

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