REVIEWS

The Day the Rope Broke. By Ronald W. Clark. Pp. 221. Illustrations. Secker & Warburg. London, 1965. Price 25*s*.

MR. RONALD CLARK has an established name as a historian of mountaineering; he has also a knack of unearthing fresh materials on old climbing topics, and the present work, dealing with the first ascent of the Matterhorn, is no exception. He has been to the Public Record Office and looked up the files of the British Consul in Geneva, who was asked to report on the accident. It is a real triumph to come on any new documents dealing with the Matterhorn story, and Mr. Clark is to be congratulated.

The new material throws some fresh light on certain points in the tale, through the story is in the main as Whymper told it. Thus (p. 174) Mr. Downton, the English Chaplain at Geneva, reports that Whymper says that none of the survivors could say or conjecture with any certainty which of the party slipped, as a rock obscured them save for Croz: it was supposed that it was Hadow who slipped. This is not *quite* the same story as in *Scrambles*, though the differences are slight, and Whymper always qualified his description of the accident with such words as 'to the best of my belief'. It may be preferable to accept his first-hand story to Downton's second-hand report. The Rev. W. Prior (p. 146) tells of the Taugwalders asking Whymper to publicise their names, as they would gain clients by it; but he says nothing of their asking not to be paid (which sounds improbable in any case); Parker's evidence (*A.J. 68.* 289–90) is that Old Peter complained that he had not been paid enough.[1]

Some readers may regret that Mr. Clark has interpolated imaginary scenes and conversations into the story. These may not affect major points of interest, but do occasionally lead to minor inaccuracies, and there have always been enough disputed matters in the Matterhorn narrative without adding to them.[2] Among other points of criticism are Mr. Clark's suggestion (p. 121) that Young Taugwalder, in his

[1] The existence of the 'sharp-eyed lad' who reported seeing an avalanche fall from the Matterhorn seems at times to have been doubted, because Whymper did not mention him in his letter to *The Times*. The boy was mentioned in *Echo des Alpes*, 1867, no. 2, p. 53, four years before *Scrambles* was published, and now Mr. Downton independently confirms the incident.

[2] Thus, is there any evidence for saying (p. 79) that Girdlestone was 'in bed' at the time of his collapse? Whymper's version of this suggests that Girdlestone was up at the time. Or does it serve any purpose to put in (p. 111) Taugwalder's imaginary reactions on reaching T. S. Kennedy's cairn on the Hörnli ridge?

narrative in *A.J. 61.* 489–92, was referring to Douglas Hadow, not to Lord Francis Douglas, as a bad climber; this is unconvincing, for he had referred to Hadow by name only a few lines before. Again, it is very doubtful if Hudson joined with Whymper and Croz in the final race to the summit; Girdlestone, the sole authority for this, only *saw* two men, as did the Genevese (Gos, *Le Cervin*, i. 101). Again, the order on the rope (p. 123) is that proposed in *A.J. 61.* 496, where the arguments can be found. But it cannot be regarded as certain, and it would have been as well if Mr. Clark had made it clear that his choice was optional. The disagreement between Whymper's arrangement and that given by Young Taugwalder might be accommodated differently; no one arrangement of the rope can be taken as definitive, though it mattered little on the ascent, since it was without incident.

Mr. Clark is, perhaps, a little too ready to excuse Old Peter; the latter cannot escape some blame for using a bad rope, and if it is argued that, had a strong rope been used, all seven lives would have been lost, this is not certain, for on Taugwalder's own admission, he thought that he and Croz could have held up the three falling men, had the rope held. This is, of course, on the assumption—which Mr. Clark urges on his final page was perhaps true—that Croz was not knocked over by Hadow, but was dragged down by the three men above him who had fallen. On this view, it was the weak link between Douglas and Taugwalder that led to the fatality; furthermore, if it is true that the rope between the last three climbers had been belayed round rocks, then the whole party was not necessarily doomed, no matter what the strain of the falling bodies might be. We have only to think of the escape of F. W. Hill in 1899 on the Dent Blanche, when Glynne Jones and others fell, to realise that; in more recent times, the almost incredible performance of Schoening on K2, in 1953, in holding up a large party of fallen men, shows that it is unwise to be too dogmatic about what strain a rope or a man may be able to sustain.

Too much may be made of Leslie Stephen's 'defence' of Taugwalder in *Macmillan's Magazine*, for what, in essence, does Stephen say? That the employment of the weak rope by Taugwalder was not deliberate, but just an instance of the habitual carelessness of guides. This is indeed praising with faint damns; compared with Stephen's remarks (tucked away in an obscure magazine where they were lost to sight for many years), Whymper's testimony was almost hearty—and it was put into one of the most widely read books on mountaineering that has ever been written: that the insinuation of cutting the rope was an 'infamous charge'; that Taugwalder *could* not do so at the time of the slip, and did not do so beforehand; that 'not only was his act at the critical moment wonderful as a feat of strength, but it was admirable in its performance at the right time'.

Mr. Clark does not deal with Whymper's assertion, that had the rope been taut between those who fell the whole accident might have been averted, but in the main he covers all points of discussion very fairly and sensibly. Not everyone will agree with him that Whymper's first wish, to keep silence about the accident, was dictated by his disinclination to say anything good about the Taugwalders; it is not rare to find people who, having had a severe shock, do not want to talk about the matter. As for small differences in his narratives, as given to us by others, these are no more than one would expect from a young man, harassed by what had occurred; he had to arrange about a search for the bodies (the Taugwalders never lent a hand); he had to answer numerous questioners; he had to attend an official enquiry. That, later on, he may have heightened some effects in his stories is probably true; the 'crosses' seen on the descent is a case in point. Mr. Clark (p. 145) compares it with the famous 'leap on the Ecrins'. But Lord Schuster (*Postscript to Adventure*) has shown that the evidence for the 'leap' anecdote is convincing; equally, nothing really reliable exists to undermine the story of the 'crosses', though this is not to say that Whymper's drawing is not exaggerated.

Other points of difference may occur to readers, but there is little calling for definite correction—though it is happily premature to speak of Professor Graham Brown as 'the late'. Mr. Clark, after careful study of the sources, makes a coherent story out of this most dramatic of all Alpine accidents, and if anyone wants to know what happened during the climb, he can hardly do better than read this book.

D. F. O. DANGAR.
T. S. BLAKENEY.

The Centenary of the Italian Alpine Club. Compiled by Renato Chabod. Pp. 957. Photographs, sketches, diagrams. Tamari, Bologna. 1964. Price L.5,800.

THE volume is introduced as follows by the academician Renato Chabod, who compiled it:

'At a meeting held on December 13, 1959, the Central Council of the Club Alpino Italiano, facing the problem of a worthy celebration of the first centenary, nominated an *ad hoc* committee of the following: general Vice-Presidents Chabod and Costa; members of the central council Guido Bertarelli, Cesare Negri, Antonio Pascutti, Silvio Saglio, Antonio Saviotti; Emanuele Andreis and Paolo Ceresa for the Torino Section, and Nino Soardi for the UGET Section. President Bertinelli was nominated honorary President; the undersigned, acting President and Silvio Saglio, Secretary.

'The general Vice-President Bozzoli and central councillor Giuseppe Ceriana were both asked to join the Committee.

'To begin with the Central Council and the Centenary Committee

agreed on the necessity of a fully historical and technical publication which would recall the men, organisations and means of the first hundred years; and they also agreed that this publication could use the services of several regional areas and mountain schools, Saglio being given the task of collecting and transcribing the various papers submitted, and also of providing the illustrations and editorial sections.

'Although this solution might have led to repetitions and disagreement it was, however, the only one which could successfully present the views of climbers as a whole. It involved considerable preliminary correspondence, as well as subsequent revision in committee, responsibility for both these tasks being entrusted to Renato Chabod.'

The work is divided into two main parts: 'The Men' and 'The Methods'. In the first part, the history of Italian mountaineering for the first hundred years is followed by chapters on the Club Alpino Italiano, scientific mountaineering, guides, the academician, mountaineering for the youth of the country, mountain schools, alpine skiing, the mountain rescue organisation and mountaineering in different parts of the world, the latter in chronological order terminating with the biggest successes. Then follows 'the Methods', from huts to equipment, from the guide-book of the mountains of Italy to local publications, the library, the national museum and mountain films.

As Chabod himself writes, all have done their best so that the work succeeds in being worthy of the celebration; and if it is not as perfect as one would have wished, it nevertheless records the essential story of the first hundred years of the Club Alpino Italiano. The work does in fact constitute, both as a whole and in its individual chapters, a fitting celebration of the centenary of the C.A.I.

The historical chapter by Massimo Mila is well written; one can perhaps criticise him for the omission of some names and expeditions, but the story is complete and well described, from the pioneers grouped around Quintino Sella to the modern aces of the sixth grade. In the report which follows, by Silvio Saglio, we are told all about the organisation of the Club and its Sections, from 1863 when there were two hundred members to the present time when there is a membership of 100,000. The chapter on guides by Renato Chabod contains, in addition to the history of the Italian guides and their organisation (each zone being described by members of the National Association of Guides of the C.A.I.), a remarkable legal study on the guide's contract and the obligations relating both to the professional and to the client.

All the other chapters constitute a profound study on different subjects; the former general President, Bartolomeo Figari, gives us an exhaustive account of the life of the C.A.A.I., while Colonel Cecioni tells us about Italian mountaineering outside Europe from the first to the most recent conquests, including the ascents of K2 and Gasherbrum IV.

The chapters by Giulio Apollonio on the modern technical construction of huts and by Cirillo Floreanini on equipment, in the second part devoted to 'the Methods', are worthy of special comment; Apollonio explains exhaustively how and why special materials should be used, drawing on his great experience of hut construction as applied to the splendid new Tissi hut at the Civetta. This is the study of a specialist and deserves to be known outside Italy.

In conclusion, this is a work of the greatest interest for everyone who wishes to know the history of Italian mountaineering and the C.A.I., from the first courageous steps of the pioneers to the impressive achievements of the present time.

UGO DI VALLEPIANA.

Where Four Worlds Meet. Hindu Kush, 1959. By Fosco Maraini. Translated by Peter Green. 290 pp. Hamish Hamilton. 1964. Price £2 2*s*.

THE main part of this book is an account of a successful Italian ascent of Saraghrar, 24,111 ft., in Northern Chitral in 1959. It is dedicated to Peter Nelson, who led a British expedition to the same peak in 1958 and was killed in a fall down a couloir. (*A.J. 64.* 116.)

My first impression of the title was of another mountaineering cliché. However, the book proves a serious attempt to bring together many strands from Europe and Asia although at the centre is a valley largely isolated from outside influences. Much in this attempt is of a high order of merit, but the result, overall, is unbalanced. The style is discursive and would seem to have lost something in translation. There are some errors of fact and confusion of text. It is well illustrated though the photographs add little to our general knowledge of this remote area.

One third of the text is devoted to such matters as the origins of modern Pakistan, a comparison of the cultures of Europe and Asia, the origins and nature of Islam, the history of the Indus basin over five thousand years and, in the final chapter, a description of a short visit to a Black Kafir valley in Southern Chitral. (See *Kafirs and Glaciers* by R. C. F. Schomberg.)

Whilst Maraini shows himself a keen observer, at times his understanding is at fault. For instance, whilst he appreciates the possible effect of environment on the Kafir, he does not make proper allowance for its effect on the inhabitants of Dir and Chitral as a whole.

After a glance at modern Karachi and a diversion to a *natch khana* at Rawalpindi, the narrative proper starts at Peshawar from where the expedition set out in a station wagon and a country bus on July 2. The journey to Dir is normally a one-day affair. They were slowed by political formalities and finally brought to a halt and near-disaster by a spate, not uncommon at this time of year. It was not till July 5 that the party

reassembled at Dir and changed transport to pack for the crossing of the Lowari Pass into Chitral.

Maraini seems to have taken an undue dislike to the Dirwals. This was in part due to hard bargaining over the spate incident, their universal habit of going armed and political views expressed by the Pakistani liaison officer. Their independent and self-sufficient outlook was too readily interpreted as sullenness and hostility.

Now that lorries can climb the Dir side of the Lowari Pass, it is interesting that by this means timber is exported from Chitral. The country has a wealth of timber unfortunately remote from any market. Twenty-five years ago, the then ruler negotiated an agreement with the Afghan government to float it down the Kunar river into the Kabul river and so to Peshawar. The Kunar does not go underground as stated by Maraini. The scheme, not surprisingly, proved a failure as little, if any, recrossed the frontier into India.

At Ashiret, the baggage was reloaded into lorries for the run to Chitral town. He mentions that the Ashiretis speak a dialect of their own. It is in no sense a variation of Khowar, the common language of the Chitral valley, and should not be called a dialect. He is correct, as far as is known, as to its origin.

The road to Chitral provided the usual excitements. It is spectacular, and improvement would be a major undertaking. The suspension bridges, built thirty years or more ago from salvage from the old Khyber Pass aerial ropeway, must be suffering from old age and lack of maintenance.

There is a good deal said about the Chitrali character. Most of what had been read beforehand was far from recent, and I do not consider his judgement fair. The people are desperately poor with little variety and sustenance in their diet. Deficiency diseases are common as is constipation in the winter season when little more is available than dried apricots. He mentions an occasion when given salted tea and yet overlooks the general absence of sugar. When adequately fed, as in the Chitral Scouts, they improve almost out of recognition. In 1919, when the Afghans tried to invade the country, they demonstrated their ability and courage in a battle at Arundu which victory, though mentioned, is treated with scepticism. Some served loyally in Burma in World War Two.

In the carry to Base Camp he had porter trouble, but the bulk of the caravan consisted of men who seldom, if ever, leave the inhabited areas and main routes. He does do justice to the Shikaris or huntsmen who were his mainstay in the high camps. With their experience of the high valleys, the superstitions of the lowlanders are largely absent. Considering the universal poverty more appreciation might have been shown for the general standard of honesty.

The language, Khowar, is guttural but not otherwise difficult to pro-

nounce. There used to be an excellent printed grammar and for an Urdu speaker it did not take long to become reasonably fluent; the vocabulary is not extensive. The difficulties of the expedition on account of language are surprising.

After reaching Drasan, a Northern centre of government, they followed the Mulikho valley, entered the seldom visited Ziwar Gol and effected an efficient reconnaissance of the mountain on its North-east flank. Base Camp was established on July 22. Comparing the detailed map opposite page 176 with the Survey of India quarter inch map, the latter, compiled by Burns in 1929, appears as extraordinarily accurate. It was more than an ordinary survey, rather a labour of love by a man who was a mountaineer at heart. There are some fine 23,000 ft. peaks in the area which might provide objectives for future expeditions and it is regretted that so little is said about them.

The climb, itself, was a lengthy one, extending seven miles from Base Camp. It had the benefit of the usual settled Chitrali weather and met with a fair ration of technical difficulties, though none of a high order. The assault proper started on August 6, and after negotiating a series of ridges Camp 5 was established on the summit plateau at 21,650 ft. This was the ceiling for the Chitrali porters and it is to be regretted they could manage no higher. It should be remembered that Abdul Karim carried to Camp 9 on Tirich Mir for the Norwegians in 1950 and Pinan Jan all but climbed Istor-o-Nal with Dennis Hunt in 1935.

The summit plateau extended for two miles, necessitating another camp. The expedition is to be congratulated that four members reached the summit on August 24, two of them starting the day from Camp 5.

Something is said of the failure of the strength of the two youngest members of the party. Maraini puts the outer limit of age for such expeditions as twenty-six to forty-two and these two were outside it. This is an interesting subject, but surely the last word on it has not been said.

Whilst negotiations and the obtaining of permits may have been slow and exasperating, once this stage was over the party was treated with courtesy and hospitality by the various representatives of the Pakistan Government throughout their journey.

J. R. G. FINCH.

Les Montagnes de la Terre. By Roger Frison-Roche. Vol. 2. *La Montagne et l'Homme. Histoire de l'Alpinisme.* Pp. 471, maps and illustrations. Flammarion, Paris. 1964.

THE first volume of this massive encyclopedia of mountains and mountaineering was reviewed in *A.J. 61.* 308. It is not possible to mention here all the subjects dealt with in this second volume; a little more than half the book is devoted to such topics as mountains and their origins,

the animals, flowers and people that dwell among them, and to many other matters affecting them. With its numerous and varied illustrations this part of the book contains much interesting information.

The remainder of the volume is given up to the history of *alpinisme* and it is regrettable that its value is adversely affected by the many errors to be found within its pages; with so little additional trouble these could all have been so easily avoided. The reviewer of the first volume observed that a man dips into an encyclopedia in search of items on which he requires information; but if he finds that the information is incorrect the book is suspect, and he will always have an uncomfortable feeling that he cannot rely on the accuracy of any of the facts given.

It is not unreasonable to expect to find in a book of this nature a correct account of the events on the Matterhorn on July 13–14, 1865, but we read (p. 293) that eight people were roped together on the descent; on p. 306 that Whymper came down last and elsewhere that the rope broke between Douglas and 'Young' Taugwalder. There can be no excuse for errors of this kind in a book purporting to give an accurate history of mountaineering; they are unpardonable. The early attempts on, and first ascent of, Mont Blanc are dealt with at some length. The author is on the side of Balmat and finds it difficult to understand why his part in the ascent has been played down; even so, it is a little surprising to read 'que les Anglais, dans leur acharnement hypocrite à défendre l'esprit 'amateur', aient cherché à amoindrir le rôle de Balmat en conférant à Paccard tout le désintéressement de l'histoire, cela nous paraît abusif et absurde'. It is no less surprising to find in an illustration of the South face of Mont Blanc on p. 310 that the 'long rocky arête' bounding the Frêney glacier is the 'arête dite la Brenva'.

It is difficult to get rid of the impression that the book was compiled in too much of a hurry. 'Hinsling' was not a member of the British party that made the first guideless ascent of Mont Blanc; 'H. Wieley' did not make the first ascent of Koshtan Tau, nor was 'Williams' with the party that made the first ascent of the Central Pillar of Frêney and it is lamentable to find the name of a most distinguished mountaineer so maltreated that it appears throughout as 'Coolie'. Alas that M. Frison-Roche did not consult one of his British colleagues! Had he done so he would have been saved from many blunders.

It is not only the British who have bothered the author; he has had trouble with both the Andes and the Himalaya. The first ascents of Cotopaxi and Chimborazo are hopelessly muddled. On p. 384 Baltoro Kangri and the Golden Throne (one and the same mountain) are listed as two separate peaks, as are Queen Mary and Sia Kangri, and even the dates of the first ascents of the fourteen 8,000-ers are not in all cases correct. In spite of these and many similar errors the forty-odd pages devoted to the exploration of the Himalaya and Karakoram are interesting reading. One

of mountaineering's historic photographs, Mallory and Norton in the 'costume de Gentleman-Farmer' approaching 26,985 ft. on Mount Everest in 1922, deserves comparison with that of Jean Franco on the slopes of Makalu more than thirty years later.

We sympathise with M. Frison-Roche; he has made a valiant effort but the burden was too great and the book is further evidence, if any were needed, that the writing of a mountain encyclopedia should be a 'combined operation': it is not a task for one man.

D. F. O. DANGAR.

Mountain Sickness. By B. Bhattacharjya, M.B., M.R.C.P. Pp. 58. John Wright and Sons, Ltd. Bristol, 1964. Price 12*s*. 6*d*.

THIS very little book must not be judged by its size. It is an excellent summary of our present knowledge of the physiology of mountain sickness. Everything we *know* is there. From a purely academic view one might perhaps regret that our attention is not drawn very forcefully to what is *not* known, but the purpose of the book is obviously practical: it is to instruct the medical officers of Himalayan expeditions, who are not necessarily physiologists, in the basis of their craft, and in this purpose it is difficult to fault it.

It describes the effects of hypoxia, cold, aridity, wind velocity, intensity of light, and the psychological effects of isolation, with accuracy and wisdom. The only serious criticisms I can produce are that, in his attempts to be complete, Brigadier Bhattacharjya drags in gravitation without evidence that it is of practical importance; and that he does not give enough references to previous work. He may be right about the second criticism. What medical officers of Himalayan expeditions want to go back to the original sources? If a fact is a fact, what matter who established it and by what means? He gives, I think, too little attention to the subject of frost-bite. He might reply that this book is called 'Mountain Sickness' and that frost-bite is not mountain sickness. But he does, in fact, touch on it. As this is obviously a book intended for Himalayan medical officers, he should either leave it out (and write another book about it) or treat it more fully in this one.

I hope that these criticisms will not detract from my general impression that this is a book which no climbing doctor can wisely do without.

RAYMOND GREENE.

Schoolhouse in the Clouds. By Sir Edmund Hillary. Pp. 180. 66 Illustrations. End-paper map. Hodder and Stoughton. 1964. Price 30*s*.

THIS is an account of Hillary's travels in the Solu Khumbu district of Nepal in 1963. His active and very practical interest in the welfare of the Sherpa community is already well known, and on this latest of his many expeditions he planned to build two further schools, this time

in the villages of Thami and Pangboche. Besides this there were plans to pipe fresh water to the villages of Khumjung and Khunde, and in the former place to establish a medical clinic for six months or so. Finally, because Hillary is expert at combining pleasure with business, there was to be an attempt on two peaks in the Everest region, Taweche (21,463 ft.) and Kangtega (22,340 ft.), both of which in due course provided some difficult first-class climbing.

Hillary is not an anthropologist and admits that he has no gift for acquiring foreign languages. His book is not therefore a contribution to knowledge, but it is a pleasantly unpretentious account of the day-to-day activities of his party. In any case the shortcomings of the book, if such they be, are obliterated by the author's warm humanity and efforts to repay the Sherpas for all they have given to western mountaineers.

There is a great need for every kind of educational and medical help in all the mountainous parts of Nepal, and not only in the Sherpa country. Something has already been done, particularly by various organisations in the United States, but unfortunately money for this kind of aid seems to be forthcoming only from Christian missionary sources. It is therefore suspect, even though proselytising is (rightly in my opinion) expressly forbidden in Nepal. Hillary's educational project is certainly the only purely secular and entirely altruistic form of aid being carried out anywhere in Nepal at present. I believe it is the only kind of help likely to have lasting results, because nothing is asked in return, and as such it deserves every possible encouragement.

There have been difficulties in staffing the schools. Among the local people few have reached the necessary educational standard, low though it is, and, as in all developing countries, as soon as a man receives a modicum of education his one desire is to migrate to the capital, where he can earn more money.

Hillary points out that Britain, through its employment of Gurkha troops, has had more benefit from Nepal than has any other country, and it is regrettable that we have done so little in return. America, Russia and China are all busily competing in the race to help Nepal, but their efforts are mostly confined to the Kathmandu Valley and the Terai. In the hills, as I myself found a few years ago, life goes on much as it always has, and except for Hillary's private scheme nothing has been done for the Sherpas. Personally, I am glad that Britain is taking no part in the ideological struggle being waged in Nepal, but I do much regret that the admirable Voluntary Service Overseas is not represented in the country. A few young British students in one or other of Hillary's schools could do more good than almost anything. And incidentally they would spend the year of their lives!

JOHN MORRIS.

The Climber's Fireside Book. Compiled by Wilfrid Noyce. Pp. xv, 268. Heinemann. 1964. Price 30*s.*

The Perpetual Hills. By Hugh Merrick. Pp. 247. Newnes. 1964. Price 35*s.*

Two anthologies, both called personal; but different.

Noyce's is the more conventional, a collection of extracts from mountain literature, arranged in chronological order, with the briefest of linking and introductory notes. Although the choice is personal, of things that Noyce himself enjoyed, it is wide and representative, from Chinese poems of A.D. 400 to the tigers of today and beyond, for the book ends with a short story of nuclear war. Most of the obvious pieces are here; as Noyce says, no anthology could be complete without them. But there are many less obvious, including, usefully, some from climbing journals, so that most readers will have the double pleasure of meeting old friends and also making new ones. A good feature is that many of the extracts are of some length, so that they can be read in less snippeted fashion than most such books impose.

The book has the melancholy interest of being Noyce's last, completed just before he left for the Pamirs. One may regret that there is not more in it from his own pen. Yet in the things he liked and in the few sentences he wrote to introduce them his personality does come through: quiet, smiling, civilised, in mountain literature as in mountains themselves at home yet questing, assured, skilful, happy.

Merrick's book is original and ingenious. Admirably produced, the text lit by some lovely pictures, it 'is an attempt to share with my readers, whether already initiates or yet to hear the summons, at least a part of all the enjoyment, actual and vicarious, granted me by a life-long passion for the Hills'. The form is autobiographical, but the author's enjoyment of mountains and mountain climbing has been extended and enriched, as is that of many of us, by enjoyment through their writings of the mountain climbing of others, especially during the great years of Himalayan conquest. The personal story is thus aptly and lavishly illustrated by quotations, so that the whole is rightly called an anthology. Other men's flowers in one man's garden; and that, after all, is how flowers should be seen.

A. K. Rawlinson.

Victorian Lady Travellers. By Dorothy Middleton. Pp. xii, 182. Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., London. 1965. Price 25*s.*

Mrs. Middleton's book makes delightful reading and it is likely that several of the travellers she studies will be unfamiliar to most people. Everyone knows of Mary Kingsley, and most mountaineers are familiar with the name of Fanny Bullock Workman, but how many of us, before

taking up this volume, could say anything of Isabella Bird Bishop, or Kate Marsden ?

In an excellent introductory chapter Mrs. Middleton recalls the difficulties that women had to face, not merely abroad on their travels, but at home where they were liable to meet formidable disapproval. Today, what probably strikes one most is the incredibly unsuitable clothing they often wore; Mary Kingsley, perhaps the most vivid character of the lot, and a fairly hard-boiled traveller, nevertheless considered one had 'no right' to go about in Africa in things one would be ashamed of at home, and she tramped through tropical swamps and rainstorms complete with long skirts and high-necked blouses, and encased in corsets.

The only mountaineer, strictly speaking, was Mrs. Bullock Workman, and she proves to be the least attractive personality of them all. Yet, now that the reputation of the Bullock Workmans as mountain explorers has suffered somewhat, it is well to be reminded of the very considerable journeys that they undertook in the Karakoram, sixty to seventy years ago. And how many of us knew of their bicycle journey in 1898 from Cape Cormorin (after first touring Ceylon) to the north of India, preparatory to making their first mountain trip from Srinagar to the Karakoram Pass ?

Although not mountaineers in the technical sense, Isabella Bird Bishop and Annie Taylor qualify in a high degree as mountain travellers. The first-named, perhaps, with Mary Kingsley, is the outstanding personality in the book; she not only ascended volcanoes in the Sandwich Islands, but camped and climbed in the Rockies up to 14,000 ft. She seems almost to have fallen in love with 'Rocky Mountain Jim' Nugent, a wild, reckless 'Man of the Mountains', though not (perhaps fortunately for her) quite so grim a type as the famous 'Cannibal Phil' Gardner of a generation earlier, who, finding himself marooned in the mountains by snow, subsisted comfortably on the flesh of his current squaw.

Later, Isabella Bishop journeyed through Western Szechwan almost to the Tibetan frontier, a region visited by Annie Taylor some years before. Miss Taylor was bent on evangelising the country through which she passed; Lhasa was her goal, and she nearly reached it. Her journey in 1892/3 puts one in mind of André Migot's similar attempt in 1946/7 (*Tibetan Marches*).

The other women chronicled make, perhaps, slightly less impact on the reader; Mary French Sheldon in East Africa, Kate Marsden among lepers in Siberia, and Marianne North painting flowers almost everywhere. But none is insignificant; several were sickly, but not put off by that. Mary Kingsley herself died at an early age, of enteric while nursing in South Africa during the Boer War; others lived longer, only Annie Taylor's date of death being untraced. Now that women undertake any

sort of adventure as readily as men, it is well to be reminded of the pioneers of their sex; it will be no easy matter to outclass them.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

The Place No One Knew. By Eliot Porter. Pp. 170. 72 colour plates. Sierra Club, San Francisco, 1963. Price $25.

THE mountain and desert States of Utah, Arizona and New Mexico are remarkable for many geographical features of outstanding interest and beauty, not least their unique canyons. In the local arid climate the great rivers traversing the ancient and elevated sedimentary beds have carved passages of a splendour and on an heroic scale not matched elsewhere. The better-known canyons—Grand, Bryce, Zion—are justly famous, but in that vast land are many that are lesser-known and some whose existence is known to only a very few travellers whose curiosity has taken them far from the beaten track. Among such were Glen Canyon, through which the Colorado river flows, and tributary canyons formed by the San Juan and smaller rivers. I say were, for they were largely drowned in 1963 by the building of a hydro-electric dam near the Utah–Arizona border.

This was but one of many encroachments on the mountain and wilderness country with which the western United States is so richly endowed and while, from this distance, we cannot be aware of the social and other pressures or the scale of the issues involved, the sustained efforts of our fellow clubs such as the Sierra Club in the conservation of their resources commands admiration. Efforts to save Glen Canyon proving unavailing, Eliot Porter undertook the only salvage possible—he made a thorough photographic record of the canyon and the Sierra Club have published in *The Place No One Knew* a selection of seventy-two colour plates of sustained magnificence, not so much as a mere record of what is no more, but rather as a horrible warning of what may happen again.

For us, it is enough to admire and envy the splendour of rock carved by water; and to rejoice in the perception and technical skill of the photographer in recording so much that was exquisitely beautiful, the skill of the printer, and the munificence of the Sierra Club which made such a publication possible. We are most grateful to our member, Edward G. Porter, brother of the author, for presenting this remarkable record to the Club.

F. SOLARI.

SHORTER NOTICES

A Climber's Guide to the Yosemite Valley. By Steve Roper. Pp. 190. Photographs and line drawings. Sierra Club, San Francisco. 1964. Price $4.75.

THE Sierra Club has issued a number of guide-books, of which this is the latest. The fantastic nature of some of the rock climbs—El Capitan, Lost Arrow, and others—in the Yosemite Valley has already been described in various climbing journals. In this guide-book we have a short history of the development of climbing in the Yosemite, followed by descriptions of 295 routes of all grades of difficulty, from routes taking only a few hours to others requiring several days.

Climbing, Canoeing, Ski-ing, Caving. By Anthony Greenbank. Pp. 156. Illustrations, drawings. Elliott Right Way Books Ltd., Kingswood, Surrey. 1964. Price 7*s*. 6*d*.

THIS little book is intended to show how young aspirants to any of the sports named should set about becoming proficient. There is much practical advice given and the book should be of real use to beginners. Ian Clough writes a commendatory foreword.

The Craft of Climbing. By W. H. Murray and J. E. B. Wright. Pp. 77. Illustrations. Nicholas Kaye, London. 1964. Price 15*s*.

THIS is not the ordinary type of text-book, with details of how to climb on rocks or snow or ice; it is, rather, a series of essays by two mountaineers of great experience, writing on such topics (among others) as 'The Rope in Rock Climbing', 'Balance Climbing', 'The Story of the Eiger' (more strictly, the Eigerwand), and 'The Relation of Scottish to Alpine and Himalayan Mountaineering'. The book needs to be read as a whole, and makes good reading.

Adventures in Climbing. By Rusty Westmorland. Pp. 124. Illustrations, line drawings. Pelham Books Ltd., London. 1964. Price 15*s*.

COLONEL WESTMORLAND has, as all know, an extensive record of climbing in the Lake District and in Canada. In this book he draws on his own experience, to illustrate climbing techniques, rock, ice, and mountain rescue. The book goes beyond ordinary routine information, and deserves to be read both by the beginner and by those who can enjoy a book of reminiscences.

On the Heights. By Walter Bonatti, translated from the Italian by Lovett F. Edwards. Pp. 248. Illustrations and diagram. Rupert Hart-Davis Ltd., London. 1964. Price 35*s*.

THE French edition, *À Mes Montagnes*, of this book, was reviewed in *A.J. 68*. 153–4. It is not necessary to add more to what was then said;

it is a volume of remarkable climbs by a remarkable climber. One is naturally tempted to compare the book with Terray's *Conquistadors of the Useless*, for the two guides have comparable achievements to their names. Bonatti's is the smaller volume, but he has managed to cram a lot of adventure into it: an English version of it is to be welcomed.

Zermatt Saga. By Cicely Williams. Pp. 197. Illustrations. George Allen & Unwin, London. 1964. Price 36*s*.

THIS is a pleasantly written book by the wife of the Bishop of Leicester, and she writes as an ardent enthusiast for Switzerland, and for Zermatt in particular. So much so, indeed, that Sir Arnold Lunn, who contributes a foreword, is moved to put in a special plea for his own beloved Grindelwald.

In addition to writing about Zermatt in its strictly mountaineering context, Mrs. Williams takes one into wartime events between 1939 and 1945; the revival of Zermatt after the war; and something of those 'behind the scenes' aspects of life in the village with which she has fortunately become acquainted.

It is to be regretted that more care has not been taken to remove small errors, not individually important in themselves, but collectively prejudicial to one's confidence in the writer. Thus, the first President of the Alpine Club is said (p. 34) to be John Ball and (p. 140) to be T. S. Kennedy; it was J. F. Hardy, not W. E. Davidson (p. 57), who was nicknamed the King of the Riffel; it was Ulrich Almer, not Alois Pollinger, who made the classic remark about the 'Four Asses' on the Dent Blanche (p. 101); it is fairly certain that Lord Francis Douglas did not make the first ascent of the Trifthorn (see *A.J. 61*. 348).

The author goes astray in more than one reference to the personalities involved in the first ascent of the Matterhorn; it was 'Old', not 'Young', Taugwalder who made with Douglas the ascent of the Ober Gabelhorn by a new route (p. 43), nor was it this same Young Taugwalder who went with Douglas to Breuil. As for the Matterhorn adventure, the order on the rope is wrong, both on the ascent and descent. Other errors could be listed, but this is needless regarding a book that is not designed as a detailed history, but to give enjoyment to ordinary readers. In this it should succeed.

Two Star Red. By Gwen Moffat. Pp. xviii, 206. Hodder & Stoughton, London. 1964. Price 21*s*.

THIS is a factual account of misadventures in the mountains (mainly in the U.K.) and the searches and rescues subsequently carried out by R.A.F. mountain rescue teams.

As such, it should be of the greatest interest to all who wish to adventure safely in the mountains. The book, however, does not live up to this

promise, and does not compare in interest with the author's previous book.

Mountaineers may well disagree with some of the opinions expressed, such as that one should not climb in winter in places where one has not already climbed in summer, and an underlying impression that only the guide or 'expert' is truly safe. But if the book causes mountaineers to ponder on their own safety precautions, and what might have happened had fortune gone against them, it will have served its purpose.

I Quattordici '8000'. Antologia di Mario Fantin. Pp. 302. Illustrations. Nicola Zanichelli, Bologna. 1964. Price L. 5,800.

THIS is the third volume in a series under the direction of Walter Bonatti; the second volume, on the Matterhorn, was noticed in *A.J. 69*. 310. After a preface by Count Ugo di Vallepiana, it proceeds to a general outline of the Himalaya and Karakoram ranges. The 8,000-metre peaks then follow, one by one, with a preliminary summary of the earlier history (if any) of each, and extracts from the writings of those concerned in each instance in the first ascent. Gasherbrum IV (7,925 m.) and Kanjut Sar (7,760 m.) are thrown in for good measure.

No compiler of such a book could be other than indebted, as the author testifies, to the works of Professor G. O. Dyhrenfurth and of Marcel Kurz. Readers of Italian will welcome this book, which is finely illustrated.