

But the story proves this likeness to be illusory. The differences appear not only in the lower elevations, but more saliently in the cultivation of the valleys, man's marks on the heights, the pervading presence of the sea, the types and profusion of flowers, and especially in the absence of forest cover. The place names are strange and meaningful (some clue to their pronunciation would have pleased the American reader).

By no means a stark guidebook, *The Mountains of Ireland* is, nevertheless, informative as well as pictorially graphic. The author knows all phases of her subject. Her general descriptions of history and location are supplemented by accounts of actual trips she has made over the highlands during which an observant and appreciative eye has noted details of route and beauties of scene for a skilled pen to record. Aided by the map showing the whereabouts of the several groups—clear but on too small a scale for trails or roads—it would be no difficult matter to retrace her steps, and surely a delightful one.

On completing this book, the reader will be convinced that Ireland's mountains present a convenient region, unfrequented and full of charm, most rewarding to visit, not, perhaps, when one is full of vigor and ambition, but for the times when leisurely hill tramping seems an appealing recreation.

MARJORIE HURD

Leuchtende Berge. A book of colored photographs of the Alps, by Jos.

Jul. Schaetz. 72 pages, 28 colored photographs. Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1954.

This is a very fine collection of colored photographs of the Alps by the writer and others. The pictures are imaginative and beautifully reproduced. They range from studies of flowers, waterfalls, peaceful lakes and mountain valleys, to excellent pictures of high peaks, glaciers and rock faces. "Suitable" captions accompany many of them, and Schaetz has written a short preface about mountaineering enthusiasts from Petrarch to the skiers and mountaineers of the present day.

URSULA CORNING

High Sierra Country, by Oscar Lewis. 291 pages, map end-papers. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York; Little, Brown and Company, Boston, Toronto, 1954. Price \$3.50.

A glance at the title would lead one to believe that this book is about the alpine regions and high peaks of the country's greatest single mountain range. But actually, the mountains themselves serve largely as a backdrop for man's kaleidoscopic activities. Being the twenty-seventh volume of the

well-known "American Folkways" series, it concentrates on the human story of California's Sierra Nevada, from its discovery by the Spaniards to the present day. However, Mr. Lewis has not written an exhaustive, chronological history of the range, but rather has selected highlights which he considers interesting and significant. The effect is the Sierra done "once over, lightly," and as such is a lively and entertaining account.

After a short introductory description of the region, the author takes up the various phases of its history. There are chapters on explorers, early travelers, Yosemite Valley, stagecoaching, the Central Pacific Railroad, gold mining camps, and various odds and ends, including literary lights, highway robbery, Big Trees, tall tales and folklore. This amazing conglomeration of men and events is successfully handled by topical sub-chapters, rather than a continuous narrative. Most of the action takes place in the foothills and middle altitudes; only once does Mr. Lewis conduct his readers above timberline. This is with Clarence King in his attempts to climb Mount Whitney in 1871 and his final success two years later. The map end-papers, although decorative, are too small scale to show the locations of many places mentioned in the text.

Mr. Lewis is an accomplished and experienced historical writer, and it is unfortunate that his manuscript was not checked more thoroughly before printing. For example, there is a confusion between Echo Summit, over which ran the Sierra's most traveled stage road, and the much higher Carson Pass, to the south. Credit for the "discovery" of Yosemite Valley should be given to William Penn Abrams in 1849, not members of the Mariposa Battalion two years later. We are somewhat startled to read that surveyors running California's eastern boundary "followed down the 39th parallel from the Oregon border" to "the spot where that parallel intersected the 120th meridian." There are some 70 groves of Big Trees, instead of 25. The famous organization headed by Whitney was the California State Geological Survey, not Geographical Survey. The Sierra Club was founded in 1892 instead of 1890, and Yosemite National Park contains approximately 1,200 square miles, not 12,000. But these and other slips do not mar the scope and sweep of Mr. Lewis's story.

More surprising, however, is his approval of the dam at Hetch Hetchy, which converts a valley almost as beautiful as Yosemite into a reservoir of the San Francisco water system. In a sub-chapter, "The 'Rape' of Hetch Hetchy," we read: "Moreover, it presently grew clear that the dire results opponents of the [dam] measure had foreseen had not come to pass. For the transformation of Hetch Hetchy Canyon into a mountain lake did not materially lessen the scenic attractions of the region; indeed, in the opinion

of many, it served rather to enhance them." Obviously Mr. Lewis cannot have visited this dreary man-made lake with its desolate mud-caked shores at low water.

However, every writer is entitled to his opinions, and slips are inevitable until electronic brains take over human affairs. Up to that time *High Sierra Country* will probably be one of the most readable accounts ever written about man's activities on the slopes of our mightiest mountain range.

WELDON F. HEALD

The Men and the Mountain: Frémont's Fourth Expedition, by William Brandon. 337 pages with 3 sketch maps. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1955. Price \$5.00.

This account of Frémont's fourth expedition in 1848 records the strong-willed but futile attempt to cross the Colorado Rockies in one of the hardest winters known in the mountain country. Frémont's purpose was twofold: first, to complete surveys of previous expeditions and to examine a possible central route for the transcontinental railroad; and secondly, to vindicate himself from the seemingly unjust court martial which spelled an end to a colorful and promising army career at the age of thirty-five. Here, in Mr. Brandon's book, is the story of a heroic and romantic visionary dedicated to success above all else. The events of the expedition are vividly described, and its members credibly humanized in their historical and tragic role. The story is straightforward, its purpose clear: to give a suitable background to the expedition, and then recount the month-long struggle of 36 men against winter in Colorado's San Luis valley and San Juan range, followed by the equally long retreat to Taos of the 26 survivors.

Unfortunately, the mountains are important only because of the accidental role they play in creating disaster for Frémont. The mountains were merely stumbling blocks, to be crossed the best way possible. There is no basic interest in them. *The Men and the Mountain* is, therefore, of value for historical rather than mountaineering reasons. For the ardent scaler of peaks, the book may be of little interest, simply because there is only a general, rather brief description of the mountains, and none of them is climbed. Yet many a mountaineer, who knows the true nature of the adventurous spirit, will appreciate this brief encounter with the Continental Divide, which presented a truly rugged barrier to the movement West.

FREDERICK O. JOHNSON

The Untrodden Andes, by C. G. Egeler and T. de Booy. Foreword by Sir Edmund Hillary. Translated from the Dutch by W. E. James. 203