

Book Reviews 1982

Compiled by Geoffrey Templeman

DAL CAUCASO AL HIMALAYA. VITTORIO SELLA (Club Alpino Italiano/Touring Club Italiano, 1982, pp 239, profusely illustrated, 300 x 220mm, npq.) This magnificent volume has been graciously presented to the Club by Dr Ludovico Sella and inscribed 'A souvenir of Vittorio Sella's long association with British mountaineering'. The definitive biography in English of Sella was written by our member, Ronald Clark, and published in 1948 under the title *The Splendid Hills*. It was reviewed at length in *AJ LVII*. In 1981, nearly 40 years after Sella's death, a much more detailed work has been produced under the aegis of the Italian Alpine Club and the Touring Club. This is stated to be the first comprehensive account 'at least in Italy' of the great man and his work. This is certainly true of the text with its detailed history of the Sella family, and records of Sella's extensive Alpine travels in his earlier years, particularly his great winter ascents of the Matterhorn, Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa. The large illustrations, for the most part, as the title of the book suggests, are related to his travels beyond Europe, and thus his Alpine and Dolomite photographs are not as fully represented as in Clark's book.

In 1879, after the premature death of his father, Vittorio was 'bought out' of the cavalry regiment in which he was serving, in order to train for his future responsibilities in the prosperous textile mills owned by the family. His father had been a keen photographer, and Vittorio acquired his large camera, and other equipment. He began work with 'wet' plates which had to be coated with collodion in a dark tent at the viewpoint. His machine was a vast one, taking plates of 15 x 12 inches. Modern photographers with their 1 x 1½ inch negatives will not be surprised to learn that the Italian word for plate . . . *lastra* . . . can also mean a paving stone!

His earlier years were spent in travels to many parts of the Alps and Dolomites, but the excellence of his negatives remained unseen by a wider public since contact prints were all that were available until good photomechanical processes were developed in the 80s.

Before going to the greater ranges he changed to rather smaller machines, with Ross Lenses and a Dallmeyer telephoto attachment enabling a magnification of x4 (the modern equivalents are the 'lens extenders'). With this he secured the grand set pieces of mountain landscape for which he is renowned. He also took a Kodak stereo camera for instantaneous exposures. Orthochromatic material both in plates and

films was now obtainable . . . often imported from England . . . and used with a yellow filter gave better 'values' in monochrome than the old blue sensitive materials. Much of the present book shows these landscapes to full effect, yet equal interest is given in the portraits and the action shots.

At one end of the social scale we have the Queen of Italy, with Lady in Waiting, guides and, at the front, a small dog . . . surely not a Corgi? Then an elegant houseparty at the Sella home when the Duke of the Abruzzi was a guest. Even in Central Africa we see the King of Toro with his white robed entourage.

At the other end of the scale there are Suanetian hunters and shepherds; in Africa a native woodwind band resting; in the Himalaya groups of porters and a specially fine one of gentle Lepchas; action shots of Polo at Skardu, and a party crossing the Shigar river on a goatskin raft.

In the text, references to AC members are numerous and appreciative. Freshfield, who helped him in his first Caucasian tour, and invited him to the Kanchenjunga journey; Donkin, who put him up for the Club; Garwood and Aitken (who used many of his Alpine photos in his privately printed memoir, a copy of which is in our Library).

There is a photo of Woolley, in deerstalker and breeches, setting up his own camera next to a Whymper style tent . . . looking like Sherlock Holmes on Grimpen Mire.

Sella also records his meeting with 'Lizzie' Burnaby on an abortive ascent of Monte Rosa. He gallantly (and presumably accurately) speaks of her as 'young, pretty, cultured and charming'. Young Lizzie lost her first husband Col. Burnaby at Abu Klea the following year, married twice again and, as Mrs Aubrey le Blond, founded the LAC.

Charles Gos, in his obituary of Sella (reprinted from *Les Alpes* in *AJ Vol 54 p 292*) says of him that he contended 'with undue modesty' that he could not write and refused to attempt an autobiography. This has largely been remedied by extracts from his diaries adjacent to many of the plates in this latest book. Possibly Sella was still smarting under the rebuke from his uncle Quintino, who advised him to stick to facts and avoid lyricism.

The book is a worthy, if belated, tribute to his memory, and for ourselves we can only reaffirm (as in our review of 1949) 'our high regard for a great Italian; a gallant mountaineer, and a superb craftsman in photography, who for 50 years was a member of, and an ornament to, this Club'. From Charles Gos, the final accolade—'his name will remain engraved in letters of gold in the history of mountaineering'. *C. Douglas Milner*

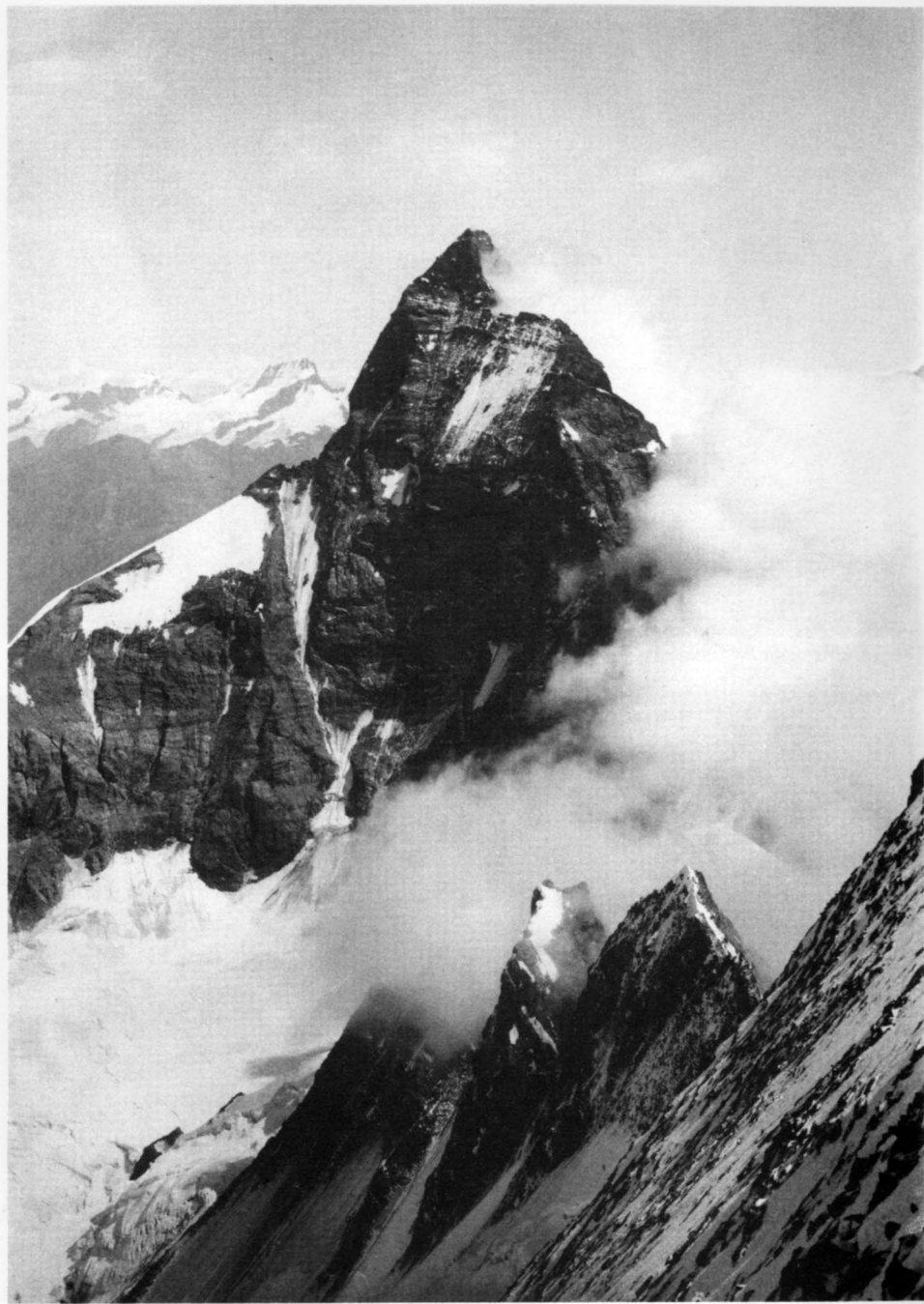


Photo: Vittorio Sella, 1885



71 *Shepherds in the Caucasus*

Photos: Vittorio Sella



72 *HRH the Duke of the Abruzzi (left), Lady Younghusband (centre), Sir Francis Younghusband (right), Vittorio Sella (standing left)*



Photo: Vittorio Sella

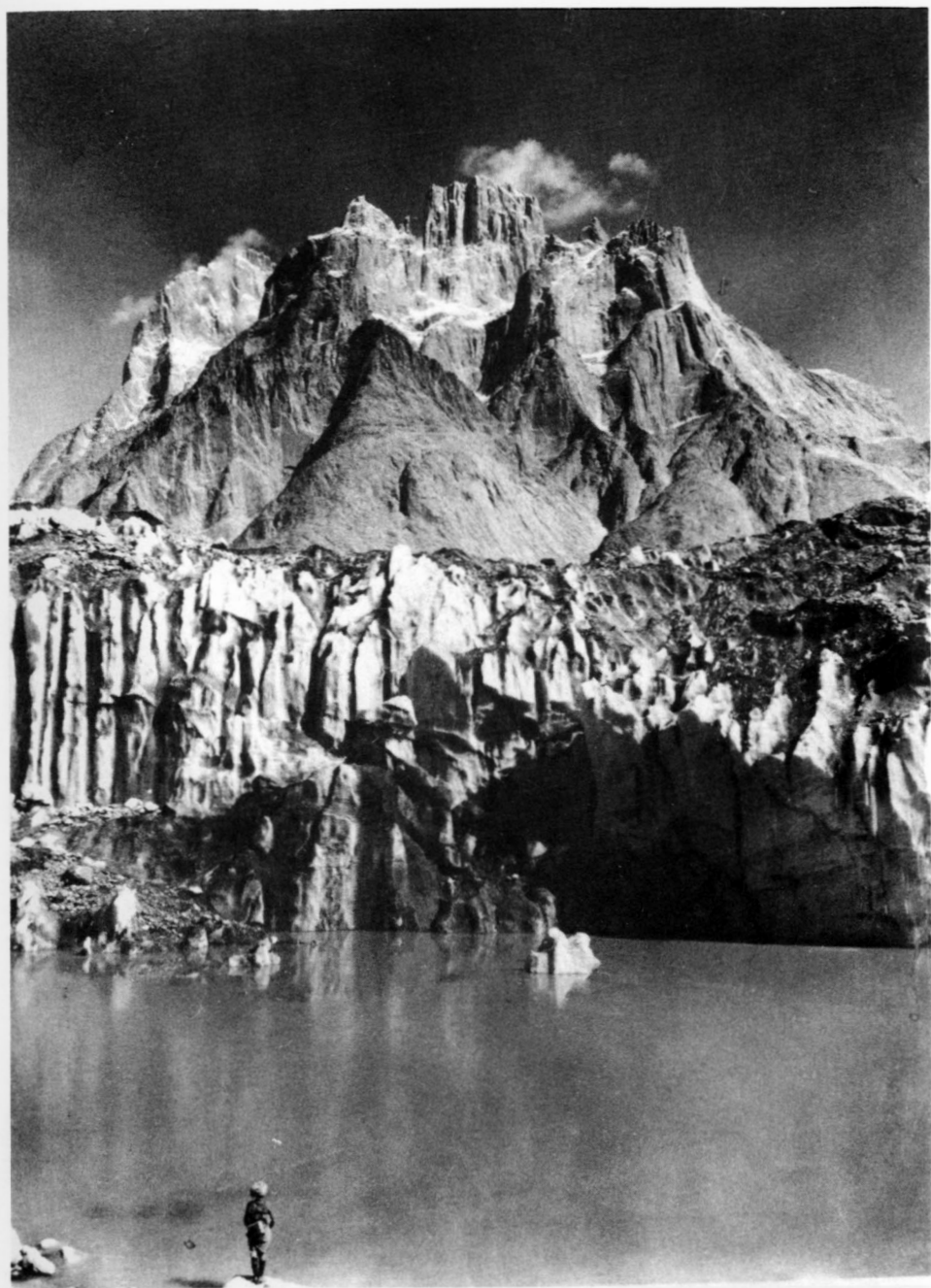


Photo: Vittorio Sella, 1909

E. T. COMPTON. Maler und Bergsteiger zwischen Fels und Firn Edited by Ernst Bernt in collaboration with the Österreichischen Alpenvereinsmuseum in Innsbruck. (Rosenheimer Verlagshaus Alfred Förg, 1982, pp 208, halftone and colour reproductions, German text, 245 x 325mm, DM 80). This sumptuously produced picture book of the work of our most important purely topographical artist of the Alpine scene puts to shame, by the high quality of its colour and monochrome reproductions, anything to be seen published in this country.

The illustrations are arranged under three headings: the Eastern Alps, the Western Alps and a much smaller section at the end which covers the Pyrenees, Norway and even New Zealand. A short essay by a well-known authority contemporary with Compton accompanies each illustration to produce an effect which is wholly pleasing both to the mind and to the eye. Many are written by Dr. K. Blodig, Compton's regular companion in the mountains.

Compton was the mountaineers' artist *par excellence*. Highly professional, he could depict the Alpine scene and mountaineering activities therein more accurately and vividly than any other artist I can think of except, perhaps, Willink and Conway's companion, McCormick. All his pictures are beautifully composed, admirably painted and have great appeal for mountaineers. Let members only go and glance at the lovely reproductions in this book in the library to see what I mean. The Club is lucky enough to possess three drawings of his which the artist presented to it. These were on view in our recent exhibition, 'Treasures of the Alpine Club', in the catalogue of which one was reproduced as the striking frontispiece.

Like many professional book illustrators, of which Compton was one, he hardly ever changed his style throughout his life. He was such a competent artist, however, that I would dearly love to have an example of his work in my watercolour collection but, having said that, I do not think that I would want much more. I would rather see the rest of them in the Alpine Club's collection or else in one of the many Alpine museums on the Continent where, in fact, most of them already are, because Compton lived most of his life in Bavaria.

With Compton, I feel like I do about Callow who was also marvellous in his professionalism; just one of his best drawings will suffice me. Even so, his drawings, although almost photographic, have that something extra which makes any good drawing just that much more interesting than any good photograph can be.

But thank God for E. T. Compton, the mountaineers' artist above all others! I wish that we had more of his pictures in the Club's collection but these hardly ever appear in the salerooms or dealers' galleries in this country, so we shall be lucky if we can add to our collection.

This book must surely be one of the most important modern publications to have been presented to the Alpine Club Library of recent years, simply because at last justice has been done to a great artist of the

Alpine scene. Not great in the sense that Turner or Ruskin were great; but comparable with Callow.

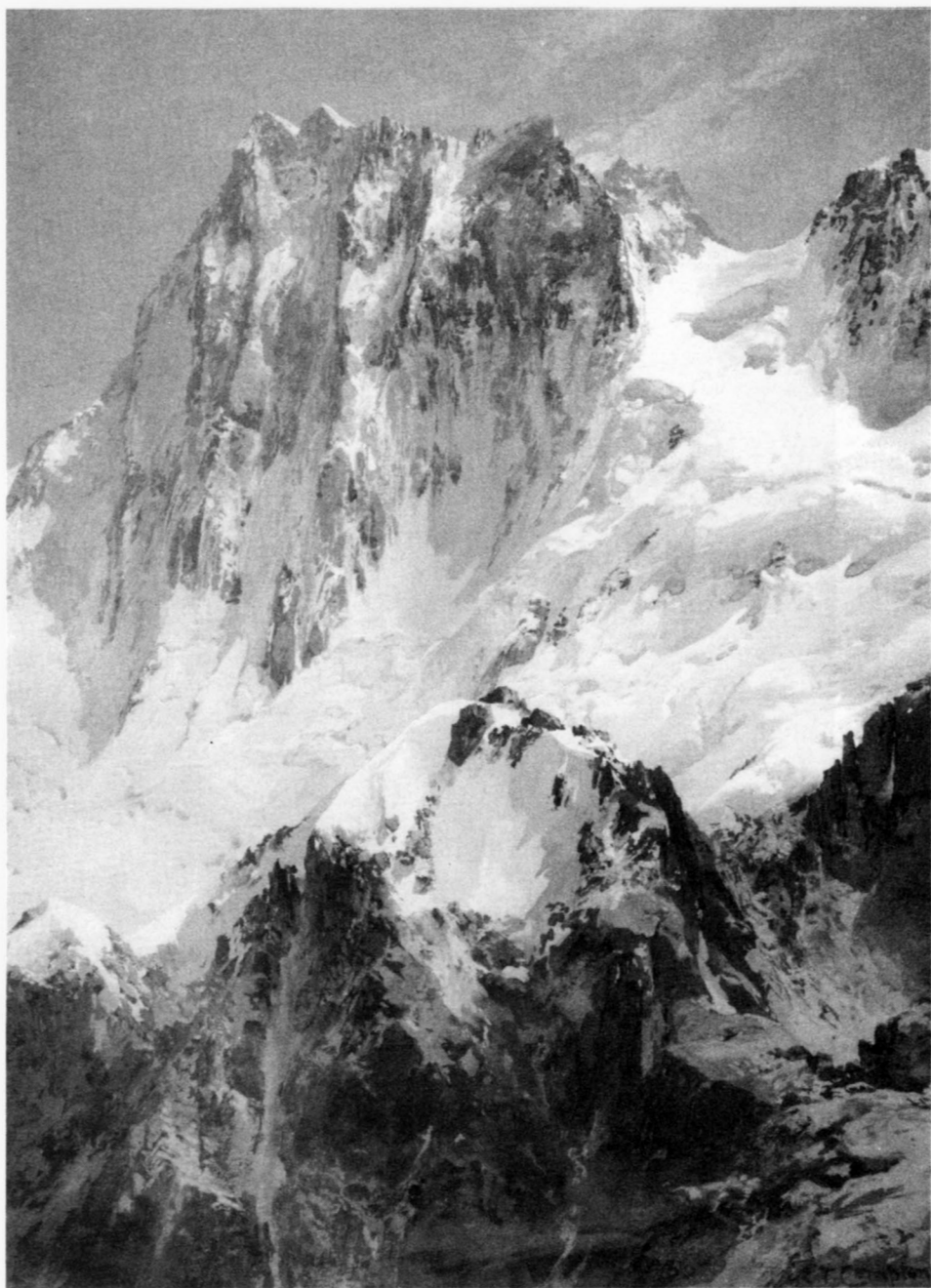
I have deliberately not written about Compton's life because that has been fully recorded in *The Alpine Club Register 1877-1890* and in an obituary notice in *The Alpine Journal*, Vol 34. Both these notices are worth consulting by anyone who is interested further. *Charles Warren*

SACRED SUMMITS A Climber's Year Peter Boardman (Hodder & Stoughton 1982. pp 264 with photographs, maps and drawings £9.95) Peter Boardman's last book begins and ends with the same sentence—'It was the last day of November'. In the book he sets out to describe 3 mountain expeditions in the 12 months between the end of 1978 and the end of 1979.

The first section deals with an expedition to the Snow Mountains of New Guinea with Hilary Collins who later became his wife. The author vividly describes the many problems facing the traveller in this comparatively little known part of the world. He described the mountains as—'far away from the main mountaineering regions, they were difficult of access, usually covered in cloud, and rose from a strange uninhabited plateau surrounded by jungle, swamp and tribes of primitive peoples still living in the stone age'. To the difficulties of gaining the necessary permissions to enter the mountain areas made potentially dangerous by sensitive inter-tribal relations were added the technical problems of working out mountain routes during periods of rain and mist when ridges were constantly obscured in cloud. At the end of December 1978 the party successfully climbed the south face of the Carstensz pyramid (4806m), the highest mountain in South East Asia. In this part of the book there emerges a striking contrast between the primitive existence of the local tribes, and the incongruous twentieth-century life of bull-dozers, landing strips, roads and tunnels at the nearby Ertsberg copper mining town.

The second section of the book covers a small 4-man expedition to Kanchenjunga which was climbed by the hitherto unclimbed N ridge. Peter Boardman, Doug Scott and Joe Tasker all reached the summit at 5.15 pm on the 16 May 1979, leaving the top 3m untrodden following the precedent established by George Band and Joe Brown on the first ascent in 1955. The other member of the party, Georges Bettembourg, missed the summit because, as he put it, he hadn't the juice.

After a summer break which included climbing in Derbyshire and in Switzerland, Peter Boardman was back in the Himalayas in the autumn. The objective this time was the South Summit (Gauri, or Tseringma) of the twin summited Gauri Sankar mountain, most sacred of all to the sherpas, which lies on the Tibetan border NE of Kathmandu. The party consisted of Boardman with John Barry and Tim Leach from the United Kingdom and a Swiss guide from Leysin where the author ran his international school of mountaineering, Guy Neithardt. After 3



75 *The Grandes Jorasses (4206m) from the Aiguille de Tacul (3438m)—40.9 × 31.6cm—
E. T. Compton (this and the following 3 pictures from the book 'E. T. Compton Maler und
Begsteiger Zwischen Fels und Firn'.*



76 *Grünhorn and Fridolinshütte (2156m) by the Bifertinfirn—28.5 × 13.2cm—
E. T. Compton*



77 *Signalhorn (3244m)—18.0 × 36.5cm—E. T. Compton*



78 Eiger (3970m)—18.5 × 25.2cm—E. T. Compton

attempts and many set-backs the whole party, except John Barry, with the sherpa Pemba Lama, reached the summit after an assault along the heavily corniced W ridge. The assault lasted 23 days and the ridge extended some 4km from the foot of the first rock tower to the summit.

In their different ways the three summits all qualify as sacred in the eyes of the people who live below them. But although this linking theme explains the title of the book, the one quality which the 3 expeditions have in common is that of struggle against all sorts of obstacles, bad weather, storms, illness and accident. In New Guinea mist and rain provided the main obstacle, and Peter Boardman carried an injured knee. On Kangchenjunga on the other hand, he first damaged an ankle and later was hit by falling rocks, when as he put it 'his left forearm was smashed just above the wrist'. He subsequently appeared to recover from these injuries although the reader is not told exactly what the damage was. At a height of about 7700m Boardman, Scott and Bettembourg were sharing a tent when at 1.30am at the height of the storm the centre hoop suddenly snapped and the whole tent began flapping and cracking wildly when hit by hurricane force winds. The party managed to struggle out with their sleeping bags and equipment before the whole tent was blown away into Sikkim. They descended in the storm and in the dark and by 8am managed to reach the snow cave lower down the mountain where they had spent the previous night.

On Gauri Sankar Tim Leach became seriously ill and tottered down to base camp in a semi-delirious state, but later seems to have made a remarkable recovery and took a leading part in the climbing of the upper part of the mountain. John Barry when leading on the upper reaches of the W ridge was blown off the mountain and fell about 60m. His fall took him out of sight of the other members of the party who assumed that they had lost him. Again we are not told exactly the nature of his injuries except 'his knee was badly swollen, his wrist crooked and his hand unusable'. The descent from the summit with the injured Barry was a harrowing experience.

The various difficulties and dangers are described in graphic detail and the author shows a remarkable insight into the moods of his different companions. Perhaps inevitably the accounts are in the chronological, historical style supplemented by extracts not only from the author's diary but also from those of his companions. The different characters emerge, warts and all, but the reader is conscious of the very strong bonds of friendship which survive the appalling dangers and difficulties; and this is clearly demonstrated by the warmth of affection shown by Bettembourg in welcoming down the rest of the party from Kangchenjunga. It will be recalled that he himself did not feel strong enough for the summit attempt although he had played a major part in making the route along the ridge.

Inevitably Peter Boardman's last book provides a poignant record of his great skill and determination as a mountaineer, the honesty of his

involvement in expedition life and the extraordinary talent for recording the details of the struggle, the awful beauty of the mountains and the great sense of achievement. The one impression which is almost entirely lacking, however, is any sense of real enjoyment.

The book is well produced, with illustrations and drawings, and the photographs are of quite exceptional quality. *J. H. Emlyn Jones*

SAVAGE ARENA Joe Tasker. (Methuen, 1982, pp 270 + photos, maps and line drawings, £9.95). There are a very few mountaineering books that become both a representative expression of a certain era and, at the same time, inspirational bibles to the young climbers of that period. Two immensely important books for me in this context were W. H. Murray's 'Mountaineering in Scotland' and Hermann Buhl's 'Nanga Parbat Pilgrimage'. 'Savage Arena' falls into this category and I am quite sure it also will become a classic. Tasker not only captures the mood of extreme climbing in the Himalayas, he also portrays his fellow climbers, particularly his two main climbing partners, Dick Renshaw and Peter Boardman, with great clarity and sensitivity. The writing is spare but wonderfully expressive and the book has a pace that is so gripping that you just don't want it to end.

High standard climbing, particularly in the Himalayas, is dangerous. The climber is on a fragile knife edge between success and disaster, and very few expeditions are without at least one, sometimes more, incidents when someone was very lucky to survive, a near-miss from a stone fall or avalanche, an accidental slip or the effects of a sudden storm. Climbers tend to flinch away from discussing the risks of their craft or their attitude to death; it has become something of a taboo subject which they like to ignore or laugh away. Tasker, however, has grasped the nettle and describes his own fears and attitude to death and risk. He wonders about his motives, considering each climb a test, and questions:

'Where would it all lead! What had I gained from the last two years if all that was left to me was an indefinable dissatisfaction! Was I destined to be forever striving, questing, unable to find peace of mind and contentment?'

The game might be serious, might have this addictive quality, but the essential element of fun also constantly emerges in Tasker's writing, in his description of an execrable journey in a clapped out van, which finally breaks down in Kabul, in the witty, yet sympathetic, portrayal of the foibles of his companions. But strongest and most compulsive of all is his description of some of the epics which he and his companions survived, culminating in their near-miss on K2 in 1980 when their tent, at 26,500 feet, was avalanched and they were all very nearly swept to their deaths. This and their descent in a storm makes powerful reading. Their single-minded determination was shown by their return after only a few days' rest for another attempt.

It is a pity that the publisher was so miserly with the pictures, allowing

only black and white, for Joe was an outstanding photographer, and yet this is of no real account, since the strength of the prose is so great, that it barely needs any illustration at all. 'Savage Arena' deserves to become one of the great climbing classics and is perhaps the most fitting memorial there could be to this immensely determined and talented mountaineer, who, in this book, has also shown himself to be a writer of very considerable ability. *Chris Bonington*

KONGUR, CHINA'S ELUSIVE SUMMIT Chris Bonington. (Hodder & Stoughton, 1982, pp 224, photos, maps, £9.95). No doubt China has other elusive summits besides Kongur, but the sub-title is apt enough in relation to this particular mountain and to the fascinating story which culminated in its first ascent on 12 July 1981. At that date it was probably the highest unclimbed mountain wholly in China; how many of us had ever heard of it two years previously? A number of British mountaineers during the 1970s were hoping that one day the ranges of China might become accessible, but Michael Ward was probably unique among them in starting, as early as 1972, to bombard anyone with influence in China with requests for permission to go there. His efforts were fruitless for several years, but the scene changed dramatically when Chairman Hua visited London in August 1979. By November it was known that Kongur was one of eight peaks (and was the only unclimbed summit among them) for which political permission might be granted. It is clear that one important reason for Ward and Bonington's almost immediate success in securing this, when they flew out to Peking in February 1980, was the interest of the Chinese in Ward's work, and his in theirs, on the problems of high altitude physiology. This rapid trip—the whole thing only lasted about a fortnight—ended with a few days in Hong Kong which assured the generous backing of what would, inevitably, be an extremely costly undertaking by Messrs Jardine Matheson, whose capacity for taking decisions quickly, and almost informally, paralleled that of the authorities in Peking.

All this was done before the normal preliminaries of an expedition, such as the formal appointment of a leader or any final decision about whether to mount an expedition at all, had been dealt with, and it is to the credit of the MEF that it was in no way disconcerted by the bold commitments which its two representatives had taken on during this hectic first mission. Outstanding among these was the fact that not one expedition would be necessary but two, since it was an obvious requirement that someone should discover where exactly Kongur was, and by what route it should be tackled, before going any further. Only three months after they had left Peking, Ward and Bonington, reinforced by Al Rouse, were out there again, prior to flying back westwards across the whole of China in order to resolve these problems by a reconnaissance of the Kongur massif. Such a task was quite

ambitious for a party of only three Europeans, especially since they were effectively reduced to two when Rouse twisted his ankle; the rescue operations involved by this trivial accident, which happened well below the snow line, give a vivid idea of how serious the smallest misadventure could have been. Nevertheless Kongur was identified and reconnoitred from three sides, and it was decided that the best chance lay in an approach from the south-west. The reconnaissance took about six weeks.

Approximately half the actual text of Bonington's book is devoted to these preparatory phases, and the contacts and the travel which are described are as interesting to read about as anything that happened during the full scale expedition of 1981. The whole project, however, was given its special character, not just because it was a major venture into a part of China which had been politically inaccessible for many years, and was anyhow very little known to western travellers, but also because it managed to combine, as equally important, two objectives which do not always make easy bed-fellows. Again, it was Michael Ward who conceived an expedition of this nature, an idea which derived from his double, or perhaps triple, interest: mountain exploration, serious climbing and medical research. If one asks whether mountaineering or science was the primary object of this expedition, the answer can only be—both. The ascent of Kongur was a sufficient challenge to attract such a formidable quartet of climbers as Bonington, Rouse, Boardman and Tasker, and their success was probably the outstanding British achievement of 1981. But an equally dedicated foursome of mountaineer-scientists enjoyed the full collaboration of the climbing team in submitting to the scientific tests required; and the lasting importance of even such a notable mountaineering achievement as Kongur's first ascent may well lie in the scientific results which this expedition obtained.

Scientific work, though, however valuable, does not provide the material for a book which the average climber will want to read, and it is naturally Chris Bonington, leader of the climbing party, who has written this exciting story of the exploration and ascent (Alpine style) of Kongur. The peak was always difficult, even to get a glimpse of; the weather was usually foul: and Kongur remained an elusive mountain almost until the very end. Two determined attempts were required before it was climbed; on the second of these, four consecutive nights were spent bivouacking at over 7000m in snow 'coffins'. The book is written in the same vivid style as Bonington's other expedition books, and once begun, it is difficult to put down. It is splendidly produced, and is illustrated by fine photographs, many of which are in colour. The one opposite p113, showing three entirely unperturbed camels snowed up after a blizzard at Base Camp, must be one of the most unusual expedition photographs ever taken. For a book of this quality, the price is remarkably cheap.

Finally, it is one of the merits of *Kongur* that the text is nowhere cluttered up with material which is not central to the narrative. All this is put into 11 Appendices, which between them only occupy 42 pages. The present reviewer is unqualified to comment on most of these, beyond saying that they all seem to convey much useful information, yet at the same time to be very concise. They clearly add to the importance of the book. *David Cox.*

FILMING THE IMPOSSIBLE Leo Dickinson (Jonathan Cape, 1982, pp 256, many colour illustrations, £12.50). Expedition books usually bore me. There are notable exceptions, of course, but usually one has only to transpose names, heights and dates and the next book of the next expedition is already half way to the printers.

Although this handsome book does not set out to be an 'Expedition Book' *per se*, it is nevertheless a record of a series of expeditions, most of them rather extraordinary ones, and not all of them involving mountaineering. But it is written from an entirely new viewpoint and is exciting fare for the jaded palate.

We already know our member Leo Dickinson as one of the world's great mountain—indeed adventure—film-makers: a true professional. Sometimes gifted artists can express themselves in more than one medium, and Leo has this lucky facility. He comes over as a jolly lad, bubbling with enthusiasm, and he writes with a fine freshness and witty candour. He tells his part of the stories behind a dozen of the adventures he has filmed over the past decade.

The 7 chapters covering mountain exploits will perhaps be of greatest interest, particularly as the projects covered are notable ones. We meet, for instance, Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler and join their first oxygen-less ascent of Everest. The controversy within the expedition is explained and we learn something of Messner's extraordinary motivation.

We read a succinct potted biography of enigmatic Cerro Torre: Leo is the man who, after attempting to climb it himself, filmed a probing interview with Cesare Maestri about *his* attempts to climb it. Fascinating!

Then there is Eric Jones, Leo's special buddy. Among other climbs, we follow Eric's first British solo of the Eigerwand. Eric is surely one of the most unsung of Britain's great mountaineers!

The remaining four chapters introduce us to the terrors of kayaking Himalayan rivers, hot-air ballooning and free-fall parachuting. These chapters are no less entertaining and certainly more intriguing if only because these activities will be new ones to most mountaineers.

This is not essentially a picture book but the illustrations are profuse. They are all in colour and of wide variety, usually offering some explanation of the text through the eye of a fine photographer. I doubt if Leo is thrilled with the quality of the reproductions but, bearing in mind

that publishing is a compromise between quality and price, I find them acceptable.

However I must now climb on a pet hobby-horse. I'm afraid that I find the title difficult to accept. Knowing the author as I do, I feel sure that the title is publisher's invention. Clearly the subject of Leo's filming was *never impossible!* But this title is merely symptomatic of the media's typical misrepresentation which haunts all those of us who work within its orbit. I have every sympathy for the author who—working largely with ITV companies—must be haunted more than most.

Titles such as 'Skiing down Everest', 'Canoeing down Everest', 'The Ultimate Challenge' and suchlike, ring well and would be fine titles were they true! But they are dreamed up and bandied about by TV and the Press with little concern for veracity or indeed reality. Such titles are plainly contradictory in terms, sensational catch-phrases dangled at the gullible public. I believe that truth, if it is sympathetically described by a talented teller, can adequately reach the heights of excitement without tasteless sensation—as indeed Leo has shown us in this book.

It is a book that the author should be proud of, the reader will enjoy and I can heartily recommend. *John Cleare.*

CLASSIC WALKS Compiled by Ken Wilson and Richard Gilbert. (Diadem, 1982, pp 272, profusely illustrated in colour and b/w, £17.95). The latest in the series of excellent large format books which started with 'Hard Rock' and 'Classic Rock', continued with 'The Big Walks' and now caters for lesser mortals with 'Classic Walks'. The series has undoubtedly set a new standard in books about the British and Irish hills; the quality of the photographs and varied nature of the articles makes each one a pleasure to thumb through and I know that my own copies are constantly being taken off the shelf. From a sprinkling of colour photographs in the early books, this volume has colour on at least every other page, and in some cases on double page spreads. Many are superb—Ben Loyal, the Honister Pass, Kinder plateau, Moel Eilio,—one can go on and on. Every other page evokes either memories or desires.

The format is similar to 'The Big Walks', starting with 27 routes in Scotland, then a big English section, 13 in Wales and a final half dozen in Ireland. Many of the recognised favourites are naturally included, but it is interesting to see the Manx hills, the Forest of Bowland, and areas such as the Migneint and the lonely country around Rhobell Fawr included. Some of these are real connoisseur's country and can give miles of rough, tough going. At the opposite end of the scale, Guildford to Box Hill can at least give a London-based mountain lover a breath of fresh air with distant views, and the photograph of the River Mole at the foot of Box Hill is as atmospheric as any in the book. Once again, an excellent production. We look forward to the next in the series. *G. W. T.*

CONTINENTS IN COLLISION Keith Miller. (George Philip, 1982, pp 212, 285 x 195mm, illustrations in colour, many maps and sketches, £12.50) This splendidly produced book is a credit to all concerned—the author (our member) and his collaborators, the publisher and the sponsors. It describes the International Karakoram Expedition of 1980, a large scale effort mounted to mark the 150th Anniversary of the RGS, which carried out a wide range of scientific studies in the Karakoram range. More than 70 scientists from many disciplines—British, Pakistani and Chinese—were involved in projects on geomorphology, glaciology, seismology, geology, surveying and housing and natural hazards; the results of this new work are to be published separately.

The area is one of great instability, prone to earthquake and avalanche, it is therefore not surprising to learn that it marks a tectonic plate boundary. The Indian plate carrying Nanga Parbat is moving north towards the Eurasian plate. Between them is a former island arc, the highest peak of which has been thrust up to produce Rakaposhi. The results of these earth movements abound among the Karakoram. Present day sophisticated length measurement methods should enable relative movements to be detected over a quite short period, giving a fascinating insight into the working of the plate theory.

Exciting results, too, have emerged from the other programmes; read the book and learn about them.

There is a wealth of experience here in fieldwork among mountains which is going to be of great help in similar scientific activities in the future. The benefits of course spread far beyond the sport of mountaineering into many of the earth and human sciences.

The *Alpine Journal* has long carried a legend that it is 'A record of mountain lore and adventure and scientific observation'. Here we see the third of these, until recently comparatively neglected in these pages, take its place alongside the purely adventure aspects of mountains. It will have an expanding role in the future. *Edward Pyatt*

POEMS OF THE SCOTTISH HILLS An Anthology selected by Hamish Brown. (Aberdeen University Press, 1982, pp 196, photos, £5.90 flexi, £11.00 hard) Hamish Brown's selection of almost 250 poems contains many which are excellent and evocative—and several which are doggerel. Beauty, however is in the beholding and for a book of this type the selection of favourites must be a purely personal thing. The book lacks a proper Index of Authors and has no Index of Titles.

I much regretted my haste in reading this book from cover to cover for review. The variety of emotions it generates is too great for enjoyment thus. Such a book as this should be read at leisure, at random and whenever the mood takes you. Nearly all of the poems are short, rarely extending to more than one page in length. The longest, and one of the best, is the epic *The Battle of Glentilt* by Sir Douglas Maclagan which runs

to 3 pages, whilst the shortest is a mere 3 lines.

Some of the better poems are written in Scots dialect and may be lost on those who are not blessed with the ability to speak it. One such, *A Border Burn* by J. B. Selkirk, is full of sparkle, alliteration and activity; another, *A Hint o Snaw* (William Seutar), brought back memories of frosty autumn days many years ago; whilst *The Rowan*, by Violet Jacob, with its tensions and unnamed fears makes one's flesh creep. English language poems are in the majority, though, and they are as good and enjoyable as the dialect ones. I have a special liking for Patey's brand of humour and was glad to find 2 of his poems included. Rennie McOwan's *Mountaineering Bus* stirred memories of steamed-up bus windows and epic drives through the night, unrecorded storms and moonlight houffs; whilst the anonymous *I Leave Tonight from Euston* wakes an urge to go packing one's sack for the North.

I enjoyed this book. My favourite poem in it is perhaps Naomi Mitchison's *Wester Ross* which to me depicts more than any other, the beauty which is the tragedy of the Highlands. *J.M.F*

ADVENTURES UNDER SAIL, selected writings of H. W. Tilman Edited by Libby Purves. (Gollancz, 1982, pp 252, illustrated, £9.95) In his mid 50s Bill Tilman turned from mountaineering to what he perhaps mistakenly referred to as, 'less rigorous pursuits' and over the next quarter century sailed more than 140,000 miles to both the Arctic and Antarctic in 3 separate boats each almost as old as himself. Libby Purves, who has made this selection from his writings, claims that he was a man who spoke little and wrote like an angel. Tilman would surely have agreed with the former as certainly as he would have doubted the latter. There is however no doubt about his amazing achievements in the field of deep sea expedition sailing and any of his writings are eloquent evidence of his ability and spartan resolve to complete the task he had set himself.

Most readers will enjoy this distillation which contains extracts from each of Tilman's 8 sailing books although as extracts they do not present a wholly complete portrayal of the man or his achievements, many of which benefit greatly from being seen in more detail and in the wider perspective resulting from an awareness of his considerable earlier contribution to the field of central Asian and Himalayan mountain exploration.

Bill Tilman, with his ready wit and seemingly inexhaustible supply of quotations and aphorisms, was a writer, sailor and mountaineer unique in his generation. It was as a crew member with an expedition mounted by a later generation of sea-faring explorers that he lost his life and it is such a great sorrow that this bridging of the generations in the pursuits of a shared ideal should have ended so mysteriously in the bitter waters of the South Atlantic.

At the end of his final book, after he had sold his last boat, 'Baroque', Tilman quoted Humbert Wolfe:

'where the ships of youth are running close-hauled on the edge of the wind, with all adventure before them and only the old behind.'

Bill Tilman, at 80 still not one to be left behind, sailed with the ships of youth and tragically was lost with them,—a man to be remembered and respected by all of us; and this book, if it brings a wider audience to his writings, will play a part in ensuring that he is. *Derek Fordham*

THE LAKE DISTRICT W. A. Poucher. (Constable, 1982, pp 208, colour photos, £10.95) If this most recent 'Poucher' is linked with his previously published *Scotland* and *Wales*, they must form a trio of the finest colour plate books ever issued on the British Mountain areas. This latest volume contains 100 photographs, all in colour and most spreading across 2 pages, which are well produced and which nearly all show the sun shining down on a benevolent Lakeland. The commitment and patience necessary to achieve such results are especially remarkable when one remembers that the author is certainly no 'youngster'. Text is kept purely to captions to the pictures, but I doubt if anyone has ever opened a Poucher book to study the quality of the prose,—it is the pictures that matter, and here they are superb. Ever since the first publication of *Lakeland Through the Lens*, hill lovers have awaited each succeeding volume with keen anticipation. *The Magic of Skye* has become a rare item for collectors. In returning to large format picture books after the small walking guides, the author is showing to a younger generation the superb quality he can achieve. *G. W. T.*

CLIMBING AT WASDALE BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR George S. Sansom. (Castle Cary Press, 1982, pp 100 + XX, photos and drawings, £10.00) This volume has been privately published—although freely available in specialist shops,—to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the girdle traverse of Scafell and is in 3 sections. The first, a few pages of reminiscence, and the last, a detailed account of the first ascent of Central Buttress, have been published before in the *Fell and Rock Journal*, but the main central part is completely new. This consists of George Sansom's Diary of his climbs from August 1908 to June 1911, a copy of which was found recently by one of the author's sons.

Whilst the Diary section does not include Sansom's greatest climbs, such as the Girdle Traverse and Central Buttress, it gives a fascinating picture of the climbing world in the Lakes soon after the turn of the century. All the famous figures are there, The Abrahams, Botterill, Collier, Gibson, Brunskill and many, many more. It is also interesting to read of the Dauphiné guide Josef Gaspard and his brother Alexandre, employed as professional guides by the Wasdale Head Hotel for a number of years prior to 1914. Apart from the interest in the diary itself, one of the glories of the book is the photographs. Whilst we have all grown used to the excellent Abrahams pictures, most of those here were taken by W. B. Brunskill and, whilst not as technically accomplished as

the former, have a less posed look and are wonderfully evocative of the period. The one used for the dust jacket of the 1912 Girdle Traverse, with the rope hanging in a great arc across the picture, is a beauty. In the section on the Central Buttress, the letter that Herford wrote to Sansom when the latter was in Brazil in 1913, describing his explorations on Scaffell is reproduced in facsimile,—what a pity we haven't got Sansom's diary for the years of his teaming-up with Herford.

The book itself is a nice production, with one or two little idiosyncracies. Many of Wainwright's drawings are used twice, the index is so spaced out that it occupies 16 pages and there are 2 rather amateurishly hand-written pages. But, no more carping!—an appendix giving details of some of the people mentioned in the diary and notes on the text, rounds off an excellent book which should be on the shelves of everyone interested in the history of British climbing. Whilst mentioning early Lake District climbers, a note should be made of a paperback issued by Dalesman Books in 1980,—**Lakeland Pioneer Rock-Climbers** by Herbert and Mary Jackson. Don't get too excited, though, as it is really just a complete reprint of the visitor's books of the Tyson's, Row Farm, Wasdale Head, from 1876-1886 and mostly comprises lists of names. One or two entries by Haskett-Smith and Robinson are expanded into interesting accounts of climbs, but these are disappointingly few. The historians of Lakeland will find much to interest them, but climbing historians may find the title doesn't live up to expectations. *G. W. T.*

A SCRAPBOOK OF SNOWDONIA Vernon Hall. (Stockwell, 1982, pp 132, drawings and photographs, paperback, £2.95) This is an unusual, slightly old fashioned type of book, which, despite its title, is really a history of the Pen y Gwryd hotel. Following on from the early efforts of C. E. Matthews and Carr and Lister, it brings the story bang up to date at considerable length and complete with fascinating anecdotes and snippets from the visitors' books. Later chapters, entitled 'Amblers', 'Anglers', 'Wranglers', 'Wanglers' and 'Danglers', describe those walkers, fishermen, climbers and so forth who have imprinted themselves on the Snowdonian scene. It is a fascinating book, only marred by bad proof reading—Llyn Geirionydd is spelt in 3 different ways within a few pages, none of which is correct, and we find Moel Mierch, Pont Cyfang, Rhydd-Dhu, Llanwrst and many more. Two photos also have the same caption. A pity, but still a book which will well repay dipping into. *G. W. T.*

LES FLAMMES DE PIERRE Anne Sauvy. (Editions Montalba, 1982, pp 300, 59F.) Anne Sauvy's collection of short stories starts with the luckless climber who meets the devil at the Fourche hut and is granted all that a climber's heart could desire, with the predictable consequences. The second tale, 'Le Rappel', is truly nightmarish—if you have ever abseiled into the void, with nothing but fog all around,

you will appreciate the atmosphere of this one. Some of the later tales are in lighter mood. The history of climbing to 2084 envisages the dynamiting of rock faces to provide new routes. This goes on until the mountains start to collapse, thus giving rise to a new category: 'Last Ascents'. And has it ever occurred to you that, in the place of your trusted climbing partner at the other end of your rope, you might one day encounter a Being from Outer Space? The last story recounts the social history of the community of mountains, culminating in the Mountain Liberation Front and an inevitably bleak conclusion.

The author's inventiveness goes with a cool eye for the vanities, weaknesses and illusions that beset all those who like to call themselves mountaineers, and few will escape some spasms of rueful recognition amongst the types we meet here. The quality of the pieces is uneven, but they will serve well to while away wet days at the hut. Non-climbing wives, however, should at all costs be kept from reading the story which bears the motto: 'Ne cherche jamais à savoir pour qui tourne l'hélicoptère. Il tourne pour toi'. An English translation of this book would be welcome. *Ernst Sondheimer*

LES PREALPES DU SUD Vercors—Verdon—Devoluy Patrick Cordier. (Denöel, 1981, pp 235, 265 × 225mm, photographs some coloured, topos, sketch maps, npq believed to be about £16-50 in this country). This is the ninth volume in the magnificent series 'Collection les 100 Plus Belles Courses', which is edited by Gaston Rébuffat. The French are indeed wonderfully served by these volumes which, too massive for field use, can provide them with hours of enjoyable planning away from the mountains. The title fails to reveal that the Diois and the Baronnies are also included.

It was Geoffrey Young, I believe, who wrote that far too much of the world's rock exposed in climbable form is limestone and thus subject to the various limitations which it imposes. The solubility in slightly acid rainwater means that there is little surface drainage—landscapes are bare and stark; it is potentially loose, though steep crags soon cast off any detached material; it forms flat rather featureless crags, which nevertheless are both steep and imposing. France possesses a very large share and in fact all the cliffs described in this book are of this particular rock.

Some of the 100 Courses offer only rough walking, the remainder are climbs of a range of standards. For each there are pictures, a location sketch and a topo.

Some standards are very high indeed; the state of development at Verdon is as advanced as anywhere in the world. Climbers from this country might well be drawn to these crags of the PréAlps in preference to the Alps themselves; the weather is better particularly as one moves southward and one might well escape some of the crowds. For anyone so inclined this fine book will point the way, though at 1.25kg it is unlikely to go higher than the car shelf. *Edward Pyatt*

JOHN TYNDALL *Essays of a Natural Philosopher* Edited by W. H. Brock, N. D. McMillan and R. C. Mollan. (Royal Dublin Society, 1981, pp xii + 219, illustrations, £10.00) The third in a series of historical studies of Irish science and technology published by the Royal Dublin Society, and consisting of 16 separate contributions covering the many facets of Tyndall's distinguished life. Possibly, the main item of interest to members will be Ronald Clark's brief account of Tyndall's mountaineering activities—he was of course a member of the Club and made a number of exacting ascents during the 'Golden Age' of Alpine climbing, including the first ascent of the Weisshorn in 1861. In addition, his very wide ranging contributions to science included work on glaciology, geology and a variety of atmospheric and magnetic phenomena often observed and investigated while he was in the mountains. *T.M.C.*

GUIDE TO MOUNT KENYA AND KILIMANJARO Ed. Iain Allen. (Mountain Club of Kenya, 1981, pp 288, maps, diagrams and photos, npq) The Third (1971) Edition of this guide drew attention to the gaps between routes on these mountains. This Fourth Edition is a celebration of the success of climbers, mainly locally based but increasingly from the mountaineering mainstream, in filling these gaps.

This is particularly true of Mount Kenya, where the number of routes on the main peak has doubled. The really good news is that the quality of many of these new routes is very high indeed. My main criticism of the guide in fact is that it does not enthuse sufficiently about this superb mountain. It is remarkably accessible—so much so that the unacclimatised are advised to slow down their approach. In the recognised climbing seasons it rarely sulks and broods in prolonged bad weather and in January and February it is positively benign. For a big mountain the objective dangers are minimal. Most of the rock is proverbially solid and the glaciers, under threat of extinction, cling resolutely to the mountain. Add some of the other pleasures of Kenya—a few days on crags such as Hell's Gate and a visit to the coast via a game park and you've got yourself a holiday.

The pity, as the guide admits, is that you can't top it off with an ascent of Kilimanjaro. The Kenya-Tanzanian border remains closed. The inaccessibility of the modern routes on Kibo is for the most part no great loss. Those on Breach Wall are nasty and brutish without being short in compensation. The guide rightly stresses the beauty of the southern approaches via either the Umbwe or the Machame routes to the Western Breach. It does not dwell sufficiently on the magnificent scenery of the Breach and the lunar landscape of the Crater. The attractions of the Heim glacier as a more technical alternative are however credited, though at IV it is considerably overgraded even allowing for its situation.

The grading elsewhere is sound though visitors should realise that many of the routes on the minor peaks have had only one ascent and could prove interesting: the lowering of the grade of the SW ridge of Batian was overdue and hopefully will encourage visitors to avoid the complexities and sometimes even crowds on the Normal Route. They should beware however the misleading route start arrow on the photo p 124 which indicates the way up the Great Slab of Point Slade.

A significant weakness of the guide is its excess baggage. The 1959 Edition described eight routes on the Mt Kenya main peaks and a similar number on Kilimanjaro. It was understandable that the rest of its 190 pages were filled with information on other aspects of the mountains. It is time for this material to be found a home elsewhere. A National Park such as Mount Kenya deserves a well illustrated publication describing its natural history. It should not have to get into print by cohabiting with a climbers' guide.

Very welcome are some new features. The topographical diagrams by Ian Howell are excellent and will raise the route-finding confusion threshold. The medical section is a hypochondriac's dream packed with 'Do It Yourself' advice of a very practical kind. The illustrations (mountain not medical) have been increased, but sadly the quality of their printing does not match that of the original photos.

Iain Allen and the Mountain Club of Kenya are to be congratulated on the excellent job they have done. *John Temple*

SOUTHERN SANDSTONE Tim Daniells. (Climbers' Club, 1981, pp 128, illustrations and sketch plans, npq) This is the culmination of some 50 years of guidebook writing on the rock outcrops of Kent and Sussex, in which field the present reviewer played in the past a not inconsiderable part. It started in 1934 with a little guide to Harrisons Rocks by M. O. Sheffield and H. C. Bryson and this was succeeded 3 years later by Bryson's *Rock Climbs Round London*—a real eye-opener for those of us in the south who were just beginning to climb. Suddenly we found that we had climbing on our very doorsteps.

During the War years this was the only climbing available to us. We went when we could and met our Services friends there on their leaves. My own series of guidebooks began with *Sandstone Climbs in South East England*, published by the London JMCS in 1947, and continued with *South East England*, in 1956, when the copyright was transferred to the Climbers' Club. By the time of the next edition I was no longer active there, but my text was republished with updating by members of the Sandstone Climbing Club. The next edition (1969), updated this time by L. R. Holliwell independently, still substantially used my text, though by some oversight my name was omitted from the title page. Now at last we have a 4th Edition; no longer a revision, but an entirely new text; a worthy follower to all that has gone before.

It is a privilege to have been called upon to review the new guidebook, which in describing over 850 climbs makes particularly fascinating reading for me. As befits some 50 years of exploration, standards are now very high, yet all the lower standard routes of the early days are still included. Nowadays these rocks are very much used. There are serious problems of erosion by top ropes, while the earth base from which the climbs are started is being worn away by the tramp of climbing feet. Nevertheless proximity to London makes this a very important practice area out of proportion to the height and lateral extent of the outcrops and it is vital that the amenities be preserved.

Tim Daniells has done a magnificent job in bringing us the latest state of the art; now he must settle down to keeping it up-to-date ready for the next edition. His guidebook is indispensable for any visitor to the Kent and Sussex outcrops, whatever his, or her, standard of climbing ability. *Edward Pyatt*

WALKING IN FRANCE Rob Hunter. (Oxford Illustrated Press, 1982, pp 218, sketch plans, £6.95) This book is packed with information on the comprehensive network of footpaths—the Sentiers de Grande Randonnée—which are being set up in France ever more widely. Every hill and mountain district has its paths, and here we find all the advice and information that is necessary for planning and executing holidays on them, from gentle walking to scrambling and easy work above the snow line. Literature, where to stay, what to eat etc are all covered. Thoroughly recommendable.

The ready acceptance of such a network by the French contrasts markedly with the opposition to similar facilities being set up in the more remote parts of Great Britain. It seems we just have to be different. *Edward Pyatt*

GUIDE DES ECOLES D'ESCALADE ET AUTRES LIEUX GRIMPABLE DE FRANCE (Cosiric Commission 'Ecoles d'Escalade', Paris, 1982, pp 102, illustrations and sketch plans, npq) A list of all the non-mountain climbing sites in France with copious details of location, access, conditions, guidebooks, references etc etc. An absolute *must* for every climber/traveller in France. *Edward Pyatt*

SNOWMAN Norman Bogner. (New English Library, 1977, pp 160, £4.50) More non-authentic mountain fiction. The Abominable Snowman, now 25 feet high and eating human flesh, has made his way from the Himalaya to western USA, where he terrorizes a newly-built ski complex. One might have hoped that it would turn out to be an allegorical treatment of ski complexes, but in fact it is only not particularly good science fiction. After the usual reverses the 'humans' of course win in the end. Hardly worth the reading time. *Edward Pyatt*

LES ALPES, COEUR DE L'EUROPE *Les 50 plus beaux itinéraires routiers à la rencontre des hauts sommets* Dieter Maier. (Ringier, Zurich/Munich; 1981; comprises 2 books: 1 pp 240 in French, 290 × 220mm, many pictures, many in colour; 2 pp 207 in French, 150 × 110mm, sketch maps; npq, about £22 in this country) These picture books from abroad are breathtaking. This one describes a series of itineraries among the Alps, which enable the motorist to see the best of the mountains, or the climber to get the readiest access to his peaks. The main work, a coffee table book, contains the descriptive text and the pictures; the smaller work, a guidebook for use in the field, gives a comprehensive selection of essential travel data. Coverage extends from the Hochschwab to the Corniche; all the major passes appear, as well as many minor and many dead end routes up into the higher valleys.

Expensive, but worth every penny. *Edward Pyatt*

NILAKANTHA. The first ascent Narinder Kumar. (Vision, New Delhi, 1979, pp xii + 120, maps, photos, Rs.45) A new edition of the book originally published in 1965, telling the story of the Indian expedition to Nilakantha in 1961.

HIGH MOUNTAIN PEAKS IN CHINA Chinese Mountaineering Assoc. (People's Sports, China/Tokyo Shimbun, Japan, 1981, pp 196, maps, diagrams, b/w and colour photos, npq) This book gives the details of those mountains inside Chinese Central Asia which were available to foreign mountaineers in 1981. Included, in Chinese spelling, are Qomolangma, Xixabangma, Kongur, Kongur-Tuibie, Muztagata, Bogda, Anyêmaqên and Gongga. Although the main text is in Chinese, the 'front' 45 pages are a summary in English of geographical, etc, information on the peaks and details of Chinese expeditions to them, although no foreign attempts are mentioned apart from those on the N side of Everest. Small B/W illustrations are scattered throughout the text, but the chief interest to non-Chinese readers will be the sections of excellent colour photographs.

JAPANESE JOURNAL OF MOUNTAIN MEDICINE Vol I, No. I. (Dec '81, pp 136, diagrams, etc.) The first issue of this journal in Japanese, but with article summaries in English, as are many of the charts and diagrams. For the specialist.

THE OLD MAN OF LOCHNAGAR H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. (Hamish Hamilton, 1980, not paginated, illustrations, £3.95) This mountain book was inadvertently omitted from review in earlier journals. It recounts the amazing adventures of the Old Man and is charmingly illustrated by Sir Hugh Casson. Maybe those who have been hunting the Yeti, or, nearer home, investigating the Grey Man of Ben Macdhui, can now start searching for the home of the Gorms among the cairns of Lochnagar.

ANNAPURNA—der langa vägen (1981, pp 122, maps, photos, drawings, in Swedish, npq) The book of the Swedish Himalayan Expedition 1981, which attempted Annapurna I.

WATERFALL ICE Albi Sole. (Rocky Mountain Books, Calgary, 1980, pp iv + 92, maps, b/w photos, £3.95) A guide to 90 waterfall ice climbs in the Canadian Rockies. One reads so much about them these days that it comes as a surprise to realise that the greater number of first ascents have been completed within the last 10 years.

TCHIEGEM—ADYRSU Alexand'r Naumov. (Moscow, 1980, pp 224, many diagrams, in Russian, npq) Climbing guide to this area of the Central Caucasus.

THE MOUNTAINS OF GREECE George Spikas. (Efstathiadis, Athens, 1982, pp 204, maps, diagrams, many colour and b/w illustrations, npq) The English edition of the comprehensive guide to the Greek mountains, dedicated to the Greek Alpine Club of Athens on its 50th anniversary.

CLIMB. Rock Climbing in Colorado Bob Godfrey and Dudley Chelton. (Alpine House, Colorado, 1977, pp ix + 275, map, numerous b/w photos, 22 × 29cms, npq) Not previously reviewed in *AJ*, this is a sumptuously illustrated history of rock climbing in Colorado from 1870 to the present day.

SHISHA PANGMA Manfred Abelein. (Gustav Lübke Verlag, 1980, pp 216, many b/w and coloured illustrations, 23 × 26 cms, in German, npq) The account of the German expedition that climbed Shisha Pangma in May 1980, beautifully illustrated and including a section on Tibetan life and art.

SCI DI FONDO Vol I. Canetta & Corbellini. (Tamari, Bologna, 1977, pp 260, maps, photos, L.8,000) A detailed guide, in Italian, to 'Piste ed escursioni in Lombardia/Engadina/Trentino Occ./Altipiani.'

PYRENEES HIGH LEVEL ROUTE Georges Véron. (Gastons-West Col, 1981, pp 136, maps, npq) As the sub-title says, 'Atlantic to Mediterranean. Mountain walking and trekking guide for a complete traverse of the range in 45 day stages with 50 easier or harder alternatives and variations'.

DIAMÍR—KRÁL VRCHOV Marián Šajnoha. (Sport, Bratislava, 1981, pp 120, photos b/w and colour, maps, diagrams, 32 Kčs, in Czech) An account of the 1978 Czechoslovakian expedition that climbed Pt 7816m via the Diamír face of Nanga Parbat.

LE MONTAGNE DOLOMITICHE Gilbert and Churchill. (Marino Bolaffio Editore, Trieste, 1981, pp 436, original illustrations, npq) The first Italian edition of the classic book on travel in the Dolomites published in 1864.

DIE SLOWENISCHE BERG—TRANSVERSALE (Planinska založba Slovenije, Ljubljana, 1979, pp 80, maps, paperback, in German, npq) A guide to the 800km traverse of the Slovenian mountains from Maribor in the east to Koper in the south-west, including the Karawanken, Triglav, Jalovec, etc.

HIGH AMBITION A biography of Reinhold Messner Ronald Faux. (Gollancz, 1982, pp 180, photos, £9.95) Many readers will already be acquainted with Messner's main achievements from his own books—Everest without oxygen, Nanga Parbat solo, K2 and of course Everest solo, but it is useful to have them in a condensed chronological form as here. Of possibly greater interest, however, is the story of his early life, his family and his relationship with those around him. The author attempts to explain the force which drives Messner on, but, as the years go by, there seems little room left for fun or pleasure among the mountains. Competition, albeit with oneself, rules all. This is a straightforward biography, which seems a little over-priced, even in these inflationary days.

SKI THE NORDIC WAY Cameron McNeish. (Cicerone Press, 1981, pp 192, diagrams, £3.75, paperback) A manual of cross-country skiing, containing all one should know about gear, maintaining and using it, and the vagaries of snow conditions.

ICE Fred Hoyle. (Hutchinson, 1981, pp 191 b/w illustrations and diagrams, £7.95) Sub-titled 'How the next ice age will come and how we can prevent it', this presents a new and revolutionary theory of ice ages, the next of which, says the blurb, 'could come quickly perhaps in less than 10 years'.

FANSKÉ VRCHY-SVET PÄŤTISÍCOVIEK Arno Puškáš & Josef Korsala. (Pressfoto, Bratislava, 1981, 60-Kčs) A folder of 33 mostly colour photographs of the Fan's Mountains in Tadzikistan, with diagrammatic maps on the covers. Introduction and brief captions in English.

KANGCHENJUNGA EL PICO NO HOLLADO Charles Evans. (Juventud, Barcelona, 1981, pp 224, photos & diagrams, npq) The second Spanish edition of *Kangchenjunga, the Untrodden Peak*.

LES ECOLES D'ESCALADE DE L'EST DÈ FRANCE (CAF, Strasbourg, nd, pp 28, maps and photos, npq) A handy guide to the locations of practice outcrops in France, east of the Meuse, and including one or two over the border in Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany. Also included is a list of huts in the Vosges.

MUNRO'S TABLES of the 3000-foot Mountains of Scotland Ed. & rev. by J. B. Donaldson & Hamish M. Brown. (Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1981, pp 10 + 104, maps and photos, npq) The latest edition of the bible for all Munroists is a complete revision of all heights, and includes the 'Corbett's' of 2,500 ft summits and the 'Donald's' of the 2,500 ft hills in the lowlands.

PLANNING A SMALL EXPEDITION The Expeditionary Advisory Centre. (RGS and YET, 1982, pp 182, £6) This is the proceedings of a seminar on expedition planning. It describes all aspects of planning including research, organisation, fund-raising and reporting. It offers much practical advice also, on choosing projects for expeditions and although it emphasises what must be considered for school parties, much is applicable to adult parties too. A useful checklist is provided in the appendices.

THE TREKKER'S GUIDE TO THE HIMALAYA AND KARAKORAM Hugh Swift. (Hodder and Stoughton, 1982, pp 342, maps and photos, £5.95) This book provides a fascinating and entertaining introduction to the countries and peoples of the Himalaya. It is full of interesting titbits of information and sensible advice. Bibliographies and addresses of useful information sources are given and there are several sketch maps, so this book should make a good starting point for anyone planning a visit. The area descriptions are not given in minute detail leaving much to be discovered for oneself. There are chapters on history and natural history, planning and hygiene, and glossaries to 7 major Himalayan languages. A happy book, its illustrations show only smiling and laughing faces.

THE ICE EXPERIENCE Jeff Rowe. (Contemporary Books, Chicago, 1979, pp xiv + 212, b/w illustrations, softback, \$7.95) A brief note on a book published in the States in 1979. The author gives a short history of ice climbing in North America, commencing with Conrad Kain's ascent of Mount Robson in 1913, and then covers all aspects of technique, ending with a 'Hardwater Guide' to some of the best routes and some personal reminiscences.

THE SOUTHERN CORDILLERA REAL R. Pecker, W. Schmiemann. (Plata/Anchor Press, 1977, pp 57, maps, diagrams and photos, npq) A short guide listing 21 climbs and 6 ski tours in the area.

CORTINA A special edition of a magazine-style publication celebrating the centenary of the CAI in 1982, with the programme of events held in Cortina in that year and articles on the history of sport in the area.

MOUNTAINS AND HILLS OF BRITAIN Michael Marriott. (Collins/Willow, 1982, pp 176, maps, diagrams and photos, many in colour, £8.95) Sub-titled 'A Guide to the Uplands of England,

Scotland and Wales' is just that—a brief guide to each region from Cornwall to Skye which, whilst covering most upland areas, inexplicably stops at Loch Maree in its northward journey. Well illustrated.

ANDY. SIERRA MADRE (Pressfoto, Bratislava, 1981, 60Kčs) A loose folder containing 33 photos on card, mostly in colour, of Aconcagua, Chimbarazo, Popocatepetl and other South American scenes.

DE CHAMONIX À KATHMANDOU The First Fifty Years of the UIAA Pierre Bossus. (UIAA, Geneva, 1982, pp 106) A booklet, in French and English, detailing the achievements of the first 50 years of the UIAA.

HIELO PATAGONICO SUR Mateo Martinic B. (Institute of Patagonia, 1982, pp 120, maps, photo, npq. Paperback. In Spanish) This is the twelfth in a series of monographs on Patagonia and deals with the southern ice-cap, detailing exploration from 1913 to the present day.

EYE TO THE HILLS Poems. Hamish Brown and James Macmillan. (Pettycur, 1982, pp 32, £1) A paperback edition of 30 poems by the authors on hill themes. Although not great poetry, they make pleasant reading, and some of them are included in an anthology of Scottish Hill Poems published this year by Aberdeen University Press.

MOUNTAINEERING. THE FREEDOM OF THE HILLS Ed. Ed Peters. (The Mountaineers, Seattle/Cordée, 1982, pp 550, photos, drawings, diagrams, £9.95) In the 1981 *AJ* we reviewed the 3rd edition of this book. This is the 4th edition—much revised and enlarged. We said then that it added up to 'one of the finest expositions of mountaineering and its background that has appeared'. That can be said again, only more so. Hundreds of contributors have ensured that it is an accurate, up-to-date, manual of climbing lore with excellent, often amusing illustrations.

A SUNNY DAY IN THE HIMALAYAS Peter Hillary. (Hodder and Stoughton, 1980, pp 166, diagrams and colour photos, £7.95) A brief, rather late, notice of a book by another member of the Hillary family, which describes the author's year in Nepal and India, culminating in an attempt on the west face of Ama Dablam which ended in one member of the team being killed and Peter Hillary himself being badly injured. The whole story is graphically told.

THE BIG BOOK OF MOUNTAINEERING Ed. Bruno Moravetz. (Barron's, 1980, pp 284, colour illustrations, 35 × 27 cms, £19.95) Originally published in Germany in 1978 it is one of the 'Big' series of books, and really is big—it would make a coffee table itself if

you put legs on it. The only thing that really benefits, however, are the numerous full and double page colour photographs, many of which are superb, as the number of pages is average and the large print gives a normal number of words to the page. The 29 short articles cover most aspects of the mountain scene,—science, art, history, individual experience, literature, etc. etc., each by a different author.

THE GREAT GLACIER AND ITS HOUSE W. L. Putnam. (AAC, 1982, pp 224, maps & photos, 31 × 23 cms, npq) This is a beautifully produced volume, published by the American Alpine Club, to tell the story of the first centre of Alpinism in North America from 1885 to 1925. The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 opened up the Rockies, and it was soon apparent that refreshment stops would be required to overcome the necessity of hauling heavy dining cars through the mountains. The next year, an ordinary dining car was established below Rogers Pass in the Selkirk Range to cater for this need, but, by the year after, a proper hotel, The Glacier House, was in operation. It remained a major centre for mountain exploration until its closure in 1925 and, in telling its story, the author tells the early history of mountaineering in the Selkirks. The book is profusely illustrated with historical photos.

CE QU'IL FAUT SAVOIR—POUR CONSTRUIRE UN MUR D'ESCALADE. (CAF n.d. (1982), pp 35, diagrams, npq) A technical treatise, in French, on the construction of climbing walls.

VIA FERRATA. SCRAMBLES IN THE DOLOMITES Trans. by Cecil Davies. (Cicerone Press, 1982, pp 176, maps, topo. drawings and frontispiece photo, £5.00) Translated from the original German publication, this guide details 50 routes in the Western, Eastern and Brenta Dolomites. Interest in the via ferrata has been growing steadily amongst British walkers in recent years and this volume caters for a considerable need. Experienced mountain walkers will find routes of all grades of difficulty concisely described and adequately illustrated.

SCRAMBLES IN THE LAKE DISTRICT R. B. Evans. (Cicerone Press, 1982, pp 192, maps, diagrams and photos, £4.15) As the author says in his Introduction, the Lake District is already covered by minutely detailed walking and rock climbing guides to the extent that one wonders if there are any empty spaces left. This book fills that gap in a similar way to Steve Ashton's Welsh book. The problem is, as always, that having written about such empty spaces they remain empty no longer, but scrambling up ravines and broken hillsides will probably always remain a minority pursuit—thankfully,—and, if it has to be written about, it couldn't be done in a better way than this.

BRENTA DOLOMITES. Scramblers' Guide Michael Anderson. (West Col, 1982, pp 56, maps and diagrams, npq) Guide to the major scramblers' routes in the Brenta region, with numerous route diagrams.

TRAPROCK. CONNECTICUT ROCK CLIMBS Ken Nichols. (AAC, 1982, pp 480, photos, diagrams, map, npq) A detailed climbing guide to 1318 routes on the traprock crags of Central Connecticut.

CORSICA MOUNTAINS Robin G. Collomb. (West Col, 1982, pp 96, photos, maps, diagrams, npq) A single volume guide for walkers and scramblers brought out by the general editor in place of the 2 volume set originally commissioned from the late Eric Roberts. After introductory chapters on Corsica generally, the best bases to use are described, together with various huts, and then the best areas for walking & scrambling with routes up to III. Diagrams are numerous and clear. The final chapter is on GR 20.

SENTIER DE LA CORSE (de Calenzana à Conca) Michel Fabrikant. (Fédération Française de la Randonnée Pédestre, 1980, pp 64, maps, drawings, paperback, npq) 6th edition of the topo-guide to GR 20 in Corsica.

WINTER CLIMBS IN THE CAIRNGORMS John Cunningham. (Rev. by Allen Fyffe) (Cicerone Press, 1981, pp 112, diagrams, £3.75) The third revised edition of the Cairngorm guide, which includes Lochnagar and Creag Meaghaidh.

WINTER CLIMBS IN NORTH WALES R. Newcombe. (Cicerone Press, 1980, pp 104, diagrams, £3.95) The second revised edition of this guide has expanded greatly with the popularity of winter climbing and covers everything worth doing from the Ogwen area to the Arans.

GOGARTH 1981 Geoff Milburn. (Climbers' Club, 1981, pp 54, £0.95) Yet another supplement to Gogarth testifies to the activity here, —78 routes in 1978 alone!

PEMBROKE-1982 Supplement Jon de Montjoye & Mike Harber. (Climbers' Club, 1982, pp 68, £1.45) The Pembroke supplement is becoming virtually an annual event, necessary because of the great activity in the area. An impressive list of hard new climbs for a single year.

WYE VALLEY. 1982 Supplement John Willson & David Hope. (Cordee, n.d. pp 32, £0.75) The supplement to the 1977 guide.

ANTRIM COAST Calvin Torrans & Clare Sheridan. (FMCI, 1981, pp 92, photos & diagrams, npq) This second edition of the 1974 Antrim guide has more than doubled the number of routes described. Whilst the authors say that it is still an interim guide, the photograph of the Prow shows little room for further expansion!

WICKLOW ROCK CLIMBS Ed. Ken Higgs. (FMCI, 1982, pp 128, map and photo diagrams, IR£3.50) The latest rock climbing

guide published by the Federation of Mountaineering Clubs of Ireland gives the up-to-date position at Glendalough and Luggala, doubling the number of climbs listed in the original 1973 guide.

NEW CLIMBS 1981 Dawson Stelfox. (FMCI, n.d. diagrams, £2) Details all the recent climbs throughout Ireland.

SNOWDONIA ROCK CLIMBS Paul Williams. (Extreme Books and Design, 1982, pp 303, photos, £6.95) A selection of climbs of all grades from the N Welsh coast, Carneddau, Llanberis, Snowdon S and E, Ogwen and from Gogarth. As with all selections, there are many gaps, so this is a book for the occasional visitor only.

ROCK AND ICE CLIMBS IN SKYE J. R. MacKenzie (SMC, 1982, pp 206, diagrams and photos, npq) The most recent in the series of 'selective' guides to the Highlands and Islands, 'Skye' is an excellent production, well printed and with clear diagrams and 27 generally good photographs. A particularly useful guide for all average climbers.

MOUNTAINEERING FOR ALL Richard Gilbert. (Batsford, 1981, pp 136, photos & diagrams, £7.95) A well-illustrated general introduction to the mountains, spiced with personal recollections.

EIGER. WALL OF DEATH Arthur Roth (Gollancz, 1982, pp 352, photos, £9.95) Any author setting out to write the story of the Eiger North Wall is obviously in immediate competition with 'The White Spider', and it must be said that this American author adds little to the earlier book, apart from up-dating the story for the last few years. Having said that, the book is well written and illustrated and will fill a gap for the general reader not aware of the earlier book.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE GIANTS Mountain Ascents Past and Present Tom King (A. S. Barnes, 1981, pp 288, photos & diagrams, \$11.95) This book gives potted histories of the early ascents of Mont Blanc, the Matterhorn, Bernese Oberland peaks and Everest, and then goes on to describe the author's own efforts in these areas, plus a pilgrimage to Fujisan, climbs in the High Sierra and a crossing of the Haute Route. The author, a Los Angeles lawyer, writes well, but again it is difficult to see the market aimed at. Readers of the *AJ* will certainly be very familiar with the historical aspects of the narrative, and probably not too interested in the author's own achievements.

STONES OF SILENCE Journeys in the Himalaya George Schaller. (Andre Deutsch, 1980, pp xii + 292, drawings, maps & photos, £6.95) The author is the Director of Conservation for the New York Zoological Society and this is the story of a 6 year period of study of the wild life of the Himalaya. It is both well-written and illustrated with charming drawings.

OGWEN Zdzislaw Leppert. (Climbers' Club, 1982, pp 208, diagrams, £4.95) After 72 years, this climbing guide to the Ogwen district has reverted to a single volume to cover Tryfan, Glyder Fach, Cwm Idwal and all those summits stretching north-west of Idwal to Carnedd y Filiast. A complete re-write and update, together with new diagrams and maps means a fresh looking guide of considerable length, which will obviously be one of the most popular in the series. The historical section by Jim Perrin, coupled with the notes in the first ascent list, give an excellent picture of climbing in the area over the years.

ROCK CLIMBING IN WALES Ron James. (Constable, 1982, pp 266, photos, £5.95) The third edition of this popular guide has now been reduced from its previous elongated format, one or two routes have been replaced, and there has been a general up-dating and introduction of pitch grading on the harder routes.

PAPERBACKS

The following books have been issued in paperback during the past year:

EVEREST Walt Unsworth. Penguin, £4.95 (Orig. pub. Allen Lane '81).

PEAKS, PASSES AND GLACIERS Walt Unsworth. Penguin £3.95 (Orig. pub. Allen Lane '81).

NANGA PARBAT PILGRIMAGE Hermann Buhl. Trans. Hugh Merrick. Penguin £3.50 (Orig. pub. Hodder and Stoughton '56).

The following expedition reports and shorter publications have been received:

AGYASOL '81 Oxford University MC Expedition to Kishtwar. (pp 28, map).

KUNYANG KISH '80 Attempt on the NW Spur & N Ridge. (pp 16, illustration, maps).

BRITISH PADAR HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION 1980 (pp 32, drawings, maps).

BARUNTSE EXPEDITION 80/81 MIDWINTER Academic Alpine Club of Hokkaido expedition which climbed Baruntse in winter. (pp 12, maps, colour photos, in Japanese and English).

MOUNT COOK NATIONAL PARK A coloured brochure, well illustrated, giving general information on the park. (pp 32, photos, maps.)

CORSICA 1979 (pp 27, map). Glenalmond expedition—climbs & GR.20.

GLENALMOND PERU EXPEDITION 1981 (pp 88, maps, diagrams, photos, including colour tipped-in) The Trinity College, Glenalmond, expedition to various areas in Peru.

KULU 80 (pp 17, map) Durham University expedition to the Himachel Pradesh.

BRITISH TAULLIRAJU SOUTH FACE EXPEDITION 1982 (pp 29, map, photos).

EXHIBITIONS AND PLAYS

THOMAS GRAHAM BROWN, F.R.S. 1882-1965 —An exhibition in Edinburgh.

When in Scotland with the S.M.C. meet at Easter, I suddenly remembered that this exhibition in celebration of the centenary of the birth of our distinguished member, scientist, editor of our journal, and, above all, the pioneer of those classic routes on the Brenva face of Mont Blanc, was still on view in Edinburgh and I persuaded my companions that we should stop off, on our way south, to look at it. And what an astonishingly pleasant and rewarding break in our journey south this turned out to be! An exhibition beautifully mounted, as was to be expected of the National Library of Scotland. For the bibliophile there were, on display, rare books like Bourret, de Saussure, Glissold, Fellows (with the rare coloured plates), Auldjo, Albert Smith, A. W. Moore and many others. And for mountaineers there were photographs of famous men and of classic climbs in the Alps, mostly from the lens of our much loved late member Basil Goodfellow.

But perhaps, most interesting of all, were the photographs of the Brenva face routes on Mont Blanc; and the Graham Brown, Frank Smythe correspondence regarding their combined pioneering endeavours on that mountain; some of it acrimonious, but interesting.

A copy of the catalogue of this exhibition is now in the AC Library and anyone who is interested should read Peter Lloyd's admirable and thoroughly fair assessment of Graham Brown's achievements both as a scientist and as a mountaineer. The planning and the accomplishment of the great Brenva face routes on Mont Blanc were indeed his epitome.

But let me now try to bring to life a little this review of a fascinating exhibition with a personal reminiscence. I remember a gathering at the Wasdale Head Hotel in the old days at which G.B. was present and virtually presiding. He was telling us about his pet crag in the Lake District, Boat How, on the Ennerdale face of Kirk Fell. The next day, young and old alike, we were all shepherded to Boat How. There seemed to be dozens of us because long before I got off the ground, as the last man on the rope, G.B. had finished the climb, had come down again, and was there to see us youngsters launched up the first pitch.

That visit to Wasdale in the late 'twenties' stands out in my memory as a very pleasant episode in my life. I remember those days of the mantelpiece traverse in the old hotel sitting room and the other games we played there. And above all I remember, as a very young man, the kindly presence and stimulating enthusiasm of Graham Brown.

The exhibition is now, of course, over. But members of the AC and other mountaineering clubs should be reminded that the material which was on view is still accessible to interested parties in the reading rooms of the National Library of Scotland. And for further information it should be mentioned that the Library also has James Wordie's and R. W. Lloyd's mountaineering books. Research workers in matters to do with mountaineering and exploration therefore now have access, in Edinburgh, to a wealth of valuable material which is not available to them elsewhere.

Charles Warren

THE ASCENT OF WILBERFORCE III (The White Hell of Iffish Adorabad)—A high altitude musical extravaganza! by Chris Judge Smith and J. Maxwell Hutchinson.

This play was originally commissioned for the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, and was later put on, in altered form, at the Lyric Studio, Hammersmith, as a Christmas time musical entertainment during January 1982. The Alpine Club was consulted about props for the production and lent a tent, boots, crampons and a hemp climbing rope contemporary with the period of the story which was set in the 'thirties' of this century. The show, as put on at Hammersmith, was correctly described in the programme as a musical extravaganza. It is a satire on politically motivated mountaineering expeditions; and a very entertaining satire it is too. Charming, the producer was at pains to say that she hoped that mountaineers would not be offended at the fun being poked at them in the play. I assured her that AC members could stand more than that.

This musical had a pop session flavour about it, and some of the tunes were really good, if only one's ear drums could hold out against the electro-magnification of the sound; and some of the lyrics were very funny indeed. A lot of the time I found myself bursting with laughter.

Lord Melior, who was obviously either a Liberal or a Labour peer of the time, thought that by making the first ascent of the mountain Wilberforce III with an international expedition he would espouse the cause of the League of Nations. His team consisted of would-be heroes, eccentrics and one stowaway who joins the party in male dress but who turns out to be a woman. A brilliant touch was to have the opening chorus sung in Esperanto, the crazy language of the time. Lord Melior's party are all pretty quarrelsome and incompetent; all, that is to say, except that marvellously comic character Dank Tangi, the Sirdar of the porters, who proceeds just to run up and down the mountain between

camps while his Sahibs are laboriously panting their way upwards, and who wheedles money out of the leader for staying in support of the expedition which without him would collapse. Paul Dalton's acting in this splendid comic role was magnificent. And Carole Harrison, as Diana Credence, the camp follower, also had a good part which she played with gusto. Her pop song was thoroughly good fun, as was her seduction of Bud Freestone in the tent.

But I never quite understood the denouement of the musical version of this play. At first it appeared that everyone except Lord Melior had perished on the mountain, and that he alone had survived to reach the top only to find there, in an ice cave, the Gura Mensana who, as I understood matters, thought that the expedition was really a lot of ballyhoo, as indeed it was. And on that note the show ought to have ended.

But then, all the characters were brought to life again; but to what purpose I wonder, except to be there to sing the finale in a musical version of the play?

All the same, this was thoroughly good entertainment. Inevitably, the play reminded me of Auden's much more solemn *Ascent of F. 6.*

Charles Warren