich, reached the summit by the S. face which was attacked perpendicularly below the Furggen shoulder.

R. C.-C.

NEW ZEALAND NOTES.

THE season has been very bad, but some few high climbs have been done.

Miss Kate Gardiner and guides, Peter Graham and Frank Allack, did Mt. Sefton from the W. side. This is the second ascent by a lady, Miss Du Faur being the only other. Miss Gardiner also climbed a small, hitherto unnamed point which might almost be called a third

²³ See also the illustration in *A.J.* 22, facing 123.

peak of Sefton—a first ascent—also Elie de Beaumont, Mt. Green, Walter and Malte Brun, etc. Another ascent by same route of Sefton by Vic Williams (guide), his wife and Mrs. H. Parker, with Bowie as second guide.

Messrs. Syme, N.Z.A.C., and Bryant, climbed Mt. Tasman by the E. ridge, a new route; hitherto it has always been done *via* the Silberhorn. This was a guideless party. Descent by the N. ridge.

A good deal of useful work has been done in the Otago mountains and the peaks at the head of the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers. These are lower altitudes, under 8000 ft. as a rule, but big icefields and good climbing. These parties were guideless in most cases.

The enclosed Annual Report will provide some 'Notes.' Mountaineering is beginning to 'boom' in New Zealand, and it is very interesting to see it and to still be able to help and guide it along sound lines.

The opening of the new De la Bèche Hut was interesting. It was just forty-one years since Mannering and I last walked up the glacier together! I found the old wall I built, the year after Mannering established the bivouac, still standing. It recalled three critical experiences under the old rock which I had with sick men in 1891-2. This bivouac was also where R. S. Low spent several days alone with a broken leg and no food, about 1907.

Miss Gardiner was with us, and when I had finally 'opened' the hut we put up a brass tablet in memory of those who perished in the storm last year. It was a perfect day and an interesting function. The hut is the N.Z.A.C.'s property and under its control and the nominal charge is to be 2s. 6d. a night. Parties carry their own food, but everything else is provided. This, by giving the West Coast parties a footing on the Tasman side without paying heavy charges to the Hermitage Company, will encourage transinsular crossings.

Now that I have arranged for a climbers' hostel on the Tasman, young men with small purses can go there, and when the promised legislation for licensing guides is through I shall feel that I have at long last got things on a sound footing.

ARTHUR P. HARPER.

EXTRACT FROM THE N.Z. ALPINE CLUB'S REPORT
FOR 1930-1.

In March last the Club completed its fortieth year, being founded in 1891.

Licensing of Guides.—It has been recognised by climbers for years past that the want of system which has obtained at our climbing centres has been responsible for more than one accident, and that some method of licensing guides was a necessary safeguard. As long ago as 1922 the President submitted a considered memorandum on the whole subject to the Government (see 'N.Z.A.J.' vol. iii, 351), but no action was taken. However, persistence had its reward, for

on September 30 last a Conference of all parties interested (including members of Parliament) was convened by the Minister, and the President's scheme was generally approved. A Committee was appointed and legislation authorising the setting up of a Board of four experts (two guides and two amateurs) has been promised. This, it is hoped, will be dealt with at the ordinary session of Parliament in June.

Climbers' Hostel.—In the above-mentioned memorandum it was also urged that a hostel or annexe to the Hermitage be established, to be available for climbers who desire simple food and accommodation at a moderate price, but the proposal was not considered feasible by the Company. However, this year the opening of the motor road to the Ball Hut had the effect of making that hut unnecessary for sleeping accommodation, so at Miss Gardiner's suggestion the President again took the matter up with the Company while at the Hermitage in April, and the Committee is pleased to be able to report that the Company has agreed to convert the Ball Hut into a climbers' hostel at a charge of 12s. 6d. per day, and that the Malte Brun Hut may possibly be included at a later date.

De la Bèche Refuge.—The Club, at the request of certain friends of the victims of the storm on the Tasman Glacier in January 1930, headed the appeal for funds to erect a Memorial Hut at De la Bèche 'corner.' A sum of just under £400 was raised. The contractors did wonderful work, completing the hut inside five weeks. The hut was formally opened in the presence of some fourteen people on April 4.

Scenic Reserves.—The large Reserve taking in the whole watersheds of the Cook and Karangarua Rivers has been gazetted. Mention was made in our last Report of the representations made on behalf of the Club to secure the extension of this Reserve, which now covers some 175,000 acres, and some of the finest scenery and climbing in the Dominion.

Members.—This year 16 new members have been elected and 17 new 'subscribers.'

CAUCASUS NOTES.

ALTHOUGH, owing to disturbances, the Caucasus was mostly closed to tourists in 1931, an Austrian party arrived *via* Moscow at Naltshik at the beginning of August. It consisted of the following: Herren K. Poppinger, K. Frank, K. Moldan and S. Schintelmeister. The party was financed by the D. & C.A.V. and its sections.

On August 5 they arrived at the Missess-Kosh, their base camp on the Bezingi Glacier. Their first task was to search for the two Swiss, Herren Mägglin and Heglin, who had set out with two Russian climbers to attempt the ascent of Missesstau, S.E. of the