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*Sommerfreuden in der erquickenden Kühle der
Alpenseen
Plaisirs d'été sur les eaux limpides et fraîches des lacs
alpestres*

*The Charms of Summer on the clear, cool waters of the
Swiss Lakes*

*Delizie estive nella refrigerante frescura dei laghi
alpestri*

Plakatentwurf von Kunstmaler P. Gauchat



Das Edelweiss

*die Blumenkönigin des Hochgebirgs | L'edelweiss, reine de la flore alpine
L'edelweiss, o stella alpina, regina dei fiori dell' alta montagna*

Phot. Meerkämper



Phot. Steiner

Bernina

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING IN SWITZERLAND

Indisputably her mountains are the magnet that attracts so many keen sportsmen to Switzerland. At Christmastime their wide surfaces of snow are ideal courses for winter sports. In summertime their towering summits send down a challenge to the ambitious athlete to prove his skill and his endurance by scaling their heights. If, as philosophers say, the overcoming of difficulties is one chief source of joy, it is no wonder that the heart of a successful climber glows with satisfaction, for he has surmounted alike difficulties and dangers.

For to climb is a glorious sport, but it is no mere pastime, and don't you forget it! The Finsteraarhorn is not Kanchenjunga, but neither is it Snowdon. There are no restaurants at the bottom of the crevasses as Tartarin fondly believed! Not long ago, a party returning from an ascent, caught the sound of a feeble cry, repeated at regular intervals. As this is a recognized S. O. S., they searched the glacier and found an Englishman stuck fast in a crevasse fifteen feet down. He had gone out for a stroll over the glacier by himself *three days before!* They got him home alive. Well, don't go alone on a glacier. Indeed for serious work it is well to have a party of three or four.

For many centuries the Alps were regarded with awe and not with delight. Hardy huntsmen or herdsmen would penetrate the forest-clad slopes; an occasional troop of soldiers or a party of pilgrims bound

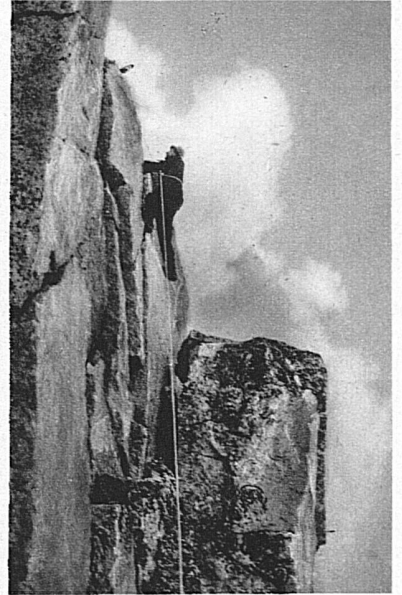
for Rome might, greatly daring, cross a pass into Italy; but not till fifty years after Columbus had set foot on the sands of 'the new world', did the first Swiss, Konrad Gessner, climb the peaks of Pilatus. And it was three centuries later when the mighty rock of the Matterhorn was first mastered by the famous English climber, Edward Whymper, whose success terminated so tragically.

It was in 1863 that some sixty enthusiasts founded the Swiss Alpine Club. It has now a roll of 26,000 members, and jolly good work has it done. Thanks chiefly to its enterprise, there are now over a hundred Club Huts erected and maintained at salient points within the climbing districts. No less than 52,000 visits were paid to these huts by climbers in 1927. In addition the Club publishes maps, trains guides, arranges lectures, organizes tours for beginners as well as for experts. In these and other ways it has fostered and facilitated the sport, enhanced its pleasures and lessened its dangers.

Nevertheless, accidents are on the increase owing to the culpable and stupid foolhardiness of inexperienced visitors, who leave their office in the City one day, and think they can tackle a mountain the next! They may be fine athletes, though probably not, but experience is not a quality born in the average tourist. And Climbing is as much an art as other sports, and is more strenuous an exercise than boating. It needs training,



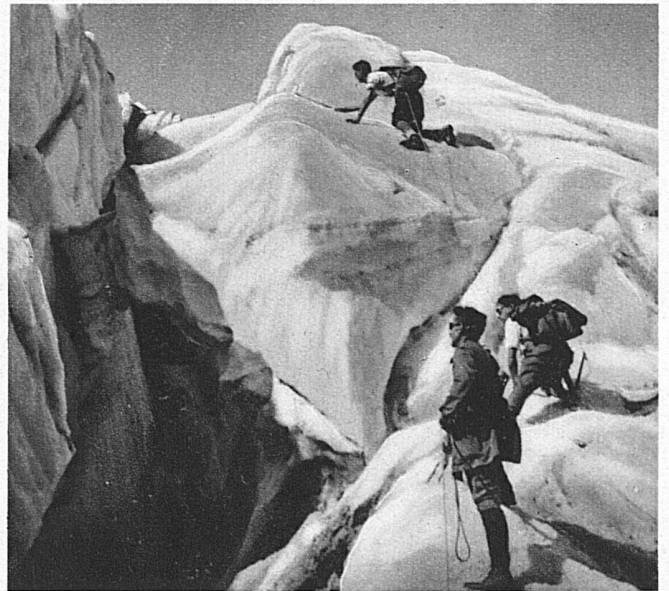
Phot. Meerkämper *View from the Piz Corvatsch in the Upper Engadine*



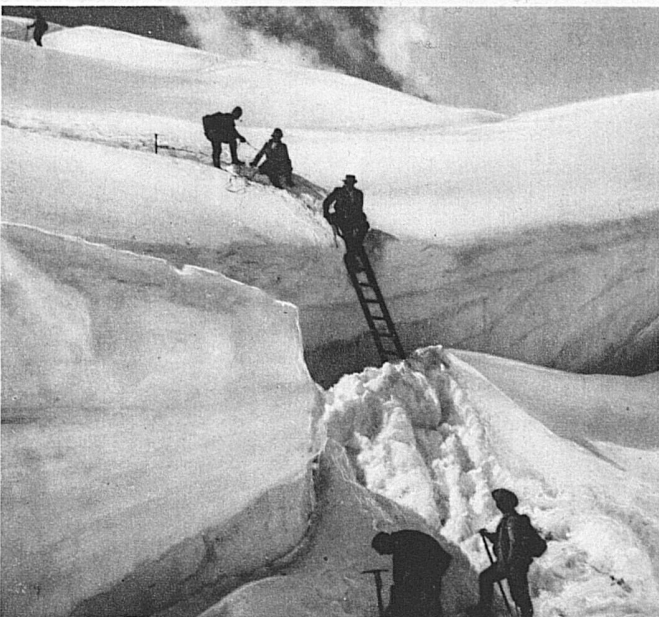
Climbing on the Maloja del Largo



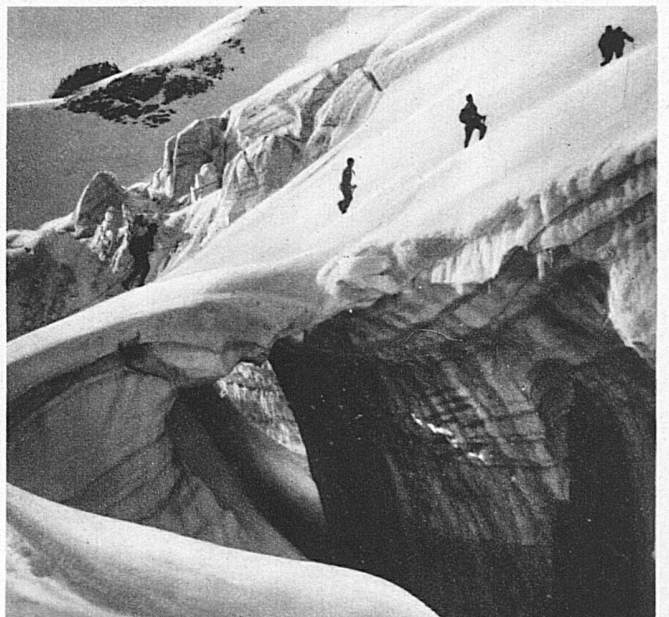
Phot. Meerkämper *Scalettagletscher / Davos*

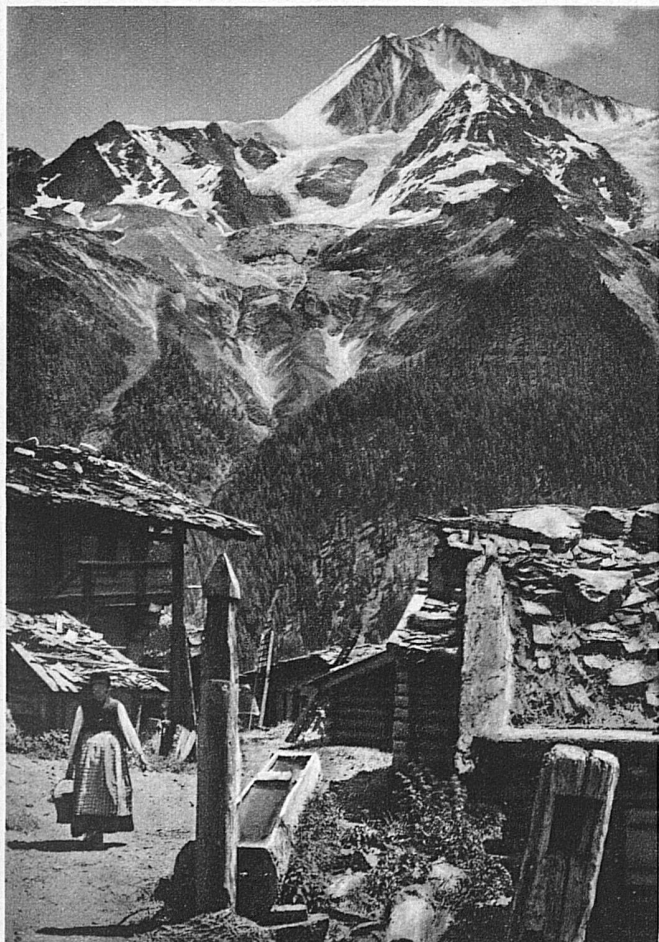


Wildhorn near Lenk Phot. Dreyfuss

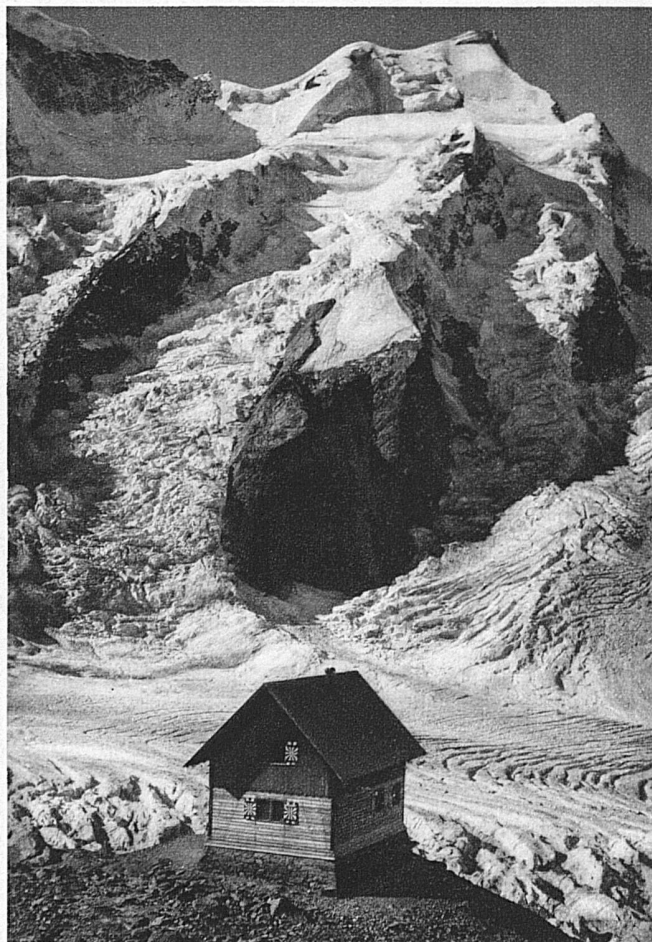


Phot. Meerkämper *Among the Glaciers of the Bernina*





Bietschhorn | Lötschen Valley



Hut on the Strahlegg

Phot. E. Gyger

self-discipline, endurance, and at least some acquaintance with the characteristics of rock and snow and ice. A man who wants to be a climber has his lessons to learn as in every other sport. Let him treat this art with respect, or trusting merely to his physical powers, he will come a cropper as many a self-confident tyro has done before.

Let the beginner, then, show his common sense. Let him spend, say a week, exploring among the delightful stretches of lake and forest and meadow land on the lower Alps. The air is superb up there, but one does not get acclimatised to the higher atmosphere in a night. There is no lack of peaks and precipices and glaciers, too, stiff enough to test his endurance and to afford trial of his equipment. He must know the proper handling of axe and rope and the climbing irons. It is no longer obligatory to engage the services of a guide, but the beginner obviously needs an expert companion and that is just what a guide is. To go off without a guide is often to court danger. Many a climb has been converted from a joy into a serious task by the collapse of an untrained or inexperienced member of the party.

Naturally, a steady head and an absolutely sound heart and lungs are essential to attempting any such physical feat as mountain climbing. But what is not so generally appreciated is the importance of possessing good digestive organs, and of taking proper care of them. Indeed, their neglect is one of the commonest crimes among the inexperienced. A man will start off with little else than a supply of tinned food, and he will have to eat at any odd time owing to the conditions

of his climb. The natural consequence will almost certainly be sickness, diarrhoea, vomiting, lassitude, loss of energy and the like. Take, as far as possible, the sort of food the stomach is used to. Take bread and butter, cheese, fruit (dried or preserved), milk, chocolate, oatmeal, biscuits. Drink tea or coffee. Avoid alcohol and fresh meat. Such is the advice of those who speak from long experience. It will save the ambitious climber many painful hours, for goodbye to any enjoyment if the stomach gets out of order.

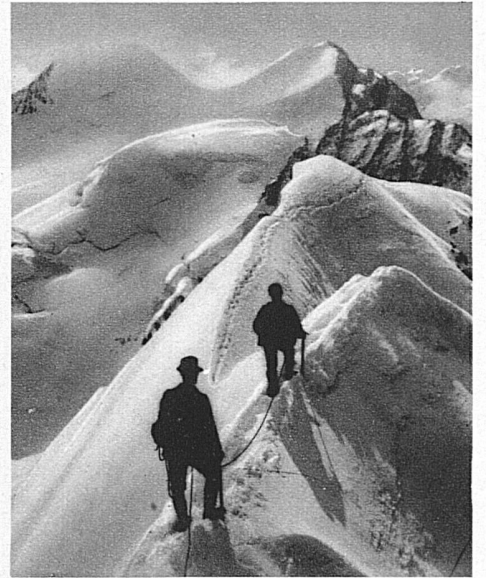
Dangers there will always be as well as difficulties. There are those stones that here and there fall from somewhere high overhead with force to strike a man dead. There is the «awful avalanche», that vast mass of snow loosened perchance by the vibrations from a ringing shout or a loud and reckless laugh, and swallowing up the victims in its path as it rushes madly down the mountain side. There is the dreaded fog or mist which steals around with sudden swiftness and shrouds the climber in a blank world. It takes an expert to read the weather indications, and he is not always infallible. What will a novice know? Therefore take advice. If the local wiseacre says, Do not venture today, then put off your start, and don't yield to any foolhardy selfconfidence in yourself or in a companion.

For the man endowed with physical strength and a good nerve, who is a cheerful and reliable companion, who prepares beforehand with care, who heeds the advice of the guide whose life is bound with his own on the rope, for such a man the call of the mountains presents an attractive force he does well to welcome and offers rewards that will never disappoint.



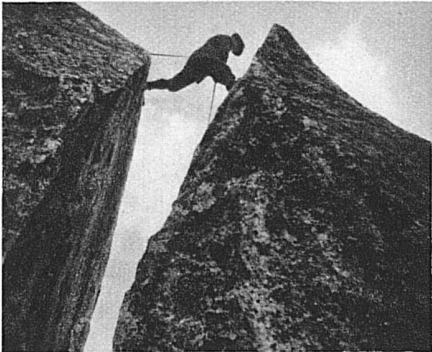
Phot. Gaberell

Obergabelhorn / Dent Blanche / Zermatt

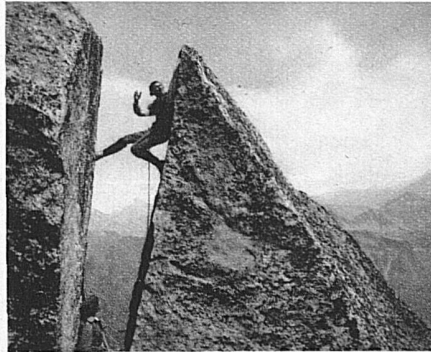


Biancogrät / Bernina

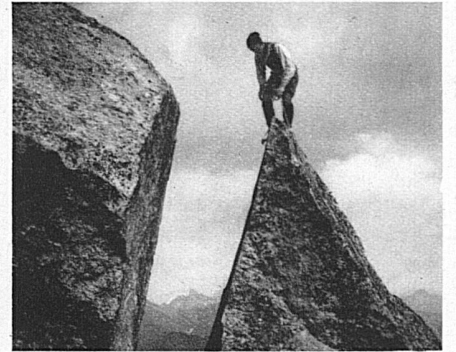
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Phot. Meerkämper

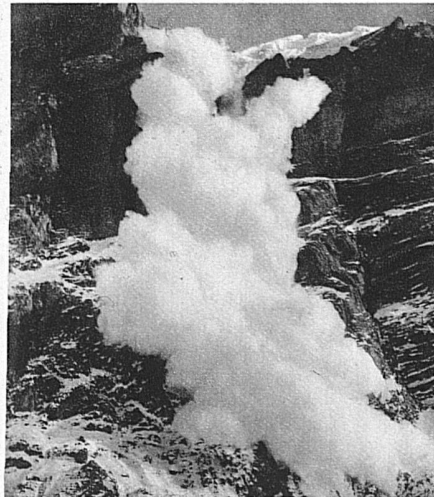


Pizzo Gallo / Bergell



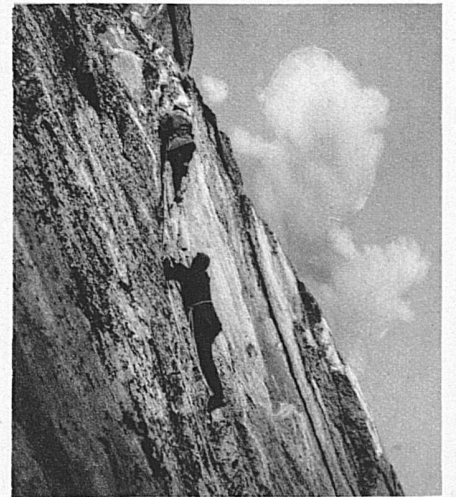
Phot. Wittwer

Chamois in the Bernese Oberland



Phot. Schweizer

Avalanche on the Wetterhorn



Phot. Meerkämper

Crest of the Borgo / Bergell



Phot. Meerkämper

Ascent of the Piz Palü



Dom, one of the highest Swiss Mountains

Phot. Gos