an altitude of 18,750 ft. and the second—D 41 of the Survey—that of 20,168 ft. On the summit of the latter the party was enveloped in a dense fog accompanied by an icy wind, which lasted for several hours. In this the descent was accomplished by following the trace which had been made in ascending. The topographical features of the region were found to differ materially from those shown on any existing map.

## ALPINE NOTES.

'The Alpine Guide.'—Copies of Vol. I. of the new edition of this work, price 12*s.* net, and of 'Hints and Notes, Practical and Scientific, for Travellers in the Alps' (being a new edition of the General Introduction), price 3*s.*, can be obtained from all booksellers, or from Messrs. Stanford, 12 Long Acre, W.C.

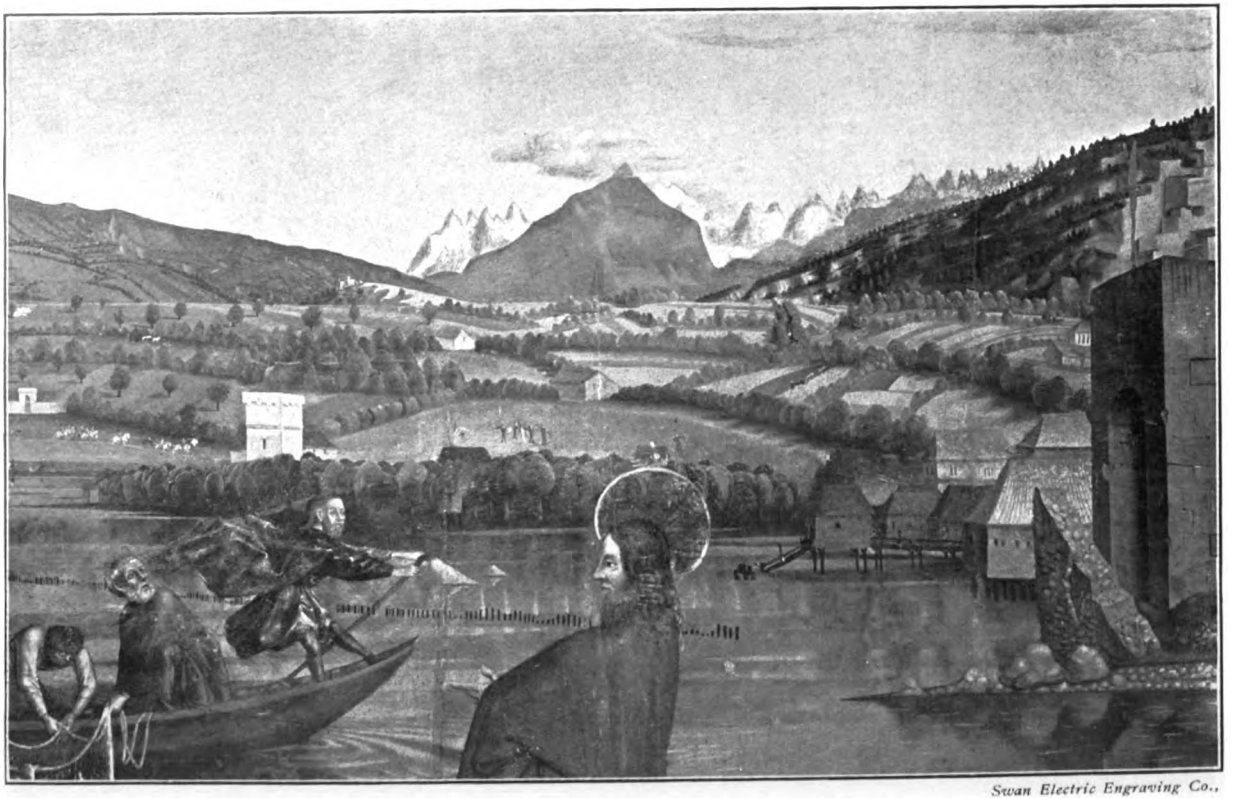
The Library Catalogue may be obtained, bound in cloth, on application to the Assistant Secretary, 23 Savile Row. Price 3*s.*; postage, 4*d.*

Ski-Running.—During the coming season Mr. W. R. Rickmers will be found at Kitzbühel (Tyrol), where everybody eager to learn is cordially welcome. No fees.

The First Appearance in Art of Mont Blanc.—The visitor to the Public Gallery at Geneva known as the Musée Rath will find in the rooms on the basement floor two fragments of the old altarpiece, painted on panel, which stood, up to the time of the Calvinistic Reform, in the Chapelle des Macchabées, adjacent to the Cathedral. They form the upper and lower right shutters of a large triptych, representing events in the life of St. Peter, which was erected in A.D. 1444 by François de Mies, Bishop of Geneva and nephew of his predecessor in the See, Jean de Brogny (†1426), the builder of the chapel. The panel bears the inscription, 'Hoc opus pinxit magister Conradus Sapientis de Basileâ, MCCCCXLIIII.'

The following account of this artist is borrowed from Bryan's 'Dictionary of Painters and Engravers,' new edition, 1905:—'Conrad Witz, of Rothweil, in Würtemberg, was probably one of the painters who were invited to come to Basel to adorn the churches and other buildings in honour of the Council to which prelates from all parts of Europe flocked in 1433. Witz (to use the unlatinised form of his name) was one of the most important of that group of painters of Swabia and Upper Germany, who were the pioneers of realistic tendencies in the art of South Germany and exercised an important influence on the development of painting in the first half of the fifteenth century. He is an artist of grace, originality, and powerful endowments.' Mr. Coolidge informs me that Professor Daniel Burckhardt in an essay on Conrad Witz, published in 1891, has reproduced (Plate XXI., opposite p. 288) the mountain background of the Geneva picture, and identified it (p. 289) as the chain of Mont Blanc, but this essay

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*Swan Electric Engraving Co.,*

THE CHAIN OF MONT BLANC FROM NEAR GENEVA,

CONRAD WITZ, pinxit, A.D. 1444

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forming part of the 'Festschrift zum 400ten Jahrestage des ewigen Bundes zwischen Basel und die Eidgenossen' seems to have escaped attention in Alpine circles. Professor Burckhardt (p. 285) eulogises this panel 'as a unique work in the history of Old German landscape-painting,' and adds (p. 289), 'This work of a medieval master may bear comparison with Dürer's best landscapes.'

One of the preserved shutters of the Geneva altarpiece represents the Miraculous Draught of Fishes and Christ walking on the Sea of Galilee. The artist has shown his 'realistic tendencies' by reproducing with great fidelity the landscape of the Lake of Geneva. The view is taken from the northern shore from a spot between Geneva and the village of Pregny. On the right of the picture is seen the water-gate of the city, a lofty structure resembling the Porta Romana at Florence. A conical rock, apparently encrusted with fossil shells, stands in front of it; further distant are houses partly built on piles. Above it rises the long slope of the Salève, and more in the centre the conical form of the Môle is conspicuous. Behind and on either side of the latter the artist has been at pains to introduce the snows of the Mont Blanc range. The shapes of the mountain itself and its aiguilles have evidently been observed with, for the time, unusual care and appreciation, as will be seen from the accompanying photograph, which I owe to the courtesy of the Director of the Musée Archéologique—to which the altar-piece belongs—and of Monsieur Baud-Bovy, the Curator of the Musée Rath, himself the son of a distinguished painter of the Alps. This picture gives us what is, I believe, by many years, if not by three centuries, the first representation in art of the glaciers of Savoy. Leonardo da Vinci went to Geneva, and one of his notes runs as follows: 'Riviera d' Arva presso a Ginevra ¼ di Miglia in Savoia dove si fa la fiera in San Giovanni nel villaggio di San Gervagio.'* This seems to refer to two distinct places or sketches. Some critics have imagined Leonardo's San Gervagio to be St. Gervais in Savoy, but it is clearly, I think, the suburb of St. Gervais N. of the Rhône, and on the other side of the town to the Arve. If any of Leonardo's mountain sketches that I have examined represents the distant view seen from Geneva the summits are conventionalised beyond recognition.

I may take this occasion to suggest to members of the Club that a collection of photographs illustrating the representation of high mountains in pictures by old masters might well be combined with an exhibition of early prints and lithographs of Alpine scenery. Our late member Mr. Josiah Gilbert, in his charming book 'Landscape in Art before Claude and Salvator' (Murray, 1885), has indicated where to look for material. Should the Committee see their way to holding such a show I believe it might be made both interesting and entertaining. If members or others who possess and would be ready to exhibit such prints would communicate with the Assistant Secretary it might help the Committee to form an estimate of the material readily available. D. W. F.

* See Richter's *L. da Vinci*, vol. ii. p. 245.



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DR. PACCARD AND MT. BLANC.—The following passage, forwarded by Dr. Dübi, is an interesting bit of contemporary evidence to the view of Dr. Paccard's character taken by Mr. C. E. Mathews and Mr. D. Freshfield, and may serve as an additional ground for discrediting the stories told by Balmat at a later date to his companion's discredit.

In Friedrich Matthisson's 'Briefe' (Zürich, 1795, 2 vols.; French translation, Zürich, 1802, in 1 vol.) the following passage occurs in Letter 8, vol. i. (between pp. 92 and 105, which describes a visit to Chamonix early in July 1788). The letter is dated Bex, July 7, 1788, and mentions the fact that the writer paid a visit to Dr. Paccard:—

'Der uns seine Reise nach dem Montblanc sehr bescheiden und einfach erzählte. Er scheint weiter gar keinen Werth auf dies kühne Unternehmen zu legen und behauptet dass jeder andre, mit gleichen Kräften, eben so gut als er den Gipfel dieses Berges hätte ersteigen können.' W. A. B. C.

MEASUREMENT OF HIMALAYAN GLACIERS.—The following letter has been received from Mr. T. H. D. La Touche:—

'Geological Survey Office, Calcutta:
September 20, 1906.

'DEAR MR. FRESHFIELD,—Your letter of August 23 reached me last week, and I am glad to hear that you approve of the steps we are taking to observe the Himalayan glaciers. We are making a good beginning this year, as I have been able to send up parties to three different districts—two men to Kumaon, two to Lahoul, who are to examine some of the Spiti glaciers as well if they have time, and one to Kashmir. Mr. Huyden, who has undertaken the last, is now up in Hunza, fixing marks near some of the big glaciers there, and the Resident, Col. Younghusband, has promised to instruct the political officers at Gilgit to inspect them from time to time. Mr. Cotter, who is in Kumaon, has already sent in a very nice plan of this end of the Pinduri glacier, and seems to have carried out his instructions in the matter of fixing points for future observation very judiciously. Next year I hope the Sikhim glaciers will be taken in hand.'

The following is the notice issued by the Director of the Geological Survey of India:—

## NOTICE TO TRAVELLERS.

### SECULAR MOVEMENT OF GLACIERS.

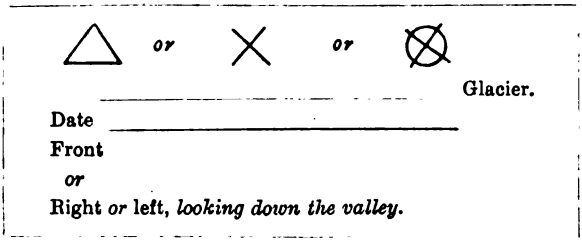
For several years past the International Commission for Glaciers has been collecting information from all parts of the world where glaciers exist with regard to the secular increase or decrease of the ice, which in Europe has been found to possess a fairly definite period of variation. The observations hitherto received from India have been very meagre, and the assistance of travellers and sportsmen visiting any of the Himalayan glaciers is cordially

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invited, in order that fuller information on the subject may be obtained.

Visitors to the glaciers who are provided with a camera are requested to take photographs of the ends of the glaciers from, if possible, three points of view, (*a*) directly in front, (*b*) and (*c*) from either side of the valley as nearly as possible in a line with the end of the glacier, so as to include in the view a portion of the opposite side of the valley.

If possible the points from which the views are taken should be situated near or upon some conspicuous rock or large boulder, on which a distinctive mark should be scratched with a knife or the point of an alpenstock. This mark should be indicated on the back of the photograph, with the date and the name of the glacier, thus :—




A sketch plan of the glacier-end and sides of the valley, indicating the approximate position of the marks and their distance from the glacier, would also be very useful, and might be attached to the photograph.

It is requested that the photographs should be sent to the Director, Geological Survey of India, Calcutta, who will acknowledge their receipt.

T. H. D. La Touche,
*Offg. Director, Geological Survey of India.*

Traverse of the Finsteraarhorn (14,026 ft.).—On September 11, 1905, Mr. Claude A. Macdonald, with Rudolf and Hans Almer, ascended the Finsteraarhorn by the S.E. arête by practically the 1883 route, and descended by the N.W. arête to the Agassizjoch to Grindelwald. They found the snow good but the rocks bad and a good deal glazed. The fixed rope near the summit was buried in ice probably a foot deep; only the ends of it were visible. They found no very great difficulty in getting up to the left of the couloir. The expedition is a very fine one, though if the snow were not in a favourable state it would be a very long one. Times :—

| Ascent. | Hrs. | Min. | Descent. | Hrs. | Min. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hut to 'Schrund' | 1 | 30 | To Hugisattel | 1 | 0 |
| To arête | 2 | 15 | To Agassizjoch | 0 | 50 |
| To minor summit | 2 | 0 | To Finsteraarjoch | 1 | 15 |
| To foot of final couloir | 1 | 20 | To Schwartzegg | 3 | 10 |
| To summit | 0 | 35 | | | |
| | 7 | 40 | | 6 | 15 |



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MARMOLATA (11,020 ft.) BY THE S. FACE. *August* 24.—Mr. E. A. Broome, with Antonio Dimai and Agostino Verzi, followed this route, and although not new (it was done first in 1901, and four times since) it has never been recorded or even named in the 'Alpine Journal,' and no details of the first climb have ever been available. From the Contrinhaus over the Ombretta Pass and then down to the foot of the wall took 1½ hr. The nail boots were taken off (and sent round to summit) about 400 ft. to the right (E.) of the enormous couloir which bisects the Süd-Wand precipices. From here to the Gipfel is about 2,100 ft., and the face is naturally divided horizontally by two long narrow terraces into three walls, the lowest estimated at 600 ft. high and the middle and highest at 750 ft. each. The first is very difficult throughout, and the climb is up three or four steep narrow chimneys, with traverses and walls between, and generally working a little to the left towards the big couloir. This took 2 hrs. 25 min. The first terrace is then followed for some distance to the left (almost to the couloir) and the next wall, 750 ft. in height, is similar to the lower one, but somewhat less difficult. This time you work up rather to the right, and at one traversing point, about half-way up, must descend considerably to make further ascent possible. Time to second terrace, 2 hrs.

This terrace was followed about 250 ft. to the right, crossing several snow patches and a rivulet, to the foot of a bent couloir almost directly under the summit. This couloir or couloirs and the rocks, first on their left and then right, were climbed to the col between the E. and real summits, whence the ridge was followed to the top. The last 750 ft. was comparatively and increasingly easy, and took 1 hr. 25 min., making the whole climb 5 hrs. 50 min. actual going.

The descent was along the W. arête down to the Marmolata Scharte, and the party considered the expedition to be the finest in the Dolomites.

DAUPHINÉ ALPS. CHAMOISSIÈRE, CENTRAL SUMMIT (*c.* 3,050 m.). —On July 6, 1906, Mr. H. Symons and I, with our guides, Alois Pollinger, sen., and Edouard Charlet, ascended this peak, which is stated in 'The Central Alps of the Dauphiny' * to have been 'not yet ascended.' Leaving La Grave at 9.51 A.M. we reached the snow-slopes to the N. of the peak, which were traversed until they led us to the foot of the couloir which leads up its N. face. Ascending the rocks on the W. side of this couloir we went fairly straight up the easy face to the summit (4.7 P.M.), where we found a stone-man. Starting again at 4.50 P.M. we descended by the same route and reached La Grave at 9.30 P.M. Halts on ascent about 1 hr., on descent about ½ hr. The views, particularly that of the grand ridge between the Meije and Roche Faurio, are most striking, and for this reason the expedition is well worthy of the attention of mountaineers staying at La Grave or the Chalets

* Second English edition, p. 85.

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de l'Alpe. It should be stated that the height, 9,907 ft., given in the 'Climbers' Guide' is a misprint for 10,007 ft.

OLIVER K. WILLIAMSON.

MATTERHORN TRAVERSE TO ITALY BY THE ZMUTT ARÊTE.—Under the impression that this combination of routes had not been followed before, Messrs. W. N. Ling and Harold Raeburn made this traverse. There is a record, however, in the Italian hut book by Mr. W. E. Davidson, who did it with two guides in 1895. This is the first time, however, that the route has been followed without guides, and apparently also the first British guideless ascent of the Zmutt arête. On July 30, 1906, Messrs. Ling and Raeburn took two porters up to the Tiefenmatten face of the Zmutt arête. They there built a *gtte*, and sent the porters back to Zermatt. Starting at 4 next morning they took 11 hrs. to gain the summit. The slow going was caused by the bad condition of the ridge, plastered with snow and ice after much broken weather. Much cutting of steps and hacking out of holds was therefore necessary, and in many places only one climber could move at a time. The weather was fine to the summit, but on the way down the Italian side a somewhat heavy snow shower, with thunder, made the rocks rather slippery and the going accordingly slow. The Italian hut was reached at 8.10. On the following morning, August 1, return was made to Zermatt over the Furggjoch.

THE TRAVERSE OF THE FINSTERAARHORN.—This traverse, ascending by the S.E. ridge and descending by N.W., is now facilitated by the building of the new hut at the foot of the Finsteraarhorn. The hut, a neat and clean one, but very small, is built on some rocks close to the figures 3,237 on the Siegfried map. It is well fitted, has wood in a lean-to outside, and a small quantity of provisions for a case of need. The only record of this traverse hitherto appeared to be that of Mr. G. H. Morse with Ulrich and Hans Almer in 1887.*

On July 19, 1906, Messrs. Eric Greenwood, W. N. Ling, and Harold Raeburn, without guides, leaving the hut at 8 A.M., ascended the glacier in an E. direction, crossed the bergschrund 4.15–30, then up an ice couloir and a somewhat rotten chimney out to a broad ridge, 5; thence slopes of snow, ice, and easy rocks led up to the ridge at 6. This was at a corniced snow arête between two rock towers just before the ridge begins to rise more steeply. The arête was then followed, with its many rock towers, easy but interesting climbing with magnificent views, the snow shower, accompanied by thunder, encountered lower down now ceasing. Breakfast 6.45–7.15. The top was reached at 11.15. There is a somewhat weather-beaten rope in a gully on the right of the arête, but it is not required.

Leaving the top at 12.10, the ordinary route was followed to the Hugisattel—12.45 P.M.—and an ice slope cut down, then by the

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xiii. p. 422. See also p. 339 of this number for a traverse by Mr. Claude A. Macdonald in 1905.

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rock arête, somewhat loose, to the Agassizjoch, 2.25 P.M. The rocks of the Agassizhorn were then descended (tea taken on these rocks) to near the foot, and an ice couloir cut down to schrund above Finsteraar glacier, 6.35 P.M. Passing through the Finsteraarjoch, 6.45 P.M., a direct route was taken through the séracs and across an ice slope to a rock island on the right of the Obereismeer, then across this and by snow slopes, couloirs, and rock ridges, then moraine-strewn glacier to the Schwarzegg hut, reached at 10, just as another thunder storm came on.

SCHRECKHORN TRAVERSED, ASCENDING BY N.W., DESCENDING BY S.W. ARÊTE.—This traverse, which has apparently not been made before, was the outcome of a suggestion in Mr. Bradby's paper, 'A Month's Climbing in the Bernese Oberland' ('A. J.' vol. xxi. p. 499). It can be cordially recommended as affording a grand climb, which, though full of interest throughout, cannot be described as difficult.

The S.W. ridge, as pointed out in the above-quoted paper, is steep and sooner free from ice than any other route, and when climbed in July this year, not long after bad weather, was wonderfully free from ice, except near the top. The following is the itinerary. The slow going may be accounted for by photography, tea-making on the summit, prospecting route, and clearing loose stones on the descent:—

Messrs. Eric Greenwood, W. N. Ling, and Harold Raeburn, without guides, left the Schwarzegg hut on July 23 at 3.15 A.M. Crowded hut; no sleep. Ascended by ordinary route to top of couloir, 4.30. Across to left below S.W. ridge. Halt, 6.3-6.23, above Ober Kastensteinfirn. Then across to N.W. ridge; ice and rubbly rocks; a good deal of cutting necessary, as the party were without crampons. Keeping immediately under the steep rocks of the peak, the couloir running into the N.W. shoulder was crossed high up, and a steep rock wall climbed to the arête just before it suddenly steepens, 8.25-35. Thence 2½ hrs.' climbing placed them on the top, 10.58. Loose rocks on this arête all iced up. Leaving the top at 12.15, the S.W. ridge was descended to the top of the ridge running off to W. Halt here, 4.55-5.15. Near the summit some heavy snow cornices and ice were found, but lower the rocks are too steep to hold much snow to produce ice. Descending the W. buttress for a time, an ice couloir to the left was crossed to easy rocks, thence snow easily gained, and a jump across the bergschrund landed the party on the Schreckfirn. From there the ordinary morning route was followed on the descent to hut. Owing to the late hour this was perfectly safe, as the avalanches had ceased running. The hut was gained at 8.15.

NANTILLONS GLACIER.—The perfect conditions prevailing this summer made it possible to traverse the four principal aiguilles, forming the amphitheatre at the head of this glacier, in one day. It has been suggested that a note might be of interest. Leaving the Montanvert at 1.45 A.M., Mr. G. Winthrop Young, with Joseph Knubel, reached the summit of the Charmoz (11,293 ft.), by the

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'ice chimney,' at 6.50. (Twenty minutes were devoted to the first gendarme on the arête.) Leaving again at 7.20, the highest summit of the Grépon (11,447 ft.) was reached at 11.30 (of which time 1¼ hr. were comfortably spent at the foot of 'the Crack,' waiting for another large party to ascend). Restarting at 12.10 the Col de Nantillons was gained at 1.20. Here axes and coats were deposited, and, leaving the snow at 1.30, the central, highest peak of the Blaitière (11,549 ft.) was surmounted at 2.15. From this, after ¼ hr.'s halt, the northern summit (11,497 ft.) was gained at 3.10, left again at 3.20; the Col regained about 3.45, and the Montanvert gently at 6.10—in all 16½ hrs. The conditions were, of course, ideal.

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

*Rock-climbing in North Wales.* By G. and A. Abraham. Keswick, 1906.

EXPLORATION of the rocky recesses of North Wales has been carried on with vastly increased energy since the publication of the Welsh volume of 'Climbing in the British Isles.' During the last ten years the work of Haskett-Smith and O. G. Jones has been tested; old climbs have been improved or varied, and new ones have been discovered.

Among all these explorers none have shown greater vigour and skill than our fellow member J. M. A. Thomson, and those who were in a position to know what vast stores of knowledge he was heaping together have for several years been eagerly expecting the day when he should give to the world the result of his labours and studies. Those hopes may yet come to be gratified, but meanwhile we welcome a very substantial addition to our knowledge of the subject coming to us from a different source. It is well known that at the date of his untimely death O. G. Jones was preparing or at least making plans for a Welsh companion volume to that which he had already published on the climbs of the English Lake District, and now the Messrs. Abraham, who worked so efficiently in illustrating and re-editing the first book, have carried out their friend's plan by producing a similar work on the climbs of Wales.

We may say at once that the book is a great success. The writers have for several years given close attention to the district, and they enjoy the very great advantage of combining in an unusual degree physical prowess as climbers with practical mastery of all the resources of the camera. The result is a beautiful and very instructive volume.

The joint authors have divided their subject between them, the deep depression of the Llanberis Pass forming a very natural boundary. The southern portion is the larger and on the whole the finer and better known subject, and is very well handled by Mr. A. Abraham, while his brother with less material to draw upon

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