

In regard to keeping the climbing records, it was the unanimous belief that these records were valuable and useful, especially to the more distant members. Two uses were mentioned. First, the records serve to individualize to some extent the members who are not known to each other personally. Second, it affords an opportunity for any member desiring to climb a particular peak, or in any district to write directly to the members who have climbed in that district. It is realized that to publish this list every three years may be too much of an expense, but we all hoped that it could be done at least every five years, and that the records could be kept up to date either through the *Journal* or through other means.

The prospect of having a *Journal* of our own was welcomed with enthusiasm and all members promised to give consideration to the matter of contributing articles and photographs.

Following this discussion, each member present gave some reminiscences of his or her mountaineering experiences and there was a general discussion of a number of mountain climbs and mountaineering episodes.

All declared that we should hold another meeting early in the fall at which we hoped to secure a larger attendance when some of our absent members have returned from foreign parts.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Alai-Pamir Expedition, 1928. Vol. 10 of *Deutsche Forschung*. Karl Siegmund Verlag, Berlin, R. M. 10.

Although this is labelled as the preliminary reports of the German participants in this remarkable expedition, it is a very complete synopsis of the work accomplished. The various members of the expedition have each contributed a chapter on their particular phases of the work and although those of the topographer and the leader of the climbing group will probably most interest us here, the others are by no means to be lightly skipped over. The expedition, one of the most pretentious of recent years in Central Asia, covered the eastern Pamirs and the mountain chains east of the territory penetrated by the two expeditions led by W. Rickmer-Rickmers in 1906 and

1913. In a territory little known to explorers and wholly unknown to climbers, the field of the expedition was necessarily a large one.

After the introduction explaining the objects, ways, means, and sponsoring of this elaborate expedition, W. Rickmer-Rickmers shows us its daily life as seen by the leader and then that of the leader himself, which necessarily at times was a hectic one. We can feel his annoyances at the misfortunes and his deep despair when only a few pounds of silver remain and it is necessary to send messengers coursing about the country.

The topographical work was done by R. Finsterwalder, ably assisted by H. Biersack and at times by K. Wien of the climbing group. The survey was done by photogrammetric methods. The Russians had determined the principal positions, although a small short-wave radio receiver was carried which did not succeed very effectively in picking up time signals on account of heavy interference. Although an enormous amount of ground was covered, the preliminary maps which have been compiled to go with the book, show the thoroughness with which topographical work was done. Necessarily there are gaps, but considering the exigencies of time and distance it is remarkable that there are not more. Two definitive maps are being prepared, a detailed one of the Seltau group and a larger general map of the whole district.

The geological work was undertaken by L. Nöth, who covered a great deal of ground. The chief upfolding of the Pamirs first occurred at the end of the Paleozoic, probably in the Carboniferous. Then, after several advances and recessions of the sea, the mountain-forming movements began to occur in the Alai valley syncline during the early Tertiary. This movement reached its height during the middle of this period when the Mesozoic and old Tertiary strata were folded up and pushed over the Pamir ranges, since which time it has been a process of denudation and erosion. Statigraphy, morphology, and glaciology were all studied and duly recorded, but nowhere does this short account become wearisome with details.

The zoological work was carried on by W. F. Reinig, necessarily detached from the rest of the expedition. He made an extended trip to the Great Pamir and thence back through the western Pamirs to Kara Kul, the starting place. The vegetation was very scarce and as might be inferred therefrom, the wild life was also. The trip was, however, fruitful in results, as the fact that some 12,000 insects were

captured indicates. The extremely rigorous conditions of life make for a rare and not very varied fauna, but this work is valuable as showing what can exist under such conditions.

The philological and ethnographic researches were carried on by W. Lentz, who journeyed to Tashkent about a month ahead of the rest of the party to become familiar with the spoken language. The Tadjik Persian formerly spoken in Bokhara and Turkestan is gradually being ousted by the Eastern Turki as the Uzbek advances westward and becomes politically dominant in these portions of the U. S. S. R. Only in the mountain valleys, is Tadjik Persian to be found today to any extent. Perhaps its principal appeal is its connection with the past, as it is the oldest Iranian dialect now in use. The influence of the Turkish upon it is considerable and the whole work may help to throw some light upon the historical and racial background of this region, of which we know so little.

The climbing group was headed by Ph. Borchers and included E. Allwein, E. Schneider and K. Wien. Although their climbing activities were somewhat circumscribed by the necessity of exploring and assisting in the mapping, they accomplished a large number of ascents, of which that of Mt. Kaufmann (7,130 m) is the greatest. It was thought at the time to be the highest mountain in the U. S. S. R., but is now found to be surpassed by Garmo (7,500 m) in the Seltau. This peak was renamed Peak Lenin by the Soviet authorities. Will the name stick now that a higher mountain has been found? Whether they now hold the record for the highest complete ascent is still a matter of dispute. Besides the climbing, they discovered and explored the Notgemeinschaft Glacier (over 25 miles in length), explored the whole length of the Fedschenko Glacier (48 miles) and discovered passes therefrom to both the Yas Gulem and Vanch valleys.

Only a sketch of the work can be given here. The book itself should be read to gain a true idea of the enormous amount accomplished by the most elaborately organized mountain expedition of recent years.

K. A. H.