

general index and an index of names in Sherpa-Tibetan language. A seven-page comprehensive summary in English is of particular help to the reader unfamiliar with the German language. The book is full of information and of great value to the student of Sherpa history. The reader will be impressed by the thoroughness of the research work on which the book is based.

HORST VON HENNIG

*Mountains of the World, A Handbook for Climbers and Hikers*, by William M. Bueler, Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, Co. 279 pp. 43 maps.

"The Alps are the best-known and most written-about mountains on earth, and anyone planning an Alpine vacation should have little trouble finding a great deal of information." So begins William M. Bueler's chapter on the Alps in his handbook for climbers and hikers entitled *Mountains of the World*. This pocket-sized, soft-covered manual is presented as a quick reference guide for the hiker or non-expert mountaineer. In fact, it is neither a guide nor a reference text but a collection of brief descriptions of the highest peaks in the mountain ranges of the world. Included are 43 sketch maps which give the reader a rough idea of the relationships the peaks bear to one another, and to the nearest town in a given locale. Reference is intermittently made to guidebooks about a mountain area, but there is no bibliography to aid the reader in further investigating a subject, and there are no pictures to enliven an unexciting text. If this handbook has any virtue it lies in answering the question, "What is there to climb in so-and-so anyway?" In this reviewer's opinion, obtaining the answer does not justify purchasing the book. Taking Mr. Bueler's own words a bit out of context, "Anyone planning an alpine vacation should have little trouble finding a great deal of information" . . . elsewhere.

SAMUEL C. SILVERSTEIN, M.D.

*Minus Three*, by Gene Mason, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970. 190 pages, 12 color photos. \$7.95.

Dr. Gene Mason, specialist in anesthesiology at an Everett, Washington, hospital, writes this personal account of his ascents of the highest points of three continents: McKinley in North America, Aconacagua in South America, and Kilimanjaro in Africa. The book describes ascents by the

Muldrow-Karstens Ridge route on McKinley; the west-north side route on Aconcagua (with a major variation by an ascent of the previously unclimbed West Buttress from 13,500 feet to 20,000 feet, then return to normal route); the usual route on Kilimanjaro (very briefly); and a detailed coverage of the attempt on a new route on Kilimanjaro's northwest flanks – with the party's nearly tragic accident and the injured author's painful and ignominious evacuation from the mountain atop the shoulders of native porters. The basic theme of the book, however, is not so much to describe routes but to share the author's observations of the psychological – and sometimes hallucinatory – effects of altitude on the climbers' mental processes.

The book should be of interest to all climbers, but also is written to reach the layman who enjoys an in-depth study of the climber's world. Mason presents a clear, first-person view of the actions and interactions within his various parties, the individual's thoughts and emotions at high altitude, and the sometimes resulting questionable decisions and his own soul searchings. He discusses his feelings of guilt when, just short of McKinley's summit, he and another climber decide to continue to the top, to make this a "successful expedition", while others in the party maintain togetherness below with a temporarily incapacitated companion. That the author's decision to continue upward at the expense of party unity was made is not so important as the fact that it was recognized and analyzed in retrospection. So few mountaineering books deal so freely with this aspect of expeditionary climbing.

The foreword by Jon Lindbergh summarizes that "this is not another book on the glories of mountaineering . . . Mason tells a casually frank and at times joltingly honest story of . . . not heroes of legend, but ordinary people driven by extraordinary motivation . . . more striking is the insight provided into the minds and actions of the climbers themselves . . . his petty thoughts as well as his profound ones . . . Yet from all this comes a picture . . . more real than the ones found in some of the classic tales of mountaineering."

The book provides a portrait of each mountain which is distinctive of its continent, with its climbing history and problems, and a lively commentary on the countryside and peoples visited enroute. Although not a geography lesson, however, the book could have benefited from a map of each peak's location and approaches, and a greater number of photos to augment the 12 color plates of a few scenes on each peak.

The book jacket states that the author is the only man to have climbed three continental summits. However, several others have accomplished this, including Major William Hackett who claims as his five summits McKinley, Aconcagua, Kilimanjaro, Kosciusko (Australia), and Mont

Blanc. Since *Minus Three*, Gene Mason has climbed Elbruz in the Russian Caucasus, proclaimed by some as "the highest point in Europe." Such wide travels among the summits could lead to lively discussions on the definitions of a continent: Europe or Eurasia? Mont Blanc or Mount Elbruz? (But what about Everest?)

DEE MOLENAAR

*Montagne di Groenlandia*, by Mario Fantin. Bologna: Tamari Editori, 1969. 374 pages, 280 photographs, 39 sketches and maps.

Lovers of the Arctic mountain world will be happy to see this volume, the first actual book on the mountains of Greenland. The text is in Italian, but anybody more or less familiar with some Italian mountaineering terms will have no trouble in following the development of the climbing history in this great island. The illustrations are so good and numerous, and the maps so usefully descriptive, that for these alone the book has a purpose.

The work is organized into three large bodies. The first introduces, simply but precisely, the Arctic island, not only in its physical aspects, but also with much other interesting information, such as its political administration and description of its native population. Part II deals extensively with the exploration of the mountains of Greenland up to and including 1968. Part III is the richer body of the text, with some 260 pages of writings by Italian and foreign explorers and mountaineers, translated from four languages. The work closes with a Greenland Eskimo vocabulary and grammar summary.

Mario Fantin is at present working on two other giant volumes like this one, on the mountains of the Sahara desert and of South America. Since accuracy of information and the abundance and high quality of maps and illustrations are standard in his books, we can only wish him every success in these two projects.

EVELIO ECHEVARRÍA

*A Settemila Metri: Gli Inca, Precursori d'Alpinismo*, by Mario Fantin. Bologna: Tamari Editori, 1969. 24 pages, 18 illustrations (some in color), 1 map.

The notion that mountaineering began with the first ascent of Mont Blanc is no longer acceptable. Some three centuries before the historical year of 1786, and even before Cortés' soldiers had climbed Popocatepetl in 1519, a number of very high Andean summits had been occupied by ill-equipped