

REVIEWS.

THE SELKIRK MOUNTAINS: a Guide for Mountain Climbers and Pilgrims. (Winnipeg, 1912).—Although the Selkirks and the Canadian Rockies are at

an almost prohibitive distance from Scottish climbers, yet THE SELKIRK opportunities sometimes present themselves, and those who MOUNTAINS. have visited Glacier House, or the Châlet Lac Louise, will not soon forget the forests of cedar, hemlock, spruce and fir; the luxuriant wild flowers (white rhododendron, yellow adder's tongue, scarlet painter's brush, etc.); the amusing wild beasts, such as small black bear, and porcupine, and whistling marmot; the graceful glaciers and steep icefalls; the strong, swift rivers; above all the magnificent peaks and ranges, many of them of limestone, holding a richer colour and a fuller vegetation than the Swiss Alps. This guide is produced under the authority of Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler, A.C., First President of the Canadian Alpine Club, from whose book "The Selkirk Range" (Ottawa, 1905) much of the information is derived. But the real authoress is Mrs. Elizabeth Parker, Winnipeg, known to many Scots climbers and tourists for her enthusiastic devotion to the Canadian mountains. She has here produced a mass of practical information about the district of Glacier House, a mountain hotel a little west of Rogers Pass, near the famous Illicillewaët Glacier, the Asulkan Pass, the Sir Donald Range, and the Hermit Range, and also about the less known districts of Golden, Windermere and Revelstoke. She also gives several maps and a number of photographs. Such veterans as Professor Macoun, the Dominion naturalist, and Professor Coleman, the geologist of Toronto, also contribute; and there is a charming note by Mrs. J. W. Henshaw, of Vancouver, on the mountain wild flowers. Although Glacier House is not yet so popular as the Châlet Lac Louise, many expeditions start from there; and Edouard Feuz, of Interlaken, and other Swiss guides have already made it their home. In order to retain some of these guides and their families permanently in Canada the C. P. R. Co. have just built a model Swiss Village called "Edelweiss," close to Golden. A photograph of these young men and their women folk may be seen in the *Canadian Gazette* of 30th May, 1912. The general geography of the Selkirks is of course rather distracting. This arises from the fact that they lie in the loop made by the Columbia River in the first 600 miles of its course. The Columbia flows north for 300 miles, and near the Athabasca Pass makes the Big Bend, and 300 miles further south joins the Kootenay River. On the other hand the Kootenay River rises on the western flank of the Rockies some miles north of the source of the Columbia, and the two rivers flow in almost parallel lines but opposite directions. A mile and a quarter of almost level land separates them near Columbia Lake. The Kootenay turns north west in Idaho, and the two rivers meet near the International boundary at Arrow Lakes. Writing with reference to these rivers, Mrs. Parker is therefore justified in describing the Selkirks as "practically a huge inland island of forest, rock, ice and snow." She has

the legitimate pride of recording the fact that two first ascents in this wonderful region were made by her daughter, Miss Jean Parker. E. W.

THE SPELL OF THE ROCKIES. By Enos A. Mills. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company).—The Rocky Mountains in Colorado

have their attractions, as indicated in a recent number of *CLIMBS IN THE ROCKIES.* the *C. C. J.*, in which allusion was made to a prior work on the subject by Mr. Mills, an expert climber of these mountains in all weathers. He calmly mentions having experienced 70 storms on the summit of Long's Peak (14,256 feet high), and jocularly refers to the title "Snow Man" which has been given him by the "upland-dwellers" in the range, owing to "numerous and wild accounts of my lone, unarmed camping-trips and winter adventures in the mountain snows." In this volume we have accounts of various experiences under exceptional conditions—heavy rains, snow-storms, and blizzards; encounters with avalanches and landslides, forest fires and "grizzlies." Many of the adventures were exciting and risky, yet they are all told modestly and unaffectedly, but at the same time reveal a pluck and resource and endurance of discomfort that compel admiration. Like all works on mountain-climbing, this one abundantly discloses the great secret of the art—"It's dogged as does it." R. A.

MY CLIMBING ADVENTURES IN FOUR CONTINENTS. By Samuel Turner, F.R.G.S. (London: T. Fisher Unwin—12/6).—This book is hardly for the

average member of the Cairngorm Club, the author deprecating the view that "walking up gradual slopes" is mountain mountaineering. To him, mountaineering "means more or less adventure"—such adventure as is involved in climbing steep rock-faces, jumping across chasms from one ledge of a precipice to another, tackling crevasses and couloirs, and cutting steps down ice-slopes "varying from 50 to 65 degrees of an angle, much steeper than the roof of a house." An experience of this last kind was gained in the traverse of Mount Cook, in New Zealand in 1906, briefly referred to in the *C. C. J.* of that year (v., 171), but more fully and much more graphically described in this volume. Mr. Turner and his three companions were the first to traverse the three summits of Mount Cook (12,349, 12,173, and 12,049 feet respectively. Other New Zealand mountains afforded Mr. Turner considerable adventures. To him the Alps are as mere playthings, and he goes much farther afield for his "sport." He has done winter exploration and climbing in the Altai Mountains in Siberia, reaching the summit of a hitherto unknown peak, 17,800 feet high; he attempted an ascent of Aconcagua, in South America, but had to beat a retreat when he had gained a height of 20,500 feet; and he hopes some day to climb Mount Everest, in the Himalayas (29,002 feet). It is not surprising to find him declaring the climbing of Mount Everest or K2 a greater feat than getting to the North or South Pole, and asserting that he who climbs mountains thereby lengthens his years at least by five. Mr. Turner has had many hair-breadth escapes. "I have," he says, "a lump on one of my ribs through wriggling up a crack in a precipice, another lump on the occiput of

my head from a piece of a rock-avalanche off Mount Cook, and rather weak eyes through being snow-blind on three occasions. I have five times had the skin off my ears, neck, and face." But with the exception of "these minor things," he bravely and finely adds—"I have gained everything and lost nothing in my encounter with the mountains." His book is in many ways an interesting one, and is particularly instructive to the climber as distinct from the walker; but one is impelled to concur with the regret of the *Spectator* that the "respectable achievements" recorded are "set out much in the same style as bicycle racing on a track might be described in a provincial paper."

R. A.

THE club apparently does not, as its title suggests, confine itself simply to Alpine climbing, but goes in for "Alpinism" in a very wide sense of the term. The contributions to the magazine, which are all GERMAN AND clearly and methodically written, are of varied interest, AUSTRIAN and something will be found to appeal to the taste of ALPINE CLUB almost everyone. Besides descriptions of individual expeditions, such as the first ascent of the high mountains of JOURNAL FOR Greenland by A. de Quervain and A. Stolberg, ski-ing in 1911. the Lower Taurus by J. Baumgärtner and Karl Sandtner, etc., we have articles on more general themes, which, however, gain rather than lose interest by the introduction of personal experiences. Among the latter, we might mention the article on "Ballooning in the Alps," by Margaret Grosse, who, though treating a subject which would seem to appeal only to a few, yet succeeds in making it of general interest. The same general interest is found to a greater or less degree in all the contributions. One drawback exists, which is mentioned in one of the articles—the contributions have to be handed in apparently about a year before the publication appears, and consequently are not absolutely up-to-date. As the journal is a yearly publication, this defect might be remedied by occupying, say, three months instead of twelve in its preparation.

The most striking feature of the journal, however, is its excellent illustration. Some of the photographs in it are magnificent, and all attain to a very high standard. They are, in themselves, sufficient to make the journal of value even to British devotees of mountaineering whose knowledge of the German tongue is nil.

E. W.

DR. FARQUHARSON, ex-M.P. for West Aberdeenshire, in his recently published volume of reminiscences, titled "In and Out of Parliament," expresses regret that he ever attempted to become a mountaineer, the regret arising out of what he terms "an unsuccessful attempt to break my neck by trying to go up the Wetterhorn." After furnishing details of the early part of the journey, he describes the futile ascent in this wise:—

"After some snow and ice work of no particular importance we came to a truly awe-inspiring place, a gigantic precipice of limestone rock, round which we had to skirt by footsteps cut in the rock; and as the weather had now broken up, or down, they were filled with water, and seemed to me to

give an uncertain and precarious tenure of continued existence. But there was no help for it: on we must go, with nothing to hold on to above, and a yawning and terrific precipice below. But nerved by grim despair and clutching desperately to our guide's hand, we safely got round the *mauvais pas* and reached the Gleckstein cave; and well-named it was, being nothing more than a sort of magnified slit between shelving rocks, sloping downwards to the infinite below and barely holding our little party. Here we were to pass the night—I will not write, to sleep, for what between the novelty of the situation, wet and chilly feet, a general atmosphere of damp, dark and depressing desolation, nothing particular to lie on, a cup of strong tea, and the vigorous snores of my companions, I barely closed an eye (metaphorically), and felt rather like the hero of Victor Hugo's terribly realistic *Dernier jour d'un condamné à mort*, as I saw the chill beams of the morning sun furtively stealing in upon us through the prevailing gloom. It soon became time to rise and decide what to do, for it was raining heavily, and the mist was beginning to settle down on the defending peak. And now the order came to pack up and return to civilisation, for it would not have been safe to go higher; and although I was assured that we had done the worst part of our journey, I could not help a feeling of relief, more especially when I found, to my delight, that we were to come down by a longer but an easier route. So I never became a member of the Alpine Club."

The laird of Finzean, however, is one of the original members of the Cairngorm Club. His book, by the way, contains a reference to his own casual remark in a debate on the Access to Mountains Bill that he "owned a mountain" (Peter Hill)—a remark that in its turn created some remark (See *C. C. J.*, i., 143).

QUITE different are the impressions of another ex-member of Parliament, the late Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, for twenty-four years the

SIR M. E. representative of the Elgin Burghs. A popular edition GRANT DUFF's has just appeared of his "Notes from a Diary, 1851-1872,"

IMPRESSIONS. which contains an account of a walk (in 1852) across the Weissthor, a glacier pass connecting Macugnaga, in the Val d'Anzasca, Italy, with Zermatt, in Switzerland, that "passed in those days for the most difficult glacier pass in all Switzerland." The "Notes" reproduce what Sir Mountstuart wrote about this walk some years afterwards—

"Who can forget the start before the little hamlet is awake—the stars fading out one by one over Italy—the mighty peaks flushing in the growing day—then the blaze of sunlight as we emerge from the valley shadows, and as the sound of the Alp horn comes up along the pastures to tell us that the world below is rising to its labour? Ere long we reach the snow-line, and see perhaps the chamois, which loves the debatable land between frost and flowers, playing above us till our constant advance makes it fear that harm is intended. Who can forget the hours of struggle over rock and snow-slope—hurrying here lest the avalanches should overwhelm us, there lying down exhausted, and careless, for the time, of avalanches and everything else? At last comes the joy of setting foot upon the topmost ridge, and looking down on another and different world. Then the dangers of the precipice are

exchanged for those of the glacier, and we descend slowly and tied together. The mountains, as we sink lower and lower, seem to grow in height, and as the day declines we see the clouds 'laying themselves down to sleep on their vast ledges.' At length the darkness begins to fall around, and it is night before we see the lights in the village to which we are bound, twinkling far down through the valley mist."

IN juxtaposition to these descriptions of Alpine adventures may be placed the account of an ascent of a mountain pass in Scotland—not so much by way of comparison or contrast, as because it describes experiences that must be familiar to all hill-climbers. The ascent (made partly on bicycles) occurred conjecturally in Ross-shire, there being references to the manse of Carron and to a well-known Spa ; and it is narrated in the course of an article in *Blackwood's Magazine* for March—

"The snow had vanished and the sun was warm, and although great white banks of cloud piled themselves on the horizon, there was enough blue sky to cheer the most faint-hearted. Cathal and I had the spirit of adventurers upon the road ; every turn of the way is a romance, every hill-top suggests an enchanted land beyond, and we rode with light hearts up the long glen, barred at the end by the great mountains, and leading on somewhere through and above the distant fir-woods to the formidable Pass. For the first couple of hours all went well, and it was not until after we had buried ourselves in odoriferous woods and the road turned sharply uphill that our troubles began. Great snowflakes began to fall till the air was thick with them, and we and the way grew white. We had to dismount and climb for miles up a wretched road that seemed as bent on going monotonously up as the devoted youth in the poem of 'Excelsior.' I remembered a weary friend who once toiled up a mountain-side with me. 'They say Life is a climb,' she remarked with a sigh, 'but, oh, I'm glad it's not like this.' The road twisted and turned ; we continually saw before us heights that promised to be the summit of the ridge and were not. We reached the top in the end, of course, and fickle Fortune smiled on us for a little from a clear sky as a reward for our endeavours. There was a delicious loneliness on the heights of the Pass. Great tracts of brown heather and bent stretched on either side of us to the mountain walls and shut us in ; little lochans looked up at the sky with cold-blue eyes and reflected the tall, scanty fir-trees that grew beside them ; deer fled at our approach with a soft stir and scampering that was pleasant to hear. Then in the course of time, our way began to drop downwards, and the wooded fertile straths beyond the watershed lay below us."

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL for February has an article with the somewhat fantastic title of "As Heaven's Water Dealeth," descriptive of a walking tour in Glen Affric and Glen Shiel, undertaken in June last year by the writer, Mr. William Anderton Brigg, along with Messrs. Greenwood, W. Garden, and J. A. Parker. The real objective of the trip was the ascent of Sgurr Fhuaran or Scour Ouran (3505 feet), the summit of which the writer regards as "surely one of the

finest, if not the finest view-points in Scotland." He is not alone in that opinion, Sheriff Scott Moncrieff Penny, for instance, declaring (*S. M. C. J.*, iii., 28) that such a prospect as that from the top of Scour Ouran one sees only twice or thrice in a lifetime. Here is how Mr. Brigg describes it—"We seemed to be set in the centre of Scotland's mountain districts, and could see them all—the Cairngorms in the east, the Coolins in the west, Ben Nevis in the south, and Torridon in the north; with all that lay, or rather rose, between Ben Screel in the south, our friends of yesterday and to-day [Tom a' Choinich, Carn Eige, Mam Sodhail, Sgurr nan Spainteach, and Ciste Duibhe] in the east, Rum and Eig in the offing, Sgurr nan Saighhead immediately at hand on the one side, and the range culminating in the saddle on the other, and at our feet Glen Shiel and the gleaming waters of Loch Duich . . . We have no such panorama like it in England, and in the Alps it is worthy of compare with that, say, from the Col du Géant looking southwards, saving of course the snow peaks."

Readers may be reminded of the reproduction of a fine photograph of Sgurr a Ciste Dubh and Sgurr Ouran by Mr. Garden which accompanied Mr. Emslie Smith's article on "A Westward Tramp in Ross-shire" in the January number of *C.C.J.* Another fine photograph by the same gentleman forms the frontispiece of this number of the *S.M.C.J.* It is the view from one of the hills on the north side of the Glen Shiel road looking over Loch Duich to its junction with Loch Long. Unfortunately the Skye hills are cloud-covered.