

## Associate Editorial

*Being largely Thoughts on  
Propaganda and Enlightenment  
by Brian Meredith*

THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR of the Canadian Ski Year Book rejoices under another official title: Chairman of the Committee on Education and Promotion. Whenever, as often happens, he fails to breast the blows of circumstances with customary aplomb or gets tripped up by a little crust, he secures some reassurance from the thought and goes bravely on. But always there will lurk a tiny regret. When the idea was first cooked, why did it not become President of the Council on Propaganda and Enlightenment? Much more fun.

Be that as it may not, the general purpose of promotion and education regarding ski-ing is one in which the association is rightly more interested now than ever before; and various clubs and zones that make it up are proving what may be done. So far as headquarters are concerned, the promotion chairman must confess that he has merely been able to fling a few ideas into the void of sundry circulars, and been able to initiate and encourage a few contacts with the press.

### *Press Publicity*

Press relations are important and most pleasant to maintain, for as a rule newspapermen cherish enough essential insanity and individuality to make life lively. They are interested in ski-ing and willing to print news about it; but they are human, cannot cover every club gathering and competition because staffs are small and the events they must cover many, and won't bother with badly written copy or accounts of something that took place a few days before, something that is no longer News. It is worth the time and attention therefore of some energetic member of each club and zone committee to keep the newspapers in his territory posted as to coming events, to provide all reasonable help at those events should reporters materialize, and to turn in short advance notes and prompt news-stories of competitions where that will aid in getting them into the paper. It is worth while to that individual to study press problems and practices, to learn how to write an efficient news-story in minimum space, to learn about assignment books and sports departments and the internal workings of newspapers, and to know personally the men actually concerned with covering ski-ing. Some papers pay an outside staff contributor to watch ski-ing, which is a job worth seeking.

The value of proper press relations and steady and interesting publicity regarding the sport, on all club activities and on the human side of it



*A portrait by Edwin Holgate of Montreal of H. Smith-Johannsen, C.A.S.A. Executive Committee, and veteran skier, who has just been made an honorary member of the S.C.G.B.*

where the opportunity offers, is obvious. Membership can only be built up, attendance at competitions assured, and the support of useful authorities solicited if the public is kept acquainted through the press and radio.

### *Radio and Movies*

The radio is worth all the time that can be afforded, and if local stations or sponsors are interested in broadcasting talks on ski technique or on weather conditions each weekend, then the influence exerted cannot be overestimated. One of the most praiseworthy moves in this direction was taken two seasons ago by Mr. R. G. Lewis and certain associates in the Ottawa Ski Club, and elsewhere in this issue some of the instructional information broadcast appears in condensed form.

Instructional moving pictures are most helpful, and it has been the hope of the C.A.S.A. that copies of McCrillis-Schneib's "Modern Ski Technique" could be afforded for loan to various clubs; but at the time of writing this is not possible.

### *What's Worth While*

But the press and the radio and the movies are all only means of promotion. What is more important is to decide what fundamentally should be promoted. For many years, and still with many individuals, the idea has been to promote competitions and to orientate the operation of association and club work to that end. Of late others have arisen who have disagreed, or who have claimed at least that the sport itself and not the few stars of it deserved notoriety.

It is a nice but important point. Ski-ing, as some of us happen to see it, is essentially a non-competitive sport, as much an individual affair as swimming or canoeing. It is not necessary to win anything in order to enjoy it, and indeed if the competitive complex appears paramount, then many prospective skiers will be deterred. A friend argued the other day that he would never join a ski club because he never wished to compete in anything. He had his fun in cross-country and downhill ski-ing. He didn't realize that the association and clubs made much of his ski-ing possible; that they had helped in instigating ski-specials, and checking ski free, and improving slightly hotel standards and rates in the ski country, had helped beginners with systematic instruction and had actually opened up much country to ski-ing, cutting trails and securing the consent of property owners.

It is more desirable, conceivably, to do all this than to neglect any of it and concentrate on competition. The one benefits the many, and the other the few. Clubs can be a great and beneficial influence by training the youngsters and starting beginners with technique that will keep them out of trouble and injury. They can check on the service they get from transportation and hotel companies; and they can show those whose co-operation is essential to successful ski-ing how they can best provide for skiers and how they can make themselves more attractive to ski-tourists generally. They can encourage the formation of affiliated clubs in schools and churches and scout groups; and they can get the interest and backing of merchants and townfolk by staging events that will stimulate business for the community. They can, and in many instances they do, and for those who do and for those who perhaps agree with what we believe to be almost axiomatic, this may sound superfluous.

#### *Club Bulletins*

One of the most effective means of stimulating and sustaining interest within a club is of course a weekly bulletin or magazine; and to assist what we vaguely describe as "public relations" copies should be mailed also to all newspapers, municipal officials whose support is useful, and merchants whose business may relate to the sport in some way. The latter will often sponsor paid advertising, and transportation companies may include in their regular advertising announcement of competitions or carnivals that take place on points served by them.

The club bulletin should be handled by someone genuinely interested and qualified, by someone willing to study the mechanics and physical restrictions of putting it together. It can provide real information, attract attention and even gain some small revenue for itself. It should not be attempted on an ambitious scale but allowed to grow gradually. Few things can endure that are not fundamentally sustained by people whose business it is, and who are paid to do it. Let

written material be direct and to the point, and don't, unless the writer is a rare exception, attempt to be too "matey" or funny. Amateur humor tends to go sour, and to take up a devil of a lot of space. In page arrangement allow wide margins, and for captions favor small bold face type well displayed rather than large type crowded about by text. An architect or artist member of the club can be of real assistance in selecting standard types in harmony with one another, and in designing a standard page-arrangement that should be followed. Lay-out of pages should be begun on strictly conservative lines, and no attempts at stunts made until some experience has been gained.

#### *Ideas in Operation*

In recommending in these and other matters as we do, it is with the knowledge that much is already being accomplished. Sam Cliff and his confreres in the Ontario Zone we shall always regard with appreciative awe, for they, for one group, are doing as much for the sport along general lines as one could wish for anywhere. We noticed with some joy, for instance, that they were recommending that last year's *Ski Year Book* be carefully considered, and that certain special articles be studied. Some of these they recommended as having news value and being worth offering to newspaper friends for reprinting. The same will apply to the current *Year Book*, we hope, and clubs may arrange to have published any material from this issue, provided the *Ski Year Book* and the C.A.S.A. are referred to, and also the original source where, as in some instances, the material has been secured indirectly by us. "The Ski Runner," issued actually by the Toronto Ski Club, and other literature published in that territory is so good that other zones and clubs should be on their mailing lists; and it suggests that there should be a more systematic interchange of information and memoranda between clubs and zones.

All C.A.S.A. and Zone officials should be on the mailing lists of all clubs and zone committees, as in this way many excellent ideas can be put quickly into circulation.

#### *Art of Ski-ing*

As the art of ski-ing has improved of late years, so also we like to think that ski-ing has improved art. It is not far fetched to claim that skis have taken many artists and embryo artists out into the open, whereas they would have a scanty idea of it otherwise, and that they have begun to paint the Canadian winter with a more appreciative brush.

For some unknown reason we have been curiously sensitive about our winter. Kipling and many others have contributed a lot of subtly adverse publicity regarding it; and it has taken skiers to really out and say, and quite truthfully and enthusiastically, that they get as much if not more fun out of it than summer. Art has

somehow reflected this, has illustrated winter either as an artificial pretty-pretty affair found only on Christmas cards, or bleak and cheerless to an extent only possible within a few degrees of the north pole. It has only of late begun to catch a little of the sparkle we can see on the snow, and the tang we breathe in the air, and the zest with which we can fling ourselves across the snows. In print it sounds like the old variety of propaganda: the sparkle, the tang, the zest; but we like to believe that until a few years ago people had no idea how to enjoy it, until they skied they really didn't live, and that we have discovered a new land here in our own homeland which needs to be described more naturally and intimately, and painted from a fresh and familiar point of view.

We don't mean that winter landscapes need to have a skier slewing across the foreground, though he makes an unostentatious and decorative incidental figure to humanize a picture. We infer that the artists who are on skis are painting better for it, are catching the beauty in familiar scenes in winter and doing much to break the forbidding spell which the stay-at-homes imagine broods over it for four months of the year.

In this issue there should appear several examples to illustrate our point. Edwin Holgate's portrait of Smith Johannsen indicates the character which a forceful painter can retain in a forceful subject. Fred Taylor's etchings are directly inspired by the sport itself, and most creditable they are. Graham Norwell has been painting in the Laurentians and producing some

delightfully decorative work in water-color, oil and conté-crayon. Peter Whyte at Banff will contribute more to the Art of Ski-ing undoubtedly.

On the cover appears a four color reproduction of a Laurentianesque landscape by F. S. Coburn, one of the most famous of Canadian landscape painters, to whom we are much indebted, whose winter landscapes have for long anticipated many of the qualities we have hoped would be revealed. The plates first appeared on the cover of "The Seigneur," magazine of the Seignior Club, from which source also several other engravings have been loaned.

THE illustration of the Canadian Ski Year Book is a problem, and an expensive problem, for engravings cost a lot, many are required and we can afford few. The Seignior Club's files have produced an interesting collection of ski photographs used as engravings in "The Seigneur," and these together with the cover plates add greatly to this issue. "The Ski Runner" in Toronto has lent others, and thus we have been able to supplement the few we have had made especially for the book. This may explain why, erratically, some photographs are reproduced and some are not. Usually it was a case of cuts already existing in one case and not in others.

A most helpful contribution to this end was a donation from Mr. W. B. Converse of the Red Birds Ski Club, that staunch patron of the sport to whom many are so justly grateful. The editors and publishers thank him for the improvement which his thoughtfulness has made possible.



Arriving from the Station at Montebello, P.Q.