

ALPINE NOTES

THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY :						Date of Election
Bowyear, H. W. T.	.	.	.	.	.	1880
Cockburn, Henry	.	.	.	.	.	1883
Mackenzie, Evan	.	.	.	.	.	1893
Compton, Rev. Canon W. C.	.	.	.	.	.	1895
Edwards, Rev. Canon W. G.	.	.	.	.	.	1898
Glazebrook, Sir Richard T.	.	.	.	.	.	1899
Finch, F. R.	.	.	.	.	.	1906
Arni, Dr. Paul	.	.	.	.	.	1928
Thompson, Rev. Canon A. E.	.	.	.	.	.	1933

ALPINE CLUB.—His Highness the Maharajah and Prime Minister of Nepal, Hon. Lieut.-General Sir Joodha Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., has accepted Honorary Membership of the Club.

GIFTS TO ALPINE CLUB.—The Club is indebted to Mrs. Collier, widow of the Hon. John Collier, the late well-known artist, for a striking oil-painting representing the Argentièrre Glacier with the Aiguille du Chardonnet. Sir John Withers has kindly presented numerous Alpine lantern-slides, and Professor Norman Collie the complete set of the late Dr. Kellas's Himalayan photographs.

ALPINE JOURNAL.—For the new format and type henceforth to be used, I am much indebted to Mr. R. W. Hanson, Director of Messrs. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., and to Mr. A. R. Hinks, editor of the *Geographical Journal*, for their kindly advice and great assistance.

E. L. S.

MR. W. P. HASKETT-SMITH.—The fiftieth anniversary of the first traverse of the Napes ridge and pinnacle (now named 'The Needle') on Great Gable by W. P. Haskett-Smith on June 30, 1886, will be celebrated by the 'Fell and Rock' and other clubs at Wasdale Head this spring. Not only the older clubs with their large memberships, but also the steadily growing number of University mountaineering clubs owe much to the way in which Haskett-Smith helped to open up a great climbing ground that had until then attracted little or no attention.

While he made notable ascents in the Alps, the Pyrenees and other parts of the world, his great work in laying the foundations of rock-climbing and mountaineering in England and Wales call for special recognition.

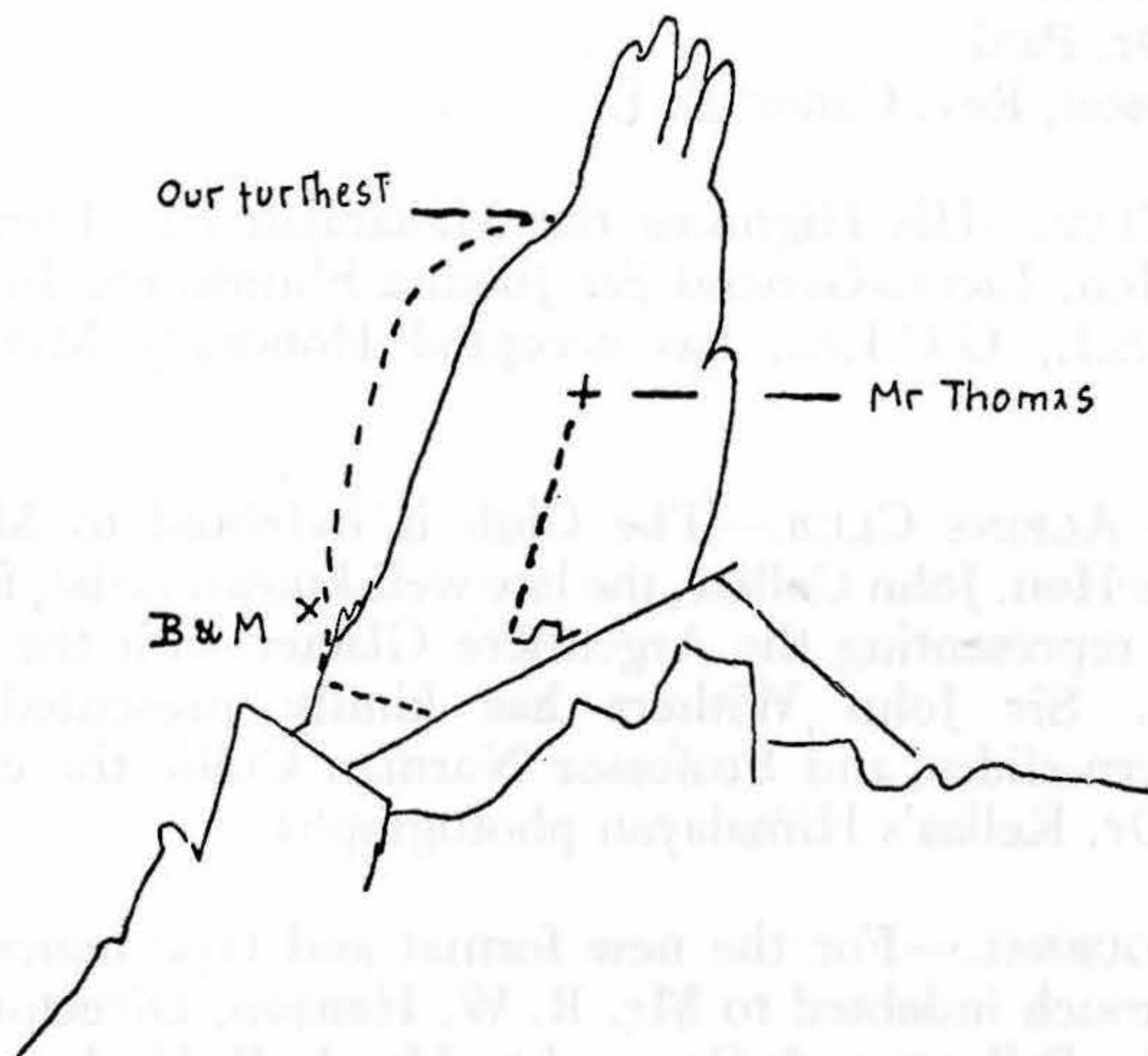
Trained on the homeland mountains to which he first drew attention,

the present generation of British climbers has worthily maintained the traditions of the great years of the Alpine Club, and it must have been a source of pride to him to find successive Everest expeditions largely manned by mountaineers who learned the first steps of their craft upon the Lakeland rocks and fells.

He has therefore well earned the great esteem and affection in which he is held by British climbers.

AIGUILLE DU GÉANT, N. FACE.—*Extract from letter written by A. F. Mummery to W. A. B. Coolidge, and dated December 7, 1882. The original is in the National Library at Zürich.*

'The snow ridge (to right of peak in lithograph) abuts on to the peak & is therefore further from the spectator than B. & M.¹ [The



COPY BY T. G. B. (NOT TRACED) OF COPY MADE BY A. F. MUMMERY
FROM SKETCH BY P. W. THOMAS

lithograph here mentioned is certainly that in A.J. 11. 72 (November 1882), which number had just appeared.]

I enclose a rough sketch (from one given me by Mr. Thomas), which shows the point B. & M. as nearly as my memory serves me.

¹ *I.e.* the line attempted by Alexander Burgener and A. F. Mummery. The first ascent of the Aiguille du Géant, S.W. summit, 4009 m., *Vallot*, was made on July 29, 1882, by Signori Corradino, Alessandro, Alfonso and Gaudenzio Sella with J. J. Baptiste and Daniel Maquignaz. The N.E. summit, 4013 m., *Vallot*, fell on August 20, 1882, to Mr. W. W. Graham with Alphonse Payot and Auguste Cupelin. Mr. Mummery's letter refers, presumably, to an attempt on the N.W. face made *anterior* to the first ascent achieved, of course, by the S.W. face, or present 'ordinary' route. The first ascent by the N. or, strictly speaking, N.W. face (see pp. 167-8) was made on July 20, 1900, by Herren H. Pfannl, T. Maischberger and F. Zimmer, a famous Austrian party.—*Editor.*

[Mummery here inserts a rough outline sketch from one made by P. W. Thomas (probably in 1880) from a slightly different point (nearer) than that from which the lithograph was taken. A copy of this sketch (free-hand—not traced) is given here.]

‘Your assumption that 1000 feet remained to be climbed was practically correct as the peak can only be *climbed* from the north (on the east side of the north face). On this part of the peak 1000 feet of rock remain to be ascended.

‘I had intended to try it from this direction, but fresh snow on that line of rock made it impossible & being at the Col du Géant we thought we might as well see if anything could be done from the snow ridge.’

Copied by T. G. B.

ZERMATT—COURMAYEUR—CHAMONIX: July 7–11, 1936.—Herr W. Uttendoppler with Adolf Schnydrig.

- July 7. Zermatt–Martigny, by rail.
 Martigny—Orsières—La Fouly, by car.
 Petit Col Ferret—Lavachey, on foot.
 Lavachey—Entrèves—Courmayeur, spring cart.
 (Zermatt dep. 07.10; Courmayeur arr. 20.30)
- July 8. Courmayeur dep. 07.30
 Gamba hut arr. 12.00
 dep. 12.30
 Fresnay Glacier arr. 13.40
 dep. 13.50
 Brèche Nord des Dames Anglais (base) arr. 15.50
 Brèche Nord arr. 17.30
 (Night in shelter-hut.)
- July 9. Brèche Nord dep. 03.30
 Aiguille Blanche arr. 09.00
 dep. 09.05
 Col de Péteret arr. 12.00
 dep. 12.30
 Eckpfeiler arr. 15.00
 dep. 15.15
 Mont Blanc de Courmayeur arr. 18.30
 (Bivouac *ca.* 100 ft. under summit on Miage side.)
- July 10. Bivouac (snowstorm). dep. 05.00
 Mont Blanc arr. 05.30
 Vallot hut arr. 07.50
 (Hut found with difficulty.)
- July 11. Very fine, but much new snow.
 Vallot dep. 04.30
 Grands Mulets arr. 06.05
 dep. 08.00
 Chamonix, *via* cable to Pèlerins whence
 on foot arr. 11.00
- Actual nett times, Courmayeur—Mont Blanc de C., 22 hours.

WHERE GLORY LEADS ?—With reference to a so-called first 'ascent' by the N. face of a certain Dolomite,² a curious episode has been brought to our notice. A party had been long at work hammering in a series of pitons, reported as 180 in number. Finally, this party was compelled to come down, owing to the supply of nails running short and also to the advent of bad weather. Hearing of the enforced retirement of the first, a second party of sportsmen set out at once, armed with an abundant supply of ironmongery. Utilizing the pitons already in position and then hammering in their own, they duly, after the usual lasso bivouacs, reached the summit in 48 hours. The original party thereupon proceeded to bring an action for theft against the victors !

We wonder to which party the inevitable medal for 'valour' will be awarded ?

BLODIG'S ALPINE CALENDAR, 1936.—Although this publication is in no way connected with the Alpine Club,³ it may be as well to correct an absurd statement made in its English edition.

It is there stated with reference to the Nanga Parbat attempt of 1934, '... the sixth [climber], Bechtold, our photographer, had preferred, owing to the bad weather, to return earlier. ...' The facts being, of course, as stated in the JOURNAL, '... Bechtold left us here in Camp VII with two sick porters ...,' and further on, '... From Camp VII, Herr Bechtold was obliged to descend with two porters suffering from mountain-sickness. He experienced great difficulty in bringing down the two completely exhausted men, but a fine performance resulted in all three, despite a storm, attaining Camp IV. ...' Further on again, '... We see Bechtold sacrificing his own chances of the summit by escorting down two broken porters. ...'⁴

It is not the first time that we have had to protest against crass inaccuracies in the English edition of the above work.⁵ We are aware that no British mountaineer would take the first-quoted remark seriously, but in view of a letter received from Germany, we have much pleasure in reiterating the true facts in the great tragedy.

KABRU, 24,000 ft.⁶—A party consisting of Messrs. C. R. Cooke and G. Schoberth, with 4 Sherpa porters left Darjeeling on October 10, 1935, and arrived at Churung Chu on the 18th *via* the Singalila ridge. Thence a path was cut through rhododendron jungle to a camp by the Rathong Chu. Some 3 miles of exceptionally rough glacial moraine were crossed and the Base Camp was pitched at the foot of the Kabru icefall at 15,800 ft. On November 2, Camp I was inaugurated at the top of a smaller icefall descending from the Dome, from there the

² *A.J.* 47. 373 ; *Alpinisme*, No. 41, pp. 226-30.

³ The Calendar is not even indexed in the Club Library.

⁴ *A.J.* 46. 425 ; 47. 166, 391.

⁵ *Ibid.* 43. 419 ; 44. 377-8.

⁶ See *Kurz* map, *A.J.* 44. Fuller details of the ascent will be found in *H.J.* viii.

main icefall was entered by crossing over a shoulder buttressing the Dome. After 12 days the party reached the névé slopes above the Kabru icefall and there established Camp V at 21,000 ft. inside a large crevasse and equipped it with stores and fuel sufficient for the whole party of 6 for 12 days as a shelter in the event of bad weather. High wind was experienced even inside the crevasse, particularly the first evening when with great difficulty the camp was moved farther into the crevasse. The highest bivouac was placed at 22,400 ft. on the 16th and the following day an attempt was made, but lack of acclimatization and a somewhat cold wind put the summit out of reach. The next day Cooke and Schoberth with an earlier start climbed together to the rocks just below the summit at about 23,000 ft., where the latter was unfortunately obliged to turn back due to the height and cold hands. The plateau between the two summits was reached at about 2 P.M., and the summit about an hour later after traversing to intermediate high points on the ridge. The table-like formations of the hard snow on the plateau carved by the wind were a peculiar feature and gave an indication of very high wind velocities. The party descended next day to Camp V from where Cooke and Angtsering II, Sherpa, took a light bivouac with them and made an attempt on the Dome. After crossing a point on the ridge nearly level with the summit they climbed along it for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile then returned due to lack of time, as there were still $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of sharp ridge of the summit with a dip of 500 ft. between. They camped for the night at 20,000 ft. and joined the rest of the party on the descent next day. The Base Camp was reached on the 23rd. On November 25, Cooke and Angtsering II crossed the glacier and ascended 3 miles of moraine to the gap on the Nepal border between Little Kabru and the Koptang peak and obtained a view of the Yalung Glacier in Nepal. Darjeeling was reached on December 2 *via* Dzongri and Rinchenpong.—From *Report of Himalayan Club*, 1935.

HEREDITARY MOUNTAINEERS.—Gerald, son of Mr. F. A. M. Noelting, aged 13 years, climbed the Aiguille du Tour, Mt. Blanc de Seilon and Aiguille de la Tsa in 1934. In 1935, he climbed Fuji-yama accompanied by his father.

AGOSTINO FERRARI.—We regret to hear of the death of this well-known Italian mountaineer and writer. Signor Ferrari was one of the principal authorities on the S. side of Mont Blanc.

The Valtournanche guide, Maurice Bich,⁷ has been killed, together with a lady, by an avalanche when ski-ing. He was one of the best of the younger Italian professionals.—*R.I.P.*

WINTER EXPEDITIONS.—So far as British ski-ing is concerned, the notorious 'Down Hill Only' (*A.J.* 47. 181) school continues to

⁷ *A.J.* 44. 75-8; 45. 156; 47. 343.

flourish. The said D.H.O. may account for the comparative immunity from serious accidents as it most certainly does for the paucity of tours of any importance.

MRS. ROBERTS THOMSON.—We regret to hear of the death of this lady, well known in the 'nineties for several new expeditions accomplished with Christian Klucker.

SHELTER HUT 'BOBI ARSANDAUX.'⁸—This refuge-bivouac was erected in 1932 by the Groupe de Bleau (G.D.B.) in memory of their founder Bobi Arsandaux, who was killed on the Aiguille Carrée of la Verte in 1931.⁹ The G.D.B. is a Parisian climbing club of about twenty active members, who spend their Sundays in the Forêt de Fontainebleau climbing on the sandstone there.

The refuge is lightly constructed of wooden slats, size about 4½ ft. high, 7 ft. wide, 16 ft. long, with a sloping roof. There is a tin box full of blankets, spirit cooker and spirit, candles, pharmacy.

It is situated at the foot of the S.E. arête of the Aiguille de Blaitière about 300 ft. below the foot of the arête, perched on a rock bastion. There is a difficult rock climb from the Glacier d'envers de Blaitière to reach the hut. An overhanging short chimney, followed by a hand traverse leads to a miniature 'Mummery crack,' where there is a fixed rope. Then an awkward step up on to a ledge, followed by a traverse round a corner, lands one at the hut. It is distinctly hard to ascend carrying a sack. The first night that we spent there—during a thunder-storm—it was impossible to get warm, even though we were wearing *all* our spare clothes, including coats and helmets, and had three blankets each. On the next visit we came supplied with plenty of newspapers which we spread on the floor underneath us; this helped considerably in preventing draughts. Anyone using this refuge would be well advised to do likewise. There are places for 8 persons. According to the hut book we were the first British party to use the hut. Since the opening on August 15, 1932, the following have used it. In 1932, six parties; in 1933, three; in 1934, six—we were the fourth party in 1935. It is of great advantage to anyone wishing to try the difficult routes from the Glacier d'envers de Blaitière, but inquiries should be made as to whether the hut is still standing before arranging to sleep there; being lightly built it will not last indefinitely.

M. R. FITZGIBBON.

MT. KENYA.—With reference to the title of the illustration, *A. J.* 47. facing 372, this should read 'from about 15,000 ft.' H.R.H. the Duchess of Gloucester, writes '... the forest extends to 11,000–12,000 ft., then come bamboos followed by giant heather till about 13,000 ft. The farm which we started from was at 8400 ft., the cave where we slept was, I know, at a height of 15,000 ft. ...'

⁸ *A. J.* 43: 393.

⁹ *Ibid.* 407.

HIMALAYA.—The French Karakoram expedition consists of MM. H. de Ségogne (A.C., leader), L. Neltner, P. Allain, J. Carle, J. Charignon, J. Leininger, Dr. J. Arlaud, M. Ichac and J. Deudon.

Herr Paul Bauer is leading a very small (German) party to Sikkim, as is Mr. Marco Pallis. We understand that no attempt on Kangchenjunga in 1936 will be made by either of these parties.

The Mt. Everest expedition consists of Messrs. Hugh Ruttledge (leader), E. E. Shipton, F. S. Smythe, P. Wyn Harris, E. G. Kempson, E. H. Wigram, P. R. Oliver, J. M. Gavin; G. N. Humphreys and C. Warren (medical officers); Major C. J. Morris (transport); and W. R. Smijth-Windham (wireless). All, except Lieut. Gavin, R.E., have recent Himalayan experience and should constitute about the best all-British *team* now available. Mr. Ruttledge hopes to be in position to deliver the first attack on the summit about May 22. The expedition left Kalimpong on March 14. Full accounts are appearing in the *Daily Telegraph*.

An Anglo-American party is also proposing to visit the Himalaya—probably Garhwal—during and after the monsoon.

TAESCHHORN, S. FACE.—The note is full of inaccuracies.¹⁰ [I may mention that I had a long conversation in July this year with Alexander Taugwalder, one of the guides concerned; and also refreshed my own memory by a day's examination of the face, under changing lights, through the big telescope at the Schwarzsee, in conjunction with Herr Perrig, the translator of the original account.] I mention but those inaccuracies which leap to the eye:

(i) 'Franz Lochmatter's 1906 route.' Franz had nothing to say to the choice of route or line, which was Ryan's and mine. He was Ryan's second guide on the day, and his remarkable 'lead' was on the second part of the ascent.

(ii) 'Franz Lochmatter's famous chimney.' No such 'chimney' is referred to in the original story; which describes a 'corner.'

(iii) 'well-known overhang' which is climbed by Taugwalder 'standing on Biner's shoulder.' Reference to the original story shows this to be at least 100 ft. high.

(iv) 'decided to finish the climb' (second paragraph, first line). Taugwalder informed me they went on because they 'thought it safer than trying to return': our reason also, in 1906! (last line of Editorial note, also, contradicted by this).

(v) 'Taugwalder considers it would be safe.' He told me he would not go again. It must always be dangerous, now, from falling stones. Snow would probably make it impossible.

(vi) 'He thinks . . . they followed the 1906 route exactly.' He told me that all he knew was that they followed the 'only route possible.' As they traversed off to avoid the 'corner' and emerged finally at a lower point on the *Mischabeljochgrat*, S.E. arête, they could never have

¹⁰ A.J. 47. 362-3. For a still more inaccurate note, see *Alpinisme*, No. 41, p. 223.—Editor.

been again on the 1906 route. (Biner was quoted to me in the same sense. Knubel is of the same opinion.)

(vii) Editor's note. 'The best judges, etc.' Contradicted, I fear, by both the original account, and by the note of this ascent? The conditions of 1906 and 1935 were not, in either case, those of 'ice and good snow.' The first ascent had falling fresh snow, the second snow freshly fallen. While not including myself among the 'best judges,' I should, if asked, have said that the climb would be impossible if the sloping holds were snow-covered, good or bad snow alike.

I omit other details. Taugwalder was himself hit by stones this year. There were none falling in 1906, and none fallen below to be seen. Mountains are subject to these changes (as the 'Fresnay' couloir of Dames Anglaises). I am concerned that so uninformed a note should not lead to more of our 'Accidents.'¹¹

G. WINTHROP-YOUNG.

GIOVANNI BOBBA.—It is hoped to publish a full obituary in a future number. Meanwhile, Mr. Yeld, still the leading authority on the Eastern Graians, writes:—

In August 1893 I was spending my summer holiday at Cogne with François and Sylvain Pession when Signor Giovanni Bobba called upon me. We naturally became friends as he was one of the best Italian climbers who had for some time been exploring the mountains of Cogne, at that date still comparatively little known. He had with him his favourite guide, Casimir Thérissod, of whom he afterwards wrote in the JOURNAL¹² in the warmest terms.

His father and sister also shared his holiday. An invitation to lunch cemented our alliance. At the end of the meal Bobba insisted on singing 'God Save the Queen' to show his friendliness and regard to the British.

On August 19, we went up to the Chalets of Monei and spent a very pleasant evening, for S. Bobba was a man not only with a knowledge of the Cogne Group which few could equal, but also with a gay good humour and ready wit. Next day we climbed what is now the 3444 m. point, and gave it the name of Punta Paganini after the famous cartographer, a friend of both of us, and the first to give it a position on the map.

On August 21, Bobba and I with the guides made what we took to be the first ascent of the Punta del Tuf, 11,221 ft., now known as the Cima Leviona. It was easily climbed and we decided to return by the col between it and the Grand Sertz. The descent of the wall to the Cogne side suffers from dangerous falls of stones.

On August 23, we crossed the Colle Teleccio, which was unusually laborious, being much cut up by crevasses and chasms of wonderful

¹¹ The reference to 'a solitary difficulty' (9 lines from foot) is just such a statement (contradicted by Taugwalder's talk) as tempts the 'guideless.' They are led to expect it 'all easy' above.

¹² A. J. 34. 151-2, containing a portrait of Signor Bobba.

beauty. The next day, August 24, we all started together, and then separated—Bobba and Thérised for the Central peak of the Becchi de la Tribulazione and the rest of us for the Gemelli of the Roccia Viva. Both parties were successful,¹³ Bobba and Thérised putting in some excellent climbing and both were caught in a terrific thunder-storm. On the 25th we returned to Cogne by the Col Monei. Bobba did not allow the hilarity of the party to flag and probably no merrier party ever descended the Valnontey.

I have spent many happy days with Italian lovers of the mountains, all of them pleasant people and ready to help a stranger out with guileful innkeepers. I formed many friendships at Cogne and Ceresole Reale which I still warmly cherish and amongst them Bobba's good nature and happy disposition maintain a high place.

¹³ We climbed the eastern summit of the Gemelli, being forced down by the storm.