

ward but descended the next day and found the body on the glacier where they buried it at a height of 4,200 m. In spite of this mishap, the rest of the party afterward crossed the range and effected fourth ascent of Ushba.



*A French Expedition*, sponsored by the G. H. M. and the C. A. F., was also in the Caucasus this past summer. It was composed of Raymond Gaché, Jacques Lagarde, Robert Tézenas du Montcel, and Lucien Valluet. They arrived in Naltshik on August 8th and their objective was to explore the peaks in the vicinity of the Ullu-Auz Glacier. Their first climb was a long traverse which resulted in the first ascent of Tiutium-Bash (East Peak 4,500 m.; West Peak 4,551 m.), Gortü-Bash (4,437 m.), and Breithorn (4,246 m.). Two of the party with a Russian, G. Marietsky, then made the first ascent of Kilmot-Bash (3,906 m. and 3,965 m.), while the other two effected the first ascent of the square tower of Koshtantau and were in a fair way to make a new route on this latter peak by way of the north ridge when they were forced to turn back on account of an accident which fortunately was not serious.



#### MOUNTAINEERING EXPEDITIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION DURING 1933

Interest in mountaineering and mountain exploration in the Soviet Union has been increasing from year to year. It is looked upon not only as a valuable form of recreation but also as an activity through which much scientific research can be conducted. Practically all the work is done under the joint auspices of the Society of Proletarian Tourism and the Academy of Sciences. The following information was obtained in Tiflis and Moscow from reports and lectures as well as through personal interviews with members of the various expeditions. It is believed that this data in its important details are substantially correct.

During 1933 many first-class ascents were made in the various mountain ranges including the Caucasus, Altai, Tian Shan, and Pamir. Soviet citizens who now include among their number several expert alpinists accounted for nearly all the big climbs accomplished.

*The Caucasus.* Winter ski expeditions into the highest sections of the Caucasus which were begun in 1931 were continued during the winter of 1932-33. Three mountain skiing expeditions composed of both men and women were sent from Tiflis into the main range. The first of these visited the districts of Racha and Lower Svanetia in the Central Caucasus, the second crossed the

main range of the western part of the Eastern Caucasus in Khevsur-  
ratia, and the third visited South Ossetia.

Other ski expeditions crossed the main ridge of the Central  
Caucasus by way of the Sharivsek, Mestia, and Betscho Passes,  
all over 11,000 ft. high. One of these also reached the saddle  
between the two peaks of Mt. Elbruz at an elevation of 17,450 ft.  
—the first time this has been done in winter and doubtless one  
of the highest winter climbs ever made.

In June an expedition climbed Kasbek using skis to an altitude  
of 14,700 ft. During the summer it is reported that 110 persons  
reached the summits of Mt. Elbruz (18,470 ft. and 18,347 ft.).  
The majority of these were red army commanders who in one  
gigantic party of fifty-seven scaled the mountain *en masse*.

Both Koshtantau (16,880 ft.) and Shkara (17,038 ft.), among  
the highest as well as the most difficult peaks in the Caucasus,  
were climbed for the first time by citizens of the Soviet Union or  
of the former Russian Empire. Tetnuld (15,918 ft.) was climbed  
twice and the very difficult ascent of Tiktingen (15,918 ft.)  
was almost accomplished by two men who reached a point within  
two hundred feet of the summit. The three peaks of Dongusorun  
(all over 14,000 ft.) were also reached. Many other climbs were  
made during the summer, including a number of first ascents.

Two parties of foreign alpinists visited the Caucasus in 1933.  
A French group attempted Koshtantau by the northeast side but  
failed to get above an altitude of about 15,000 ft. A Swiss party  
reached the South Peak of Ushba (15,409 ft.), still considered  
one of the finest and hardest climbs in the Caucasus despite  
the fact that it has now been done at least four times. One of  
the members of this group was killed earlier near the summit of  
Doppach (14,420 ft.).



*Altai Mountains.* The ascent of Belukha (5,500 m.), the  
highest summit of the Altai, was first attempted before the Great  
War. A Soviet expedition in 1932 also failed to reach the top.  
In 1933 the highest or East Peak was reached by a large party  
composed of both men and women.

The first ascent of another peak known as Tikhtu (4,200 m.),  
near Belukha, was also accomplished by this party.



*Tian Shan Mountains* (Northeast of the Pamirs). Following  
the recent expeditions culminating in the successful ascent in  
1931 of the giant peak Khan Tengri (6,990 m.), an expedition  
was sent out in 1933 to explore the western part of the range.  
Its members climbed Peak Manas (5,630 m.) and Peak Kurkurel  
(5,470 m.). They reported that there are other peaks in this  
region that are as high, and that the summit of one known as