

La Fortaleza extremely difficult from the start. Above boulderfields and scree, they were faced with "huge belts of boilerplate-like slabs, low-angle but severe." These would have been too difficult for load-carrying, even with fixed ropes and so they investigated further and found a huge couloir which did penetrate the slabs for some 3000 feet. A snow cave was dug near the top of the couloir below a 1000-foot band of vertical rock. This was broken only by a thin gully with a 350-foot ribbon of very steep ice, which they called the "Ice Hose," with snow gullies above and below it. The final 80 feet of the ice ribbon were vertical and the whole was more difficult than the "Ice Hose" on the Eiger. Bad weather set in on December 18. They again left Base Camp on the 26th. Mrs. Clough and Gregory cleared the fixed ladder in the "Ice Hose" of ice. The route was continued from the gully leftward up a steep retaining wall and across smooth, holdless slabs to the "Big Corner," the only break through the 1000-foot upper vertical walls. After 200 feet of vertical verglased rock, a steep ice gully rose, terminating in a steep, then overhanging 400-foot granite wall. Bad weather slowed progress until January 2, when Nicol and Gregory climbed part of the wall. On the 4th Clough, Hibberd and Jackson completed the route to the final 1500-foot summit icefield. Gregory, Nicol and Hibberd climbed to the summit on the 5th.

*Lo Valdés group, Central Andes.* A number of steep walls of very good rock of the Cathedral massif (13,073 feet) known as Placas, have been a favorite ground for technical climbs in Central Chile. On April 30, the last and most difficult of these walls, the Gran Placa, was climbed for the first time, at the fifth attempt, by Jorge Cila and Claudio Alvarado, of the Club Andino Mañike. It was considered one of the finest rock climbs accomplished in the area in the last years.

JOSÉ AMBRÚS, *Federación de Andinismo de Chile*

*Cerro San Francisco, Central Andes.* Two local climbers, Mario Alfaro and Iván Vigoroux, and the Frenchman Philippe Grenier made the first ascent of the southeast buttress of Cerro San Francisco (14,698 feet) on February 2. The climb, some 2300 feet of rock and ice, required a bivouac.

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*El Ermitaño and Peña Blanca, Northern Andes.* These two peaks were ascended by an expedition of the Club Andino de Chile. The group travelled from Santiago to Copiapó and turned east to cover the last 130 miles in a jeep along the international road to Argentina, reaching 13,800