

ALPINE NOTES

(Compiled by D. F. O. Dangar)

SCHWEIZER ALPEN CLUB.—The S.A.C. has always been held in high honour in this country, not only by the members of the Alpine Club but by all British mountaineers. Though not quite the oldest of our descendants it is now, after one hundred years of existence, regarded not only with our esteem but with our affection. It is with particular pleasure that, on the occasion of its Centenary, we extend to the Schweizer Alpen Club our most hearty congratulations and our warmest good wishes.

If the cradle of the Alpine Club was rocked upon the summit of the Finsteraarhorn, that of the Swiss Alpine Club may well be said to have been rocked upon the summit of Piz Rusein, for it was there, on July 30, 1861, that the idea of forming an 'alpine association' first came to Dr. Theodor Simler, professor of chemistry and geology at the University of Berne.

On October 20, 1862, Dr. Simler sent out a letter to certain Swiss prominent in the mountaineering world, with a draft of the proposed statutes for the foundation of a 'Schweizerischer Alpenverein'. Article 6 suggested that in the spring of 1863 an invitation should be sent to all those who signified their agreement with the proposals to attend a meeting. Dr. Simler hoped for twenty to thirty signatures in support of his circular letter; he received more than one hundred and thirty.

The historic meeting which resulted in the foundation of the S.A.C. took place at Olten on Sunday, April 19, 1863. Thirty-five people attended, but there was no representative from French-speaking Switzerland. Gottlieb Studer having declined the honour, Dr. Simler was elected the first President and the election of the first *Comité Central* was entrusted to the Berne section. The ALPINE JOURNAL noticed the formation of the new club¹ and remarked that, in addition to other aims, it 'projected the erection of night stations in the higher regions of the Alps, and the selection and education of able guides—schemes which, if carried out, might well be of great use to all travellers and ought to obtain the pecuniary support, as well as the hearty sympathies, of English mountaineers'.

By the time the first general meeting took place, at Glarus on September 4-5, 1863, eight sections had been formed; Tödi, Basel, St. Gallen, Uto, Rhätia, Berne, Aarau, and Les Diablerets; at the end of

¹ *A.J.* 1. 95.



Photo: by courtesy of the Schweizerisches Alpines Museum, Bern.]

DR. RUDOLF THEODOR SIMLER (1833-1873), FOUNDER AND FIRST PRESIDENT
OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB.

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1863 the Club had 257 members, seventy-five years later there were eighty-four sections and more than 31,000 members. Today there are ninety-two sections with a membership of over 43,000, of whom 695 are resident in Great Britain. The *Comité Central* is at present located at Geneva, with Dr. Ed. Wyss-Dunant as President. The C.C., it may be mentioned, holds office for three years (though from 1863-66 the period of office was one year) at the end of which time it is formed by a different section. Before Geneva the C.C. had its seat at Chur and prior to that at Basel. To date, there have been thirty-five Central Committees.

The original objects of the S.A.C. were defined as follows: 'd'explorer les Alpes suisses, de les étudier plus exactement sous tous les rapports, de les faire mieux connaître et d'en faciliter l'accès. Il sert en outre de centre de ralliement à tous les amateurs de courses en montagne'.

In later years other tasks have fallen to the S.A.C. In 1907 additional aims were adopted—'la conservation des beautés du territoire alpin suisse' and 'la prise de position contre le vandalisme'. In 1926 compulsory insurance against mountaineering accidents was introduced. The Club's activities have expanded to an enormous degree during the hundred years of its existence and are too numerous to enumerate here. Of its many achievements probably none has proved of greater benefit to the mountaineers of all nations than the building of the numerous club huts now found throughout the Swiss Alps. The first of these huts, the Grünhorn, was erected in 1863 at a cost of Fr. 876. The latest hut, the Oberaarjoch, completed in 1961 and fitted with every modern convenience, cost Fr. 137,668.

We offer our most cordial wishes to the S.A.C. for its continued prosperity and well-being. Long may it flourish!

THE ALPINE JOURNAL.—The ALPINE JOURNAL has now been in publication for one hundred years without a break. The first issue appeared in March, 1863, under the editorship of H. B. George. To mark the occasion we reprint the 'Introductory Address' that was published in the first number.

'The amount of geographical and other information acquired during each summer by members of the Alpine Club, is felt to be worth making known more generally than by means of the papers read at their monthly meetings. It has, therefore, been resolved to establish a Journal, which shall not only give an account of their actual proceedings, but also contain other matter relating to mountain explorations, and thereby to extend to all members of the Alpine Club, and to the public in general, advantages which have hitherto been enjoyed only by those able to attend regularly the meetings of the Club.

'It is intended to report all new and interesting mountain expeditions, whether in the Alps or elsewhere; to publish all such new items of scientific and geographical knowledge as can be procured from the various available sources; to give some account of all new books treating of Alpine matters, and, generally, to record all facts and incidents which it may be useful to the mountaineer to know. The Club being responsible for a Journal published under its direction, all the narratives inserted will be written by members; but a section devoted to "Alpine Notes and Queries", which, it is hoped, will prove a most useful portion of the Journal, will be open to all persons interested in the matters in which we concern ourselves.

'It may, perhaps, be thought rather late to commence the publication of an Alpine Journal when so many of the great peaks of Switzerland have been already climbed, and the successful expeditions described. But we can assure the most sceptical reader that the Alps are not nearly exhausted, even by the many new ascents of last summer, of which we are now recording the first instalment. The number of persons who know the mere name of the highest mountain in the great Dauphiné group may be reckoned by tens; and many peaks, that would be considered first-rate but for the proximity of such neighbours as Mont Blanc and the Weisshorn, are as yet untried; while even if all other objects of interest in Switzerland should be exhausted, the Matterhorn remains (who shall say for how long?) unconquered and apparently invincible. Moreover, the Himalayas, which are daily becoming more accessible to enterprise, offer an unlimited field for adventure and scientific observation, not to mention the numerous ranges in all parts of the world which the Englishman's foot is some day destined to scale. With all these sources from whence to derive a constant supply of narrative and valuable knowledge, we may defer the prospect of the starvation of the Alpine Journal for want of matter whereon to feed, to some date beyond the scope of our calculations.'

ARTHUR B. EMMONS.—The news of the sudden death of Arthur Emmons² must have come as a great shock to his friends in the many parts of the world he had visited either on his climbing expeditions or as a member of the U.S. Foreign Service. I first met him during World War II in Montevideo, where we were *en poste* together in our respective Embassies. In 1944, and again in 1945, we employed our very brief local leave in making two trips to the Aconcagua region, during the second of which we succeeded in climbing Cerro Tolosa by a new route on the North-west face. We were badly benighted on this climb and I will always remember the cheerfulness and resource with which Arthur guided us down some very steep slabs in the dark.

² We hope to publish a full obituary of Mr. Emmons in our next number.

Despite the loss of all his toes on Minya Konka he was a wonderfully active climber and, with his calm temperament and great sense of humour, the perfect companion in camps and bivouacs which, owing to bad weather, improvised equipment and our untrained condition, were at times far from ideal.

From South America he went to the Far East, and his appointments thereafter unfortunately seldom took him to Europe, but he was in Ireland for a short time and, to the great pleasure of all his old friends, attended the Centenary Dinner in 1957.

His death is a great loss to Anglo-American mountaineering, for which he did so much, and our deepest sympathy goes out to his charming wife Evvie, and to his family.

THEODORE CROMBIE.

G. J. F. TOMLINSON.—Mr. F. H. Keenlyside writes—‘Sir George Tomlinson, K.C.M.G., C.B.E., who died in January, 1963, was elected to the Alpine Club in 1901. He spent his early years in Huddersfield, whence every Sunday he and his father would set off by train for the North and cover tremendous distances over the Yorkshire moors. It was, no doubt, these walks in the Dales which first inspired his great affection for mountains.

‘He was educated at Charterhouse and University College, Oxford, where he ran the mile for the University and was President of the Union. On going down from Oxford he held appointments in South Africa before joining the Nigerian Administrative Service in 1907. He retired from Africa in 1928, but almost immediately was invited to re-join the Colonial Office as Assistant Under Secretary of State in charge of the Personnel Division. He held this post with success until 1939 when he retired again, only to take up temporary war work in the office of the Clerk to the House of Commons. To his dying day he loved to talk about mountains and to recall his early expeditions. He was happy to claim that he had known both the first and the last editors of the Alpine Journal, for Hereford Brooke George was still at New College when Tomlinson was an undergraduate.

‘His first season in the Alps was in 1898, when he climbed the Unter Gabelhorn, the Wellenkuppe and the Dufourspitze. At the Riffel he fell in with a Mr. Rogers and with him completed the tour of Monte Rosa via the Théodule–Val Tournanche–Gressoney–Alagna–Macugnaga and the Schwarzberg–Weisstor. Tomlinson liked to recall that they drank a bottle of Asti Spumanti each night and that the price was four lire a bottle. In 1899 he was in Zinal with Wilfrid C. Mathews, a contemporary at Univ. and also a nephew of the great Charles Edward. Mathews brought with him two cousins called Osler. They climbed Lo Besso, crossed over to Zermatt, climbing the Pointe de

Zinal on the way; then on to Randa where they climbed the Dom. In 1900 his companion was Reginald Jamison, a Trinity contemporary. They went over the Oberaarjoch to Concordia; climbed the Finsteraarhorn, the Gross Fiescherhorn, the Wetterhorn and the Schreckhorn; traversed the Jungfrau from the Rottal to Concordia, and the Aletschhorn from Concordia to Belalp; finishing up by taking in the Tschingelhorn on the way from the Lötschental to Lauterbrunnen.

'In 1901, with Frank Bergne of St. John's,³ Tomlinson went from Chamonix to Saas by a high level route; over the Col du Chardonnet to Champex, traversing the Grand Combin to Chanrion, over to Prarayé, then the Dent d'Hérens from the Valpelline and over the Château des Dames to Val Tournanche; the Matterhorn from Breuil to Zermatt and the Rimpfischhorn from Zermatt to Saas, where they finished up with the Lenzspitze.

'Their route on the Château des Dames was recorded as a first ascent at the time,⁴ but Tomlinson always maintained that the route they followed, both up and down, was so obvious and straightforward that it must have been followed many times before.

'Having completed these four seasons, Tomlinson was elected to the Club, but immediately embarked on a career in Africa and never climbed again. He remained a member of the Club till 1931; in that year the late Neville Chamberlain cut Civil Service salaries by 10% and caused Tomlinson to resign as a measure of economy.

'Tomlinson's last years were clouded by the deaths of his son and of his wife, but he was always happy to talk about the Alps and the mountains of his youth; in spite of the interval of sixty years his memory of his Alpine days was bright and clear.'

DEATHS.—Austrian mountaineering suffered a grievous blow last summer when Diether Marchart lost his life on August 27, in the course of a solo attempt on the Eigerwand.

Marchart was one of the most brilliant of the younger generation of Austrian climbers and probably no mountaineer of his age has equalled or surpassed the expeditions he achieved.

Born in Vienna on November 11, 1939, he had his first experience of the mountains when he and his family were evacuated to the Bregenzerwald in 1945. As a young boy he climbed the East face of the Fleischbank (Dülferweg) and the Steinerweg on the South face of the Dachstein and dozens of other routes in the Austrian Alps, achieved both in summer and winter. Later, he did many of the most difficult routes in the Dolomites and the Alps; among his ascents in the Western

³ Mr. Bergne met his death on the Schwarzhorn (Saas Fee) on New Year's Day, 1908, while on his way to the Mischabel hut. See *A. J.* 24.96.

⁴ *A. J.* 21.45. records it as the first ascent by the North-west arête.

Alps in 1957 were the East face of the Grand Capucin and the West face of the Dru. In 1960 he made, with Günther Stärker, the first ascent of Distaghil Sar (25,868 ft.).

Marchart frequently climbed alone and among his solitary ascents may be mentioned the ascent and descent of the Ostwand of the Watzmann by the Salzburgerweg, which Hermann Buhl ranked as the most difficult of all the climbs on the East wall, and the first and only solo ascent of the North face of the Matterhorn (in six hours!).

An agricultural engineer by profession, Marchart was a member of the Committee of the Österreichischer Alpenklub, to whom we would express our sincere sympathy on the loss of this distinguished young climber.

We regret also to report the deaths of two other well-known climbers; Jan Duglosz, the Polish mountaineer who took part in the first ascent of the Central Pillar of Frêne, was killed last July when climbing in the Tatra, and Hermann Delago, known for his first ascent of the Delagoturm of the Vajolet-türme in 1895 (when he was but twenty years of age), died early in December last year.

U.I.A.A.—The Executive Committee of the Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme with M. C. Egmond d'Arcis, the President, in the chair, met at Corfu on September 3 last at the invitation of the Hellenic Alpine Club.

The general meeting, at which seventeen mountaineering associations and clubs were represented, took place the following day. Among the many subjects discussed was the mechanisation of the mountains and it is gratifying to know that there seems at last to be growing public alarm about this danger. All the speakers emphasised the point that conditions in modern towns are such that it is essential for town dwellers to be able to enjoy the peace and quiet of the country and that these can best be found in the mountains. The President had already been in touch with the Mountaineering Council, the S.A.C. and the C.A.I. about the matter.

Many letters of protest had been received about the proposed extension of the Jungfrau railway and the U.I.A.A. urged all associations to unite in their resistance to mechanisation and to notify each other of the steps they were taking.

Their Majesties the King and Queen of Greece were present at part of the afternoon session.

In view of their Centenary the S.A.C. have invited the U.I.A.A. to hold this year's meeting in Switzerland and it will probably take place at Interlaken.

ITALIAN ALPS, 1962.—In *A.J.* 58. 273, we reported our 1951 visit to

Mont Aiguille and an examination of the original documents relating to its ascent (1492) in the Grenoble archives.

While at Turin this summer we made an excursion to the Cathedral of San Giusto at Susa to see the Triptych of Rocciamelone, which Rotario d'Asti carried to the summit when he made the first ascent in 1358, fulfilling a vow made in a Turkish prison. This was the earliest ascent of a snow peak, the height being 11,608 ft. The triptych, shown by a verger, is an early fourteenth century bronze in niello. The central panel depicts the Madonna, St. George on the left, and St. Joseph with the kneeling knight on the right. Below is an inscription to the effect that the knight 'brought me hither in honour of our Blessed Lord and our Lady on September 1, 1358'. Legend has it that in the eleventh century the monks in the monastery of Noalesa had failed to scale it in order to secure treasure left there by King Romulus, at which time the peak was called 'Mons Romuleus', its present name first occurring in 1494.

In the Duke of the Abruzzi Alpine Museum at Turin there is an excellent relief map of K2 (1 : 10,000) by Mario Fantin, and a copy is also in the Alpine Museum at Courmayeur.

At Courmayeur there is much building in preparation for the opening of the Mont Blanc tunnel, the final blast-through occurring on August 14. The old graveyard was moved about 1911, and the early stones, including that of the American Howard Riegel (*A. J.* 64. 239), have vanished. In the new cemetery we noted a memorial tablet to Michael Roberts and the stones of H. O. Jones and his wife (*A. J.* 26. 454) and of John Churchill and his fiancée (*A. A. J.* 8. 512).

An old house in the nearby hamlet of Saxe has an amusing bronze of King Victor Emmanuel II beside a fallen ibex. Does anyone know why it is in this remote location?

The two lifts at Courmayeur take one to the Col de Chécrouit, with its reflecting lake, and to the Pointe Helbronner, whence one can walk easily across the Allée Blanche to watch the skiing and look down on the Requin hut.

All through the Val d'Aosta there is a renaissance of wood-carving, often following ancient patterns, particularly in depicting animals and in the characteristic piece called 'Grolle', actually a grail whose form dates back to the Crusades. Many of the finer Gothic pieces from Cogne and Courmayeur can be seen in Castle Fénis, near Châtillon, and in the Museum of Ancient Art at Turin.

Guido Rey's house at Breuil has been sold. There is a fine memorial plaque of him on the main road within the edge of his grounds. It would have saddened him to see the ugly buildings which have now sprung up in the foreground of his Matterhorn.

The ski fields of Plan Rosa are crowded and parties take skis far up

the Breithorn. Germans were using short summer skis and plodded on them across the Breithorn plateau.

On the walls of the charming village square of Valtournanche are many tablets commemorating those who took part in early expeditions on the Matterhorn, J. A. Carrel, Gorret, and others.

Having read Anati's recent book, *Val Camonica*, dealing with the prehistoric rock carvings, we entered the Bergamasque Alps from Brescia and spent several days at the comfortable Hotel Antica Fonte at Boario Terme, whence it is a short bus ride to Angolo with its view of the triple-peaked Presolana. In the main valley there are some fifty-two sites with a total of 25,000 pictographs dating from the first millenium B.C. The best are in the Naquane Park on the hillside above Capo di Ponte station, the trail from the main highway being well marked. There are enormous rocks, some almost 100 ft. long, grooved and polished by glacial action. On the smooth surfaces are depictions of houses and people, hunting scenes and ritual dances, war chariots and agricultural activity. The chief animal is the stag, hunted by mounted men wielding spears and accompanied by dogs, giving a remarkable appearance of action. Ibex appear occasionally, but not chamois. Ibex are now extinct, while chamois frequent higher reaches of the valley. The houses sometimes show floor plan and division into rooms, and the frontal elevations are the only ones of pile dwellings that show how the roof was constructed.

At Madonna di Campiglio there is so much new building that one scarcely recognises the town of ten years ago. A new car lift takes one to the top of Monte Spinale, and several chair lifts rise in other directions.

San Martino di Castrozza has a car lift to the Rosetta, whence one can walk to the summit in less than an hour. There is a chair lift from Passo di Rolle to the lake at Baita Segantini, but the long one from San Martino to the pass is under repair. The car lift to the Alpe Tognola affords splendid views of the Pala group.

By the post office at Cortina there is now a bronze portrait of Dolomieu (*A. J.* 64. 124). There are two car lifts: Pocol, shortening the walk to the Cinque Torri, and the Tondi di Faloria, which is spectacular and affords a wonderful panorama from the Marmolata to the Tre Cime di Lavaredo. Mountain troops were everywhere, with artillery, field kitchens, and mule trains. A large camp just below the Refuge Caldart provided a striking foreground to the Lavaredo peaks, coated with new snow in early July.

J. MONROE THORINGTON.

A TOUR CENTENARY.—In June, 1863, the first organised tour to Switzerland was made, conducted by Thomas Cook, under the title of the 'Junior United Alpine Club'. The travellers produced a journal of

their activities, written in the style of rather heavy Victorian facetiousness. They were, clearly, not a genuine Club, but, rather, a coterie of friends giving themselves a high-sounding name. All the names mentioned seem to be fictitious, except for Mr. Cook. They did not perform any climbing feat that has enabled one to identify the individuals; undoubtedly, they visited the places they name, such as the Montanvert. They were interested in the Alps, and refer to E. S. Kennedy, the then President of the Alpine Club, and had clearly studied Ball's Guide.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

WINTER ASCENTS.—The first winter ascent of the North face of the Pointe Walker of the Grandes Jorasses was made in January by W. Bonatti and Cosimo Zappelli. The climb took nearly seven days.⁵

Three Germans forced a new direct route up the North face of the Cima Grande di Lavaredo. This ascent took seventeen days and 850 pitons, 400 of which were left in the wall. It is, perhaps, not without significance that two members of the party were said to be professional steeple-jacks.

REFUGES.—The old refuge du Pelvoux, or Lemercier, built in 1892 at the foot of the moraine of the glacier du Clot de l'Homme, has been replaced by a new *cabane* with sleeping accommodation for fifty-eight. The opening ceremony took place on July 15 last.

The inauguration of a modern refuge on the Aiguille du Goûter to replace the old hut took place on September 23. The new hut will accommodate seventy-six people in four dormitories.

FINLAND.—The Finnish Alpine Club (Suomen Alppikerko) was founded in Helsinki on October 26, 1962, with M. A. Jokinen as the first President. We extend our hearty good wishes to the new club.

STOVES.—Unfortunately the small Réchaud Bleuete stove recommended by Mr. Bonington was out of production by the time his article was published in the November, 1962, issue of the ALPINE JOURNAL. It has been replaced by a much larger model, with a cylinder giving 2–2½ hours of use, and it is packed in a polythene bag too small to contain the stove when connected with its cylinder. I would doubt if Mr. Bonington would care for the bulk of the new model, although it is a fine contraption for elderly mountaineers bent on a picnic in the valley, or for a reserve in case of power cuts at home.

T. A. BROCKLEBANK.

⁵ A leading London daily, not distinguished for its accuracy in mountaineering matters, reported the summit of the Pointe Walker as being 17,000 ft. high. Not so very long ago the same paper reported that a motor cyclist was killed on a Swiss road by colliding with a chamois at a height of 16,000 ft.

BEN NEVIS RACE.—When in Fort William, Inverness-shire, last summer, I witnessed this remarkable race to the top of the Ben, 4,406 ft., and back to Fort William at sea level. The winner, P. Hall of Barrow-in-Furness, created a new record in accomplishing the total return distance of about ten miles to the summit in 1 hour 45 minutes 44 seconds!

Mr. Christopher Brasher tells me that a really top class marathon runner could cover 20–21 miles in $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours *on the flat* and recalls the 1957 race, when he was the official starter. The race was not started until the afternoon; there was a very high wind, and mist and driving rain over the mountain top. Three competitors had to be taken to hospital and another was completely lost and, although found by a search party at two o'clock next morning, died later in the day. As a result of this tragedy the race is now started in the morning.

Other fell races in Britain are the Three Peaks Race which takes in Ingleborough and lasts for over four hours, and the Lake District Mountain Trial held annually in September.

N. E. ODELL.

MOUNT COOK.—Mr. H. E. L. Porter has been good enough to send a cutting from the *Wellington Evening Post* of October 17, 1962, reporting vast avalanches on Mount Cook the previous day as the result of an earthquake shock. The guide M. Bowie, who was on the Tasman glacier at the time, described the avalanches as the most spectacular he had seen. 'There was a sudden crash,' he said, 'as if there was an explosion beneath the glacier. Following this, the whole Eastern face of Mount Cook was a moving mass as the avalanche flowed.'

The Manager of the Hermitage said that the shock only lasted for about ten seconds but was sharp and most violent. A few bottles fell from shelves as the building swayed and creaked. Tremendous falls of ice and snow could be seen on the slopes of Cook, Sefton and Sealy. Even ten minutes after the earthquake rocks and stones could be seen—and heard—rumbling down the lower slopes.

MOUNT GAUDRY.—Captain T. Willis, R.M., and Marine T. McAuliffe, of H.M.S. *Protector*, accompanied by Mr. J. Green, have made the first ascent of Mount Gaudry (9,000 ft.) on Adelaide Island.⁶ A blizzard was blowing on the summit and the Union Jack intended to be left there was retained for protection during the descent. With visibility down to 3 ft. and their earlier tracks obliterated, the party spent fifteen hours in a snow hole at 7,500 ft., the flag being used as a door. Taking advantage of a lull in the storm they managed to get down another 1,500 ft., only to be held up again by the weather for

⁶ The N.G.S. map of Antarctica (1957) gives the height as 7,600 ft.

three hours, and eventually got back to their base forty-four hours after setting out.

THE HEIGHT OF MOUNT EREBUS.—Since its first sighting by the British expedition of Sir James Clark Ross in 1841, the elevations assigned to Erebus have differed widely. Ross himself estimated the height as 12,400 ft. The first ascent was made by members of Shackleton's expedition in 1908, and Mawson at that time made the altitude 13,370 ft. Priestley, on Scott's 1911-13 expedition, gave the figure as 13,350 ft. Other estimates have been as high as 14,997 ft., and 15,325 ft. But the figure usually quoted in recent years (e.g. in the British *Antarctic Pilot* and the American *Geographic Names of Antarctica*) has been 13,200 ft.

In the summer of 1960-61 engineers of the U.S. Geological Survey made observations and measurements with theodolite and tellurometer and made the height 12,280 ft. More extensive observations last summer have brought a new figure which, it is claimed, is 'of greater accuracy'. As part of a tellurometer traverse, distances were measured from Brown Island to Salmon and from Salmon to Hogback. With this extended base line precisely measured, the highest point of the mountain was estimated to be 12,450 ft.: which is practically Ross's estimate of 120 years ago!

(From *Antarctic*, June, 1962.)

HINDU KUSH.—In 1938, when at about 18,000 ft. on Buni Zom in Chitral, I noted a peak of considerable size due west, in Afghanistan and visible past the south flank of Tirich Mir. Over the years I have made various attempts to obtain identification but without success. The existing Survey of India maps gave no clue as to its position or likely height.

It now seems beyond dispute that the peak is Koh-i-Bandakor, 6,660 m., visible from the Anjuman Pass in Afghanistan and standing above the junction of the Anjuman, Manjan, and Jurm valleys. A German party climbed it in 1960 by its West ridge. An account is given in *Die Erde*, 1961, no. 1, pp. 59-70.⁷ The location given is 35° 99' North and 71° 00' West, which seems to accord with my observation.

Comprehensive air photo cover now exists for a large part of Afghanistan carried out by the Americans and the Russians.

J. R. G. FINCH.

ANDES.—An expedition from the London School of Economics is going to the Cordillera Huayhuash during the summer. The principal

⁷ And also in *Der Bergsteiger*, August, 1961, p. 646.

objective of the party is Rondoy (5,883 m.), the highest summit of which is still unclimbed. It is also hoped to climb Yerupaja and Jirishanca.

FANNY.—The plate backing that facing p. 15 of the May, 1962, ALPINE JOURNAL bears the caption, 'Peak in right foreground is that called "Fanny" by 1957 British party'. This peak was, in fact, so christened by the 1938 British party after Mrs. Fanny Bullock Workman who, despite the impediments of a husband, a posse of Alpine guides and a voluminous skirt, carried out seven expeditions into the Karakorams between the years 1898 and 1912. In 1911 she visited the Masherbrum glacier from Hushe.

JAMES ROBERTS.

KOLAHOI NORTHERN GLACIER.—A visit to this Kashmir glacier was made on August 31, 1961, with my wife and Major R. E. Rawle, and it was apparent that marked recession of the snout had taken place since the position shown on the one-inch Survey map of 1912, as well as on the reduced half-inch sheets of 1922 and 1943; all three of these are still in current, but restricted political, use and difficult to obtain. It is evident that there has been a retreat in the interval of about half a mile, i.e. from the lower open valley, where it takes a sharp turn to the west, to the near vicinity of the North face of Mount Kolahoi, whence it descends in an ice-fall fed chiefly by the upper glacier basin lying on the west side of the peak. The present altitude of the snout is about 12,000 ft. in relation to the contours of the above maps, and the lower reaches of the glacier are in a passive and shrinking condition. Time and opportunity after a four days' trek from Srinagar, via the West Liddar valley, did not permit a visit to the uppermost reaches of the glacier, particularly that branch, now the main stream, which has its source on the west side of the mountain. In 1909, from Dr. Neve's account in *A. J.* 25. 39-42, the main head-snows of the Kolahoi glacier were then situated in what is now the shrunken tributary from the névé on the east side of the peak. Moreover, Dr. Neve indicates that there has been general retreat of the glacier over a long period. This matter will be dealt with more fully, and illustrated, in a coming issue of the *Journal of Glaciology*.

It may be added that Mount Kolahoi, 17,799 ft., is the highest peak of the range, which lies along the north-east side of the valley of Kashmir, and it is situated about thirty-five miles, in an air-line, east-north-east of Srinagar.

In 1911, with approach from the east, the main peak was ascended to within 30 ft. of the top by Capt. J. B. Corry, R.E., and Lieut. R. D. Squires; and the following year the actual summit was reached by Dr.

E. F. Neve and Lieut. (later Professor) K. Mason, R.E. (*A. J.* 25. 681 and 26. 407), the latter of whom was largely responsible for the mapping of the local topography. A number of other climbers have subsequently made successful ascents of the main peak, and a summary to date of these was given by F. Leeson in *H. J.* xvi. 112. But no ascent of, or even attempt on, the precipitous North-north-west ridge, or the North-east face of Kolahoi has heretofore been made, as far as the writer is aware. However, there must be at least one grand, and no doubt difficult, route available here; for, to his chagrin, Major J. Waller had in 1937 to give up any attempt, and pass round to a variant of the old route from the east side of the mountain (*H. J.* x. 162).

N. E. ODELL.

NILGIRI.—The first ascent of the North Peak (23,072 ft.) of this group, a few miles north-west of the Annapurna massif, was made on October 19, 1962, by the Dutch brothers P., H. C., and P. F. C. van Lookeren Campagne with Lionel Terray and the Sherpa Wangdi.

From Camp II at 5,900 m. the summit party went by way of the very steep North face to the West ridge. Here Camp III (6,500 m.) was erected, from which they reached the top.

MOUNT EVEREST FOUNDATION.—Applications for grants for the 1964 season should be received at their offices (c/o Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore, London, S.W.7) by September 16, 1963, in the case of expeditions expected to leave in the early part of the coming year. Expeditions leaving later can postpone their applications up to December 16.

NILKANTA: A DISPUTED ASCENT.—The first ascent, on June 13, 1961, of Nilkanta, 21,640 ft., by O. P. Sharma and two Sherpas, was noticed in *A. J.* 66. 390, but no details were available. We have now received a typescript study of the climb, 'Nilkantha—still unclimbed?', by Mr. Jagdish Nanavati of Bombay. This is a lengthy (at a rough guess, some 40,000 words) study and it may be said at once that Mr. Nanavati compels some damaging admissions from the expedition's defender, Major N. B. Nayar, of the Directorate of Military Survey, Delhi, who, though not on the expedition itself, was entrusted with the task of replying to the criticisms made.

The expedition placed five camps on the mountain above Base Camp, and the first points scored by Mr. Nanavati are over the altitudes of the three upper camps. Camp III, which was originally given by the expedition narrative as 20,000 ft., is reduced by Major Nayar (this appears to be agreed by the expedition, too) to 18,900, though Mr. Nanavati would put it 500 ft. lower. Camp IV, originally 20,600, is

now given as 19,650 (Mr. Nanavati claims only 19,000), and Camp V, originally 21,200 ft., is now down to 20,450 (Mr. Nanavati says 19,600).

Camp V is all-important; there were seven climbers there (June 12), in a single one-man tent, with virtually no food or drink at all. The leader, Captain Numar, stayed back, at, as he said, only some 400 ft. below the summit, and sent forward the others on two ropes. On Major Nayar's figures, there were 1,190 ft. to the summit, not a mere 440; on a mountain of Nilkanta's size, 1,190 ft. is not excessive, certainly, for a final climb, but the conditions prevailing were atrocious, the monsoon having broken. It was snowing heavily and blowing hard; the first rope sent forward just could not manage and had to retreat; the two Sherpas with Mr. Sharma were against proceeding, but were, we are told, induced to carry on; all three were benighted on the way down (no sleeping bags, no wraps, no food or drink); when they joined their companions back at Camp V the following morning (June 14) they were in a bad way. The combined party then took three more days to descend, still without food or drink, and only their miserable little tent to house them. The leader's feet were badly frost-bitten, the others rather less so; we hear of the party rappelling down an ice-wall, their hands so numb that they had to hold the rope with their teeth (!). It is scarcely to be wondered if doubts began to be felt when the tale came to be told.

Mr. Nanavati goes into a great deal of detail that it is impossible to summarise here; he gives Major Nayar's reply, and his own rejoinder, and copies of correspondence he has had with the Sponsoring Committee of the expedition. It is to be regretted that the latter body refused to allow Mr. Nanavati to examine the materials they had on which they prepared a revised story, for he had already compelled some readjustments of the original account, and others of his criticisms remain unanswered.

From these present records Mr. Nanavati does not give the impression of being actuated by some strong bias against the Nilkanta party, still less by the absurd sort of criticism that was levelled in India against Hillary and Tenzing's ascent of Everest (*A.J.* 60. 200). But, as he says in his foreword, an impression is made by some recent mountaineering publications in India that the sport is regarded too much as a matter of competitive national prestige, hence expedition claims must be backed by adequate evidence and accurate narration.

National prestige ('Oneupmanship') is not peculiar to Indian climbing; every country is liable to explosions of it.⁸ Recently, in this *JOURNAL*, we have had to criticise Chinese accounts of their expeditions to Everest and Amne Machin, and indeed, false or inadequate claims to

⁸ The race for the Matterhorn in 1865 is one instance; and see remarks in *A.J.* 46. 375. No nation is blameless.

have made mountain ascents (or, for that matter, other forms of geographical exploration) are not new, whether in terms of national or individual claims. From Countess Dora d'Istria's alleged ascent of the Mönch in 1855 (to go no further back) to F. A. Cook (to come no later) these things have occurred. Nowadays, it is not enough merely to rely upon some individual's testimony; an expedition must expect to have its records scrutinised. Nothing, by the way, seems yet to have been published to support the claim that Panch-Chuli was climbed by a lone climber in 1953.

In the present instance of Nilkanta, Mr. Nanavati, whether his arguments carry conviction or not, has performed a valuable service by his criticisms; not all of his strictures seem to have been met.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

THE ICE-AXE FOUND ON EVEREST IN 1933.—On my return from Pakistan last summer (1962) I received a letter from Mr. Hugh Irvine saying that a Shrewsbury School O.T.C. swagger-stick had been found amongst his deceased father's effects. On this military swagger-stick are three parallel nicks, thus | | |, cut in such a way that neither he nor his younger three surviving brothers claim, when at Shrewsbury, to have used as a means of identification. The obvious deduction by Hugh Irvine and his brothers is that the swagger-stick had belonged to their fifth brother, Andrew C. (Sandy), who died on Everest in 1924. The approach to me by my old friend Hugh was made on account of my discussion, in *A. J.* 46. 447, of the ice-axe found on Everest in 1933 by Wyn Harris and Wager, and the fact of its marking with triple nicks. Briefly, the conclusion that I arrived at (incidentally after reference to Mrs. George Mallory, who averred that her husband never so marked his belongings) was that the axe was much less likely to have been George Mallory's property than to have been Sandy Irvine's. In spite of this, the Everest axe, which has hung on the wall of the Club for thirty years, was prematurely and arbitrarily labelled as being Mallory's, without mention of the possibility of its having belonged to Irvine. However, from the new evidence of the similar markings on the swagger-stick, it would now appear certain that the axe was the property of Irvine. With the permission of the President and the Hon. Secretary I have shown the axe to the various members of the Irvine family, for comparison of its markings with those on the swagger-stick, and we all agree that both cases must be attributed to Sandy Irvine. Moreover it appears that he was in the habit of using this kind of marking when materials or surfaces were too difficult or awkward for a simple monogram of his initials.

However, the identity of ice-axe and swagger-stick can prove nothing as to the fate of either Irvine or Mallory on their last climb in June 1924.

It may be added that members of the Club were given an opportunity to compare the marks of the swagger-stick with those on the axe, on the occasion of the annual general meeting on December 10, 1962.

N. E. ODELL.

HIMALAYAN PLANS.—In addition to the American expedition to Everest mentioned in our last issue, there will be two Austrian expeditions in the Himalaya this year. One of these, sponsored by the Akademische Sektion Wien of the Austrian Alpine Verein and led by Ing. Rudolf Bardodej, will attempt Minapin (23,861 ft.). This will not be the leader's first visit to Minapin; in 1959 Herr Bardodej arrived within a few hundred feet of the summit only to have to turn back because of the weather.⁹

The other expedition is sponsored by the Österreichische Himalaya Gesellschaft and plans to visit the Dhaulagiri Himal and will, if possible, climb Dhaulagiri II and III. The leader will be Herr Eidher, a young man with a fine record in the Alps and the Caucasus.

At the time of writing it is not known whether a proposed Scottish expedition to the Baltoro glacier will, in fact, take place. It is said to have designs on the Trango Towers and Paiju Peak.

⁹ We have now heard that this expedition will not take place as the party was not granted a permit to enter the Gilgit region.