

## REVIEWS

*Nanga Parbat.* By Karl M. Herrligkoffer. Pp. 254. Illustrations. Elek Books. 1954. 21s. Translation by Eleanor Brockett and Anton Ehrenzweig.

THE first part of the book, by the translators, is a résumé of the history of attempts on the mountain with emphasis on its tragedies. The account of the British expedition of 1895, when Mummery reached a height of 20,000 ft. on the Diamir face, is taken from Collie's book, *Climbing on the Himalaya and other Mountain Ranges*, published in 1902, and may be less familiar to many readers than the story of the German expeditions of 1932, 1934, 1937 and 1938. Bechtold's *Nanga Parbat Adventure*, translated by Tyndale and splendidly illustrated, was published in 1935 and tells the fate of Willy Merkl and many of his colleagues, a tragedy which the author of the present work, Herrligkoffer, gives as the main reason for the 1953 expedition, the Willy Merkl Memorial Expedition.

All these German attempts had been made by the Rakhiot Glacier under the glacier-hung northern face of Nanga Parbat. The translators tell us something of the Reconnaissance of the Diamir face in 1939. After trying Mummery's route and finding a relic of his camp on the second rock rib, they abandoned it as too dangerous and forced a way to a height of 20,000 ft. up the precipices under the North Summit. 'The stone was extremely brittle and broke at the slightest touch; stones hailed continuously from above.' We can forgive the refusal of the Bhutia porters to follow! A month later Harrer and Lobenhoffer reached 21,000 ft. and pitched their small tent 'while stones kept whistling over their heads.' Aufschnaiter, however, thought the route would be possible earlier in the summer and a full-scale expedition was planned for 1940. One gathers from the book that the planning of this expedition to try the new route, and the determination of Herrligkoffer to follow the old Rakhiot route, was one of the reasons for the acute disagreements which seem to have preceded and followed the doings of the 1953 party. There is a brief account of what is called the British 'Winter Escapade of 1950.' The Sherpas, Tenzing among them, refused to carry camp equipment up to the glacier zone which had proved a death-trap to almost the whole party of 1937. One of the three young Englishmen was saved by getting frost-bite and having to come down to the Base Camp.

The translators cause occasional doubts about their knowledge of mountaineering, when, for example, on p. 51 they say of Aschenbrenner and Kunigk in 1932: 'On their return they glissaded direct down the steep north-east ice-wall which they had shirked on the way up and were at its foot within two and a half hours.' Some glissade! The height of this wall is given as 800 ft. on p. 176.

Dr. Herrligkoffer, who writes the account of the 1953 ascent, is a half-brother of Willy Merkl. Though it records a wonderful success due to a quite outstanding feat of enterprise and endurance by the Tyrolese, Hermann Buhl, it is rather an unhappy, even disquieting tale. The reasons for climbing the mountain and the aftermath of the climb are so entirely foreign to what most of us hope to get from mountaineering. A sort of urge for self-immolation seems to seize many Germans once they have a vision of the flag on some eminence; they seem unable to see beyond it. Frauenberger writes of the main summit as he first sees it: 'that radiant crown . . . rightly demanded the supreme sacrifice.' The President of the Munich Section of the German Alpine Club says in his Introduction: 'All Germans . . . must rejoice that the Nanga Parbat Expedition of 1953 has done so much to enhance the nation's prestige.' The oath-taking ceremony on p. 148 is a strange rite.

Curiously enough, the man who was wholly responsible for the wonderful effort that brought success to what was becoming a rather despondent party, the Tyrolese, Hermann Buhl, shows no sign of this almost hysterical tension of feeling. One senses a certain lack of sympathy between him and some of his party. On the high plateau at 25,000 ft., he looks back towards the Silbersattel and sees Otto Kempter far behind. 'I saw him stop and then sink down. Otto had given up. This in itself was more or less immaterial to me, but with my tongue parched and my stomach rumbling I could not but think of the bacon in Otto's rucksack which was now lost to me.' And nearing the top: 'Naturally, as a climber, I realised that I was now on the last lap to the summit. But it might just as well have been any other summit in my native Tyrol.'

Of the four young men of the assault party, Rainer had been taken ill, and Köllensperger, whose bad slip on a difficult traverse on the Rakhiot Peak had been well checked by Buhl, had gone down with bad toothache, so that only Buhl and Kempter were left. Frauenberger and Ertl came up to help establish Camp V at 22,600 ft. beyond the Moor's Head on the east arête, leaving the two young men to make the attempt on July 3. Kempter was unwilling to get up when Buhl was preparing to start, and followed him nearly an hour later. He gave up just beyond the Silbersattel, stayed on the plateau all day and returned to Camp V late in the afternoon. Next day, July 4, despite urgent messages from Base Camp, no attempt was made to go up to the Silbersattel to see what had happened to Buhl. In the afternoon a small memorial tablet to Merkl, Welzenbach, and Wieland, was fixed to the rock of the Moor's Head and the ceremony filmed.

It is no disparagement of the other fine climbers in the party to say that Buhl stands out as a quite exceptional performer. On the Rakhiot Peak, over 23,000 ft., he had been 'unable to resist climbing the extremely difficult needle above the snowy top'; again 'only Buhl was still keen on bringing home some success for the sake of prestige.' The extraordinary occurrence of a quite windless night at over 26,000 ft. let him survive the night standing against a rock with next to no protec-

tion. Drugs certainly enabled him to keep going, but his account of the final climb suggests that his mind was not acting normally. An overhang of 30 ft. is mentioned as a casual incident, though it sounds enough to stop an admittedly exhausted man; and it is hard to imagine a man in his senses leaving his ice-axe behind for good in such a place.

There are four appendices: on equipment, the Hunza porters, oxygen, and weather; oxygen was only used for invalids. The illustrations, some of them in colour, are numerous and good, though not equal to those in *Nanga Parbat Adventure*.

As they read of the tents buried to the tops in new snow, the difficulties with the porters, the quarrels, and the doses of phanodorm, of padutin and of pervitin, not many mountaineers will regret they were not there.

R. L. G. IRVING.

*Das Buch vom Nanga Parbat.* G. O. Dyhrenfurth. Pp. 199. Nymphenburger Verlagsbuchhandlung, Munich. 1954.

*Das Ringen um den Nanga Parbat, 1856-1953.* Paul Bauer. Pp. 238. Süddeutscher Verlag, Munich. 1955.

IN these books two of the greatest living Himalayan experts give the whole story of the indomitable and finally successful struggle by the élite of the German and Austrian mountaineers to reach the summit of Nanga Parbat.

Professor Dyhrenfurth has expanded and brought up to date the chapter on the mountain in his masterly work, 'Zum Dritten Pol.' Starting with Mummery's bold effort in 1895, he compresses into 150 small pages of large print all the essential facts and features of every expedition, together with valuable comments on the outcome of each based on his own extensive experience. His last 50 pages he devotes to special topics; the history, characteristics and rival merits of the Sherpas, Bhotias, Hunzas and Baltis; scientific results; the making of films; a bibliography and glossary. It is a short book, in which no word is wasted. It could be read in one long sitting, and when so read leaves a powerful impression on the reader of a great tragic drama, in which at the cost of over 30 lives, spread over many acts, the mighty mountain is conquered at last as the curtain falls. The book is adequately illustrated with 13 photographs and two maps.

Dr. Bauer's book is far longer and more comprehensive, extending to over 230 large pages of small but clear print. He starts with the exploration of Adolf Schlagintweit, who in 1856, brought back the first reliable geographical details of the mountain. He then deals at some length with Mummery's tireless campaign, of which he writes: 'Looking back today, sixty years later, it is clear that Mummery's attack was the boldest and most resolute ever undertaken and his reconnaissance not surpassed in width and scope by any later one. . . . He was indeed one of the really great mountaineers.' The events of the great German expeditions are given largely in the words of the climbers themselves; for 1934 by Fritz Bechtold, who in all went four times to

the mountain ; for 1937 by Dr. Hartmann, inspired by Walter Flex's haunting refrain, ' Was Frost und Leid, Mir gilt ein Eid, Der glüht wie Feuerbrände . . . ' ; for 1938 by Bruno Balke and Dr. Bauer himself. By this method the human aspect of the adventure is greatly enhanced : the reader hopes and fears, is scorched or frozen, with the climbers themselves. There is room to record pleasing incidents such as the adoption of two mischievous motherless wolf cubs, who were christened Nanga and Parbat respectively, and became the mascots of the 1934 Base Camp ; and the retrieving of ' Martl's ' precious topee from a crevasse 150 ft. deep by his friend ' Pert,' who had himself let down on a rope held by two raw Baltis, who could not understand his orders and all but strangled him by too vigorous tugging. There is room, too, for a chapter on the important additions to scientific knowledge in the domains of geology, geography, and botany made by the experts attached to the 1934, 1937 and 1938 parties.

It is very interesting to compare the authors' comments on the various expeditions. They, by no means, always agree in the conclusions they draw from the evidence. For instance, Dyhrenfurth thinks that Aschenbrenner and Schneider might well have achieved the summit and returned in daylight on July 6, 1934, if they had started the day with that intention and gone all out : Bauer is confident that they must have been caught by nightfall and storm and perished miserably with the rest. Again, Dyhrenfurth thinks that the 1937 party culpably underestimated the avalanche danger in their choice of a camp site under Rakhiot Peak in preference to the far safer site used in 1934, whereas Bauer attributes the disaster not to any error of judgment but to sheer bad luck, and gives good reasons for his belief. As a rule, however, they think, as one might expect, along the same lines, especially in the case of the 1953 expedition. Both are severely critical of the handling of the team from the mountaineering angle by its nominal leader, who was no mountaineer, while not refusing him credit for the persistence which collected the money and so made the expedition possible. It is indeed a strange irony of fate that doomed the 1934 and 1937 efforts to disaster despite a splendid team-spirit and inspiring leadership, whereas the 1953 party, which lacked harmony from the start and never achieved real cohesion, conquered the mountain by mutiny against the leader's direct order. In the last paragraph of his book Dr. Bauer pays an eloquent tribute to the mutineers : ' One day Providence put restraint on the Powers of Nature. She allowed thirteen days of silk and satin to dawn on Nanga Parbat, days and nights on which no storm, no wind, not a breath disturbed the ether, no flake of snow danced in the air. And she provided three men, of whom one was the heart, one the head and the third the fist, a very hard, steely and steady fist. To that fist the Powers that rule over us granted the capture of the summit. It was a great, a wonderful deed. Thanks be to God that He let it come to pass.' So ends a book, the writing of which in memory of his friends and in honour of a great mountain must have been to Dr. Bauer a labour of love.

For his illustrations, Dr. Bauer has been able to draw on the archives of the Deutsche Himalaya-Stiftung, and he has made full use of that privilege. It is safe to say that in no book ever published has a mountain been presented to the public from every side and in every aspect with such magnificence. There are 92 plates in all: they include portraits of every team and most of the leaders. One picture, however, is missing which should have been present to complete the collection, Hermann Buhl's own summit photograph. Permission to reproduce it was apparently refused by the owner of the copyright, Dr. Herrligkoffer. Three useful maps are appended at the end, where they are easy to refer to. The publishers have co-operated well with the author, and the result is a book pleasant to handle, easy to read and almost word-perfect. English readers, however, would be pleased, if a few minor blemishes were removed in a second edition. I. N. Collie (p. 16), Tillmann (p. 27), Corbert (p. 99) would look more familiar as J. N. Collie, Tilman, and Corbett. On pp. 33 and 36 by an unaccountable lapse Juni has usurped the place of Juli.

H. E. L. PORTER.

*South Col.* By Wilfrid Noyce. Pp. 303. Illustrated with 52 plates, 4 in colour, and line drawings by A. J. Veilhan. Heinemann. 1954. 21s.

'EVEREST was not climbed by limbs and oxygen but with the help of these. Something else climbed it. . . . 'Something of mine.' And here is 'something' of Wilfrid Noyce's; a fine thing, too.

We confess to having approached this book with diffidence. John Hunt's book was so good that there hardly seemed room for another. Surely most of us who have already bought the official account of the expedition feel we know about all of it already, and what is the point of reading it all over again? . . .

Then we began to read it. And we had not got far when it began to grip us. Here are our old friends, the members of the expedition. But they are described from a new angle, a more subjective and personal one, so we have no sense of repetition. And it is the same with the account of the journey, the preliminary climbing and training, and above all, the work on the ice-fall and on that great Lhotse face. We knew it all before in an objective way—but here we become Wilfrid Noyce's companions as he cuts and kicks steps, undoes the tangled rope, cleans out pans with snow and cold fingers (how well we know that horrid job), finds that there is plenty of oxygen but nothing to drink, or that the Sherpas are all prostrate when they ought to be ready to start, except two (bless them!).

The way up the ice-fall is particularly vividly described, and if you have ever been up a Himalayan ice-fall, or even up the one on the Mer de Glace near the Dent du Géant, you can imagine you are with the party hacking their way up it. The chief art of Wilfrid Noyce's writing is the ability to impart this sense of companionship. We are with him on the climb, not merely sitting in a chair and reading a book about it. And it is this subjective, personal point of view, shared by

reader and writer as it were, that make us feel that even if you already own a copy of the *Ascent of Everest*, you should have this book too, to complete your knowledge of the expedition and to make it a richer experience.

The poetic side of Noyce's nature comes out again and again—better in the book, we think, than in the actual poems at the end.

'Everest, the cold calm mass that lay there still . . . as indifferent to our struggles as it had ever been throughout the centuries' (p. 253). 'I felt that I was playing a sleep-walker down almost unknown ground' (p. 167); 'I stopped to admire once more the silver blades of ice riveted in the bronze-work of Nuptse's rock' (p. 203); 'First in little turrets and ridges, finally in one terrifying uprush, too steep even for the toughest Himalayan ice to cling to, the mountain heaved itself to dominate everything around' (p. 94). 'Terrors are then more acute, so also is the sensation of being a part with hills, and through them with all natural forms. I could never be frightened of ghosts among mountains' (p. 203). Passages like these savour more of true poetry than many lines which are arranged in the form of verse. Of these the first, 'That I may endure . . .' is the best. But the poetry in the book itself is one of the things that give it distinction.

The explanation of the dry high-altitude throat given on p. 78 is wrong; it is the dryness of the cold air, not its dustiness, that is responsible. That is the only inaccuracy we have detected; but in a book of this calibre one does not look for inaccuracies. One reads to enjoy.

One of the joys of the book is the description of the Sherpas and their village life at Namchi. After the summit has been won, the expedition is by no means over, and the journey down with its care-free atmosphere is an integral part of it. The last forty pages of the book are as delightful as any, and it ends characteristically with a quotation from Browning, whose influence is visible in the poems with which the book closes.

Coloured illustrations of snow mountains have to be super-excellent to be better than monochrome photographs, and we cannot feel that the coloured pictures, except the last one ('Sunset over Lhotse') are really first-rate. Many of the half-tone plates are good, some of them very good; but they should have been numbered, especially as they are referred to by numbers in the text.

A. J. Veilhan's drawings are expressive, and in a good rhythmic style, the best being at pp. 15, 115, 177 and 217.

Maps are simple, clear, and sufficient. The one on p. 76, however, ought to have the Chugima valley marked by name. But the clearness of the writing and of the maps means that the reader always knows 'where they are,' which is more than we can say of many similar books on mountain adventure.

Everest 1953 seems to produce books of very good value, in spite of the price of paper and printing and the other things we hear so much about (and pay so much for) nowadays. This book is a winner at a guinea.

T. H. SOMERVELL.

8000. *Driiber and Drunter*. By Hermann Buhl. Pp. 351. 9" × 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".  
Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, München. 1954.

THIS fine book records the highlights of Hermann Buhl's astonishing climbing career. A delicate child, bereft of his mother at the age of four and brought up in a household of very straitened means, he was from his earliest years possessed by an all-absorbing passion for mountains, with the result that at the age of 29 he found himself world-famous for a unique achievement, the solo ascent of Nanga Parbat, the Mountain of Terror. The feat seemed incredible when the first scanty details were revealed and it appeared that from the final bivouac Herr Buhl had ascended over 4,000 ft. to the summit at 26,650 ft., covering a horizontal distance of nearly four miles, had spent a night out on a tiny ledge without any protection not far below the summit and after 41 hours had returned alive to tell the tale. When, however, one has read Herr Buhl's own account, how he trained himself in body and spirit, on rock and ice, in summer and winter, almost expressly in order to achieve some such superhuman exploit, one does not need the irrefutable evidence of a summit photograph to convince one that the story is true.

His career started with an apprenticeship in the lovely mountains that encircle his home town, Innsbruck. Every spare moment he spent on the hills, always training and hardening himself for the future, even to the extent of walking about the streets with balls of frozen snow in his fists. At 17 he leads his first 6th grade climb in the Wilder Kaiser; at 24, to his intense joy, he is one of a party of four Austrians invited to the French school at Chamonix. Thereafter nothing can stop him, except lack of money. He earns it as a porter, as a ski-instructor, as a worker for films, even as an amateur steeplejack, and so finances visits to the Dolomites, Mont Blanc and Zermatt, where one after another the most notoriously difficult north faces and ice-climbs succumb to his attack.

Throughout he seems to bear a charmed life. He and his friend fall 200 ft. down a chimney, the rope jams in the nick of time and holds them on the brink of a precipice: they are not too badly damaged to *abseil* to safety. Doing a stunt for the films he falls 150 ft. down a crevasse, the party who should have been holding him being so engrossed in their game of cards that they had failed to notice him start: he escapes with some bruises and a nightmare. He might have been killed outright on at least eight occasions narrated in the book. Quite as often he escapes a still worse form of death by benightment in terrible situations high up on 6th grade climbs beyond the point of possible return, while thunderstorms break over the party, followed by heavy snow. He is so hardy that he survives them all, and without serious damage to his limbs. Even after three nights of bivouac in storm on the north face of the Eiger he emerges with two slightly discoloured toes, whereas his companion loses several by amputation.

His tireless resilience is illustrated on the north buttress of the Grandes Jorasses. After a terrific struggle he and Kuno Rainer are

forced to bivouac 800 ft. below the summit in a snowstorm : next day, after unfreezing themselves, they attain Pte. Walker and proceed to traverse all six summits, are overtaken by night above the Col des Grandes Jorasses and return to their base on the third day. The same party traverse all the Aiguilles of Chamonix from the Charmoz to the Plan, 15 peaks in all, in one expedition with two bivouacs ; after which he admits to being tired, but his companion was dead-beat. Not even an obviously happy marriage and the claims of paternity could restrain him for long. He was married in 1951. The following year witnessed some of his most brilliant feats (or one should call them escapades ?), the south buttress of the Tofana, the north-east face of Piz Badile, alone, in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours straight from a cycle ride of over 100 miles up hill and down dale ; and, still worse, the horrors of the north face of the Eiger, with his wife waiting below in the meadows of Alpiglen. In 1953 comes the climax, the supreme ordeal on Nanga Parbat, the various stages of which he describes with a wealth of detail quite astonishing when one considers that all who have spent any time at that height without oxygen are agreed that the mental faculties are almost in abeyance.

He has a power of vivid description and a rich vocabulary, which diversifies the slightly monotonous incidents of these gladiatorial contests, in which man pits himself against mountain in its most formidable mood and at its strongest point, armed only with a few pitons and karabiners and a Zdarsky tent. He reveals a most pleasing personality. A modest and generous nature is shown by his hero-worship of his great compatriots of an earlier generation ; Dulfer, Aschenbrenner, Auckentaler and others, his veneration for the great French professional, Gaston Rébuffat, and his affection and admiration for his own comrades, Kuno Rainer in particular. Even in his guarded references to the great Nanga Parbat quarrel he is concerned rather to display his gratitude to his fellow mutineers, Walter Frauenberger and Hans Ertl, who nursed him so devotedly from Camp V down to Base Camp, than to dilate on his grievance against the leader of the expedition. As illustrations he has collected from various sources some 20 excellent photographs of the scenes of his greatest triumphs. The last is the picture of his own face taken by Hans Ertl as he stumbled into Camp V on July 4, 1953, more dead than alive, the face of an old man, in startling contrast to the Frontispiece, which shows the same face in 1954 in all the strength and poise of vigorous manhood.

Herr Buhl has written a book of action, but he does on occasion attempt to explain wherein lies the appeal and fascination of this most dangerous sport. He emphatically rejects the common belief that he and his like are actuated solely by the competitive spirit and the desire for notoriety. To himself it is a necessary means of self-realisation ; he must learn the limits of his own powers ; he must wrestle with death to know how sweet life is ; an irresistible urge bids him ever venture something higher and harder. Like Henley, he thanks whatever Gods there be for his unconquerable soul. But that he has at

times a slightly uneasy conscience about the worthwhileness of the modern cult of extremes is revealed by the significant admission that what he enjoys above all is 'free' climbing. 'There is no pleasure,' he says, 'like that of balancing up and up light-footed and unburdened free of all mechanical aids,' and there is a remarkable picture of him doing so on a Dolomite overhang on p. 49. My point is confirmed by his moving assurance to the spirit of Mummery, for whom he has an intense admiration, that he had climbed to the top of Nanga Parbat, not by the help of modern technical aids, but entirely by 'fair' means, by clean methods and his own strength, as Mummery himself would have done.

It has been said of the confirmed 6th Graders that 'if they are still alive at 27 years of age, they are incapable of doing anything more,' so great is the strain on the nervous system.<sup>1</sup> It may well be so, but Hermann Buhl is clearly made of sterner stuff. At the age of 29 his iron will was able to drive a protesting, but perfectly responsive body, to achieve the impossible. At 30 he has produced a remarkable book, which shows not the least trace of mental exhaustion. Can it be that this amazing man, still in his prime, has yet some surprises in store for an admiring world?

H. E. L. PORTER.

*The Ascent of Alpamayo.* By Georges Kogan and Nicole Leininger. Translated by Peter E. Thompson. Pp. 134. Harrap. 1954. 15s.

THIS is an English translation of the book which, under the title of *Cordillère Blanche*, has already been reviewed in *A.J.* 58. 542-5. The initiative of the publishers in thus extending the range of Andean literature available in this country deserves every support and it is to be hoped that sales of this book will encourage accounts of other French Andean expeditions (such as FitzRoy and, in due course, Aconcagua South Face), to be similarly treated. The translator seems to have captured successfully the styles of the two narrators, the late Georges Kogan and Nicole Leininger. The quality of the coloured frontispiece and 34 black-and-white photographs may seem a little disappointing to those who saw the fine slides shown by M. André Mallieux at his lecture to the Club in 1952. There are two general and four detailed sketch maps with heights shown in feet, which make routes and the geography of the range easy to follow.

TH. CROMBIE.

*The Mountains of My Life.* By 'Ashenden.' Pp. xii, 212. Illustrations. William Blackwood and Sons, Ltd., Edinburgh. 1954. 21s.

MOST of us start our mountain experience on British hills and crags, widen it by holidays in the Alps and then, if we are lucky, tread unknown paths of distant mountain ranges. And no doubt the restriction of our mountain activities comes through increasing decrepitude or illness, so that in the end we can barely 'climb the Gornergrat . . . and are rather proud of that.'

<sup>1</sup> *Romance of Mountaineering*, p. 128.

Ashenden has had the unusual experience of reversing this order of things. Laid low by a chronic illness until the age of twenty-six, his enthusiasm for the mountains was fired by readings of the Alpine classics and his early 'climbs' were by binoculars from his home on the Asiatic shores of Marmora or from his grandmother's house near Smyrna. When his climbing started in earnest, it was on the Anatolian hills, so rarely trodden by members of the Alpine Club. Scrambles on the Nymph Dağ near Smyrna and on the Bithynian Olympus—now Ulu Dağ—were Ashenden's initiation to the mountains, which came to mean for him a restoration of health. The vagaries of walking the hills in Turkey and the attendant risks of arrest are wryly described in the tale of a search for an elusive waterfall.

Under the inspiration of Guido Rey's book, his first major ascent in the Alps was the Matterhorn, and he raced up the Hörnli ridge with Alfons Franzen in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours from the Belvedere. The days of illness were then forgotten and in two or three successive seasons Ashenden completed a number of the classic climbs in the Alps and the Dolomites which he describes with the refreshing enthusiasm of a newcomer.

His Alpine expeditions included a photographic venture into the little-visited Distelgufer under the Unter Gabelhorn, but owing to the lack of expert companions Ashenden usually climbed with guides. His most remarkable adventure was, however, one without guides in his native Anatolia. His forced bivouac with the redoubtable Pauline on the Demirkazik, an 11,000-foot peak of the Ala Dağ—an outlying range of the Taurus—is vividly and humorously described. This ill-prepared excursion in October, when the first snowfalls are to be expected, might have ended in disaster but since it did not, it must be reckoned as one of those 'close calls' without which no individual mountain experience is complete. Having taken part in two of the four previous ascents<sup>2</sup> of Demirkazik, the writer feels justified in criticising Ashenden's route-finding. To judge from the illustration facing p. 108, Ashenden and Pauline strayed from the straight but narrow snow couloir that is the key to the west face of Demirkazik and were tempted by a broader couloir which peters out in a shallow amphitheatre under the sheer wall of the west summit. The mountain let them off at the price of an uncomfortable night on a snowy ledge and on their return to generous Turkish hospitality below, the main question asked was how much they had been paid to do the job. It should be noted that the only rescue parties likely to disturb the rest of a climber benighted in Turkey are those organised by the gendarmerie.

Ashenden's approach to the mountains is on the whole mature. He is as glad to walk the hills as to climb them. He recognises, too, that the facile thrills of cragsmanship which he samples in his Dolomite climbs, are only a part of the full enjoyment of the mountains. But his writing has a freshness and a sensitive appreciation of the changing mountain scene that is closer to the pioneer spirit of the authors of *Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers*, than the type of clinical record reading

<sup>2</sup> See *A.J.* 54. 235-45 and 55. 45-55.

' piton 9 placed 12.07 . . . summit reached 21.45.' Ashenden is to be congratulated on putting down these memories of his early seasons before they fade. The book ends with a description of a night at the Capanna Margherita and a traverse of the Lyskamm which Ashenden evidently considers to be a prelude to further mountain experiences. In particular, any record of more climbs in Anatolia would be a welcome addition to our limited knowledge of Turkish mountains—doubly so if enlivened by Ashenden's cheerful vignettes of travel in those parts.

Ashenden takes excellent photographs—the reproduction does justice to most of the numerous illustrations.

E. H. PECK.

*Tibetan Marches.* By André Migot. Translated by Peter Fleming. Pp. 288. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Rupert Hart-Davis, London. 1955. 18s.

TIBET has always had a fascination for the Western world, both for its remoteness in space and in temperament, and for the suggestion of mystery that has hung over the land.

M. Migot keeps his feet on the ground, whilst none the less influenced by the mystic strain in him that enabled him to share the thoughts of the lamas whom he met in monasteries, as he shared their life and studied sympathetically their beliefs and rituals. He was himself initiated into the Karmapa sect at Shangu Gompa, and all along his march he was able, by his knowledge and understanding of Buddhist lore, to gain the goodwill of the lamas, who soon realised that he was not just one more Western traveller who regarded Lamaism as merely a collection of quaint, photogenic superstitions.

He took the greater part of a year (December 1946 to October 1947) to travel from Yunnan to Peking, going *via* Chengtu, Kangting (or Tatsienlu as it is more familiarly known), Kantze, Jyekundo, the Kokonor, Sining and Lanchow. No part of the route was unknown, but his record of the journey may well be the last we can expect for some time from the eastern marches of Tibet, and the last, perhaps, of all, of Tibetan life under the old régime.

M. Migot's good humour and friendliness are obviously of a high order, and he needed these qualities. Bandits looted him of almost everything between Yaan and Kangting, and he records that 'the inn-keeper and I, left to our own devices, took one look at each other and, roared with laughter.' (Characteristically, he notes that the bandits, when cooking some of the stolen food, invited him to share their meal: 'their hospitality cost them little enough, but I appreciated it greatly.') This light-heartedness carried him through his trials and travels (lack of food, clothing, superfluity of lice, etc., etc.), and pleasantly infects his writing. He tells us that at Kiating, south of Chengtu, he spent a welcome evening with a Chinese engineer who had studied in France 'exchanging reminiscences of the Quartier Latin'; at Chengtu he found a French diplomat who, like himself, was a keen mountaineer, and 'it was a wonderful experience to be suddenly able to conjure up memories of mountain-tops that meant so much to both of us.'

On one subject M. Migot expresses himself decidedly: his preference for Tibetans to Chinese, and particularly to the Chinese Nationalists and the corruptions of Kuomintang officialdom. It is these last that rouse his dislike, for he recognises the good qualities of the great mass of the Chinese, and their inexhaustible patience and cheerfulness. But the young Chinese who have rejected the traditions which gave their race its strength, substituting for them a pseudo-Western culture, 'whose ill-digested essentials too often include the less admirable features of American civilisation,' were a different matter. It is noteworthy that M. Migot, though no Communist, was favourably impressed by the Communists investing Peking at the time of his arrival and who captured him; and as equally ill-impressed by the Nationalist troops to whom he was later released: 'it was not very difficult to decide who was going to win the war.'

Since then, he has travelled back overland to Indo-China, *via* Eastern Tibet; and the Communists, too, have travelled west, and engulfed Lhasa and beyond. Time will show whether the new régime will wreck Tibetan culture or not; that it cannot remain unchanged is certain. Hitherto Tibet has been exceptional in the world, in asking only to lead her own life, without interference from others, and without interfering with others. She has lost the first half of her objective and, inevitably, her neighbours view with misgivings the impact of modern materialism upon a land that, as M. Migot puts it, has for so long been a shining example of the beneficent effects of Buddhist philosophy.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

*High Mountains.* By Charles Meade. Pp. 136. Illustrations. The Harvill Press, London. 1954. 15s.

A GREAT mountaineer once wrote that he would set himself to learn Chinese if that would enable him 'to understand one more record of genuine mountain adventure or discover some unfamiliar attitude of the human mind towards mountains and their symbolism.' To estimate fully the writings which Mr. Meade brings together in *High Mountains* would need an intellectual labour almost on that scale. It is a book which comes under the heading of 'an unfamiliar attitude,' whereas his former book, *Approach to the Hills*, was leavened with much 'record of genuine mountain adventure,' and was therefore much easier to follow.

Mr. Meade here collects together a number of writers whose reactions to experiences, as they have recorded them, he regards as mystical. Not all of these writers would agree to that adjective; it is, surely, quite usual to find aesthetic pleasure, in action and in surroundings, in such a way that the language of mysticism is inappropriate. This is a difficulty throughout the book, at any rate if one is no 'initiate' in mysticism. Again, one constantly finds passages—old friends among them—which are given a context and an interpretation which one cannot feel was wholly intended in the original. Some of the quotations from Geoffrey Young are not even accurately given.

At times, the stream of symbolism from other writers is so complex that when one finds Frank Smythe describing, as Mr. Meade puts it, 'the awesome upper regions of Mount Everest,' one clutches gratefully at the clearest sentence ever written on that much-discussed topic. 'It was,' Smythe says, 'cold.'

But even if the reader is not versed in philosophical jargon, he will find here many sympathetic passages, some familiar and many not, and there is an excellent chapter on the Swiss painter Segantini. The choice of photographs is very good and so is the quality of their reproduction.

T. A. BROCKLEBANK.

*The Mountain World.* 1954. Editor-in-chief Marcel Kurz. Published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, for the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research. 8½" × 7". Pp. 224. 64 plates in black and white. 25s.

THE Stiftung's splendid journal, *Berge der Welt*, has now reached its ninth year and this is the second year of its English edition. It is now published in six countries and in four languages; this is some measure of its success.

This is quite the most interesting number of the series, for it reports the year 1953, when five major expeditions set out to climb 8,000-m. peaks, two of them successfully.

Everest is introduced with a superb portfolio of the photographs taken by the Indian Air Force. Wilfrid Noyce goes on to tell the now familiar story with great charm. Free from the responsibilities of the leader, he writes an account which, while strictly factual, adds many delightful personal touches to the official narrative.

In complete contrast, Karl Herrligkoffer's article reports the German-Austrian party's success on Nanga Parbat. This is quite short, and leads up to Hermann Buhl's own account of his extraordinary solo climb of 16 hours and 4,000 ft. to the summit; and of his miraculous survival of a night out without food or spare clothing near the top. But the account leaves the reader with the feeling that much has not been said. What a desperate man Buhl must have been to set out alone, his companion with most of the food an hour behind soon giving up, and both of them knowing, it seems, that they had no hope of support from below.

One turns with delight, and in complete contrast again, to the lively account by Pierre Vittoz, the Swiss missionary of Leh, of the ascent of Nun, the only 7,000-m. peak between the Karakorum and Garhwal. After most of the party had been injured in an avalanche, Vittoz reached the summit with Madame Kogan, to whose elegance he pays proper tribute. Bernard Pierre has clearly proved himself a great leader of a happy party.

Charles Houston writes a notable article on the tragic American expedition to K2. As a doctor he puts forward powerful arguments for acclimatisation by hard work and for climbing high without oxygen; the remarkable escape of his party from ten days' imprisonment in storm at 25,500 ft. goes far to prove his case. He finds time for much philosophy.

Dhaulagiri shows itself a formidable mountain ; a difficult approach through deep forest gorges where the porters' reluctance is understandable ; and beyond, a hideous face of infinite length to climb with little or no security or site for camps. The Japanese on the other hand found Manaslu a mountain easy of approach and relatively straightforward to climb, as described in the review of their book in the November 1954 *A.J.*

Busk describes his short expedition to the Ruwenzori where he had rare luck with the weather. The last quarter of the volume is devoted to the Arctic. Fantastic rock spires and immense glaciers of the Cumberland Peninsula in East Baffin Land add to the rich store of splendid peaks of Alpine character on the Arctic circle. Finally, the Editor brings up to date his historical record of Himalayan expeditions. There is now no room for his Alpine newsletter ; this valuable record now appears in the Stiftung's *Journal*.

The articles are excellently translated, but we are not told by whom. No doubt the indefatigable Marcel Kurz has added this to his other labours. The photographs maintain the supreme standard which we expect of our Swiss friends.

B. R. GOODFELLOW.

*The Picture of Everest.* Chosen and explained by Alfred Gregory. Hodder and Stoughton. 1954. 42s.

*Everest* (an account of the Swiss Expeditions). Pp. xx, 148. English edition, printed in Switzerland, published by Hodder and Stoughton. 1954. 42s.

*K2 (8.611 metres).* By C. S. Houston, R. H. Bates, G. I. Bell. Pp. 100. French edition published by B. Arthaud, Paris. 1954.

THESE are primarily picture books. The first is about the British expedition of 1953, the second about the two Swiss expeditions of 1952, and the third about the heroic and ill-fated American expedition to K2 in 1953.

Since the first two books deal with the same mountain, and were published in England at the same time, by the same firm, at the same price, they invite comparison. Any book about the British expedition has the advantage that the expedition reached the top, and the Swiss can show nothing so dramatic as the famous picture of Tenzing on the summit, but apart from this the Swiss book is the better. The British book is wholly in colour and the seven or eight best plates are very good. Gregory's picture of the Route to Camp Four, for example, is a beautiful photograph, and Hillary's of the South Col Camp and Band's of the Second Assault Party are other good photographs which gain by being in colour and are well reproduced. Unfortunately, out of the forty-three plates, eighteen are distressingly fuzzy and six or seven more are barely acceptable for the same reason. This may have been caused by camera shake (small cameras should be fitted with a device automatically to prevent open views being taken at 1/50 or 1/100 at f. 8) but probably the real trouble lies with the blockmaker. Good colour blocks are so difficult to make and so expensive that they are rarely seen in this

country, except in women's clothing magazines with international circulations. No whole book of mountain photographs in colour has yet been successfully produced in any country and the economic difficulties of making one are about as easy to surmount as Everest itself. It was therefore a mistake to produce this book in colour; with seven or eight colour plates and some sixty black-and-white photographs, it would have been a cheaper and a better book.

The British pictures one tends to judge by one's own Alpine standards for the difficulties of taking them are not apparent and they make Everest look almost cosy. But the Swiss pictures are professional; they are of a different order of magnitude altogether. They are not all good and the book is badly arranged, sometimes with the captions many pages away from their pictures, but if every page that could be criticised were deleted, something like 100 superb photographs would remain, including a series of portraits of Swiss climbers and Sherpas by N. G. Dyhrenfurth and André Roch which has never been equalled in expedition literature. It is not difficult to pick out the work of Dyhrenfurth, the official photographer, and his plate No. 52 of Pumori must be one of the best photographs of a mountain ever taken. No photographic data are given, but obviously he worked with large cameras. In one picture he is shown using a big Speed Graphic on an enormous tripod, the whole probably weighing 15 or 20 lb. If expeditions want the finest photographs, they must recognise that this sort of equipment is required. André Roch's pictures, however, fall little short of Dyhrenfurth's and were probably taken with a much smaller camera. The reproduction of the photographs is outstanding even by Swiss standards and the printers, Conzett & Huber of Zürich, deserve the highest praise.

It must be admitted that professionalism has its dangers, for many of the Swiss pictures might have been taken from outside the expedition, as though by some not wholly approving god half-way up the flank of Nuptse. The British book shows a cheerful, hard-working group of men against a background of Everest; the Swiss book, the empty coldness of the Everest region where the brief incursion of a few humans hardly matters. 'K2' avoids these extremes; it gives a more adequate account of the expedition than the British book and a more personal account than the Swiss. The photographs have a liveliness often lacking in mountain pictures, and first-class action photographs were taken in conditions where one can only marvel that photographs were taken at all. The standard of reproduction is not high, but it is adequate, and the colour pictures are fortunately too few for the book to be damned on their account. 'K2' can be classed as successful photo-journalism rather than salon photography—and to Americans at least, that is praise. As a photographic account of an expedition, it is the best book of the three. The copy reviewed had a French text and a paper binding, but presumably an American edition exists.

HAMISH McARTHUR.

*Alpine Climbing on Foot and with Ski.* By E. A. M. Wedderburn, revised by C. Douglas Milner. Illustrations. Countrygoer Books, Ltd., London, 1954. 12s. 6d.

E. A. M. WEDDERBURN'S useful pocket-book for mountaineers has now been revised and brought up to date by Douglas Milner. This new edition is slightly enlarged both in descriptive matter and by the inclusion of a number of excellent photographs by Milner. The principal innovations since Wedderburn wrote are the Vibram sole, the nylon rope, and the many extensive uses of pitons both as a climbing aid and for safeguarding, and he outlines the new techniques for the use of these aids with a number of line drawings.

The book is written mainly for the climber trained on British mountains and who wishes to enlarge his experience by expeditions on Alpine peaks under both summer and winter conditions. As in the original, only one chapter (Chapter 5) deals with 'Ski-ing for the Mountaineer.'

There is much good advice in this small well-produced book but the novice can only learn the art of safe-conduct in the mountains, whether on foot or on ski, by practical experience either with a guide or with experienced amateurs. Nevertheless, such handbooks as this are valuable as an introduction to the new techniques and as a reference book for comparison.

BRYAN DONKIN.

*The Ski and the Mountain.* By Thomas Paynter. Hurst & Blackett. 1954. Pp. 212. 20 photographs. 15s.

MR. PAYNTER says in his preface that this book is written primarily for those who both climb and ski, or mean to. The emphasis should, perhaps, be on the latter and it is to the ski-ing beginner, particularly if he has an urge to go touring and later ski-mountaineering, that this book will appeal most widely.

The first half covers the historical development of ski-ing and then enlarges on ski-mountaineering and climbing technique, subjects which do not lend themselves very easily for inclusion in a book such as this. While the author has done well to cover so much ground on these intricate topics, much of it is rather elementary and some would think the ski-ing technique described a little out of date and almost certainly confusing for the present-day beginner. Nevertheless, these and other of the early chapters in the book contain much sound advice on mountain precautions and safety for the novice ski-tourer.

There is a chapter on ski-racing, introduced one feels to round off the picture of ski-ing since its subject is really outside the sphere of this book, but perhaps the author's graphic descriptions of the agonies of this sport are subtly intended to divert the enthusiastic beginner to seek loftier and more peaceful heights. It is a pity to note that there is only the briefest reference to the 'Duke of Kent' race and the 'Citadin' races sprung from it, the development of which, especially in these post-war years, has played such an important part in international ski-ing. It would have been worth while enlarging on the background

of the policy and aims of these races in which the British have taken a leading part, as of course they have done in the whole development of downhill ski-racing during the past thirty years, and it would be well for the newcomer to ski-ing to know this.

In the second half of the book we really get into our stride on a series of interesting and adventurous ski-tours and climbs in the Oberland, the Valaisan Alps, the Bernina and Norway, as well as in the British hills. While most of these expeditions are over more or less well-known ground, nevertheless they make pleasant and at times exciting reading. The majority were done guideless because Mr. Paynter chose to learn his way about the mountains for himself in the company of friends, and if things did not always work out right they provide many object lessons for the beginner, emphasising the essential necessity of a sound working knowledge of snowcraft and mountaineering before attempting to undertake anything approaching a major expedition. If Mr. Paynter has stressed the difficulties and dangers he encountered, he has done so on purpose as a warning to others, but it would be a mistake for the novice to suppose that these are necessarily typical of most ski-mountaineering expeditions. The author has also indulged in solitary climbs and ski-tours and his experiences should act as a sufficient warning for others not to do likewise.

As a conclusion and for good measure we are treated to some excellent accounts of ski-ing and ski-mountaineering in the Canadian Rockies in the course of military training in the latter part of the war. The incredible difficulties of terrain, inadequately mapped and covered with 'dead-fall' timber, to say nothing of a great depth of snow unconsolidated and without firm foundation, do not make the country of the Jasper National Park around the Maligne and Tonquin valleys appeal to us as good ski-mountaineering country, but great credit must be given to Mr. Paynter and his companions for the fine expeditions they were able to achieve.

The book is illustrated with an excellent range of well-chosen photographs from a variety of sources.

K. C. SMITH.

*The Swiss without Halos.* By J. Christopher Herold. Pp. 271. Drawings. Columbia University Press, New York. 1948.

*The Swiss without Halos* is well worth reading; it contains a very great deal of information, not only on Swiss history, life and culture, its languages and government, but on dairy-farming, the making of its amazing network of railways and tunnels, postal-coach roads, on the origin of the Red Cross, alpinism and very much more. The writer sets out to bring to public notice 'that Switzerland is inhabited by live beings other than hotel personnel, that it has a rich and proud past and its culture has deeply influenced the Western world.' We agree with the first two of these three statements, but think he has overestimated the influence which Swiss culture has had upon the Western world. The author's humour has relieved much that might otherwise have

proved tedious to the average reader and he has unravelled in a very capable manner some of the intricacies of Swiss history.

This book is a series of essays rather than a connected whole and there is a good deal of repetition. It is not a history of Switzerland, but there is a great deal of history in it. The history of Switzerland just previous to the formation of the Swiss Confederation in 1291 (formed by the Union of the three Forest Cantons, Schwyz, Uri and Unterwalden to throw off the Austrian yoke) is surely deserving of greater mention. There are lengthy discourses on men such as Voltaire, who was not a Swiss, although he had much influence in and around Geneva; Nietzsche, who was a German and no benefactor to Switzerland; and Rousseau, although Swiss, takes up too much space, for, as the author himself admits, he had no real influence upon his own country.

Although the book is entitled, *Swiss without Halos*, the author has no doubt unintentionally given them halos in his rather satirical mention of the standard of morals expected by the good citizens of Berne, the capital of Switzerland. We have ourselves been amazed at the small amount of crime and theft which occurs amongst the Swiss, and their honesty is outstanding. Long may Swiss standards be upheld.

The author gives the reader many interesting and instructive facts to think about. Most people do not realise that in the fifteenth century the Swiss were the rulers in Milan as well as over large tracts of Italy, and partly in Venice. Nor do they realise that the Swiss let themselves out as mercenaries to the other great nations, particularly from the Roman Catholic Forest Cantons. Small or even large armies used to go off independently hired to fight enemies against whom they had no grievance. The government forbade this, then later themselves sent out mercenaries whether the men liked it or not, for the financial enrichment of the country.

Finally, if the book cannot be called a classic, anyone is sure to learn a great deal by reading it. The heraldic devices at the beginning of each chapter, and the woodcuts are well chosen (apart from that of The Orator, which might well have been left out).

C. F. FOTHERGILL.

*Handbook on Ski-Touring and Glacier Ski-ing.* Published by the Ski Club of Great Britain, London. 1954. 4s. 6d.

THIS little book covers every aspect of travel on ski in the mountains. Etiquette, equipment and clothing, dangers, first aid, bivouacs, are all dealt with, and a great deal of detail is crammed into a small compass. The book is intended to be carried in a rucksack, for practical use on expeditions, and not merely for reference in a library; it seems well designed to fulfil that purpose.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

*Da Rifugio a Rifugio : Alpi Retiche Meridionali.* Edited by Dr. Silvio Saglio. Published by Touring Club Italiano and Club Alpino Italiano.

THIS guide covers the Alps northward from Lake Garda. The introduction points out that the increasing number of those who go to walk in the hills, quite apart from the climbers, has demanded the wider

range and scope of this series, in which *Alpi Retiche Meridionali* is the fifth volume.

Dr. Silvio Saglio has produced a most attractive book about a district not filled with great summits, but with as real a charm as any. Photographs of the peaks and pastures (for the walkers are well catered for), together with pleasant drawings of the huts, must make this book appeal to the traveller who looks up the Lake of Garda and feels the longing to escape an Italian summer into the cool vistas of the Cevedale or the high hazards of the Brenta.

I need only add that the accounts are brief and to the point, the maps excellently clear and the index as full as could be wished.

WILFRID NOYCE.

## MOUNTAINEERING JOURNALS OF 1954

*Die Alpen*. JANUARY. Devoted to the A.A.C.Z.'s expedition to Dhaulagiri in 1953, with an article on the problems of nutrition in the Himalayas by R. Bircher.

FEBRUARY. 'Dernière chance au Nun': by P. Vittoz. (Vittoz's account of the first ascent of Nun). 'Korsisches Tagebuch': by W. Schwab. 'Auf einsamer Spur in der Val Mora': by E. Wenzel.

MARCH. 'Staublawinen-ja oder nein?': by E. Rohrer. Accounts of the first winter ascent of the Peutereygrat by H. Huss and of the first descent of the east ridge of the Doldenhorn by A. Voillat. R. Naville discusses the possibilities of an eruption of the Indonesian volcano, Mérapî.

APRIL. 'Une nuit sur le Stromboli': by D. Bertholet. 'Abenteuer im Karwendel': by W. Uttendoppler.

MAY. This issue is devoted to the Rescue Services of the Alps, and includes an article on the employment of the helicopter for the transport of sick or injured persons after an accident.

JUNE. 'La première fête romande du C.A.S. en 1866': by L. Seylaz. 'La face S.W. de la Dent de Jaman': by S. Herzen. 'La Messe au Mont Blanc (August 11, 1893)': by E. Gos; this article is illustrated by a photograph of Edward Whymper with an imposing column of guides and porters, about to leave Courmayeur for the ascent of Mont Blanc. 'Grosser Windgällen-Westgrat': by D. Bodmer. 'Castello delle Aquile al Marguareis': by A. Biancardi.

JULY. 'Vom und zum Refuge Ar Pitetta übers Weisshorn': by H. Furer. 'Varappes autour de Kandersteg': by M. Brandt. P.-L. Mercanton and A. Renaud write about the variations of the Swiss glaciers in 1953. Of the 100 glaciers observed no less than 92 were shrinking, 5 were stationary, and 3 were advancing.

AUGUST. 'Une journée au Popocatepetl': by S. Herzen. 'Face nord-ouest de l'Aiguille Devant, course classique?': by P. Emonet. 'Im südostanatolischen Hochland': by M. M. Blumenthal (this article is concluded in the September number).

SEPTEMBER. ' Wolken und Winde als Wetterkünder ' : by J. Häfelin (concluded in the October number). ' Badile ' : by B. Favre. ' Exploration du Gouffre du Pétrin de la Foudre ' : by C. Renaud.

OCTOBER. ' Escalades calcaires des Préalpes françaises ' : by R. Néplaz. ' Bivouacs fixes ' : by L. Seylaz ; (includes a list of fixed bivouacs in the western Alps). ' Pyrénées Orientales ' : by V. Binggeli.

NOVEMBER. ' Vom Bergsteigen ' : by S. Walcher. ' Une semaine de varappe en Corse ' : by A-O. Clerc. ' Paroi nord de la Pointe de Mourty ' : by F. Altherr.

DECEMBER. ' Encore le Salcantay. Première ascension du sommet est ' : by S. Brönnimann. ' Die Besteigung eines Viertausanders in Zentralanatolien : Erciyas Dağ ' : by R. A. Cuttat. ' Ein vierbeiniger Bergkamerad ' : by E. Kreis. ' Biwak auf dem Ätna ' : by T. Meyer. ' Trifthorn und Obergabelhorn ' : by W. Kirstein.

*Alpinisme.* André Roch contributes to the Spring number an account of the A.A.C.Z. expedition to Dhaulagiri and Henri Lesueur describes the first ascent of the north ridge of the Caïman. Mountaineering conditions in Russia are described by Alfred Birgy in a well-illustrated article which includes photographs of Pik Lenin (Kaufmann) and Pik Stalin (Garmo), probably not very familiar to British mountaineers, and of several Caucasian peaks.

The Summer number contains, amongst other articles, the story of the American attempt on K2 in 1953 (by R. H. Bates), and of the Japanese expedition to Manaslu.

The Autumn issue is devoted mainly to the successful French expedition to Nun Kun and to an account of mountaineering conditions in Japan. Modern methods of mountain rescue are described—and illustrated—in an account by André Contamine of the rescue of two soldiers from the Grépon.

The Christmas number, the final issue of *Alpinisme* in its old form, contains Lucien Bérardini's account of the ascent of the south face of Aconcagua. Climbing in Great Britain is dealt with by G. J. Sutton and Leo Seitelberger writes about solitary climbing with a short account of his ascent of the north face of the Cima Grande di Lavaredo. Lucien Ghedina records an ascent of the south-west face of Cima Scotoni.

Each issue contains, in addition to the main articles and book reviews, notes on important ascents not only in the Alps, but in mountain ranges throughout the world.

*The Canterbury Mountaineer*, 1952-3 (vol. 6, no. 22). To pick and choose among the climbing articles in this journal is no easy task, backed, as they are, by some splendid photographs. John Pascoe deals with a 3-week traverse from north-west Otago and the West Coast. In 'Five of a Kind,' a party of five deals with La Perouse; David's Dome-Dampier-Vancouver traverse; Elie de Beaumont, Malte Brun, Sefton by the east face (a very formidable affair), and Low Peak, Mount Cook.

But if we turn to p. 112 and study the 'Ascents List' for the season 1952-3, we gain some idea of the activities of the Canterbury M.C.; the majority of the articles in the journal are short summaries of a selection of these climbs.

*Climbers' Club Journal*, 1954 (vol. x, no. 3 (79)). C. W. F. Noyce leads off with his impressions on reaching the South Col of Everest in May 1953—impressions written down, we are told, a few days later. He underlines the views of Hunt and others, that it is a desolate place, not rendered any less so by the 'ghost camp' remaining over from the Swiss expedition.

H. G. Nicol ('Gervasutti Route, Punta Gugliermana') and E. A. Wrangham ('Tronchey Arête of the Grandes Jorasses') describe two notable climbs in 1953. Bernard Pierre ('Nun Kun, 1953'), M. E. B. Banks ('Exploring Greenland') and W. A. Poucher ('Monument Valley, Arizona') take us away from the Alps; but K. Pawson ('Climbing Notes from Out-of-the-Way Places') scores highest honours for variety in his climbing districts, including as he does B.W.I., Ascension Island, Falklands, South Shetland Islands and other Antarctic or near-Antarctic regions; Lapland, Tierra del Fuego, Madeira, Tasmania and the Tonga Islands.

E. C. Pyatt provides his customary documentation of new climbs in Wales and Cornwall.

*Fell and Rock C.C. Journal*, 1953 (vol. xvi, no. iii (47)). Graham Wilson, 'The Days of our Youth,' looks back to early meets of the F. & R., and Mrs. Richards (Dorothy Pilley) dwells encouragingly on the smaller centres of the Alps, especially suitable for the middle-aged mountaineer. T. H. Tilly and J. A. Jackson combine on an account of an expedition to Garhwal in 1952 (Jackson's photographs are to be commended), and D. H. Maling ('Sarmiento and So On') gives us a useful and a fuller account of the Tierra del Fuego excursion of K. Pawson, noted above in the *C.C. J.* A. R. Dolphin catalogues a number of severe climbs in the Lake District between 1948 and 1952.

*The Himalayan Journal*, 1946-54 (vols. xiii-xviii). *The Himalayan Journal* is perhaps the leading journal of the world for purely Himalayan work, though the indefatigable Marcel Kurz, in *Berge der Welt*, is a formidable rival. The *H. J.* ceased to function between 1940 and 1946, but rose again when the war was over under the editorship of C. W. F. Noyce, who, however, handed over after a single issue to Colonel Tobin; and no subsequent change of Editor has occurred. Almost everything else in Himalayan travel has changed since then: in 1946 Nepal was closed for practical purposes; now, it is wider open than any other part of the Himalayas, except Kulu and Lahul.

Vol. xiii (1946). Peter Mott deals with the Karakorum expedition of 1939, of which we already have records by Shipton and Scott Russell. T. H. Somervell and L. Krenek each take us to less exalted altitudes

and show us how attractive lesser expeditions in the Himalaya can be. Schomberg gives us the last of the articles we had learned in the past to expect from him, on the Afdigar Pass in Hunza.

Vol. xiv (1947). This is a good number, with J. O. M. Roberts on Saser Kangri (1946); Ralph James on a short trip to the Nun Kun massif (in the company of Major T. S. Stobart, who has subsequently become much better known than when he was an officer in Army Films); P. L. Wood writes of Nanda Ghunti (1945); and L. Chicken tells us of the German expedition of 1939 to Nanga Parbat, which explored Mummery's route up the Diamirai face.

Vol. xv (1949). H. W. Tilman contributes two papers to this volume, on Bogdo Ola and Muztagh Ata, both described by him in more detail in books. The Lohner-Sutter expedition to Garhwal, 1947, is another prominent article.

Vol. xvi (1950-1). 'Annapurna,' by Maurice Herzog, inevitably bulks big in this volume, but this success has been amply recorded elsewhere. It is pleasant to read René Dittert on the Swiss expedition to north-east Nepal in 1949, or Streather on Tirich Mir; or, to turn to a historical paper, F. F. Fergusson's paper on Sir Joseph Hooker's pioneer journeys of a century ago. L. Krenek prints on pp. 121-30 a useful list of Sherpa porters (dead and alive), with records of their ages, expeditions and qualities.

Vol. xvii (1952). Everest fills a large place in this number, with contributions from both Charles Houston and W. H. Murray. The N.Z. expedition to Garhwal (1951) is described by Riddiford, Lowe and Cotter; Mlle. Maillart takes us to the sacred lake of Gosainkund, north of Khatmandu; various aspects of Kulu are described by H. M. Banon, E. H. Peck and others; and short articles deal with Rakaposhi (by Hans Gyr), Trisul (by R. Greenwood) and Panch Chuli (by K. Snelson).

Vol. xviii (1954). Everest, 1953, in the hands of a whole team of writers (among whom we are glad to see J. O. M. Roberts, whose self-effacing work for Hunt's party has been liable to escape notice), occupies pride of place in the latest volume of the *H. J.* To some readers, James Morris's contribution, on the press arrangements of the expedition, may well prove the most interesting item of all. It is well, too, to have his testimony, as it supplies all the answer that is necessary to the absurdities of some of the Indian press, absurdities brought together in S. M. Goswami's diatribe, *Everest, is it conquered?*, recently published. Mr. Goswami exemplifies the press of India at its worst; he has no qualifications for writing about Everest, but makes shift with an atrabilious temper and an inadequate command of English. Hillary and Tenzing are not allowed to have reached the summit, for Everest must be regarded as sacred and inviolate—and one does not scandal-monger against a virgin! Hillary's accident in the Barun Valley in 1954, and Tenzing's private worries, are attributed to the vengeance of the Gods, though, if the two did not get to the top, it is not obvious why they, more than any others of the party, should be singled out for

vengeance. Tenzing, to be sure, is more to be pitied than blamed, for he was a poor innocent, mercilessly bullied by the arch-villain of the piece, 'Sir Hunt' (though 'Sir Hillary' is a pretty good villain also) and even Sir Winston Churchill, it is hinted, may have been the arch-prepetrator [*sic*] of the plot.

However, if Mr. Goswami tops the list in silliness, he is not quite alone. An American, Steven Marcus, who, after two years at Cambridge University, has returned to the U.S., has managed fairly well in an essay in 'Commentary.' He does not deny the ascent, he merely belittles it; the true architect of victory was General Eisenhower. Well was it rumoured that the true victor would be Errol Flynn; but, to be fair, Mr. Marcus has stopped short of that. Compared with all this rubbish, the *H. J.* is a tonic indeed. Other articles in the volume are on the same high level. Streather and Hermann Buhl describe K2 and Nanga Parbat respectively. Less widely-known areas of the Himalaya are touched on by B. R. Goodfellow ('North of Pokhara,' with his majestic photograph of Machha Puchhare); K. Snelson ('The Dibribokri Basin . . . and Beyond,' 1952—a district later investigated by A. E. Gunther—*A. J.* 59. 288); T. H. Braham ('North-east Sikkim,' an area once popular but now rendered somewhat inaccessible through politics); whilst N. Parekh describes attractively the attempt on Pumori by an Indian party in 1953, and includes a striking photograph of Nuptse.

The foregoing indicates all too briefly the main contents of the post-war *H. J.*s, but does not do justice to other valuable features in the volumes, particularly the 'Expeditions' and 'Notes.'

One serious defect in the *H. J.* is that the volumes are not indexed. They have now completed the first twenty-five years of their existence. Are there no retired members of the Himalayan Club who will spare time and effort to do this very necessary work of indexing? There is so much valuable material contained in the journal that it may fairly be said that the Himalayan Club owes it to the mountaineering world to get an Index made, and kept going for the future.

*M.A.M. Journal*, 1953 (vol. II, no. 4). This journal appears rather irregularly, but the M.A.M. are active none the less and, whilst climbing seriously, write light-heartedly. R. M. Acheson discusses the medical outfit necessary for a small Himalayan expedition—it runs to two pages of details. One wonders if C. G. Bruce, in olden days, or Shipton or Tilman in modern, carried such elaborate medical stores? A little more, and mountaineers who are not also doctors may need guidance as to the use of particular drugs or implements.

The climbing articles range from Spitzbergen, Arctic Norway, Les Bans, Triglav, and Tembo Pk. (Kenya).

*La Montagne*. FEBRUARY. This number includes the story of the American attempt on K2 and an amusing account of the perils of the Mer de Glace in 1854, the latter taken from the journals of Auguste Perrody. Maurice Martin gives some advice on winter camping in the Alps.

APRIL. Jean Franco discusses the seasons of the year from the point of view of skiers and climbers. The attractions of the Djurdjura range in North Africa ('the Algerian Dolomites') are described by Marc Vaucher.

JUNE. A note on Makalu by Jean Franco serves as an introduction to the French expedition which he was destined to lead later in the year to Nepal. Georges Livanos writes about the Calanques, a fine playground for the people of Marseilles and for all lovers of 'l'escalade artificielle.' A series of photographs of the arête Forbes of the Aiguille du Chardonnet will be of particular interest to all who have made this ascent. J.-M. Pruvost contributes an instructive article on weather in the mountains illustrated by some excellent photographs of various types of cloud formation.

OCTOBER. The Grand Paradis massif as a ski-ing and climbing centre is the subject of articles by M. Martin and J. Boisseau; those intending to visit the district will find these helpful. The issue also contains a short account of one of the notable mountaineering achievements of last year—the first ascent of the south face of Aconcagua by a party of young French climbers.

During several months *La Montagne* conducted an enquiry among its readers, 'Pourquoi allez-vous en montagne?' Gérard Herzog summarises the many replies received, some of which were published in previous issues.

DECEMBER. This issue contains an account of the exploration of the Gouffre Berger, near Sassenage. On their journey in this remarkable cavern some of the party reached a depth of approximately 2,960 ft. below ground level. P. Ravier writes about the first ascent of the north face of the Grande Aiguille d'Ansabère, said to be the most difficult climb yet accomplished in the Pyrenees.

Ski-ing enthusiasts will read with interest 'Ski en Beaufortin,' by J. Tessier du Cros, and E. Favre's account of six of the C.A.F.'s 'chalets-skieurs.'

*New Zealand A. J.* JUNE 1953 (vol. xv, no. 40). Hillary and Lowe combine on the leading article in this number of the *N.Z.A. J.*, on the Cho Oyu expedition of 1952 and its subsidiary explorations. Mount Cook by a variety of routes is another leading item, and a later section on climbs not otherwise recorded, and on first ascents and explorations, shows that New Zealand mountaineering is in a very flourishing condition. But the world today needs no assurance on that score, and if anyone did, a perusal of the 'Contents' pages of this issue, running to 72 separate headings, would dispel any doubts.

JUNE 1954 (vol. xv, no. 41). This, again, is a good issue, with Hillary's diary on Everest as the outstanding contribution. A. R. Roberts's account of the N.Z. Nepal expedition of 1953 is of interest, as their adventures were, inevitably, overshadowed by Everest and little has been heard of them. A sketch map might with advantage have been included.

The remainder of the journal is devoted to the N.Z. mountains, with Tasman, Mt. Cook and Elie de Beaumont well in evidence.

*Rucksack Club Journal*, 1954 (vol. xii, no. 3 (47)). B. R. Goodfellow leads off in this issue of the *R.C. J.* by 'Reflections on Everest,' which are particularly valuable as coming from a 'back-room boy' who knows much of the unwritten history of Hunt's successful expedition. The article should be read, not summarised here: he pays just credit to Pugh for his insistence on anti-dehydration measures; but the oxygen question is not settled yet (see *A. J.* 59. 350 and 401; *Canadian A. J.*, 1954, pp. 56-64; *G. J.*, March 1954, pp. 82, 132; *N.Z.A. J.*, 1954, pp. 382 *et seq.*). He deals judiciously with the delicate problem of replacing Shipton by Hunt as leader; but a query may be made at a reference to 'our outburst of indignation' in 1951-2, at the Swiss getting in ahead of us for the 1952 expedition. There was no outburst. He assesses the Swiss assaults fairly—too confident, insufficiently planned (as a Hunt would estimate planning), yet achieving great feats, in particular their post-monsoon attack.

G. W. S. Pigott, 'Mixed Weather at Chamonix,' takes us over well-known but never dull ground; J. A. Stewart carries us to Cyprus; V. T. Dillon describes a sporting defeat on the Dent d'Hérens; and both failure and success on the traverse of the Main Ridge of Skye are dealt with by V. J. Desmond and D. J. Legg. G. L. Travis writes a good obituary note on the late G. S. Bower, and Pigott lists some new climbs in the Lakes, Wales, etc. in 1953.

*S.M.C. Journal*, 1954 (vol. xxv, no. 145). A weighty essay on 'The Meteorology of the Scottish Mountains' by Kenneth K. Hunter, and 'New Climbs in the Scottish Hills,' are the longest articles in this journal; but T. Weir's 'Nepal Himalaya, 1952' makes easier reading, and is fortified by some fine pictures. The section, 'S.M.C. Abroad,' shows that the Club is very much alive outside its own national limits.

*Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal*, 1954 (vol. viii, no. 27). C. I. W. Fox recalls visits to Zermatt and Chamonix, in the years 1951 and 1953; and W. Kelsey describes the ascent of Mt. Victoria, in Canada. Much of the journal is concerned with pot-holing, but an article by J. G. Brook, on 'Dr. Johnson and the Mountains,' is a pleasing contrast. But the Doctor was not among the elect, for he is not known to have climbed a mountain, and anyone who could write that he was 'now content with knowing, that by scrambling up a rock, I shall only see other rocks, and a wider circuit of barren desolation,' is certainly not of the true faith.

T. S. BLAKENEY.