Thence the climb to the Furka Pass, an ascent of 2000 feet, was made interesting by the close-up views of the broad sweep of the Rhone Glacier and its crevasses. Soon after midday I arrived at Hospenthal, found a good hotel and decided to spend the night there rather than at Andermatt, which is usually crowded in the summer months. That afternoon I visited the Devil's Bridge N. of Andermatt. The Reuss falls into a deep gorge here, and towering cliffs above make a most impressive spectacle. Workmen were busy blasting the cliffs to place artillery for the defence of the St. Gotthard Pass.

My second day out had added some 30 miles to my score. Where would my next night be spent? It was Sunday morning and the weather fine when I left Andermatt to cross the Oberalp Pass. Following the long turns of the winding road for six miles, I soon reached the summit of the pass. The ascent was about 2000 feet. From the scenic standpoint the view was disappointing. After a brief rest I pressed on to my goal, the ancient town of Disentis, where the Mittel-Rhein joins the Vorder-Rhein. Thirteen miles lay ahead of me before I could hope for rest and my Sunday dinner. The good folks in the villages through which I passed were attending mass. The churches were open, but the inns were closed until afternoon. I felt in my pockets for a chocolate bar or a crust of bread, all in vain. At long last the Kurhaus at Disentis appeared and, soon after, the table d'hôte dinner. It was followed by a complete rest that afternoon. While I had walked some 21 miles on my third day out, there remained still 36 miles to go if I was to reach Coire for my rendezvous on Monday. Could it be done without the help of the Swiss Postwagen? I hoped so.

As luck would have it, I had the company of a young German on Monday. He volunteered to join me as far as Ilanz, some 18 miles down the valley. The hours passed quickly and pleasantly as we sped on our way. At the picturesque town of Ilanz, high above the Rhine, we had a hearty lunch and enjoyed the good Valtelline wine. I could not persuade the German to go farther, and set forth alone on the last lap of my journey.

The highway led through Flims, Trins and Tamins to Reichenau. The day was well-nigh spent when I reached Reichenau, where I encountered the railroad. I was weary, and finished the last five miles of my trek to Coire on the train. Except for

conveyance by Postwagen and railroad for a matter of 30 miles, I had accomplished my pilgrimage on foot, as is the way of good pilgrims. My reward was a few weeks' stay at Pontresina, in the heart of the beautiful Engadine, and some good climbing in the Bernina Range.

CHARLES F. JUDSON*

ASIA

Ascent of Annapurna. Last spring the French Himalayan Expedition successfully climbed Annapurna (26,500 ft.), the highest summit yet reached and the first peak over 8000 meters ever ascended. In the original planning of the expedition it was decided that the objective was to be an "eight-thousander." This greatly limited the choice, since nearly all the 14 peaks above that altitude lay in regions where entry was impossible because of the India-Pakistan war in Kashmir or the Communist pressure on Tibet. When permission was granted to enter Nepal and either to attempt Gaurisankar or to follow the Krishna Gandaki Valley and try Dhaulagiri or Annapurna, the French decided on the latter region so that they might have two peaks from which to choose.

Study of other expeditions convinced the organizers that most failures in the Himalayas had been caused by a lack of physical conditioning and by too large a group encumbered by too heavy equipment. They therefore joined the school of thought favoring light expeditions. The comparatively small group was headed by Maurice Herzog, and consisted of Jean Couzy and Marcel Schatz with the three guides Gaston Rébuffat, Lionel Terray and Louis Lachenal as the climbing party, Dr. Jacques Oudot as doctor, Marcel Ichac as photographer and approximately an equal number of Sherpa porters. Local porters were used only for the approach march to the mountain. Great stress was laid on physical conditioning, which was greatly helped by the three-week preliminary reconnaissance and the extensive carrying of loads by the sahibs.

The expedition reassembled in Tukacha on 14 May 1951 after having explored thoroughly the possibilities of climbing Dhaulagiri (26,825 ft.), whose N.W. ridge seemed to offer a possible route—

*Dr. Judson, a Philadelphia physician who had travelled widely in the Alps, died in 1948.—*Ed.*

but one which was so difficult that it could hardly be climbed in the three weeks that remained before the coming of the monsoon. Annapurna, some 20 miles to the S.E., had hardly been reconnoitered, although one party had discovered a tortuous way through difficult terrain that appeared to offer access to the yet unseen N. face. The unknown appealed to them more than certain difficulties. The climbers set off, leaving the bulk of the transport to be organized so that it could leave immediately on being summoned. After a day's march on valley roads, they slabbed along the walls of a gorge, across a col in the Nilgiri chain and into the Miristi Kola Valley, which they reached just upstream from some impenetrable gorges. After difficult stream crossings, they established their base camp at about 15,000 ft. In order to get a better view of what lay ahead, they decided to climb the N.W. Spur. The difficulties which the party encountered were extreme; it probably did the most difficult climbing ever carried out above 16,000 ft. Enveloped by clouds as they reached the first peak on the ridge (18,500 ft.), they gave up the attempt. Three days later, on May 21st, they returned and climbed to a higher summit on the spur, reaching an altitude of 19,700 ft. From what they could see there, and from other reconnaissance, they decided that the route seemed practicable and sent back for the bulk of the transport.

Knowing that they were fighting against time, they continued on without waiting for further supplies. Camp I was established on the glacier, and Camp II was set at 19,700 ft. at the foot of the difficult section of the peak. From there to 23,000 ft. the route led up a series of very steep ice and snow slopes, frequently swept by avalanches and badly cut up by icefalls which contained enormous crevasses and séracs. Camp III was placed on the lip of a crevasse at 21,300 ft., and Camp IV was 1300 ft. higher at the upper edge of the "Sickle," a semicircular rock and ice cliff that guarded the approaches to the comparatively easier upper slopes. By June 2nd Herzog and Lachenal established Camp V at 24,300 ft. and at dawn on the 3rd left for the summit, which they reached at about two o'clock. There, in order to adjust his camera, Herzog removed his gloves and lost them. Terray and Rébuffat, who meanwhile had established themselves in support at Camp V, were surprised when Herzog returned alone with badly frozen hands and feet. He had unroped from Lachenal to descend faster. Considerably later, they

heard a cry and saw in the stormy afternoon Lachenal some distance below them, where he had managed to stop a fall. He was badly shaken and minus his ice-axe, hat, gloves and one crampon. He, too, had badly frozen hands and feet. After an uncomfortable night spent in trying to revive their extremities, they realized that the usual afternoon and evening storm was not abating. Feeling that it was unwise to stay in the high camp any longer, all four started for a lower camp. Soon the wind dropped, but it began to snow very hard, and it became impossible to find the route down. At dusk, as they were seeking a crevasse in which to bivouac for the night, Lachenal fell into a hole and found himself inside a shallow, well-bridged crevasse, a perfect shelter for the night. Huddled together with all their feet in the one sleeping bag they were carrying, they spent a miserable night. At dawn an avalanche passed over them, luckily covering them only lightly with snow and not completely burying them. It did, however, cost them a tedious hour of digging for their lost boots and equipment. When they emerged from their shelter, Terray and Rébuffat discovered that they had become snowblind from not wearing their goggles in the storm the day before. Herzog and Lachenal were exhausted and frozen even worse than the day before. Although it had cleared somewhat and the latter two had fair vision, they could not decide what route to take. Just at this moment Schatz appeared some 50 yds. from them, making his way from Camp IV toward Camp V. In spite of the fact that the mountain lay deep in new snow, it seemed essential that the whole party descend as fast as possible to Camp II with the frostbite casualties. Part-way down, the fresh snow, over a foot deep, peeled off, sweeping four of them with it. Rebuffat jumped to the side of the couloir where he was clear. Herzog jumped into a small crevasse, from which he managed to hold the two Sherpas who were on his rope. The battered group struggled into Camp II that afternoon.

The monsoon broke before they reached the main valley, but they won their race with the rising waters. Although transporting the crippled climbers on stretchers was extremely difficult, the whole expedition was soon able to make its way out to India.

ADAMS CARTER

The Norwegian Expedition to Tirich Mir. In 1949 two Norwegian climbers, Arne Randers Heen and I, made a reconnais-