

EXPEDITIONS

THE 1958 SHERBORNE KULU-SPITI EXPEDITION. The objects were to find a route up the valley above Losar through to the Gyundi and thence to the Bara Shigri, and subsequently to attempt any of the unclimbed peaks 31/52H (20,570 ft.), 48/52H (21,410 ft.), 35/52H (21,760 ft.), and Holmes' Central Peak (20,600 ft.).

The route from Losar to the Gyundi and thence to the Bara Shigri was opened up successfully. The Losar valley involved difficult going for a couple of miles, traversing steep moraine, crossing two considerable side-streams and avoiding a gorge, although it was necessary to keep fairly low throughout. Earlier in the year with continuous snow bridges there would probably have been no difficulty. Once onto the glacier, it was soon established that the route to the col over the Gyundi lay to the left and not on the main continuation.

A reconnaissance beyond this col disclosed that the watercourse below the glacier could not be followed owing to gorges and instead a traverse had to be made over two ridges to the right separated by steep and very loose scree slopes before the way led out to the Gyundi valley, 5,000 ft. below. Happily the gorges in this valley, which had held up the Abinger party travelling from the west and Holmes from the east, lay to the left so that the route to the col overlooking the Bara Shigri was open. A small stone shelter suggested that these gorges were passable earlier in the season and that sheep could be taken through for grazing for a short period.

The bulk of the expedition was then committed to the Gyundi with eight days' food and after carrying on the survey work they found the col to the Bara Shigri. This involved some steep ice work on both sides and was by no means obvious to locate, owing to the number of ridges and valleys at the end of the Gyundi. By the time the col was reached the food had been exhausted, so that it was with some relief that the remainder of the party bringing fresh supplies up the Bara Shigri was sighted immediately below the col.

Unfortunately the total time out from roadhead at Manali had to be cut to five weeks, and also our Indian member, Malhotra, was taken ill early on and had to return. As a result there was little time left for serious climbing. In the remaining two days a camp was established in one of the high hanging valleys over the Bara Shigri with a view to attempting Central Peak, but the guess proved wrong and a peak of slightly under 20,000 ft. was climbed instead, revealing Central Peak in the adjacent valley. Peaks climbed for survey purposes included one

of 20,200 ft. over the Losar-Gyundi col and a couple more of slightly less than 20,000 ft., but not involving much technical difficulty.

We formed the impression that peaks 48 and 35/52H would be really worthwhile problems and also the Abinger 'Schreckhorn' but that 31/52H and Central Peak were straightforward from the south, but the latter looked fearsome from all other directions.

Mr. J. P. O'F. Lynam, who was in charge of the survey, reports that so far as the survey was concerned, 'the object was to fill the gaps in Holmes' map and to solve various problems he had raised'.

From base camp at Losar in the Spiti valley a plane table survey on 1 : 126,720 scale was commenced, working from the Survey of India triangulated stations 16,890 (Ganmo) and 17,244 (Shilatakar). The survey was taken south from Losar into the upper Gyundi valley as far as a peak on the Gyundi-Bara Shigri divide near Holmes' Central Peak. The survey was closed onto peaks 48/52H (21,410 ft.) and 35/52H (21,760 ft.) without appreciable error. Heights were determined by Indian clinometer.

In addition to this, photographic panoramas, using a Super-Ikonta and bubble levelling on a panoramic head, were made from almost all plane table stations and also from several points east of the Kunzum La and south-west of Central Peak. Analysis of these are under way and with some further information from the Gunther and Abinger expeditions it looks as though a fairly complete and accurate map of the whole area west of longitude $77^{\circ} 50'$ will be available later this year.

We have established that peak 31/52G is where Survey of India put it and that Holmes confused it with 20,340 ft., three miles further north. We consider that the Survey of India height of 21,410 ft. for peak 48/52H is too low and estimate the true height at about 21,800 ft., compared with Holmes' figure of 22,500 ft. In general, considering the simple methods used and the area of ground covered, Holmes' map is astonishingly accurate.

J. G. G. STEPHENSON.

EAST AFRICA. There has been a great deal of activity on the Ruwenzori, but I have heard of no new climbs deserving to be reported. However, H. A. Osmaston and A. C. Stuart repeated the North-east ridge of Margherita during 1958 and then spent a day or two ski-ing on the Stanley Plateau. They had with them Tim Bazarrabusa, an African Member of Legislative Council, who developed considerable proficiency on ski and later climbed Speke for the second time. This is something that gives considerable encouragement for the future, as also does the fact that the number of African schoolboy parties visiting the glaciers continues to increase.

Meanwhile the main track has been improved and a new foot bridge