

## ALPINE NOTES

THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY :	Year of Election.
Howard, G. E. . . . .	1907
Roger-Smith, H. R. . . . .	1910
Gates, Caleb F., Jr. . . . .	1928
Hey, Wilson H. . . . .	1929
Hobday, S. R. . . . .	1933
Sarpy, A. U. . . . .	1936

ALPINE JOURNAL.—Index to Vols. 39–58. Copies of this index are still available and may be ordered from the Assistant Secretary, Alpine Club, 74, South Audley Street, London, W.1. Price 20s. post free.

Copies of the Index to Vols. 16–38 are also available, price 20s. post free.

Back numbers of the ALPINE JOURNAL are generally extant: prices on application.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP.—At the Winter Dinner on December 6, 1955, Sir Edwin Herbert announced, amid applause, that His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh had graciously accepted Honorary Membership of the Alpine Club.

We are glad to announce, also, that Dr. G. M. Trevelyan, former Master of Trinity, has been elected an Honorary Member of the Club.

SCHALLIHORN: FIRST ASCENT FROM THE SCHALLIJOCH.—E. A. Broome with Alois and Heinrich Pollinger claimed to have made the first ascent of the North ridge of the Schallihorn in 1903,<sup>1</sup> but was later told by George Yeld that the ridge had been once previously climbed, though no particulars of this expedition were ever given.<sup>2</sup> It would be of interest to know if any information is available about this supposed earlier ascent. G. Winthrop Young was under the impression that his party was making the first ascent of the ridge in 1907,<sup>3</sup> but this was not so, though the matter of Broome's priority is still undecided.

The North ridge of the Schallihorn was *descended* for the first time in 1900 by Sir Edward Davidson with Christian Klucker and Joseph Imesch and the Hon. Gerald FitzGerald with Ulrich Almer and Fritz Boss.<sup>4</sup>

LES DROITES.—The North face was climbed, with five bivouacs, by P. Cornuau and M. Davaille in September, 1955. Starting early on Monday morning, they reached the summit on Saturday, September 10, where they were met by an anxious party led by Lionel Terray.

<sup>1</sup> *A. J.* 21. 581.

<sup>3</sup> *On High Hills*, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> *A. J.* 22. 256–7.

<sup>4</sup> *A. J.* 20. 264.

NESTHORN.—The North face was ascended in July last by three French climbers. We believe this to have been the second ascent. The first ascent was made in 1933 by Herren Drexel, Schulze and Welzenbach.<sup>5</sup>

LES ALPES.—Dr. Louis Seylaz has resigned the editorship of the French portion of *Les Alpes* and has been succeeded by Professor Edmond Pidoux. Dr. Seylaz had been editor since January 1945.

ALEXANDER MORRICE MACKAY.—Mr. G. Winthrop Young writes :—

Sandy Mackay, who has died in Edinburgh at the age of eighty, was the senior Scottish Lord of Sessions, and had been a notable judge for twenty-five years. He was an all-round athlete, and in his day one of the best mountain climbers in Scotland. A scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, he captained the University Lawn Tennis team in 1899. He was President of the Scottish Lawn Tennis Association from 1919 to 1924 and Scottish Lawn Tennis champion from 1905 to 1907. He was a fine golfer, curler, and billiards player. He was also a well-known authority on Scottish history, legend and literature.

While he was still at Cambridge, mountaineering captured him. He was one of the pioneers of Scottish rock climbing, with Raeburn, Ling, and Gillon, and one of the earliest of the new rock-climbing school in Wales and the Lakes.

In 1898-9 he had two successful Alpine seasons, largely guideless, during which, among many other climbs, he shared in the first and guideless traverse of the east and middle peaks of the Lonzahörner,<sup>6</sup> first ascents on the Fusshörner,<sup>7</sup> a guideless traverse of the Jungfrau by a variant from the Rottal, and the third ascent of the Viereselsgrat from Zinal.<sup>8</sup> A broken leg suffered in a snow gully on Cir Mhor in Arran, together with marriage and the demands of a legal career, prevented him from again climbing in the Alps. But he continued to mountaineer in Scotland, and to the end of his life supported and spoke with enthusiasm at climbing meets and dinners.

A man of great strength and agility, of wide knowledge, formidable presence and a philosophic humour, he had a spirit of enterprise, a gaiety and a charm, which made him the ideal mountain comrade.

ANTARCTICA.—The expedition organised by Dr. Vivian Fuchs plans to cross the Antarctic continent from Vahsel Bay in the Weddell Sea to McMurdo Sound in the Ross Sea. The crossing is planned to take place between November 1957 and March 1958. Dr. Fuchs' party, which will be employing mechanical vehicles as their main means of transport, aided by dog teams and aircraft, will travel via the South Pole and will be met in 83° S. in the neighbourhood of Mount Albert Markham by a party led by Sir Edmund Hillary which will have travelled

<sup>5</sup> See *A.J.* 45. 372-3, with illustration.

<sup>7</sup> *A.J.* 20. 45.

<sup>6</sup> *A.J.* 20. 46.

<sup>8</sup> *A.J.* 20. 53.

from McMurdo Sound via the Ferrar Glacier to the Antarctic plateau and from there to the Mount Albert Markham area. In February Dr. Fuchs' reconnaissance party was established a few miles inland on the Filchner ice-shelf in  $77^{\circ} 57' S.$ ,  $37^{\circ} 16' W.$  The main party will join the reconnaissance party at the hut in January 1957.

CHRISTIAN JOSSI THE YOUNGER (1872-1956).—This distinguished Oberland guide, and the friend of many British climbers, died in January at the age of eighty-four. He had been virtually bed-ridden during his last few years. G. A. Hasler summarised his career in the ALPINE JOURNAL in 1943<sup>9</sup> when Jossi was already over seventy, and little need be added here. Alan Greaves and C. W. Nettleton were among his principal A.C. patrons; in 1905, with Mr. Nettleton, he made the first descent of the South face of the Bietschhorn.<sup>10</sup> In 1906, with Miss M. T. Meyer, Jossi made a variation of Carrel's *Galerie* route on the Matterhorn,<sup>11</sup> crossing the Tiefenmatten face at a lower level than Carrel's route.<sup>12</sup>

Jossi's best-known partnership was with Canon W. E. Durham, who has commemorated their long association in his book, *Summer Holidays in the Alps*. For ten years, 1905-14, this combination covered a great deal of the Alps; in 1914, when the First War was about to break out, Canon Durham found himself in difficulties as regards getting home, owing to currency problems. Jossi and Fritz Amatter promptly sent him 500 francs to relieve the situation. After the war, one more season (1920) was spent together, and no doubt would have been continued but for Canon Durham's fatal accident in 1921.<sup>13</sup>

Jossi had a wide experience of mountaineering (he had climbed in the Caucasus as well as all over the Alps), both in winter and in summer and was the worthy son of a very eminent father. All who have climbed with him will regret his passing and sympathise with his family in their loss.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

THE MOUNTAINEER AND THE LAW.—Mr. M. N. Clarke writes to point out that the case referred to in *A. J.* 60. 379 is not the first of its kind in Switzerland.<sup>14</sup> In June 1942 an experienced Swiss climber allowed a relatively inexperienced woman companion to follow him unroped across the crevassed glacier to the Renfenjoch (near the Dossenhorn) and a fatal accident occurred to her. A year later the man was prosecuted and received two months' imprisonment.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *A. J.* 54. 161.

<sup>10</sup> *A. J.* 59. 465.

<sup>11</sup> *A. J.* 25. 359.

<sup>12</sup> The late Mr. Amery made a somewhat similar route, in reverse, in 1926 (*A. J.* 38. 207; *In the Rain and the Sun*, pp. 99-102).

<sup>13</sup> *A. J.* 34. 192.

<sup>14</sup> The note was based on a report in *The Times* which described the case as 'unprecedented' and stated it to have been the first in Switzerland in which a climber had been sentenced for imprudence and neglect.

<sup>15</sup> *A.B.M.S.A.C. Handbook*, 1945, pp. 21-2.

LOUIS LACHENAL.—We report with regret the death of this distinguished French guide who was killed on November 25, 1955, by falling into a crevasse on the glacier du Géant. Lachenal and a companion were descending on skis from the Aiguille du Midi towards the Requin hut; they were not roped. At La Bédière, where the Col du Géant route is joined, Lachenal disappeared into a crevasse nearly 200 ft. deep. His body was recovered with great difficulty.

Louis Lachenal was born at Annecy in 1921, became a guide in 1942, and served for a time as an instructor at the National School of Ski-ing and Mountaineering at Chamonix. He had carried out some of the most difficult expeditions in the Alps, including the North face of the Grandes Jorasses and the Eigerwand. In 1950 he was a member of the successful expedition to Annapurna and, with Maurice Herzog, reached the summit. Severely frost-bitten on the descent, he had to have all his toes amputated.

MOUNTAINEERING DOGS.<sup>16</sup>—Mr. G. W. Murray points out that Police-ie (the usual spelling hitherto) was on Everest in 1933, not on Kamet in 1931, and that she reached a greater height than is credited her, as she not only reached Camp III, 21,000 ft., but went on further, to be lost somewhere below the North Col.<sup>17</sup>

Our note in the ALPINE JOURNAL was based on the letter of Dr. Raymond Greene in *The Times*, June 2, 1955. Dr. Green writes to us as under:—

‘ Sir,

‘ To one of scientific bent there is no shame more humiliating than that of having deflected, albeit temporarily, the straight stream of truth. My letter to *The Times* was written hurriedly, in a moment of mental aberration induced by overwork, and a correction remained unpublished. I hoped it might have passed unnoticed, but alas! Sir, you have elevated my error above the level of the ephemeral and enshrined it in History. Police-ie’s record was “notched,” of course, on Everest and not on Kamet. My only excuse is the strange strategical similarity between the North Col on the former mountain and Meade’s Col on the latter.’

We are grateful to Mr. Murray for calling our attention to this mistake and must apologise to Dr. Raymond Greene for not having checked his statement before ‘enshrining it in History.’ We understand that Mr. Shebbeare, who knew Police-ie well, wrote to *The Times* to point out the error, but the newspaper, not for the first time in our experience, declined to print any correction of what it had published.

A further canine climber has been recorded in *The Birmingham Post*, June 27, 1955: a stray dog is said to have accompanied a Dehra Dun party under Mr. J. T. M. Gibson up a Himalayan peak to a height of 20,000 ft.

<sup>16</sup> See *A. J.* 60. 378.

<sup>17</sup> See *Everest 1933*, pp. 127, 274; *A. J.* 45. 218 (n).

COOLIDGE AND MUMMERY.—Mr. Blakeney writes :—

I do not think Sir Arnold Lunn's interesting letter <sup>18</sup> really meets the case against the probability of Coolidge having faked Mummery's election. The bulk of the letter is devoted to showing that Coolidge was pathological in his vanity and, one may add, in his irascibility. When referring to the clash with Mummery, Sir Arnold describes it as a slight breach that could hardly have ruffled Coolidge ; yet, in *A. J.* 60. 122, I have quoted Coolidge's own words, that he felt so strongly about Mummery's nomination to the Alpine Club Committee that he proposed to resign from the Club, and to break with Freshfield, and so on. Whilst I can well believe that, with the passage of time, Coolidge, with so many other quarrels on hand, might grow more tolerant of Mummery ; since the latter was dead we are concerned, not with how Coolidge felt at the later time when Sir Arnold knew him, but how he felt at the time of Mummery's election. And I think the evidence I have quoted is pretty clear and not in accord with Sir Arnold's views.

I fancy, too, that Sir Arnold forgets that Coolidge was always anxious (as his extant correspondence shows) to try and impress any newcomer with a sense of his (Coolidge's) merits and the injustices he thought he had experienced at the hands of the Alpine Club. A young man like Sir Arnold was a gift to Coolidge ; but I am surprised he can believe so readily so improbable a story. It would be quite consonant with the warped vanity and maliciousness of Coolidge to try and impress a youngster by claiming to have diddled the Club. It would not be an easy matter to rig the ballot boxes, though not impossible. But it is highly unlikely that one man could do so without anyone else knowing. Since it has yet to be shown that Coolidge was at the General Meeting when Mummery was elected (and the evidence all tends against the belief), I think it is impossible to accept Coolidge's uncorroborated story, and until reliable testimony is available in support of him, then Mummery's election must be regarded as valid.

AN ANDEREGG CENTENARY.—On August 11, 1856, Melchior Anderegg achieved the first of his many new expeditions by making the first recorded crossing of the Lämmernjoch with the Rev. F. J. A. Hort and the Rev. J. B. Lightfoot.

GUIDES.—The deaths of several Swiss guides were reported last summer. Hieronymus Julen, the doyen of Zermatt guides, died at the age of ninety, and David Biner, also of Zermatt, died in June aged seventy-six.

Mountaineering accidents were responsible for several of the deaths. In August, Fritz Steuri was killed on the Grünhorn and Peter Schlunegger on the Klein Schreckhorn. Towards the end of the month Stanislas Kalbermatten met with a fatal accident on the Rimpfischhorn.

<sup>18</sup> *A. J.* 60. 437.

Léandre Brantschen was killed while rock climbing above Randa; two years ago he made the fifth ascent of the South face of the Täschhorn.

THE ALPINE CLIMBING GROUP.\*—The renaissance of British climbing in the Alps after the hiatus of the war years has been slow and is still far from complete. During and immediately after the war there were remarkable advances in the techniques of alpinism on the Continent, but these were balanced by the equally dramatic raising of the standard of free rock climbing in Great Britain, and it is curious that there should not have been a more rapid revival of British climbing in the Alps.

One of the reasons for the failure is that in Britain it has been hard to learn much about current Alpine climbing. Further, to those brought up on English guide-books and depending on School Certificate French, literal translation of Continental guides is very misleading—a description such as ‘Athlétique et pénible, fort exposée, une des plus difficiles . . .’ when put in the English idiom should probably read ‘An interesting climb on good rock and with delightful situations.’

It was against this background that the Alpine Climbing Group was founded some three years ago. Its object is to encourage mountaineering of a high standard principally by promoting acquaintance between mountaineers and by spreading information about mountain routes. It owes a great deal to the Groupe de Haute Montagne and to that excellent and much-lamented magazine, *Alpinisme*.

Membership is limited to those who are active mountaineers and who have shown themselves to be thoroughly competent in the Alps. Retirement is automatic at the age of forty—W. H. Murray adds to his distinctions that of being the first to be retired under this rule. The Club is thus not competitive with the Alpine Club, but rather serves to provide contact between the younger members of the Alpine Club and other young climbers who have achieved Alpine routes of a high standard.

The Alpine Climbing Group holds an Annual General Meeting in Cumberland on the last weekend in April, and further informal meets including one annually on the third weekend of September in Wales. It distributes a bulletin containing technical accounts of new Alpine routes and a brief survey of the more interesting ascents in the Himalayas and other ranges as well as in the Alps.

A major activity is the production of climbing guides in English. The Club has published a guide to selected climbs in the Mont Blanc group, which is based closely on the Vallot series, and there are in preparation guides to other areas.

The officers of the Club are at present : *President*, T. D. Bourdillon ; *Hon. Secretary*, E. A. Wrangham ; *Hon. Editor*, A. Blackshaw ; *Hon. Treasurer*, D. Thomas ; *Committee*, R. R. E. Chorley, H. G. Nicol, D. D. Stewart, D. Whillans.

\* Believing the A.C.G. to be a valuable and significant post-war development, we are very pleased to publish an outline of its aims and constitution.—  
EDITOR.

There are at present 53 ordinary members and one retired member. The annual subscription is 10s.

T. D. BOURDILLON.

GANESH HIMAL.—The highest summit (24,299 ft.) was reached for the first time on October 24, 1955, by Raymond Lambert, Eric Gauchat and Madame Claude Kogan. During the descent Gauchat insisted on unroping and went on by himself; when the other members of the party reached camp he had not arrived. Next day his body was seen lying at the foot of a snow couloir and on October 26 was buried beneath a great rock. Aged twenty-one, Gauchat was a brilliant member of the post-war generation of Swiss climbers and had to his credit many formidable expeditions in the Alps.

LHOTSE.—The attempt of the International Expedition led by N. G. Dyhrenfurth was unsuccessful owing to the bad conditions encountered. The lull between the end of the monsoon and the onslaught of the winter storms is said to have been much shorter than usual last year. In the course of an attempt on October 15, the Austrian, Ernst Senn, reached a height of 26,575 ft. Lhotse is the highest unclimbed mountain.

Another Swiss party is returning to the mountain this year and is reported to have reached Namche Bazar on March 21st.

NEW ZEALAND HIMALAYAN DINNER.—Mr. L. V. Bryant writes that in September of last year a dinner was held at Christchurch for all those living in New Zealand who had climbed at any time in the Himalayas. It was found that thirty-three mountaineers qualified, though five years earlier only three (N. E. Odell, J. B. Harrison and L. V. Bryant) would have been eligible. This rise in numbers is good testimony to the enthusiasm for Himalayan climbing that began with Riddiford's party in 1951.

Of the thirty-three candidates, twenty-five attended (six of them members of the Alpine Club), whilst five others were abroad, and three more were prevented from attending by illness.

KANGCHENJUNGA.<sup>19</sup>—Mr. C. G. Crawford writes :—

With reference to Colonel Tobin's review of *Kangchenjunga Challenge*, may I query his statement: 'Except for Farmer's rash adventure, the latter [i.e. south-western approach] had not been examined since the tragic Guillardod . . . attempt in 1905.' Oddly enough, unless I am much mistaken, Colonel Tobin was himself in Darjeeling in 1920 and met Raeburn, who organised the Yalung expedition of that autumn.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> See *A.J.* 60. 422.

<sup>20</sup> Mr. Crawford is, of course, correct. His and Raeburn's expedition is described in *A.J.* 34. 33-50.

PRINCE CHARLES MOUNTAINS.—The Australian Minister for External Affairs has announced that Her Majesty the Queen has approved that a range of mountains in Australian Antarctic territory should be named the Prince Charles Mountains. The range, 7,000–8,000 ft. high, is in MacRobertson land ; its northern extremity is about 150 miles south-east of the Australian station in Mawson.

RUWENZORI.—Dr. G. N. Humphreys writes :—

Mr. Busk's most interesting and careful account of recent mountaineering in Ruwenzori <sup>21</sup> may awaken interest in the nomenclature of the massif. As he suggests altering the name of Ensonga Peak, the origin of the name may be of interest.

The members of the 1926 expedition were the first to notice that an unnamed peak at the north of Duwoni (Mount Speke) appeared to be higher than Vittorio Emanuele Peak, which the Duke of the Abruzzi had considered to be the summit. This unnamed peak, as seen from Mount Stanley, almost named itself. It was snow-covered except for a small circular black spot just below the highest point. In conversation among themselves the members of the expedition called it Spot Peak. The appearance of the spot was so artificial that after the expedition, when a composite photograph of Duwoni was being made, the photographer removed this feature in the routine process of de-spotting. The expedition later climbed all the peaks of Duwoni and confirmed that, in their view, Spot Peak was the highest point. Feeling that the peak should have a name, they called it Ensonga, which in Lutoro means spot or point.

Mr. Busk also wishes to change the name of Ruwenzori to The Ruwenzori, on the analogy of ranges such as The Alps. However, Ruwenzori is not a range but an isolated massif. Moreover, Alps is a plural word but Ruwenzori is singular. The prefix 'Ru' means the greatest of its kind. Ruwenzori was the nearest Stanley could get to the native name given to him, which was either Ruenjora, meaning the greatest place of rain, or Ruwenzori, meaning the greatest mountain. Anyhow, Stanley gave the name Ruwenzori, which might be allowed to remain unless or until there should be a comprehensive renaming of the features of the massif.

If such should be contemplated, a note by the Editor in the *Geographical Journal* of June 1927 on the nomenclature of Ruwenzori might be considered. He deplored the practice of affixing European names to geographical features in Asia and Africa and suggested that where native names could not be found, descriptive names should be given, translated into the local language.

RUWENZORI—The Ruwenzori has achieved a melancholy distinction. In January, the first fatal accident occurred, resulting in the death of a young South African medical student, Roger Crawford. Exact details are lacking but it appears that the party of three, having made a

<sup>21</sup> *A. J.* 59. 268, 407 ; 60. 105.

successful ascent of Margherita, climbed the Johnston peak of Speke and were roping down the summit rocks. One member descended safely but during Crawford's descent, the rope slipped off the belay and he fell, pulling the third man with him. The third man was lucky enough to be able to arrest his fall but, presumably as a result of the rope breaking, Crawford fell some 600 ft. and was killed instantly.

D. L. BUSK.

**BOULEAU MOUNTAIN.**—The vast expanse of lake, river, muskeg and forest in central Quebec, about midway between the St. Lawrence and Hudson Bay, is undulating, but on Sheet 32 N.E. of the National Topographical series of maps made by the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys of Canada, which deals with the region round Lake Mistassini and much of which is marked as unmapped, only three elevations are named, one as a mountain, one as a hill and one as a peak. This note describes the mountain.

Bouleau Mountain lies on the west side of Lake Waconichi (Waconichi means fish eggs), a sizeable lake draining northwards over Foam Falls into Baie du Poste and Mistassini, and thence westwards by many other rivers and lakes into Hudson Bay. Bouleau is a small tree-covered hill but somewhat of a landmark, though perhaps no more so than two mountains at the north-west end of Waconichi which have not been dignified by a name on the map.

The country for great distances around is composed of thick forest and lake, and Bouleau with the rest of the landscape must have been covered by hundreds of feet of the Laurentide Ice Sheet during parts of the Pleistocene epoch which in turn has been responsible for the entrancing landscape left by receding ice.

Rising about 600 ft. above the lake, Bouleau was climbed by a party after a three-day march from the Base Camp of the 1954 British Schools' Exploring Society, situated on the east side of Lake Waconichi. It is not very likely that this was a first ascent, as hunters and trappers have no doubt crossed the summit on numerous occasions. It is probably, however, the first time that Bouleau Mountain has been climbed for the pleasure which it gave.

J. C. HAWKSLEY.

**HIMALAYAS, 1956.**—According to newspaper reports Fritz Moravec is leading an Austrian party to attempt Gasherbrum II and another attempt will be made on Dhaulagiri by an Argentine party. A small party led jointly by I. G. McNaught-Davis and J. M. Hartog, and including J. Brown is going to the Baltoro Glacier; one of their main objects will be a thorough reconnaissance of the West and East ridges of the Muztagh Tower (23,800 ft.).

**HANNIBAL'S ROUTE ACROSS THE ALPS.**—The route across the Alps across the Col Clapier has become fashionable as the solution for the problem of Hannibal's Pass ever since 1887 when Colonel Perrin pointed

out that from its summit there was a view over the plain of Piedmont. The Col Clapier is accessible from the West only out of the valley of the Isère, and its identification with Hannibal's Pass rests on two assumptions, each of which is untenable.

None of the early manuscripts mentions the Isère. The name of this river is an emendation proposed by the early editors who did not understand what was meant by Polybius's *Skaras* and Livy's *Arar* in the earliest manuscripts. If *Isaras* or *Isara* was what the classical authors meant, it is necessary to assume that two copyists, independently, one in Greek and the other in Latin, made a mistake at precisely the same place in the two manuscripts. There are long odds against this, and it is an untenable assumption.

In any case, the emendations are unnecessary, because documents prove that the present river Aygues in the early Middle Ages bore the name *Icarus* and philology shows that this is what the classical name *Skaras* would be expected to become. It is frequent for rivers to bear more than one name, and this one was also called the *Arauris*, which explains Livy's *Arar*.

This river forms the south-eastern boundary of the so-called 'island,' and it is known to have been four days' march for Hannibal from the crossing-point of the Rhone which, in turn was three days' march for Scipio from the eastern mouth of the Rhone. Hannibal's rate of march in this region is known to have been 14 km. a day, and the *Skaras* cannot therefore have been more than 100 km. from the sea. This agrees with the Aygues, but excludes the Isère which is 200 km. away.

The second untenable assumption is that the texts of Livy, Silius, and Timagenes can be discarded because they are supposed to disagree with a (non-existent) bias in favour of the Isère route by Polybius. On the contrary, these other texts fit in perfectly with Polybius, provided that the Isère emendation be dropped. There are two further proofs that the 'island' could not have been bounded by the Isère. Livy said that when Hannibal was in the 'island,' instead of making his way directly towards the Alps, i.e. eastwards, he turned to his left, i.e. northwards, and passed through the territories of the Tricastini, Vocontii, and Tricorii. The Tricastini lived near St. Paul-Trois-Châteaux, 80 km. south of the Isère, and it is therefore impossible that the 'island' can have been north of that river, which it would have to be if the Isère was the *Skaras*.

The second proof is the fact that the word *nesos* used by Polybius for the 'Island' also means 'land flooded by the Nile.' This would accord with the description of the 'island' as highly fertile and very populous. The area between the Rhone, the Aygues and the Baronnies hills, some 500 sq. km. is triangular (like the delta of the Nile to which Polybius compared it), and very low-lying, frequently inundated, being part of the flood-plain of the Rhone. The area between the Rhone, the Isère, and the Mont du Chat is quadrangular and highly accidented, containing a number of features rising to over 2,500 ft. It cannot be said to bear any resemblance to 'land flooded by the Nile.'

Livy and Silius say that Hannibal came to the Durance, which is awkward for the Isère protagonists. But the river was in flood at the time when Hannibal crossed it, and that was in mid-October. At that time of year the waters of the glacier-fed Isère fall nearly to their lowest level, whereas those of the mostly spring-fed Durance rise towards their winter peak. Natural science therefore suggests that Livy and Silius were correct in saying Durance and not Isère, and this agrees with Varro who certainly suggested a Durance Pass for Hannibal. It also agrees with the fact that the territory of the Tricorii, through which Hannibal passed, is represented by the diocese of Gap, in the valley of the Durance.

Finally, the pass itself had snow on it, not only of that autumn but of the previous winter, frozen, slippery, deep enough and extensive enough to present a real obstacle. It must therefore have been very high. The snow-line in that region lies at about 3,000 m. and four different methods indicate that in 218 B.C. the climate was not colder than today. The pass must be dangerous enough to cause Hannibal very heavy casualties, and it must command a view of the plain. This last condition is the only one fulfilled by the Col Clapier; all the other conditions about it and the line of approach rule it out.

GAVIN DE BEER.