

or artistic point of view. I liked best, of the monochromes, those of the Victoria ridge, some of which appeared in the *National Geographic*; also those of Mount Brussels and Lake McArthur; and, of the color plates, those in which the golden September aspens turn the landscape into fairyland. I liked least the sad travesty on the beauty of Lake O'Hara. However, I must comment on the monochrome reproduction, which is probably a serious disappointment to the author. Photographs which were doubtless very satisfying in gradation and texture have been turned into "soot and whitewash," very likely because of financial stringency in England. One has but to compare this with one of his pre-war albums, *A Camera in the Hills*, for instance, to see what this one might have been. On the other hand, oddly enough, the Kodachromes seem to have fared better. As far as I can judge by comparing them with my own color slides of the same region, they have reproduced well, and they go far toward redeeming an otherwise slightly disappointing book. Those who love these mountains, about which few books have appeared in recent years, will wish to own this, in spite of its shortcomings and its excessive cost. I have already got much pleasure from it.

NATHANIEL L. GOODRICH

*Again Switzerland*, by Frank S. Smythe. 8vo., 248 pp., 33 illustrations and a map. London, 1947: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd. Price, 20/-.

Mr. Smythe has written a book describing his first trip to Switzerland, after the enforced absence of the seven long war years. He went over in February of 1946, one of the first of the British to revisit Switzerland, for a skiing holiday at Adelboden, in the Lötschenthal, at Verbiers and Zermatt. The names of the runs he made and the mountains he climbed are almost household words; he makes us see again the powder snow—yes, the wind-slab and crust, too—and feel the crisp air and glowing sun. We also see the inns, the inn-keepers, and the other people almost as if we were there.

Toward the end of his stay, in late March, he did some ski-mountaineering; he climbed the Breithorn, followed the Haute Route, and made a solitary traverse of the Oberland. There are no tours de force here; in fact, it is perhaps not a very impressive list of achievements for a man of Mr. Smythe's caliber, and experience

in the Himalaya and elsewhere. With the exception of his trip alone across the Oberland glaciers, thousands of ski-mountaineers could make, and indeed have made, similar expeditions. We suspect that only the times persuaded Mr. Smythe to write a book on such slight material. But the fact that it deals with the familiar and well-loved scenes of Switzerland, and with climbing experiences more or less within the common reach, does not detract from the charm and allurements of his book. For Mr. Smythe's style is very vivid, and he writes with such an immense quantity of detail—those little well-known details that had perhaps dropped out of mind until he recalls them so explicitly—that Switzerland is revived for us. I, for one, find nearly unbearable the longing that he arouses in me to get back to Switzerland myself. Shall I say, "Don't read this book unless you are able to go to Switzerland in the very near future—it will just make you homesick"?

Of course, the illustrations are excellent, as might be expected, and I wish there were some way we could see more of the pictures he took.

As a final word, let me say that I think it a fine thing for a man of Smythe's standing to come forward in both word and deed in favor of solitary mountaineering in its proper place, in the face of the unrelieved condemnation of this phase of the sport which is the fashion among British and American climbers.

MIRIAM E. UNDERHILL

*Snow on the Hills*, by Frank S. Smythe. Large 4to., 119 pp., 47 illustrations. London, 1946: A. & C. Black. Price, 25/-.

Another book of mountain photographs by Smythe, his seventh. It consists of two essays, "The Beauty of Snow" and "The Photography of Snow," and 47 of the author's photographs, from the British hills, the Alps, the Canadian Rockies and the Himalaya. The book is large enough (10" x 12½") to do the photographs justice, and the reproductions are good.

The essays, 20 pages in length, are a pleasure to read. Few men have had Smythe's opportunity to observe snow in so many places and under such a variety of conditions, and still fewer have had his keen eye, poetic sensibility and photographic ability. Even those who may have felt as he does about snow have rarely taken the trouble to try to put their feelings into words. On the subject of