

REVIEWS

An Alpine Valley and other Poems, by Lawrence Pilkington :
with wood cuts by Margaret Pilkington. Longmans, Green & Co.
3s. 6d. net. Everyone familiar with the story of

AN ALPINE mountaineering in Scotland knows the name of
VALLEY. Mr. Pilkington as one of the two brothers who
did much of the pioneer climbing in Skye and
discovered the wonders of the Coolin range, and it is with special
interest, therefore, that one opens the pages of this little book of
verse. Nor is one disappointed. Elsewhere we have reproduced,
with Mr. Pilkington's permission, some verses from the opening
piece, "What Called me to the Heights?" and they are typical of
the graceful artistry that distinguishes the poems, and of the fine
feeling and deeply reverent spirit that mark this lover of the
mountains. Not all the poems are Alpine in subject. Many deal
with moods and mysteries of life that are common to all humanity.
But the note that runs through them all is one of reflectiveness and
sympathy. They breathe the calmness and repose that come to
one among the hills and in the open spaces, not the indifference
of a man forgetting the world and careless of its sorrows but the
courage of a man prepared to go back and take his part in the
work of life, and we are sure that all who find their recreation
and solace in the mountains will be grateful to Mr. Pilkington for
putting their creed, as he has done, so finely in verse. The little
wood-cuts by Miss Pilkington are equally distinctive and charming.

MR. ERIC P. BUCHANAN, who has been honorary editor of *The
Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* since 1921, has retired and
been succeeded by Mr. G. B. Green, the November
SCOTTISH issue of the magazine being the last to appear under
MOUNTAIN- Mr. Buchanan's charge, and the April issue the first
EERING CLUB. in Mr. Green's charge. In the former an account
is given of the club meet which was held at Braemar
at Easter last year, and we note an article by Mr. A. J. Rusk
upon Lochnagar accompanied by two fine photographs of the corrie
and of the snow cornices upon the top of the cliffs. Mr. Walter A.
Smith contributes some interesting recollections of his sixty years'
rambling on the Scottish hills, for his memories go back to 1864.
He mentions that his father, with an Edinburgh botanist, crossed the
Cairngorms by Ben Macdhui and Loch Avon in 1847. This was
long before Hill Burton published his book upon the Cairngorms,
and long before the Ordnance Survey map, and these two early
enthusiasts prepared a map of the group which is wonderfully

accurate. Mr. Green has secured for his inaugural issue two pleasant papers by veterans of the S.M.C., Mr. Maylard and Mr. Naismith, the one a reverie of the hills and the other reminiscences of early winter climbs in Scotland, in which development of mountaineering Mr. Naismith was a pioneer. A younger member of the club describes a five days' stay, in March, in the half-way hut on Ben Nevis, a pretty vigorous and rigorous experience, and Mr. Eustace Thomas sends a note on how he did all the Scottish "four thousanders" in a day, a feat to which reference is made elsewhere. The photographs of mountain scenery are particularly good.

The Alpine Journal, (Longmans, 12/6 net.), for November gives the record of the Mount Everest of 1924, the official despatches, as well as papers by various members of the expedition, while there are memorial tributes to Mallory and Irvine, who lost their lives in the final attempt on the mountain, and numerous photographs, including the highest photographs taken on this globe, Mr. Somervell's showing Col. Norton advancing over sloping slate rocks at 28,128 feet, with the topmost peak in the distance. The whole story forms a great and romantic episode in mountaineering annals. In May last year Mr. J. A. Parker read a paper on the Pyrenees before the Alpine Club, and it is reproduced in this issue of the *Journal*, accompanied by a number of admirable photographs. The Pyrenees are comparatively little known to climbers from this country, and Mr. Parker has added to the value of his article by giving a list of the high huts in the range which are conveniently placed for mountaineers. Other papers deal with the New Zealand Alps and the Rockies, and in the latter connection an interesting account is given of the early passage of the Rockies by the pioneers of the fur trade. The illustrations of this, the premier mountaineering magazine, are as usual exquisitely done.

THE *Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club*, 4/- net. Much of the matter in this substantial and admirably illustrated annual is of a severely technical character, relating to FELL AND ROCK rock climbs in the Lake District, and it is with CLIMBING something of relief that one comes upon the pleasant CLUB. and all too brief article upon "Grass Tracks", by W. T. Palmer, who speaks lovingly of the old roads across the fells, just as many of us in Scotland find our happiest days not in bagging peaks but in wanderings over moorland paths. The Fell and Rock Club acquired Great Gable and a large tract of adjoining country as a war memorial, and an account is given of the unveiling ceremony last year, with a panoramic view and map of the memorial area. The ground has been handed over to the National

Trust, and as Scafell Pikes and Scafell, which lie immediately to the south have also been presented to the Trust, the central and finest mountain region in the Lakes is now a national possession forever. We hope to soon see the whole of the Cairngorms national property also, now that a beginning has been made with Cairngorm itself. The Club is issuing a series of rock climbers' guides to the Lake District, and the section dealing with the Scafell group, by C. F. Holland, appears as the first part of this issue of the Club *Journal*. We notice that many of the severe courses can only be done in rubber shoes, and on a later page there is a discussion of the comparative merits of nailed boots and rubbers which will interest rock gymnasts. Accounts of climbing in the Carpathians and on Mount Kenya, pieces of verse, one set to music, and the editor, Mr. Chorley's account of his peak bagging feat in Scotland, referred to elsewhere, give variety to a magazine, the main contents of which are naturally and properly devoted to the Lake District.

THE *Pinnacle Club Journal*. 3s. 6d. This latest addition to mountaineering literature, edited by L. E. Bray and D. E.

THE
PINNACLE
CLUB.

Pilley, is of special interest, for the membership of the club is confined to women, and a high standard of rock climbing qualification is exacted before admission. The club was founded in 1921, largely by the enthusiasm of Mrs. "Pat" Kelly, who, sadly enough, met her death a year later in a mountaineering accident in Wales. She must have been a woman of rare vitality, to judge from the delightful sketch written by her in 1921 and now printed in the *Journal*. The energy of the Club and its members is shown by the numerous and varied expeditions recorded in these pages, comprising climbs in Skye, in the Alps and in Norway and a traverse in winter of the Pyrenees from Gavarnie to Spain, by the route taken two years ago by two members of the Cairngorm Club, to whom Miss Pilley's brightly written paper will be of special interest. "Pot holing," the inverted climbing practised in the limestone caves of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, is described by another member, and a feature of the magazine is the number of excellent photographs. One is glad to see that there is a good deal of mountaineering in the *Pinnacle Club Journal* as distinct from the highly specialised rock gymnastics which bulk so largely in the activities of some clubs.

LA MONTAGNE. Nos. 175 to 181. These seven issues of the C. A. F. monthly keep up the high standard set by their predecessors. The most interesting article in them is

FRENCH
ALPINE CLUB. probably that by M. Segogne describing a traverse of the Aiguille Verte made by him and three others in 1924 from the Argentiere glacier to the Couvercle. The ascent of the very difficult east face is admirably described.

The expedition took the party 23 hours. Among the monthly notes of the proceedings of the C. A. F. we note with interest that the club unveiled three Indicators (tables d'orientation) during 1924, and we also note that in connection with the Fetes on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the club that 52 members visited the Vallee d'Ordesa in the Pyrenees, well-known to several of our own members, and that while there they quaffed "gaiment le cidre mousseux espagnoll"—also well-known to one or two of our club members!

At the Back o' Benachie or Life in the Garioch in the Nineteenth Century, by Mrs. Helen Beaton (nee Helen Mortimer). With

Illustrations. Pp. 246. The Central Press, Aberdeen. This volume of reminiscences, sketches, verse and jottings is unpretentious and unaffected and will appeal to Garioch folk for the sake of old times, though it may not take rank among the weightier contributions to local literature. The authoress writes chiefly of Rayne "the Giral of the Garioch," famous for its white church,

Fite Kirk o' Rayne
Straught stan's yer wa';
But on a bonnie Pess Sunday
Doon sall ye fa'.

but very properly like every true child of the Garioch she begins with Benachie, which another child of the Garioch, Pittendrigh Macgillivray has called the Fujiyama of Aberdeenshire, so deeply is its form implanted in the hearts and affection of the people who live beneath its shadow. She tells of the days when Benachie was a commonty and how in 1854 the lairds seized it with the consent of the Court of Session, dividing the hill between them and evicting the squatters upon it. This was the lament of the people.

Oh, ye was aince a monarch hill,
To freedom's footsteps free,
But noo, unless their honours will,
We daurna tread on thee.
Alas, the heather on thy broo
Will bloom nae mair for me;
The lairds aroon' hae ta'en ye noo,
Ye're nae oor Benachie.

With such recollections, anecdotes, and snatches the authoress has put together a pleasant, if simple, miscellany.