

REVIEWS.

The Alpine Journal, No. 249, November 1934.

The geographical range of the articles is, as always, very wide, and the volume constitutes not so much an Alpine record as a reference volume to recent exploration among the great mountain ranges of the world. Mr W. Rickmer Rickmers himself ranges "From Titlis to Bitlis," and although it transpires that he has never climbed the Titlis and has never reached Bitlis, he has an entertaining defence for his title. In Mr Rickmers' usual style the article touches lightly on nearly everything, save, possibly, actual climbing, which latter he leaves to the imagination of the reader, "who should be able to fill in the technical detail from his own experience"! "As a supreme test of literary ability," Mr Rickmers recommends "an essay which mentions neither mountains nor climbs and yet is deemed eminently suitable for *The Alpine Journal*."

Perhaps the most charmingly written account in this number is Miss Corning's "South Tyrol—or Thereabouts," one of the few purely Alpine papers. The majority of the papers treat of more remote regions—the Himalaya, Persia. Formosa, etc. There is an interesting account of the first ascent of Mount Foraker, Alaska, and a long paper on the Swiss Caucasus Expedition of 1933. Mr N. E. Odell, in a letter to the Editor, contributes some further observations on the ice-axe found on Mount Everest. A most interesting number, although less imposing than its predecessor.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, No. 118, November 1934; No. 119, April 1935.

No. 118 contains the first part of "Days That Are Past," in which Mr J. Gall Inglis describes changes in life and conditions in the Highlands since 1856. "A Climb on Ben Nevis" is the record of a new climb between the North-East Buttress and the Observatory Ridge—"a good 4." Mr J. H. B. Bell contributes an article on "The Rock Climbs of Dumyat in the Ochils"; we rejoice to see such an eminent authority reject the "true right" and "true left" humbug. The rock climbing interest is continued in "Some Recent Rock Climbs in Scotland," chief among those described being Rannoch Wall, Buachaille Etive, and the lower southern buttress of the Trident, Ben Nevis. Mr A. Harrison recounts the chapter of recent mountaineering accidents which have ended fatally and points a lesson. An amusing Ben Nevis diary and the usual notes, etc., make up a very interesting number.

No. 119 opens with the second part of "Days That Are Past"—Kyle Akin in 1882, an account of early Highland life that grows in

interest. J. A. Parker's "Curvature and Visibility" is as concise and as precise as might be expected from that writer. It will prove most useful in solving the frequently recurring problem whether one hill can be seen from another over an intervening third. The explanatory matter is made beautifully clear and simple; non-mathematicians need not embark on it with the same hesitation as did the writer of this note! Accompanying it is the largest diagram ever seen in a climbing journal—essential, of course, if the diagram is to be of real use. Another technical article by Mr Wedderburn explains fully the methods of roping down. The Rannoch Wall climb, mentioned above, is described rather more fully and is illustrated with two good photographs. Much more serious is Mr Roxburgh's "Mystery of the Tower Ridge" with its amazing disintegration of Ben Nevis. Quite the most amusing account of a climb we have ever read appeared in the *S.M.C.J.* some years ago; this is a good second.

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. VIII., No. 1.

We look forward with keen anticipation to the arrival of this *Journal*, and are never disappointed with the contents. Under the editorship of Mr J. H. Doughty it flourished exceeding well, and the present number is quite up to the standard of its predecessors. There are several articles and illustrations of Scottish interest—"Suilven," by the Editor, "Ski-ing at Home," by B. R. Goodfellow, and a note on Arran, etc. Club journals have frequently too much of too little interest to non-members, but *The Rucksack* is wide enough in its scope to avoid the inevitable "frozen out" feeling. Affability, indeed, would appear to be one of the qualifications for membership; we met a Rucksack man once on Ben Nevis, and although ourselves not shining examples of the tailor's art, we hesitated to believe that anything with such an eccentric exterior would dare venture into Fort William. Not until we were in conversation with him did we discover that he was a climber, with ideas on many things, particularly on climbing and on Club huts, and we left with the impression that the Rucksack Club would be a lively Club to belong to! You may pick up this *Journal* without being confronted with a long article on the 101 rock climbs on a small outcrop of rock somewhere in the middle of England.

The number opens with an ascent in Nigeria; there are no startling incidents, but Mr Wootton has, nevertheless, given a delightful description of travel in Nigeria. "Fear in the Night" is fiction, at least, we hope it is; if truth, it is the sensational confession of a murderer! It has a genuine "fear in the night" flavour. We liked "Suilven" as much as anything in the *Journal*, but we have not yet found the windy tops so banal as to be persuaded to follow Mr Forrester in his "Scratchings Underground"; still, the underworld seems to have unusual possibilities—" . . . a short stomach wriggle brought us into a high passage . . . which is mostly done ferretwise . . . and with difficulty negotiated a hairpin bend downhill. You can only go a

yard or two more as the passage gets too tight for human beings. . . .” Not a sport, apparently, for fat men nor for those who cannot accomplish the safe negotiation of a hairpin bend uphill and feet first! We can assure our readers that this is as good a four shillings’ worth as there is on the market.

Songs of Skye, selected and edited by B. H. Humble (*Æneas Mackay*, Stirling, 3s. 6d.), presents in short compass and in attractive form what is best and most appealing in the poetry of that island. The story of the Misty Isle down the ages is rendered in song, continuity being given by prose notes. The anthologist is usually guided in his choice by his æsthetic preferences, and Humble is no departure from this rule. The charm of an anthology is that we get glimpses of so many poets, and it is pleasant to know this little of one poet rather than wandering through the jungle of collected works. For the less energetic as well as the mountaineer, whether “folk of the blood or stranger,” this little volume will bring home strongly the magic of Skye.

The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. L., Nos. 5 and 6; Vol. LI., Nos. 1 and 2.

The first of these contains an article which should appeal to our readers, “The Interpretation of Scottish Scenery,” by Mr John H. G. Lebon. “The Story of Arctic Voyages and Exploration,” while dealing mainly with voyages in the Polar Seas, also touches the adjoining mountain lands—Greenland, Spitsbergen, etc.

In Vol. LI., No. 1, readers will find two articles of interest, “On Watershed Migration and the Passes of the Lowther Hills” and “A Tribe of the Western Himalaya.”