

## BOOK REVIEWS

Coolidge, and others. It is indeed a new Tyndall who delighted picnic parties by hanging from his heels from the highest tree to be found, and who would climb floating icebergs in the Märjelsee until they overbalanced and gave him a freezing bath. It is odd to hear from John Ball of American travellers at the Grimsel parting company through dispute on the theory of glaciers. Coolidge, the controversial figure from our shores, "The Boswell of the Alps," will be the subject of a future volume. Will D. W. Freshfield make a satisfying Dr. Johnson? It is a pity that Coolidge's contemporaries have all departed this life, for his biography would (and may yet) arouse as much controversy as did the publication of Whymper's *Scrambles*.

The portraits used for illustration, part of a larger collection shown publicly in London, are of utmost interest. That of Miss Brevoort is the most attractive yet to appear; other of the ladies are less favored. Yet all belie their abilities. It is interesting to note that the courier standing behind young Arthur of Connaught at the Grands Mulets in 1864 is the same Louis Peter who accompanied the American party of the Wilkinsons in the following year.

J. MONROE THORINGTON

*Francis Younghusband: Explorer and Mystic*, by George Seaver.  
391 pages, maps and illustrations. London: John Murray,  
1952. Price, 25/—.

Sir Francis Younghusband came of an old fighting family, with established traditions in the Indian army, but he himself seems never to have been entirely happy as a regimental officer. The phrase "wide open spaces" has today something of a phony ring, suggestive of the worst that Hollywood can produce; yet the draw of such spaces is undeniably felt by many, and in Younghusband may be regarded as the product of his adventurous spirit on the one hand and the strain of mysticism in his character on the other. Such a man might not fit easily into army life, but, with his abundant self-confidence, he was well equipped for exploration in Central Asia and the Karakoram-Himalaya regions at a time when they were almost unknown ground.

The author relates graphically the story of Younghusband's

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great journey from Peking to India in 1887, which he himself described in a fascinating book, *The Heart of a Continent*. Explorations in the Pamirs, Gilgit, Chitral, and elsewhere followed, and in 1904 he commanded the Tibet Mission with patience and judgment. He incurred the disapproval of the then Secretary of State for India by signing the Tibet Treaty, and Dr. Seaver in a useful chapter brings out clearly how justified Younghusband had been and how unfairly he was treated.

The mystical strains in his character found vent in later years in founding the World Congress of Faiths, and he corresponded with philosophers such as McTaggart in his efforts to sift and straighten out his religious convictions which the silences of great mountain regions had for long been etching into his mind. He never lost his interest in mountain exploration, and as President of the Royal Geographical Society and as Chairman of the Mt. Everest Committee he brought all his enthusiasm to bear.

This is a good biography of a remarkable man and very well worth reading.

T. S. BLAKENEY

*The Grace of Forgetting*, by Geoffrey Winthrop Young. 352 pages, with 29 photographs and 5 line illustrations, including 2 maps by Leo Vernon. London: Country Life, 1953. Price, 21/—.

Geoffrey Winthrop Young's latest book is made up of memories—all "pictures in colour," as the author explains—of life at his family's island home on the Thames; of journeys to Mount Athos, among the Aegean islands, across Asia Minor; of service in the first War as a correspondent and then as a member of ambulance units in Flanders and on the Italian front. There are brief glimpses also of life at his "second home" in Ireland and at Monte Fiano, above Florence, and of excursions in the Pyrenees and in Massachusetts. No doubt each reader will remember a different set of "pictures." I have noticed Balfour's "very long brilliantly striped socks," lifted high on the side of the punt in which he reclined; the "blood-red head-scarves" on the "Greek pirates of villainous aspect" who acted (or, rather, failed to act) as crew of a boat chartered at Salonika by the author's