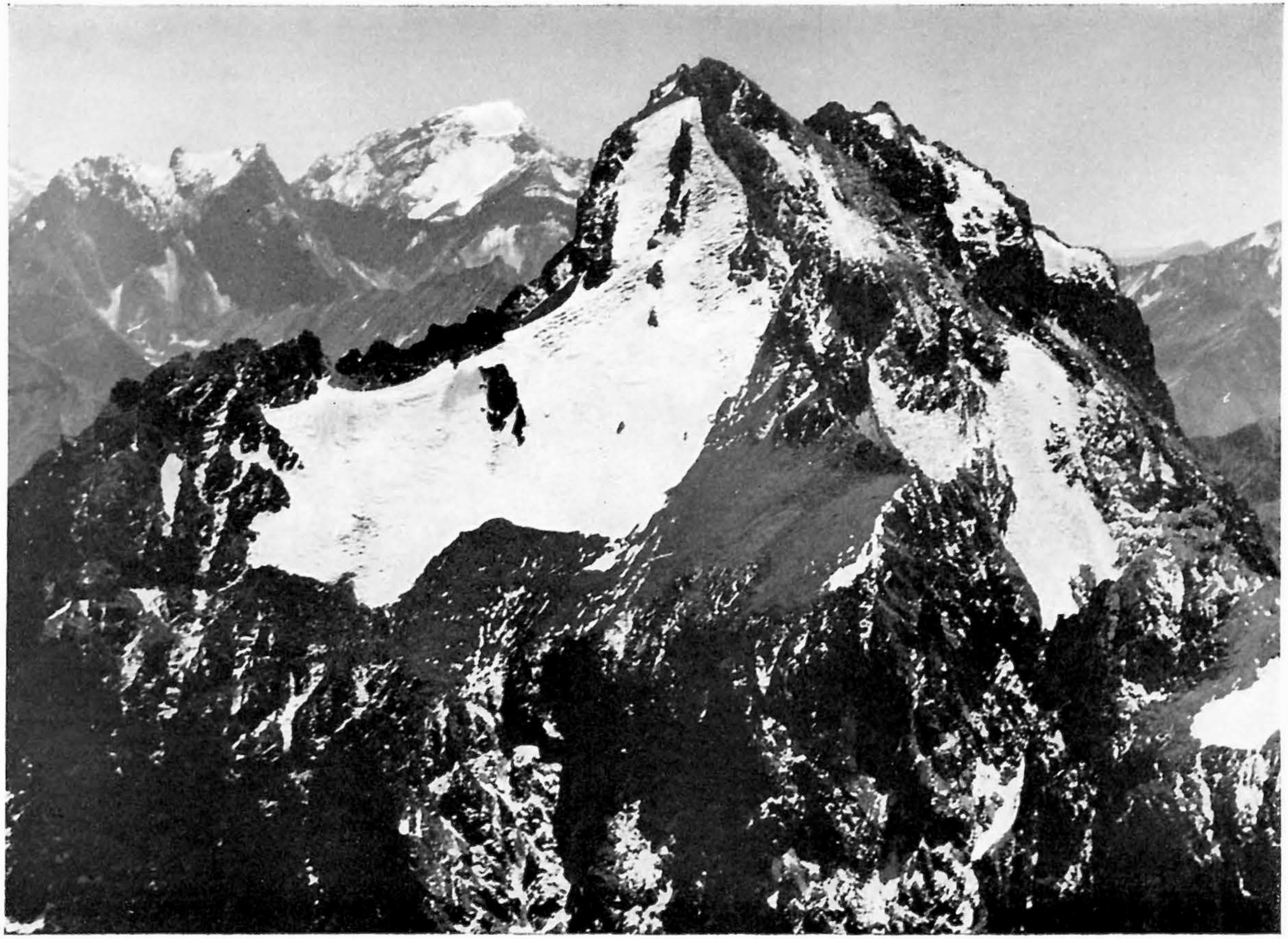


Photo, Chilean Federacion de Andinismo]

UNNAMED MOUNTAIN AT 15,575 FT. OF YESO VALLEY, CENTRAL CHILE. CLIMBED BY A CHILEAN–JAPANESE GROUP ON FEBRUARY 18, 1960.



Photo, Manuel Bazán]
EL TRONCO, 18,078 FT. (*centre*) TRAVERSED FROM RISOPATRON (*left*) DURING FEBRUARY 1960.

[*To face p.* 242

CHILEAN NOTES

By EVELIO ECHEVARRÍA C.

To bring up to date the progress of modern mountaineering in the southern end of South America as described in recent numbers of *A.J.*, it will be of interest to record some events of the 1959 and 1960 seasons in the Chilean Andes. Information has been extracted from the bulletins published by the Chilean Federación de Andinismo and also from the useful 'Climbs and Expeditions' notes supplied by Mr. Adams Carter in the *A.A.J.*

Central Chile. Many ascents between 12,000 and 22,834 ft. (the latter figure being the height of Aconcagua) were made by climbers residing in the larger cities of Central Chile, where local mountaineering has reached its biggest development; among these, worthy of mention are the first ascent of El Tronco, a mountain located east of Santiago and on the international border. El Tronco had repulsed no less than six attempts in the last four years; at last, in February 1960 two young climbers from Santiago traversed to its summit (18,078 ft.) from the somewhat higher Risopatrón (18,909 ft.) this being the only way believed accessible to the top. Also, an unnamed rock peak, 15,256 ft. high, of the Cortaderas group, some twenty miles south-east of Santiago was scaled for the first time by Mr. Anthony Campbell, a Briton, and Señores B. and O. González, from Santiago, in March 1960.

Farther south of Santiago, three fifteen thousanders at the head of the Cipreses valley, east of Rancagua town, were ascended for the first time by university students from Santiago, in February 1959. The same area was visited the following season, in February/March 1960, by a group of native and Japanese mountaineers, the latter from the Alpine Club of Kobe University. In the Cipreses valley this strong group, ten climbers in all, ascended three fourteen-thousanders; later, in the valleys east of Santiago and Los Andes they climbed ten other peaks, most of them for the first time, thus greatly reducing the scope for pioneer mountaineering in Central Chile. It is believed that at present only four peaks over 17,000 ft. remain unclimbed, one of them being Chimbote, 17,815 ft. a rock peak that has repulsed every attempt 100 ft. below its last rock tower; the number of lesser unclimbed mountains may be much larger.

Patagonia. Besides the first ascent of Cerro Helbling (*A.A.J.* 1960, p. 151) and the explorations of Mr. Eric Shipton in the Viedma area,

a Chilean group of four entered Patagonia and made the first ascent of Cerro O'Higgins (9,547 ft.); this mountain, located some forty miles north of Cerro FitzRoy, was ascended with the help of six camps by W. Espinoza, E. García, C. Marangunic and F. Vivanco, on January 16, 1960.

International. Besides a few climbs in Central Argentina, including Aconcagua, ascents were made on Mercedario, located in the Ramada range, in San Juan province, Argentina; its summit 21,884 ft. high, was ascended on March 18, 1959, by V. Chiaranda, E. Lartundo and E. Payá, via its North-west slopes, a new route. However the expedition ended in disaster; the climbers had to bivouac in the open, with no other shelter than an ice cave and two of them suffered severe frost-bites which later resulted in amputations. The third climber, V. Chiaranda, who had descended separately in order to prepare a quick evacuation of camps, disappeared in a snow-storm and was not found. A rescue party organised in Santiago conducted fruitless searches; in the course of this rescue expedition another ascent of Mercedario was made by the same route.

Other notes. A new hut has been placed by the Federación in the Central Cordillera; it has been located at the foot of La Gloria (15,355 ft.), a peak much favoured by visitors from Valparaíso seaport. This is the fifth of a series of twenty-five huts or 'refugios' the institution plans to build in the area; these refugios are made of lenga, a sort of Chilean redwood, with iron supports and concrete foundations. They are of standard construction, resembling a two-pole tent; their dimensions are 10 x 8 x 5 ft. which allows four to six inmates with their equipment. But these refugios cannot properly be considered alpine huts, but rather a sort of permanent high camp shelter for a specific mountain or group of mountains; they are, of course, placed near resources of wood and water and usually at some 11,000–12,000 ft. above sea level.