CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENARY OF THE FIRST ASCENT OF MONTE ROSA

THE centenary of the first ascent of the Dufourspitze, which happily coincides with the centenary of the Monte Rosa Hotel, was celebrated at Zermatt in the first week of July. The central feature of the celebrations was a press conference held at the Monte Rosa Hotel on the evening of July 6, followed by a dinner in the Mont Cervin Hotel. The Chairman of both functions was our own ex-President, the Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery. Sir Arnold Lunn, curiously described as a member of the Alpine Club of Great Britain, was a member of the Honorary Organising Committee. The press conference was opened in German and English by Bernhard Biner, President of the Bergführervereinigung, Zermatt. Mr. Amery then made a moving speech in German on the long and happy association between the climbers of all nations and the men of the Vispertal. He expressed his own keen pleasure with the manner in which Zermatt and her people had managed to maintain the same intrinsic character and charm in spite of the enormous modern developments.

Mr. Amery was followed by Hermann Buhl, who had arrived by traversing Monte Rosa from Macugnaga where his main difficulties had been vast quantities of snow on the Swiss side of the mountain. He spoke feelingly of the great historic associations of Zermatt and her ring of mountains, the golden age of mountaineering and of the continuance of the great traditions forged so largely in this small village into the larger field in which the ' eight-thousanders ' of the world were being conquered. Mentioning his own climb of Nanga Parbat he modestly gave much of the credit to his forerunner, Aschenbrenner, and he finished by a graceful tribute to the success of the French on Makalu and of Charles Evans' party on Kangchenjunga.

Sir Arnold Lunn pointed out how much of the charm of the Alps depended on their historical associations, which in the Valais were particularly strong. He praised, too, the part which the Seiler family had played in making it one of the happiest playgrounds in the world.

Louis Lachenal of Chamonix emphasised the essential similarity of tradition and outlook between the valleys of Chamonix, Courmayeur, Macugnaga and Zermatt.

M. Fierz of Zürich happily coupled the fame and achievements of Dufour with the Smyth party that first climbed his eponymous point.

At the subsequent dinner, at which were assembled a large number of prominent national and local personalities as well as guides from Switzerland, France and Italy, Mr. Amery made a very happy speech in English this time, while Sir Arnold Lunn reverted to German ; others spoke in French, one or two speakers used two or three languages each. Dr. Franz Seiler displayed great parliamentary and rhetorical skill and

the proceedings ended at midnight with a speech from Mr. Rose, lately President of the New Zealand Alpine Club.

The week also included an international meeting of guides, a general meeting of the Alpine Vereinigung, Zermatt, a special visit to the Alpine Museum, the opening of a permanent exhibition of mountaineering photographs in the Monte Rosa Hotel. These pictures, largely taken from our own pages and from those of *Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers*, were collected by Sir Arnold Lunn and now form an added attraction at the hotel; it is hoped to supplement the collection from time to time.

A party of Chamonix guides laid a wreath on the grave of Michel Croz, and a party of Macugnaga guides laid a wreath on the grave of Alexander Taugwalder.