

off by an unexpected slip of a person on his rope. As he fell, he struck another member of the party standing below him, who consequently suffered head injuries. The leader received a broken pelvis. The second party rendered what first aid was possible and then went across the lake for help. The subsequent trip out to Jasper involved two separate boat and automobile rides to cover a distance of approximately 50 miles.

*Source of information:* the November 1950 *Gazette* of the Alpine Club of Canada.

*Analysis.* Insufficient information to warrant analysis. However, the case does illustrate once again the danger of a member of a party standing directly beneath a climbing leader. (See analysis of the accident on the Dent du Géant in the 1950 report of the safety committee.)

*Mexico: (1) Ixtaccihuatl (17,743 ft.).* On 4 November 1950 rescue brigades found one man dead and two other persons injured among a group of ten mountain climbers (members of the Club Alpino), who were climbing to make arrangements for a Mass to be held on the summit the next day.

*Mexico: (2) Popocatepetl volcano (17,887 ft.).* On 3 September 1950 a large rock avalanche swept away a group of 25 climbers who were making a climb under the auspices of the Alpine Federation. Two members of the party were killed immediately while a third was buried and not found. A fourth climber later died of injuries while his companions were carrying him down the mountain to Amecameca. Most of the other members of the party were injured by the sliding rocks in the avalanche.

*Source of information:* member of the Auxiliary American Alpine Club Safety Committee.

*Analysis.* Insufficient details available from (1) and (2) to warrant comment

*Mexico: (3) Popocatepetl volcano.* On 15 October 1950 two deaths and 10 serious and several hundred minor accidents occurred to mountain enthusiasts who had turned out for the celebration of the International Mountain Climbers Fraternity. This was to include a religious ceremony blessing the banners of mountaineering clubs in North and South America and Europe. A blinding snow storm hit the upper portion of the peak so that a general warning was issued that the

climb should not be undertaken. In spite of the fact that ice was even then forming on the cars in which the celebrants had come, some hundreds of persons started out to make the ascent. The priest failed to arrive at the summit to conduct the mass although several other climbers made it. Two deaths occurred in one of the accidents on the climb. A girl slipped and slid down a snow slope. A young man who advanced across the slope in an effort to halt her was struck by her falling weight, lost his own balance, and then both of them went over a 600-foot precipice to their deaths.

*Source of information:* Associated Press account.

*Analysis:* This is another case of too many inexperienced and unroped persons on the same mountain at the same time.

*Peru: Cerro Yerupajá (21,769 ft.).* From an expedition of six members, ages 24 to 31, James Maxwell and David Harrah left high camp at 20,500 feet about 10 A.M. 31 July 1950 in a try for the summit. Late in the afternoon they reached the final 300 feet of the summit ridge and found it very narrow and heavily corniced. Both sides fell off at 60 degrees or more. The summit was reached after 5 P.M. Sunset was at 7:30 P.M. On the descent, 100 feet down, Maxwell thrust his axe into the corniced snow of the 7-foot wide ridge to take a picture, when suddenly the snow gave way under Harrah along a crack which opened between his feet. He fell the full length of the rope, over 120 feet. Maxwell grabbed his axe, took a few steps back, drove the axe into the snow and braced himself as the first tug came. The shock dragged him a foot or more toward the edge and partially pulled his axe loose. The rope, cutting through the snow, barely enabled Maxwell to hold. The rope jolted three times as Harrah hung freely suspended against a 70 degree ice slope below. Maxwell says a fourth pull would probably have pulled them both completely off the ridge. If the rope had not been nylon, and hence more elastic, the accident would certainly have been fatal. Harrah's ribs were hurting painfully. Maxwell could pull in the rope, but could not help otherwise. Harrah had a short ice-axe hanging from each wrist, and with these it took him about 45 minutes to dig his own way back up to the crest of the ridge.

After the accident, while continuing the descent, another