

Appointment in Tibet, by W. H. Murray. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959. 284 pages; 6 maps. Price \$3.95. Published in English edition as *Five Frontiers*; J. M. Dent, 1957.

Most of us know W. H. Murray as an outstanding rock-climber and Himalayan mountaineer who has written vividly of his climbing experiences. When we see a book called *Five Frontiers* in England, and *Appointment in Tibet* in America, we expect more of the same thing. Actually, this volume is pure fiction, a novel of international intrigue and adventure.

The rapid action takes us into three interesting regions. It starts with some dangerous small-boat sailing in the Western Isles of Scotland, in various sorts of weather—mostly bad. The villains are followed briefly to a fishing village on the Catalan coast of France, and then far into the Himalayas, beyond the borders of Tibet. There the excitement includes snow and ice work in the heights, a blizzard and an avalanche.

The publishers call this book "an adventure story in the grand manner of Robert Louis Stevenson and John Buchan." They have, I think, done Mr. Murray's first novel no service, by a comparison with the writings of such masters of the genre. But in spite of some definite weakness of plot and of plausibility, it is in general a lively, fast-moving yarn, told with conviction, and full of realistic detail. Its settings are both colorful and correct. It has two unusually fine, exciting storms on the sea and in the mountains. The hero and heroine are likeable, the villains suitably villainous, and the writer gives us a specially sympathetic and interesting picture of the Dotal porters, who help the ones, and thwart the others. In a word, it is good entertainment.

ELIZABETH KNOWLTON

Great Days in New Zealand Mountaineering, by John Pascoe. London: Bailey Bros. and Swinfin Ltd., 1958. 199 pages; 27 photographs, 20 maps. Price 21s.

It is always a pleasure to read the recollections of a mountaineer about his own homeland mountains. There is here a knowledge and an intimacy which is hard for a visitor to achieve.

In reading this book it would help anyone to whom the New Zealand mountains are unknown to have on hand a physical map of the whole country to orient himself. John Pascoe writes about the chief climbing areas and covers a wide range in some of the lesser known ones. He has climbed himself in most of the areas of which he writes and has a great familiarity with all of them. The pioneer New Zealand climbers are household names to him. Some of them he knew or knows personally as he does the modern