

life possible on earth. Suppose water was densest at 32° instead of at 39° Fahrenheit. Suppose water did not dissolve NaCl; suppose it did dissolve silica or lime more than it does; suppose its specific heat were less than it is, or its surface tension greater or less—could our earth be habitable under any of the above, or other changes in many other attributes of water? Yet in this solid mass of 712 pages, replete with detailed studies, there seems to be a lack of any bond tying the whole together—just so much material through which the reader, who can survive to the end, feels utterly at sea—with no discussion, however, on the very important influence of the sea with its very large volume of water, on the earth. The wide variety of styles of the 22 different authorities contribute further to the disconnection of the treatise as a whole.

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Hiking, Camping and Mountaineering, by Roland C. Geist. 8 vo., 304 pages, with 18 sketches, 4 sketch maps and 20 photographs. New York: Harper and Bros., 1943. Price \$3.00.

Addressed to beginners in each of the activities named, this book aims “to interest and stimulate those millions of Americans who sit and watch athletic contests, to get out and enjoy hiking, camping and mountaineering.” Whether any book can be very effective in such a way may be doubted, but the author has gathered together a great deal of useful information, going as he states “only to the essentials” and it should prove a useful book to the inexperienced. The author has a fondness for definitions, even when the meaning should be obvious, and these are not always carefully framed. We learn that “Hiking is a kind or type of walking” and that “walking is the art and science of progression by setting one foot methodically before the other.” Some of the statements are a bit surprising: for example we find that “walking may be classified into three main types or forms: hiking, heel and toe walking, and mountaineering.” Possibly the intent was to break the news gently to the beginner. It is surprising to find the greater part of the material relating to camping specifically directed to automobile camping as it is also to find “heel and toe” contest walking stressed. The theory seems to be: anything to lure the sport contest fans from their ring side seats—which is fine if it works.

Part III, devoted to mountaineering, introduces the subject in a way that should be interesting and gives brief but fairly adequate mention to each of the principal mountaineering clubs as well as information as to the chief climbing areas of North America. The chapter on equipment is good, in general, but one is puzzled by the statement as to edge nails in climbing boots: "Do not use too many nails; about seven or eight nails properly spaced are enough for the sole." The least number shown in the author's sketches—which are good—is 19 and they are well spaced. The chapters on Rock Climbing and on Climbing on Snow and Ice are sound and as adequate as the 28 pages devoted to them permit—which of course means that only rudimentary matters can be treated. The final chapter with its advice and precepts on training, party make up, guides, pace, weather and climbing and hut manners is excellent, so far as it goes. For the beginner the book may be recommended, for the more experienced its value, if any, would consist in its general information and its lists of needed equipment and supplies. Ten appendices, including a glossary of English, French and German mountaineering terms and a six-page bibliography add some value to the book.

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