

by name, all over the world—individuals whom he or Mrs. Amery met on their many travels; and he diplomatically focuses attention on every single one of these many acquaintances by also listing every one of them in his twelve-page index.

Digressions on the origin of the name Amery and the origin of the title of the book—the titles of his earlier *Days of Fresh Air* and of this book together make up one line of his school poem (Harrow); a strong recommendation for mountain troop training; frequent references to his favorite classical poets; and occasional discussions on the philosophy of the mountain climber, together with an exceedingly easy reading style, and light weight of paper stock, all commend the book to the public as well as to the climber.

J. E. F.

Guide du Skieur dans les Alpes Valaisannes, by Marcel Kurz. 2 vols. (I, du Col de Balme au Col Collon; II, du Col Collon au Monte Moro.) 2nd edition. Club Alpin Suisse, 1939.

Marcel Kurz's ski guide to the Valais covers the finest country in the Alps for the mountaineer who wishes to combine climbing with Alpine skiing. The scenery is magnificent and the range of possibilities almost unlimited, including many high-level traverses, of which the most famous is the high-level route from Bourg St. Pierre to Zermatt, and mountain ascents on both ice and rock of all degrees of difficulty. The season is long, at least extending from January to June—the best month for the skier usually being May, when the crevasses are relatively safe and the spring snow is in good condition.

It cannot be too strongly stressed that travel in this area requires mountaineering experience and skill. The skier who is interested mainly in the sport of skiing, but who wishes to see something of the high mountains, should choose in preference districts like the Silvretta, the Bernese Oberland or the many districts in the Eastern Alps where mountaineering problems and danger are infinitely less.

In this connection Marcel Kurz writes in his preface as follows:

“The title of this guide may mislead those who are not sufficiently warned. In using the map attached to the volume, one will see dotted routes leading to summits where no one will go on ski. Neither the map nor the text which accompanies it is intended to lead the ski sportsman to snow fields where he may abandon him-

self to the thrill of downhill running. In the high mountains the ski ceases to be a plaything. Circumstances make it a tool—the most useful aid to the winter mountaineer—but a simple tool intended to make travelling easier—something which we put on or take off like crampons and which is only a means to an end, to lead us to the summit of the mountains which were formerly denied us.

“This guide is then designed for the mountaineer whom winter has turned into a skier. It is certainly easier for a mountaineer to become a skier than for a skier to turn himself into a mountaineer. The technique of skiing can be learned in great part from manuals which have been written on the subject, but that of the mountaineer can only be acquired through experience in the course of many expeditions under the direction of licensed guides or competent companions.”

This second edition has been brought up-to-date and greatly expanded. It follows the form of the first edition, the most important part of the guide being the Siegfried 1/50,000 map on which all routes are marked and numbered. Arrows indicate those portions of the routes which are exposed to avalanche danger. The map itself gives a reasonable idea of the area in which crevasses may be dangerous. It should be kept in mind that crevasses are constantly changing and that the map cannot be relied upon as to details. A solid line marks the routes which can be followed on skis, and dotted lines the places where under normal conditions it is necessary to proceed on foot.

The explanatory text, which in the first edition was very brief, is now all that can be desired, dealing particularly with deviations from summer routes and the dangers which may be encountered at different times of the year.

There are two most valuable additions, a number of aerial photographs showing the routes, and a series of reproductions from a new map of Switzerland of certain areas, the topography of which was incorrectly shown on the Siegfried map.

The guide is intended to be used in connection with the regular Valais guide of the Swiss Alpine Club, which deals with the region at much greater length, but which is intended for the summer mountaineer.

Marcel Kurz was one of the pioneers in the ski conquest of the Alps. From 1907 on he skied and climbed year by year in the Valais. His great experience and skill as a mountaineer combined with his profession, that of topographical engineer, make him the ideal editor for a guide of this kind. The guide itself is a model

for future authors and fills the requirements of the Alpine skier to perfection.

J. C. C.

Driftwood Valley, by Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher. 369 pages and 15-page appendix; illustrated. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1946. \$4.00.

An account of two whole years in a cabin some hundred miles northeast of Hazelton, B. C., *Driftwood Valley* is primarily a beautifully reported study of wild life in that area; it is also an excellent treatise on living in that country, summer and winter, and on the habits of the native Indians.

Possibly the true attraction of this book can best be conveyed to the reader by a few lines picked here and there from its text:

Oh-h-h—the cry of the Pacific loon; like a woman crying hopelessly, endlessly; like a baby bear who has lost its mother; like the faint, far-off foghorn of a ship at sea; like the mournful sigh of wind in a pine tree . . .

Above all things, perhaps, the wilderness teaches patience and endurance . . .

There is a secure way of life—all manner of help and of care for us if we use the wilderness rightly; work with it, not against it . . .

The loyalty of dogs, and the patience of horses, are very big and touching things . . .

Of all people we know, we envy these Indians most; for they are free as very few left on this earth are free . . .

Toward the end, as a record of their achievements:

It is rather wonderful that the most intelligent of all our wild companions (the wolves), have reached tolerance towards us . . .

And in discussing the damaging upsets to the balance of nature where man has tried to modify the principle of the survival of the fittest, the author asks, almost in despair, "Is man's instinct of chivalry towards the weak, unfit ones, *really* a sign of progress and wisdom, or isn't it?"

If only a better map of the area had been included, it would have made the many beautiful word passages even more personal to those who have more than a passing acquaintance with the country. And if it does seem to the reviewer, from his own recollections of having once passed the year round outdoors in British Columbia,