

BOOK REVIEWS

Avant-Premières à l'Everest, by Gabriel Chevalley, René Dittert, and Raymond Lambert. Introduction by Dr. Ed. Wyss-Dunant. 304 pages, 36 illustrations, sketch maps, and appendices. Paris and Grenoble: Arthaud, 1953. Price, \$3.50.

This fine account of the great effort of the Swiss to be the first on Mt. Everest brings us the spirit and atmosphere of the ultimate in mountaineering, right from those in whose homeland alpinism came into being. We meet and fall in love with a band of sworn friends who admit that they have long been ravaged by the "alpine virus" and have from childhood made climbing a way of life. When unexpectedly strong backing appears, they set forth for a bold bid for the greatest prize that the mountain ranges of the world have to offer. The consciousness of their being pioneers, with all its drawbacks and its thrills, never leaves them. The splendid progress that they make probably surprises even them. The day comes when the two outstanding men, Raymond Lambert and the Sherpa, Tensing Norkey, make a bid for the summit. But altitude and a poor turn in the weather, chiefly the former, forces their withdrawal before they are overcome by the sort of low-oxygen euphoria which they think may well have affected Mallory on his final climb.

In the fall, before their authorization from the Nepalese government runs out and reverts to the tensely waiting British, they return to the fray. This time they have a heavier and more completely equipped expedition, fortified by fresh blood from the ranks of the most brilliant climbers of Switzerland. And still with them is the brilliant Lambert-Tensing team. Their intention is to take advantage of the clear autumn days and, indeed, they do push forward with splendid speed and with every hope of making a good showing. In the shortening days of November, however, as they approach the heights reached in the spring, inexorable winter closes in and simply freezes the brave expedition to a halt.

More than once credit is given to their predecessors on the southern approach—to Houston in 1950 and to Shipton in 1951—on whose shoulders they are the first to admit they stood. And they swell with justifiable pride at the generous greeting from

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Nepal the following spring when Colonel Hunt telegraphed them "half the glory" of the great British success.

ROGER S. WHITNEY

Nanga Parbat, by Ulrich Ling. 52 pages, 24 photographs, 3 maps, and 1 sketch. Munich: Bergverlag Rudolph Rother, 1953. Price, DM. 3.80.

This inexpensive, small paperbound volume was brought out in early August, just a month after the actual ascent of Nanga Parbat was made and at the very moment when the controversy between the members of the expedition was breaking into the press. It gives a summary of all the previous expeditions and devotes the last eleven pages to the successful climb. The summaries are good although somewhat dramatized for the average reader and not as detailed as those found in Dyrenfurth's "Zum Dritten Pol." The final fifth of the book, however, is of more interest since here is found new and somewhat controversial matter. The account suggests that there was no disharmony among the members of the expedition. The disputed permission to climb is reported as readily given by Aschenbrenner, who is said to have urged the climber in best shape to go on alone. There is no mention of the separate starts for the summit; it is merely stated that Buhl climbed faster. Most of the photographs are well reproduced, and although many have appeared already in other books and there are none from this year's expedition, they nevertheless add greatly to this small book.

H. ADAMS CARTER

Zum Dritten Pol, Die Achttausender der Erde, by Günther Oskar Dyrenfurth, with contributions by Erwin Schneider. 286 pages, 47 photographs, 2 drawings, 2 geological profiles, and 8 maps. Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1952.

In a year in which two of the fourteen mountains over 8000 meters in elevation, Everest and Nanga Parbat, have been climbed, and three others, K2, Manaslu and Dhaulagiri, attempted, a book dealing with these very peaks cannot fail to arouse our interest. Dr. Dyrenfurth has for the first time systematically described all the "eight-thousanders" (mountains