

## BOOK REVIEWS



*Das Letzte im Fels*, by Domenico Rudatis. Translated from the Italian by Emmeli Capuis and Max Rohrer. 8vo.; 250 pages, including bibliography and index, with numerous route diagrams by the author. Munich: Gesellschaft Alpiner Bücherfreunde, 1936.

There have always been those who, for good or bad reasons, wished to grade climbs according to their difficulty. And, although the scale has undergone considerable alteration in the past ten years, peaks are usually divided into six groups, in which the first is the only one not requiring *Kletterschuhe*, and the last, in its conclusion, is best represented by a one-way ticket to the cemetery. According to the author, in the third grade "the best climbers may go without assistance, but it is better not to. Almost all descents by roping-off. Nailed boots practically excluded. This grade, fifty years ago represented the limit of possibility as, for example, in the Schmitt chimney of the Fünffingerspitze." More than half of the book is then taken up by examples of sixth grade acrobatics in the Civetta Group.

While such a method of gradation is doubtless an attempt to establish a standard, it will, in the opinion of this reviewer, always fail, since the many variable factors remain uncontrolled. Second grade may become sixth grade when a storm breaks, or seem so merely as the result of dietary indiscretion. And what will the author think of sixth grade, one day when a tractor with suction grip, loaded with first-grade climbers, comes steaming past him, as he blacksmiths his way up walls that once were best left alone?

J. M. T.

*Lawinen*, by Walter Flaig. 8 vo.; 173 pages, maps and illustrations. F. U. Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1935.

*Snow Structure and Ski Fields*, by G. Seligman. 8 vo.; x + 555 pages, diagrams and illustrations, bibliography and index. Macmillan and Company, Limited, London, 1936.

As winter travel in mountainous country becomes more popular, so the number of fatal accidents due to lack of knowledge of snow conditions increases. The vast majority of accidents due to ava-