

to cover the ground from Katmandu to Base Camp and beyond with a guide whose personal ambition is not focused on the summit, who is planning rather how to get his despatches back to *The Times* without interception by the lurking newshounds. It is somewhat amusing to detect rather divided loyalties! But even the most hardened peak-bagger may feel a little sentimental over the account of the well-timed transmission to London of the news of final success and of the confirmation of the success by the little receiver at Base Camp.

“Great Days in New Zealand Mountaineering” presents stories of the exploration of the climbing areas of New Zealand, from the snow and ice peaks of South Island to crater mountains in the North. The local topography of each area is illustrated by clear sketch maps, but the reader ignorant of the wider geography would have welcomed a map locating the various mountain groups more precisely. A well-chosen collection of photographs gives a good impression of the rock and snow which challenged the climbers whose exploits are recounted by John Pascoe, himself a notable pioneer with numerous first ascents to his credit.

“Shadow Buttress” is a novel by an author whose mountaineering fiction has previously been of the detective story type, written under the pseudonym Glyn Carr. This, however, is the story, set in the north-west, of a professional guide whose sight fails, of misadventure on the rocks of Shadow Buttress, and of the relationships of climber and guide, man and girl. The writing is crisp and the atmosphere reasonably well-established, but the reader is left with a feeling that the dramatic situations are somewhat overdrawn.

The author of “Selected Poems on West Penwith and Reflections” was a notable figure in British mountaineering and the father of Cornish cliff climbing, persuading the Climbers’ Club to establish the Bosigran Hut. As we regret to record his death in 1959 at the age of 90, it seems appropriate to quote one of his verses:—

#### VALHALLA

To each his own Valhalla and release  
From perpetuity of petty things,  
But we who are the freemen of the hills  
Need no such sanctuary. We may not rest  
Until we have climbed high enough to see  
Beyond the false horizon’s beckoning line  
Which flatters us in vain for still we climb.

All the above books, and many more, are available in the Club Library.

R. L. M.

#### NEW ROCK-CLIMBING GUIDES

It will be noticed that this number of the *Journal* does not include a section dealing with new climbs in the Cairngorms. This is because the two-volume S.M.C.

Climbers' Guide to the Cairngorms Area has been announced for publication in 1961, and should provide these in a more convenient form. Three other areas are covered by the new guides which we are glad to have the opportunity of reviewing below.

"Climbers' Guide to the Cuillin of Skye." Edited by W. M. Mackenzie. S.M.C. Guide, 1958, 9s. 6d.

The long-awaited pocket guide to the Skye Rock Climbs has now been published, bringing it into line with the guides covering Ben Nevis and Glencoe. It will fill a much-felt gap, particularly for the climber not already well acquainted with the Cuillin. The restriction of the Guide to the Cuillin Hills only has deprived it of much of the charm and interest of the larger and older Guide, which it does not entirely outdate or replace.

Many new climbs made in the post-war years have been included. The great majority, being in the Severe, Very Severe or Hard Severe class, will presumably be of greatest interest to the Tigers of to-day, and little seems to have been added to the existing routes for the more ordinary mortal.

The Editor has done a fine job in recording these new climbs. It is a pity he has tripped up over an old favourite like Kings Cave (page 43) which the reviewer has taken many parties through during the past twelve years. On the other hand, the wet day excursion from Sligachan (page 14) was outdated some years ago by the fall of a considerable mass of rock.

Several rather unimportant old routes have been reclassified, usually upwards, and to be consistent in grading "for nails unless otherwise stated" some of the more worn popular routes might also have been reclassified instead of being down-graded, as, for instance, Cioch Direct from S to MS.

Of the seventeen diagrams collected at the back of the book, ten appeared in the old guide. These seem to have suffered from redrawing and condensation to a smaller size, and fail to come up to the usual S.M.C. standard. The new method of marking routes has added nothing to clarity, and the reviewer would hate to find herself for the first time on Sron na Ciche West Buttress depending on Diagram No. 15 to signpost the correct routes. The additional diagrams depict the more inaccessible cliffs which have been opened up in recent years.

The Guide concludes with the customary but very useful graded lists of climbs, working along the main range from North to South, and, despite the minor criticisms, can be thoroughly recommended.

"Climber's Guide to Glencoe and Ardgour: Buachaille Etive Mor," Vol. 1, by L. S. Lovat. S.M.C. Guide, 1959, 7s. 6d.

Time marches on apace and successive generations of climbers have visited, climbed and explored intensively in the easily accessible Glencoe region. So much so that ten years after the publication of the first special Rock Climbing guide covering the whole area, Buachaille Etive Mor now needs a whole volume to itself.

The new guide closely follows its predecessor in lay-out, using many of the same diagrams, with the addition of new routes. A few new diagrams have however been added and several of these could with advantage be larger. One or two of the old routes have been down-graded because this guide assumes Vibrams to be the generally accepted footwear.

To the beginner or a less serious climber a first glance through the book may appear rather intimidating because of the high grading: no fewer than 41 Very Severe, 36 Severe, some employing artificial technique and pitons! Coming down the scale a little the less highly-striped Tigers will be relieved to find that there are 37 Very difficults, 9 Difficults and 13 Moderates. Those from south of the border, not accustomed to the length of many of the climbs, would do well to note this factor, especially during our short winter days.

"Rock Climbs in Arran," by J. M. Johnstone. S.M.C. Guide, 1958, 4s.

The Arran Guide, which differs from the others reviewed in having soft covers, satisfies a genuine need in the list of rock climbing guides. It may not be long before it, too, will need a revised edition, for it is set out clearly and concisely with excellent diagrams. It cannot but lure many experts to these charming pocket-edition mountains.

Again, grading is for Vibram soles. The reviewer especially likes the adoption of the continental system of numbering the routes in text and diagram, making it very easy to identify and follow a climb.

There are again hard climbs needing artificial support, but there is plenty for the average climber. The usual subtle distinctions are made between the more difficult climbs in that we have 6 Very Severe, 5 Hard Severe, 12 Severe and 2 Mild Severe. Some of these vary because of their length or lack of it, and consequent exposure. In the lower grades Very Difficult and Difficult include 48 routes, Moderate and Easy 19 routes.

Generally speaking, the routes are shorter than the average Scottish climbs, but the keen types can always make up for this by doing a succession of climbs. Perhaps nowhere else in Scotland are so many different routes on different peaks to be found for so little walking.

A. F. G. CORDNER

## CLIMBING JOURNALS

- Alpine Journal*, Nos. 294-301.  
*Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, Nos. 148-151.  
*Rucksack Club Journal*, Nos. 50-53.  
*Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal*, Nos. 51-54.  
*Cambridge Mountaineering*, 1957-60.  
*Oxford Mountaineering*, 1957-58.  
*M.A.M. Journal*, 1956-60.  
*Yorkshire Ramblers Club Journal*, Nos. 27-30.  
*Pinnacle Club Journal*, No. 8.  
*Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club Journal*, No. 4.  
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*American Alpine Journal*, 1957-60.  
*Appalachia*, Vol. XXXI, No. 3 to Vol. XXXIII, No. 1.  
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