

EDITORIAL

Since this edition of the *M.A.M. Journal* comes to its readers after another change of occupant of the editorial chair, many may wonder what changes of policy, if any, are to be observed. The present editor donned the green eyeshade, assumed the well-chewed cigar butt and summoned his Advertising Manager* with the hope that a formerly biennial affair would henceforth be an annual one, but with few other aims, as a journal of this description is largely what its contributors make it. Apart from that, we hope the journal reflects the many sides of M.A.M. activity, and whilst we want to be up to date on all the exciting climbs performed by our members and those outside the association, we have tried to temper the muscular with the literary and even to introduce here and there little news items from the world of humour and fantasy. If those who come from haunts of coot and hern feel left out of it, they can at least take consolation that those whose haunts are slab and cornice have not had it all their own way.

No one, however unobservant, can fail to have noticed the remarkable mountaineering achievements of the past few years. In Himalayan enterprises, of which a recent good example has been the conquest of the Mustagh Tower, in brilliant *paroi nord* ascents in the Alps, and in the various new climbs of exceptional severity achieved on British rock we sense a raising of standards all round; the impossible gets a little nearer to achievement each year and climbing is less the art of the prudently reasonable and more the art of the well-nigh impossible. The climbing atmosphere is charged with confidence; after decades of meeting failure on difficult enterprises gallantly the reaction is that nobody seriously doubts that anyone who announces his intention of doing some particular climb will indeed achieve his object. In all this activity, too, one feels that whilst nobody is being so pure as to scorn all artificial aids, such aids are being fiercely kept in check and are being used as sparingly as possible. The irresistible conclusion is that standards are steadily improving, which will ultimately prove to be for the lasting good of the sport.

And now, as they say, read on.

* Mrs. W. E. Walker, to whom many thanks.