REVIEWS

Peter Graham, Mountain Guide: an Autobiography. Edited by H. B. Hewitt. Pp. xiv, 245, illustrations. George Allen & Unwin, London, 1965. Price 42*s*.

THE countless friends and admirers of Peter Graham will welcome the appearance of this eagerly awaited book four years after his death, and be grateful to the editor, Mrs. Hewitt, for the completion of a difficult but very worth while task. Peter Graham was pre-eminently a man of action rather than of the pen, and even in his retirement, despite every encouragement, had not got beyond the year 1910 in his memoirs at the time of his death, whereas his active career extended at least to 1924, culminating in the first ascent of Tutoko. His own narrative occupies 196 pages. The highlights of his later achievements are ably recorded by Mr. John Pascoe in a forty-page epilogue, compiled from Peter's own notes and contemporary accounts, mainly by Miss Du Faur and Hugh Chambers, favourite companions of his, and Samuel Turner, whose egoism he appears to have borne with admirable patience. Mr. Pascoe has also supplied a foreword, in which he summarises the events of the first century of mountaineering in the Southern Alps, as a frame to the very central role that Peter played in it.

The earlier chapters give a fascinating picture of his boyhood among the gold-miners of the West Coast, of education cut short at the age of twelve and of a growing love for the great, mysterious mountains in full view from the door of his cottage home. One can see Providence at work, when two keen mountaineers, in the key positions of doctor and parson, arrived on the coast at the exact moment when the two younger of five sturdy sons of a remarkable mother were of an age and disposition to be drawn into the magic circle. Dr. Teichelmann took Peter exploring up the Callery Gorge to the foot of Elie de Beaumont at the age of twenty, and in 1903 Newton and Teichelmann took him on the very first expedition to the head of the Fox. Newton, fresh from the Alps, had had him equipped with proper boots and crampons made locally after the pattern of his own. They succeeded in penetrating to what is now known as Engineer Col between Tasman and Lendenfeld. In the final couloir of steep ice the more experienced Newton was leading when his crampons tripped him and he fell. Peter held him and no actual harm resulted, but it seems likely that this narrow escape from disaster had the effect of postponing the general use of crampons, in a range ideally suited to their use, for a whole generation. Peter in a few years was to become all-powerful as Chief Guide at the Hermitage, whose word was law. It appears that he never wore crampons again,

though he carried a pair in his sack on the first ascent of the Low Peak of Mount Cook in 1906 (p. 120); nor did any of the younger men, whom he trained so well. This was the age dominated by the professional guide, notably Peter at the Hermitage and his brother Alex at Waiho, there being no successors to the enterprising little band of guideless amateurs, who had striven so hard in the nineties.

The later chapters record incidents in those earlier years at the Hermitage, during which he established a world-wide reputation as a master of ice-craft and a leader of men. In them one savours the qualities which endeared him to a host of admirers; his passion for his mountains, their birds and flowers and everything in them, his keen sense of humour, his love of good music and literature, his diplomacy in handling the many queer and difficult guests, mostly eccentric females, who demanded his services. . . . Among these the star turn was Miss B., who arrived in N.Z. self-heralded as a great alpinist and member of the Ladies' Alpine Club in 1904,[1] but who, when put to the test, proved to be an incompetent duffer. It is good to have in print the full, authentic account of that legendary episode, the rescue of R. S. Low in the nick of time from the De La Beche bivouac, told by the chief protagonist. His innate modesty, however, prevents him from doing justice to his own extraordinary exploits as a mountaineer. For instance his account of the first traverse of Mount Cook in 1906, ending with his amazing feat of cutting steps down steep ice for six hours on end by fitful moonlight at the end of a long day, does not compare in excitement with Samuel Turner's crudely coloured narrative, or even Malcolm Ross's comparatively sober version of the same epic climb. He is thrilling, however, in his description of a solo crossing of the Copland Pass in terrible weather, when in deadly danger he did battle with creek after swollen creek in a desperate effort to get to his mother's sick-bed at Waiho.

There is a wealth of well-reproduced and very interesting illustrations gathered from many sources, which vividly evoke a vanished past. The book is a pleasure to handle, the print is excellent and there is a minimum of misprints. It ends, appropriately, with Peter's famous story of the ghost in the Hooker hut, the re-telling of which, long after midnight with the lights out, was by special request the final episode of the celebrations at the Hermitage for the sixtieth anniversary of the N.Z.A.C.

H. E. L. PORTER

Ce monde qui n'est pas le nôtre. By Robert Tézenas du Montcel. Pp. 201. Éditions Gallimard, Paris, 1965. Price Frs. 9.70.

MOST of those who read this exciting book of 200 pages will know the very high position the author holds among French mountaineers.

[1] This is odd, since the L.A.C. was not founded till 1907.

To those who do not he reveals himself as a very courageous enthusiast who has reaped great rewards from mountains and who has had the good fortune to survive the perils, the emotions and the tests of endurance he describes. He was fortunate in having for a mountaineering tutor Edouard de Gigord, secrétaire général du G.H.M., who spent some time with du Montcel and his brother in the Chamonix district at the Hotel d'Argentière. The development of mountaineering, like that of politics in France, has been more revolutionary than in Britian. It is hard to believe that as late as the beginning of the present century 'l'ascension du Mont Blanc entre deux guides avec trois porteurs était le couronnement d'une carrière'. We are introduced to some of the new ambitious school of climbing: the guide Armand Charlet, 'amateur dans le vrai et noble sens du terme', Jacques de Lépiney, Henri de Ségogne and the devoted but quarrelsome pair of brothers Meyendorf, who came back when not expected 'harassés, en lambeaux, malgré tout superbes'. There is an unexpected meeting in the Argentière hut with four great French climbers who by their quiet example imparted the secret of great exploits, not 'des moyens exceptionels' but 'l'heureux rencontre d'un jugement sûr et d'une audace raisonnée'.

The increasingly high standard of difficulty is what we should expect from the writer's motives, 'ce que je cherche c'est l'évasion, l'aventure, l'épreuve de sa volonté et de sa résistance; c'est l'accomplissement impossible du rêve que chacun porte en soi'. The climb on the North face of the Charmoz must have amply satisfied these desires; 'our world was reduced to a grey-walled cell in which we fought with death for nineteen hours'. 'I'm sure I'm going to slip; a few steps more and the snow collapsed, I felt the rope tighten round me. I felt Paul had been pulled off': a nightmare of a descent even after the bergschrund had been crossed, and most of the crevasses. A final fall through a snow bridge and they found themselves still bound by the rope, du Montcel in the crevasse on a wedged block of snow, his friend on the slope 80 ft. below, having been carried right over the crevasse. Dawn surprised them, overcome with sleep, sitting on the glacier. Montenvers was reached forty-five hours after leaving it. A promising start to an adventurous career.

The tale of ambitious adventure continues: an early spring traverse of the Meije; a feat in which they were just anticipated by three guides; a thrilling 'première' of a new col on the Blaitière; a night ascent of the Verte; great days on the Ecrins and descending the Peuterey ridge of Mont Blanc; a repetition of the exploit of Devies and Gervasutti on L'Olan. Here they joined instead of competing in rivalry with Fourastier and Frendo. For a moment I was transported to the cricket field when I read that Fourastier exclaims joyfully at sight of the great rock face, 'c'est du six!' I never learned to measure my climbs in numbers; if

I had tried a six I should certainly have got out! I may have managed one or two fours, but even at cricket I'm afraid a series of fours driven past the fieldsmen have given me more satisfaction than an occasional six over their heads. So I like to read du Montcel's comment, 'je constate qu'il m'importe peu de savoir si le passage doit être classé ou non au sommet des difficultés techniques'. I hope Fourastier was encouraged when du Montcel suggested close to the top of the seventeen hundred metre wall that he had a chance of beating his record, a seven hundred metre fall on the Verte.

The last climb in the book is the South face of the Drusenfluh made with a couple of Austrians. Their previous meeting had been as enemies in the war of 1939–45; one of them had been with a party of German scouts to the top of Elbruz. The formidable wall of the Drusenfluh was successfully climbed, and the late enemies became friends on Christian name terms. Here is a delightful example of how mountains can give to our sky 'une lumineuse profondeur où s'efface pour nous dans la rencontre d'un même amour le souvenir des sanglantes querelles des hommes'.

R. L. G. IRVING.

I Come from the Stone Age. By Heinrich Harrer, translated from the German by Edward Fitzgerald. Published by Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1964. 256 pp., 38 illustrations (black and white and colour); 5 maps. Price 35*s*.

ANY mountaineer-explorer could be well satisfied with a single one of the three achievements which Heinrich Harrer managed to pull off during 1962 in what was then Netherlands New Guinea, already under the threat of Indonesian invasion. He made the first ascent of the highest peak between the Himalayas and the Andes; he reached the hitherto unvisited source of the stone axes which the tribes of this part of New Guinea still treasure; and he traced the Baliem Gorge down from the highland home of the tough warrior Danis to the swamps of the Asmat cannibals on the south coast. It is the almost impenetrable belt of jungle and karst—the jagged limestone smothered in vegetation (which Harrer and his Dutch companion found so trying on their last descent to the swamps) that until some ten years ago kept the Danis and other tribes of the Central New Guinea Highlands in the Stone Age. And now the stone axes, so painstakingly split from the rock gorge at Ya-Li-Mo and polished with such loving care, are being eagerly replaced with steel axes imported by air. So Harrer's expedition may be a last as well as a first: certainly his fortitude in returning to complete this side excursion, after a false step above a waterfall had nearly killed him, deserves a unique reward. The Baliem Gorge was another 'first' and is of especial interest to the present writer, who in 1960 went as far as the last Dutch-administered post at Kurima and peered down its steepening reaches; the

turbulent river is here spanned by a Dani-built bridge of lianas, primitively ingenious but considerably less alarming to cross than some of its Himalayan cousins.

What will be of chief interest to mountaineers is Harrer's first ascent of the 17,096 ft. Carstensz Pyramide. It was in 1623 that Commander Jan Carstensz while sailing the Arafura Sea, saw 'very high mountains white with snow in many places which certainly is strange for mountains so near the equinoctial line'. Thanks to the very difficult approaches and to the savage nature of the inhabitants of the surrounding region, the Carstensz mountains have held out longer than Mount Kenya or the peaks of Ruwenzori, than Chimborazo or Cotopaxi. Not until the present century did any expeditions even approach the range, and of these only those led by Wollaston (1912–13) and Colijn (1936–7) were able to attack the mountains themselves, the first reaching the snow-line and the second climbing a peak then believed to be the highest in the range. Then in 1961 Philip Temple made the gallant attempt related in *Nawok* to unravel the complicated geography of the Carstensz range, no easy task in the tropical rain and heavy mists, to say nothing of the warring feuds and childish savagery of the Danis. Philip Temple was determined to come back to conquer the highest point, the Pyramide, which had defeated him, and Harrer was fortunate in being able to profit by his experience of the range and by his knowledge of the Danis. Together they made the ascent of the Pyramide on February 13, 1962, finding the rough limestone of the West ridge, according to Harrer, of continental Grade IV difficulty. A week later they were on the neighbouring Idenburg Top and thereafter made various ascents in the range, both separately and jointly, totalling thirty-one of which all but the one climbed by the Colijn expedition were of virgin peaks. They not only filled in the map, but also established that the Carstensz glaciers are in retreat; and despite the mists they managed to take some fine photographs, of which that of the 'Fairy Tale Valley' with the Hansel and Gretel lakes is perhaps the most evocative of this strange country.

The naked Danis seem natural climbers, prancing over log bridges and tackling a practice boulder 'as though they had suction pads on their feet'. Their coy insistence on attempting to retain their sole original article of 'clothing'—the elongated gourd worn as a phallocrypt—made it difficult to fit them with warm clothing for the snows, but their regret at abandoning their native apparel was offset by their delight in finding the 'cold salt without taste' which they carefully stored in tins to carry home. The fact that it vanished was clear proof of the power of the spirits in the 'Dugundugu'.

Harrer's book, written as a diary, suffers from the defects of that literary form. One hopes that he will find time to write a fuller account of the Carstensz range and its mountaineering possibilities, even though,

with the Indonesian acquisition of West Irian, this is likely to remain fairy-tale country for mountaineers for some time to come.

E. H. Peck.

Rondoy. By David Wall. Pp. xiv, 176, illustrations. John Murray, London, 1965. Price 30*s*.

In August, 1963, an expedition organised by members of the London School of Economics Mountaineering Club made the first ascent of Rondoy, a formidable rock and ice pyramid of 5,883 m. in the Cordillera Huayhuash of Central Peru. It was an ambitious target, particularly as three of the eight climbers had comparatively little experience of high mountains. Rondoy had already repulsed several expeditions, including one led by no less than Walter Bonatti, and it says much for the competence of the leader, Peter Bebbington, and particularly of the two men from New Zealand, Vic Walsh and Peter Farrell, that, despite mixed weather, four men reached the summit. Yet they paid too high a price for success, for Bebbington and his companion on the rope, Graham Sadler, fell while returning from the South Peak and were killed.

In *Rondoy*, David Wall, secretary, treasurer and one of the support party, has written a well-balanced and honest account of the expedition, neither exaggerating nor playing down the difficulties, dangers and hardships entailed, nor glossing over the minor discords within the team. The factual style combined with some excellent illustrations make it easy for the reader, whether mountaineer or not, to follow the ascent almost step by step.

The story moves well and the author manages to convey the atmosphere of tension among the climbers strung along the difficult ridge between the South and North summits when contact with Bebbington and Sadler is lost and fears of disaster begin to creep in. Equally well he gets across to the reader the strain and the danger of the final descent from the Ice-basin Camp to Base Camp when, with minds numb and nerves overwrought, tempers are worn thin and energy unnecessarily dissipated as the tired men struggle with their loads.

That the ease of approach to the Huayhuash, as well as to the Blanca and Raura, is not an unqualified advantage many expeditions know to their cost. From Lima at sea-level to Chiquian, which must be around 11,000 ft., is only twelve hours or so by road, and there is a strong temptation, particularly when time and money are short, to push off from there towards one's objective without waiting to acclimatise. This probably accounts for the prolonged mountain sickness from which most of the party suffered. To add to his troubles the author relied on a pair of brand new French climbing boots which proved to be too narrow, yet it seems peevish to curse the French for having narrow feet.

In contrast, several of his comments on Peruvian politics and economy are both shrewd and apposite. It is a pity that some heights are omitted, notably those of Chiquian and the Ice-basin Camp. One small point of accuracy: the wing-span of the Condor is given as 'some fifteen feet', whereas it does not normally exceed eleven feet.

But, such details apart, it is a very readable book.

H. L. STEMBRIDGE.

Four against Everest. By W. W. Sayre. Pp. 251. Illustrations. Arthur Barker, Ltd. London, 1964. Price 30*s*.

PERHAPS I should not be reviewing this book, because in many ways I find myself out of sympathy with some of the sentiments expressed in it. The one thing that can be said for this party is that they had the guts to survive a rash adventure. But how tiresome mere toughness can be if it is likely to lead you into trouble and at the same time to jeopardise other competent parties' chances of success on the same mountain.[1]

The author's avowed intention was to take his inexperienced party to the north side of Mount Everest. He knew that it would be useless to ask for permission to go there and so, to quote his own words, 'we decided to go without permission'. This meant that he had to resort to deceit, and, to quote him again, 'we would ask, then, for permission from Nepal to go to Gyachung Kang. If all went well, we would climb up to our notch and go on into Tibet'.

One can sympathise with the argument put forward that the small party has certain advantages and should not be denied the chance of climbing a high mountain. But there is nothing new in this. It would be acceptable in the case of a responsible and competent group of mountaineers. I find it less convincing when advanced by a party such as this, whose plans involved a break with the traditional respect for local feelings in the matter of allowing foreigners to travel through their country. I can remember how much some of us wanted to stay on in the Everest region after the pre-monsoon attempt in 1936. But our leader Hugh Ruttledge, knowing that the time of our permitted stay had expired, rightly decided that we must not do so for fear of jeopardising the chances of future parties in Tibet, and we all accepted his decision.

The four members of Mr. Sayre's expedition to Gyachung Kang left their base camp on the Ngojumba glacier (April, 1962) and instead of making for that mountain crossed a pass to the south of it and entered Tibet. Thence they descended the West Rongbuk glacier and made their way round to the old route up the East Rongbuk glacier without being spotted by the authorities. On the way up this well-known route,

[1] An Indian party had permission to climb Everest from the south in 1962 and Dyhrenfurth's American expedition was already planned for 1963.

they managed to lose themselves and wasted time by following a tributary north of the North Peak instead of the main glacier stream. On discovering their mistake they corrected their course and eventually arrived at the foot of the North Col slopes. After surviving a fall and a night out on the eastern slopes of the col, they eventually reached the top of this pass. Thereafter they attained an altitude of about 25,000 ft. on the North-east ridge of the mountain. Their inability to climb any higher was attributed to the debilitating effects of their accident on the North Col slopes. This may have been the case; but one suspects that they were underestimating the effects of the altitude as an additional factor. 'Without the first fall it would, admittedly, have been different. I feel sure we would have gotten at least to the Great Couloir'. But would they? I think that this is optimistic. After a second fall, on the descent of the North-east ridge, the whole party retreated and with great difficulty struggled back to their base camp in Nepal. In all, they had been away from base for more than six weeks doing all their own carrying, and one has to admire their toughness and courage in this respect. One has also to admit that their adventures during this period make exciting reading, and that the passing references to discoveries of old camp sites are of interest.

Possibly the best chapter in this book is the last one, and I would agree with some of the views expressed in it. But having read other things the author has had to say earlier in the book, I am still left in some doubt as to the genuineness of his motives. One is tempted to ask why he had to choose Mount Everest as his objective when he had official permission to attempt the ascent of such a noble mountain as Gyachung Kang (then unclimbed). Was he not being tempted by the notoriety attaching to the former mountain? Could he not be labelled 'a snob for altitude'?

Personally I have always felt that it is not just the success of climbing to the summit of a high mountain that matters: it is the way in which the attempt is carried out. A brilliant climb, ending perhaps in a safely conducted retreat, commands admiration; but not so a hazardous one. What can one say, I wonder, of this expedition?

C. B. M. WARREN.

Joies de la Montagne. Edited by Lucien Devies and Lionel Terray. Pp. 256; 221 illustrations (26 in colour). Hachette, 1965. Price Fr. 59.00.

THIS is a massive book, in size, in subject, in the number of illustrations, and in price. And it is undoubtedly magnificent.

Of its quality the names of the contributors are sufficient guarantee: Devies and Terray as general editors, chapters by Samivel, de Chatellus, Frison-Roche, Livanos, Magnone, Cornuau, Desmaison, Hiebeler,

Franco, and Herzog. The photographers, too numerous to list, are no less distinguished. About three-quarters of the book is concerned with the Alps and Dolomites; the last two chapters deal in more summary fashion with the Andes and Himalayas. The text, partly historical, partly descriptive, is inevitably synoptic. Quite properly it reflects the personal viewpoint of the contributors. A general survey of mountaineering is today well-worn ground. It is the individual twists that give interest to a new one.

It is no disparagement of the text to say that it is the pictures that are the primary feature of the book. Besides some splendid views of mountain scenery, there are some interesting portraits of some of the heroes mentioned, and stirring action pictures.

Maurice Herzog sums it all up in the last sentences of the conclusion: 'L'alpinisme est l'exercice de la liberté humaine. L'homme n'est jamais plus fort qu'attaché à ce qu'il peut à tout instant quitter'. But perhaps an even better summary of the *Joies* is the final photograph, of Terray and his companion exultant on the summit of Jannu.

A. K. RAWLINSON.

Exploration Medicine. By various authors, edited by O. G. Edholm and A. L. Bacharach. Pp. 410. Wright, Bristol. Price 47*s*. 6*d*.

THIS book is a very complete symposium of answers to all the questions that anyone planning an expedition could possibly ask; how to choose the members, the prevention and cure of possible diseases and accidents, caring for the injured, survival in extremity, medical supplies to take, dental precautions, rations of food and drink. Besides this there are special chapters about different climates—hot and cold, high altitudes, under-water, in small boats at sea; and a fearsome set of enlarged insects and pests. The treatment for bites of these and of snakes is in the chapter on emergencies, and I was amazed to find how safe it is to be bitten by a snake; the death rate from poisonous snakes is only 1·3 per cent, and from water-snakes 15 per cent.

The chapters on high altitudes, which are the ones especially to interest readers of the *A.J.*, are by our members Griffith Pugh and Michael Ward, and are full of interest and good advice.

A reviewer must be critical and look out not only for the music on the gramophone record, but for the scratches on it too. The first criticism is the very heavy weight of the book, no doubt due to the good quality of the paper; but it is not a book to put into an already heavy rucksack. I wonder if the next edition could be published in sections, general and special, but that might be difficult to arrange. It weighs 2 lbs. exactly.

Page 78 ff. should be read by everyone whose job it is to select members for an expedition; they are full of good common sense; how many

expeditions have been marred by one or two incompatible members! On p. 82 there is an excellent description of the impatience and irritability induced by high altitudes, but no mention of that important and very constant effect which makes one entirely care-free about whether one should get to the top or not. This can only be combated by being almost unnaturally conscious of the necessity of making up one's mind in advance that this feeling will come, and must at all costs be fought against when it does come.

Pages 190–196. Chloramphenicol. Nothing about its use in typhoid fever.

Page 197 ff. Heat-stroke, sunstroke, etc. No mention is made of the commonest form of sunstroke, with headache and fever of 103° or so and pulse of 110 or 120, lasting one day only and relieved by rest in bed, cool drinks, and darkness or deep shade for the day. It is not sufficiently stressed that sunstroke is got through the eyes rather than through the head. Dark glasses are far more important than head-wear. And it should be stressed that adequate salt intake, especially immediately after prolonged exercise, will lessen stiffness of the muscles and often entirely prevent cramp.

Pages 266–7. Good on frostbite; but the temperatures of water suggested for warming frostbitten hand or foot are all some two or three degrees too high.

Pugh on acclimatisation is very good, and gives results from various expeditions; the layman may find it a bit highbrow, but to a doctor it is very interesting.

I suppose the food rations in the last chapter are theoretically right, but they wouldn't suit me. I demand at least four times as much jam as I can find in any of these tables. Jam, condensed milk and snow are worth any amount of the meat bars and potato powders when high up. And why curry powder only for cold weather when curry is a hot weather dish par excellence?

Finally we must realise that these scratches on the record do not alter the fact that this is a most useful and complete book. Every leader of an expedition is advised to consult it while choosing his members, and to take it with him, punishing him who disregards its advice by making him carry the expedition copy in his sack.

T. H. SOMERVELL.

Mountain Rescue Techniques. By Wastl Mariner. Pp. 200. Distributed by *The Mountaineers*, P.O. Box 122, Seattle. Price 8*s*. 6*d*.

WASTL MARINER is an eminent name in the field of mountain rescue and his book describes the highly specialised equipment and methods that he and his collaborators have devised and which they have developed into what is now the generally accepted practice in the Alps. For this

first English translation we are indebted to Dr. Otto T. Trott and Mr. Kurt G. Beam, both members of the Mountain Rescue Council, U.S.A., and to that Council and the Oesterreichischer Alpenverein for sponsoring it and so making it available to a much wider public.

The main items of equipment are the mountain stretcher and the wire ropes and winches that are used to hoist or lower it. Of the many ancillary devices the Tragsitz is important. Wire ropes can be joined together to form a considerable length and it has been recorded that an incapacitated climber has been retrieved, though with much difficulty, after using a run-out of 1,200 ft.[1] The proper use of this equipment calls for a high degree of mountaineering competence, and skill in the anchoring of the winches and pulleys. Weights are not given in the text but those of the 5 mm. wire rope and our own standard climbing rope may be assumed to be roughly the same. Perhaps a note of warning should be sounded here: anyone who has used wire rope will know that sooner or later some of the strands will break and, though this may not at first seriously affect the strength of the rope, the needle-like broken ends can inflict unpleasant wounds on unprotected hands.

The mountain stretcher can be broken down into two parts for ease in carrying, and the shape of its sharply-curved, tubular-steel runners is excellent for sliding over the irregularities of rock or ice, but less good for sledging on snow; for this purpose a special sledge-stretcher called the Akja is used and indeed it replaces the other for winter rescue. A wheel can be attached to either and used on suitable ground.

Some continental gear has been used experimentally in this country by some of our more highly trained teams, but our standard equipment is much simpler and is designed so that its use may be self-evident to the less-experienced helpers. For our relatively easier problems, difficult though they may sometimes be, rope is used rather than wire, and one stretcher has to serve for all purposes; but, to both the skilled and unskilled, Wastl Mariner has provided a most interesting study of advanced methods and of many ingenious improvisations with material that is usually carried by the mountaineer on foot or on ski, or that can be found below the tree line.

It is to the credit of the author and his sponsors, and in keeping with the spirit of mountain rescue that the book, which is profusely illustrated with excellent line drawings, has been produced without thought of profit; it is obtainable from the Austrian Alpine Verein, 26 Old Bond Street, London, W.1, for 8*s*. 6*d*.

A. S. PIGOTT.

[1] Lionel Terray, *Conquistadors of the Useless*, pp. 182 *et seq.*

Cervin — Cime Exemplaire. By Gaston Rébuffat. 215 pp., 116 illustrations, Hachette, 1965.

CERVIN, CERVINO, MATTERHORN: names much in our eyes and ears in this centenary year of 1965. In the thoughts of most readers of the *Alpine Journal* three strands are interwoven. First, the shape, most familiar of all mountain shapes the world over, which one sees for the first time in reality with faint surprise and almost disappointment at its being, in fact, just like the million photographs. Second, the history. No mountain is so full of history; of none is the history more familiar. It is a history not only of great deeds, of the drama of the first ascent (which most of us must have learned almost by heart this year), of later triumphs and sometimes tragedy, but of the great names of the mountain world: Carrel, Whymper, Hudson, Croz, Maquignaz, Mummery, Burgener, Rey, Piacenza, another Carrel and then a third, perhaps greatest of all, the Schmids, Bonatti—what a catalogue. And thirdly, for those who have had the good fortune to climb it, there is the strand of personal memory of adventure. Of so famous a mountain even the most ordinary and undramatic ascent cannot but be an adventure, a big day in anyone's mountain memories.

These are the three strands of this book. It is worth having for the photographs alone, a truly wonderful collection, recording every aspect and mood of the famous shape, so that even those who know it well will find something new here. The photographs also tell some of the history, for they include portraits of many of the famous figures. In the text the story is told once again, for the most part and surely rightly, in the words of those who made it, by long quotations from their writings. Much is familiar, but here too most readers will find this or that which is new.

Finally, there are three chapters of personal reminiscence of Rébuffat's own climbs on the mountain: the North face in June, the Furggen direct almost by mistake, for having gone up, late, for the Piacenza they were lured to the direct by the sight of Carrel's pitons pointing the way, and paid the price of a bivouac in storm. But the last chapter tells not of storm or of dramatic struggle, but of the ordinary traverse, serene and happy, by the Hörnli and arête du Lion, with a bivouac for the best of all reasons, just to be on the summit at dusk and at dawn, in solitude and at peace.

'Les autres cimes sont belles,' writes Rébuffat, 'le Cervin est présent.' His book will help to bring the presence to the fireside, on winter evenings.

A. K. RAWLINSON.

Coopers Creek to Langtang II. By Peter Taylor. Pp. 239, illustrations. Angus & Robertson, London, 1965. Price 25*s*.

THE title of this volume is appropriate: the book is in the main an account

of the author's life while preparing to climb Langtang II and has in it very little description of the mountain and of its ascent. Of some 240 pages, only fifty or so are given to the ascent, and these are largely occupied with material that is not strictly relevant. It is difficult to obtain a clear picture of the structure of Langtang II and of the route followed.

Although the text is tiresomely filled with irrelevant anecdote, the author cannot fail to enlist the sympathy of every mountaineer who has tried to mount a shoe-string expedition in the Himalaya. He knew very little of mountains when he started out, and nothing of Nepal, but he succeeded in climbing a 21,592 ft. peak during the monsoon. The candour of his account, his pride in the achievement and his sincere tribute to his small band of Sherpas are pleasing features of the later chapters.

R. C. EVANS.

Alpine Climbing, 1965. (Bulletin of the Alpine Climbing Group.) Published by the A.C.G. Price 3*s*.

THE A.C.G. Bulletin continues to improve in content and quality of production. It remains a 'glossy', with a striking cover photograph, on the lines of *La Montagne* but of a handier size.

This year there are twenty-three pages of text, plus a dozen pages of route descriptions as a supplement. These latter are a very worth while idea and are perhaps the best feature of the Bulletin. They cover nine routes on the Jungfrau, Mönch and Eiger, mostly difficult or fairly difficult, and about fifteen routes, again difficult or fairly so, that can be climbed from the Sciora hut.

Bonington contributes a useful article drawing attention to some of the bad weather climbing areas within easy reach of Chamonix and gives technical descriptions of a selection of climbs. José Anglada describes climbing on the curious conglomerate cliffs of Montserrat. Talbot touches on the Engelhörner. The only article that jars is entitled 'Yosemite, Yosemite'. Written in a Sunday newspaper interview style, it tells me little either of Royal Robbins, the subject of the article, or Yosemite. Several pages of Technical Notes complete the Bulletin. My main criticism is that the articles are so short, about a page and a half, that the authors barely scratch the surface of their subjects.

R. R. E. CHORLEY.

SHORTER NOTICES

The White Spider. By Heinrich Harrer. Translated by Hugh Merrick. Pp. 310, illustrations. New Edition, 1965. Rupert Hart-Davis, London. 35*s*.

HARRER'S volume on the Eigerwand has become something of a classic since it was published in 1959, and stands in little need of a further review. But a good deal has happened in the ensuing years; the first edition recorded thirteen ascents to 1958; now we have forty-three to 1964, including a first by a woman, a first in winter, and a first solo. In addition, the first descent (in winter at that) has been made. Of the 123 people who have made the ascent, sixteen have since died.

As an earlier reviewer observed (*A.J. 65*. 111), the Eigerwand must in a sense become easier, as more ascents are achieved. Still, no-one has yet rivalled the fourth ascent (1950) for speed, this being the only occasion when the face has been climbed in a single day. As for the future, 1964 was the year of the first attempts at a *direttissima* and Harrer forecasts 'any number of freak "firsts"'. From such a dismal prospect—for mere stunts will be a profanation of a majestic mountain face—it is a pleasure to turn to the best of all the records in the book; Harrer's own, the first ever.

The Cross-Country Ski Book. By Johnny Caldwell. Pp. 80, illustrations. Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, Vermont, U.S.A. 1964. $1.95.

A USEFUL little book on cross-country ski-ing, intended to help the person who has never yet been on skis, and also the downhill skier who is taking up a new form of his sport. Equipment, technique and training are all included, but ski-mountaineering is expressly not dealt with.

Carte Géoliogique du Massif du Mont-Blanc. By Paul Corbin, Nicolas Oulianoff and Jacques Bellière. 1 : 20,000.

The Library has received, with thanks to the authors, a copy of this section, Tré La Tête, of a geological map of Mont Blanc. An explanatory pamphlet accompanies the map, and further sections of this will be issued at intervals.

'*Felix Austria*': *vol. I. The Venediger Region*. By Philip Tallantire. Pp. 141, illustrations. Austrian Alpine Verein, 26, Old Bond Street, London, 1964. (No price.)

THIS little guide book is the first of a series of hut-to-hut touring guides, intended for mountain walkers. It is a handy, pocket-size work and contains a lot of information, not only on routes but on huts and hostels, and should serve its purpose well.

Matterhorn Centenary. By Sir Arnold Lunn. Pp. 144, illustrations. George Allen & Unwin, London, 1965. Price 25*s*.

THIS is a disappointing book. It is not sufficiently complete, considered as a history of climbing on the Matterhorn; for example, it contains nothing about the climbing of either the East or South faces, whilst those climbs that are described are not free from errors. Lunn seems to have nothing to say that he has not expressed elsewhere; all his customary prejudices are included and, owing to the prestige of his name, are likely to be given fresh life.