

short V.D. corner, block belay (70 feet). First up 10 feet to left, then easy climbing right to a large block (50 feet). Climb two successive V.D. corners, right to a large block (90 feet). Moderate climbing (150 feet) now leads to the top of the pinnacle—three hours.

Gargoyle Direct.—R. H. Sellers and G. Annand, December 5, 1954. First winter ascent; heavy powder snow conditions. Normal summer route followed, except for 60 feet on middle buttress where small gully directly above the neck was preferred. As chockstone at cave pitch (summer crux) was heavily iced, a piton was required. Five hours, leading through.

We are indebted to the Editor of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* for permission to reproduce several accounts of new climbs which have already appeared in that journal.

NEW CLIMBING BOOKS

- “Introduction to Mountaineering,” by Showell Styles. (Seeley, Service, no date, 15s.)
- “The Untrodden Andes,” by C. G. Egeler and T. de Booy. (Faber, 1955, 25s.)
- “The Moated Mountain,” by Showell Styles. (Hurst and Blackett, 1955, 18s.)
- “Commando Climber,” by Mike Banks. (Dent, 1955, 18s.)
- “The Island Hills,” by Campbell Steven (Hurst and Blackett, 1955, 18s.)

“Introduction to Mountaineering” is another of the many short textbooks which have appeared in recent years. It attempts in 130 pages of text to indicate how and how not to climb as well as where to climb. In this respect it is no worse and sometimes better than many of its predecessors, but what Mountain Craft required nearly 500 pages to do cannot be done thoroughly in one-fifth of the words, especially as in addition it attempts to review the climbing areas of Britain. Scotland comes better than usual out of it, getting almost as much space as North Wales! Only winter climbing in Scotland is considered, and we doubt the wisdom of the advice to the novice to do some of the ridges such as the Aonach Eagach before tackling the easy Nevis gullies. He is more likely, in our opinion, to come to grief on the double cornices or iced slopes of the ridges than on the straightforward snow climbs of the gullies, provided conditions there are indeed suitable for a party of novices. Can we ascribe some of the difficulties in which parties from the South have recently found themselves to the cursory treatment which the Scottish ridges in winter get in mountaineering textbooks such as this? In the best of conditions they may resemble easy Alpine ridges in summer—except that the days are only half as long—but snow and ice conditions can change much more quickly, blizzards and gales are often much more severe than summer Alpine storms, and, a factor often ignored, distances are much longer than in most English and Welsh climbs. Appended to the text is a vocabulary of mountaineering English which demonstrates the abundance of foreign words in the climbers’ jargon. Some of home origin, such as the use of expressions like “safing,” would be better forgotten. And are the English and Welsh 3,000-ers Munros?

“The Untrodden Andes” is an account of a small expedition to the Cordillera Blanca of Peru. The Dutch authors were accompanied by Lionel Terray, who led

them up the Nevado Pengos and the 20,981 foot Huantsan, the latter a first ascent which was not completed without some misadventure. A lucky escape from a 300 foot fall and a blizzard at a rather inadequately supported high camp are described with the vigour and simplicity which characterises the whole book. Much of the detail of preliminary organisation, choice of party, and journey out will seem familiar to readers of accounts of earlier expeditions to Asia, Africa, or South America, for there is somehow a certain similarity about the snags which tend to arise. Nevertheless the authors, and the translator, have been able to achieve a welcome freshness: this will not always be possible, and the market for books of this type must be diminishing unless they have some outstanding ascent to relate. To return to the climbing, the Dutchmen proved that they were not the novices they claimed to be by climbing a virgin unnamed peak of almost 18,000 feet in the Pongos Massif before Terray joined them.

No sooner had the above been written than "The Moated Mountain" arrived for review, and demonstrated that an excellent book can indeed still be made from an expedition which, judged from the number of peaks ascended, was rather unsuccessful. It is an account of the attempt of a small English party to climb Baudha, a mountain of nearly 22,000 feet in Nepal a few miles south of Manaslu. It proved beyond the capacity of the party of four, all new to the Himalaya, in the unfavourable weather conditions of May 1954. But here we have a book which seems to get the spirit of the country by introducing the people and the scene with an informality often lacking in modern climbing books. Here Showell Styles has material which suits his style, and, as we said recently about his Norwegian book, we hope he will be able to go back and find more to tell us. R. L. M.

"Commando Climber" gives an account of the writer's climbing experiences from the time that he qualified as an instructor at the Commando Cliff Assault Centre at St Ives in Cornwall. Perhaps the opening chapters, which deal mainly with the routine work of the Centre, will appeal more to those who know the Cornish cliffs, but it is interesting to learn that the Royal Marine training establishment in Cornwall was a development of the Commando Mountain Warfare Training Centre established at Derry Lodge during the last war. In the few years since Captain Banks took to mountaineering as a sport he has travelled far, in more senses than one, and his accounts of his climbs in Cyprus, in the Alps, and in Greenland are always interesting, well salted with humour, and never marred by any emphasis on his own share in an expedition. Those who know the Brenva face of Mont Blanc will doubtless read with special interest his account of a moonlight ascent of Route Major, but to the reviewer the best parts of his book are where he is on the Scottish hills. He climbed frequently with members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club and the Creagh Dhu Club, and while paying tribute to the climbing ability and good fellowship found in the latter club he occasionally allows himself to poke a little gentle fun at them. The west of Scotland climbers can hold their own at that game too. How else can we account for the extraordinary statement that Captain Banks and the men he took to Arran heard in the stillness of the hills there "the wild, shrill mating call of the haggis"!

The author in his Introduction expresses the hope that others will follow him in exploring "The Island Hills." We are sure that many after reading this book will want to do so. Campbell Steven tells us of days in Arran and in Skye, and many of his readers will be on familiar ground, but he also takes us to the hills of

Jura, Mull, and Rum to the Sgùrr of Eigg, to Ailsa Craig, and Handa and the little islands that lie at the mouth of the Firth of Lorne. He has many a good tale to tell and the manner of the telling is such that we would all want to go with him the next time he closes his office door in Glasgow at 5 P.M. on a Friday and land with him before the sun is up next morning on one of the Western Isles.

J. E. B.

CLIMBING JOURNALS

- Alpine Journal*, Nos. 289, 290.
Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, No. 146.
Climbers' Club Journal, No. 80.
Rucksack Club Journal, No. 48.
Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal, No. 48.
Cambridge Mountaineering, 1955.
Oxford Mountaineering, 1955.
American Alpine Journal, 1954, 1955.
Iowa Climber, 1954, 1955.
Appalachia, Vol. XXX, No. 2, 3.
New Zealand Alpine Journal, 1954.
Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa, 1954.
Club Alpino Italiano, Sez. di Milano, Boll. Mensile, 1954, 1955.
Wierchy, 1954.

A pile of journals more than a foot high cannot be reviewed adequately in the limited space which can now be spared in the journal of most climbing clubs. The printers' bills have made the reviewers' job much easier, or is it more difficult? But as last year we evaded the issue entirely, an attempt must now be made to pin-point a few outstanding items in the current batch. Once again we record our thanks to all the clubs who exchange with us and draw our members' attention to the availability of the journals in the Club library.

The *Alpine Journal* gives us an opportunity of reading at leisure the talk by Dr Frauenberger and Hermann Buhl on Nanga Parbat, which many of our members have already heard. The accent is on the Himalaya in both numbers, bringing the K2 story to its culmination with accounts of the 1953 American and 1954 Italian expeditions, describing the 1954 reconnaissance of Kangchenjunga—possibly we should say preliminary reconnaissance, since the 1955 reconnaissance finished the job off—and the 1952 Scottish Nepal and 1953 Creagh Dhu expeditions, which at least make us feel a little nearer home. Perhaps the same might be said of the account of the exploration of the Api and Nampa group. There is the story of the ascent of the south face of Aconcagna in No. 290. Alpine articles cover the Peuterey ridge, the east face of the Petit Dru, the Führerbuch of young Peter Taugwalder, some notes on A. F. Mummery, and Sir Arnold Lunn on Human Nature in the Valais. There is an account of the technique of artificial climbing in which the method of using the etrier, or rope stirrup-cum-ladder, which recently made its appearance on Lochnagar, is described. Finally, it seems worth while drawing attention to the consolidated index to Vols. 39 to 58 of the *A.J.* covering the period 1927-52, which will facilitate the search for specific items of information.