

NEW ZEALAND NOTES

BY N. D. HARDIE

DURING the past year there was considerable activity in the local mountains as well as some highly successful climbing by New Zealanders abroad.

Most of the main peaks were climbed by a variety of routes but the trend which is noticeable in these ascents is the increase in face climbs. Mount Hooker (named after Sir Joseph Hooker, who was here in 1850 between explorations in the Ross Sea and the Kangchenjunga area) was climbed by a new South face route. This mountain is away from the Main Divide and until ten years ago it had been climbed only seven times. Now the new highway, which joins South Westland to Otago gives much easier access to the approaches of this once remote peak.

Crosscut, named because the profile of its summit ridge resembles a saw, was also climbed by a new route up its Southern granite face. In 1941 a very steep couloir to the Fox glacier had been descended from the summit of Mount Tasman, the second peak of this land. It was not until this year that the couloir was first climbed. It was found to be a long, steep ice climb which kept the two pairs of climbers fully absorbed for a long day. They then traversed the mountain after spending a night in bivouac sacks at about 1500 ft. below the summit.

Murray Jones, who recently returned from Europe, was in parties which made new face routes on Haidinger, Tutuko and Talbot. Among his European climbs were the Walker Spur and the Brandler-Hasse route on the Cima Grande di Lavaredo.

In Antarctica the official surveying field traverse groups were reduced to one party of six instead of the more normal two or three parties of four men to each. They operated in the far north-west of the Ross Dependency, exploring the Rennick and Lillie glacier areas, with emphasis more on geology than mountaineering. Still, they climbed many summits and recorded a complicated mountainous area some four hundred miles from Scott Base. There seems to be much wasted manpower in using three motor toboggans and six men in crevassed country. One vehicle cannot travel far alone with safety and two can do just as much useful work as three.

Some eighty miles eastwards, on the Ross Sea Coast was Ed. Hillary's party, being more openly mountaineering. This and the New Zealand effort in the Andes are recorded elsewhere in this Journal (see pages 173 and 252 respectively).