

NORTHERN BEAUTY

The Pennine Dales

By Arthur Raistrick. (The Regions of Britain.) Pp. 236 + 40 plates. (Eyre and Spottiswoode: London, September 1968.) 63s.

THERE are important and beautiful parts of England north of Hendon, however much some Londoners and many others in the south-east pretend never to have heard of them. One area in particular is strangely forgotten by many people. This is the region known as the Pennine Dales, at the northern end of the "Pennine Chain"—an area with some of the most spectacular scenery in the country and one with a quite extraordinary unity and character. It is the area that Arthur Raistrick has written about with loving pen. He writes with authority, too, being born and bred in Yorkshire, a member of the Dales Park Planning Committee, as well as president of the West Riding Ramblers Association.

Arthur Raistrick defines the Pennine Dales by a rectangle that joins Carlisle and Newcastle in the north with Lancaster and Harrogate in the south. The valleys of Eden and Lune form its western edge, and the Great North Road lies a few miles beyond its eastern boundary. It embraces not only the lush valleys like Wharfedale and Wensleydale, but also a wild moorland plateau and the rugged summits of Ingleborough, Wharfedale, Pen-y-ghent and Crossfell.

The Pennine Dales is not a tourist handbook as its glossy cover might suggest, although it could be profitably read as an introduction to the area. It is a serious regional study, and can be read both for pleasure and as a reference book. Arthur Raistrick outlines the history of the region from Mesolithic man to the present day. He describes its geology and climate; the growth of villages, towns and markets; the development of mining, textiles and agriculture; and the effects of the industrial revolution and the coming of railways. The book has an extensive bibliography, and there are plenty of plates and diagrams of very good quality.

As many of the dalesfolk and some visitors know, the dales are wonderful places for walks and, as the author points out: "There are few parts of the country where a person can have more confidence of finding interesting walks to suit whatever length he fancies". It is fitting therefore that Dr Raistrick includes a chapter at the end of the book to write about one of the greatest walks in the country, the Pennine Way, which was officially declared open in 1965. This route, a 250 mile walk along the "backbone" of England, runs from Edale in Derbyshire right through to the Scottish border. In marked contrast to this wild and hilly way, there is planned a new riverside footpath through the dales along a 73 mile route from Ilkley to Bowness-on-Windermere. It came as a nice coincidence that the proposal to create this path was submitted to the West Riding County Council a few days after the publication of this book. If the proposal is approved, the new path will be called the Dales Way.

The Pennine Dales are beautiful and they have a strange fascination that haunts all those who live or have lived there. But how long will this beauty last? Already, parts have been spoilt through careless planning and inconsideration. Arthur Raistrick ends his book with these thought provoking comments: "The new motorways are bringing populations of fifteen to twenty millions within an hour's run of the dales and the Lake District. Are these lovely areas to be opened to more and ever more cars, without limit, until they become one vast car park with crowded, jammed traffic on every road on to which a car can force its way? Or are we as a nation going to accept a measure of planning and control as the price of keeping our greatest treasures? This choice has not yet been put to trial nor explained to the nation with sufficient force and clarity; it is still left too much to the

voice of a quiet minority. It is a choice that cannot be avoided if we are to keep for the enjoyment of future generations such areas, and there are many, as the dales which this book has tried to describe". SARAH BUNNEY

SCIENTIST-EXPLORER

The Letters of F. W. Ludwig Leichhardt

Edited by M. Aourousseau. Vol. 1: Pp. xvi + 1-424. Vol. 2: Pp. v + 425-820. Vol. 3: Pp. v + 821-1175. (The Hakluyt Society, Second Series, Nos. 133-135.) (Cambridge University Press: London, July 1968. Published for the Hakluyt Society.) 126s.

ON February 22, 1848, a week before he was to lead an ill-fated expedition into the interior of Australia, F. W. Ludwig Leichhardt, scientist and explorer, wrote, "... whatever I have done has never been for honour. I have worked for the sake of science, and for *nothing* else; and I shall continue to do so even if not a soul in the world pays any attention to me. I am fearful of losing God's blessing, should I give way to vanity and confound the driving ambition to be acclaimed and famous with the genuine, quiet and laborious striving after knowledge". The expedition of seven men was never heard of again, but Leichhardt became a legend in Australia. Unfortunately, this extraordinary man with a passion for science is little known outside of that country, a situation this excellent edition of his letters, ably edited by M. Aourousseau and published under the sponsorship of the Hakluyt Society, will help to correct.

The son of a Prussian civil servant, Leichhardt began his university career in 1831 by reading philology at the Friedrich Wilhelms Universität in Berlin. Two years later he transferred to Göttingen where he met John Nicholson, a young Englishman who had turned from medicine to linguistics. His interest in the sciences aroused by Nicholson, Leichhardt returned to Berlin in 1834 and took up medicine. In the 1830s it was no easy matter for a young man with little money to devote himself to science, for there were few salaried posts available. Medicine, however, offered a means of support and an opportunity for serious scientific research. Leichhardt left Berlin before taking his medical degree to travel and study with his affluent friend William Nicholson, John's younger brother. William, in effect, became Leichhardt's patron. They pursued science in the libraries, museums and lecture halls of London and Paris.

The studies of the two friends were in preparation for careers of scientific exploration in remote parts of the world. They planned to explore Australia together, but in 1841 Leichhardt sailed alone when Nicholson decided to remain in England to practise medicine and to take up the family responsibilities that had fallen to him on the death of his father. With little money and the disadvantage of not being English, Leichhardt struggled to establish himself in Australia, overcoming poverty and moments of doubt. He tutored children and gave public science lectures. He benefited from the kindness of new friends and suffered from the indifference of people who could have helped him in his enterprises. Somehow he kept his independence and enthusiasm as he pursued his study of Australian natural history and geography, beginning collections and opening correspondence with European naturalists. He made several scientific trips, often alone, and led two expeditions, the first in 1844-45 establishing his reputation as an explorer, the second in 1846-47 ending in failure. On the third expedition he and his comrades vanished.

Besides being a rich source of information about life in the English settlements of the 1840s, Leichhardt's Australian letters reveal the single-mindedness and