

placed letters. Despite this, it is well worth having in one's library and once had, will be read with constant pleasure and enjoyment.

K. A. H.

They Climbed the Alps, by Edwin Muller, Jr. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, New York. Price \$3.50.

Under the title "*They Climbed the Alps*", Mr. Edwin Muller, Jr., has given a very interesting and often a dramatic account of the evolution of the art of mountaineering from the earliest attempts, when an awkward alpine stock and a small hatchet were the only weapons of offense, to the highly specialized technique of the modern climber.

The author has deftly strung together the story of the famous alpine ascents—Mt. Blanc, Matterhorn, Weisshorn, Grépon—and in the telling thereof, sometimes in his own words, often in the words of the climber himself, has given a vivid picture of the methods evolved in slowly overcoming these alpine giants. Whymper's incomparable siege of the Matterhorn loses nothing in the retelling. Balmat, sleeping shelterless again and again on Mt. Blanc, toils up to its summit. Mummery, climbing up his famous crack on the Grépon; Tyndall, struggling against apparently hopeless odds on the Weisshorn; G. W. Young, ascending new and more difficult routes by methods little short of the miraculous—all are names to conjure with in mountaineering annals and so dramatic are the stories that one marvels anew at the endurance of the human spirit.

The book is not at all technical. The style is simple and direct and the illustrations well chosen to show the more perilous side of mountaineering. In the last chapter "*Why They Do It*," the author attempts to explain that which to the laity is so often inexplicable—the ceaseless allure of the mountains to the climber.

"For certain brief snatches of time, a man may have glimpses of glory that are on a different level from the rest of living. To one it may happen when listening to Beethoven's Fifth, to another when the birds come back in the spring, to most for moments when in love. They are never more than moments, gone as soon as realized, yet they are worth months of ordinary living. For a fleeting moment we feel that the kingdom of heaven is very near to us, that with only a little effort we could tear away the veil. . . . The man who climbs mountains knows that if he summons his courage and ventures

up into the snows he will be rewarded somewhere by one of these moments of ecstasy. . . . And the memory of such moments is a precious jewel that he carries all of his life. His way may lead through dingy, sordid paths but with the mountains in his background he can never be thoroughly unhappy."

M. H. S.

"*Mountaineering*," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th Edition, 1929. Vol. 15, pp. 929-932 with 2 pp. illus.

This subject has been handled by the well-known authorities William Martin Conway, Arnold Lunn, and Howard Palmer. The article is divided into several parts. There are first, general definitions of mountaineering, its dangers, the methods used and outfits required. Then a brief history which touches upon the various districts with special mention of some of the more recent accomplishments. Palmer has covered the United States and Alaska; all else including the definitions is signed by Conway and Lunn.

The general definition of mountaineering is very well put indeed. Emphasis is placed upon the major subdivisions, rockcraft and snowcraft. Subheadings cover the various dangers encountered such as falling rocks, falling ice, snow avalanches, falls from rocks, ice and snow-slopes, crevasses, and weather. A brief and somewhat inadequate paragraph on outfits is complementary to previous scattered references. Under these headings, the treatment is essentially to define causes, and explain means of overcoming or avoiding the dangers which may be encountered. The positive as well as negative side is often brought in by frequent definitions of some of the technical requirements. One sentence might well be noted by all mountaineers—"The great principle is co-operation, all the members working with reference to the others and not as independent units" . . .

Following "History", are further headings such as "Alpine Climbing", "French Guideless Climbing", "German Mountaineering", and "The Canadian Alps". A random list of recent books on various topics is here included.

The development of mountaineering in the United States is traced from the founding of the Appalachian Mountain Club in 1876. The movement rapidly spread to Colorado in the late Eighties and to Canada in the Nineties. In 1902 the American Alpine Club was founded bringing together a nation-wide group devoted to the "kindred interests of alpinism and Arctic exploration" . . .