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REVIEWS.

THE ALPINE JOURNAL.

The November number is full of interest.

Mr. W. R. Rickmers writes of Suanetia.

Mr. E. A. Broome, of the Roth-horn.

Mr. A. E. Field, of the Wellhorn.

Mr. D. W. Freshfield, of Mountains and Mankind.

Mr. W. A. Brigg, of Monte Viso.

Mr. G. Yeld, of Le Trident.

There are, besides, an obituary notice (by Mr. C. Dent) of a sister of Mrs. Seiler, well known to all *habitués* of Zermatt, an account of the disaster on the Gran Paradiso to Mr. Clay's party, and one of that on the Gabelhorn to Dr. Demelius. All these are good articles, but none perhaps exceed in importance the first and the fourth. The latter is a philosophical summary of the whole course of relationship between men and mountains, bringing together, in able and striking fashion, the evidences which prove a steady growth of knowledge and of sympathy. Incidentally almost every Alpine topic is touched on, and with a grasp which few have at their command; but for active human interest, the palm must be awarded to Mr. Rickmers' Caucasian paper. Those who had the pleasure of hearing it when it was delivered before the Club will agree that it loses a good deal in cold print, but it could easily afford to lose a great deal, for few of us have ever heard a more vivid and thrilling narrative. Eloquent description, philosophy, poetry, puns and romance pursued one another in headlong haste, while the versatile writer figured, in rapid succession, as a medieval knight, a

modern courier, a campaigner, a troubadour and in fifty other characters. It is a pleasure to think that a large part of this paper is still to come.

The story of the accident near Cogne is clearly given, the facts being evidently drawn from much the same sources with the account which appeared in our last number. It is, however, somewhat curious that the fall is stated to have taken place from steps which had been cut "a few hours before." Now these steps were cut when the party was descending from the Gran Paradiso about 10 a.m. A few minutes later they reached the *Col*, and wasted very little time over the attempt to descend thence towards Cogne. Nor do they seem to have gone very far in the direction of the Piccolo Paradiso. It is in fact possible that they might, in the course of an hour or so, have done all that they are known to have done and got back to the point from which they fell. If instead of one hour they consumed several hours, how was the time spent? If they intended to go back over the top of a big mountain, would they have waited about and made so late a start? Moreover there is a fact which is here omitted, yet has, if we can rely upon it, considerable importance, viz. :—the finding of the watch, which was said to have stopped at 11 o'clock. This is by no means conclusive evidence, because the watch may have been slow, or it may have been stopped by some accidental blow while the party was near the *Col*, but there is a strong probability that the stoppage was caused by the fatal fall of the wearer, and that he would not have taken with him a watch that did not shew time reasonably near—say, within half-an-hour of—the truth. In that case the accident must have taken place before noon, when no great change in the condition of the snow can have been brought about by the action of the sun on a western slope. Perhaps the greatest difficulty of the whole affair is to discover why the party renounced their known intention of joining their friends in Cogne, and attempted the much longer task of retracing their steps over the summit of the Gran Paradiso. These difficulties are not cleared up by an interesting article in the

Monthly Review by Mr. R. Hughes, who was not in possession of the full facts at the moment of writing.

Among the new expeditions several of our men distinguished themselves. In the Eggishorn part of the Oberland, Mr. G. W. Young was actively climbing new peaks and adorning them with picturesque names. In Norway our indefatigable President was actually able to find summits which he had not attained before. His exploits on the Lofoten rocks require four or five pages of description.

The illustrations to this number are unusually numerous and fine. Of our own men, Nettleton supplies one, and Rickmers several of very great beauty and interest.

W. P. H.-S.

THE MOUNTAIN CLUB ANNUAL. No. 8 (for 1903.) Cape Town [1904.]

IT is a fascinating pastime to work out an unknown climb with nothing to assist the imagination beyond a vague sketch or a misty "snapshot"; but there is almost as much fun to be got by studying the records of a climbing club in some distant land, and piecing together, from stray hints, the conditions under which it works, the advantages which it enjoys, and the drawbacks which it has to endure. The Mountain Club, which has its home at the Cape of Good Hope, is a case in point. Yet though its publications provide in abundance the particular pleasure to which we have referred, that pleasure is not wholly unmixed. For if there is one thing more than another which makes climbers discontented with their lot, it is to read of the wider opportunities of sport offered by newer and less frequented countries. It is not so much the great snow-clad giants for which we sigh. We can admire them as much—possibly more—from a distance, and do not grudge the time spent in an occasional journey to visit them. But it is a great and enviable thing to have at one's doors playgrounds like Table Mountain and rocky hills like Jonker's Hoek, something in the style of our own fells,

where those who lose their way without a guide, and those who find it with the help of one, seem to be thought equally ridiculous. Perhaps that is a fair test of a sporting country on a small scale, and the Cape seems to offer hundreds of square miles which can stand that test very well. The hills are only about twice as high as our own, and apparently not as a rule very difficult, but the charm of mystery and uncertainty hovers over them. It also hovers to a certain extent over the club which devotes itself to their exploration. It appears to consist of at least three sections. Of these the Cape Town section is vigorous and articulate, bearing on its own shoulders the whole burden of the Club Journal; but the other sections are shrouded in mystery, and seem to be almost as shadowy and unsubstantial as certain British Army Corps.

The very titles of them are suggestive, one being named after Worcester, which over here we regard as "the faithful city," and another after Stellenbosch, which, in the metaphor of South Africa, holds a place somewhat analogous to that of Coventry in ours. A speech at the annual dinner of the club seems to drop a hint of one, if not two, secessions. "The Club, as now existing, differs doubtless from the ideals of some of its originators." Did these reactionary "Auld Lichts" withdraw to "the faithful city"? Again, "Our roll has been purged of the names of many persons not really in sympathy with our ideas." Were these revolutionaries dismissed to Stellenbosch? The whole thing reminds one of the Irish Professor of Natural History who said, "The rhinoceros is a complete misnomer for two reasons. In the first place he has no real horn. In the next, if we wish to speak with scientific precision, we should say that the one-horned rhinoceros really has two horns, but one of them is not there." In this case, however, the horn which *is* there—the Cape Town section—is full of energy. Having Table Mountain in its back garden, it assumes responsibility for all the rash beginners who get lost upon it, so that the formation of search parties is fast becoming a serious occupation. It has

an annual excursion, a dinner, and a geological lecture. Its members push their bivouacs into the more remote ranges, where a pleasing variety is given to the work by centipedes, scorpions, venomous snakes, large and persistent baboons, and wild flowers of elegant and innocent aspect, which raise blisters on the human skin to the size of a hen's egg. They have not even a compensating escape from the mists which so often trouble us. Indeed these may have something to do with the strange variety of routes on Table Mountain—amounting to not less than forty-five.

Mist, Table Mountain holding,
More ways to climbers shews
Than of table-napkin folding
The cutest *Kellner* knows.

Strange company is to be met with on these mountains, from "goddesses who scale the Stinkwater Needle" (in costume quite in accord with the climate and customs of Olympus, if the poem "Mountain Beauties" refers to them) down to a mountain-loving hermit who long tenanted a secluded cave, and was last seen "wearing the broad arrow of a blameful life."

The articles on Natural History are full of interest. The book is freely illustrated, and misprints are few. "Alpes Vaudoires" must be one, and ruins which "luxuriant climbers *cloth*" is doubtless another, though we have all known rocks too apt to "cloth" themselves at the expense of a "luxuriant climber's" garments. In conclusion, let us quote from a poem by Mr. R. Hymer, which, though the *Alpine Journal* demurred to a former poem of his as being "ungallant," is sure of universal approbation:—

Dame Nature's infallible cure for all ills
Consists in ascending her mountains and hills;
Convalescents keep writing in prose and in rhyme
Unsolicited letters with one constant chime—
"Doctor Nature's great Cure—worth a guinea a climb."

W. P. H.-S.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. No. 44,
May, 1904.

THIS number will appeal principally to members of the S.M.C., as two-thirds of its contents are devoted to the "Proceedings of the Club" at their New Year and Easter, 1904, Club Meets.

We note with pleasure an announcement on page 121, to the effect that a type-written copy of the original Sligachan Climbers' Book has been made, and deposited with the new lessee of the Sligachan Hotel, for the use of all climbers. The S.M.C. are nothing if not thorough, and they will make to themselves many debtors by having added to the book the following:—

Map of the Cuillins, 4 inches to the mile.

A Guide Book to the Cuillins, by the Editor—Mr. Wm. Douglas.

Various articles which have appeared on Skye and the Cuillins in the *S.M.C. Journal*, together with a number of photographs.

The whole forms a handsome and well bound volume, which should prove extremely useful to all climbers visiting Sligachan.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. No. 45,
September, 1904.

THE *S.M.C. Journal* has long been noted for the excellence of its illustrations, but, in this number, the Editor has surpassed himself, there being no less than ten full page photographic reproductions.

The articles include one by Mrs. Inglis Clark, entitled "Three on the Centre Grid of the Trident Buttress, Ben Nevis," giving an account of a new climb on Britain's premier peak. This is the first time we remember seeing a contribution by one of the fair sex to any of the British Mountaineering Club Journals—apart, of course, from that of the Alpine

Club. Miss Inglis Clark contributes a charming photograph—"The Ben Nevis Group from Corpach—Sunrise Effect," so we may call this quite a ladies' number.

Another new climb is described in "The Rose Ridge on Sgoran Dubh," and yet a third on Carn Dearg of Ben Nevis (see pp. 179, 180). Evidently Scotland is far from exhausted yet!

A well-known member of our Club, Mr. W. R. Rickmers, writes a very interesting article, entitled "Aquatic Sport on Ben Nevis," or, to put it more plainly, "Ski-ing on Ben Nevis in merciless rain, with a few remarks on whisky." Last, but not least, we mention an article on "Garbh-Bheinn of Ardgour, and the North East ridge of Aonach Beag," by Dr. Inglis Clark, illustrated with some fine photographs taken by himself.

CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL, No. 23, July, 1904.

NINE articles and a poem make up a good average number.

"The Mamore Forest," by our member, Mr. Edred M. Corner, and "Easter at An Teallach," by Mr. Geo. T. Ewen are perhaps the most worthy of mention.