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Nothing like Ski-ing
For Shooting a Line!

Your great-aunt will tell you, and she will not be kidding, that there was a time when ski-ing—in the full Regent Street and Brompton Road sense of the word—did not happen at all.

A form of it was practiced by the peasantry in Scandinavia and Switzerland, who had no better way of getting from here to there. Skis were in the same category as Eskimo kayaks, used while waiting for good roads and motor-boats. Only the Viennese, always ones for a bit of fun, skied “just,” as the Irish say, “for gas.” In the period when even their widows were merry, they would drive out to Semmering and do it on Sunday afternoons. We British wondered what those rather narrow wooden things were that they carries about with them, and, on being put in the picture, deemed them frivolous.

[. . .]

One word of warning: Aleister (“The Beast”) Crowley, Britain’s No. 1 Black Magicker, used to claim that when ski-ing across Tibet he had levitated himself, by supernatural power, across a crevasse 1,000 yards wide. Should you, on your holiday, meet a stranger who suggests you join him in a similar experiment, always ascertain his fee in advance, and find out from the hotel further whether he is a trustworthy, registered magician. If nor, dispense with his services. You can always say you did it, and it was too bad everyone was having tea at the time and missed your feat.