

rock, glaciers, and climate, another with living things and a third with man's activities in the range. The book is full of information and John Theberge has been skillful in pulling it all together. Photographs are an important part, many of them by Walter A. Wood, our former president, who between 1935 and the present has done more than anyone to explore this region in a scientific way. His efforts have been basic to the preservation of this special mountain environment as a national park.

Among those taking particular pleasure in the book will be four club members (Adams Carter, Ome Daiber, Bradford Washburn and I) who still vividly recall entering this region with a dog team in the winter of 1935, under Washburn's leadership, to explore what was then largely a blank on the map.

ROBERT H. BATES

*French Rock-Climbs*, by Pete Livesey. Leicester, England: Cordee, 1980. 77 pages, maps, diagrams. Price £3.95.

For the rock climber who has done everything in the U.S., this may be *the* book of the year. Tired of Yosemite? Burned off with El Dorado or the Gunks? Well, why not buy a cheap trans-Atlantic flight and try France?

There have been rumors lately about the splendors of rock climbing there—Verdon in particular. One of the chief rumormongers has been Pete Livesey, who has now put into book-form a smattering of routes from twelve French climbing areas. It is a book in the tradition of Robin Collomb's *Mont Blanc*, or J. Brailsford's *Dolomites*; being far from comprehensive but of great value to climbers ignorant of the local language. When bummed out on the Chamonix or Courmayeur weather, climbers may find welcome relief and diversions in these crags; most of them clustered in the sunny south and situated near villages of great charm. Not *all* climbers, however. Anyone who can't climb at F9 to F10 needn't bother with *French Rock-Climbs*.

Vercors and Verdon get by far the largest sections; a dozen pages each, compared to six for the Calanques, four for Le Saussois. Dry and understated Yorkshireman though he be, Livesey almost bubbles with enthusiasm over Verdon, calling it the "undoubted centerpiece of French free climbing; a magnificent 2000-foot steep gorge flanked by cliffs of superb limestone. Here one can find a selection of the finest climbs to be seen anywhere in Europe. Long sustained routes follow soaring cracks and dièdres or the blank sheet-like pillars between them." And this: "Nothing is quite so enthralling as climbing a seemingly holdless white wall set high above the roaring Verdon river by a continually surprising series of incut holds."

The publication of this book is bound to stimulate traffic in English-speaking climbers to the South of France—coincident with what appears

to be a new surge of local talent on the scene. It is to be hoped that *ententes cordiales* prevail between the nationalities. Already I've heard disturbing stories about French climbers at Verdon defecating too close to the campground. Presumably the French have their stories about American or British boorishness. And when there are discussions between *our* styles and *theirs*—i.e. protection placed by the leader and no resting allowed on it versus their preference for pins *in situ* and fifi hooks—let's not forget *liberté, égalité et fraternité*.

It seems astonishing that such fine rock climbing as this book describes in 150 different routes, should only recently have surfaced into the collective Anglo-American consciousness. But better late than never. And when I read the well-traveled Livesey wax lyrical about "air filled with the scent of a dozen species of aromatic plants, the colors are striking, and the weather all too kind," there's no doubt where I'm going this summer.

JOHN THACKRAY

*Classics in the Literature of Mountaineering and Mountain Travel from the Francis P. Farquhar Collection*, an annotated bibliography by James R. Cox. Los Angeles: University of California Library, 1980. 58 pages, illus. Price \$25.00.

Some years ago I came across a *lingerie* advertisement—I think in the *New Yorker*—which contained the oddly ambiguous phrase "rien ne remplace le vrais . . ."—"nothing replaces the real thing." I was reminded of it as I wandered through this short book. *Classics in the Literature of Mountaineering* is twice removed, or, perhaps thrice removed, from the real thing. Any mountaineering book—even the greatest—is once removed from the mountaineering experience. This book is not a mountaineering book but rather a catalogue of the great collection of over 2000 volumes that the late Francis Peloubet Farquhar left to the UCLA library, and in fact, it is, in reality a *selected* catalogue containing only 110 annotated selections from the collection. Indeed, after looking through the book I was led to ask myself, "Who needs it?" It is not clear to me that anyone does, except as a sort of memorial to Mr. Farquhar. It is not that I came across anything actually wrong with the brief descriptions of the various books and journals. It is quite true that Horace-Bénédict de Saussure "made an ascent of the Mont Blanc," and gave "impetus to the sport of climbing." It is also true, and not mentioned in the three lines that the book's editor James R. Cox devotes to de Saussure, that in fact de Saussure *invented* this activity when, in 1760, he offered a prize to the first man to climb Mont Blanc. Until this time it does not seem to have occurred to anyone to try to climb a high, snow-covered mountain simply for the sake of climbing it. In fact,