to be preserved as the one holiday Alpine area free from motor traffic.

It is the intention of the Canadian Pacific Railway Hotel Department to erect a modern stone mountain hotel of some 200 rooms as soon as possible. It will probably be rectangular and be placed on the flat ground where was the old lawn, so as to be clear of the forest fire hazard and economical to manage.

FREDERICK V. LONGSTAFF.

REVIEWS.

Alai! Alai! By Willi Rickmer Rickmers. Pp. 300, profusely illustrated. F. M. Brockhaus, Leipzig. 1930.

THIS most interesting book is a record of the work done by a combined German and Russian expedition in 1928 in exploring the Alai-Pamir, the principal mountain range of Russian Turkistan. The expedition consisted of twelve Germans under the leadership of the author, including four selected specially to be a climbing party, and a number of Russians who joined them from time to time. Although on previous occasions the author, who had made eight expeditions into Turkistan between 1894 and 1913, had been refused admission to this region, on this occasion the expedition was given every facility by the Russian authorities.

The expedition was planned with the object of carrying out a complete survey of a practically unexplored region, and mountaineering was looked on as merely incidental to this purpose. The interest of the book is mainly geographical and scientific and descriptions of climbs occupy only a small portion of it, although it records the ascent of four peaks from 6000 to 7000 m. and seventeen from 5000 to 6000 m., not to mention lesser heights ascended for the purpose of surveying.

These mountains are comprised in two groups: the main group at the head of the Fedchenko Glacier, which was found to be 75 kilometres in length and thus the longest glacier in the world; and the Transalai group to the N.E. including Mt. Kaufmann, 7130 m., the ascent of which was achieved by Allwein, Schneider and Wien, who thus nearly equalled Dr. Longstaff's record on Trisul. The expedition further discovered that Pik Garmo to the W. of the Fedchenko Glacier is actually higher than Mt. Kaufmann. An attempt on this mountain failed, but its height was calculated as being 7500 m.

The plan of operations was to concentrate on the head of the Tanimas river on the E. side of the main group. The huge glacier reported by a previous explorer to fill the upper part of the valley was found not to exist, but the valley was blocked by a large glacier flowing N. and S., called by the party the *Notgemeinschaft Glacier*.

They established a camp above this glacier at a height of 3550 m., providing the headquarters of the expedition. Another camp was established at 4300 m. on the pass at the head of the Tanimas Valley, which was found to lead on to the Fedchenko Glacier. Thence several peaks at the head of this glacier were climbed and a very difficult passage made to the W. to the valley of the Vanch over the Kashal Ayak Pass, which was thus proved to exist in fact as well as in legend. In addition to these mountaineering operations in the two main groups, different parties surveyed the whole ground to the S. as far as the Afghan and Indian frontiers.

The main portion of the book consists of the diary kept by the author, in which are included the messages sent in by the various parties from time to time. This, as the author says, is somewhat difficult to follow, but is made much less so by the excellent map indicating the routes pursued. There are separate accounts of these by five members of the expedition. The brief descriptions of the climbs are written with great restraint, and one only gets an occasional glimpse of the serious dangers and hardships encountered. Scientific observations were often carried out under great difficulties. An attempt on the 'Dru' at the head of the Fedchenko Glacier failed because the party was overtaken by an avalanche, and on Mt. Kaufmann intense cold was suffered, resulting in all three climbers being afflicted with frostbite, one of them rather seriously. On pp. 126–128 there are some interesting remarks concerning acclimatization to altitude. The conclusion is reached that young and vigorous climbers possess an unlimited capacity for acclimatization and could climb Everest with heavy rucksacks and without oxygen.

The preparations made for the expedition were on a most extensive scale, the leader being of the opinion, justified by the event, that one expedition thoroughly equipped can accomplish what would exceed the capacity of several which disdain the use of all the available resources of modern organization.

The book contains besides the map, ninety photographs, some of great beauty, twenty-five diagrams, and two panoramas. Altogether an excellent production, on which the author is to be congratulated as well as on the success of the expedition.

Travels and Reflections. By the Right Hon. Noel E. Buxton, M.P. Pp. 223. Illustrated. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1929. Price 10*s*.

Mr. Noel Buxton, though regrettably not yet qualified for membership of the Alpine Club, has had the privilege of close lineal propinquity with it in the persons of his father and uncle, the late Sir T. Fowell Buxton and Mr. Edward North Buxton, distinguished members two generations ago, as well as in that of a nephew still, happily, with us. His taste for travel in mountain lands, and the unusually intelligent use he has made of his exceptional opportunities for indulging it, owes much to their example and encouragement.

Moreover, a close friendship with one of the most gifted and sagacious of the Presidents of our Club, the late Lord Bryce, led to his devoted interest in and prolonged efforts on behalf of the fortunes of the inhabitants of Balkan mountain ranges in their struggle for freedom from all that Turkish misrule and cruelty have been responsible for during the last 30 or 40 years until that struggle culminated in their virtual expulsion from the Continent of Europe as a result of the Great War.

As Chairman of the Balkan Committee of the House of Commons during the years of its sustained activities, Mr. Buxton had exceptional facilities afforded him for travel and observation in the regions in question. How well he has utilized them will be speedily realized by even the most superficial perusal of the chapters devoted to them, for it has seldom fallen to one's lot to meet with so striking a combination of thrilling personal adventure, charming sketches of natural scenery of many and varied kinds, and suggestive and stimulating reflections upon the events related and the lands and people with whose fortunes he deals. Throughout the whole runs a never-failing sense of humour which lightens even the most sombre scenes. When about to set out for the Balkans he told the Turkish Ambassador in London that he was going in search of health, and 'in particular for an affection of the throat': the Ambassador quaintly replied, 'It is not a very good place for throats!' Such, indeed, Mr. Buxton found to be the case on a subsequent occasion, though not wholly in the sense then intended. For in Sofia he occupied the next room to an emissary of the Turkish Government itself, sent—in the early days of the Great War—to assassinate himself and his brother, Mr. C. Roden Buxton, when on their way to Bucarest for the funeral obsequies of King Carol of Rumania. Finding, however, that there was no death penalty in Bucarest he followed his prospective victims thither. Firing at point-blank range, he only narrowly failed in his task, breaking Mr. Noel Buxton's jaw and shooting his brother through the lung. When subsequently interrogated as to his crime he was asked, 'You failed to kill Mr. Buxton; did you think he was protected by God?' 'No,' was his reply. 'I thought the cartridges must be bad!'

But it is the mountain interest, so to speak, of this remarkable book with which the pages of the ALPINE JOURNAL are more properly concerned. But wherever the writer takes us, the human interest is always inseparable from it, as when crossing the wild borderlands between Turkey and Persia where the prevailing impression carried away is neither of Turk nor Persian but of the Kurd, and his hectoring ways with Turk or Christian alike. The chapter on the Balkan hills is a singularly graphic and lucid description of the 'mountain chaos' that constitutes a confused extension of both the Alps and the Carpathians. He believes they have a future, and that no distant one as a new and fashionable Switzerland at least in the matter of its lakes, for 'there does not exist in Europe

anything more picturesque than the lake of Ochrida, where all that is attractive in the old towns of Italy is combined with the contrast of the isolated peak above the lake—and the plain in which it stands, the wooded hills beyond the plain and the interminable ranges of the Albanian mountains showing purple behind the lake.' In 'Round about Ararat' we are reminded of the travels of Lord Bryce and Mr. Douglas Freshfield, while 'In the Sahara' we have an entertaining sketch of the uses and the vagaries of the 'desert car.' This destroyer of peaceful travel is also responsible for the destruction of much of desert romance, but Mr. Buxton is of opinion that motoring over the dunes provides such novelty as almost to constitute a sport, and that 'just as the English invented "Winter-sport" in the snow, they will develop a game out of the dunes for which the next generation will be swarming to Africa instead of to Switzerland.'

The chapter on 'Mountaineering in Japan' gives us the writer in an atmosphere wholly free from the note of sadness inseparable from so many of the scenes described in most of the rest of the book. The climbs he describes are none of them such as involve 'technical' difficulties, though the ascent of Fuji still clad in its white winter mantle afforded some 6000–7000 ft. of gradually steepening snow, and a final view of the whole of the widest part of the mainland of Japan, lying stretched at one's feet as a gigantic relief map in the freshness of its incomparable spring beauty. Of the dramatic and curious consequences of this expedition, of the 'first ascent by a foreign traveller' of Ena-San, and of the 140 eggs consumed by the three hungry Englishmen in the three days it occupied, and finally of the boisterous behaviour of the active crater of the volcano Baudai-San and the destruction wrought by it, we can say nothing in detail. But we do seem justified in quoting the wise advice with which Mr. Buxton concludes a book of travels and reflections of entirely unusual interest and merit: 'While there is yet time, the reader should bestir himself and set out on his pack-horse before the oncoming flood of Westernism engulfs the colour and romance of the remaining untamed regions of the world.'

Fiction versus Fact; The Revival of a Fable.[1]

It may at times be difficult for a critic to draw the line beyond which any attempt in a biography or a historical romance to colour or distort facts, or to caricature characters, becomes a breach of good manners. The reader's judgment will be influenced chiefly by the tact shown by the author in avoiding obvious misstatements, and his skill in making his embroideries harmonize with the authentic material he has at hand. There have been lately signs of a growing disposition to disregard altogether the line in question. We have seen on the Continent 'Producers' who do not shrink from

[1] *Jacques Balmat du Mont-Blanc*, par Rochat-Cenise. Société Française d'Éditions littéraires et techniques, Malfère, Paris. Fr. 12.

travestying even the tragedy of the Matterhorn in order to provide a more attractive entertainment for their patrons.

The compiler of the volume lying before us is relatively but a venial offender. In ordinary circumstances we might have let him pass unrebuked. M. Rochat-Cenise is a literary butterfly who, like the adventurous insects we often find frozen on the loftiest snows, has flitted beyond his proper sphere. In so doing he has alighted fortuitously on the annals of Mont Blanc. In the story of its early climbers he has recognized a human interest which might serve him as material for a bit of book-making. To suit the taste of the tourist crowd and the bookstalls and of 'Ceux de Chamonix' (to whom he dedicates his volume), he felt at once the need of a hero and a villain. In the legend as first narrated by Dumas père he found both at hand. Jacques Balmat asked for nothing better than to pose as the hero. Some material for assigning to Dr. Paccard the part of the villain was eagerly sought for. M. Rochat-Cenise calls on us to watch Balmat riding backwards and forwards astraddle on the Bosses arête 'with one leg hanging over *France* (in 1786 ! he means Savoy) and the other feeling for an undiscoverable foothold on the side of Italy.' The top of Mont Blanc gained, we are offered a tableau. 'Balmat, dressé, les bras étendus, crie aussi fort qu'il le peut. Il crie son nom, un nom qui vient de devenir illustre. JACQUES BALMAT.' His feelings thus relieved he remembers his companion, whom he has left in a state of collapse. 'Il est à bout, il n'en peut plus. Il refuse désormais de faire un seul pas en avant. Jacques Balmat laisse alors derrière lui cette loque affaisée'—this worn-out rag !

Poor Dr. Paccard ! He is allowed no qualities either physical or moral. To make the contrast with the noble peasant still more striking he is even accused of forgery, of having in the matter of the signed and witnessed Declaration of 1787 shown 'Une belle petite âme de faussaire.'

Were it worth while it would be easy by multiplying a list of M. Rochat-Cenise's inexactitudes to exhibit the extent to which he has tampered with the material at his disposal. But we grudge the space : one specimen may be enough ; it refers to a crucial point in his argument. The following paragraph is copied from p. 149 of his volume :

'Le livre de Paccard vit le jour à Lausanne, dans le pays de Vaud, à la fin de 1786. Cela s'appelait "Premier voyage à la Cime de la plus haute Montagne de l'ancien continent, le MONT-BLANC, par M. le Docteur Paccard, Michel-Gabriel, médecin dans les Alpes de Chamonix." Dans le texte, Balmat tenait le rôle du plus modeste des auxiliaires tandis que l'auteur, se taillant la part du lion, prenait pour lui le mérite d'avoir réussi l'entreprise et celui d'en avoir eu l'idée.'

No assertion could be more definite and explicit. Unluckily for M. Rochat-Cenise's credit it has been established by the most thorough research that Dr. Paccard's account of his ascent, eagerly

expected at the time by De Saussure, though duly announced, never saw the light.

M. Rochat-Cenise, as all competent critics will by this time have recognized, has produced a romance masquerading as a biography. Some of our readers may perhaps think his potboiler might well have been left to the public to whom it is addressed. It would, probably, have escaped our notice had not its author met with an injudicious friend in a reviewer in the last November number of *Die Alpen*. That valuable periodical is, as is well known, the official organ of the Swiss Alpine Club and is announced to be edited by its Central Committee. In the above number [p. 251] we find a notice of M. Rochat-Cenise's book, brief it is true, but expressed in terms of the highest appreciation. The following two sentences may be taken as specimens of its exuberant character :

'C'est la vie toute entière du guide que Rochat-Cenise expose à nos yeux, avec un tel entrain, avec un tel ardeur de vérité, que ce bel ouvrage se lit d'un seul trait, et se relit encore avec plaisir.'

'Ce livre est un des plus beaux que nous ayons sur l'histoire de la Montagne.'

The incompetent reviewer, it must be noted, exhibits his—or her—' ardeur de vérité ' by accepting, despite the conclusive evidence available to the contrary, M. Rochat-Cenise's assertion that Dr. Paccard's account of his ascent was published in 1786.

As we all know, it never was published ! Can it be that M. Rochat-Cenise's reviewer has had in his hands the ALPINE JOURNAL (Vol. **41**) and has first omitted to notice the words ' attempted reconstruction ' in the title of Dr. Stevens's ingenious paper, and then failed to read, or understand, its first sentences, so that when he set himself down to write a hasty note he was under the delusion that he had under his eyes an authentic reprint of Dr. Paccard's ' Lost Narrative ' ? The supposition may appear at first sight extravagant ; but, as far as we can see, it is the one least improbable.

When we turn to our shelves and recognize Dr. Dübi's classical work of 300 pages, ' Paccard wider Balmat,' issued in 1913, while he was still editor of the *Jahrbuch* of the Swiss Alpine Club, we feel forced to express our astonishment and regret that the reasoned verdict of our Honorary Member, one of the highest authorities on Alpine literature, should have been so carelessly flouted by his colleagues. Doubtless an oversight on the part of the Editorial Committee : but an oversight that calls loudly for correction ! Our veteran colleague has all our sympathy.

D. W. F.

Alpine Flowers. By Dr. Gustav Hegi. Translated by Winifred M. Deans. Blackie & Son, Ltd. Price 7*s.* 6*d.*

IN this translation of the 6th edition of the German ' Alpen Flora ' we are reminded of a very similar publication by Professor Ludwig Schröter bearing the same title. The English translation of Dr.

Gustav Hegi's book, now under review, appeals to us because it is an improvement both as to accuracy of the colours of the plants therein depicted, which are produced in Germany by the chromo-lithographic process, and also because of the letterpress which is of English production. It possesses over 250 illustrations (mostly in colour) of the commoner Alpine flowers, together with simple, non-technical descriptions, indexes of plant names, and a glossary of botanical terms.

To the tourist and visitor to the Alps who may not be acquainted with the botany of the hills, this conveniently portable book is to be recommended. It should add to the pleasure of a holiday, and help one to be an enthusiastic botanist of Alpine plants.

Der Grossglockner. Hsg. von Hans Fischer. München: Rother.

THIS is a compilation of various interesting articles with 64 plates, including reproductions of old pictures and early maps. There is an historical article by A. Stois: an article on geology by Hans Leitmeier: on the glaciers by V. Paschinger: on Johann Stüdl and Karl Hofmann's explorations: on ski-ing by E. Friedl: on unusual ascents and problems by F. Tursky: and on Pallavicini's expeditions by R. Ratscher.

THE ALPINE CLUB LIBRARY.

By A. J. MACKINTOSH.

The following works have been added to the Library :—

Club Publications.

(1) **Akad. Alpenclub Bern.** 24. Jahresbericht 1929. 9 × 6: pp. 45: plates.
(2) **Akad. Alpen-Club Zürich.** 33. Jahresbericht 1928. 9 × 6: pp. 30: plates.
(3) **Akad. Alpen-Verein Berlin.** 25. Jahresbericht 1928. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$: pp. 62: plates.
(4) **Akad. Skiklub Stuttgart.** Jahresbericht 1928–29. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$: pp. 62: plates.
(5) **Alpenverein Donauland.** Nachrichten. 13 × $9\frac{3}{4}$. 1929
(5b) **Alpine Club.** Journal. 1929
—— Index to the ALPINE JOURNAL. Vols. 16–38. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$: pp. 90. London, Spottiswoode, 1929. 10*s*.
(6) **American Alpine Club.** American Alpine Journal, no. 1. 1929
(7) **Appalachian Mountain Club.** Appalachia. 1929
—— Bulletin. 1929
Associated Outdoor Clubs of America. Mountain Magazine, vol. 8. 10 × $7\frac{3}{4}$. 1929
(8) **C.A.F.** La Montagne. 10 × 7. 1929
—— Commission des travaux scientifiques. Les noms des Lieux des Montagnes Françaises par Léon Maury. 10 × $6\frac{1}{2}$: pp. viii, 325. Paris, 1929
(9) —— **Lyons.** Revue Alpine. 1929