

the first amateur who could undertake difficult expeditions on an equal footing with his guides. As Coolidge considered this effort as the last word in the mountaineering of the time, it is of interest to see how these older efforts are now graded (Lucien Devies in *Alpinisme*, 1933):

The expedition of the Comte de Bouillé on the Aiguille du Midi does not attain the first degree, "easy."

The routes of the Victorians, north summit of the Blaitière and Aiguille du Plan do not exceed second degree, although the south and central summits of the Blaitière approach third degree.

Mummery's climbs were never below third degree and, on the Grépon, attained fourth degree, "difficult."

On the east arête of the Plan, Franz Lochmatter reached the upper limit of fourth degree and approached, without attaining it, fifth degree.

Grépon-Mer de Glace is classed as "difficult," but the Knubel fissure is estimated as fifth superior, a little more than "very difficult."

The southeast arête of the Fou (Pierre Allain's route) is fifth degree, and the east arête of the Crocodile reaches fifth superior.

There is no route in the range that justifies a rating of sixth.

The illustrations, mostly full-page, are magnificent, particularly the telephoto panorama extending from the Aiguille de la République to the Aiguille du Midi. There is an amusing studio photo of Joseph Knubel and G. W. Young in contemplative attitudes, seated on property rocks dated Zermatt, 1907. Old prints, the careful drawings of Ruskin, the excellent portraits and views of climbers in action complement a text which evidences painstaking research. The book itself is the most recent in the Sempervivum series, which also includes the author's volumes on the Barre des Écrins and the Meije.

J. MONROE THORINGTON

*Quand brillent les Étoiles de Midi*, by Marcel Ichac. Paris: Arthaud, 1960.

115 pages of text, 102 photo illustrations, 4 plates in color and a contour map of the area between the Col du Midi and the Tour Ronde. This is the story of the making of a mountain film, in which the producers refused to make any concession to public desire for cheap effects. There are no man-made avalanches, no cardboard precipices, no convulsed features, no cries of terror and no bleeding hands. The danger of such a decision is that the sincerity of the result will not be appreciated, but in this instance *Les Étoiles de Midi* won the Gran Prix du Cinéma Français in 1959 as well as many other awards. It was made by Marcel Ichac with the collaboration of Lionel Terray, Gérard Herzog and Jacques Ertaud. It is the 50th film by Ichac dealing with mountains, skiing, climbing or

cave exploring. The action takes place on the Grand Capucin, one of the most beautiful granite obelisks in the Alps, its 1500-foot face rising from the névé of the upper Géant basin as an advanced sentinel of the aiguilles ornamenting the eastern buttresses of Mont Blanc du Tacul. It was first ascended by Bonatti and Ghigo in 1951, after three bivouacs and the placing of 200 pitons. Commentators said that it would never be repeated.

The film required six months in the making. On the mountain itself 30 people worked 25 days, the summit being attained on four occasions and parts of the route being climbed five times. It is without doubt one of the most remarkable unions of professional photography and technical mountaineering, and the climbing shots are supplemented by equally spectacular pictures of the methods used in their making. The courage of the cinema crew in unaccustomed and exposed positions merits the reader's applause and rivals the nonchalance of modern technique, which would have given the Victorians of Grade IV some very bad dreams. The pictorial excellence of the book must be seen to be believed.

J. MONROE THORINGTON

*Steiermark*, by Robert Löbl. Introductory text by Hieronymus Riede.

Munich: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1961. 96 pages, with two maps and 80 full-page photos, captioned in three languages.

This is an excellent picture-book, showing the scenery, life and people of an Austrian province lying between the Salzkammergut and Vienna. The capital is Graz, a pleasant city of baroque architecture and important museums, whose best-known citizen was romantic Erzherzog Johann, a pioneer of mountaineering in the Eastern Alps. In the western part of the province one finds the snowclad Dachstein, and the Gesäuse group of the Ennstal. There are also fine lakes in the vicinity of Bad Aussee. The mountain views and climbing scenes include the Trisselwand, Grimming, Planspitze and Dachstein.

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*Berge in alle Ewigkeit*, by Jost Perfahl. Salzburg/Stuttgart: Verlag Das Bergland Buch, 1960. 351 pages, with 22 plates (5 in color), and bibliography. Sw. Fr. 16.80.

Mountain experiences and tragedies of all periods, from Hannibal to Harrer, form this anthology of original sources in Alpine literature. The reader has before him the adventures of the men who first stood on Mont Ventoux and Mont Aiguille, as well as those of the conquerors of Mont Blanc and its aiguilles, the Schreckhorn, Weisshorn and Matterhorn, the Dachstein and Gross Venediger. Primarily a collection of documents from