

STAT

10 April 1958

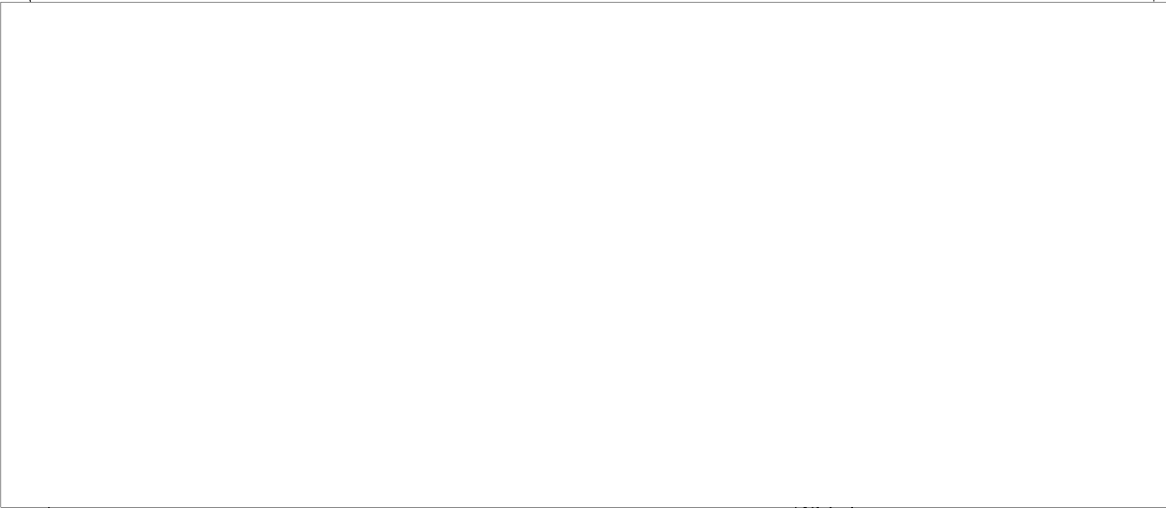


ALPINE WALLS IN BULGARIA



Bulgaria

STAT



STAT

STAT

ALPINE WALLS IN BULGARIA

Alpiyskite steni v bulgariya
/Alpine Walls in Bulgaria/,
 1956, Sofia, Pages 3-263

Tsanko Bangiev

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWARD	1
RILA MOUNTAINS	6
The Mal'ovitsa sector of the Rila Mountains	14
Mal'ovitsa	26
The western wing of the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak	29
The Mal'ovitsa corridor	31
The eastern wing of the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak	31
The northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak -- Triugulnikut	33
The "Kaminite" variation	44
Ushite Peaks	48
Elenin Peak	52
The southern wall of Elenin Peak	52
The eastern wall of Elenin Peak	54
Classical route	54
The northeastern arete	58
The western wall of Elenin Peak	59
Orlovets Peak	60
Zliya Zub Peak	62
The southern wall of Zliya Zub Peak	65

The western arete of Zliya Zub Peak	66
The northern wall of Zliya Zub Peak	67
The southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak	69
The Varnikut route	70
The Slavyanskiya route	77
Dvuglav Peak	84
The Kaminite route	89
The Plochite route	96
The 9 Septemvri route	99
The Republican Alpine Competition II route	109
The arete linking Zliya Zub and Dvuglav Peaks	110
Iglata Peak	112
The southern arete of Iglata Peak	114
The northern arete of Iglata Peak	118
Dyavolskite Igli Peaks	120
Kamilata Peak	126
Lovnitsa Peak	129
The eastern part of the northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak	131
The western part of the northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak	132
The Kuppenite Peaks	134
Kharamiyata Peak	138
THE PIRIN MOUNTAINS	143
Koncheto	149
Vikhren Peak	152
The northern wall of Vikhren Peak (Kazanut)	153
The couloir	157
Triugulnikut	158

The Kaminata route	163
The-Funiyata route	169
Sinanitsa Peak	171
Momin Peak	177
Atmegdan	182
The northern part of the northwestern wall of Atmegdan Peak -- the Bashliyska wall	185
The Narodna Asmiys route	186
The Stroitel route	189
The western part of the northwestern wall of Atmegdan Peak	192
Dzhangal Peak	196
Strazhite Peaks	202
THE VITOSHA MOUNTAINS	204
Molina Skala Peak	208
Kominite Peaks	209
Dolniyat (Golemiyat) Komin	211
The northern wing	211
Damskiya route	211
Southern wing	212
Tsepkata route	213
Malkiyat Vinkele route	213
The arete route	214
The Vinkele route	214
The traverse route	215
The Natvesut route	216
Gorniyat Komin	216
Reznyovete Peaks	217
The northern wall	218
The arete	219

The southeastern wall	220
THE STARA PLANINA MOUNTAINS	222
Vratsata	226
The Iskur River Pass	231
Ritlite	232
The Lakatnishki rocks	233
The Damskiya route	241
The couloir	242
The overhangs	243
The combination route	244
The Zhultata Tsepka route	245
Lyulyakut route	245
The Faktor route	246
The ideal arete route	246
The Sheminete route	247
The German route	248
The Svinskata Dupka route	249
The diagonal route	250
The Septemvri route	251
The Krustut route	252
The Triugulnikut at the Bov railroad station	253
The Kozya Stena peak	258
Kipenut Peak	259
Botev Peak	260
The Rayskite rocks	262
The northern Dzhendem	269
The Malkata Kozya wall	270
Mazalat Peak	271

The Yantra River Pass	272
The rocks above Preobrazhenski Monastery	273
Zandanut	274
The rocks around Dryanovski Monastery	275
Strazhata	276
Momini rocks	276
Sinite Kamuni site	279
Climbing sites	281
Bryanovshitsa rocks	281
Chervenata rock	282
The rocks along the Rusenski Lom River	282
Brezhani	283
APPENDIX	284
BIBLIOGRAPHY	294
FIGURE CAPTIONS	295

FOREWORD

Bulgaria is a predominantly mountainous country. The history and life of the Bulgarian people are closely linked with the country's mountains. The boundless love of the Bulgarian people for their own native mountains and landscape gave rise to a mass interest in a kind of hiking which is much like mountaineering. Despite the fact that most Bulgarian peaks are easily accessible, their perpendicular walls, the snow-covered couloirs, the ridges and aretes in their upper regions, etc., make conditions very favorable for an advance in Bulgarian alpinism.

The birth of Bulgarian alpinism owes much to the experience of Bulgarians in hiking, and to the first ascents of the highest Bulgarian peaks which were undertaken. The first winter ascent of Musala (Stalin)

Peak was undertaken in 1923 after hiking in Bulgaria had become an organized activity. Two years later -- in the winter of 1925 -- a similar ascent of Eltepe (Wikhren) Peak was attempted for the first time. In connection with these efforts, research was begun and the high portions of the Bulgarian mountain ranges were explored. It became evident that better and more specialized equipment, as well as a more profound knowledge of various factors, was necessary before the complete exploration of these mountains could be carried out. For these reasons, the Bulgarian Mountain Club [BPK -- Bulgarski planinski klub] was established in 1929. Later it became the BAK [Bulgarski alpiyski klub -- Bulgarian Alpine Club]. Alpine techniques are being increasingly employed in our high Bulgarian mountains. As a result, the first climbs of the western wall and arete of Malyovitsa Peak and the marking of a path across the rocky arete of the Rupite Mountains and the "Karstoviyat rub" (carst arete) in the Pirin Mountains were possible.

Alpine techniques and equipment were responsible for attempts to ascend the following alpine walls: the northern wall of Eltepe Peak, the northern and southwestern walls of Zliya Zub Peak, the northwestern arete of Iglata Peak, and the northern wall of Orlovets Peak. These technical improvements in Bulgarian alpinism also resulted in the climbing of the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak, the most difficult ascent ever made in Bulgaria, which was undertaken in 1938.

More recently, a reawakening of interest in alpinism has taken place along with the overall upsurge of the country since the establishment of the people's regime in Bulgaria. Within a short period of time, the ascent of most of the high alpine walls in the

Bulgarian mountains was undertaken. Within a matter of only a few years, the crossing of almost all the high mountain aretes was accomplished. In addition to these accomplishments, a mass interest in alpinism developed.

The popularization of alpinism in Bulgaria was seen as an important task by the alpine groups connected with the voluntary sports organizations. Alpinism was made a recognized category in the overall republican sports classifications, and use was made of the experience of the Soviet alpine school. The regulations imposed by the ERSK [Edinna republikanska sportna klasifikatsiya -- Standard Republican Sports Classifications] are such as to ensure the maximum of safety during the period when alpinists are attempting to qualify as such. This facilitates a gradual transition from the easiest exercises, which are trips, crossings and climbs, to the most difficult and complex alpine maneuvers in a progression commensurate with the experience and accomplishment of the climber. These classifications have been made the basis of qualification for the various categories of climbs, depending on the difficulty of access to the various Bulgarian alpine sites. The difficulty of high mountain arete crossings and ascents of peaks has been established on the basis of the obstacles encountered in executing the maneuver. The ERSK has rigid requirements for and insists upon strict observance of a determined progression from easy to difficult undertakings.

Alpinism involves a wide range of mountain activities. The routes by which a peak can be attained are always varied and numerous. The mastery of alpine techniques, a knowledge of the various routes and an understanding of geographical and geological, as well as many other kinds of background information, are the conditions which assure a mountaineer of victory over his superior opponent - nature and its varied forces.

Excellent conditions exist in Bulgaria for the development of alpinism. The high mountain walls to be climbed and the ice-covered high mountains aretes provide excellent opportunities for the practice of alpinism. Such activities are attracting more and more people to mountaineering. The attainment of the high mountain peaks demands an improvement on our present knowledge of the mountain areas of Bulgaria, which include alpine walls. The selection of routes for the climbing of such walls is a difficult proposition. A proper selection and study of the route along a wall to be climbed contributes greatly to the successful accomplishment of the undertaking.

This book, which is based on the requirements and regulations of the ERSK, has been written for the purpose of aiding alpinists undertaking the ascent of Bulgarian alpine walls. I have tried to provide an exact description of the various alpine walls and to give the actual routes which have been established for their ascent. To this end I have drawn on my long personal experience as Senior Instructor in Alpinism, on my years of service as a State Coach in Alpinism, as Head of Study and Sporting Exercises at the Central Alpine Camp of the VKFS [Vurkhoven komitet za fizkultura i sport -- Supreme Committee on Physical Culture and Sports], and as a coach for the "Lokomotiv" DSO [Dobrovolna sportna organizatsiya -- Voluntary Sports Organization].

Although I have personally climbed all of the walls described herein and have followed each of the routes mentioned, it is difficult to describe precisely certain of the typical situations I have encountered since the complexity of a climb is a relative thing. In describing the difficulty of passages I have taken as a basis the six degrees and six intermediary classifications of difficulty adopted by the republican alpine section. For the sake of convenience I have described these as

easy, moderate, and difficult; low, average, and high. gradual, inclined, and steep. To avoid tautology, I have in describing the passages omitted the mention in some cases that it is rock formations which are under discussion. However, when other formations are involved, I have given the predominant characteristics of the formation and passages. For the same reason, it should be understood that a reference to pitons or rope lengths implies rock pitons and the functional length (30 m) of the standard 33 m alpine rope.

In describing rock walls and routes I speak from the climber's point of view: the left or right side of a valley, a river, a pass, a saddle, a wall, a climb, etc.

Because the ERSK recognizes no training areas, this book does not include a detailed description of such. However, because of the desirability of popularizing the alpine areas of the Stara Planina and Vitosha Mountains and of expanding alpine activities to include them, those which are not recognized by the ERSK have been described separately herein.

I would like to express my appreciation to my teachers, Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, and Konstantin Savadzhiev, for the advice which they gave me; to Engineer Rudi Davidov, who helped me in the writing of this book; and to all those who aided me in the gathering of the necessary historical, technical and illustrational materials, thus contributing greatly to this book.

I was greatly aided in amassing the technical data on the routes up many of the walls described by my comrade Valentin Filipchenko, who perished on the northern wall of Vikhren Peak, and it is to him that I dedicate this book.

This book is not free of weak points, since this is a first attempt at collecting and systematizing fresh historical material and technical information on the subject of alpinism. I would therefore greatly appreciate corrections and additions from readers. This work is intended as a modest contribution to Bulgarian alpine literature, and it is my hope that it will further general familiarity with Bulgarian alpine sites and prove a stimulus to further Bulgarian writings on the subject.

The Author

THE RILA MOUNTAINS

The Rila Mountains constitute the northwesternmost portion of the grandiose Rila-Rhodope massif. They are the highest mountains in Bulgaria, and in fact in the Balkans. They are a compact mountain mass with typical alpine topography. They rise in the southwestern part of Bulgaria like a haystack, and are surrounded by plains and valleys at various altitudes. They are bordered on the west by the valley of the Struma River (Blagoevgrad and Kocherinovo Plains), on the south by the Gradevska River and the Predel Saddle (1295) and the Razlog valley; on the east by the valley of the Mesta River, the Avramova Saddle (1295), the Banska River, the Yundola region and the Yadenitsa River; and on the north by the Dolna Banya Plain, the Borovets Saddle (1305), the Samokov Plain, the Cherni Iskur River, the Klisurska Saddle (1025), the Dzherman River and the Stanke Dimitrov Plain. Within these borders, the Rila Mountains cover an over-all area of 2629 sq km. The average altitude is 1487 m, for which reason it is classified as a high mountain range.

The Rila Mountains have abundant water resources. There are numerous streams, rivers and lakes, and for that reason the ancient Greeks and Thracians called this region Dunaks, meaning "water mountain" or "mountains in which water abounds." With the arrival in the Balkan peninsula of the Slavs, the mountains were called Rula, and later Rila, keeping the sense of the original word.

Geologically and petrographically, the Rila Mountains are for the most part massive and crustalline rock. Crystalline schists are the commonest and most widespread rock formations in the Rila Mountains. Gneiss and granite-gneiss are frequently found interspersed among them. Marble is rarely found. The predominating massive rocks in this region are the granites. Generally speaking, the crystalline schists are faulted toward the southwest, but there are exceptions at various sites to this tendency.

Glaciation during the Quaternary Era exerted an exceptionally great influence on the nature of the topography. It caused the deep cirques in which the post-glacial lakes are found. These lakes serve as the sources of numerous rivers. Quaternary glaciation also caused the great U-shaped hanging valleys, the steepness of the slopes and the huge masses of moraine materials which are found accumulated at many points in the valleys above an altitude of 1150 to 1200 m. Between the many valleys there are high, many ribbed ridges with steep slopes and towering rock heaps. All of these factors give an alpine aspect to many of the parts of this mountain range.

In terms of the current classifications, the Rila Mountains can be divided into four large orographic regions:

East Rila comprises the eastern parts of the mountain range. Its western border runs along the Samokov Plain, follows the deep valley of Beli Iskur River, and passes to the southwest of Nalbant

Peak. It then leads to the footpath to Semkovo, which it joins, later following the Belitsa River to the point where it merges with the Mesta River. The highest peak in this sector is Stalin (Musala) Peak -- 2925 m. This is also the highest peak in the Rila Mountains as a whole, and in fact, in the entire Balkan peninsula. East Rila is composed of the following sectors: the Iburski sector, in the easternmost part of the mountains. Its highest point is the Ibur Peak (2666 m); the Muslichal-ski sector, the highest point in which is Mustachal (2634 m) Peak; the Stalinski sector, with Stalin Peak, the upper section of which lies in the nival belt, as its highest point --the northern slopes of this sector of the mountain region touch the Sredna Gora Mountains; the Marishki sector, which is the central portion of the East Rila Mountain region, and in which the highest peak is Golyam Bliznak Peak (2782 m); and the Nalbant sector, the highest point of which is Nalbant Peak (2638 m), covering the southwesternmost parts of the region.

The Central Rila region is the smallest. It is bordered on the east by the Beli Iskur River and the continuation of the footpath leading to Semkovo; on the south by the Dinkov valley, the Kadlin Grob Saddle, and the valley of the Iliyana River as far as its junction with the Rilska River; then to the northeast the boundary leads to the Partizanska meadow, where it joins the Sukhozerski stream, follows the Kobilino Branishte saddle and then the Levi Iskur River to the point where it joins the Beli Iskur River. It consists of the following sectors: the Skakavishki sector, covering the highest portion, of which the highest point, as well as the highest in the Central Rila Region, is Golyam Skakavits Peak (2734 m); the Shishkovishki sector, the highest point of which is Shishkovitsa Peak (2669 m); the Kanarski sector, covering the southeastern portion of the Central Rila region, of which the highest point is Karaalanitsa Peak (2716 m); the

Marinkovishki sector, of which the highest point is Vodniya Chal Peak (Suchal -- 2683 m, frequently called Sukhiyat Chal, in contradiction of its name, erroneously); and the Bricheborski sector, of which the highest point is Dubrava Peak (2591 m). This region was, during the glacial epoch, covered by the heaviest snow cover of any region. For this reason it is richer in glacial forms, cirques and lakes than any of the others.

Northwest Rila is separated from the other Rila Mountain regions by the Levi Iskur River on the east; the Kobilino Branishte Saddle on the west; and by the Sukhoezerski stream and the Rila River. This region is linked with the Vitosha Mountain range by Mount Verila. Its southernmost portions are alpine in nature. This region is composed of the following sectors: the Mal'oviski sector, the highest point in which is Mal'ovitsa Peak (2731 m), which is also the highest peak in the region, and the ridge of which is the most difficult of access of any in the Rila Mountains; the Damgski sector, the central portion of the Central Rila region, the highest peak of which is Danga Peak (2673 m); the Polichski sector, of which the highest point is Kalin Peak (2614 m); the Seymenski sector, containing Kabul Peak (2535 m); and the Lukatishki sector, which has the appearance of foothills to the mountain range, but because of its close geological and petrographic relation to the Rila Mountains, is considered a part of them. Its highest point is Virove Peak (1673 m).

Southwest Rila is the largest region in area. It is separated from the Northwest, Central and East Rila regions by the valleys of the Rilska, Iliyana, and Belitsa Rivers to the point where the Belitsa River joins the Mesta River. The highest point in this region is Golyam Aygedik Peak (2663 m), and it contains the basins of the Mesta and Struma Rivers. It is divided into the following sectors: Aygedishki

sector, the highest in the region, of which the highest point is Golyam Aygedik Peak; the Tsarevvrushki sector, of which the highest point is Tsarev Peak (2390 m), also known as Demirevski Peak; the Parangalishki sector, containing the richest grass-covered ridge in all the Rila Mountains, in which the highest point is Merdzhiko Peak (2490 m); the Kapatnishki sector, covering the southernmost and lowest portion of the Rila Mountains as far as the Predel Saddle, and the highest point in which is Kapatnik Peak (2220 m); and the Bakurtepenki sector, located in the southwest portion of the Rila Mountains, and is the lowest sector. Its highest peak is Popova Glava Peak (1038 m).

The elevation of the Rila Mountains in past eras was great, taking place at several different periods. These various risings resulted in the three plateaus which are found in the mountains at about 1200, 1600 and 2200 m altitude, respectively. These are very important factors in the economic advantages which the Rila Mountains boast.

The Rila Mountains contain 15 peaks higher than 2700 m, 78 which rise above 200 m altitude, and many lower ones.

The foothills of these mountains are covered with such deciduous trees as beech, oak, and hornbeam, as well as others, interspersed with vast areas which have been turned into fertile fields and pastures. Between 1000 and about 2000 m altitude lies the coniferous belt. There are pine, spruce, and juniper trees there. Above 1800 m, the coniferous forests begin to give way gradually to dense juniper thickets. Still higher up, the juniper thins out and alpine pasturelands, extending to the very highest parts of the mountains, replace tree covered areas. Below Parangalitsa Peak, the largest Bulgarian national park and timber and game reserve extends toward the valley of the Blagoevgradska Bistritsa River near the Kartala pasture. It is called the "Parangalitsa Reserve."

The Rila Mountains constitute the major hydrographic junction in the Balkans. Over 150 lakes are located in the mountain cirques. The largest of these is Smradlivoto Lake (900 m long, 260 m wide and 21 m deep). Among the better known larger groups of lakes are that located below Stalin Peak, in which the highest Rila lake--Ledenoto Lake (2722 m) -- lies; the Marichini; Yakorudski; Ribni; Dzhendemski; Mal'ovishki; Urdini; the Sedemte Rila lakes; and the Gradinski lakes. These groups of lakes serve as the sources of many rivers, including the largest ones in Bulgaria: the Maritsa, the Iskur, the Mesta, and others. Along these rivers dams, artificial lakes, power plants for the production of electricity, factories, etc. are being built, and some of the high mountain lakes are being used as natural water reservoirs. Part of the waters of these lakes are kept in reserve to ensure a steady supply.

Most of the river valleys in the Rila Mountains are of great depth. Between 1200 and 1300 m altitude the valleys tend to have a U-shape. Once glaciers were active here, as is indicated by the thick layers of moraine deposits accumulated at these sites, and by the steppe-like terraces with their waterfalls. Cirques, in which beautiful lakes are located, are to be found at the beginnings of these valleys. On the steep slopes of the ridges there are huge rock slides and outcroppings which are a great hindrance to movement along them.

During the winter, when blizzards bury the few principal roads of access leading up the valleys, the Rila Mountains become a remote and isolated area. The broad steep slopes are dangerous because of avalanches then, and cornices of snow overhang the sharp ridges.

Prior to the liberation, the Rila Mountains were thought of as an uncharted region, despite the fact that both Bulgarian and foreign geographers and travelers had made studies of them.

The Rila Mountain area is sparsely populated. Those settlements which are to be found lie in the more accessible valleys and along the lower slopes.

The Rila Mountains served in the past to shelter many revolutionaries fighting for Bulgaria's liberation from its enslavement to Turkey. During the Bulgarian Renaissance, the Rila Monastery was the most important educational center in the country. These mountains are also closely linked with the more recent history of Bulgaria. Immediately following the September Rebellion, the Rila Mountains became the operational territory of Kuzo Yosifov, Stamenkov and others, and between 1941 and 1944, there were several partisan groups operating here. Its folds have sheltered and protected many antifascist fighters. In June 1943 the "Kosta Petrov" Dupnitsa partisan group was formed. This group, together with the partisan group led by Slavcho Trunski wages epic battles in these mountains during the winter of 1944. Six months later, the great Rila-Pirin partisan group was formed. Part of this organization still later became an independent partisan group, operating in the Rila Mountains under the leadership of the legendary Shelyu Demirevski, who perished in the Fatherland War. Today one of the highest peaks in the Rila Mountains, Tsarev Peak, which rises to the south of the Rila Monastery, is being called Demirevski Peak, after this hero of the people, with increasing frequency.

Despite the fact that it is classified as a high mountain range, the Rila Mountain massif is easily accessible for tourists, particularly in summer. Many of its ridges and peaks are rocky but grasscovered. One side is often a steep, grassy slope, while the other is a perpendicular rock wall rising to a dizzying height above a cirque. There are footpaths leading along the valleys and grasscovered ridges which make most

parts of the mountains easily accessible. In thirty years, the construction of hikers' accommodations has made the Rila Mountain region into one which it is practical and convenient to travel in, and has made access to its higher parts easier than before. Ten tourist huts, twelve shelters, and one meteorological observatory have been constructed. In the foothills of these mountains there are numerous rest homes.

The Rila Mountains constitute a splendid skiing area, and they have been favorably compared by many people, and with much justification, with the most beautiful mountain ranges in Europe. The ski runs at Borovets, near Govedartsi village, below Mecht Peak, and at the Central Alpine Camp east of the Mecha meadow near Ruzhdavishki Hill are the most beautiful in Bulgaria. They are used for the training of beginners, instructors and coaches and for republican ski competitions. The mountain cirques (the Zavrachitsa, Stalin, Mal'ovitsa and Pazardere cirques) are being increasingly used as broad natural ski runs for practice and high mountain competitions.

The Rila Mountains are of even greater interest to alpinists. They abound in summer and winter climbing sites. The most interesting sectors to alpinists are those in the western part of the East Rila region (the Stalin and Maritsa sectors) and in the Central and Northwest Rila regions. There are parts of these areas which are relatively inaccessible even for the most experienced climbers, and to cross them in winter would be difficult and dangerous for anyone lacking alpine equipment. Alpine techniques are employed during all seasons in crossing the rocky ridge leading from Elenin Peak via the Petlite Peaks and Orlovets Peak to the Zliya Zub Peaks, as well as the rocky formation leading from Vuzela Peak to Shishkovitsa Peak, which is known as Zhandarmite. During the winter season, alpine techniques

are used not only for the climbs mentioned, which are in Northwest Rila, but also in crossing the ridge between Danga Peak and Golyam Mechit and Maluk Mechit Peaks; the Skakavtsite ridge; the ridge between Kanarata Peak and the Aygedik Peaks via Pavlev, Karaalanitsa, and Aladzha-Slab Peaks; the Kyoravitsa and Mermera Heights; the Dzhendema arete; and the ridge leading south from Stalin Peak through the Bliznatsite Peaks and Marichinchal Peak to Yurushkichal Peak.

There are other mountain ridges, apart from these difficult and dangerous ridges and aretes, the crossing of which is possible only with alpine equipment and by means of alpine techniques, the northern slopes of which are also splendid for alpine exercises. Alpinists are attracted to these sites by the grandiose perpendicular walls of such peaks as Malyovitsa, Zliya Zub, Elenin, and Dvuglav; the beautiful southern arete of Iglata Peak; and the smaller walls of Orlovets, Lovnitsa, Kупenite, and other peaks.

The Mal'ovitsa Sector of the Rila Mountains

This sector is a part of the Northwest Rila region. It is often called the Kupeno-Mal'ovishki or Mal'ovishko-Prekoreski sector. It is the only sector in the Rila Mountains which, in its orographic nature, resembles the southern part of the Central Pirin Mountains. It contains a beautiful chain of sharp mountain peaks located along a main mountain ridge starting to the northeast of Lopushki Peak and stretching in an arc west toward Mal'ovitsa Peak. This ridge, with the cirques on the north and the steep slopes on the south, give this sector a totally alpine aspect. The main ridge in the Mal'ovitsa sector is the most difficult of access of any in the Rila Mountains.

The Mal'ovitsa sector, particularly the lower slopes of its peaks, is composed of granite with pegmatite veins. In the upper parts, crystalline schists are mixed in with these rocks. The rock layers are

faulted 10 to 15 degrees to the southwest. This is one reason that the peaks here are so much eroded. Their northern sides are perpendicular walls several hundred meters high, while the southwestern slopes are usually gradual inclines covered with grass. The entire sector is made up of formations which are considerably broken up -- huge rock masses and boulders lie in the foothills below the peaks. The rocky peaks and cirques, with their steep, almost perpendicular slopes, give the Malyovitsa sector the characteristic appearance of an alpine area, and differentiate it sharply from the other sectors of the mountain range.

This sector covers a larger area than any other in the Northwest Rila region and has the highest average altitude as well. It is bordered by the Levi Iskur River; the Kobilino Branishte Saddle; the Sukhozerski stream; the Rila, Eleshnitsa and Urdina Rivers; and the Cherni Iskur River, to its junction with the Levi Iskur River.

The main ridge of the Mal'ovitsa sector begins above the Mala Tsurkva and Madzhare villages in Samokov okoliya, and stretches southwest to the deep and steep valley of the Eleshnitsa River. It lies in the form of a rocky arc about 25 km long. Near the beginning of the ridge rises the low but beautiful Sredono Peak. The next peak is Budachitsa (2473 m), which is also called Budachki Rock. To the west stand Maluk Mechit Peak (2398 m) and Golyam Mechit Peak (2476 m). Between these meanders the unfinished and now abandoned road leading from Govedartsii village to the Rila Monastery.

To the west of the two Mechit peaks there are several elevations, which the local population calls the Lopushki Peaks. Beyond them stands a beautiful height shaped like the headgear formerly worn by priests. From this form its name, Popova Shapka (2699), derives. Some persons

call this peak Lopushki, because of the Lopushki lakes to the north of it from which the Lopushnitsa River originates. Its proper name and location is a much discussed point in the literature of the subject of Bulgaria's mountains. According to our oldest mountaineers, who were among the members of the first organized expeditions to this sector, this peak has always been known as Popova Shapka Peak, the name deriving from its shape, by the local population. To the west of Popova Shapka Peak stands a peak which was formerly called Prekorek and now known as Lopushki Peak (2710 m). To the south of this peak and above Sukhoto Lake rises Malka Popova Shapka Peak. The confusion in the names and locations of Popova Shapka and Lopushki Peaks has by now almost disappeared. Bulgarian mountaineering circles, which include most of the persons to whom this is an important issue, have agreed upon Popova Shapka as the name for that peak (2699 m) located north of the Kobilino Branishte Saddle and west of the Mechit Peaks, and Lopushki as the name for the peak (2710 m) which rises to the west of the other and northeast of Strashnoto Lake. From this latter peak a jagged, curiously serrated ridge, rising above the surrounding cirques and the valley of the Rilska River, branches off. It is usually, though erroneously, referred to by the old general name, Rupite.

A rocky arc, about 3.5 km long, extends to the west from Lopushki Peak. It stretches to Elenin and Mal'ovitsa Peaks. Mal'ovitsa Peak, and Elenin Peak to the south of it, have long been well explored areas. The peaks lying between these and Lopushki Peak to the northeast, however, were until recently very little known. They had not been studied extensively, and were called by the old names -- the Rupite, Prekorek or Kuppenite (Kupni) Peaks. These were the general names by which the local population referred to them.

Organized mountain excursions to this sector were first started by the "Rila" Youth Hiking Society in Samokov in 1921-1922, following the establishment of the Youth Hiking Union. On 12 July 1926, a group of hikers -- Mikhail Krushnyak, Nancho Nanchev and Lyuben Georgiev -- undertook the first crossing of the ridge linking the easternmost peaks in the Mal'ovitsa sector, which were at that time called the Rupite Peaks. Starting at two o'clock in the morning from Govedartsi village, the group reached the summit of Elenin Peak at four-thirty in the afternoon. Two years later, in the spring of 1928, hikers Vasil Radev and Ivan Ivanov made the first crossing of the Rupite Peaks on skis. They traveled from Lopushki Peak to the small cirque which is surrounded by Kamilata, Lovnitsa, Zliya Zub and Orlovets Peaks, and where the "BAK" shelter is now located. Trips to this sector increased gradually in number from that time on. In March 1955, BAK members Nikola Mironski, Dr. Lyuben Telcharov, Mikhail Krushnyak, Bozhidar Stoichkov, Itko Kochev, Lyuben Genchev-Pisetsa, Georgi Konstantinov-Chernovrushki, Ivaylo Vladigerov, Vladimir Zagorov, Yordan Yordanov, E. Yordanova and Em. Parasko undertook the first winter crossing of the Rupite Peaks by a large group. Some of these peaks were given names during this expedition.

Bulgarian mountaineers, after studying the Mal'ovitsa sector in detail, rejected the too general term Rupite as applied to the Kupeni, or Kupni Peaks, as the easternmost heights in this sector were known, replacing these with individual peak names. At present the general name Rupite is applied to the great precipices to the north of the peaks in the eastern part of the Mal'ovitsa sector. This name, so applied, is indeed an accurate description of the topography, since "Rupa" or "Ropa" (Khoruba) means "a hole," or something much inclined or broken up. The name is thus etymologically correct.

From Lopushki Peak to the southwest and west lie the most beautiful peaks in the Mal'ovitsa sector. Just beyond Lopushki Peak stand the three elevations known as the Kúpenite (Kúpnite) Peaks, as well as by their individual names -- Portata, Maluk Kúpen, Sreden Kúpen, and Golyam Kúpen (2700 m). Next comes Lovnitsa Peak (2570 m), which is separated from Kamilata Peak (2550 m) by Lovnishki Pass. This latter peak is the beginning of the ridge which extends through Lovnishki Pass to the northwest to Chernata Skala Peak (also called Studenoto Krilo Peak by some). From that point it goes north, separating the Mal'ovishka and Prekrite Rivers, where it is known as the Ruzhdavitsa ridge. It extends as far as the Plana site, where it ends.

To the southwest of Lovnitsa Peak rises Zliya Zub Peak (2650 m). The two peaks are separated by the Zliya Prelez Pass. A rocky arete which has two small peaks with perpendicular walls called the Dyavolskite Igli Peaks (2580 m) branches off to the south from Zliya Zub Peak. A similar formation, on which Dvuglaviya Peak (2605 m), also extends from Zliya Zub to the south. To the west of this peak stands the rocky Iglata Peak (2575 m). To the west of Zliya Zub Peak march the proud and beautiful Orlovets Peak (2650 m), the rocky Petlita arete, and Elenin Peak (2652 m) in the southern folds of the ridge. This peak ends in a steep wall, to the south of and below which the rocky arete continues to the point where it disappears into a pine forest. The ridge continues north of Elenin Peak and includes Mal'ovitsa Peak (2735 m), the highest peak in the sector. To the north of this peak stand the lower Orieto Peak (2694 m) and Malka Mal'ovitsa Peak (2698 m), separated by the Mal'ovishki Pass. Facing these peaks from the northwest are the Ushite Peaks (2560 m). To the north of these the Kalburut ridge runs along between the Mal'ovishka and the Urdina valleys.

West of Mal'ovitsa Peak the principal ridge of the sector becomes rounded, which is the form characteristic of the ridges in the Rila Mountains. The western slope of Mal'ovitsa Peak drops off to a wide, rocky incline, but beyond this the ridge climbs gradually and without interruption. The Dulgiya Hill lies to the south, in the direction of the broad valley of the Rila River. This hill slopes away steeply to a point above the Rila Monastery. Beyond this western branch of the main ridge stands Dodov Peak (2597 m), which is also called Drushlevishki Peak, after the Malka Drushlevitsa and Golyama Drushlevitsa Rivers which rise south of it. The main ridge of the Mal'ovitsa sector ends with Vurli Peak (2595 m), which rises to the south of the Konopishte Saddle at the point where the Eleshnitsa turns to leave the Malko Pazardere ravine. The western side of Vurli Peak slopes off steeply toward the Eleshnitsa River valley. To the south of this peak Karabumar Hill, Baucher Peak (2166 m) and Ravna Peak rise between the Drushlevitsa and Eleshnitsa Rivers. The southwestermmost branch of the Mal'ovitsa ridge slopes off from this point to end at the junction of the Eleshnitsa and Rila Rivers.

The Mal'ovitsa ridge begins as a rib which flanks Popova Shapka Peak, beyond which it serves as a watershed, as far as Dodov Peak, between the Aegean and the Black Sea basins. Beyond Dodov Peak it lies entirely within the Struma River Basin.

The northern slopes in the Mal'ovitsa sector are longer and more gradually inclined than their southern counterparts, having been affected by glacial action. Their deep cirques contain many lakes which serve as the sources of the streams which form the right bank tributaries of the Cherni Iskur River.

To the north of Budachitsa Peak lies the source of the Yorushka River, which joins the Cherni Iskur at Dospey hamlet. The deep, rocky cirque north of Popova Shapka Peak contains Lopushko Lake, which is the source of the Golyama Lopushnitsa River. Below this cirque lies Malko Lopushko Lake, and still lower there are three smaller lakes which often dry up entirely. East of the cirque, and on the northern slope of Popova Shapka Peak, the Malka Lopushnitsa River rises. It joins the Golyama Lopushnitsa River at the Nadaritsa site, forming the Lopushnitsa River. The lakes which are scattered in the cirques on the Rupite Peaks serve as the sources of the Iztochna Pryaka, Sredna Pryaka and Zapadna Pryaka Rivers, which join to form the Pryaka River. These rivers rise from the six Kupenski Lakes, which are also called the Pryakorechki Lakes because they lie within the basins of the various Preki rivers. Most of these lakes also have individual names. The Sredna Pryaka River has its source in the beautiful Svinsko Lake, whose shores are covered with juniper. The other five lakes lie in the basin of the Zapadna Pryaka River. The highest in altitude and the largest of these is located to the northwest of and below the Kupenite Peaks and is called Strashnoto [this Bulgarian word means "the terrible"] Lake, although it is one of the most beautiful in the sector. In good weather, its dark blue-grey waters reflect the rocks of the Kupenite Peaks. The lake's name is only justified when the fierce mountain winds disturb its waters and raise great waves, which crash with a fury against the unyielding rocks, making the earth tremble. To the west of Lovnitsa Peak lies Mineralno Lake, below and to the west of which Ruzhdavishko Lake is to be found.

One of the most beautiful lake groups in this sector is the Malyovishki Lakes, composed of nine bodies of water which are divided into three groups. They are located in the Mal'ovishka valley in a terrace

formation. To the north of Kamilata Peak lie the three Malomalyovishki Lakes. At the bottom of the Malyovishka valley, the three Elenini Lakes are to be found in a high cirque. The largest of these reflects beautiful Orlovets Peak. The other three lakes in this group nestle in a small cirque which is located beneath the northeastern wall of Malyovitsa Peak, west of Malka Mal'ovitsa and Orleto Peaks, and east of the Ushite Peaks. These have kept the old general name - the Mal'ovishki Lakes. They are the source of foamy mountain streams which later join to form the Mal'ovitsa River.

The eight Urdini Lakes, which serve as the source of one of the Cherni Iskur River's principal tributaries -- the Urdina River, are found between the Mal'ovitsa, Dodov and Danga Peaks, lying in a large cirque.

The southern slopes of the peaks in the Mal'ovitsa sector contain relatively little water. They are short inclines which drop off steeply toward the valley of the Rilska River. The three Popovi Lakes are located between the southern slopes of Popova Shapka Peak and Lopushki Peak, and above and to the northwest of Malka Popova Shapka Peak. Beneath them flows the Sukhozerski stream, which collects its waters from the marshes at the Kobilino Branishte site, and then empties into the beautiful Sukho Lake. This lake drains into the Rilska River at the Partizanska meadow via underground passages.

Many ravines, which were formerly known collectively as the Zlite streams, cut across the southern slopes of the peaks of the Mal'ovitsa sector from Lovnitsa Peak on the east as far as Elenin Peak. They have steep, sometimes perpendicular walls, and they lead toward the valley of the Rilska River. Only those who have roamed these slopes will understand how justified the name Zlite [which means, in Bulgarian, "the bad"]

is as applied to these ravines. It is difficult to cross these rocky chasms, particularly in autumn, winter, and spring, when they are covered with snow or when roaring cascades of water or snow tear along them carrying along huge boulders which crash noisily from one ledge to another. These ravines are even more treacherous when the snow begins to melt and the waters swell. Then the silence of the mountain world is rent by the deafening echo of the rock slides which are a frequent phenomenon here.

The larger and most distinctive ravines among those known as the Zlita streams have gradually been given individual names. The easternmost of these, which runs south between the Zliya Zub and Lovnitsa Peaks toward the Partizanska meadow, is called the Beliyat ravine (Beliyat Uluk). The pass at which this ravine begins is called Zliya Pass. The ravine which begins on the southeastern slope of Zliya Zub Peak, below the natural circular formation called Khalkata (Prozoretsa), and runs between the Dyavolski Igli Peaks and Dvuglav Peak to the Partizanska meadow is called the Dyavolskiya ravine (Dyavolskiyat Uluk). This is the steepest ravine of the group. A rope must be used to climb or descend this ravine, which follows a stairstep formation in many places. Atmospheric conditions should be taken into consideration in planning trips along this ravine, with a view to avoiding rock slides. The Siniya ravine (Siniyat Uluk, Siniyat Anduk) lies to the west of the Dyavolskiya ravine. It begins at the pass between Zliya Zub Peak and Orlovets Peak, and continues between the western slopes of Dvuglav Peak, the perpendicular west wall of Iglata Peak, and the steep southern slopes of Orlovets Peak. West of the Siniya ravine, the southern slopes inclining toward Elenin Peak are divided by numerous smaller ravines which do not have individual names but are included in the old collective name, the Zlita streams. These smaller ravines are almost waterless.

The Ochovo ravine, along which the Ochova River runs, lies between the rocky arete which descends the southern slope of Elenin Peak to disappear into a pine forest, and Dulgiya Hill. The southern slopes of Dodov Peak, to the west of this hill, give rise to the Malka Drushlevitsa and Golyama Drushlevitsa Rivers, which join to form the Drushlevitsa River, a right bank tributary of the Rilska River. The Drushlevitsa joins the Rilska River at the Rila Monastery. The westernmost river in the Mal'ovitsa sector is the Eleshnitsa River, which has its source at the Konopishteto site in the Malko Pazardere ravine. It runs south through a steep valley between Kalin and Vurli Peaks, joining the Rilska River below the Manastirskiya Pchelin site. The stream which has its beginning at the Karabumar site is also a tributary of the Eleshnitsa River.

The Mal'ovitsa sector is the only locality in the Rila Mountains offering climbers ideal conditions for mountain climbing in both winter and summer. More alpinists and mountaineers are attracted to the gigantic rock heights of this sector, which conceal nine cirques with perpendicular walls, than to any other peaks in the Rila Mountains. The alpine giants in this sector, which are snowcovered until late in the spring, are very beautiful. In summer they are bathed in sunlight, and their summits project boldly into the skies. In autumn they are swathed in fog, and have an air of mystery and intrigue. These peaks are even more grandiose in winter -- the white snow cover, beautiful but dangerous, glitters in the sun, and the summits are attainable only for the boldest climbers.

One of the oldest tourist huts in Bulgaria is located between the Ruzhdavitza and Kalbura ridges in the Mal'ovitsa valley. It was built on the left bank of the Mal'ovitsa River in 1934. It stands below the

Malka-Mal'ovitsa Peak and between Kuklata and Chernata Skala Peaks. The "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut (2050 m altitude) is a very convenient starting point for climbs in this sector. Following the completion of the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut, enthusiastic members of the Bulgarian Alpine Club built the primitive "BAK" stone shelter (2500 m) in the small cirque surrounded by Kamilata, Lovnitsa, Zliya Zub and Orlovets Peaks. It is made of roughhewn stone. It is the only shelter to be found in this region in case of inclement weather. It is sometimes entirely buried by snowdrifts in winter. Beneath the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut, the Supreme Committee on Physical Culture and Sports built the first school for the study of mountaineering in Bulgaria in 1952. This is the Central Alpine Camp [TsAL -- Tsentralen alpiyski lager], which stands in the beautiful Mecha meadow. There Bulgarian mountaineers improve their technique and are trained in the use of complex alpine equipment.

The "Strashnoto Ezero" alpine shelter at the edge of Strashnoto Lake (2400 m), built in 1950-1951, is the best starting point for trips and climbs along the peaks of the eastern part of the Mal'ovitsa sector. This shelter was built by voluntary labor on the part of hikers and alpinists from Sofia and Samokov, and was financed by the VKFS. East of the shelter and below Golyam Mehit Peak stands the "Samokovska Komuna" tourist hut. It is located at the Govedarnika site which is at an altitude of 1470 m. It was built in 1950-1951 by the VKFS. It serves as a starting point for trips to the eastern parts of the Mal'ovitsa sector and to the Central Rila region. One of the most beautiful ski runs in Bulgaria begins there, and this tourist hut is Bulgaria's first special high mountain ski base.

The most convenient settlement from which trips to the Mal'ovitsa sector can be begun is Govedartsi village, located in the picturesque Iskur valley. It is a two and a half hour trip from Govedartsi to the "Samokovska Komuna" tourist hut. It is then a several hours' journey to the alpine sites of the Mal'ovitsa sector. The "Strashnoto Ezero" alpine shelter can be reached in four and a half hours via the valley of the Prekrite rivers. From Govedartsi village to the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut via the Ovnarsko or Gyulechitsa sites it takes five hours.

The best starting point for trips in the southern part of the Mal'ovitsa sector is the Rila Monastery, which is itself in this sector. The beautiful Partizanska meadow can be reached in an hour's walk from the monastery. This meadow contains the Partizanski shelter (1250 m), which is a convenient base for climbs along Dvuglav, Iglata and Dyavolski Igli Peaks. The walls of these peaks can be reached in two to three hours from this shelter.

The "Ivan Vazov" tourist hut is a great convenience for hikers and climbers in this mountain sector.

The northern walls of Mal'ovitsa, Orlovets and Kamilata Peaks; the northwestern walls of the Kopenite, Zliya Zub, Malka Malyovitsa, and Orleto Peaks; the southeastern walls of Zliya Zub, Elenin, and Ushite Peaks; the southern slopes of Dvuglaviya and Dyavolski Igli Peaks; and the southern arete of Iglata Peak are the best known alpine sites in the entire Rila Mountain range. Some of these, for example the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak and the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak, are comparable in difficulty to the great world known alpine sites outside Bulgaria. Although the mountain walls in the Mal'ovitsa sector are not too high, most of them are quite difficult to negotiate and require great mastery of techniques on the part of the climber.

The rocky Petlite arete, which links Elenin and Orlovets Peaks; the ridge between Zliya Zub Peak and the Lopushki Peaks; the Prekite river cirques and those of the Mal'ovitsa and Urdina Rivers; and the cirques of the neighboring Sedemte Rilski Lakes are interesting sites for winter alpinism.

Mal'ovitsa

Mal'ovitsa (2730 m) is the highest peak in the Mal'ovitsa sector of the Northwest Rila mountain region. It rises proudly from the Mal'ovitsa valley and dominates the main ridge east of Dodov Peak.

It can be reached via the Mal'ovitsa valley. As one enters the valley, and especially after the Mecha meadow is reached, Mala Mal'ovitsa becomes increasingly clearly visible. Behind it rises Orleto Peak, and to the right, above the Mal'ovishki Lakes, Mal'ovitsa Peak stands imposing and grandiose. It is shaped like twin haystacks. The 300 foot pyramid shaped perpendicular northeastern wall arrests the eye. It is called Triugulnika, and is the first perpendicular rock face on the peak. The eastern arete of the wall slopes off, and together with Orleto and Mala Mal'ovitsa Peaks, forms a pass. Beyond this pass and below the eastern slope of Mal'ovitsa Peak lie the beautiful Eleni Leaks. To the south, the main ridge separates Mal'ovitsa Peak from the Elenin Peak, and the western slopes descend to form a flat ridge separating the Mala Urdina River cirque from the beginning of the Ochovo ravine.

The origin of the name Mal'ovitsa has never been established. Some link it with the Malite (Mal'ovishki) Lakes which lie in a terrace formation beneath the northeastern wall of this peak. Others believe that the root of this name is the turkish word "mal," which means "property," since so many of the names of Rila Mountain sites are of Turkish origin.

Gyulechitsa, Zekiritsa, Zavrachitsa, etc. are examples. The explanation given by the local population, which is based on the following legend, is presumably the most accurate account of the derivation of the word available:

"On the route to Ovnarsko stands the Mokro Livage site, at the point where the highway enters the pine forest. The Lopushka River runs through this site. Near the river traces of the ancient Nadaritsa settlement can still be seen. This community was cruelly exploited during the fifteenth century by the Turkish enslavers, who forced the citizens to forge iron implements in the so-called madani, or forges. During the day, all of the villagers were taken away to work, but without compensation. Only the feeble old women were left in the village to go from house to house and rock the cradles of the wailing infants ... One of the village youths, who is believed to have been a descendant of an ancient family of Bulgarian feudal lords, and who was named Mal'o, began to terrorize the Turks and to avenge the wrongs inflicted upon the peasants of his village. Year after year the enslavers in constant fear because of him. For many years they pursued him, but he always managed to find refuge in the deep and little known valley below the village. But one dark day, the Turks succeeded at long last in surprising him in his hideout in the depths of the valley, and they killed him." Thus there is a link between the brave Bulgarian valley rebel and the name of the peak which rises at the end of it. After the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut was built, the juniper surrounding the site was cut down. During the course of this work, a huge pine tree which had decorated the spot was also cut down, and a grave was discovered in the roots of this tree. From it the well preserved skeleton of a large man was removed. Around the waist of this skeleton were remnants of a wide leather belt with copper ornamentation. On the basis of the above legend it is believed that this was the grave of the rebel Mal'o.

This legend is also supported by the old and little known folk song which speaks of the people's struggle against the Turks. It speaks of the rebel Mal'ov, and is now sung only in the valley of the Iskur Rivers and in Beli Iskur village.

The peak is usually reached by means of the upper terrace, which in turn can be attained by following the upper part of the Mal'ovitsa River bed. This upper terrace stands at the foot of the valley, and is referred to by the mountaineers of the region as simply the "Upper Terrace." Above it, the route passes to the right of the Eleni Lakes, and then south to the main ridge on which Mal'ovitsa Peak rises. Elenin Peak lies to the south. This route circumvenes Mala Mal'ovitsa Peak easy and pleasant as well as almost devoid of risk. The route follows pyramidal markers which indicate an otherwise indistinguishable footpath winding in and out among huge outcroppings of rock and stone heaps.

The peak is even more easily accessible from the western side. The route there leads over the grass covered slopes of the peak. Other routes lead upward from the lower terrace ("Dolnata Terass") of the Mal'ovitsa valley and emerge on the vast, grass covered Mal'ovo field. This field can also be reached via the Zaeshka footpath, which passes beneath Kuklata Peak west of the "Mal'ovista" tourist hut. From the Mal'ovo field the route leads to the three Mal'ovishki Lakes, while another path leads around them. Higher up the route follows the large rock outcroppings below the northeastern wall of the peak, emerging in the Mal'ovishki Pass via the steep couloir between the wall and the small Orleto Peak which rises on the left. From the pass the ascent is made via the eastern grass covered arete of the northeastern wall. From the peak at the Triugulnika site, the route follows the jagged and rocky arete to the summit.

The northern side of this peak is the most difficult to climb. It can be mastered only with alpine techniques and equipment.

The Mal'ovitsa Peak towers like a wall over the watershed ridge between the Mal'ovitsa and Mala Urdina Rivers on the north. It is separated from Orleto and Mala Mal'ovitsa Peaks on the east by the Mal'ovishki Pass, and on the west it slopes off to the watershed between the Mala Urdina and the Ochova Rivers.

The northern wall of this peak is divided by the Mal'ovishki corridor into two spurs - the western wing and the eastern wing.

The Western Wing of the Northern Wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak

The wing starts about 70 m above the eastern wing, rising from the valley of the Mala (Gorna) Urdina River. It is composed of low, perpendicular walls interrupted in some places by grass covered stretches. It extends to the summit of the peak. On the left it touches the Mal'ovishki corridor, and on the right the western arete of the northern wall, which extends from the summit of the peak to the western grass covered slope with which it merges. This part of the wall is 200 to 250 m high. Its upper end merges with the high, grass covered areas on top of Mal'ovitsa Peak. The rock is granite, and it is covered with moss and lichen.

The first ascent of Mal'ovitsa Peak via the western wing of the northern wall was attempted in the summer of 1934 by the following BAK members: Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, Dr. Lyuben Telcharov, Dr. Lyuben Pelev, and Zhivko Kraev. However, intemperate weather interfered with the completion of this expedition.

On 17 September 1934 a group of BAK members made another unsuccessful attempt to climb the peak from this side. Between 20 and 26 September of that same year, BAK members Mikhail Krushnyak, Dr. Lyuben Telcharov and

others made a study of the Mal'ovishki cirque. The first successful ascent of the peak by this route was made during this same period, by Dr. Telcharov, Mariya Vuzharova and others. They managed the ascent in four hours, in spite of poor atmospheric conditions, including fog and ice ('). During this ascent, rock pitons and snap rings were used for the first time in high mountain climbing in Bulgaria.

The first ascent of this wall by a large group was made in 1952. It was undertaken by forty students from the Central Alpine Camp.

The classic route across this arete leads to the triangular marker at the summit of the peak. There is no specifically marked route. First short stretches of rock interspersed with grass areas must be crossed. This is done by means of a loose line, working diagonally to the left toward the Mal'ovishki corridor. Toward the top of this wall, there is a broad ledge almost directly above the Mal'ovishki corridor. Above this ledge there is a rocky overhang of about 30 m, which is the last section of the ascent. This overhang cannot be negotiated except with pitons and snap rings. It was here that these were first used in Bulgarian alpinism. In ascending this overhang the leader of the party must work toward the east, in the direction of the arete, from which the access to another, smaller ledge is easiest. A steep grass covered slope leads from this second ledge to the summit of the peak.

During this climb complete coordination between the members of a climbing party, which should consist of two or three people, is necessary. There are suitable spots along this route for resting and grouping of the party. This wall has abundant and solid ledges and small platforms and many suitable spots for the driving of pitons. The short stretches of rock are easily surmounted. For one or two hours of the ascent, climbers may follow a route which is not rigidly specified. Seven or eight rope

lengths are required, and four to five pitons must be placed. A like number of snap rings are required to facilitate the ascent.

This wall is classified 2 C in difficulty.

The western wing of the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak is an excellent practice climb for beginning alpinists, and will train them in the techniques needed in wall climbing and in the organization and tactics of high mountain ascents, as well as accustoming them to heights.

The Mal'ovitsa Corridor

This corridor divides the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak into a western and eastern wing. It begins on the floor of the valley of the Mala Urdina River and extends to the highest part of the peak, ending in a small, steep saddle between the western and eastern wings. The first winter ascent of this corridor was made at the end of April 1955 by BAK members N. Mironski, Dr. L. Telcharov, L. Genchev-Pisetsa, V. Zagorov, V. Stoichkov and Em. Parasko. They climbed in two parties of three people each, and completed the ascent in three hours (---).

The ascent of this corridor is very easy, and is done on a loose line. It takes a maximum of one hour. Complete teamwork on the part of all climbers is necessary.

The Mal'ovitsa corridor is classified 1 C in difficulty.

It is an interesting climb in spring, when the entire corridor is covered with firm snow. Summer climbs are usually made for training purposes, especially to accustom beginning alpinists to altitude.

The Eastern Wing of the North Wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak

This wing begins at the Mal'ovishki Lakes and ends about 60 m below the highest point of the peak. Its upper point is separated from the top of the western wing by the small, jagged saddle in which the Mal'ovishki

corridor ends. The easternmost part of this wing is an almost perpendicular wall, triangular in shape, which faces northeast. It is known as Triugulnika. The remainder of the wall, on the right side, has a terrace-like formation, and is partly covered with grass. The eastern wing borders the Mal'ovishki corridor on the right and the eastern arete of the northeastern wall (Triugulnika) on the left.

The eastern wing of the north wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak is composed of grasscovered parts and granite slabs. Most of these latter are covered with moss or lichen. The formations of the granite here are composed of compact veined rock which contains pegmatite. The wall as a principally northern exposure, as well as one to the west, toward the corridor. It is about 200 m high.

This wall was first climbed on 9 June 1930 by Samokov mountaineers Mikhail Krushayak, Vasil Nenkov, and Ivan Shekhtov. It took them three hours. They were poorly trained for this kind of climb and had little equipment. A standard rope was used, and the steps on the upper part of the wall, where the climbers had to traverse icy surfaces, were cut with a bayonet(--).

In August 1934 BAK members Rudi Davidov, Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, and Khari Khaimov climbed the eastern wing via the northwestern arete of the Triugulnika (.--).

The first winter ascent of the eastern wing of the wall, which was also undertaken by BAK members, was made in the middle of March 1935, and was completed in four hours.

In June 1951, students in the Republican course for Beginning Alpinists, organized by the VKFA, effected the first ascent of this wall by a large group. They were lead by Senior Alpine Instructors Andrey Todorov, Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov, and Mikhail Kotsev.

They began their ascent at the foot of the east wing of the north wall, working diagonally to the left and then switching back to take advantage of the various platforms as far as the center of the right hand arete of Triugulnika. The ascent over the patches of rock and grass thus far was made with little but a loose line to aid the climbers. There are many convenient platforms to assure safety here. The arete can be reached in three to four rope lengths. Beyond the arete's edge, the climbing route goes upward along its surface. The highest part of the eastern ring can be reached in two to three rope lengths.

This entire ascent can be made over easy rocky passages with convenient handholds. There are many platforms, and convenient locations for the driving of pitons within easy reach of the leader.

The climbing route is not specifically determined. The climb takes two hours at the most, and requires seven to eight rope lengths. It is advisable for climbing parties to carry a few pitons and as many snap-rings to ensure absolute safety. The ascent can best be made by teams of two, three or more persons.

This climb is classified as 3 B in difficulty. It is recommended for beginning alpinists, and will serve to develop endurance and alpine orientation.

The Northerneastern Wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak -- Triugulnika

The easternmost part of the eastern wing of the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak is a wall about 300 m high which rises almost perpendicular and faces northeast. Despite this orientation, mountaineers call it the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak. It is the most difficult face of the northern wall of the peak to climb. It is called Triugulnika [triangle] because of its shape. It towers over Gorno Mal'ovishko Lake between Orleto Peak and the watershed ridge between the Mal'ovitsa

and Urdina Rivers. This wall is composed of light colored granite, and is split from the top to the bottom down the center by a wide cavity. The rocky patches in this cavity are mostly granite, but there are also some composed of schist gneiss with veins of pegmatite and biotite schists.

The peak, which is almost always shrouded in fog, looks inaccessible from the north. The wall seems a terrible and invincible barrier. Since the years of the first Bulgarian alpine efforts, this wall has drawn the eyes and tempted the restless spirits of the bold Bulgarian climbers.

The first and unsuccessful attempts to scale the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak were made in August 1934, by the following BAK members: Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski and Ivaylov Vladigarov. They camped on the eastern wing of the northern wall.

On 16 and 17 June 1935, BAK members including Meritorious Physical Culture Worker Gancho Ignatiev and S. Shlezinger made another attempt to conquer the wall. After a difficult two hour climb, they had climbed 40 to 60 m, and had reached the lower chimney (1) [see illustration opposite page 33, orig.], but they were forced to descend en rappel again because of the wet moss covering the rocks. They judged that further progress under those conditions would be impossible. Later that same year several other unsuccessful attempts to climb this wall were made. Actually, these attempts were of the nature of studies of the rock face.

During 1937 further unsuccessful attempts were made. A group of Slovene alpinists, under the leadership of Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, climbed about 60 m of the wall, reaching the end of the lower crossing (2) [see illustration opposite page 33, orig.] which begins at the chimney (1) and goes diagonally to the left. The party turned back at this point. During the same year, the famous Munich alpinists

reached approximately the same point, but their attempt was also unsuccessful.

The French alpinist Layninger came to Bulgaria in the summer of 1938. With a party of Bulgarian alpinists, he made an unsuccessful attempt to climb this wall. Later the same year an Italian alpine expedition, led by Austrian alpine guides, came to Bulgaria. In the course of fifteen days, they made several unsuccessful attempts to climb the wall.

Thus for four or five years the wall defied the attempts of the best Bulgarian alpinists and of foreign masters of the sport to climb it. Bulgarian and foreign climbers began to consider this wall unscalable. This, however, did not decrease the efforts of Bulgarian mountaineers to attain this peak. The first unsuccessful attempts and the supposed "inaccessibility" of the wall resulted in a mobilization of all the powers of Bulgarian alpinists. They worked perseveringly to improve their mountaineering abilities.

On 20 August 1938, after a twenty day period of preparation, two members of the "Rilski Turist" Hiking Society in Samokov, Konstantin Savadzhiev and Georgi Stoimenov, determined to attempt the ascent of the Mal'ovitza Peak's "unscalable" wall. At nine in the morning on the twentyfirst they arrived at the foot of the peak and established a base above the Mal'ovishki Lakes. About noon they prepared for the climb, studying the route for the ascent for the last time. After four hours of difficult climbing, they had climbed about 60 m from the foot of the wall and had reached the lower traverse. At this point (2) the perpendicular patches of rock begin. The heavy supplies were left here (29 to 30 kg of pitons, snap-rings and other equipment), and the party descended to spend the night at the base. Thus time was gained for the assault on the most difficult part of the wall.

The following morning -- August 22 -- at six thirty, the two climbers who had been waiting impatiently for the warmth of sunrise after an uncomfortable night near the lake, continued the climb which they had begun the day before. They reached the grasscovered traverse with ease and speed. Above that point stretched a smooth, cold rock surface, covered with lichen and moss but with no visible handholds or crevices for pitons. After two hours' scanning and feeling beneath the lichen and moss, the climbers discovered one crack in the rock where a piton could be driven. This they secured, and to it they attached a rope ladder. K. Savadzhiev, the leader, slowly and with perseverance drove piton after piton above this point into the various cracks in the rock, slipping and nearly falling several times because of the moss and lichen which crumbled beneath his feet. After a harrowing twelve hour assault on the rock, without any nourishment or even a drop of water, the two alpinists reached the center of the rock face -- a large concave recess which they named "The Cabin". There they rested and ate. After another half hour's climb, at exactly seven in the evening, they reached a narrow, grass covered horizontal ledge several meters to the right and above the recess (3) [see illustration opposite page 33, orig.]. There they spent the night, having climbed about 120 m of the rock face. It would have been impossible to turn back then. Securely roped to the pitons they had driven into the ledge, they slept on the ledge (X) [see illustration opposite page 33, orig.]. Some rain fell during the night, but at six o'clock on the morning of 23 August, the clouds began to disperse. A half an hour later, the two climbers decided to continue the ascent. Above them extended a great overhang. They had to negotiate the crumbling sides of this overhang, the least solid part of the entire rock face. It took them three hours of struggling to climb seven m. Finally they emerged above the

overhang at the Orlovo Gnezdo site (4) \int see illustration opposite page 33, orig. \int , to the left of which there is a small, inclined grass covered ledge. From it they worked diagonally along a 30 cm wide rocky traverse covered with grass for several meters. They found themselves faced with a smooth, perpendicular wall about two m high, which they managed to surmount after several attempts. From that point they climbed to a point below the chimney which reaches to the top of the peak. Climbing the chimney, they reached the upper portion, where there is an overhang. The leader's first attempt to negotiate the overhang was a failure, but a second try succeeded. At exactly two o'clock in the afternoon, K. Savadzhiev gathered up the rope by which the team had been linked for thirtysix hours. A moment later, the conquerors of the Mal'ovitsa Peak, exhausted but with tears of joy in their eyes, clasped hands with the last remnants of their strength...As they gazed down over the precipice, their faces reflected the happy satisfaction which is the modest reward of every victory achieved in the mountains.

For some years after its first conquest, the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Wall went unchallenged. No one dared to risk a new assault on Triugulnika.

It was not until 26 July 1948 that this writer and Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov repeated this climb, in honor of the tenth anniversary of the first ascent of the wall. During this climb, the system of alternating leaders was first used in Bulgaria. The northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak was scaled for the second time under moist and variable weather conditions. This time the ascent took only six hours.

The wall was first scaled by a woman in 1950. She was Alpine Instructor Diana Petkova. Master of Sports Encho Petkov was her climbing partner.

In recognition of the great importance of alpinism, the Supreme Committee on Physical Culture and Sports established the Central Alpine Camp beneath Mal'ovitsa Peak in the Rila Mountains in 1952. On the fifteenth of August of that same year, the first group ascent of the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa was effected under the leadership of this writer and eight other instructors from the camp.

The foot of the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak is easy to reach. A rocky slab leads to it from the uppermost Mal'ovishko Lake. At the foot of the wall itself there is a steep gravel and grass covered approach a few meters long. It is usually covered with snow until late in the summer, and when the drifts are deep, the first few meters of the rock face are covered. It is at this point that climbers usually stop for roping. The first rocky patches on the wall are composed of solid, light colored granite in which there are convenient handholds and footholds. The wall can be attacked via three easy rock crevices which lead from the foot of the wall to the beginning of a slightly sloped ledge covered with short deciduous grass, where they merge. This ledge widens gradually as it becomes steeper, and it penetrates the wall to about 20 m depth, where it ends in a large chimney (1). The ascent thus far is made with a loose line, and the climbers need not lose sight of each other. It is not difficult to ensure complete safety here. The chimney is about 1 m wide, and climbing it is not difficult. Getting out at the top, however, presents problems, since it narrows toward the upper end and contains certain overhangs. It was at this point that the early unsuccessful expeditions were turned back. The "Kaminite" alternate route from this point on was mapped in 1954 and actually negotiated in 1955 (see description of the "Keminite" variation on page 39 original).

The route continues from the chimney (1) on a loose line, with the climbers in partial view of each other, diagonally to the left across a broad, grass covered traverse with a stairstep formation in several places. There is a large rocky protuberance about ten meters across the traverse from the chimney. It can be used as a natural safety base. This traverse gives easy access (usually one piton suffices) to a horizontal grassy ledge (2) which is located at the foot of a rocky ridge. The platform has rock projections about which safety lines can be belayed. Teams should wait here until the group has been consolidated. The area between (1) and (2) is known as "the lower traverse."

Above the ledge there is a perpendicular rock face of solid granite which must be surmounted. There are patches with excellent handholds and cracks for driving large pitons for ascent en rappel. After a climb of 10 m, a rock overhang is encountered. A piton for en rappel climbing of average size should be driven to the right of this overhang to facilitate surmounting it and to provide an additional safety measure. Above this overhang there is a small rocky platform covered with soil and grass. From it another and broader granite face 7 to 8 m high extends upward. It has a convenient crack which serves as a foothold. It too can be climbed by means of wooden pitons. It ends in a small overhang which is even more difficult than the first. There is a small rocky ledge above it, also covered with tufts of grass. To the right of this ledge there are good belaying points for safety ropes, and space enough for a three man team to gather. Above this ledge stretches the third high pitch, which is about 15 m. The granite here is less solid, since it is strongly pegmatized. The cracks gradually disappear toward the upper part of it. There is a small overhang to be negotiated before the ledge at the top of this face can be reached. It is more difficult than the previous two,

since there are no cracks to be found, and the rock crumbles away at some points. The small but convenient rocky ledge above it is covered with tufts of grass. This is a good point for the belaying of safety ropes, and the team should be consolidated here before progressing further. Five to six pitons must be used to reach this ledge. From the traverse (2) to this ledge the team members are in full sight of each other.

The route continues diagonally to the right above this ledge across an easy overhang to a perpendicular slab of solid granite a few meters wide. It has a convenient diagonal crack which can be used for handholds and driving pitons. Above this point the solid granite disappears. It is replaced by pure or mixed patches of biotite schists, schisted gneiss, pegmatite and borders of solid granite. From the slab there is a steep pitch of several meters. It is a passage of grass and rock, above which there is a small overhang. This must be negotiated to emerge in a rocky groove which is perpendicular, several meters high, and one meter wide. Care must be taken here, as the rock, due to its varied structure, is not very solid. The groove is easily climbed using chimney techniques. Above and to the right of the groove there is a small, grass covered ledge from which another broad, steeply inclined groove rises. This ledge can be reached by using three to four pitons. To the right of it there is a good rope belaying point. It is advisable for two man teams to consolidate here, even though they may have free rope available and the groove above is an easy climb. This is because from this point the safety man can keep his partner in full view. If the party consists of three climbers, the leader and center man should wait for the last member at this point. Once the climbers are in the crevice, full visibility is not possible, because of the many rock

projections and cavities, and the many friction points make the handling of the ropes difficult. When the party emerges on the grass covered ledge above this groove, the most difficult part of the lower half of the ascent of the wall is behind them.

A grass covered crevice which is steeply inclined extends above this ledge. It is about 15 m high and quite broad. It forms a large arched cavity in the rock. Its upper part narrows into a 1 to 2 m high chimney above which there is a great overhang called "Kabinata" (3). This crevice can be climbed on a loose line.

There is an aluminum box at the Kabinata site which contains a notation of all the ascents which have been made, and a roster on which all climbers who reach this point sign their names. This site is located in the center of the face of the wall, about 100 m from the bottom.

To the right of the Kabinata site, a step-like path of 5 to 6 m in length leads diagonally to a grass covered horizontal traverse (X). It is 4 to 5 m long and 1 m wide.

The most easily crumbled part of the wall, and the most difficult pitch along the upper half of the wall, extends upward to the left of the grassy traverse. It consists of a great overhang made up of step-like blocks of granite, schists, gneiss, biotite schists and pegmatite interspersed with chunks of soil and grass, and having a diameter of about 20 m. It can only be surmounted by making a half circle around it to circumvent the least solid parts of it. Climbers must move very carefully along this segment of the route, keeping close to the rock surface so as to have possible handholds if crumbling does occur. In gripping outcroppings of rock weight must not be allowed to pull outward or downward. Force should rather be exerted against the direction in which it is feared that they may give way. There are places above the

grassy traverse where one or two pitons can be driven to lessen the risk of negotiating the six to seven m overhang. Above this overhang extends the most easily disintegrated part of the rock face. Feldspar predominates in its composition. There are fewer suitable spots here for driving pitons, although this is not entirely impossible. Pitons should be driven in various spots as a safety measure, but because of the nature of the rock and the possibility that they may give way, they should not be counted upon to support functional weight. Only the greatest care and concentration in selecting and testing handgrips and footholds will guarantee the success of a crossing of this stretch. The most crumbled portion of this pitch can be avoided by keeping to the left of the main protuberance on the great overhang, and then bearing right for several meters over difficult terrain to the Orlovo Gnezdo site (4) located above the main protuberance of the overhang. It consists of a great cavity in the rock formed of easily disintegrating slabs of rock. Above and to the left of this site there is a convenient rocky ledge from which another rocky traverse extends diagonally, again to the left. There is a solidly driven piton on this ledge which was placed there by K. Savadzhiev, which serves as a belaying point for the safety lines. There is room for another piton as well, which can be driven to provide an increased safety factor. The leader and center man of a party of three should wait for the last man at this point. It is also recommended, if a two man team is making the ascent, that they rendezvous here. The most dangerous section of rock, from the point of view of crumbling, can be negotiated with all team members in full view of each other.

To the left of this rocky ledge a steep, narrow and rocky traverse called "The Rocky Traverse" or "The Upper Traverse" runs upward diagonally. It includes an overhang, and after 4 or 5 meters it becomes very narrow.

There is a piton at one point on this traverse placed there by K. Davadzhiev. It greatly facilitates the crossing of this stretch, particularly the rocky and perpendicular end of the traverse, which is several meters long. Beyond this there is a steep grass and rock passage (5) [see illustration opposite page 33, orig.]. In crossing this particular attention must be paid to the selection of hand and footholds, since most of these are smooth and there is a danger of slipping, while the great overhang tends to push the body outward. The rocky and grassy slope beyond this stretch can be covered on a loose line as far as a large outcropping of rock 30 m along, which can serve as a belaying point. The rock becomes more solid again (grey granite) beyond this point. The members of the party can keep each other in partial view.

Beyond the outcropping of rock, one can climb about 10 m on a loose line along a steep and grass covered passage to the foot of the great chimney which leads to the summit.

There is another chimney to the left of this one, which also leads diagonally to the summit. If necessary, it can easily be climbed with half a rope's length. One emerges on the eastern arete of the wall.

A piton should be placed at the base of the chimney. The chimney (1 m wide) is easy, despite the fact that it is perpendicular. However, there are solid hand and footholds, conveniently located, which greatly facilitate ascent. There is a rocky ledge about 15^m/above the base of the chimney which would be a suitable location for a piton. There is an overhang to the left of and above this ledge, beneath which a solid piton should be placed to aid in surmounting it.

Above the overhang the chimney widens into a passage with a gradual and step-like floor. This can be climbed on a loose line. The climbers emerge on the Mal'ovitsa summit arete. The climbers have full view of each other during the ascent of the chimney.

The rocky saddle in which the Mal'ovishki corridor ends can be reached by following along this rocky but gradually sloped arete. Several rope lengths farther along, the highest part of the Mal'ovitsa Peak, where the pyramid marker stands, is reached.

The rocky part of the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak is 200 m high, and the overall height from the base of the wall to the highest point on the summit is 300 m. The route along the wall which we have described is eight rope lengths long. The ascent along the fifth and sixth rope lengths covers crumbling patches, while the others cover for the most part solid granite patches.

This ascent may be made by a team of two or by a party of three climbers. The climb takes from 4 to 6 hours, depending on the number in the party, and the members of the group have good visibility of the others most of the time.

The northeastern wall of the Mal'ovitsa Peak is one of the most difficult northern faces in Bulgaria. It is classified 5 A in difficulty.

Heavy clothing is recommended for this ascent, as the rock wall is damp. There is a danger of rock slides and crumbling stone, particularly in the soft rock area in the central sector near Orlovo Gnezdo site.

The "Kaminite" Variation

Two Bulgarian alpinists who were members of the "Lokomotiv" DSO in Sofia, Nikola Korchev, the leader, and Mikhail Uglyarov, made a successful ascent via a variation on the "classical route" up Triugulnika on a

climb undertaken on the occasion of Bulgarian Railroadmen's Day -- 29 July 1954. On this ascent (---) they emerged from the two lower chimneys below the center of the face of the wall, and then proceeded along the "classical route."

The following year, on 10 and 11 September, Nikola Korchev, leader, and Instructor Radko Breyanov made assucessful ascent following another variation of the route, which served to supplement the first. Thus the "Kaminite" variation was established. This pair began their climb at eight o'clock on the morning of 10 September. By six that evening they had reached the "ceiling" below the center of the wall (3), from which point they later continued to the summit via the upper portion of the "classical route." The following morning, 11 September, they continued their ascent toward the northwestern arete of Triugulnika, and thus to the summit

The variation begins at the "Lower Chimney" (1), which can be reached in a rope's length from the foot of the wall. This chimney is 12 m high and too wide to be climbed by the usual back-and-knee technique. In its lower part, there is on the right a wide crevice which is actually a small secondary chimney. This smaller chimney is large enough to allow a climber's body to enter, but it is extremely awkward to climb. However, by climbing the wall next to this secondary crevice, it is possible to place a vertical piton at the center of the chimney on this side. From the middle of the main chimney, the ascent is easiest on the left side. The climber emerges above the chimney on a small ledge. From this point, it is necessary to shift to the right, where there are numerous small handholds, but almost no surfaces which the feet can grip, to the second chimney. The rock thus far is yellowish, much eroded, crumbly, and completely perpendicular. The second chimney has solid, parallel

walls. It can easily be climbed by the back-and-knee method. It culminates in two "eagle's nests," one above the other. The upper one has a great overhang, to the left of which a deep, zigzagging crack begins. It is much eroded and crumbles badly. To reach this crack the leader must mount en rappel on his partner's shoulders, and ease himself into a rope sling suspended from a large rappel piton. This piton is a permanent fixture at this location. Only pitons of 25 to 35cm can safely be used in this crack. The crack runs upward 3 m, and since it forms part of an overhang, it can only be negotiated by means of the double rope sling. The crack disappears into the overhang, for which reason it is necessary to shift to the left, by means of a rope ladder, to a small cranny, from which one can emerge, by using the numerous small handholds, into a grass covered ledge from which the third chimney rises.

The third chimney appears to be a long one when seen from a distance. It is in fact divided into three sections, very different in structure. The walls of the first section are broken by numerous horizontal and vertical cracks. It is, however, very difficult to drive pitons into them, as pieces of rock are easily dislodged by the first blows of the hammer. Exit is effected by the right wall, where a piton is placed to help the climber shift upward and to the left into the next section of the chimney. This is a smaller passage, and its left wall is covered with mica. Its right wall contains cracks in which pitons can be placed. It is then necessary to shift to the right again to reach the third section of the chimney, which is accessible via an inclined slab of rock. This chimney has suitable locations for the placing of several solid pitons to ensure safety. The upper part of this chimney narrows to a wide crack which merges into a triangular

shaped, perpendicular grass covered passage. The slab of rock on its left offers the opportunity for driving a horizontal piton. There are only insecure handholds here, and it sometimes is necessary to grasp the grass tufts or the ground itself. Above this stretch there is a ledge just beneath the center of (3) the "classical route" (where the two routes join). The ascent continues from this ledge along the "classical route."

To the right of this ledge is the "ceiling," which is located above a great projection. On the left wall it is possible to drive one horizontal piton. In the center of the ceiling, between it and the center of the slab of schist, a large rappel piton has been driven. This projection can be crossed by means of a double line and a rope ladder. It is necessary to attach a line to the upper piton and to be raised while suspended in the air. The fact that there are few cracks or handholds on the ceiling or beneath it make negotiating it an extremely difficult process. Special equipment for just such a situation is necessary for this maneuver.

To the right of this overhang an entirely perpendicular area projects upward. Ten meters below this point the slab disappears into an overhang, beneath which the beginnings of the wall are to be seen. By following the easily visible handholds for three or four meters to the right, the edge of this slab can be reached. From it one must descent diagonally about 6 m to a small balcony shaped protuberance. There are convenient cracks here for the driving of pitons. The route continues 12 to 15 m upward and to the right along the wall, to a grass covered balcony, just above which there is an overhang which projects about half a m. This balcony is a narrow one. There is a deep crack between the inner wall and the overhang, which serves as a handhold. The balcony widens to the right and continues as a terrace for 10 to 12 m.

Five to six meters along the balcony an arrow has been scratched into the wall, pointing to a small, deep square hole above it, in which there is a written record of the first ascent via this route and the names of the members of the party.

A perpendicular wall 10 to 12 m high rises at the end of the terrace-like balcony formation. The route continues over a small overhang and then across the northwestern arete of Triugulnika. Sixty m upward, the point at the top of Triugulnika where the "classical route" ends is reached. The final (upper) portion of this variation of the route is comparatively easy, despite the fact that there are perpendicular patches and small overhangs. The hand and footholds, however, are convenient and secure.

The Ushite Peaks

The two small peaks which rise from the western end of the Mal'ovo Plain are called the Ushite Peaks (2560 m). Their distinctive formation [Ushite means "the ears" in Bulgarian] can be seen from afar. The sides of these peaks drop off steeply to the Mala Urdina River and form the northern boundary of this river valley. They can be clearly seen from the valley. The western peak is Golyamo Ukho, which is arresting to the eye because of its perpendicular wall. To the east of it rises Malko Ukho, which is used as a training area because there are ascents of varying difficulty to be made there.

The southwestern wall of Golyamo Ukho was first climbed on 15 October 1949 by Senior Instructor Georgi Atanasov, leader, and the Czech alpinist Vladimir Prokhaska. The ascent took five and a half hours under favorable atmospheric conditions.

The southern wall of Ushite Peak was first climbed in winter on 28 April 1955 by Senior Alpine Instructors Borislav Marinov, Andrey Mirchev and Instructors Krustyu Aleksiev and Stefan Evstatiev of the VKFS Central Alpine Camp. They began their climb at 8 in the morning and finished at 4 in the afternoon, having had favorable and sunny weather.

The wall of Golyamo Ukho faces southwest and is composed of many varieties of rock formation. The lower part of the wall is solid granite, becoming softer and having an increasing tendency to crumble higher up: it is schistlike in the center, and mixed on the upper part of the wall -- schists intermixed with pegmatite.

The route to be followed for the ascent of the southwestern wall of the Ushite Peaks is clearly marked. Beneath the wall there is a large block of granite interrupted in some places by grass covered terraces. The climb starts along a broad, cone shaped opening in the wall which is about ten meters long and cuts deep into the rock. The soil covered floor of the crevice can be followed on a free line to the rocky foot of a broad chimney which is slightly inclined to the right. This leads about 15 m to a rocky slab which blocks the opening. It serves as a convenient belaying point for safety ropes and as a point where the party can be consolidated. The chimney narrows gradually, becoming difficult to ascend. The ascent can also be made by using pitons up the right side of the exterior of the chimney, but this route is not recommended. (1) [See illustration opposite page 40 orig.].

After the upper part of the chimney has been negotiated, there is an arete which must be crossed. Safety ropes may be belayed here and there is space for a party to wait for the last climbers. There is above the chimney a sloping grass covered groove ten meters long culminating in a large grass covered ledge (2) [See illustration opposite page 40, orig.] which is 2 to 4 m wide and about 15 m long. It is covered with alpine grass. The ascent thus far can be made on a loose line and by means of the convenient hand and footholds in the chimney. (There are no cracks in the rocks suitable for pitons.)

From this ledge (2) there is a traverse to the right across crumbling passages of biotite schist, which may be crossed if necessary to reach two holes in the rock through which one can emerge from the wall. (---)

This variation (---) was first used on 15 October 1949 by Czechoslovak alpinists Robert Binder and Dr. Imrikh Bialitski, who took turns as leader, on an ascent which took two hours under favorable weather conditions.

From the grass-covered ledge the usual route continues diagonally upwards to the left across step-like slabs of solid granite interspersed with small grass covered ledges. There are increasingly frequent rocky passages which also are increasingly difficult to negotiate.

The route continues over diagonal traverses and climbs of granite pitches of average difficulty, of biotite schist and schist gneiss. There are convenient hand and footholds. There are no cracks in the rocks but a few pitons, if carefully driven in, can be secured. At the end of this rope length, there is a broad and sloped rocky protrusion beyond which there is a convenient ledge (3) [See illustration opposite page 40, orig.] which is 1 m wide and 1 m long. A safety rope can be belayed here and the team consolidated.

A rocky protrusion several meters high is located near this ledge. A few m from the ledge a consistently broad (about 1 m) triangular chimney. It extends upward about 10 m, and the rock at its bottom tends to crumble. There are no cracks in which pitons could be driven. However, in both sides, particularly the right one, there are solid hand and footholds. This chimney can be climbed on a loose line. There is a danger of crumbling rock. Great care should be taken, and every hold tested carefully before a step forward is made.

The upper part of this chimney widens gradually and for several meters becomes a steeply sloped rock and grass covered incline patch of solid grey granite covered with alpine grass. There are convenient hand and foot holds and projections where safety lines can be belayed (4) [See illustration opposite page 40, orig.]. Above this mixed surface there is a rocky groove a few meters long above which the climb can be continued on a free line across easy, step-like grass and rock covered areas. 50 to 60 farther along, the climbers emerge on the summit of Golyamo Ukho (the western peak).

The two final rope lengths are taken to the left, if the more difficult and rocky stretches are preferred.

The highest summit of the Ushite Peaks -- Golyamo Ukho -- is 2560 m high. The wall is about 120 m high. It can be climbed in seven to eight standard alpine rope lengths.

The climbers have an excellent view of each other during the entire climb. Parties of two or three climbers can make this ascent.

Four to five pitons of average size of the various types and as many snap rings should be carried on this ascent. The characteristic feature of this wall is that most of the cracks have been filled.

The southwestern wall of the Ushite Peaks can be climbed in two hours and is classified 3 B in difficulty.

The most convenient starting point for the Ushite Peaks is the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut, one hour's hike from the wall.

During the ascent of the southwestern wall of the Ushite Peaks there is a beautiful view to be seen -- the Urdina valley with the Urdini Lakes, the Damga, Polichite and Kabul Peaks, and the Sedemte Rila Lakes.

Elenin Peak

The rocky peak which rises to the northeast of the Rila Monastery is Elenin Peak (2652 m). It is located in the southern fold of the ridge, between Mal'ovitsa Peak on the northwest and the rocky arete of Petlita Peak on the east. This peak is directly linked with Mal'ovitsa Peak. Its grandiose and terrifying 250 m wall faces southeast. Elenin Peak attracts the attention of the visitors to the Rila Monastery, and is frequently mistaken for Mal'ovitsa Peak. The continuation of the elongated ridge of Mal'ovitsa Peak forms Elenin Peak. Its northern side, by which it is connected to the Mal'ovitsa Peak ridge, is slightly lower than the others, so that from afar it appears to be the southern face of Mal'ovitsa Peak. To the east and south its walls drop off perpendicularly to the deep valley of the Rilska River, while the western wall descends to the Ochovo ravine.

The name of this peak is frequently erroneously associated with a legend having to do with a maiden named Elena. The peak's real name is Eleni Peak. It comes from the name of its one time residents -- the deer, whole herds of which were formerly found herabouts. There are no deer to be found here now. The name Elenin (deer) Peak, a euphonious one, has recently become popular, whatever its origin is thought to be.

This peak is most accessible from the north. The ascent of its perpendicular southern, eastern or western wall requires alpine equipment. Since the earliest eras of Bulgarian mountaineering there have been attempts to climb these walls.

The Southern Wall of Elenin Peak

The southern wall of Elenin Peak is 250 m high. It extends from the western arete of the peak to the large, rocky chimney on the east. It is composed exclusively of granite. Its easternmost portion is slablike in nature, and to the west it slopes off gradually, and patches of grass begin

to predominate. This is particularly to be noted near the base of its western portion (about 100 m), which consists of rocky patches covered with grass and occasional rocky ledges. On the upper part of the wall, rocky passages predominate, and the wall ends in such a passage.

On 16 and 17 July 1935 a group of BAK members including Meritorious Physical Culture Worker Gancho Ignatiev and S. Shlesinger made several climbs in the Mal'ovitsa sector of the Rila Mountains, including the first successful ascent of the southern wall of Elenin Peak. They began on the westernmost, grass covered portion of the wall and reached a point some ten meters from the marker at the summit. Sixteen rock pitons were used, and the ascent took about $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The team used two alpine ropes.

In October 1949 -- the promotion month for Bulgarian alpinism -- the alpine section of the "Akademik" DSO was host to six Czechoslovakian alpine students. They were shown around the Mal'ovitsa sector of the Rila Mountains, and, with Bulgarian alpinists, made several climbs on the walls of Elenin Peak so that they could compare experiences.

On 13 October this writer, with Czechoslovak alpinists Yan Mazachek and Hugo Pavlovski, undertook the first ascent of the eastern (right hand) part of the southern wall of Elenin Peak. We had favorable weather, and set out along an unmarked route. The ascent took us three hours, and several rock pitons as well as eight rope lengths were used. That same day, Instructor Vladimir Lobodin, the team leader, and the Czechoslovak alpinist Vladimir Prokhaska made the first ascent of the central part of southern wall of Elenin Peak. The climb took two hours. Only a few pitons were needed to cover the easy grass and rock covered passages, and seven rope lengths were used.

In October 1950 the first group ascent of left (western) side of the southern wall of Elenin Peak was undertaken for training purposes by students in the course for beginning alpinists organized by the RSA and the VKFS. All the possible routes along this wall were attempted.

The southern wall of Elenin Peak has no clearly marked routes. There are many possible variations, of which the longest and most difficult are those across the eastern sector of the wall. The longest routes take a maximum of ten rope lengths, and require the utilization of many solid granite hand and footholds. The ascent takes two hours at the most. The right hand part of the wall has many filled rock cracks and convex holds. There are excellent sites for belaying safety ropes.

This ascent can be made with all members of a party in full view of the others, and it is classified 3 A in difficulty.

The Eastern Wall of Elenin Peak

This wall extends from the northeastern arete of the peak and ends at the large rock chimney along which the first ascent of this wall was made. This is now known as the "classical route." This wall faces southeast. It is composed of granite, changing to granite gneiss on the southwestern part of the wall. There are grasscovered ledges and many mixed passages of grass and rock, and the wall is about 180 m high. There are several easy ascents along this wall.

The Classical Route (I).

[See illustration opposite page 40, orig.] This route, which follows the large chimney deeply set in the left portion of the eastern wall, is clearly marked. This chimney has long attracted the attention of Bulgarian alpinists as the easiest point of access up the wall, because this route as a whole is the most difficult one on the entire eastern wall of the peak. The routes which were marked out to the right of it later on are easier ones, but this route remains the most popular one.

The first and unsuccessful attempt to climb the eastern wall of Elenin Peak was made by BAK members Engineer Yordan Yordanov, leader, Vladimir Zegorov and Engineer Rudi Davidov in August 1936. They started for the chimney [located above the number 3 on the illustration opposite page 48, orig.] in the center part of the wall, but after a few rope lengths were forced to turn back.

That same team made two further attempts to climb the wall by this route in 1937, but they got only half way -- to the difficult overhand (X) [see illustration opposite page 48, orig.] where the chimney ends. They were forced to turn back there, and abandon the attempt. The team left a memorandum describing the route taken, the date and a notation of the other attempts made to climb it in the chimney.

On 8 October of the following year BAK members Konstantin Savadzhiev, team leader, Ivan Shekhtov and Georgi Tsenev climbed the wall via the "classical route." They found the memorandum which had been placed carefully in a cigarette box in a crack in the rocks high in the chimney at the point where their predecessors had turned back. They began the ascent at 11 A.M. and completed it at 4 P.M., under exceptionally poor atmospheric conditions.

The first winter ascent of the wall via the "classical route" was made on 6 March 1955 by alpinists of the "Lokomotiv" DSO in Sofia. Nikola Korchev was the team leader, and Radko Breyanov was his partner. They began the ascent at 10 A.M. in cloudy and windy weather and completed it seven hours later, at 5 P.M. The team had the greatest difficulty in climbing the upper chimney, which was entirely covered with ice.

The "classical route" begins at a sloped rocky groove of average difficulty along which the ascent can be made on a free line. In this manner the climbers must move diagonally to the left about 10 m. This

grove merges gradually into a mixed rock and grass covered traverse (1) [see illustration opposite page 48, orig.] which is 20 m long and which runs diagonally upward toward another rocky groove. This groove cuts into the surface of the wall but is rather shallow. The central part of the rocky grass traverse is cut across by 5 to 6 m rock passages, beyond which it turns into a protected and grass covered groove leading to a small chimney (2) [see illustration opposite page 48, orig.]. The ascent to this small chimney is made via a free line, and climbers have a clear view of each other. A few pitons are needed. The bottom of the small chimney is equipped with projections for belaying safety ropes and for consolidating the party.

The small chimney is 5 to 6 m high. The ascent along its left side which has as its upper portion a conveniently sloped arete formed by merged rock is the easiest route. The chimney leads up into a step-like groove bottom covered with grass and blocks of rock, which is quite protected. Some 10 m along, the floor of the groove curves upward to become a rocky passage two meters high which can be climbed, using the chimney technique, to reach a large cavity in the rock called "The Nest" (3) [see illustration opposite page 48, orig.]. It goes deep into the rock, and it is above this that the upper chimney rises. A few pitons are needed between the small chimney and "The Nest." During this climb the team members are in partial sight of each other (it was at this point that the unsuccessful 1936 and 1937 attempts were turned back). The upper part of the 10 m chimney rising above "The Nest" ends in an overhang of average difficulty. The chimney can easily be climbed if three to four rock pitons are used, as far as the overhang (X). The overhang can be negotiated as follows:

a) After climbing onto the overhand (X), there is a grass covered crevice which leads to the top; or

b) One can climb about 10 m across a difficult pitch, using 2 to 3 pitons, and emerge in a rocky groove whose floor is covered with grass. This can be followed on a free rope to reach a large, rocky crevice which, 30 m along, emerges on the summit;

c) After negotiating the overhang by the left route (X), the climb can be continued by keeping to the even farther left. This leads to the rocky arete which mounts easily to the summit.

In all three cases, the chimney and overhang are attained via "The Nest," and the climbers have the other members in sight a part of the time. The route then follows the open face of the peak, on which there are convenient ledges for belaying safety ropes and consolidating the party to the right of the jagged and rocky arete.

Thirty m above these ledges, which distance can be climbed on a loose line, the route continues along the broad, step formation of the ridge of the arete to the rocky, grass covered ridge of the summit. The entire party can then continue simultaneously the 50 or 60 m to the highest point on the peak.

During the climb via the "classical route" the members of the party have each other in full sight a part of the time. This route has been laid out over the solid granite sectors and is about 8 rope lengths long. The wall itself is about 120 m high, and 7 to 8 pitons as well as as many snap rings are needed. It takes one hour to make the climb. This is a comfortable climb for teams composed of two or three climbers.

The "classical route" is classified 3 B in difficulty.

To the right of the "classical route" up the eastern wall of Elenin Peak, a new route (II) [see illustration opposite page 48, orig.] was marked out by climbers Borislav Romanov, leader, and Boycho Boychev in

September 1950, but it is not a precisely delineated route. It crosses rocky and slablike stretches. It is an exposed route, and team members can keep each other in sight at all times. A team of two or three climbers is a suitable party for this ascent. It takes about one hour, and crosses easy rocky, or mixed rock and grass, stretches. This route is classified 3 A in difficulty.'

To the left of the northeastern arete of the wall a new route was established on 1 September 1952 by this writer and TsAL (Tsentralen alpiski lager, Central Alpine Camp) Instructors Kiril Petrov, leader, and Milko Chernev. This route (III) [see illustration opposite page 48, orig.] is one of about the same difficulty as that (II) located to the right of the "classical route."

The Northeastern Arete (IV)

[See illustration opposite page 48, orig.]. On 13 October 1949 Senior Instructor Andrey Todorov, leader, and Czechoslovak alpinists Robert Binder and Dr. Imrikh Biyalitski laid out a new route along the northeastern arete of the eastern wall of Elenin Peak. They made the climb in about 3½ hours in exceptionally good weather (3 P.M. to 6:30 P.M.).

The lower part of the arete is comparatively easy to traverse. There are two ways of emerging at the center portion (a and b) [see illustration opposite page 48, orig.]. Gradually the climb becomes more difficult, and the upper portion of the arete is the hardest to traverse. About 10 rock pitons and as many snap rings were used by these climbers. A rope ladder was employed in overcoming the last and uppermost overhang. This route covers solid granite passages, and takes sixth standard rope lengths.

It is classified 3 B in difficulty.

In general, the routes along the eastern wall of Elenin Peak are easy ones. All the variations and combinations which have been developed can be negotiated with a maximum of eight rope lengths. Eight rock pitons will suffice for this climb, which is for the most part over solid granite passages. This accounts for the ease with which this wall can be scaled. Except for the "classical route" and the route across the arete, these routes provide team members with full view of the other members of the party. The ascent of this wall takes from one to two hours.

The Western Wall of Elenin Peak

This wall rises from the rocky southern arete, covers the western side of the peak, and drops off into the Ochovo ravine. It is between 40 and 50 m high. Its longest part is the rocky southern arete, about six rope lengths. This arete is crossed at several points by wide, grass covered ledges (almost one for each rope length, particularly along the lower stretches). It can be negotiated with a free line.

From the rocky arete to the north, several routes have been traced over clearly marked rocky cavities. The routes gradually converge on the northernmost part of the wall.

All of the routes across the western wall of Elenin Peak lie along solid granite, which has, however, many cavities and cracks. Two standard rope lengths are needed, and a few pitons. This ascent takes about half an hour.

This wall is often used in training beginning alpinists. It was so used in 1950, 1951, and 1952 and later years in connection with alpine courses for beginners organized by the republican alpine division and the Central Alpine Camp of the Supreme Committee on Physical Culture and Sports.

The most convenient starting point for climbs along the walls of Elenin Peak is the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut located an hour's walk from the eastern and southern walls and one and a half hour's hike from the western wall of the peak.

Climbers of the southern and western walls of the peak have a beautiful view of the valley of the Rilska River, beyond which can be seen the historic Rila Monastery with Tsarev Peak in the background, and another toward the western and central Rila Mountains and the Brichebor sector.

Orlovets Peak

The Mal'ovitsa valley is bounded on the left by the grandiose and rounded form of a peak. The left side of the rocky dome in which this peak culminates has the natural shape of an eagle's head, and for this reason the mountaineers have given this peak the beautiful name Orlovets [the Bulgarian word "orel" means "eagle"] (2652 m). It rises to the left of the rocky Petlita arete, ending at the small pass which separates it from the inaccessible Zliya Zub Peak,

The principal face of Orlovets Peak has a northwestern exposure. Its lower parts are composed of granite and amphibolite, with two belts of biotite schist running across them. These are a continuation of the neighboring western and rocky Petlita arete.

This grandiose peak is one of the most beautiful in the Mal'ovitsa valley, and one which has attracted the attention of Bulgarian alpinists and mountaineers since the earliest years of Bulgarian mountain climbing as a sport.

On 20 June 1935, several Bulgarian climbers, along with the German alpinists Hermann Hund and Toni Wideman, undertook the first attempt to ascend the northwestern wall of Orlovets Peak. They completed the climb in a comparatively short time -- 2 ½ hours.

The first ascent of this wall by a group was made on 7 August 1952 by instructors at the Central Alpine Camp. The wall was scaled in three hours in excellent weather, under the leadership of this writer (4 P.M. to 7 P.M.).

The northwestern wall of Orlovets Peak begins at the southeastern end of the upper terrace of the Mal'ovitsa valley and extends to the rocky dome of the peak. The upper and lower parts of the wall are clearly delineated.

The lower part of the wall, the easier one to climb, begins with a large moraine which merges gradually into a rock heap. From this short rocky stretches, crossed here and there by grassy ledges, reach upward. The ascent of this part of the wall can be made on a free rope by following along several chimney-like crevices. One emerges on the broad, slightly inclined grass and rock covered terrace which divides the wall into two parts (1) [see illustration opposite page 56, orig.]. Usually the ascent of this lower part of the wall is avoided by climbing the couloir to the right of it. This couloir is formed by the rocky arete of Petlite Peak and the side of Orlovets Peak. Thus it is possible to reach the broad rock and grass covered terrace (1) easily and rapidly. Above this terrace, which divides the wall, is the upper rocky dome-like part of the peak.

From the terrace, rocky slabs and grassy stretches extend upwards. This portion can be climbed on a free rope for about 30 m, where a convenient rock and grass traverse is encountered (2) [see illustration opposite page 56, orig.].

Above this traverse (2) the rocky dome in which the peak culminates (the most difficult part of the wall) is divided into an easier left sector and a more difficult right hand one. The left hand part is easier to climb -- there are numerous and varied alternate routes of ascent. To the far left there is a well-placed rocky protrusion which can be climbed with two rope lengths, bringing the party out on the top of the peak. Above this protrusion there are possible routes at intervals of 10, 15, and 20 m for further ascent. At the center of the wall there are fewer opportunities to ascend.

The right part of the wall, which slopes toward the rocky Petlite arete from the center, becomes increasingly difficult and smooth.

The "classical route" up the northwestern wall of Orlovets Peak crosses the center of the wall. It is a climb of 100 to 150 m, depending on the starting point. The route is not specifically delineated, and many variations, especially along the upper left portion of the wall, may be made. All these alternates bring the climbers to the marker at the summit.

This ascent can be made by parties of two or three climbers. Five to six rock pitons and as many snap rings should be carried. This climb covers very solid patches of granite in which there are numerous cracks as well as cavities, hand and footholds, and locations suitable for belaying safety ropes and consolidating a climbing party. The ascent takes 1 1/2 hours, during which the climbers have each other in full view.

~~Three to five lengths of rope are needed.~~

The climbs via the northwestern portion of Orlovets Peak are classified 3 A in difficulty.

This wall affords an excellent view of the Mal'ovitsa valley and the western parts of the Rila Mountains. From the peak one has a broad view of the entire Rila Mountain range.

The best starting point for climbs along this peak is the "Mal'ovista" tourist hut which is 45 minutes' hike from the wall.

Zliya Zub Peak

The name of this peak interests all those hearing it for the first time. Only those who know its name and location can distinguish it easily from the other peaks in the Mal'ovitsa sector. Entering the Mal'ovitsa valley, one could look in vain for this peak, for only those who are

curious enough to climb to the Mal'ovo field or go as far as the Elenni Lakes will be able to see a part of its peak's rocky dome emerging from behind the proud summit of Orlovets Peak. On approaching this peak and regarding its perpendicular walls, one understands why the Bulgarian Alpine Club members have given it this curious but suitable name [this Bulgarian name means "evil tooth"]. This peak does indeed resemble a tooth, but it is one of enormous dimensions. The perpendicular walls surrounding it make it very difficult of access and therefore "evil" to alpinists!

The ascent of the peak is usually begun from the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut. The upper reaches of the Mal'ovitsa River are followed to the upper terrace (the "second" terrace) at the end of the valley. From the beginning of the terrace a small footpath leads diagonally to the left of the river over slabs of rock. This path is hard to distinguish and in certain spots seems to disappear entirely. There are stone markers along it which lead to the mountain stream originating in the cirque which is surrounded by Orlovets, Zliya Zub, Lovnitsa and Kamilata Peaks. The "BAK" alpine shelter is located in this cirque, and is easily accessible. From the shelter one continues upward by traversing the northern foot of Orlovets Peak diagonally toward the steep crevice between Orlovets and Zliya Zub Peaks. This crevice is followed to the saddle of the ridge which links these two peaks. Then, circling the rocky dome of Zliya Zub Peak to the south, the most easily accessible part of the wall, the right arete of the southern, and shortest, wall, is encountered. It is at this point that the peak merges into the rocky arete which links it with Dvuglav, Iglata and Dyavolskite Igli Peaks.

The climbing of this 10 m or so high arete is easy. Usually an alpine rope is used to improvise a railing, but bolder alpinists sometimes climb it without a line, using only the solid hand and footholds.

The ascent is also sometimes made from the Partizanska meadow, from which it is easiest to make the climb along the Beliya crevice. The climb can also be made along the Dyavolskiya or Siniya crevices, but neither of these routes is recommended because of the danger of rock slides. Other teams prefer to climb to the pass between Orlovets and Zliya Zub Peaks (by crossing the rocky Petlita ridge and climbing Orlovets Peak) and proceed from that point to the ascent of Zliya Zub Peak. If atmospheric conditions are not favorable, the ascent of the peak from that side is difficult, particularly if the rock walls are moist or slippery with ice. Under such conditions alpine equipment is needed for ascent or descent via this route.

The ascent via the other walls of the peak always requires alpine techniques and equipment. It is for this reason that during the many years since the birth of Bulgarian mountaineering and the later development of Bulgarian alpinism, the perpendicular walls of Zliya Zub Peak have been used for the perfecting of climbers' alpine techniques. Since the earliest years of interest in this sport successful ascents of the perpendicular walls of this peak have been made, resulting in an added impulse to and belief in the possibility of the climbing of the still-unconquered alpine walls of Bulgaria.

Mal'ovitsa Peak's beautiful perpendicular walls and the inaccessible upper "tooth" of Zliya Zub Peak have been the sites at which Bulgarian alpine techniques have been perfected. From its earliest beginnings to the present time, Bulgarian alpinism has been closely linked with the name of this peak. In climbing the walls of Zliya Zub Peak, Bulgarian alpinists have demonstrated the best of alpine techniques.

The Southern Wall of Zliya Zub Peak

The most accessible approach to Zliya Zub Peak is its southern wall, which is also the lowest of the peak walls. It is composed of granite with schists mixed in with it in the lower portions, while on the left portion of the wall, pegmatite predominates. The base of the wall is about 30 m high and is composed entirely of rock. Above it there are steep grass covered stretches leading to the summit of the peak.

The easiest locality for climbing the peak from this side, and also the easiest part of the wall, is the eastern arete which is directly linked with a rocky arete which leads toward Dvuglav Peak.

The first winter ascent of the southern arete of Zliya Zub Peak was made on 28 April 1935 by BAK members Nikola Mironski, leader, E. Parasko, L. Genchev, V. Zagorov, B. Stoichkov, and Dr. L. Delcharov. They climbed in two parties with three members each. The classical route, the easiest of those leading up the peak, crosses this southern arete.

The climb via the classical route to the summit of Zliya Zub Peak starts at the small rocky saddle connecting Zliya Zub Peak with Dvuglav Peak via the Khalkata rock. Step-like blocks of rock lead to a grass covered ledge 4 to 5 m above the beginning of the climb. Above the ledge, 7 to 8 m of rocky and grassy patches leads to the grass covered ridge of the peak. The highest point (2650 m), indicated by a marker, is reached by following this grassy ridge.

There are other possible routes for the ascent of the southern wall of the peak to the left of the southern arete (...a) [see illustration opposite page 64, orig.]. Rocky paths which are not difficult lead about 30 m upwards to mixed rock and grass patches which lead to the summit of the peak.

To the right of the western arete of the peak there is another possible route of ascent up the southern wall. This lies over the most difficult rocky passages on this wall. Here too there are rocky and grass covered passages about 30 m from the bottom. By following these one emerges on the summit of the peak.

The southern wall of the Zliya Zub Peak was formerly a favorite training site for BAK members in winter.

The first group climb of this wall was made on 2 May 1948 by students in the Instructors Course in Alpinism under the leadership of Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski. This ascent was made under typical winter conditions when the southern wall was thoroughly frozen and heavy snow had fallen. The students, climbing in six teams, explored almost all the variations in the route possible during a heavy snow.

All the variations on the route across the southern wall of Zliya Zub Peak cover solid rocky territory. The portions of the wall farthest to the right are usually climbed on a free rope. The use of a few rock pitons is recommended for the ascent of the left hand portions. All team members have full view of each other during these climbs, and the longest variations take a maximum of half an hour.

The Western Arete of Zliya Zub Peak

This arete begins at the pass between the rocky domes of Zliya Zub and Orlovets Peaks. It is about 50 m long. It is composed of solid, light colored granite.

The first attempts at ascending Zliya Zub Peak were made along the western arete. At the beginning of August 1934 BAK members Rudi Davidov, Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski and Khari Khaimov attempted an ascent from the northwestern arete of Mal'ovitsa Peak along

the ridge leading to Lopushki Peak. They climbed Zliya Zub along the western arete (---) from the pass between Orlovets and Zliya Zub Peaks (ref. p. 61, orig.). The team climbed en rappel along the southern arete to the peak, and continued the following day to traverse the second part of the direct ridge between Lovnitsa Peak and Lopushki Peak.

The first group ascent of the western arete of Zliya Zub Peak for training purposes was made in May 1950 by students in the course in alpine techniques organized by the Republican Alpine Section at the VKFS under the leadership of Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov.

The ascent begins on the arete itself, crossing 10 or 12 m of it. After this point there is a small crevice in the rock which leads about 3 m into the southern wall. The route then goes 7 to 8 m directly upward, where it follows another crevice to the left to emerge again on the arete. From that point the summit is reached over relatively easy rock stretches.

This route covers solid granite areas of the arete, and climbers can keep each other in full view. It can usually be completed in half an hour. A few rock pitons are needed. The arete can be climbed by teams of two or three alpinists. This arete is classified 2 B in difficulty.

This arete is recommended as a training area for accustoming beginning climbers to heights prior to making higher climbs.

The Northern Wall of Zliya Zub Peak

To the southeast of the "BAK" alpine shelter rises the northern wall of Zliya Zub Peak. It begins at the northern arete of the peak and stretches to the western arete. It consists of granite of dark color and biotite schists. It varies in height, because to the far left, near the northern

arete, there is a grass and rock covered approach, by means of which, on one or two rope lengths over easy stretches interrupted by rocky ledges, one emerges at the summit of the peak. To the west the wall is higher -- up to 100 m -- and is more difficult to climb. This wall is interrupted at many points by broad terraces. It can be climbed with three to four rope lengths, after which one emerges at the summit of the peak.

The first ascent of the northern arete of Zliya Zub Peak was made on 19 July 1935. The climbers used a free rope and had excellent atmospheric conditions. The ascent took 1 hour. It was made by BAK members together with the visiting German alpinists Hermann Hund and Toni Wideman (. . .). Two days later, on 21 July of the same year, BAK members together with Hermann Hund, Toni Wideman and Toni Grayndel made the first ascent of the northern wall of the peak. They climbed via a route across the center of the wall, and the ascent took five hours (---). 25 pitons were used. The ascent of this face of the peak was thought at the time to be one of the most difficult ever made in Bulgaria.

The first group ascents of this wall were made in June 1951 by students in the Republican Course for Beginning Alpinists organized by the VKFS. These climbs were led and arranged by Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov (---).

There are not specifically delineated routes along the northern wall of Zliya Zub Peak. There are many variations possible, determining the procedures to be followed. Teams of two or three alpinists can conveniently undertake these climbs. Five to 6 rock pitons and as many pitons are necessary for the climb. Usually 3 to 4 lengths are needed to reach the summit, and the ascent takes a maximum of one hour. During the ascent all climbers have full view of each other.

This wall is classified 3 A in difficulty.

The western wall of Zliya Zub is considered to be one of the best locales for the training and study of groups of climbers in the Mal'ovitsa sector. This is because of the excellent visibility during the ascent.

The northern and southern walls of Zliya Zub Peak are particularly suitable for group ascents to the summit. The peak can only be reached by traversing the rocky sectors with alpine climbing equipment. These walls become exceptionally difficult to negotiate in winter. The training exercises in the utilization of complete alpine equipment should be started early in the spring.

The Southeastern Wall of Zliya Zub Peak

This wall rises perpendicular from the upper part of the floor of the Belya ravine to the highest point on the peak. It is about 300 m high. Its central portion is an overhang, which renders the ascent of it difficult. The wall is composed principally of granite; this rock predominates in its lower part, while toward the center it is increasingly mixed with pegmatite and porphyritic granite, especially in the region surrounding the two large overhangs in the center of the wall called "The Eyebrows" (HH) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.]. In some places biotite schists, which predominate in the entire dome sector of the peak, are to be seen. This variety in the petrographic structure of the wall is typical of walls with a southeastern or southern exposure. The ascent of these walls is comparatively difficult because of the many stretches on which the rock crumbles readily. One can draw a mental line from the top of the peak vertically down through the center of "The Eyebrows" (HH) to the bottom. This vertical line would clearly divide the wall into two halves: the left (southeastern) part of the wall, and the right (northeastern) part.

The "Varnikut" route follows along the northeastern part of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak. The "Slavyanskiya" route crosses the southeastern part of this wall. This first route was taken in the earliest attempt to climb the wall. The ascent was completed successfully and represented the conquest of one of the most difficult Bulgarian rock walls. The "Slavyanskiya" route was laid out later in an attempt to climb the wall as nearly as possible along the imaginary vertical line through its center from top to bottom.

The Varnikut Route (I).

[See illustration opposite page 72, orig.] This is the name given to the route marked out over the northeastern part of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak. This route's name reminds us of the many attempts over the years to conquer this wall which were rendered failures at the most crumblin portion -- that known as "Varnikut" (X) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.]. This readily cumbled and exceedingly difficult stretch partly accounts for the name of the peak as well as that of the route along the wall.

After the other two walls of Zliya Zub Peak had been conquered, two challenges faced Bulgarian alpinists -- the ascent of the northern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak and that of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak. The first challenge was met in the summer of 1938 after many attempts had been made by both Bulgarian and foreign alpinists. The second challenge remained. During 1936-1937, BAK members organized systematic attempts at the ascent, all of which were unsuccessful. In the summer of 1936, BAK members including Georgi Stoimenov, and in 1937 BAK members including Dr. Marin Petrov, made unsuccessful attempts, reaching the middle of the wall below the "Varnikut" (X) stretch, at which point they turned back. This difficult stretch of the wall is a serious hinderance to ascent.

After a lengthy study of the wall, Senior Instructors and Masters of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov, leader, and Mikhail Kotsev made a test ascent of the wall on 21 June 1947. They began their climb at 9 A.M. and reached the "Lower Traverse" (1) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.] in 3 hours. It was at this point that previous attempts to climb the wall had ended. This team investigated all possibilities of further ascent, but because of a lack of proper equipment, they left the wall via the "Lower Traverse," which leads to the Zliya Prelez Pass. This was one of the most serious studies made with a view to the eventual ascent of the wall.

After this research on the northeastern part of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak had been made, the same team began active training.

On 23 September 1947 they made a second attempt at the ascent. They started via the same route as they had taken on the first attempt. They reached the "Lower Traverse" easily (1), but because of the onset of a storm, were once again obliged to descend via the old route, the "Lower Traverse."

On the 25 of the same month, the team climbed to the "Varnikut" (X), from which the unconquered portion was attacked. After negotiating the "Varnikut" successfully, the team encountered the overhang above it. Overcoming this obstacle, they arrived successfully on the portion of the wall just below the summit (3) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.] at 4:40 P.M. -- they had been climbing for $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Because of poor weather, these climbers descended via the "Upper Traverse" (to the right of (3)).

On 26 September, after the rain had stopped, the team attacked the wall again, this time from the "Upper Traverse" (3) to complete the ascent along the portion of the wall located just below the summit of the peak. They climbed along the arete and the wall to reach the highest point of Zliya Zub Peak.

It took a total of 9½ hours for the climb along the entire route.

The second ascent via the "Varnikut" route was made about two years later. On 6 September 1949 Georgi Atanasov and Mladen Dolchinov undertook, in honor of fifth anniversary of the rebellion of 9 September, a climb via this route. They alternated as leader during the ascent.

They started along the "Varnikut" route, and reached the "Upper Traverse" (3). There they took an alternate route to the left (---) in order to emerge at the center of the wall. This second climb of consecutive portions of the wall was made without interruption in 11 hours. Atmospheric conditions were very poor -- high winds, snow and hail. The ascent was completed in total darkness.

The first group ascent of this wall was made on 8 September 1952 and was organized by instructors at the Central Alpine Camp. Eight instructors, under the leadership of this writer, made an ascent of the wall in honor of the ninth anniversary of the rebellion of September 9. It took us 8 hours. We followed the "Varnikut" route as far as the center of the wall (2) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.]. From this point we took an alternate route through the rock holes (A and B) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.] to the left of the route designated. We completed the climb via the alternate route taken by Georgi Atanasov and Mladen Doichinov.

On 28 September 1953 this wall was first climbed via this route by a woman. She was Alpine Instructor Dafina Bosolova of the G. Dimitrov VIF [Vissh institut po fizkultura -- High Institute of Physical Culture], and the party included a group of alpinists from the VIF.

At the beginning of the "Varnikut" route there is a marker bearing the symbols K.M. 21.7.47, which are the initials of Masters of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov and Mikhail Kotsev and the date these climbers first attacked the northeastern part of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak.

The lower part of the "Varnikut" route is a step-like rocky crevice 7 or 8 m long. It can easily be climbed on a free line. This rocky approach merges gradually into a steep grass covered ledge 7 to 8 m long. This provides a good location for belaying safety ropes and consolidating a climbing party. From this ledge a 25 m rocky groove extends upward. It is usually climbed via the difficult passages of solid light grey granite along its right side. At the center of this crevice there is a block of rock forming a convenient triangular platform which can be bypassed to the left. This platform will accommodate a team of three alpinists. From it the "Lower Traverse" (1) can easily be reached. This passage is 2 m wide, entirely horizontal, and a convenient spot for assembling the team and belaying safety ropes. The rocky passages leading to the "Lower Traverse" can be climbed with 6 or 7 pitons and the secure handholds and cracks in the rock. The members of the team can keep each other in full view.

The "Lower Traverse" continues to the right of (1) and emerges at the Zliya Prelez Pass. It is possible to leave the wall at this point if this should be necessary. It is also possible to continue along an exceptionally difficult rocky groove to the left which leads upwards, thus avoiding "Varnikut" (X) (this alternative is not recommended).

Above the "Lower Traverse" (1) the route continues over a solid but difficult patch which has convenient handholds and cracks in the rock. This section can be negotiated with the aid of 2 or 3 pitons. Above it the nature of the rock changes gradually from a darker to a lighter color, almost white -- it becomes a strongly eroded tectonically disturbed granite. This is the most difficult pitch on the "Varnikut" route (X), and provides a full view of all climbers only to the man who is behind the leader. The "Varnikut" should be negotiated very cautiously,

as there is a danger that the hand and footholds may crumble. To facilitate the crossing a rope ladder may be used, especially if the team leader is a small man. The "Varnikut" must be traversed by keeping the body close to the rock surface, in order that the climber may slide rather than fall clear should his hand or footholds crumble.

Above "Varnikut" (X) there are solid granite sections with convenient projections and cracks. These lead to a slightly inclined rock and grass ledge (2) 3 m long and 2 m wide. It is a convenient point for consolidating a party and belaying safety ropes. The sectors above "Varnikut" can be climbed with 3 or 4 pitons.

From the platform (2) the ascent can also be continued via the "rock hole" alternative (A and B).

The "rock hole" (A and B) alternative. If this variation is made, the climbers must climb to the left above the ledge above "Varnikut" (2) toward the center of the wall. This traverse may be begun directly from the ledge (2) or 2 to 3 m above it. This is a stretch of average difficulty which required 3 to 4 pitons. After one rope length, a great hole (A) in the rock is reached which contains many rock swallows' nests. The passage to this rock must be effected carefully. Particular care must be taken in driving a piton ^{to} the left of the juniper tree on the traverse beginning 2 to 3 m above the ledge. One must climb to the juniper and then work downward without losing sight of the other climbers. Beyond it an easy, rocky, diagonal traverse over which it is necessary to clamber on hands and knees leads to the second rock hole (B). This can be reached while keeping the other climbers in sight a part of the time.

If the "rock hole" variant is not taken, the ascent continues from the ledge above "Varnikut" (2) over a difficult patch 4 to 5 m long directly above the ledge. From this patch an easy traverse leads to

the left along a rocky protrusion which is 10 cm wide and extends for 7 to 8 m. This must be negotiated carefully. It leads to an angular groove in the rock, from which point the ascent continues along the difficult crevice as far as a small rock ledge. The route then goes straight upward across a difficult patch, following the arete farthest to the right on the wall. This arete can be reached with 5 to 6 pitons, but team members do not have a good view of each other. The arete is a convenient spot for consolidating the party and belaying safety ropes. The climb continues up the arete on a free rope. Climbers cannot keep each other in sight. One or 2 pitons are used on this stretch which is about 15 m long and which emerges on the "Upper Traverse" (3), which bisects the upper part of the wall. It is from this stretch that the rocky dome in which the peak culminates extends upward.

The last portion of the ascent via the "Varnikut" route follows the right arete of the wall. It can be climbed with about 2 rope lengths and a few pitons. Climbers have full view of each other. The arete is followed to emerge on the northeastern arete of the peak.

The ascent of the stretch of the wall just below the peak is frequently done via an alternate of the "Varnikut" route laid out by G. Atanasov and M. Doichinov. They made a climb via this route on 6 September 1949. One must reach a point 30 m to the left of the "Upper Traverse" (3) in order to find the bottom of the first angular crevice of rock to the left of the arete of the wall. The "Upper Traverse" is broad, and can be crossed on a free line in the full observation of all climbers.

Along the stretch leading to the foot of the rocky crevice there is a 5 to 6 m passage of rocky blocks ending in a steep, rocky little traverse. It leads to the foot of a rocky crevice which bears slightly

to the left, and is difficult to climb. The climb can be effected with 3 or 4 pitons. This stretch is about 20 m long, and climbers have each other in view a part of the time. Above this pitch there are other difficult stretches which lead to the center of the crevice where there is a ledge convenient for belaying ropes.

Above this ledge the grassy floor of the crevice merges gradually into an 18 m rocky groove leading to the rocky northeastern arete of the peak. The two grooves can be climbed with several pitons. There are easy passages during which the climbers have each other in partial view.

Emerging on the northeastern arete of the peak, one follows it on a free line. There are small rocky gendarmes to be negotiated which form a part of the peak itself. Beyond them, the highest point of the Zliya Zub Peak is attained (2650 m).

The northeastern part of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak is about 200 m high and its total length, including approaches and the aretes of the peak, is about 300 m. The climb can be made with about 9 rope lengths, and the rock passages are solid except for the crumbling "Varnikut" stretch. During the climb, the alpinists have a partial view of each other. This ascent can be made by teams of two or three alpinists, since there are convenient ledges where parties can be consolidated before attacking the next stretch.

Ten to 12 pitons of different sizes, type and weight should be carried on this climb, as well as an equal number of snal rings, "prusek", and a short rope ladder.

The ascent takes 5 hours.

This climb is classified 5 A in difficulty.

The Slavyanskiya Route (II).

[See illustration opposite page 72, orig.]. This route follows along the southernmost part of the southeastern face of Zliya Zub Peak, and begins at the point where the steeply inclined green grass covered traverse ends. This traverse begins at the middle of the foot of the wall and runs diagonally up to the left side of this wall.

This route was marked two years after the first ascent of the northeastern sector of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak. The laying out of a route perpendicularly bisecting the wall constitutes a problem which has been the subject and continues to be one of discussion in Bulgarian alpine circles. The "Eyebrows" (HH) are the most difficult section to traverse. Seen from below or from the side, they appear smooth, solid, of monolithic rock in the form of a pronounced overhang below the "Upper Traverse," and their color is orange-yellow, which is typical for difficult rocky passages. It is even now considered impossible to traverse them directly.

This route was laid out on 14 October 1949 by this writer and alpinist Hugo Pavlovski of Brno in Czechoslovakia. We tried to make an ascent as nearly as possible directly up the vertical center of the wall, the dream of all Bulgarian alpinists. Early on the 14 October 1949, about 7 A.M., we arrived at the face of the wall. We advanced slowly, overcoming bit by bit the increasingly difficult stretches. By about noon, we were very near the "Eyebrows" (HH), about 1 rope or a rope and a half's length away, and to the right of "The Eagle's Nest" (5) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.]. Despite our attempts to reach this point, we were persuaded that it was impossible to approach or cross them, for which reason we returned to the "Eagle's Nest" (5) to seek another exit from the wall. At 5:30 P.M., after a climb of 10½ hours in exceptionally warm and

sunny weather, we successfully completed the establishment of a new route over this part of Zliya Zub Peak, formerly considered almost inaccessible. We named this new route "The Slavyanskiya" route in honor of the comradeship between Bulgarian and Czechoslovak alpinists (II).

Two years later, on 19 September 1951, Senior Instructor Master of Sports Encho Petkov, leader, and Khristo Borisov, undertook, under very poor atmospheric conditions, an ascent via the "Slavyanskiya" route. Because of the poor weather, they were forced, above the "Upper Traverse" (6) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.] to make another variation, emerging at the summit by following the crevice directly upward (---) to the left of (6).

The following year, the first ascent via the "Slavyanskiya" route by a woman was made in July. Instructor in Alpinism Diana Petkova of the "Lokomotiv" DSO was the woman who made this ascent.

This first group ascent via the "Slavyanskiya" route was made in 1953 during the Third Republican Alpine Contest organized by the Republican Section of Alpinism at the VKFS. Early in the morning of 16 October 1953, 8 alpinists of the People's Army undertook the first ascent of the wall by a group under the leadership of Senior Instructor in Alpinism Encho Petkov, Master of Sports. The ascent took them 8 hours. Five alpinists of the "G. Dimitrov" VIF made the climb via the same route the next day under the leadership of Senior Alpine Instructors Borislav Marinov and Andrey Mirchev.

A steep grass covered traverse beginning at the center of the foot of the wall leads diagonally to the left to the beginning of the "Slavyanskiya" route (1). It starts with a slightly diagonal rock and grass stretch which is step-like in form and about 10 m long. Beyond this there is a broad rocky groove which has two distinct angular sides. The next 7 or 8 m are climbed along the right side of this crevice, where

one emerges on a somewhat inclined rock ledge (2) 0.5 X 0.5 m in size on the right arete. Above it there is a difficult stretch through a crevice. It can be avoided by using another crevice to the left of it which leads upward from the ledge. There is a rocky traverse of 1 m beyond this crevice which leads to still another groove to the left. This traverse can be reached from the ledge (2) with 7 or 8 pitons. It leads to a crevice which is sharply angular and leads to the arete itself. This crevice is 7 to 8 m long and required 3 or 4 pitons. In crossing from the traverse into this crevice, the rope attached to the piton at the bottom of the crevice will rub against the right arete of the groove. For this reason it is better to drive the piton 3 to 4 m above the bottom of the groove, such that friction will be avoided and the rope more easily manipulated.

A small rocky ledge which is triangular in shape (3) is found at the end of the left arete of this crevice. It is 10 X 20 cm in area. To the right of the ledge, at chest height, there is a suitable crack for driving in two pitons, one above the other. One is used to support the leader and the other to secure the entire party, since snap rings can be used here. The difficult passages up to this point can be negotiated with all climbers having a full view of each other.

Above this small rocky ledge (3) in which the left arete of the rocky crevice ends there is a granite and gneiss stretch which is light yellow in color and easily crumbled. It ends in an overhang which it is impossible to climb. It must be circumvented by circling to the left along a step-like crumbling passage 8 m long. The first half of this stretch is the more difficult part. This traverse leads to a conveniently located broad ledge which is triangular in shape. This is a suitable spot for belaying safety ropes and consolidating the party.

A perpendicular passage 4 to 5 m long extends from this ledge. There are step-like hand and footholds. It can easily be climbed with 1 or 2 pitons. Above it there is another stretch of unstable rocky chunks. From it there is a traverse to the right over difficult passages which are above the overhang which was circumbened and above the small triangular ledge (3). This second traverse is about 22 m long. Climbers do not have a good view of each other while crossing it. It can be crossed using 2 or 3 pitons and the convenient handholds. Particular care should be taken in the center, where loose blocks of stone must be used as footholds. These are secured to the rock only by soil and may break loose at any moment. Beyond this section, there is a more solid patch extending 5 or 6 m from the center of the traverse. This traverse culminates in a solid transverse granite arete. Behind this there is a ledge over which there is an overhang (4). This serves as a belaying point for ropes and parties can be consolidated here. To the left of the ledge there is a rocky protrusion where ropes can be secured. The first climbers should wait for other members of the party here even if there is free rope still available, as otherwise the rope will be subjected to too much friction.

Above this ledge and the overhang (4) the route goes to the left. One piton suffices for the crossing of a difficult 5 to 6 m stretch leading to the left arete. Four to five m along, after a climb on a free line over an easy stretch, "The Eagle's Nest" (5) is encountered. This marks the center of the route. This is a convenient point for belaying safety ropes. The members of a party should assemble here in order to make best use of the available rope.

Beneath the overhang which divides the wall into two rocky crevices there is a box in which a notebook is kept. In this notebook climbs are recorded.

The stretch to the right of "The Eagle's Nest" is accessible by a diagonal climb of 2 rope lengths over difficult sections toward the two overhangs (HH) located beneath the "Upper Traverse." These overhangs are known as "The Eyebrows."

The ascent continues to the left of the overhang across the rocky arete, which is interrupted by many small crevices. This arete is difficult to cross. Its upper section consists of an overhang, and a rappel piton must be driven into it. (There is usually a permanent piton left here.) The overhang can be surmounted by means of a small rope ladder. Above it there are difficult passages requiring 2 or 3 pitons. They lead to step-like rock and grass covered stretches where soil is to be found. Still farther up there is a small grassy ledge where a secure piton can be placed. From this ledge a difficult rocky groove which is covered with grass runs upward. Its upper part turns into a chimney about 1 m wide, in the center of which there is a block of rock. It can be used as a ledge or as a belaying point for safety ropes. It should not be used however until it has been tested for solidity. The climb to this block does not permit the climbers a full view of each other.

The chimney narrows gradually above this block. Its upper part is an overhang which must be circumvented to the left. To do this the climber must maneuver to the edge of the chimney in order to establish a secure piton in the slab of rock lying along the arete. Above this point there is a difficult step-like patch which leads into the crevice crossing the left part of the "Upper Traverse." On this traverse and to the left of the crevice, there is at the very end of one rope length a ledge consisting of blocks of rock (6) which can be used as a point for belaying safety ropes.

From the "Upper Traverse" (6) one follows a step-like patch of rock along a broad, chimney-like crevice for 2 rope lengths and emerges from the wall onto the grassy southern face of the peak. This variation was marked out by Senior Alpine Instructors and Masters of Sports E. Petkov and Kristo Borisov on 19 September 1951 (---left of (6)).

The rocky passages in the lower part of this chimney-like crevice form a 7 to 8 m chimney ending at a large rocky ledge from which another chimney extends upward. It is narrow and about 18 m long. It culminates in a rather large overhang. This chimney crumbled on 28 September 1954 when a group of 6 alpinists from the "Cherveno zname" DSO, who were participating in the Fourth Republican Alpine Competition, made this climb via the "Slavyanskiya" route. Although rather large blocks of rock broke loose, only short stretches in this chimney were changed in appearance. The lower part of the broad groove was not affected at all.

The point above the overhang is a convenient location for belaying safety ropes and consolidating a party. This overhang can be climbed with average difficulty by keeping to the left. Above it there is a crevice which is followed on a free line to emerge on the southern and grassy face of the peak. The summit of the peak (2560 m) can be reached by several lengths on a free line.

The "Slavyanskiya" route continues to the right along the "Upper Traverse" (6), which becomes increasingly grassy. One enters the traverse near the center of the portion of the wall below the peak and reaches the clearly visible deep chimney, called the "Upper Chimney" (7) [see illustration opposite page 72, orig.] after a diagonal climb on a free rope. This chimney bisects the wall in its exact center.

The "Upper Chimney" is composed of solid granite, but it is covered with lichen and long-fibered moss which make climbing difficult. There are many rock swallow nests in this chimney. The lower part of the chimney (about 20 m long) can be negotiated with 6 to 7 pitons. An overhang divides the chimney into two parts. To the right and above this triangular overhang, which is clearly visible from below, there is a small ledge with 2 rock protrusions of about 10 cm in length. This ledge is a good location for belaying safety ropes. About a man's height above this ledge there is a crack suitable for driving a piton to secure the leader. At the far end of the ledge there is another crack where a thick rappel piton can be driven in to assure the safety of the party. Twenty m of rope are needed to reach this point, and consequently the party must assemble at this point. The ascent of the section above the ledge is made straight upward for 3 to 4 m, where it is necessary to work to the left over very difficult stretches to the left arete of the chimney. From this point the climbers emerge on the grass covered southern face of the peak. Climbers may continue a full rope length along its average incline. The traverse must be negotiated carefully. There are good hand and footholds, and pitons can be driven securely. Between the grass covered triangular ledge and the grass covered southern face of the peak 4 or 5 pitons are needed. Climbers have each other in sight only a part of the time.

After leaving the rocky part of the wall, the route continues over an easy rock and grass covered surface to the summit. This can be climbed on a free rope.

The left part of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak is about 200 m high. The "Slavyanskiya" route lies across predominantly solid granite areas interrupted occasionally by unsafe areas which crumble

easily. These should never be traversed without adequate safety precautions. This ascent takes 8 or 9 rope lengths, and visibility for the climbers is poor. They have each other in partial view except during the first 2 rope lengths.

Teams of two alpinists can most easily make this ascent. If it is to be made by a party of three, great care must be taken in selecting the points at which safety ropes will be belayed and the party will assemble.

Ten to twelve rock pitons of varying sizes and types and as many snap rings should be carried. The broad horizontal pitons are particularly useful, and a short rope ladder and a short auxiliary rope are also needed.

The ascent via the "Slavyanskiya" route takes about 6 hours.

It is classified 5 B in difficulty.

The entire Rila Mountain range can be seen from summit of the peak.

The most convenient starting point for the ascent of the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak is the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut located an hour and a half's walk from the wall, or the alpine shelter at Strashnoto Lake, one hour's walk from the wall.

Dvuglav Peak

This peak rises to the south of Zliya Zub Peak at the end of the ridge separating the Dyavolskiya and Siniya ravines. This ridge is linked with Zliya Zub Peak by a natural rocky formation called "Khalkata" ("Prozoretsa"). Dvuglav Peak has two distinctly separate rocky domes. Its southern wall is steeply inclined, in some places perpendicular, and drops off to the valley of the Rilska River. Dvuglav Peak is most accessible from the north, along the rocky arete which links it with Zliya Zub Peak.

This peak can be climbed from the west by following the western and rocky couloir which separates it from Iglata Peak. Four or five rope lengths along this easy rocky couloir which begins at the Siniya ravine one emerges at the saddle (2) [see illustration between pages 80 and 81, orig.] which is formed by the western slope of the peak and the northern arete of Iglata Peak (see description of ascent of Iglata Peak via its northern arete between the Siniya ravine and the western rocky couloir, pages 101-I [original]). This saddle can be crossed in a traverse of two lengths of free line across steeply sloped grass covered stretches at the foot of the 10 m chimney. From this point one can, with several pitons, easily reach the steep rock and grass covered slope of the summit of the peak. There are other easy approaches along the western slope of Dvuglav Peak leading to the summit, but they are not used by climbers.

The eastern part of the peak consists of a slab-like wall which drops off, in some spots very steeply, to the Dyavolskiya ravine. This wall, particularly its upper part, is difficult to climb. This upper portion comprises the summit of Dvuglav Peak. Beneath this slab-like wall there are steep rock and grass covered stretches which are easily traversed to a large juniper covered terrace (the "Stroitel" camp (4) [see illustration between pages 80 and 81, orig.]) which is located almost exactly in the center of the eastern arete of the southern wall of the peak. The "II Republican Alpine Competition" route described on page 94 [of original] crosses these rock and grass patches.

Of the various approaches, the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak is the most interesting as an alpine challenge. This is the wall in which the southern face of the peak culminates. Dvuglav Peak, whose southern wall dominates the other peaks in the vicinity of the valley of the Rilska River, rises to the north of the Partizanska meadow. It towers

over virgin pine forests and dense vegetation covering the northern, lower part of the Rilska River valley. The southern wall of Dvuglav Peak is one of the longest such walls in Bulgarian, and certainly the longest in the Rila Mountains. It is composed of large grained granite, particularly its eastern portion. Along its western arete, to the right of which there are large chimneys (the "Kaminite" route), strongly eroded granite predominates. Biotite schists predominate in the western and upper part of the rocky dome in which the peak culminates. Such biotite schist is also to be found along the rocky arete linking Dvuglav Peak with Zliya Zub Peak.

The southern wall of Dvuglav Peak can be divided into 3 horizontal parts. The lower part, i.e., the bottom of the wall, is the broadest. It consists of easy rocky patches covered with grass and interrupted in some places by steep but short rocky ledges and platforms. The center of the lower part of the wall is composed of perpendicular and slab-like patches which it is impossible to climb. They have few cracks (opposite the "Portala"). The central part of the wall is composed of grass and slab-like sectors and is of no particular interest. The upper, and domeshaped, part of the wall is composed exclusively of rock and constitutes a series of difficult pitches.

The wall of Dvuglav Peak was for years on end a mystery to Bulgarian mountaineers and alpinists. It, along with Iglata Peak and the various rocky "needles" ["iglatas" means "the needle" in Bulgarian] which surround these two peaks, as well as the small, unnamed rocky peaks which are separated by very steep (in some places perpendicular) crevices and couloirs called the "Zlita" ravines by mountaineers and alpinists makes up the southern part of the Mal'ovitsa sector -- a huge alpine labyrinth. Until recently it was very little known and

had not been studied. With the popularization of alpinism in Bulgaria, young mountaineers and climbers made a number of ascents of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak, studied it and popularized it as a locale for group climbing in their desire to lay out new alpine routes. Beginning alpinists can develop many important characteristics on this wall -- endurance, the ability to orient oneself while climbing, familiarity with climbing while carrying a rucksack, etc. These things contribute greatly to an increase in their technical abilities as climbers and their mastery of the sport.

The first ascent of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak was made on 8 July 1950. After making camp below the southern wall on 7 July, Senior Instructors and Masters of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov and Andrey Todorov attempted the ascent of this wall.

They started up the portion of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak farthest to the left (along the broad rocky and grassy groove formed by large, clearly visible chimneys). Beneath the lower of the large chimneys (above (2) [see illustration between pages 80 and 81, orig.] they climbed diagonally to the right, after which they progressed to the "Lower Saddle" (3) [see illustration opposite page 80-81, orig.]. From this point they returned to the central, slablike part of the wall, and then emerged at the bottom of the upper, domeshaped part of the wall where there is a rocky cave. In it there is a box which contains a book in which the various climbs via this route are recorded (6) [see illustration between pages 80 and 81, orig.]. This team marked its initials (K and A), as well as the date of their ascent - 8 July 1950 -- on the wall at the far end of the cave. The team continued upward along the rocky passages on the portion of the wall farthest to the left, and along the western arete. They emerged

on the summit of the peak. After 12 hours of difficult climbing over vertical slabs, which had been made slippery by rock slides and provided no hand or footholds, as well as perpendicular chimneys, they reached the peak via grass covered overhangs. Atmospheric conditions were favorable for the ascent. By means of high rock techniques, Senior Alpine Instructors and Masters of Sports K. Dyulgerov and A. Todorov attained this highest wall in the Rila Mountain range.

A year later, on 21 and 22 July 1952, in honor of the Third Berlin Youth Festival, 12 climbers of the "Stroitel" DSO, including 2 women, effected the first group ascent of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak. Their leader was Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov. They started the ascent on 21 July and completed it on 22 July. They made camp for the purpose of scientific research at the middle of the wall. Meteorological observations, geological and topographical research, etc. were filmed during this stopover on 22 July. The ascent as far as the center of the wall was effected under favorable atmospheric conditions. At 6:30 in the morning of the following day, the party continued the climb. Weather conditions were favorable, and by 7:00 P.M. the entire group had reached the summit.

This constituted the first group ascent of a Bulgarian alpine wall. The group started along the rock and grass crevice to the far left beneath the "Kaminite." From this point the group climbed diagonally to the right toward the eastern arete, where they made camp on a broad, juniper covered terrace. This site is now known as the "Stroitel" Camp (4) [see illustration between pages 80 and 81, orig. $\bar{7}$]. The group continued the climb along the rocky east arete of the wall, emerging on the broad grassy traverse. They climbed to the west along this traverse toward the western arete of the wall, emerging on the summit of the peak.

The first winter ascent of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak was made on 24-25 April 1953 by Senior Instructors in Alpinism Encho Petkov, Mast of Sports, and Khristo Borisov. They alternated as leader during the climb. The ascent was made via the "Kaminite" route. At 8 AM on 24 April this team began the ascent of the wall. They reached the upper part of the wall after uninterrupted snowfall for 8 hours. Because of the bad weather they were forced to spend the night in the small rocky cave where the book recording the various climbs is kept (6). It continued to snow throughout the night. The climbers camped comfortably, however, as they had sleeping bags and heavy woolen clothing.

They attacked the upper part of the wall at 8 A.M. on the following day. The weather was not stormy, but some snow fell. After a climb of 5½ hours, the western arete, which was covered with a heavy snowfall, was reached. Ice picks, pitons, and cleated boots were required for the ascent.

Five alpinists of the "Lokomotiv" DSO in Ruse, all workers at the "Vasil Kolarov" locomotive and railroad car plant, climbed the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak on 2 August 1953 on the occasion of "Railroadmen's Day." Their leader was Senior Alpine Instructor Kristo Popov. They placed a tin box in the cave (6) in the upper part of the wall. It is this box which contains the book in which the various climbs are recorded.

The Kaminite Route (...).

This route lies to the right of the western arete of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak, and follows a broad chimney crevice which leads to the large grassy traverse which surrounds the wall lying below the upper, domelike part of the peak. Above this point, it follows the western arete, with an alternate route through the two rock holes, to emerge upon the highest part of the peak.

The route takes its name from the fact that the major part of the climb is made via chimneys.

This route was followed on several different occasions.

The first ascent via this route was made on 8 July 1950 by Senior Alpine Instructors Andrey Todorov and Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov. They successfully climbed the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak. They made an ascent via the lower part of the route -- a wide, chimney-like crevice leading to the foot of the Kaminite (2).

Two years later, on 25 August 1952, Instructors Georgi Shterev and Yordan Machirski, under the leadership of Senior Alpine Instructors Artin Artinyan, climbed the Kaminite route above the site (2) which had been reached on 8 July 1950 by Dyulgerov and Todorov.

They began their climb at 8:30 A.M. An hour later heavy rain began to fall, and the two teams, having climbed the "Kaminite," were forced to wait for several hours in the rocky holes above the rock and grass upper traverse. At 4 P.M. the teams completed the ascent, thus definitively fixing the "Kaminite" route. They named the alternate route they had taken above the black rock holes the "Zdravets" variation.

The route begins to the right of the western rocky arête of the wall at the point where there are 2 pine trees, one above the other. The beginning of this route consists of steep sectors covered with strong alpine grass. These merge into a narrowing rocky crevice about 30 m long. Beyond the crevice which can be negotiated on a free rope, there is a narrow passage which serves as the bottom of a small chimney of 5 m, which is slightly angled to the right. This chimney is easy to climb, but can be avoided by climbing a rocky groove which is covered with grass and is several cm wide and which lies to the right of it. In either case one emerges into a widening chimney-like crevice (1) which has high, almost perpendicular walls and a bottom covered with strong alpine grass. This crevice is about 150 m long -- 5 rope lengths. The beginning of the crevice (the

third rope length) is rather narrow. It turns after 15 m into a narrow and short chimney which it is difficult to climb. The ascent should be made via the easier stretches to the right of this chimney for the next 15 m, or until the rope length has been traversed. From this point on there is a steep, chimney-like groove 6-8 m wide composed of easy patches of mixed grass and rock.

This crevice can be climbed on a free rope for the most part, using a piton here and there. Climbers should be careful during this ascent, for in some places there are small loose stones which are dislodged even by rope movement. Where such danger exists, it is necessary to control rope friction by placing additional pitons. The belaying points along the length of this crevice are not specified, but the left side of the crevice is most suitable for such purposes. This wall also offers shelter in case of rock slides and dislodged stones. These would normally follow the natural inclination of the crevice along its right side. This ascent provides the climbers with a good view of each other. After the seventh rope length, the climbers emerge on a convenient ledge (2) which lies at the foot of a 40 m chimney which rises perpendicular. There is a natural rock protrusion on the ledge which serves to secure the leader and the other members of the party.

This perpendicular chimney can be divided into 3 parts:

The lower part is about 15 m long. It can easily be climbed with 1 piton. One emerges at a small overhang above which there is a cavity which serves as a ledge where ropes can be belayed and a party consolidated. To climb above this ledge, one must brace his back against the right hand wall (eastern wall). The hands are then free to grasp the rock protrusion which divides the chimney in two. Climbers then work their way to the right side of the chimney from which exit from the chimney is easiest.

The central part of the chimney is 8-10 m long. It is the narrowest part (about 0.5 m wide) and the most difficult to climb. A large horizontal piton can be driven into the crack found about a man's height above the center of the chimney and on its left side. There is a rocky protrusion near this crack which can serve as a hand or foothold, or to support a small ladder. The piton must be driven and the rope suspended carefully, as there is a danger that the piton may not hold the necessary weight. If the team leader is a small man, a ladder is absolutely necessary. Exit from the central part of the chimney is effected by negotiating an overhang of average difficulty above which solid hand and footholds are to be found. There is also a large rocky hole (a balcony). There, a man's height above the ledge and on the right, there is a convenient rocky protrusion which serves to secure the leader and the entire party.

The upper part of the chimney is easier to climb than the central portion. It is about 8 m long and is composed of easy stretches. Climbers have no view of each other at some points in the ascent of the 3 parts of which this chimney is composed.

Above the chimney there is a stretch of 8-10 m which can be climbed on a free rope. Climbers then emerge on the western arete of the wall (3) which has a large horizontal break here which is a good belaying point and serves for the consolidation of the party. This site is known to alpinists as the "Lower Saddle." The overall height of the wall to this point is 285 m, or about $9\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths,

This "Lower Saddle" is about 8 m long. Progress along its horizontal arete is effected diagonally to the left, and on a free rope. The climber must work toward a clearly visible rocky crevice about 30 m long. By means of easy grass and rock passages, a very steep grass covered stretch about 4 to 5 m long can be attained. Above it a convenient chimney ledge

is located at the foot of the rocky crevices. It can be reached with one full rope length on a taut line. The party should be assembled here. There are excellent facilities for belaying safety ropes.

The first 10 m of this rocky crevice have a step-like grass covered floor along which climbers can move on a free line to a convenient ledge of average size where ropes can be belayed and the party assembled. A man's height above the platform on its right side a large, secure piton can be driven. Above this ledge the rocky crevice narrows and becomes chimney-like. Climbing it further is not to be recommended. One should rather follow the solid rocky edge of the groove to the right of the ledge. This arete provides convenient and secure foot and handholds. It is climbed for a distance of 7 to 8 m, after which it is necessary to use the upper part of the rocky crevice previously abandoned, and which after a few meters crosses the right arete of the crevice (this arete is actually the western arete of the wall). Using a free line, a large platform which marks the beginning of a 5 to 6 m chimney, can be reached. This chimney is a narrow one. On this ledge the party should be assembled. Loose blocks of rock are to be found here. The ascent to this point, and farther up as well, is made with partial visibility of the other members of the party. The small chimney, which is slightly inclined to the left, must be climbed next. One emerges from it into a grass covered crevice formed by the perpendicular wall of the western arete and the steeply inclined grass covered slope to the right of it. The first 15 m of the crevice can be negotiated on a free rope, to reach a rocky ledge above which, via a 2 to 3 m chimney, there are grassy gradual slopes. These lead, after one rope length and on a free line, to the large upper break, the "Upper Saddle" (7), which is formed by the western arete. Otherwise the climb can be made diagonally to the rocky cave (6) on the large grassy traverse. This is the cave which contains the box where the record of the various ascents is kept.

Beyond this point one continues to the left of the cave along the grass traverse which leads to the western (left) arete of the wall. Three to four rope lengths on a free line, during part of which the entire team can move forward at the same time, along the large grassy traverse and its easy passages lead to the western arete of the wall (7), which here forms part of the second saddle (the "Upper Saddle" (7)).

One may continue upward around the western arete of the wall or via the black rocky holes located to the right of the arete.

The beginning of the western arete of the upper (dome shaped) part of the southern wall consists of about 15 m of step-like grass and rocky stretches which can be covered on a free line to emerge on a convenient ledge. Above this ledge there is an easy rocky crevice which can be climbed with one piton and a taut line to emerge on another small rocky ledge. This is a good point for belaying safety ropes securely.

Above this small rocky ledge there lie the most difficult rocky patches on the western arete of the upper dome section of the wall. Because of the perpendicular walls lacking in cracks, the beginning of this stretch is particularly difficult. The very first 10 m can be done on a free rope, thanks to a few secure handholds. Following this 2 to 3 pitons and a taut line are necessary to emerge on a slightly sloped rocky platform 2 X 2.5 m in size. This offers the opportunity of belaying safety ropes.

From this ledge one can climb toward the western arete of the wall or via a short rocky crevice. Via this latter route it is easiest to climb, using a free line, to the slightly sloped side of the summit. Via either of these routes one can reach a large grassy ledge to the right. It is about 10 m long and 1 to 2 m wide, and offers opportunities for belaying ropes. Caution is necessary in driving pitons here, because the predominating rock structure (biotite schist) lies in horizontal layers.

In either case, the climb is continued on a free rope to the highest point on Dvuglav Peak. This can be accomplished either via the rocky arete or along the western, grassy slope of the peak.

The "Zdravets" alternate route. It is possible to climb this peak by continuing to the right via the two black rocky holes from the second saddle on the western arete (7) as well. These holes can be reached via a climb on a free line over easy and mixed patches starting with the end of the traverse. A full rope's length brings one to the lower of the two holes. From it, 2 rope lengths lead to a sloped side of the summit, by keeping to the right of the hole and then climbing to the left along difficult rocky stretches. From this side, the highest point of the peak can be reached in 2 lengths of free line along the rocky arete or along the western grasscovered slope. This variation, passing through the black holes, was first used on 28 August 1952 when the "Kaminite" route was finally completed. This alternative was called the "Zdravets" variation.

Apart from the "Kaminite" route already described, the upper part of the wall may be climbed either by starting from the rock cave (6) and continuing to the left toward the western arete (7) and thence via the "Zdravets" variation (the black rock holes) to emerge on the summit, or from the rocky cave (6) straight upward, using the final portion of the "Diagonala" variation described on page 92 [of original].

The length of the "Kaminite" route is about 20 alpine rope lengths. There is good visibility for the climbers during the ascent. Four to 5 pitons and as many snap rings are used. A ladder may sometimes be necessary on this ascent. Teams of 2 or 3 alpinists can make this ascent, but teams of 2 are preferable so as to make the best use of the shelter available and thereby minimize the danger of falling rock in the chimney-like crevice. The ascent via this route takes 4 hours.

The "Kaminite" route is easy. Most of the climb is effected along a chimney-like couloir, chimneys and rocky crevices which in some places are exceptionally easy. This is a very important route for training climbers in endurance and the habit of heights. The small chimneys which are found at frequent points along the route are excellent practice in climbing such formations. Easy passages predominate along this route, but because of its length, it has been classified 4 B in difficulty. The most convenient starting point for ascents via the "Kaminite" route is the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut, from which one emerges at the pass between Orlovets and Zliya Zub Peaks. From this point, via the Siniya ravine, one can reach the rocky cave beneath Iglata Peak. One then traverses the arete of Iglata Peak diagonally, one can reach the foot of the "Kaminite" route. It takes 2½ hours to reach this point.

The Plochite Route (.-.-.-). This route has been laid out over the slab like central part of the southern wall, and it leads straight up across the "Upper Traverse."

This route was marked out on several different occasions. On 8 July 1950, when the first ascent of the southern wall was made, Senior Alpine Instructors Konstantin Dyulgerov, Master of Sports, and Andrey Todorov marked off the upper part of this route. However, the entire route was followed on 26 September 1953 by alpinists of the "G. Dimitrov" VIF under the leadership and guidance of Senior Alpine Instructor Georgi Atanassov. A group of 8 students in 4 teams made the ascent of the lower part of the wall under excellent atmospheric conditions. This was a new and distinct route which cut across the shortest central part of the wall. This was the first mass ascent of the "Plochite" route, and it took 7 hours. This route is actually a combination of several variations on other routes.

It is called the "Plochite" [The Slabs] because it runs across slablike passages.

The route begins to the right of the foot of the "Kaminite" route. The ascent is begun over easy grass covered passages to the left of the rocky arete (along which stand four small pine trees, one above the other) of the wall which begins to the left of the "Portala" (П). The easy grassy patches with which it starts can be climbed on a free line. After 50 m, the beginning of a 30 to 40 m grass and rock crevice is encountered. There is in this crevice one convenient ledge where the party can be assembled (1). The ascent of this grass and rock arete is usually avoided by skirting its right side in the direction of the 2 small pines diagonally. To reach these two trees, a small perpendicular wall 4 to 5 m high must be climbed. It can be negotiated with 2 to 3 pitons. (It is also recommended that a small ladder be used here.) Another 1 or 2 pitons made it possible to reach the two small pine trees. Although only 15 m of rope have been used thus far, the party should be assembled here because of the great friction to which the rope is otherwise subjected.

The climbers have a full view of each other as they continue above the small pines, along grassy patches for a distance of 25 to 30 m. One then emerges at the bottom of a chimney of average size. At the foot and to the center of the chimney, the climber braces his left foot against the chimney, and pulls himself along the right hand, slablike wall where there are handholds. By means of these and several pitons, the center of this wall can be attained. At this point it is necessary to switch to the solid, rocky left arete of the chimney, from which one emerges on a convenient ledge a full rope length away.

The ascent continues along easy grassy passages, after which a convenient ledge is reached on a free rope via a grass covered groove with an average incline. Above this ledge, across further easy grassy patches, a juniper bush, which can be used for belaying safety ropes, can be reached. There is no convenient site at this location for driving a piton (2).

Above the juniper bush there are grassy patches across which, climbing on a free line (usually with simultaneous progress by all members of the team), one emerges after several rope lengths along the right of the greenish rock slabs on the "Stroitel" ledge (4). Ten to twelve rope lengths are needed to reach this point. Climbers have a full view of each other during the ascent thus far. One continues upward along the east arete of the wall described in the "Deveti Septemvri" route, but the "Plochite" route runs along to the west of this other one. To the right of the slabs, before one reaches the "Stroitel" ledge, there is an opening into a crevice-like chimney inclined to the left. The lower part of the chimney is steep, but it is easy to climb. One emerges from the top of it onto a steep grassy passage which leads toward the eastern, right hand arete of the wall. From this point the eastern arete of the wall can be reached. The saddle formed by this arete and which lies below the traverse (5) can be reached in two rope lengths on a free line. From this point the ascent continues along the final portion of the "Keminite" route already described, along the "Zdravets" route, or the "Diagonala" variation described on pages 84 and 92 [of original].

The "Plochite" route, up to the point where it merges with the "Deveti Septemvri" route at the saddle of the eastern arete below the "Upper Traverse," is about 13 to 14 rope lengths long. Climbers have full view of each other during the ascent. Five to six pitons and as

many snap rings, as well as a rope ladder, are needed. The entire route, using all possible variations along the upper part of the wall, is about 22 rope lengths long and can be climbed in 4 hours. It is a comfortable climb for teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. This route is an excellent one for developing endurance. It is composed for the most part of easy passages. It is classified 4 B in difficulty.

The most convenient starting point is the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut, from which the route can be reached by following the directions given under the "Kaminite" route.

The Deveti Septemvri Route (...). This route crosses the easternmost part of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak, near the right hand and eastern arete of the wall.

The first ascent via this route was made on 21 July 1952 by students in the Third Republican Course for Alpine Instructors organized by the VKFS. They were led by Master of Sports Encho Petkov and Senior Alpine Instructors Georgi Atanasov, Khristo Borisov and Vladimir Toshkov. Nineteen students took part in the climb, which was made in 15 hours under favorable weather conditions (from 6 A.M. to 9 P.M.).

On 11 April 1955 alpinists Angel Petrov, leader, and Ivan Kostov, of the Spartak DSO undertook the first winter ascent via the "Deveti Septemvri" route. To reach the beginning of the route, the alpinists had to traverse the lower avalanche prone areas in the Beliya and Siniya ravines. At 8:30 A.M. they began the ascent of the wall. Thanks to the successful combination of rock and snow techniques, at 10 P.M., after 11½ hours of climbing, this team completed the ascent via the most difficult route up the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak. They returned to the "Mal'ovista" tourist hut.

The bottom of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak begins, in its eastern portion, with easy rock and grass passages which can be traversed on a free line to emerge at a height of 40 m. A chimney of average size is clearly visible on this portion of the wall. It is to the left of the eastern rocky arete of the wall, and 2 rocky crevices lie between it and the arete. The floors of these crevices are covered with grass. Following the chimney or the 2 rocky crevices to the right of it, one emerges onto the lower eastern part of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak. Both of these routes constitute variations on the beginning of the "Deveti Septemvri" route.

This route begins with the chimney (1) [see illustration opposite page 88, orig.] to the left of the eastern arete of the wall. A rocky crevice 15 m long and covered with grass is found in the crack which runs through the easy beginning rock and grass passages below the chimney. Following this groove, one emerges, climbing on a free rope, on a small grassy ledge 0.5 X 0.5 m in area. The party should be assembled here, particularly in the case that it consists of three climbers. Easy rock and grass passages stretch above the platform, gradually merging into the perpendicular chimney (1). At the base of the chimney there is a slightly inclined grass and rock ledge of average size which can usually be reached on a free rope. Secure belaying points are found here.

The chimney (1) is 8 to 9 m high. The lower part of it is broad, but it narrows as it rises to form a chimney-like overhang of average size. It can be climbed with 2 pitons, and the overhang is easy to negotiate. Above it there are mixed patches of rock and grass which can be traversed on a free rope for one rope length. There is a large, steep and grass covered ledge is encountered (2) [see illustration opposite page 88, orig.].

This lies below a large, clearly visible black spot on the rock which is precisely in the center of the lower right hand part of the southern wall. On this ledge there are secure belaying points.

One can avoid this platform above the chimney and below the black spot on the rock by working diagonally to the right toward the eastern arete of the wall. One rope length along this arete, which can be traversed on a free rope across 3 to 4 m of vertical climb, one reaches 2 rock and grass covered ledges located one above the other. These are covered with juniper (2). These ledges are at the same level as the large grassy ledge below the black spot. They are convenient for the securing of safety ropes.

Climbing the chimney may be avoided by climbing from the grassy ledge above the rocky groove to the rocky crevice which runs along its right side, and along which the route continues.

Apart from the beginning portion of the route described above, the following variations of the beginning of the "Deveti Septemvri" route are possible:

- I. To the right of the chimney a route may be taken through the well defined rocky crevice (Variation A). The lower part of this rocky crevice is the easiest, and the first 15 m can be climbed on a free rope. Beyond this point, 1 or 2 pitons in a rope's length take the climber to a small grassy ledge on the same level as that at the beginning of the chimney (1). The small grassy ledge is a convenient spot for securing belaying ropes.

Above the small grassy ledge at the grass covered bottom of the rocky crevice previously described, there are several other grassy ledges located several meters apart. They facilitate the climbing of the crevice. Above them one continues on a free rope over easy rocky

passages. Beyond this point grassy patches covered with juniper begin to predominate. Following them for one rope length one emerges on a large, steep grassy ledge below the black spot. If the ascent of the grassy patches is avoided by passing diagonally to their right, one emerges after the length of one rope on the grassy and rocky ledges (2) covered with juniper and located one above the other on the eastern arete of the wall.

II. Parallel to these alternate beginnings for the "Deveti Septemvri" route which have been laid out along the chimney and the rocky crevice to the right of it, there is a beginning of the route which runs along the lowermost right hand part of the southern wall near its rocky eastern arete. It follows the large angular chimney of rock with a grassy floor which is about 30 m long. It begins with a 15 m climb on a free rope, beyond which 1 or 2 pitons take one a rope's length to a large ledge which is covered with juniper, and to the first small pine tree on the arete. The ledge is a convenient spot for belaying safety ropes. It is on the same level as the platform located at the foot of the chimney. Above this platform there is another 30 m crevice in the rock. It is broad and deep and its floor is grassy. One can climb it on a free rope for one rope length to emerge on the rock and grass covered ledges covered with juniper (2) located one above the other which are located on the eastern arete of the wall.

III. To the left of the chimney one can gain access to the lower part of the eastern section of the wall via several rocky crevices (it is not recommended to climb them) covered with grass.

To the right of the large, very steep grassy ledge (2) the "Deveti Septemvri" route continues along the left part of the eastern arete of the wall.

The ascent begins on a stretch straight upward for about 15 m. These are grassy patches of average steepness which can be climbed on a free rope. They lead to a 15 m traverse which is slightly inclined and is covered with juniper and grass. This too is climbed on a free rope to reach the beginning of a well defined and deep rock crevice formed by the wall and its eastern arete. The beginning of the rocky crevice is formed by ledge of average size which is a good location for belaying safety ropes.

The rocky crevice is about 12 m long and can be climbed like a chimney with the aid of 2 or 3 pitons. It is partially covered with grass and juniper, and for this reason it must be traversed carefully. The rocky groove merges gradually into an entirely grassy 15 m wall which can be climbed on a free rope to emerge after a full rope's length on the eastern arete of the wall itself. There is a rocky protrusion on the arete here which is a natural and convenient belaying point for safety ropes. Above this rocky protrusion there is on the eastern arete a small but convenient platform where parties can be consolidated. However, there are no cracks in the rock there.

Below the platform with the rocky protrusion one approaches the eastern arete of the wall diagonally. Above the platform an easy rocky crevice leads several m to grassy and very steep passages. These can be reached on a free rope, and they are crossed diagonally to reach the eastern arete which forms a rocky chimney 3 m high, above which there is a grass covered ledge which is somewhat inclined. Above this there is a very steep grassy passage 10 m high. It is covered with high alpine grass and it leads to a 5 to 6 m rocky crevice of average steepness which is inclined to the right. This crevice is composed of much eroded and badly crumbled rock. Beyond and to the right of its end runs an almost horizontal traverse of 4 m. It must be crossed with caution, because

the wall here crumbles readily. One or two pitons can be driven in, but they must be thoroughly tested before being put to use. This traverse leads to a grass covered ledge which is covered with alpine grass, is of average size, and is moderately inclined. Some bushes of graduated sizes grow there (3) [see illustration opposite page 88, orig.]. Above this platform lies the most difficult part of the route. Also above it there is a slightly yellowish-grey overhang below which there is a deep rocky hole containing birds' nests. This forms a good location for belaying safety ropes.

Above the ledge and one rope's length away lies the most difficult part of the route, and also the most difficult on the entire southern wall of Dvuglav Peak. This stretch is about 30 m long. It begins with an overhang of average size which is situated about 7 m above the ledge. There is a convenient crack in the rock of the overhang where two pitons should be driven in, one 20 cm above the other. The lower one is used to attach the ladder, and the other to ensure the safety of the leader. In climbing this overhang it is absolutely necessary to use a ladder, and, if the team leader is a small man, it should have two or three rungs. Above the overhang there is a steeply sloped rock and grass covered passage (about 8 m) over which the climb can be effected on a free rope. This passage leads to a small rocky balcony about 20 cm wide and 1.5 m long. From the left end of this balcony a rocky crevice leads upward, but it is impossible to climb it. A secure piton can be driven into the base of this crevice as a safety measure. The party, if it consists of three climbers, should be consolidated on this balcony, despite the fact that it is small.

In order to advance beyond the balcony, it is necessary to begin from its right side, where there is a location a man's height above the floor where 2 pitons can be driven in (one about 15 cm above the other). There is a convenient crack in the slab of rock which extends above the balcony. The ascent of this slab, which is several meters high,

is facilitated by a rope ladder. This brings one out on a short, very steep patch covered with juniper. Above it there is a rocky balcony similar to the one below, but there are no opportunities for belaying safety ropes here. From this point a crack in the rock about 8 m long leads upward. It provides good handholds. It is also wide enough to accommodate a man's foot, and it can be climbed by digging in with the heel of the boot. It has a good rough right hand side which provides good hand grips. Thus by bracing the heel against the one side, and gripping the right hand, rough side of the rocky crack one can successfully, if with difficulty, emerge at the clump of juniper to the east of and below the large juniper covered terrace called the "Stroitel" site. At this clump of juniper the team should be consolidated, for which purpose it is convenient, as well as for belaying safety ropes.

From this point there is a very easy and almost horizontal traverse to be crossed. Along the left hand part of it, between the juniper clump and the rocky southeastern passages beneath the large terrace, one rope's length takes one to the "Stroitel" site (4) [see illustration opposite page 88, orig.], which is a juniper covered terrace. One can reach this point in 6 rope lengths with all climbers in full view of each other.

The terrace on which the "Stroitel" site is found is located at the center of the southern wall on its eastern and rocky arete. On the east the terrace ends at the perpendicular eastern wall of Dvuglav Peak which slopes off steeply to the precipice above the Dyavolskiya ravine. On the west the terrace merges into a broad rocky crevice composed of rocky and grassy patches and monolithic slabs and leads toward the western side of the southern wall of the peak. This large, sloped terrace is covered with juniper and is convenient for camping, since the juniper can serve as fuel, and there is room for a group of men to spend a safe, tranquil

night. From this terrace the valley of the Rilska River can be seen. In the foreground is the Partizanska meadow and the highway linking the meadow with the Rila Monastery, and beyond it, the peaks of the southwestern and central Rila Mountains.

The "Diagonala" variation. Above the large and steeply sloped grass covered ledge (2) beneath the clearly visible large black spot, one can continue diagonally to the left, traversing the lower eastern part of the southern wall in the direction of a short, rocky arete on the left of the large terrace on which the "Stroitel" site is located (4). This traverse is effected over steep, grassy stretches which are intersected in places by steeply inclined patches of rock slabs. This diagonal traverse can conveniently be crossed by teams of 2 alpinists, since there are no platforms to be indicated for the consolidation of the party. The cracks in the wall are almost entirely concealed, and the handholds are concave. Four rope lengths with 3 to 4 pitons for each of them lead across the traverse to the foot of a 10 m chimney to the right of the short, rocky arete on the left side of the large terrace where the "Stroitel" site is found. The upper part of the chimney contains a small overhang. It can be climbed with 1 or 2 pitons, which are used to assist in the ascent of the comparatively difficult overhang. Above the overhang one emerges in a grassy, gradually inclined crevice which can be climbed on a free rope. At some points the entire team can advance simultaneously. This crevice leads to the "Stroitel" camp on the large terrace covered with juniper (4), which ends at the eastern arete of the wall.

Above this point, the variation continues to the left of the "Stroitel" site (4) along a steep, crevice-like chimney which angles to the left (along which, to the left of the eastern arete of the wall, the "Flochite" route lies). Above this chimney one comes to a steep grassy passage beyond

which one negotiates slablike stretches to reach the rocky cave (6). Above this point, difficult passages lead to the summit of the peak. This variation was developed by this writer and Instructor in Alpinism Valentin Filipenko on 18 August 1952.

The central part of the wall lies above the juniper terrace on which the "Stroitel" site is located. This lies between (4) and (5) [see illustration opposite page 88, orig.]. It is the easiest part to traverse, and by crossing it one reaches the foot of the rocky dome in which the peak culminates, and which constitutes the upper part of the wall.

The "Deveti Septemvri" route crosses this central part of the wall along the eastern and rocky arete. From the juniper terrace and the "Stroitel" site, all team members can progress simultaneously for about 50 or 60 m to the eastern arete of the wall. The climb above this point provides full view of the others for each climber, and it crosses easy passages of solid granite. Three rope lengths lead to the highest part of the arete. Although this arete is generally easy to climb, and a free line may be used, a piton is useful at several points. There are ledges all along the arete where the party may be consolidated and where belaying points are found.

From the end of the eastern arete, it is necessary to descend five or six m to a grass covered saddle which lies between the arete and the upper dome portion of the wall. From the saddle the team can move simultaneously for about 30 m across easy grassy passages. There a 15 m rocky passage is encountered. It is divided lengthwise by a patch of grass. It can be easily climbed to reach steep, grassy passages (5) which become a large grassy traverse which extends around the entire upper part of the wall beneath the rocky dome in which the wall ends. The central portion of the wall ends with this traverse.

A large, rocky cave (6) [see illustration opposite page 88, orig.] is to be found in the center of the large grassy traverse which encircles the upper part of the wall. It is a convenient shelter in inclement weather. It contains the box with the book in which the ascents made are recorded.

The climb of the upper, domelike part of the wall is made from this point by following the final portion of the "Kaminite" route or the "Zdravets" or "Diagonala" variations which have also been described.

The "Deveti Septemvri" route is about 23 rope lengths long. Climbers have full view of each other during the ascent. About 8 pitons and as many snap rings are needed. Two small rope ladders and an auxiliary rope should also be carried. The ascent can be made by teams of three alpinists, but a team of two persons is recommended. The ascent via this route takes 4 to 5 hours.

The "Deveti Septemvri" route is the most difficult one along the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak, although easy passages predominate. It is only beneath the juniper terrace where the "Stroitel" site is located, and in the middle of the upper central portion of the wall that there are short passages difficult enough to require auxiliary equipment.

Because of the peculiarities of this route, and because the difficult stretches lie in the center and upper parts of this wall, this route demands endurance, excellent experience and quick thinking during the climb. The "Deveti Septemvri" route is classified 5 A in difficulty.

The most convenient starting point for ascents via the "Deveti Septemvri" route is the Partizanska meadow, $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours walk away. From the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut to the point where the route begins it is 3 hours walk via the "Khalkata" (Prozoretsa) rock, the pass between

Zliya Zub and Orlovets Peaks, and the rocky arete which links Zliya Zub Peak and Dvuglav Peak. From this point one must descent to the Dyavolskiya ravine, where, after an hour's hike, one reaches the beginning of the route.

The "Republican Alpine Competition II" Route (---). This route leads onto the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak from the Dyavolskiya ravine by means of the steep grass passages on the eastern part of the peak. Three or four rope lengths across these easily climbed stretches lead to the "Stroitel" site (4). From this point one continues along the "Deveti Septemvri" route.

The "II Republican Alpine Competition" route was laid out on 25 October 1952, when a group of 21 alpinists participating in the alpine competition made a mass ascent of the southern wall of the peak under the leadership of Senior Instructor and Master of Sports Encho Petkov and under the guidance of Senior Instructors Khristo Borisov and Vladimir Toshkov. The ascent was made in 12 hours (from 9 A.M. to 9 P.M.) under favorable atmospheric conditions. This route shortens the ascent of the wall considerably. It follows the easiest passages to be found. This route is 15 to 16 rope lengths long. It can be climbed with full view of each other by all climbers. Five to 6 pitons and as many snap rings are necessary. It can conveniently be climbed by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. The ascent takes about 2 hours.

Easy passages predominate over the entire length of the route, for which reason it is classified 3 B in difficulty.

The most convenient starting point for the ascent via the "II Republican Alpine Competition" route is the Partizanska meadow. The beginning of this route lies three hours' hike from the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut, from which one can approach via the pass between Zliya Zub

and Orlovets Peaks and the "Khalkata" rock to emerge in the Dyavolskiya ravine. Descending into this ravine and continuing along it, one arrives at the foot of the route. A camp can be set up at the foot of the wall.

From the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak one can see the valley of the Rilska River, the Brichebor site, and the Cherney, Baba, Dubrava, Tsarev, Yosifitsa, and Vodniya Chal (Suchal) Peaks. and the Pirin Mountains in the distance, along with the other Macedonian mountains. To the east the Skakavtsite chain, and beyond them Stalin and the Bliznatsite Peaks, Marichinchal Peak and others can be seen.

The Arete Linking Zliya Zub and Dvuglav Peaks

Dvuglav Peak is a typical alpine peak. Apart from the southern wall, there is another aspect of interest to alpinists -- the rocky arete which links Zliya Zub and Dvuglav Peaks. On the western side of this arete lies the precipice overhanging the Siniya ravine and on the eastern side, the Dyavolsiya ravine. Frequently it is difficult to traverse this arete. Alpinists must be extremely familiar with it, as it is the only route to the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut.

The southern wall of Dvuglav Peak must be left by crossing the western grassy slope of the peak (the lower, smaller dome). One continues from this point along the arete, which begins with the summit (this is the recommended route). The climb can also be made in a diagonal line toward the rocky arete as far as the rock heap made up of stones of various sizes which runs down perpendicular to the arete toward the Siniya ravine. In traversing this rock heap one comes to the arete, i.e., one passes between the lower and upper, or the large and small domes, respectively, of Dvuglav Peak. One continues to the north along the arete by means of climbing the upper (larger) dome (about 2 rope lengths) and then descending about 15 to 20 m, leaving the arete and

continuing along the western, gradually inclined grassy slope (about 2 m below the arete). One then encounters several steep grass and rock crevices leading downward toward the Siniya ravine. Here one follows the rocky arete again, and after 2 rope lengths shifts to the grassy northern slope where there is a convenient footpath. One follows this path to the beginning of the Dyavolskiya ravine. At this point there are 3 possible means of access to the Siniya ravine, from which one can continue to the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut.

1. The first convenient pass, through the "Khalkata" rock, may be used. When it is foggy, orientation is best maintained by following the fold formed by the arete of the Dyavolskite Igli Peak and its side. Along this fold (a grass covered crevice) one finds his way to the pass, from which it is possible to descend into the Siniya ravine.

2. Once on the side of the Dyavolskite Igli Peak, one can traverse this slope as far as the "Khalkata" rock (this side is perpendicular to the arete). This can be effected by going through the "Khalkata" itself, but it is recommended that the climber keep to the right of this rock, following the easy rocky groove several meters long which leads to a very small pass from which there is access to the Siniya ravine.

In either case (i.e., 1 or 2) one reaches the pass between Zliya Zub Peak and Orlovets Peak after a climb of 50 m diagonally along the Siniya ravine.

3. The third possibility is to follow a diagonal route to the north of the "Khalkata" rock, starting from the small pass in the foothills of Zliya Zub Peak, which can easily be found even in poor weather, to continue past the series of rock formations and thus to reach Zliya Zub Peak. (This route is not recommended in poor weather

or if the area is icy.) From this small pass, one can, via the southern wall of Zliya Zub Peak, reach the larger pass between Zliya Zub Peak and Orlovets Peak.

It should be noted that once the "Khalkata" rock has been passed, there is below it and to the right, about 15 to 20 m away, a small cave in the rocky which is a convenient shelter in poor weather. Its opening is about 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ m wide and $\frac{1}{2}$ m high. Inside the cave rises to a height of $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. It is a convenient temporary shelter in case of summer rain. In winter it is often filled with snow.

In poor weather (fog, heavy snow or thick ice coatings) it is recommended that the arete itself be followed to reach Zliya Zub Peak from Dvuglav Peak.

From the pass separating Zliya Zub and Orlovets Peaks, one can follow the ravine between them downward to the BAK tourist hut, and thence to the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut.

Iglata Peak

This is the name given to the small, rocky peak located to the southwest of Dvuglav Peak. It is linked to the larger peak by a small pass. It was given this name because of its exceptional sharpness ["iglate" in Bulgarian means "the needle"]. Its perpendicular and inaccessible walls drop off slab like to the west in the direction of the Siniya ravine, and on the east toward the ravine between Iglata and Dvuglav Peaks. The southern wall of Iglata Peak is a narrow, rocky arete which is much divided in some places. It is about 400 m long and it rises proudly above the pine forests surrounding the Partizanska meadow. The western part of the wall is a far shorter rocky arete which is linked with Dvuglav Peak by means of a small pass.

Iglata Peak (2575 m) and Zliya Zub Peak (2650 m) are the only peaks in Bulgaria to which access cannot be gained from all sides, and which absolutely require the application of alpine techniques for the ascent. Iglata Peak aroused the interest of the earliest Bulgarian mountaineers because of its inaccessibility.

On 25 May 1935 BAK members Aleksandur Belkovski, Meritorious Master of Sports, and Sami Alashekh made the first ascent of Iglata Peak. They made their climb along the northern, and most accessible, arete. They descended en rappel along the southwestern slope of Dvuglav Peak, as far as the saddle (X) [no such symbol to be found in illustration] which links this peak and Iglata Peak. They then climbed the short northern arete of the peak on a free rope. They descended via the same route. Altogether the climb took 4 hours, and was made under favorable weather conditions.

At the end of June 1936, BAK members Aleksandur Belkovski, Meritorious Master of Sports, who was the team leader, Engineer Yordan Yordanov and Boris Gonchev climbed the peak via the western rocky couloir leading upward from the Siniya ravine. The ascent took them about 3 hours under favorable atmospheric conditions. Their descent followed the saddle (between the northwestern arete of the peak and Dvuglav Peak) and along the couloir by which they had made the ascent.

The first climb of the southern arete of Iglata Peak was made on 10 September 1950. It was made by Senior Alpine Instructors Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, and Khristo Borisov. They alternated as leader. They started from their camp below Dvuglav Peak early in the morning. They began from the lowest part of the arete at 6 A.M. in the morning. The two young alpinists made the first ascent of this southern arete in about 10 hours. They had excellent atmospheric conditions for their climb.

The first group ascent via this route was made on 17 October 1953 under the leadership and guidance of Master of Sports Encho Petkov. Eight alpinists, participating in the III Republican Alpine Competition, climbed the peak in 8 hours under favorable atmospheric conditions.

On 2 August 1954 the ascent via this route was made for the first time by a woman -- Dafina Bosolova, Alpine Instructor at the "Georgi Dimitrov" VIF. The other members of the party were Ivan Yanakiev and Georgi Shterev.

The first winter ascent of the southern arete was made on 25 April 1955 by this writer and Instructor Georgi Karbachev.

The Southern Arete of Iglata Peak

The lowest point on the southern arete of Iglata Peak begins where the pine forest to the north and above the Partizanska meadow ends. The 400 m granite arete rises grandiose between the Siniya ravine and the ravine formed by the peak and Dvuglav Peak. The southern arete of Iglata Peak is composed of solid, large grained granite which is mixed with porphyric granite. There are grassy patches on its lower portion, and the upper part is monolithic granite covered with lichen and moss. The uppermost part of Iglata Peak is composed of biotite schists.

The arete is considered to begin at the height which is on the same level as the wall of Dvuglav Peak. The ascent of the arete is begun at this point, and there is no clearly defined route. There are many possible variations leading to the middle of the arete (1) [see illustration between pages 96 and 97, orig.], and from that point the summit is reached along the southern arete. The center of the arete (1) can be reached from the Siniya ravine or from that formed by Iglata and Dvuglav Peaks. On these routes over the slopes a free rope can be used, as the ascent follows the grassy patches and ledges.

The center of the southern arete is a large, very convenient rock and grass covered ledge which cuts deeply into the arete (1). From this ledge the ascent can only be pursued along the rocky arete and alpine techniques must be used.

The arete begins with monolithic granite passages (covered with lichen and moss) where there are numerous solid cracks and projections which are secure and can serve as handgrips. The moderate incline of the arete leads, if 3 or 4 pitons are used to a rock and grass passage 10 odd meters long to the left of the arete. This passage can easily be traversed. One full 30 m rope's length farther on, one encounters a broad, grassy platform which is a convenient belaying and assembly point.

There are 3 possible routes for continuing the ascent: 1 -- One can climb a 15 m chimney to the left of the arete which is almost perpendicular, and is very angular; 2 -- one may ascend via the arete itself, which is intersected by a 10 m rocky crevice which is inclined to the left; or 3 -- one can climb the right side of the arete. In all these cases, 3 to 4 pitons are useful in climbing the easy and solid rocky passages, which are difficult in a few places. One emerges again on the arete, where these 3 variations of the route rejoin. Above this point, one continues for 10 m on a free rope to reach a rocky ledge (2) [see illustration between pages 96 and 97, orig.] which is convenient for belaying safety ropes and for assembling the party. It is covered with juniper, and lies to the left of the arete.

Above this point lies the most difficult part of the ascent. One continues along the arete, but must follow the broad, solid granite crevice which runs along the left side of the arete. This crevice angles to the left. A convenient angular crack in the crevice facilitates the

ascent. Here the climbing must be done with the aid of the hands, using first one and then the other for support. The first 20 m of the crevice can be covered with 6 or 7 pitons. One then encounters an overhang of average size to the right of the crevice. One can emerge on the right of the arete by negotiating this easy overhang. Climbers are advised to continue another 10 m along the crevice on a free rope in order to reach a horizontal rocky ledge located to the left of the arete (3) [see illustration between pages 96 and 97, orig.] which is $\frac{1}{2}$ m wide and 2 m long. It is a very convenient location for belaying safety lines and assembling the party. There are, however, few cracks in the rock around the ledge. The use of the horizontal angular crack between the floor and the wall of the ledge is recommended for the purpose of securing the position of the leader. A short horizontal piton can be driven in here, but it may not be very secure. This 20 m passage is the most difficult of the entire climb. The convenient angular crack greatly facilitates the ascent, however, and the solid granite makes the climb safe and agreeable.

To the right of the rocky ledge already described (3), the ascent continues on a free rope across the arete. Five or six m along, one encounters a huge rocky protrusion which, along with the arete, a chimney 1 m wide. If necessary, the upper part of the chimney can be used for belaying ropes and assembling the party. The northern side of the protrusion will also serve these purposes. Above this one continues on a free rope to emerge on a ledge covered with stones to the right of the arete. It is 1 m wide and 2 to 3 m long.

From this ledge one can climb along the arete on a free rope (the use of several pitons is recommended) for one rope's length to emerge at the large rocky block which is a characteristic feature of Iglata Peak. It is located on the upper part of the peak and can be seen when the peak is regarded in profile from any direction.

Above this distinctive block, there are rocky passages for about 60 m which are easy to traverse on a free rope and which lead to a point below the rocky dome (4) [see illustration between pages 96 and 97, orig.] in which the peak culminates. At the foot of the dome (4) to the right of the arete, there is a convenient rocky ledge where the team can gather. In a hole in the rock here there is a notebook in which a record of the ascents made is kept. Following an easy 7 to 8 m rocky passage above the ledge, one emerges at the summit of Iglata Peak (2575 m).

The southern arete of the Iglata Peak is 350 m long. The lower, unmarked portion is 150 m long, while the upper part which has been specified in detail and which begins with the grass and rock ledge (1) in the center of the arete is about 200 m long. The only possible route by which the southern arete can be climbed is 7 rope lengths long. The route is laid out along the solid granite parts of the southern arete, and there are many convenient hand and footholds as well as cracks. Climbers have full view of each other during the ascent. Easy stretches and those of average difficulty predominate along this route.

The southern arete of Iglata Peak can be climbed by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists, but a team composed of 2 persons is recommended. This route offers ledges which are convenient for consolidating the party or alternating leadership.

About 10 pitons of varying heaviness, size and type and as many snap rings should be carried.

The part of the route across the marked portion of the arete can be climbed in 4 hours, and it takes a maximum of 6 hours to climb the entire arete.

This route is classified 5 A in difficulty.

The Northern Arete of Iglata Peak

This arete is composed of biotite schists, in its upper part, and of granite in the lower portions.

The ascent of Iglata Peak via the northern arete can be made as follows:

I. By following the Siniya ravine (I-1) [see illustration between pages 96 and 97, orig.] and climbing the rocky western couloir which ends at the saddle (2) [see illustration between pages 96 and 97, orig.] between Dvuglav and Iglata Peaks. This easy rocky couloir is 4 rope lengths long. It begins with 20 m of rocky passages composed of easily crumbled granite, beyond which there is a grass covered, slightly inclined ledge. Beyond this point the couloir begins to narrow. It divides the western wall of Iglata Peak from the western wall of Dvuglav Peak, and leads upward from the Siniya ravine. It has a floor formed of step-like rocky blocks which are unstable and mixed with scil in some places. It is easiest to climb by means of the chimney technique. The upper part of the couloir contains two rocky blocks which have tumbled down from higher up and are located 10 m apart. These have the appearance of a strange type of overhang. The first of these is 5 to 6 m long and forms an overhang formation which can easily be negotiated with 1 or 2 pitons. The couloir here is easy to climb by means of the chimney technique. The climb is facilitated by passing behind this block of rock by utilizing the other blocks which are found in a step-like formation on the floor of the couloir. Above this block, one reaches, by following the bottom of the couloir, the second block, which lies on the other side. This also constitutes an easy 5 to 6 m overhang which can be climbed by means of the chimney technique. One emerges again on the floor of the couloir, which is covered

with soil and gravel here. Ten m higher up, one encounters the saddle (2). The ascent of this couloir can be made on a free line, and climbers have full view of each other. Great care should be taken in view of the danger of rock slides. At all points where pitons should be driven, however, there is an opportunity for the team leader to shelter himself.

II. By emerging from the crevice between Dvuglav Peak and the eastern portion of Iglata Peak. The beginning of this groove is composed of terrace-like patches of rock slab which gradually narrow into a rocky groove.

The upper part of this crevice is steep, grassy and broad. It is easy to climb. From it one emerges at the saddle (2). Where the terrace-like rocky passages end, one can follow the eastern wall of Iglata Peak and emerge on the southern arete, from which point the route across the arete begins. The crevice is some 10 rope lengths long.

By traversing the western grassy slope of Dvuglav Peak (II) from the Siniya ravine, one can reach the saddle (2) comparatively easily. This traverse is a convenient route via which to leave the saddle in case of inclement weather.

III. By emerging en rappel from the grassy rocky ledges in terrace formation on the southwestern part of Dvuglav Peak onto the saddle between this peak and the northern arete of Iglata Peak (this maneuver can also be executed in reverse).

After reaching the saddle, which has an altitude of 2540 m, the ascent of the northern arete itself is pursued. To reach it, one follows the easy grass and rock covered eastern slope on a free line. After one rope's length, one emerges on a broad grassy ledge which forms the base of a tapering rocky dome, in which Iglata Peak culminates.

One can climb on a free rope from this ledge up a rocky passage some 10 odd meters long to a smaller and similar ledge. A few m farther along, beyond a rocky and easy passage, one emerges on the summit of Iglata Peak.

The ascent of Iglata Peak via the northern arete can be made by teams composed of either 2 or 3 alpinists.

The ascent via this route is easy, and varies in time required depending on the route selected. The difficulty of all these variations is classified 3 A.

Three to four pitons and as many snap rings should be carried.

The summit of Iglata Peak is a horizontal rocky arete 3 to 4 m high and about 30 m long. It affords a view of the valley of the Rilska River, the Central Rila Mountains and the Pirin Mountains.

The descent from Iglata Peak is done en rappel as far as the saddle between Iglata and Dvuglav Peaks. Below this one has the choice of the following routes: climbing the rocky western side of Dvuglav Peak (III); descending along a rocky couloir toward the Siniya ravine (I); descending the crevice between Iglata and Dvuglav Peaks; or traversing the western, grassy slope of Dvuglav Peak down to the Siniya ravine (II).

The best starting points for the ascent of this peak are the Partizanska meadow and the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut. From the Partizanska meadow to the foot of the wall it is about 1½ hours' hike. From the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut to the wall, it is about 2 to 3 hours' hike.

The Dyavolskite Igli Peaks

[All arabic and roman numerals in parentheses refer to illustration between 104-105, orig.]

To the south of Zliya Zub and Lovnitsa Peaks rise the Dyavolskite Igli Peaks, (2580 m) on the rocky ridge between the Beliya and Dyavolskiya ravines. Their perpendicular southern walls drop off toward these ravines.

These peaks have been thus named by alpinists because they are very difficult to climb [the name in Bulgarian means "the devil's needles"].

The southern wall of the Dyavolskite Igle Peaks is composed of granite, pegmatite, porphyric granite and biotite schist. these rocky patches are interrupted by steep, sometimes perpendicular grass covered walls. The wall is 350 m high.

After numerous observation trips, Senior Alpine Instructors Ivan Yanakiev, leader, Georgi Shterev and Georgi Atanasov of the "G. Dimitrov" VIF made the first attempt at climbing the wall of the Dyavolskite Igle Peaks on 20 July 1954. In 8 hours they climbed only 60 m. Upon finding the further ascent impossible, they made the descent by means of three maneuvers en rapel (I).

On 7 September of the same year, another attempt was made, but by a different route. The team, consisting of Senior Alpine Instructor Georgi Shterev, leader and Instructors Totka Osikovska and Lyubomire Nedkov of the "G. Dimitrov" VIF, climbed 120 m of the wall. Darkness forced the climbers to camp in a small rocky cavity in the wall (2), tied securely to alpine pitons. Because of the lack of the equipment necessary to negotiate an overhang which they encountered, the climbers descended 30 m the next day to find a better route by which to continue the ascent. After regaining the distance lost, the climbers found further advance equally difficult and descended via the route used in the first attempt (II).

After camping at the "BAK" shelter, Senior Alpine Instructors Georgi Atanasov, Ivan Yanakiev and Georgi Shterev undertook on the morning of 18 September 1954 a fresh attempt to climb the wall of the Dyavolskite Igle Peaks. They chose to follow the route by which the second attempt had been made. They reached the rocky cavity (2), where the preceding climbing party had spent the night, after about 4 hours' climbing. Above

this cavity there is an overhang which, if negotiated, provides easy access for the ascent of the remainder of the wall. This overhang can be traversed, however, only by means of expert alpine techniques; the use of many pitons; a double line; and double or triple ladders -- these, which are necessary because of the lack of footholds, must often be secured to pitons which are not too stable. After several hours' effort, the team emerged above the overhang, but because of darkness, was obliged to camp 60 m below the top part of the wall. They spent the night on a small ledge, securely tied to rock pitons. The following day, 19 September 1954, they continued the ascent, starting at 7 AM. They reached the summit of the peak in 3 hours. The team had conquered one of the most difficult alpine walls in Bulgaria after 26 hours' climbing.

The ascent is begun across a 2- m rocky sector which can be climbed on a free rope. One emerges at a small chimney.

After climbing this small 3 to 4 m chimney, one emerges on an inclined slab of rock ($1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 m long) from which, via a small traverse to the right, one can reach a grassy patch by means of the use of 2 pitons. Here one can belay safety ropes, using 1 piton. The ascent is made with all climbers in full view of each other.

One climbs diagonally to the left on a free rope to reach, after some 10 m, a large block of rock in the middle of the groove to the left. At this point the party should be consolidated. One then continues over a grassy and rocky patch for a full rope length, to reach a convenient ledge composed of rock blocks, on which juniper is found. 1 piton is used.

To continue the ascent, it is necessary to bear to the left through a chimney located beneath a solid slab of rock which forms the outer part of the chimney. Following the chimney for 20 m, one emerges on a convenient ledge which provides opportunities for belaying safety ropes (1). The entire wall is visible from this point.

The ascent continues to the left along the wall toward the foot of a high, smooth wall. The convenient rocky protrusions found at several points along this traverse are used for belaying safety ropes. This wall can be reached after 30 m climb on a free rope. Twenty m of this distance should be covered by angling to the right across the easy traverse along the bottom of the wall, where there are two natural rock protrusions which can be used for belaying safety ropes securely. One then continues to the right along a broad, diagonal crack which is at first much crumbled. Crossing it, one reaches a series of inclined slabs of rock which can be climbed by means of 2 pitons. One continues to the right on a slight diagonal along the same crack, across a difficult 5 m sector which is perpendicular. Above it there is a traverse to the right along a slab of rock. There is then another short diagonal stretch from which one must use 1 piton to descend again about 2 m. From this point one follows another slab to the right as far as a crumbling groove in the rock which ends at a large rocky hole (2). This can be reached with one rope's length by means of the use of 7 pitons. This hole is covered by a slab of rock, which should be removed and later replaced, so that the hole can be used for safety purposes. This hole is humid as a result of dripping water inside it. It was here that the team making the second attempt at climbing the wall camped on 7 September 1954. There is a large overhang above the cavity.

The most important sector of the route lies above this hole. One first climbs along a horizontal crevice to the right of the cavity. The walls of this groove permit the driving of pitons on which long ladders are affixed (2, 3 or 4 rungs). These provide the only possible means of progressing in this direction. The ascent of these passages

is made on a double line. After about 3 m one emerges from the hole to a point just below the overhang itself. One then continues horizontally to the right along the ladders. These are suspended from pitons placed close together. These are moved upward as the party progresses. It is from this point that the actual ascent of the overhang is begun. The climb is made by means of insecure pitons driven into the unstable block of rock which forms the overhang. This overhang is climbed on a double rope and by ladders. There is a danger that the pitons may give way, and it is for this reason that climbers must be extremely cautious and constantly on guard until they reach the small, cramped ledge. From this point an entire rope's length must be negotiated by means of ladders. The ascent of these passages requires 18 pitons. In some places the free movement of the rope is difficult.

One continues straight upward from the small ledge across a rock and grass stretch by crossing a small, narrow traverse to the right, and after about 20 m, one reaches a convenient spot for belaying ropes.

Following a perpendicular and very difficult grass covered sector, one reaches, after about 10 m, a small ledge above which the date 10 September 1954 and the initials "VIP" (3) have been carved in the rock. Camp was made on this ledge during the first successful ascent of the wall.

Above this ledge (3) one continues over a difficult and dangerous grass sector for 15 m. One reaches, on a free rope, a small, smooth chimney to the left. To the left of a convenient hole in the rock, there is a place where safety ropes can be belayed.

The chimney is very difficult to climb. A transfer to the right must be made above it, passing under an overhang. One emerges on a very steep slab of rock, across which another transfer, this time to

the left, must be made. This is very difficult to effect. One emerges above the overhang, which blocks the small chimney. Following a crumbling grass covered sector, one reaches, after 25 m negotiated with the help of 5 or 6 pitons, the uppermost part of the chimney. Here there is an opportunity of belaying safety ropes with 3 pitons. These cannot, however, be made entirely secure.

The small chimney is about 10 m long. It can be climbed on a free rope, but this is difficult, as it is very narrow. There is barely room for the shoulders to enter, and for this reason it is difficult to push the body upward. At the top, one emerges at the saddle between the two small peaks. A stone marker has been placed here.

This route is 300 m long, overall, and the perpendicular part of the wall is 200 m long. There is no way of emerging from the right or the left of the wall, and the descent en rappel is comparatively difficult because of the large overhangs and smooth slabs.

This route is best climbed by teams of three people linked by lines of a full rope's length each. The difficult overhangs (at about the tenth rope length) must be negotiated on a double line. Because of the difficulty of the climb and the great height, this section must be climbed by each member of the team only when both the others are firmly secured to pitons. It is best to alternate leadership. This makes it possible for all team members to conserve their strength.

Twenty to twenty-five pitons and as many snap rings should be carried. Several ladders are also necessary. It is also advisable to carry a rappel line.

The climb takes 6 to 8 hours, and climbers have each other in good view. This route is classified 5 B as to difficulty.

The best starting point for this ascent is the Partizanska meadow, which is one hour's hike from the beginning of the climb. The beginning of the route is $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours' hike from the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut.

Kamilata Peak

[All figures and symbols in parentheses refer to illustration opposite page 112, orig.]

The peak which rises to the northwest of Lovnitsa Peak, from which it is separated by the Lovnishki Pass, is called Kamilata Peak. This peak, as a matter of fact, constitutes the beginning of a ridge. It starts at Lovnishki Pass, runs to the northwest to Chernata Skala Peak, and from there continues to the north between the Mal'ovishka and Prekite Rivers. It is called the Ruzhdavitsa ridge.

An interesting rocky formation which has the appearance of a reclining camel with one hump can be seen on the southern slope of this peak when it is viewed from the Orlovets or Zliya Zub Peaks. The form of this peak was the reason that an imaginative mountaineer gave it the name "The Camel." This 2550 m peak was until recently unnamed.

This peak can easily be climbed from its northwestern, southern or eastern side, along steep, grassy slopes covered with large blocks of rock and, in some places, juniper.

The northern side of the peak (the eastern sector of it) is an alpine wall about 150 m high. It is composed of granite, interrupted in some places by steep grassy passages. It is also cut by several chimneys and perpendicular rocky grooves which are easily climbed.

The first ascent of the northern wall of Kamilata Peak (...) was made on 29 September 1953. It was made by alpine students of the "G. Dimitrov" VIF, Krustyu Aleksiev, Dimo Dimov and Nedyalko Aleksiev

under the leadership and guidance of Alpine Instructor Georgi Shterev. The wall was attacked along the chimney by two teams. The ascent took 4 hours and was made in good weather.

The northern wall of Kamilata Peak rises to the south of the Malomalyovishki Lakes. It is bisected almost exactly in the center by a large, deep chimney, which the route of the first ascent followed. One reaches the foot of the wall by attacking the wall on the farthest right, where there is a crevice containing loose rock (a couloir). It can be climbed without a rope, and leads one up the lower part of the wall (about 150 m high). The rest of the lower, slab covered part of the wall can thus be avoided.

The route involves 2 perpendicular, crevice-like chimneys (the left one is about 10 m high and the right one about 12 m) along which, climbing on a free line, one can easily reach the beginning of a slightly inclined broad rocky crevice 5 to 6 m long. This crevice merges gradually into step-like, rocky crevice passages about 7 to 8 m long. These in turn merge into a slightly inclined and broad rocky groove about 8 m long. The lower end of this groove can be reached with 1 full rope length. At this point it is possible to belay safety ropes securely. From this point two chimney-like rocky grooves -- a narrow one to the left and a broad one to the right -- 10 m long extend. Negotiating these on a free rope, one enters another broad, slightly inclined rocky crevice, this time about 8 m long. This can be climbed on a free line to reach the foot of a broad chimney (1) 20 m long. It is recommended that the party be consolidated here.

The 20 m chimney previously described can also be reached by following a steep series of grassy passages (---) to the right of the starting point of the route. One emerges, after climbing them diagonally, at the foot of the chimney (1). These passages can be climbed on a free rope.

The chimney (1) is $1\frac{1}{2}$ m wide at the foot, narrowing gradually as it rises. It can easily be climbed with 1 or 2 pitons. One can climb about 20 m to the left or the right of the chimney in rocky grooves, using 2 or 3 pitons. By any one of these 3 means, one reaches a large, curved and moderately sloped rock and grass ledge (2) about 5 m long, in one of the grooves.

To the right and above the curved platform (2) there is a broad chimney 30 m high. The first 15 m of this chimney can be climbed easily on a free rope. Following solid patches of rock one reaches a broad, comfortable rocky ledge located in the middle of the chimney. The last 15 m of the chimney constitute the more difficult half to climb. Two or three pitons must be driven in to the left of the narrowest part of the chimney, which culminates in an overhang (X). This should be skirted so as to get to the beginning of a broad, easy chimney-like crevice which forms the continuation of the chimney. One climbs on a free rope with full view of the rest of the party for 80 m across shifting, crumbled grass or rock or mixed stretches to emerge on the summit of the peak.

In addition to the broad 30 m long chimney in which the route ends, a rocky groove which leads upward from the arched ledge (2) at the beginning of the chimney also gives access to the summit. By following this rocky groove, or the left, rocky arete of the chimney (---) across easy, solid rocky passages, 2 rope lengths and 2 or 3 pitons for each rope length lead one to a large grassy ledge (3) on the left hand, rocky arete of the chimney, from which one can emerge on the summit of the peak after one rope length on a free line.

The length of the route via the chimney is 150 m, and it takes 6 to 7 rope lengths. This route can conveniently be climbed by teams composed of 2 or 3 alpinists. The ascent takes 2 hours, and climbers

The chimney (1) is $1\frac{1}{2}$ m wide at the foot, narrowing gradually as it rises. It can easily be climbed with 1 or 2 pitons. One can climb about 20 m to the left or the right of the chimney in rocky grooves, using 2 or 3 pitons. By any one of these 3 means, one reaches a large, curved and moderately sloped rock and grass ledge (2) about 5 m long, in one of the grooves.

To the right and above the curved platform (2) there is a broad chimney 30 m high. The first 15 m of this chimney can be climbed easily on a free rope. Following solid patches of rock one reaches a broad, comfortable rocky ledge located in the middle of the chimney. The last 15 m of the chimney constitute the more difficult half to climb. Two or three pitons must be driven in to the left of the narrowest part of the chimney, which culminates in an overhang (X). This should be skirted so as to get to the beginning of a broad, easy chimney-like crevice which forms the continuation of the chimney. One climbs on a free rope with full view of the rest of the party for 80 m across shifting, crumbled grass or rock or mixed stretches to emerge on the summit of the peak.

In addition to the broad 30 m long chimney in which the route ends, a rocky groove which leads upward from the arched ledge (2) at the beginning of the chimney also gives access to the summit. By following this rocky groove, or the left, rocky arete of the chimney (---) across easy, solid rocky passages, 2 rope lengths and 2 or 3 pitons for each rope length lead one to a large grassy ledge (3) on the left hand, rocky arete of the chimney, from which one can emerge on the summit of the peak after one rope length on a free line.

The length of the route via the chimney is 150 m, and it takes 6 to 7 rope lengths. This route can conveniently be climbed by teams composed of 2 or 3 alpinists. The ascent takes 2 hours, and climbers

have an excellent view of other members of the party. Five pitons and as many snap rings are needed. In climbing the rocky, crevice-like chimneys, care must be taken in manipulating the rope so as to avoid dislodging pieces of rock.

Easy passages predominate along the entire length of the chimney which bisects the northern wall of Kamilata Peak. The only difficult passages here are found in the 20 m chimney below the curved ledge (2) and in the upper half of the big chimney. Because of these passages, the route is classified 3 A in difficulty.

In climbing the northern wall of Kamilata Peak, one has a view of the Malomalyovishki Lakes, the Svinskoto Lake, the Strashnoto Lake, the Brekite rivers and the valley of the Iskrovete rivers with Govedartsi village.

The most convenient starting points for the ascent of the northern wall of Kamilata Peak are the "Mal'ovitsa" tourist hut, one hour's hike from the foot of the wall, and the alpine shelter at Strashnoto Lake, also one hour's hike away. The closest and most convenient shelter in bad weather is the "BAK" alpine shelter which can be reached from the wall in $\frac{1}{2}$ hour at a maximum.

Lovnitsa Peak

[All symbols in parentheses refer to the illustration between pages 112 and 113, orig.]

Lovnitsa Peak (2570 m) is one of the peaks which is often erroneously called or considered one of the Rupite Peaks. It rises to the northeast of Zliya Zub Peak, beginning at the Zliya Prelez Pass and covering the area along the main ridge running east of Kamilata Peak as far as the Kупenite Peaks. The southeastern grassy slopes of the peak, which are dangerous from the point of view of avalanches, are intersected in places

by large rocky crevices which drop off steeply toward the valley of the Rilska River and Sukhoto Lake. The northern part of the peak is a perpendicular wall 150 m high which rises from the bottom of the huge cirque which serves as the source of the Prekrite rivers.

The northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak is composed of large grained granite interspersed with veins of pegmatite. It is moist and moss-covered. It is a typical northern mountain wall.

The first attempt at the ascent of the wall was made on 21 July 1952 by Senior Instructor and Master of Sports Encho Petkov, leader, and Senior Instructors Georgi Atanasov and Vladimir Toshkov. It was at this time that the lower half of this route, leading across the left hand portion of the wall, was marked out. Master of Sports Encho Petkov reached the center of the wall, but was forced to turn back because of the difficulty of the overhang (x) and the wetness of the rocks.

The first successful ascent of the wall was made on 29 September 1953 by Senior Instructors Tsanko Bangiev, leader, Georgi Atanasov and Andrey Mirchev. Following the route of the ascent which had to be abandoned the preceding year, we made an unsuccessful attempt to climb the large and very difficult overhang (x). We were forced to turn back, and completely the ascent (the first) successfully via the easier righthand part of the wall. We marked out a new route over this portion of the wall in 3½ hours' time (1 P.M. to 5:30 P.M.).

The northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak rises above the extensive rocky approach by which one reaches the rock part of the wall. The wall is divided in half by a deep, rocky crevice which separates the two parts--the eastern and the western. To gain access to one of these parts, one must ascend a very broad, perpendicular rocky crevice about 60 m long. This is done on a free rope by means of the walls or the bottom of the

groove. These are formed of blocks of rock in a stairstep formation, which are greatly indented in some places. Climbers have full view of the other members of the party, and it is easy to emerge on a traverse (1) located to the right of the groove. From this traverse one has access to both the eastern and western parts of the wall.

The Eastern Part of the Northern Wall of Lovnitsa Peak

The eastern part of the northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak is reached by crossing from the traverse (1) above the crevice to a clearly visible and angular rocky groove to the left of the white rock passage which can be seen when regarding the wall even from a distance. The bottom of this large angular groove is reached by making a diagonal traverse across short rocky passages interrupted by terrace-like grass covered ledges for one rope's length. With the help of several pitons the climbers, keeping each other in full view, can reach the bottom of the large, angular rock groove. This is a convenient point for belaying safety ropes and consolidating the party. There is a grassy ledge here. The large angular groove leads upward from this ledge. The lower part of it is composed of two neighboring grooves -- one on the left and one on the right. Fifteen m higher up, the right hand one disappears, and the only means of ascent is the small, left hand rocky groove. It is recommended that safety ropes be belayed in the righthand branch of the groove. It has a convenient platform at its foot which measures 1 x 1 m. From this point one must cross to the left hand groove. After using 6 to 7 pitons to traverse 15 m of difficult passage, one reaches the large and difficult overhang (x) which blocks this crevice. It is difficult because of the fact that there are no cracks in the rock. In order to reach the second overhang, a wooden piton must be driven

into the wide crack in the angular crevice. This overhang is difficult to negotiate. It was here that the two unsuccessful attempts to climb this wall, undertaken in 1952 and 1953, were frustrated.

The Western Part of the Northern Wall of Lovnitsa Peak

The western part of the northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak is reached by passing from the grass covered traverse (1) to the rocky, angular groove which leads upward toward the summit. From the grassy traverse a difficult 10 to 12 m granite passage, which can be overcome with 4 to 5 pitons, leads to a slightly inclined rocky ledge within the groove itself. Above this ledge there is a difficult 7 to 8 m angular passage which becomes increasingly difficult in its higher portion. Here one should cross over to the easy overhang at the bottom of the neighboring right hand groove, where there is a horizontal grass covered platform (2) measuring 1 x 1 m. It is a convenient point for belaying safety ropes securely and consolidating the party.

There are three possible routes for continuing the ascent:

1. One can continue above the grassy horizontal ledge (2) to the left along the first rocky and angular groove for about 10 to 12 m. This route is not recommended, because about 6 to 7 m above the ledge the groove becomes an overhang of average difficulty. The opportunities for belaying safety ropes decrease.
2. One can continue along the central rocky and angular groove above the grass covered ledge (2) on a free rope for some 10 m. These are easy granite passages, and one can use his hands along the solid, broad angular crack.
3. One can go to the right from the grass covered ledge (2) along a broad 10 m groove composed of grass and rock passages, to emerge at the point where the two rocky and angular grooves merge into one broad crevice.

The second and third routes are the recommended ones. When the climber reaches the point where the central groove and the right hand groove merge, it is advisable that he continue the ascent along the left side of the groove thus formed. The left hand groove eventually merges with the other two on this side. From this point on the ascent is made along the clearly marked and only possible rocky crevice, which forms the continuation of the first. Seven to eight m are easy passages which can be climbed with 1 or 2 pitons. An easy overhang is then encountered, above which there is a rocky ledge (3) which offers opportunities for safety measures.

Above this ledge (3) the ascent continues to the left. One negotiates an easy overhang on a free rope. One can also climb to the right angle of the rocky crevice to reach rocky and grassy passages 80 m long which one can ascend on a free rope to reach the summit of the peak.

The northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak is about 180 m high. The ascent via the route laid out over the western part of the wall can be made in 6 to 7 rope lengths. This route lies across solid passages, most of which are easy to negotiate. Climbers have a good view of other members of the party during the ascent.

About 8 pitons of various sizes and as many snap rings should be carried.

The ascent should be made by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists; and depending on the number in the party, takes 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

This route is classified 3 B as to difficulty.

From the northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak one has a view of the various Prekorek and Iskur rivers. From the summit of Lovnitsa Peak all the parts of the Rila Mountains can be seen.

The most convenient starting points for climbs along this wall are the "Mal'bitsa" tourist hut, one hour's hike away, and the "Strashmoto Ezero" and "BAK" shelters half an hour away.

The Kuppenite Peaks

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration opposite page 113, orig.]

The Kuppenite Peaks (2700 m) are three rocky projections which rise from the main Rila ridge between Lopushki Peak on the northeast and Lovnitsa Peak on the northwest. They are found in the Mal'ovitsa sector. They are separated by two broad ravines containing rockslides. These three peaks appear most imposing from the northwest. Their steep, rocky bodies rise, on the southeast, above the cirque which contains Strashmoto Lake, and, reflected in its crystal waters, lend the lake an element of mystery. At certain times this lake is truly terrifying, particularly in stormy weather, when the waves break with tremendous force against the rocky shores, and the lightning's tongues of fire are reflected in its waters.

These three peaks received their name from the fact that they resemble haystacks in shape ["kuppen" means "stack" in Bulgarian] particularly when seen from the south. To this very day the local population calls them the "Kuppenite."

The Kuppenite Peaks are most accessible from the southwest along the steep and rocky slopes which are covered with huge rocky blocks with occasional stretches of pure rock. The ascent of these peaks can also be made along the ridge, but this requires a knowledge of alpine techniques and the use of alpine ropes in some places -- principally along the low, perpendicular walls which rise above the two passes which separate the peaks. The most inaccessible side of these peaks is formed by their northwestern sides. These are perpendicular walls.

The northern Kupaen peak is a small rocky summit up which no exact routes have been laid out. It is of no special interest to alpinists, except as a training site. It can be climbed in 3 to 4 rope lengths.

The southern Kupaen peak attracts the attention of hikers and alpinists because of its perpendicular wall. It is of no real special value to alpinists, however, because its right part is a monolithic slab, while the left side is exceptionally easy to climb.

The central Kupaen peak, which lies between the other two, is the best and most interesting from the point of view of alpine climbs. The first ascent of the northwestern wall of the central Kupaen peak was made on 29 September 1953 by student alpinists of the "G. Dimitrov" VIF and Instructors Boris Marinov and Kiril Petrov, who alternated as leader. They laid out a new route in 3 hours under excellent weather conditions (between 11 A.M. and 2 P.M.).

The wall of the central Kupaen peak has a northwestern exposure and is composed of granite with a compact border of biotite schist.

The ascent of this wall is begun by following one of the two ravines which ascend its right and left sides. One climbs along easy passages for about 60 m on a free rope to reach a very large rocky ledge (1). It is covered with large, massive blocks of rock. It is a convenient point for belaying safety ropes and consolidating the party. Above it there is a 30 m chimney which cuts through the left portion of the wall.

From this large rocky ledge (1) one follows the sloped floor of the chimney, using 1 or 2 pitons, for about 30 m to reach the perpendicular 15 m section of the chimney -- its upper portion. It ends in a large overhang. The chimney is about 2 m wide. The most difficult portion to climb is the perpendicular wall at the bottom of the chimney.

It can be accomplished, although with some difficulty, with 4 or 5 pitons. Emerging from the chimney presents particular difficulties, since it is necessary to negotiate the overhang. The chimney is covered with moist lichen and moss which render the ascent more difficult. It is recommended that the left side of the chimney be avoided. It is better to make the climb along the right side.

To avoid the right side, it is necessary for the team to cross the left rocky arete of the chimney to emerge on sloping rocky passages one full rope's length above which one finds a convenient ledge. This ledge serves as a belaying point.

Above this ledge the ascent progresses over passages of average difficulty where 2 to 3 pitons can be used. After one full rope's length one reaches another convenient ledge which is located to the left of the crevice above the chimney. Following solid patches of rock on a free line for about 60 m, one then emerges at the summit of the peak.

Above the chimney there is a gradually sloped, grass covered crevice which can be followed on a free line for about 30 m to reach a large, slightly inclined rocky ledge (2). Continuing on a free rope, one emerges after some easy patches 60 m long on the summit.

To the right of the chimney one can follow easy rock passages 4 to 5 m long on which there are an abundance of large, rock and grass ledges for a total of 25 m, using one or 2 pitons. One encounters a large, slightly inclined rocky platform (2) covered with moist moss.

Five to six m above this mossy platform (2) there are 2 possible routes by which the ascent can be continued:

1. To the right of the ledge (2) there is a rocky groove which one can follow for a full rope's length to emerge on a convenient ledge in the center of the wall (3). This ledge merges into a broad traverse which circles the upper part of the wall. Three rope lengths on a free line across this traverse take one to the summit of the peak.

2. To the left of the ledge (2) there is a 20 m rocky and angular groove in the middle of which there are unstable blocks of rock. It must be climbed carefully. The upper part of the groove leads to a slightly inclined ledge on its right side above the chimney. It is recommended that the ascent of the central and dangerous portion of the rocky groove be avoided in order to prevent the possible crumbling of the unstable blocks of rock. Just below the center of the groove, one can shift about 7 or 8 m to the right of the rocky blocks to reach the platform located on the right side of the groove and above the chimney. In either case, about 20 m of rope are needed. The difficult rocky passages can be negotiated with 2 to 3 pitons, and climbers have partial view of each other. The platform to the right of the chimney groove is a convenient place for belaying safety ropes securely.

One continues to the right near the right hand arete of the chimney (of the groove) for a full rope's length. The ascent is made over very easy and solid patches of rock which are in some places interrupted. Then, after 50 m across exceptionally easy mixed patches one reaches the summit of the peak.

The northwestern wall of the central Kupaen peak is about 150 m high. It can be climbed with about 5 to 7 rope lengths and in about 2 hours. Climbers have an excellent view of other members of the team. Five or six rock pitons and as many snap rings should be carried. This route can easily be climbed by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists.

Easy rocky passages predominate on this wall. In some places there are short difficult passages. This route is classified 3 B in difficulty.

granite with crumbling orthoclase rock. The rocky passages are covered with dark lichens.

The northwestern wall of Kharamiyata Peak is divided into 3 parts by 2 rocky, almost perpendicular ravines. These are the central, northern and southern parts. To the left and right of the central part, the northern and southern parts protrude considerably in the form of rocky aretes.

The first ascent of this wall was made on 15 August 1953 by a group of students from the TsAL [Tsentralen alpiyski lager -- Central Alpine Camp] under the leadership and guidance of Senior Instructor Milko Chernev.

All three parts of the wall were undertaken and successfully climbed.

The central part of the wall is of greatest interest to alpinists. It is 120 m high and rises to the summit of this peak. The right side of this wall is monolithic with a predominantly slablike nature which makes it impossible to climb. The left portion is interrupted by grassy ledges and small crevices which make it easy to climb. It contains the most interesting and the longest routes to be found on any of the three parts of the wall.

The first ascent (...) of this wall was made on 15 August 1953 by Senior Instructor on Alpinism Milko Chernev, leader and Ivan Chipev (both instructors at the TsAL).. The ascent was begun at 1:30 PM and took 2 to 2½ hours. The weather was dark, foggy and rainy.

The foothills of the central portion of the wall (grassy and rock covered in some places) can be reached by following a steep, sliding patch of rock which is deeply grooved between the northern and southern parts of the wall. The climb begins with easy rocky patches of 20 m in length. These can be climbed on a free line, or one piton may be used. One emerges on a steep 10 m grassy ledge (1). The team should be gathered at this ledge.

Above this platform (1) there are easy rock and grass patches along which the ascent may be pursued. Another possibility is to bear to the right by following a 10 m traverse which leads to the foot of a broad chimney 30 m high. This chimney can even more easily be reached by climbing for one rope's length along the righthand rocky ravine of the wall instead of taking the approach described above. The chimney begins with a perpendicular wall 10 m high. It can be climbed along a difficult rocky crevice to the left, or along a broader and easier angular groove on the right. This is the most difficult rock pitch on the wall. Because of the lack of cracks, it must be climbed on a free line. Above it there is an easy chimney 7 to 8 m high and inclined to the right. This is also climbed on a free rope. Above it there are steep grass and rock covered crevices which are followed to one full rope's length. On the right in the upper part of one crevice there is a convenient rocky protrusion which serves as a natural belaying point for safety ropes.

An easy 7 to 8 m high passage of rock above this crevice leads to a grassy stretch inclined to the left. Following this diagonally for some 10 m, one reaches the beginning of an easy rocky crevice which is angular and which has a grassy bottom. This is followed on a free rope for one full rope's length, at which point a small grassy ledge (2) is encountered. To the left of this ledge there is a convenient rocky protrusion which can be used as a natural rope-belaying point.

By following an easy grassy traverse diagonally to the left, one reaches another grassy ledge 3 m x 1 m in area after a climb of 8 to 10 m. Above this ledge there are easy grassy and rock covered stretches which are climbed on a free to a large terracelike ledge (3) from which one emerges on the left arete of the wall. It is at this point that the lefthand ravine in the wall begins. The ledge provides sufficient possibilities for belaying ropes.

An easy rocky goove 7 to 8 m long which is grass covered leads upward from this ledge (3). Above it easy grass and rock covered stretches which can be climbed on a free line lead one to the highest part of the peak.

The overall length of the route laid out across the left side of the central portion of the northwestern wall of Kharamiyata Peak is 5 rope lengths.

This route can be climbed on a free rope in 1 hour. Climbers have full view of each other. It can be climbed conveniently by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. 2 or 3 pitons and as many snap rings should be carried. There are no cracks in the wall, but there is an abundance of rocky protrusions which serve as natural belaying points for securing the leader as well as the entire team. The ascent of this wall is facilitated by the solid hand and footgrips and by the grassy patches covered with strong alpine grass. Easy rocky passages predominate along the entire length of the wall. This route is classified 3 A in difficulty.

The southern part of Kharamiyata Peak (---) is composed of a short wall with a western exposure in which a broad rocky chimney is cut. Two lengths of a free line suffice for the ascent of this chimney. The passages here are very gradually inclined. 2 rope lengths bring one out on the summit of the peak.

The southern rocky part of the peak has a wall with a northern exposure which can be climbed along a convenient rocky chimney far to the right of it. One rope length and 1 or 2 pitons enable one to climb this difficult chimney to emerge on the right arete of the wall. From this point one climbs to the top of the peak on a free line.

The first ascent of the southern part of Kharamiyata Peak (---) was made on 15 August 1953 by 12 students from the TsAL under the leadership of

Instructor Dimitur Ivanov. The climb began at 1:30 P.M. in dark, foggy and rainy weather. The students climbed this part of the wall in 3 hours, making the ascent in four teams of 3 people each.

To the right of the beginning of the right hand ravine up the wall, climbing the 2 easy rocky crevices or the right side of the ravine wall itself, one can emerge after one rope's length at a large grassy ledge of an average incline. From it, traversing diagonally to the right, one comes to the rocky right hand arete of the wall which can be climbed on a free rope to emerge on the summit of the peak.

The northern part of the peak begins with a monolithic rocky wall with a western exposure. It is difficult to climb except for its northernmost end where the ascent as far as the upper part of the wall is easy. From that point one can climb to the highest part of the peak on a free rope.

The southwestern portion of the northern part of the wall is of greater interest. One can reach the center of this wall in 2 rope lengths, and its left end via a traverse across easy, grassy and steep ledges. From that point $2\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths on a free rope takes one to the highest part of the peak.

The first ascent of the northern part of the wall (.-.-) was made on 15 August 1953 by 3 students of the TsAL under the leadership of instructor Racho Moinovski. They began the ascent at 1:30 P.M. and climbed for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours in dark, foggy and rainy weather.

To the left of these steep grassy passages one comes to a broad rocky crack. It can be reached by using wooden pitons. The most difficult part of this stretch (1 rope length) is that leading to the northern part. Three rope lengths across this part lead one to the top of the peak. Several pitons and snap rings are needed.

The northern and southern parts of the wall are used for practice climbs, particularly in the training of beginning alpinists who are undertaking high mountain ascents for the first time.

Despite the fact that none of the routes along the wall of Kharamiyata Peak are difficult, it is an alpine peak, rising proudly to the skies to attract the attention of alpinists in this part of the mountains.

Climbers on the northwestern wall of Kharamiyata Peak have an exceptionally beautiful view: in the foreground they see the Sedemte Rila lakes, the valley of the Dzherman River and the peaks opposite -- Ezerniyut and Kabul. On the right Sukhiyut Chal Peak and in the background the Stanke Kimitrov Plain, the Vexila Mountains, the Vitosha Mountains and the Stara Planina Mountains are visible.

Kharamiyata Peak is 2 hours' hike from the "Skaskavitsa" tourist hut and $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours' hike from the "Ivan Vazov" shelter. These are the most convenient starting points for the ascent of the peak. A new tourist hut is being built a short distance below the peak. It will greatly facilitate climbs along this peak.

The Pirin Mountains

The Pirin Mountains rise in the southwestern part of Bulgaria. They cover the area between the Mesta and the Struma Rivers. They begin at the Predel Pass (1295) and extend southeast to the Parilska saddle which separates them from Mount Slavyanka (Alibotush). The Pirin Mountain range extends about 70 km in length and about 40 km in width. On the basis of average altitude, this is the highest mountain range in the Balkan Peninsula.

The beauty and grandeur of these mountains have always had a great influence on the population of the neighboring regions. The oldest name by which the Pirin Mountains have been known is Orbelos (Orbelus). This name was also used to designate Mounts Osogovo and Belasitsa. The Slavs called these mountains the Yudenitsa -- the Nymph Mountains. It was not until the nineteenth century that this range was known as the Pirin Mountains (also called Perin or Perim by the people). This name, according to Bulgarian historians, has a connection with the name of the ancient Slavic god Perun who was believed to live somewhere in these mountains.

Like the Rila Mountains, the Pirin Mountains are surrounded not only by deep valleys but by broad ones. These mountains were elevated in several stages as evidenced by the several plateaus on the mountain slopes. The Pirin Mountains are a part of the Rila-Rhodope mountain massif, and for that reason they resemble these two other ranges a great deal in geological structure. The petrographic structure of these mountains varies greatly. The basic and predominant rock mass is granite. The rock layers lying above it are crystalline rocks -- gneiss, various types of schists, marbles, etc.

During the glacial period, the Pirin Mountains were covered with ice. Their snow line was about 100 m higher than that of the Rila Mountains. The action of the ice masses had much to do with the formation of the present outlines of these mountains. Steep, jagged peaks; deep, steep, and step-like valleys; cirques covered with moraine deposits and containing lakes in the lower parts of these valleys -- these formations are typical in these mountains.

The Pirin Mountains are divided into three large sectors -- the northern, central and southern. These sectors are usually referred to by the name of the highest peak in each.

The northern Pirin Mountains extend from the Predel Pass (1295 m) to the Todorova meadow to the east of Boykov Peak (2340 m) and include the highest part of the mountain range. This part of the mountains was in the past and still is called the "real Pirin" or "high Pirin" Mountains. This sector is the most frequently visited and the best known of the three. It covers a larger percentage of the area of the Pirin Mountains than either of the other sectors. Its steep and jagged rocky ridge rises almost perpendicular. Its slopes are very steep and are frequently the sites of avalanches. The northern Pirin Mountains are particularly steep and inaccessible. This sector of the mountains differs sharply from the others. The earth formations here are sharply defined and very varied. This sector contains the highest peaks in the Pirin Mountains: Vihren (2915 m), Kutelut (2908 m), Banski Sukhodol (2884 m), Bayuva Dupka (2820 m), and dozens of others rising higher than 2500 m from narrow, rocky ridges above deep cirques, rock slides, precipices, lakes and beautiful coniferous forests. A typical feature of this sector of the Pirin Mountains is the surface marble (limestone) layers. The main ridge is sharp, and in some places, narrow. From it rise the highest peaks in the entire mountain range. To the east and northeast of it short, jagged side ridges with almost perpendicular slopes branch off (Koteshkiya Chal, Banski Sukhodol, and others). The steep, almost perpendicular inclines which slope off into precipices several hundred m high from the various peaks, ridges and hills of this sector can be seen gleaming in the sun from afar. They lend a particular charm to the sight of these mountains.

The valleys of the Bunderitsa River and the Vlaknitska River opposite it form the geological borders of the northern Pirin Mountains. They divide the sector into a northern -- marble (limestone) -- sector,

and a southern -- granite -- sector. Large grained granite forms the basic rock mass of the entire sector, and the marble lies above it. In the periphery of the mountains, crystalline schists can be found. The upper parts of Vilkhren Peak are composed of marble. This structure also continues to the north beyond Dautov Peak and is typical of the branch ridges which extend toward the Razlog valley. Portions composed of such marbles are also to be found on the higher portions of Sinanitza which is beyond Georgiytsa.

This geological peculiarity of the northern Pirin Mountains can be clearly seen on certain of the slopes in this sector. Because of this geological phenomenon, and as a result of Quaternary glaciation, the northern (marble) part of the sector has steep, jagged formations with perpendicular walls and high precipices of a karst nature -- waterless cirques. There are only a few small lakes here, while all the other lakes in the Pirin Mountains are located in the southern (granite) part of the northern Pirin Mountain sector. The marble part of the sector is a grandiose and frightening region with typical karst formations. It is the most interesting alpine sector in the mountains. The great variety of geomorphological forms in this area has made this sector the most dangerous from the point of view of avalanches.

The central Pirin Mountains lie between the Todorova meadow and the Popovi Livadi saddle (Papszchair, Preslopa) and form the link between the northern and the southern Pirin Mountain sectors. In this sector the mountains are not alpine in character. Petrographically it is composed of granite, crystalline schists, and, at its southern end, marble. Its highest peak is Orelyak Peak (2908 m).

The southern Pirin Mountains stretch from the Popovi Livadi saddle to the Pariliska saddle on the south. This sector is composed of granite, and there are crystalline schists in the periphery of the mountains. This is the lowest sector in the Pirin Mountains, and it is relatively bare.

The Pirin Mountains contain many river valleys, which in most cases begin in deep cirques.

The "eyes of the Pirin" are the most marvelous creations of nature in this area. They are the beautiful lakes which are located in the granite sector of this mountain range. This part of the Pirin Mountains contains a total of 160 permanent lakes. There are also some 35 seasonal lakes and over 110 former lakes, now dried up. The highest lake in the Pirin Mountains is Gornoto Gazeysko Lake at an altitude of 2680 m, and the largest is Popovoto Lake (Papazgyol), which is over 500 m long and 20 m deep. Other large and famous lakes in the Pirin Mountains are the Kreymanski and Vayavishki Lakes, Tevnoto Lake, the Vesilashki and Bunderishki Lakes, the Sinanishki and Vlahinski Lakes, etc.

The flora of the Pirin Mountains are most interesting. These mountains' greatest wealth in this connection lies in the coniferous forests of white and black pine. They are found at an altitude of 1800 to 1900 m, depending on the exposure of the slopes on which they stand. Juniper is found above them. Most of the high mountain peaks are mountain pastureland. North of the Bunderishka valley, in the northeastern limestone sector near Vihren (Kazana and Dzhemchievi Skali), Kutela, Bayuva Dupka and Stolbide Peaks and the Razlozhki Sukhodol Peak, the rare alpine flower edelweiss grows.

The dense afforestation of the Pirin Mountains has made it possible to preserve its wealth of varied fauna.

The mountains' folds are rich in underground wealth -- coal in the periphery, iron, manganese and copper ores and other minerals. Many quarries are in operation here. The marble quarried here is particularly valuable. In the limestone sector of the mountains there are karst springs and caves, and in the foothills of the mountains there are warm mineral springs.

In Bulgarian folksongs, the Pirin Mountains are repeatedly mentioned as the traditional retreat of rebels. Their importance historically to the Bulgarian Renaissance and liberation movement was great. The Pirin Mountains sheltered the fighters for the people's freedom. It was a refuge for rebels and partisans. The dense mountain forests were the haunts of such legendary rebel leaders as Gotse Delchev and Yane Sandanski ("The King of the Pirin Mountains"), Dimo kh. Dimov, Todor Panitsa, Pavel Deliradev and many others, who fought for the liberation of the Macedonian people from the heavy Turkish yoke. Peyo Yavorov worked at a clandestine printing press in these mountains. The heroes in the September Rebellion who came from the Razlog region retreated to the Pirin Mountains, led by Vladimir Poptomov. The mountains' folds (Bansko city) gave birth to a poet surpassed in Bulgarian literature only by Botev and Levski -- Vaptsarov. It was in this part of Bulgaria that the first Bulgarian partisan group (Razlog okoliya) was established. On 26 July 1941 it became the Razlog partisan group, and thereafter it grew rapidly. In 1942 and 1954 units belonging to this group spent a very difficult winter in the mountains, the safest base and hideout for the group. After the death of Nikola Parapunov in December 1943, the Razlog partisan group was renamed in his honor. In the summer of 1944 a part of this group, together with the Gorna Dzhumaya and Dupnitsa partisan groups and parts of First Sofia Partisan Brigade joined forces at a point below Tsarev Peak in the Rila Mountains and assumed the name "Rila_Pirin Partisan Group." During the same summer, the "Nikola Parapunov" Partisan Group, after serious and lengthy operations in the southern part of the norther Pirin Mountain sector (the Yulenski meadows below Gazey Peak), founded the Orolovo Gnezdo camp (beneath the Tipitsite Peak), camps in th Rzalozhgi Sukhodol region, camps in the

Byala River valley, etc. From these caps the brave partisans, tempered by long and difficult mountain marches, defeated the enemy and avenged the oppression of the people.

The Pirin Mountains are a relatively inaccessible mountain range. All of its valleys have convenient roads, however, and there are footpaths which cross the high ridges. From the high peaks of these mountains there is a wonderful view of all parts of the Balkan Peninsula. The Pirin Mountains contain 8 tourist huts and 1 high mountain alpine shelter. These greatly facilitate visits to these mountains and the climbing of their higher parts.

Despite the difficult and dangerous nature of the topography in the winter, the Pirin Mountains attract many skiers and mountaineers. Climbers find excellent alpine conditions along the pyramidal peaks of the Pirin Mountains and their narrow mountain ridges.

The Koncheto Ridge

The highest and most grandiose part of the marble ridge in the northern Pirin Mountains is a narrow ridge which runs from Vihren Peak northwest to Razlozhki Sukhodol Peak. It links Vihren, Kutela, Banski Sukhodol, Bayuva Dupka, and Razlozhki Sukhodol Peaks. Between Kutela and Banski Sukhodol Peaks, the ridge is for a 150 to 200 m stretch a narrow rocky arete, narrowing in places to a width of only $\frac{1}{2}$ meter. It is the narrowest and longest mountain arete in Bulgaria. Following its narrowest parts is dangerous, as there are precipices on either side of it. To the southwest, the steep valley of the Vlahinska River is found, and on the northeast lies the Banski Sukhodol cirque. These two sheer drops make mountaineers wary. They are sometimes forced to negotiate a part of this arete (particularly the middle section) astride, as if seated in a saddle.

The traversing of the Koncheto ridge is made particularly difficult by moist weather, when it is covered by a layer of snow, or in the case of ice or fog. These make the maneuvers of even the surest footed and boldest mountaineers risky, especially if there are high winds as well. Even one careless or uncalculated step may be fatal.

The traversing of the Koncheto ridge in winter is sometimes extremely difficult and under other conditions sometimes very easy. The degree of difficulty depends upon the snow cover. There have been cases when a solid arete of snow was formed, making the crossing of the ridge far easier than it is in summer. In other cases, however, when severe snowstorms or blizzards have swept the ridge bare, it is exceptionally difficult to traverse it, and alpine techniques become necessary.

In the early days of Bulgarian mountaineering, the traversing of the Koncheto ridge in winter was considered very risky. In order to decrease or eliminate the danger, the Bulgarian Tourist Union placed a cable guide line along the most difficult and narrow stretches in 1934. To a certain degree, this facilitated the traversing of the ridge.

The first winter traverse of the Koncheto ridge was made on 3 March 1934 by BAK member Nikola Mironski and Dr. Lyuben Delcharov. They started from the "Yavorov" tourist hut at 4 AM with the intention of traversing the karst ridge. They were equipped with crampons, ice picks and a double line. At Banski Sukhodol Peak, they attacked the southern slope in order to reach the Koncheto ridge. The deep fresh snow and the danger of avalanches forced them to turn back. They were obliged to climb the icecovered arete of the peak, digging 440 steps, and attaining the Koncheto ridge. They traversed the ridge under windy and foggy weather conditions. At the center of the ridge, a snow pentice collapsed, and the leader of the team,

N. Mironski, fell several meters to the northeast toward the precipice. However, thanks to the secure position of Dr. Delcharov, his fall was arrested and he was hauled back to the arete. Following this incident, the most difficult part of the Koncheto ridge was successfully negotiated. At 1:30 PM the team reached Kutela Peak. After about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, they descended via the southeastern slope of this peak toward the small "kazan" from which they turned toward the Bunderitsa valley and the "Bunderitsa" tourist hut. This was one of the earliest and greatest triumphs of Bulgarian alpinists, and it came at the time when this sport was beginning to arouse great interest in this country.

In March 1942, 12 BAK members made the first group traverse of the Koncheto ridge under the leadership of Nikola Mironski.

The northeastern side of the Koncheto ridge is a 150 m wall which forms the southwestern border of the Banski Sukhodol cirque. This wall can be climbed, but there are no specific routes laid out.

As a result of the efforts of the Alpine Section in Plovdiv, a high mountain shelter was built in 1955 at the edge of the Malka Bayuva Dupka cirque, at an altitude of 2760m. It is located at the western end of the Koncheto ridge (the eastern slope of Banski Sukhodol Peak). This wooden shelter, which was built of black pine, is of the "Termofor" type, and measures 3 x 3 m. It is located on a special platform, and is secured to the rock surface by 4 cables.

The shelter contains 4 double and 2 single cots made of wood, and can accommodate 10 people. The limited area of the interior is readily warmed by the body heat of the occupants. The entrance faces the Koncheto ridge, while the small window looks out over Vlakhi. When the entrance is blocked by snow, entrance or exit can be gained via the window, which can be opened from the outside. The shelter is a great aid in the traversing of the Koncheto ridge and the karst arete.

Vilarska

Vikhren Peak

Vikhren Peak (2915 m) is located on the principal Pirin Mountain ridge. It rises as a pyramid in the northern Pirin Mountains between Kutela Peak (2908 m) on the north and Khvoynati Peak (2606 m) on the south. To the north of this peak extends the karst ridge of the mountains. To the west and below this peak lies the Vikhren (Eltepe) cirque, about 600 m deep, in which the 5 Vlahinski Lakes, also called the Vikhrenski (Eltepenski) Lakes, are located. The slopes of the peak on the eastern side fall away, perpendicularly in some places, toward the Bunderishka valley. Vikhren is the highest peak in the Pirin Mountains, the second highest in Bulgaria, and the third highest on the Balkan Peninsula.

Viewed from any direction, it is seen to tower above the neighboring heights. Its old name was Eltepe Peak. The local population also call it Elin or Ilin Peak. Its name has a close connection with the height, grandeur and magnificence of this peak. Eltepe means "mountain of storms, of tempests." It is usually enveloped in fog. Storms in this region are of great violence, and they frequently make this peak inaccessible. Because of this fact, the peak was renamed Vikhren [meaning "Tempest" in Bulgarian] in 1941.

This peak lies entirely within the marble covered portion of the northern Pirin Mountain sector. The marble is small grained, impure, tectonically cracked and much crumbled.

Vikhren Peak has 4 aretes, 3 of which are extremely steep and perpendicular in some places, 1 perpendicular wall and a short ridge at the top. The ascent of the peak in summer can be made via any of the 3 walls or 3 of the aretes, without any preliminary training. The ascent of the northeastern arete or of the northern wall requires special alpine training and equipment.

The ascent of this peak in winter demands a certain degree of preliminary training. The best and safest access to the peak in winter is via a route leading between Murativ and Khvoynati Peaks, which proceeds along the ridge of the latter as far as the Kabata saddle, linking the two large Pirin basins -- the Bunderishki and Vlakhinski basins. From this saddle one proceeds up the southern slope of the peak to its summit. The climbing of this route requires little effort and a minimum of risk, and the length of time required depends upon the condition of the snow cover and the atmospheric conditions. It usually takes about 2½ hours from the "Vikhren" tourist hut.

The other routes up the peak are of far greater interest to alpinists, since they provide the opportunity of employing alpine techniques and of training in protecting oneself from avalanches.

The first winter ascent of Vikhren Peak was made on 9 January 1925 by 4 young hikers: T. Atanasov, leader, D. Staukov, V. Baynov and N. Boxhinov, all members of the "Vitosha" Youth Hiking Section of Sofia. This group climbed the peak in 8 hours, starting from the "Bunderitsa" tourist hut.

The Northern Wall of Vikhren Peak (Kazanut)

The northern wall of Vikhren Peak, which is also called the Golemiya Kazan, is almost perpendicular at the bottom, and is very steep higher up. It is about 400 m long. It begins from the northeastern arete of the peak, extends to the northwest and merges with the northwestern slope of the peak. It is composed of readily crumbled limestone, interspersed with marble in some places, which, in its upper portion, makes a tile-like cover. The northern wall of Vikhren Peak is divided by a broad, steeply incline couloir into a lefthand portion, which is relatively difficult to climb, and a righthand portion, which is comparatively easy. The routes across the left part of the wall are quite clearly defined, while those across

the right hand portion (with the exception of the Funiyata route) are not specifically indicated. In general, this wall is easy to climb, but the ascent takes some time.

The northern wall of Vihren Peak has a very interesting history. Since the early days of Bulgarian mountaineering, the slopes of Kazanut have attracted the attention of Bulgarian climbers. The wall was studied for years on end with a view to the possibility of climbing it in winter.

In 1934, when Bulgarian climbers were preparing enthusiastically for a winter ascent of the wall, German alpinists P. Mozul and Dr. F. Auer arrived in Bulgaria. Utilizing the knowledge Bulgarian alpinists had gleaned as to the nature and condition of the wall, they managed to climb it in 8 hours toward the end of September. This ascent was made in good weather. Many rock pitons were used along the route, which, along the right and easier portion, presented the danger of rockslides. The ascent of this wall met the challenge of one of the major alpine problems in the Balkans. On their return to Munich, these well-known German alpinists gave many talks on the subject of the Bulgarian mountains, giving many persons the impression that this wall was almost inaccessible.

The legend of the inaccessibility of this wall under typical autumn conditions, which became widespread in Bulgaria as well as abroad, discouraged Bulgarian alpinists from attempting to climb it in winter.

The following summer, between the 15 and 17 July 1935, the most determined climber in Bulgaria in regard to this wall, Dr. Lyubomir Delcharov, and Bozhidar Stoichkov made a second ascent of this wall in 2 hours time. This ascent constituted a serious and objective survey of the difficulty of the wall, and it helped to destroy the myth concerning the supposedly fantastic heroism of Dr. F. Auer and P. Mozul which had served as a serious hindrance to attempts to scale the wall the previous winter.

During the winter of 1935, Dr. Lyubomir Delcharov and Bozhidar Stoichkov, by now familiar with the wall, undertook the ascent of this wall under winter conditions. After several hours' climb, they reached the center of the wall, but because of avalanches caused by a sudden deterioration in the weather, their attempt almost ended in catastrophe, and they were forced to turn back.

For years on end the winter ascent of this wall was a challenge to Bulgarian alpinists.

There was no snow during the winter of 1949. In view of these exceptional winter conditions, the Central Committee on Alpinism of the People's Physical Culture Union organized an expedition of 12 alpinists and assigned them the task of attempting the ascent of the northern wall of Vihren Peak. The attempt was to be made in honor of the anniversary of the "Ready for Work and Defense" Republican Physical Culture Program. On 13 February, the expedition, composed of alpinists (the first Bulgarians who had earned the GTO [Gotov za trud i obrana -- Ready for Work and Defense] emblem), arrived at the "Bunderitsa" tourist hut. Employing the experience of the Soviet alpine school, 2 "shock" teams of 2 members each attacked the wall under the guidance of Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, while 2 auxiliary teams of 3 members each were assigned to the support of the ascent. They were to climb the neighboring aretes beside Vihren Peak. This attempt was not successful, however, due to a sudden deterioration in the weather. On 15 February Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski and Vladimir Lobodin left the "Vihren" tourist hut early in the morning to make a second attempt. They began the actual ascent of the wall at 7:45 A.M. with a high wind blowing. Under extremely difficult conditions -- heavy winds, snow, avalanches -- this team conquered the wall, at extreme danger to life and limb, after 12½ hours of uninterrupted

climbing. They used rock pitons, and completed the climb at 10:15 PM, in a snowstorm. Thus, after 19 hours of uninterrupted movement at temperatures of no higher than - 20° C, the northern wall of Vihren Peak was conquered. This victory on the part of Bulgarian alpinists opened up a new and bright chapter in Bulgarian alpinism. This ascent was made via the righthand portion of the wall.

On 28 April 1952 Senior Instructors Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, Khristo Borisov, and Nikola Shopov of the Central Alpine Camp made the first ascent of the northern wall of Vihren Peak under normal winter conditions -- a very difficult climb. The group, under the leadership of Master of Sports Encho Petkov, started the ascent of the wall at 6 AM, via the "Kaminata" route. Atmospheric conditions were favorable. The team climbed the perpendicular rocky chimney passages using rubber soled shoes where rock climbing was required, as well as rock pitons and snap rings. Below the large chimney, the team abandoned this route to make a traverse diagonally to the left along the Triugulnika sector, following an almost perpendicular crevice under heavy snow to emerge beneath the Triugulnika chimney. From this point they made a diagonal traverse to the right toward the couloir. The weather began to deteriorate gradually. This factor, and the snow covering parts of the wall, obliged the group to exchange its rubber soles for cleated shoes. Despite the bad weather, this group traversed the couloir and after it the "Funiyata", progressing steadily toward the highest part of the peak. This last sector was exceptionally difficult to negotiate. With great effort, and under the constant threat posed by the unstable snow which covered the rock slabs of the wall, the group emerged on the summit of the peak at 9:30 PM, registering one of the most important and significant ascents of a difficult and dangerous alpine wall in Bulgaria ever made.

The Couloir (V)

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration between pages 136 and 137, orig.] This is the name given to the broad, very steep crevice (V) which divides the northern wall of Vihren Peak into 2 halves -- the left part, called Triugulnika (A) and the right part (B). The couloir begins near the foot of the center of the wall and ends about 200 m below the peak on the northeastern arete.

In the summer, the ascent of the couloir is not particularly interesting. The ascent is made on a free rope. Care must be taken to avoid falling rock.

The first ascent of this couloir under winter conditions was made on 14 April 1952 by 6 instructors from the Central Alpine Camp of the VKFS. Their starting point was the "Vihren" tourist hut. Under the guidance and leadership of Master of Sports, Encho Petkov, one team began the ascent at 3 PM in good weather. They completed the climb after 3 hours' ascent over frozen snow.

The beginning of the couloir can be reached by a 60 m climb over easy but crumbling and slippery passages. The entire team can move simultaneously, and no exact route is specified. Next there are 30 m of comparatively difficult but perfectly negotiable rocky passages. One then encounters a well defined rocky groove about 2 m wide and with high walls. This is the beginning of the couloir. The entire team can then advance simultaneously for 30 m to an easy 4 to 5 m passage which is 100 m from the foot of the wall. Above this rocky passage, one encounters, for a full rope's length, only very easy rocky passages. The couloir then becomes gradually more difficult. The ascent here is facilitated by the secure hand and footholds. Rock pitons can also be used. There are no cracks in the rock. There are many crumbling stretches of rocky

and patches of gravel. Stones can be dislodged here even by the movement of the rope, it must be controlled by the placing of special pitons. The couloir continues thus for another 60 m. Then an easy arete is traversed. There is a slippery passage above this which is very broad, very steep, and covered with gravel and soil. This sort of terrain continues for about 200 m. In some places this part of the couloir is intersected by short, rocky passages, and in other places its floor is badly crumbled. For this reason great care should be taken in negotiating it to avoid precipitating a rock slide. This part of the couloir leads to the upper part of the northern wall, where the couloir itself divides into several broad, rocky and easily climbed crevices which lead to the northeastern arete of the peak. By simultaneous movement on the part of all members of the team, the summit of the peak is thus attained after several hundred meters' climb.

The couloir is about 400 m long. The entire ascent takes about 20 rope lengths, and about 1½ hours' time. This route is specifically laid out. Rock slides are to be avoided. Climbers have full view of each other along the entire length of the route.

The ascent of this couloir is of no particular interest during the summer. It is useful only from the point of view of practice and developing endurance. Winter ascents of Vihren Peak via the couloir of the northern wall -- the Kazanut -- are comparatively difficult, and for that reason this route is classified 4 A as to difficulty.

Triugulnikut (A)

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustrations between pages 136 and 137, orig.] The lefthand part of the northern wall of Vihren Peak is shaped like a triangle, for which reason it is called Triugulnikut [which in Bulgarian means "triangle"]. It is here that the most difficult routes over the northern wall of Vihren Peak are laid out.

1. From the foot of Triugulnikut a route has been laid out along a rocky crevice (I) which leads almost straight upward toward the summit. This is the farthest left route laid out across Triugulnikut. The first ascent of the peak via this route was made on 14 August 1953 under the guidance of Senior Instructor Encho Petkov, Master of Sports. Georgi Vasilev (Gesh) and Asen Bekyarski completed the team. The ascent was made in 3 hours under favorable atmospheric conditions -- sunny weather.

This route begins with an approach of 10 m along which, on a free rope, one reaches an easy 5 to 6 m chimney in one full rope's length, above which the rocky crevice becomes an easy grass and rock groove. Following this on a free rope one comes to a 3 m chimney (1). Above this chimney, one follows an easy rocky crevice in a step-like formation for several lengths of free line to emerge on an exposed, grass and rock covered wall. Here, at an altitude of 280 m above the foot of the wall, the rocky groove which cuts across the Triugulnikut divides into 2 parts (2).

The righthand continuation of the rocky groove (I B) leads to the northeastern arete of the peak at a point where the couloir ends. At some places along the first rope lengths difficult rocky (slablike) passages predominate, but these gradually disappear. Despite the fact that easy passages predominate here, it is necessary to use pitons because of the great altitude and the tendency of the wall to crumble.

It is easy to reach the northeastern arete of the wall. In the left-hand branch of the rocky groove (I A), which gradually dwindles to disappear into step-like, easily climbed rocky passages, one must climb carefully, because the rock crumbles easily.

To the left of this route, there are other easy routes which are not specifically determined.

2. 2 routes (II and III) have been laid out to the right of the rocky crevice (between the crevice and the chimney on the far right side of Triugulnikut). They begin about 30 m apart at nearly the same level. By following easy patches on a free rope for about 60 m one reaches a point where there are 2 rocky crevices -- one to the right and one to the left -- which lead to the center of the wall.

The lefthand crevice is longer and better defined. It begins with a 7 to 8 m chimney which is broad and easy, merging gradually into a step-like rocky groove 100 m long. This is composed of easy passages of mixed rock and grass.

The right hand crevice is less well defined, is shorter, and in several places divides into 2 parts before it reaches the center of the wall (X).

By means of either of these 2 rocky crevices, which diverge as they approach the center of the wall, one can emerge on a free rope at the center of the wall (X). The use of 2 pitons per rope length is recommended. The wall here is in general a more gradual slope than elsewhere, but it is interrupted by steep passages and rock sectors. The route across this stretch is not strictly defined. The center of the wall can be reached in 6, 7 or 8 rope lengths. The height to this point is 220 m.

The center of Triugulnikut above (X) is composed of slablike passages which are comparatively much more difficult to ascent. For this reason a traverse is usually made from the center of the wall (X) to the left to emerge at the rocky crevice (I-2) which divides the Triugulnikut. This leads one upward over the final portion of the wall. It is also possible to make the climb to the right of the center of the wall (X) toward the large chimney (from (1) to (3)) which leads to the righthand rocky arete of Triugulnikut. The ascent is then usually continued via the chimney or to the right of the chimney, along the left arete of the couloir, where the 2 routes previously described conclude.

The central part of the wall (X) is grass covered, for the most part. It narrows toward the right hand rocky arete of Triugulnikut (i.e., the left arete of the couloir) in the form of a very steep and elongated grass covered platform 7 to 8 m long which is covered with rocky stretches (1). Gradually the platform merges into a broad rocky groove with a very steep and grass covered floor about 30 m long. In order to reach the foot of a large, rocky chimney 50 m long (the Totkova chimney) it is necessary to climb this groove, which takes one length of free rope.

From the foot of the chimney (1) one can easily emerge on the right arete of Triugulnikut, thus avoiding the necessity of climbing the chimney. The right arete of the Triugulnikut can be reached by climbing easy rocky stretches for about 2 rope lengths. From the arete, several rope lengths lead one to a large, rocky ledge (2), from which one emerges on a free rope on the northeastern arete of the peak.

The lower part of the chimney (about 30 m long) is easy. It is slightly inclined to the left, and its width varies from 0.8 to 1 m. The first 4 to 5 m are the most difficult of this section. The lower part of the chimney merges toward its center into an easy, chimney-like overhang above which there is a convenient rocky ledge which is of average size and is protected (2) -- the Totkova ledge.

Above the Totkova ledge the chimney divides into 2 parts.

To the left it narrows into a difficult chimney 15 m long which leads to a point to the left of and 5 to 6 m below the point where the right hand section of the upper chimney emerges. The left branch emerges on the rocky arete.

The right branch of the division begins on the right side of the Totkova ledge (2). It is about 20 m long. On the right of the ledge there are 2 almost perpendicular small rocky grooves 3 to 4 m long. The upper parts of these merge to form the end of the upper part of the right hand branch of the chimney, which is a 15 m perpendicular section. Despite the fact that it is perpendicular, it is easily climbed if several pitons are used. Above this right branch of the upper chimney there is a large, level, triangle-shaped rock ledge (3) covered with a thick layer of small and large gravel and soil. On this ledge safety ropes can be belayed.

On 5 August 1954, during the ascent of Triugulnikut along the 2 routes already described (II and III), a catastrophe befell the party at this chimney. The party was composed of Senior Alpine Instructors from the TsDNA Captain Todor Ganchev Ignatiev, Junior Lieutenant Valentin Nikolov Filipchenko and Sergeant Major Asparukh Anastasov (Puri). The upper right branch of this chimney, between (2) and (3), and the ledge (2) which forms the beginning of this branch became famous in alpine circles as the Totkova chimney and the Totkova ledge, for it was above this ledge that Todor Ignatiev met his death. It is by these names that we have referred to these sites.

Above the upper platform (3) one can climb on a free rope either along the several small rocky crevices which lead upward about 30 m or along the left wall of the couloir. In either case, one emerges on the northeastern arete of the wall, where there is a stone marker in memory of the soldier-mountaineers who perished making this ascent. Following this arete, one emerges on the highest part of the peak (see description on page 141 of the "Kaminitta? [of the original]").

These 2 routes, to the highest part of the Triugulnikut, are 15 to 16 rope lengths long. The ascent, via these routes, taken 3 to 4, and climbers have a full view of each other in the upper part of this chimney. If the

chimney is avoided by making a diagonal traverse below the chimney to emerge on the rocky right arete of the Triugulnikut, the entire route provides a clear view for all climbers of each other. From five to six pitons and as many snap rings should be carried on this ascent. It is recommended that this climb be made by teams of two alpinists each.

The first ascent of Triugulnikut via the left hand route leading to the Totkova Chimney was made on 22 August 1953 by Senior Instructors Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, leader, and Khristo Borisov. The ascent took them 2 hours in favorable and sunny weather -- from 8 to 10 A.M.

The first ascent of Triugulnika via the right hand route leading to the left and rocky arete of the couloir was made on 2 August 1953 by Senior Alpine Instructors Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, leader, and Khristo Borisov. The ascent, made in favorable weather, took them 2½ hours.

The "Kaminata" Route (IV).

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration between pages 136 and 137, orig.]. "Kaminata" is the name given to the route across Triugulnikut which lies farthest to its right. Its longest and most difficult portion runs through a broad chimney which cuts through the center of the entire wall. It leads to a point on the right hand rocky arete of Triugulnikut (IV).

The first ascent via this route was made on 20 and 21 September 1947. On 20 September the team, consisting of Senior Instructor Andrey Todorov, leader, and Instructor Penka Mikhova, started the ascent at 11 A.M. During the afternoon an ice storm overtook them in the upper chimney, and they were obliged to make camp. The following day, they continued the ascent over the ice coated wall. In spite of high winds and continuous rockslides, they recommended the climb at 11 A.M.

Under these extremely difficult atmospheric conditions, and after an unrelenting struggle against the elements, the team laid out the most difficult and challenging route across the northern wall of Vihren Peak. This ascent was the first great alpine achievement in Bulgaria in which a woman participated.

On 28 April 1952 the lower part of this route, as far as the large chimney, was climbed under winter conditions by Senior Instructors Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, Khristo Borisov and Nikola Shopov.

The route begins with a perpendicular 20 m chimney. the broadest part of which is usually covered with snow, which brings one out into the upper and almost perpendicular part of the chimney. It can be negotiated with 2 pitons.

This route can be attacked by ascending the rocky arete (composed of crumbling marbelized limestone) which is located to the left of the chimney. After about 15 m climb on a free rope, the team can be assembled on the arete. From that point one can either enter the chimney previously described, or continue to the right of it, moving diagonally toward its upper end over comparatively easy passages. This latter choice is recommended.

Above this first chimney there is a 25 m rocky crevice, the beginning of which (some 10 m) is slightly inclined and has a very rocky bottom. Gradually it becomes steeper, and the floor takes on a step-like character. From this crevice one can reach the beginning of a 70 m chimney which is moist and of average difficulty. This is reached on a free rope, and with no difficulty. This chimney, which is covered with grass and moss, is the lower chimney (1). (There is a danger that the rocky blocks and stones may become dislodged !)

The lower and almost perpendicular part of the chimney is about 30 m long, and there are several unspecified ways in which it can be climbed. It can also be avoided if one uses 3 or 4 pitons to climb the slope on either side of it. In this case climbers have an excellent view of each other. It is recommended that the ascent of the chimney be avoided by climbing along its left and more solid wall. It is even better to emerge on the left arete, along which the climb can be continued.

The next 25 m of the chimney widen, the floor becomes a broad (1 to 2 m) and increasingly steep wall. It gradually becomes perpendicular, merging into a broad, perpendicular rocky crevice resembling a chimney. This should be climbed along the left side, using 4 to 5 pitons. This left side of the crevice is composed of solid, gray small grained and marbelized limestone which contains solid cracks. After one full rope length, one emerges onto a 30 to 4 m wide grass covered platform (3). This ledge is cut into the wall, is only slightly inclined, and resembles a chimney. It is 0.5 to 1 m long and is protected by a small, crumbling overhang. On the left hand wall of the ledge, 1 m above its floor, there is a solid crack which can be used to secure a climber. This ledge also offers opportunities for belaying safety ropes to protect the entire party.

It is not recommended to try to climb the bottom of the previously described rocky crevice which narrows gradually, as it is composed of unstable gray marbelized rocks covered with damp moss and grass. These are easily dislodged. The danger from their instability increases as the concave floor of the crevice becomes steeper. In its upper part this crevice becomes a long, well defined but not very prominent

overhang of 20 m. The ascent of the left side of the wall, which is composed of eroded, crumbly yellow stone blocks, is particularly to be avoided. There is great danger of crumbling and rock slides.

To the left of the small, crumbling overhang which protects the chimney-like ledge previously described (3), one emerges on the rocky left arete. To the left of the arete there is a predominantly grassy patch of 15 m, which merges gradually into a broad (5 to 6 m in some places) and very steep groove about 80 m long. It leads to the left of the "Kaminata" route and the foot of the Totkova chimney to the upper right part of Triugulnikut.

The basic "Kaminata" route leads above the rocky overhang to the left which protects the chimney-like ledge (3) to a 40 m rocky groove which is steep and which has a bottom of rock and grass. Access in this direction is easy from the chimney-like platform (3). It is recommended that one keep to the left of the small, crumbling overhang above it to emerge on the crumbling passages of the lefthand, rocky side. This climb of about 15 m can be made on a free line, but great care should be taken to avoid rockslides. One then bears to the right along a steep, 40 m rocky groove. Following this for 2 rope lengths on a free line one emerges at the bottom of a broad, perpendicular 10 m chimney. This climb is made with all team members in full view of each other, and there are no specified points at which safety ropes should be belayed. The bottom of the chimney thus reached is covered with grass and moss, and contains unstable blocks of rock. This instability renders the ascent of this chimney difficult, and 1 to 2 pitons should therefore be used. Above this chimney there is a passage which is rocky on the left side and rocky on the right side. It is very steep and is 6 to 7 m long. Here climbers cannot

keep each other in sight. Above this passage there are 2 steep rocky grooves, the floors of which are grassy in some patches and which are 8 to 10 m long each. They can easily be climbed using 1 piton for each, as the rock is solid. Beyond these, the upper part of the route leads through the broad, deep chimney (4) which can be reached in a total of 6 rope lengths.

The lower part of the chimney is a steep rocky and grassy groove about 10 m long which, in the next 6 to 7 m, becomes increasingly steep, merging into a chimney about 60 m high (4). The first 7 to 8 m of this chimney are a perpendicular passage containing large, unstable rocky blocks covered with tufts of grass, moss and deciduous vegetation. This part of the chimney is dangerous, and the ascent should be made along the left wall where it is possible to drive in 1 or 2 pitons. The unstable rocky blocks must be utilized, but great care should be taken. Above this passage, the climbers cannot keep each other in view. For 7 or 8 m there is a chimney floor of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m in width, on an average incline. By means of 3 to 4 pitons over one rope's length, one can reach the center of the chimney.

The upper part of the chimney (the last 30 m) contains a large overhang which it is difficult to climb. This constitutes the most difficult part of the route. (Here great care should be taken because of the inevitable friction of the rope against the rock even before the most difficult portion has been negotiated !)

The first 10 m of the perpendicular upper part of the chimney (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m wide, and convenient for a tall climber¹) is climbed by means of 2 or 3 pitons. The team should then work to the left where there is an uneven ledge on a moderate incline which is 3 to 4 m long

and 2 to 2½ m wide. It provides the opportunity for the climber to secure himself by means of safety ropes. Care should be taken in driving in pitons, as most of the rock here is unstable. Climbers cannot keep each other in sight here.

After 7 to 8 m climb above the platform on a diagonal to the right, one emerges on the right arete of the chimney (5) which is also the lefthand arete of the couloir. It is possible to belay secure safety ropes on the arete. Eight rope lengths are used to reach this point.

There are 2 possibilities for completing the climb from the arete to the summit. One can continue to the right along the couloir (which is exceptionally easy), or along the right hand rocky arete of Triugulnikut (to the left of the couloir). Three rope lengths lead to the foot of a 15 m rocky passages which breaks the monotony of the arete. Three further lengths on a free rope lead to a large (3) slightly sloped and triangle-shaped platform covered with a thick layer of large and small gravel and soil. This is the platform above the Totkova chimney. These last 7 rope lengths along the right arete of Triugulnikut should be negotiated with the help of several pitons to guide the rope, thus minimizing the danger of dislodging stones. The arete tends to crumble; is covered at certain spots with loose stones. Even the friction of the rope may suffice to dislodge some of these.

From the large triangular platform (3) one can continue on a free rope either along the arete itself, to the left, or along one of the several slightly sloped small rocky grooves which cover the left wall of the couloir. One can also climb along the couloir itself. In any case, one emerges after an easy 200 m on the northeastern (Dzhamdzhiev) arete, by means of which one can reach the summit of the pyramidal Vikhren Peak.

The "Kaminata" route is 22 rope lengths long up to the point where one emerges on the northeastern arete of the peak. The ascent takes 4 hours, and climbers have full view of each other. Six to eight pitons and as many snap rings must be carried.

It is more convenient to climb the chimney. It is recommended that this be done, however, in teams consisting of two persons only, particularly in view of the danger from easily dislodged stones. The "Kaminata" route is the most difficult route over the northern wall of Vikhren Peak. It is classified 4 B as to difficulty.

None of the routes marked out across Triugulnikut on the western wall of Vikhren Peak -- the Kazanut -- are of any great difficulty, but they are lengthy and require great endurance. The particular nature of this wall (the tendency to crumble from top to bottom) accounts for their classification as 4 B in difficulty, since extreme caution is necessary. Climbers must have the ability to orient themselves individually. This is absolutely essential on certain of the routes crossing the Triugulnikut, because in most cases there are no specified paths for the ascent or designated points for belaying ropes. In view of the geological structure of this wall (marble and marbleized limestone) and the fact that the rocky surface patches are easily eroded, this wall should only be climbed after considerable technical and physical training.

Funiyata (VI).

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration between pages 136 and 137, orig.]. This is the name given to the classical route laid out along the left side of the righthand portion of the northern wall of Vikhren Peak -- the Kazanut. It was so named because of the funnel-like form of the right hand portion of the wall [the Bulgarian word "funiyata" means "funnel"].

The first ascent via this route was made in September 1954 by the German alpinists Dr. B. Mozul and Dr. F. Auer. They succeeded in climbing the wall in eight hours, under favorable weather conditions.

The first winter ascent via this route was made on 28 April 1952 by five instructors from the Central Alpine Camp. These climbers, divided into 2 teams, attacked the wall along the left groove along the wall -- Master of Sports Emil Milchev, leader, and Instructors Georgi Kirilov and Nikolay Shekhlarski, and along the right hand groove up the Funiyata -- Instructors Ivan Mishev, leader, and Dimitur Seizov. The ascent was begun at 6 A.M., and was continued under favorable atmospheric conditions until noon. The weather then deteriorated, and the ascent was completed, after 13 hours of climbing, at 7 P.M.

Funiyata is composed of 3 rocky crevices which begin at the right of the couloir, traverse the left side of the right hand portion of the northern wall of Vihren Peak, and emerge near the ridge at the top at the point where this ridge merges with the northeastern (Dzhamdzhiev) arete of the peak. The middle one of these grooves is also the deepest. The one on the left, the shallowest, leads to the point where the northeastern arete (Dzhamdzhiev) merges with the upper ridge of the peak, while the central and right hand grooves run parallel, leading to the right of the point where the other merges with the ridge of the peak.

The lower part of the wall is composed of slabs of rock, which constitute the beginning of the Funiyata route. After $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths, one encounters steep grassy passages above which there are rocky passages which are only slightly inclined.

The central portion of the Funiyata route is the most difficult. The 3 rocky grooves are the deepest here, while the rocky passages to be traversed are the steepest.

The upper portion of the Funiyata route is only slightly inclined. It is composed for the most part of slab like passages.

Along the entire length of the Funiyata route, the ledges where safety ropes are to be belayed are left to the climbers' choice. In general, varying combinations of the route, depending upon the alpinists' experience, may be effected in climbing the Funiyata. This route is about 25 rope lengths long. Four to five rock pitons and as many snap rings should be carried on the ascent. The climb can be made in 2 hours, and climbers have a full view of other members of the party.

Summer climbs of the Funiyata route serve a great purpose in developing endurance. For this reason it is classified as 3 A in difficulty.

The winter ascent of the Funiyata route is difficult because it becomes icy, and there is consequently a danger of avalanches of the snow layers covering this ice. The winter climbing of the Funiyata route is classified 5 A in difficulty.

From this peak one has a view of all the Bulgarian mountains.

The most convenient starting point for climbs on the northern wall of Vikhren Peak is the "Bunderitsa" tourist hut which is one hour's hike from the foot of the wall, or "Vikhren" tourist hut, which is $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours' hike from the wall.

Sinanitsa Peak

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration opposite page 152, orig.]

Sinanitsa Peak (2516 m) which is also called Sinaniskki Peak, Siniyat Peak, Varovita Chuka, and Chukata, looks from the south as if it were divided. For this reason it is also called Razpereniya Peak. It rises from the Sinanitsa ridge, which is a spur. It branches off from the main

ridge of the northern Pirin Mountains where the clearly visible of Muratov Peak (between Khvoynati Peak and Donchovi Karauli Peak) rises. This spur extends toward the southwest in the direction of the valley of the Struma River. The Sinanitsa ridge is about 12 km long. The beginning of the ridge is called Georgiytsa (Gergiytsa) and farther along, Sinanitsa. The Georgiytsa and Sinanitsa cirques are located on the northern slopes of the ridge.

The Sinanitsa cirque is one of the Vlkhinska River cirques and lies in the Struma River basin. This cirque has two parts: the eastern -- flat -- part, and the western -- rounded -- part. This latter portion is enclosed by Sinanitsa and Momin Peaks. Two lakes, bearing the names of these peaks are located in this cirque.

The Sinanitsa ridge is composed of granite and marble. Some of the individual promontories on the ridge are covered with crystalline schists. The marble found here is slightly larger grained than that in the Vikhren sector, as this is the westernmost section of the the marble covered sector of the northern Pirin Mountains.

Sinanitsa Peak rises to the west of Sinanitsa cirque. Its 200 m high perpendicular wall towers over the upper Sinaniskho Lake to the east of it. This wall faces east. Marble predominates in its petrographic composition.

Sinanitsa Peak is one of the most beautiful peaks in the grandiose Pirin Mountains, and when seen at dawn resembles a fairy castle with its perpendicular wall and isolated position. This solitude is only disturbed by the proud eagles and the wild mountain goats. This peak has long intrigued alpinists. Lying beyond the major road network through the Pirin Mountains, this peak was rarely visited until the eastern wall was first climbed.

The first ascent of this wall was made on 12 July 1949, under perfect weather conditions with absolutely no wind. This is a rare phenomenon in the Pirin Mountains. The ascent was made by Senior Instructors Andrey Todorov and Vasil Nastev. They alternated as leader. They began the ascent at 9 AM. After 10½ hours of climbing over easy, crumbling passages and difficult stretches composed of perpendicular slabs, they completed the climb at 6:30 PM.

The first group ascent of the wall was made on 28 October 1953 by 10 alpinists from the "G. Dimitrov" VIF under the leadership of Senior Instructor Georgi Atanasov. Instructor Andrey Mirchev acted as team leader. They had favorable weather conditions, and made the ascent in 5 hours.

On 27 April 1955, the first winter ascent of the wall was made by the army alpinists Senior Instructor Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, and Instructor Yordan Machirski. This ascent, made in honor of the approaching May Day holiday, was begun at 7 AM and was completed at 11:30 AM.

The area above the upper Sinaniskho Lake and below the foot of the wall is covered by a rock heap which can be seen from afar. From the end of this area, one can reach the perpendicular part of the wall without following any particular designated route. This distance is 2 rope lengths and it can be covered on a free line. The most convenient access to the rocky part of the wall is found by keeping to the left (a) of the rock protruding from the rock heap. This is actually an extension of the lefthand portion of the wall. At the beginning of this rock passage there are short rocky stretches which gradually merge into mixed rock and grass sectors. One can easily reach the entirely rocky portion of the route by following these (1).

Another possible route for reaching the rocky part of the wall is along the easy rocky groove (b) which begins at the end of the rock heap beneath the exact center of the wall. This groove is about 10 to 15 m long. By crossing crumbling rock and grass patches beyond it, one can easily reach the well defined first rocky stretch of the route.

The third possible route is by means of a climb over an easy but very crumbling rocky sector 25 m long which lies to the right of the rocky groove (c). It leads to a steep, grassy platform, the upper left hand portion of which ends in a rocky arete which can be crossed to emerge at the perpendicular part of the wall (1).

The upper portion of the rock and grass passages beneath the wall form a very steep rock and grass terrace (1) which is a convenient site for consolidating a climbing party and belaying safety ropes. Above the terrace lies the beginning of the marked route. It starts out along a broad, rocky crevice. It is recommended that the climb be effected along the righthand, angular groove which is a step-like rocky passage with convenient hand and footholds for the first 10 m. One or two pitons are used to reach a 20 m crevice which is very steep, but is broad and grassy. It can be climbed on a free rope to a solid ledge where safety ropes can be belayed.

Above this ledge there is an easy rocky passage of 10 m. There are many protrusions and cracks to aid the climbers. Climbers should keep to the right side of this passage, where there are step-like blocks of rock covered with grass. These merge gradually into a 3 m chimney which is 1 m in width. This chimney ends in an overhang which is small and can be circled to the left. Above the overhang there is a very steep, groove-like ledge which one follows for 15 m on a free rope. After a full

rope's length the climbers encounter a grass covered traverse (2) which circles the wall to the right. This traverse is a convenient site for consolidating the party and belaying safety ropes. Three to four pitons are used in reaching this traverse. Climbers have a partial view of other members of the party during the climb to this point.

Above the grassy traverse (3), the route continues to the right over a yellowish and large overhang which lies above a sloping 10 m angular groove. The climbing of this groove can be avoided by following a 10 m horizontal traverse to the foot of another crumbling, 10 m groove which divides the upper part of the wall into 2 parts.

It is recommended that the crossing of the right part of the groove, where there are very crumbling passages, be avoided. One must shift over to the left hand portion of the groove, which is a rocky, angular crevice of several meters' length. Beyond it lies the most difficult portion of the wall (X) -- a vertical and rocky angular groove several meters long, on the right wall of which the ascent should be made. The rock here is marbleized limestone, so that there is a tendency to crumble which makes the ascent doubly difficult. This climb should be effected with great caution. Despite the fact that there is no place where entirely secure pitons can be placed, those which are used carefully will aid in the ascent toward the difficult overhang which is found in the upper part of the groove. If the groove is to be climbed, this overhang must be negotiated as well. This maneuver requires a ladder if the team leader is a short man. Above the overhang there is a convenient ledge (3). Climbing to this ledge the climbers have a partial view of the other members of the team. Six to ten pitons must be used.

Above this ledge (3) there is a very steep grass covered groove (15 m long). Beyond this point the ascent to the summit of the peak is relatively easy. One can also emerge on the highest part of the peak by following easy, crumbling staircase passages to the right of the ledge. Above the groove and the staircase passages there is another broad, rocky groove which provides several possible routes of ascent. From the last platform (3) one can reach the summit by 40 m climb. The ascent can be made on a free line, but because of the crumbling nature of the rock it is recommended that several pitons be used. Here too climbers have each other in view only a part of the time.

The Sinanitsa wall is about 200 m high, and the rocky terrain of the approach is about 120 m long. The ascent of this wall can be effected with 6 rope lengths by using 8 to 12 pitons of varying types and sizes and as many snap rings. For the major part of the route the ascent is made over crumbling rocky passages where climbers have a partial view of each other. The climb takes $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Teams of 2 or 3 alpinists can conveniently make this ascent. In view of the tendency of the rock to crumble, teams consisting of 2 members only are recommended.

Sinanitsa Peak is one of the most remote sites in the Pirin Mountains, for which reason alpinists who would like to undertake the ascent of this wall should make careful plans in advance. Despite the fact that the wall itself is not particularly difficult, it is classified 4 B in difficulty because of its remote location.

From the peak there is a broad view to the southwest of the Macedonian mountains, Kresna Pass, the lower reaches of the Struma River, etc.; to the northeast one sees in the foreground the ripples of the fairylike emerald green Sinanitsa Lake above which the trapezoid form of Momin Peak rises, and beyond this the narrow pyramid of Muratov Peak, one of the highest

peaks in the Pirin Mountains, which is perpetually shrouded in clouds and has deep crevices running downward to the Vlahinska River, is to be seen. The Concheto karst arete and beyond it the Rila Mountains are also visible.

The most convenient starting point for climbs along this peak is the "Vikhren" tourist hut located about 4 hours' hike from the peak. Starting from the "Vikhren" tourist hut toward the peak, one walks for several hundred meters to reach the Ravnako site. One then follows the Vinarska footpath toward the Portata site (2505 m) located between Donchovi Karauli Peak and Muratov Peak. This footpath links the valley of the Bunderitsa River with the Golyamo Spano field. From this point, one goes diagonally to the west toward the Sinanishka Porta site to reach the Sinanitsa cirque.

Momin Peak

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration opposite page 153, orig.]

Momin Peak rises in the southeastern part of Sinanitsa cirque to the east of Sinanitsa Peak. It is a part of the Sinanitsa ridge, and links Georgiytsa Peak and Sinanitsa Peak. Momin Peak is separated from Sinanitsa Peak on the west by a small rocky pass. The southern, steep grass and rocky slopes of this peak run down toward the Golyamo Spano field, bordering it on the northwest. East of Momin Peak there is a rocky ridge which ends at the Sinanishka Porta site and which links Momin and Georgiytsa Peaks. The footpath leading from Golyamo Spano field to the Sinanitsa cirque and the Vlahinska River crosses this ridge. The northwestern slope of the peak is a perpendicular wall which is strongly marbled and very crumbling. It is 200 m high, and rises to the southeast of the upper Sinanishko Lake.

The first ascent of the northwestern wall of this peak was made on 21 August 1950 during the course for beginning alpinists organized by the "Stroitel" DSO.

Several days prior to the ascent, Senior Instructor Andrey Todorov and Spas Danailov climbed as far as the center of the wall in order to study it.

On 21 August 1950, the young alpinists Petur Moskov, leader, and Aleksandur Khizhov began the ascent. They started out in the morning, with the intention of laying out a route across the righthand portion of the wall. The first portions they climbed proved difficult. The crumbling of the overhangs turned the team leader back several times, but due to their intensive training and determination, the young men eventually triumphed. After a 10 hour struggle, they had marked out a new route over a section of the wall which tended greatly to crumble.

The foot of the wall is reached via a long stretch of rocky blocks which turns at the foot of the wall into a steep rock heap. This extends 30 to 40 m up the wall, and ends against the wall in a broad meadow with an average incline.

The route lies along the righthand portion of the wall, and follows a clearly visible and broad crumbling groove composed of rock. This route begins at the right hand corner of the meadow described above, and ends at the right of the highest part of the peak.

The route, beginning at the rock heap, leads, after one rope's length via one of the 3 slightly inclined rocky grooves above the rock heap, to a large, angular rocky crevice on the right side of the meadow. This climb can be made on a free rope.

The rocky angular crevice by which the ascent is begun is 7 to 8 m long. Its upper part merges into a narrow, 2 m chimney, which can easily be reached using 2 pitons. The upper part of the chimney tends to crumble,

and becomes a slight overhang where there is no possibility of placing pitons. This makes a diagonal shift to the left toward the left wall of the angular groove a necessity. The left wall can be reached with 1 piton. It is comparatively difficult to reach the arete from here, but this is facilitated by a convenient vertical rock crack in the arete which can be used for the placing of a rappel piton of average size. The rope must round a sharp protrusion here, and because of the great friction, two snap rings should be used, one hooked to the other. From this arete one moves diagonally along a small, very steep ledge onto another rocky arete further to the left which can be reached after a climb of 20 m on a rope. On this second arete it is possible to consolidate the team, since the ledge broadens into a small, steep and crumbling rocky ledge. It is not recommended that the team be consolidated here, however, since there is no possibility of belaying the safety ropes securely. For this reason it is advisable to continue the ascent to the full extent of the rope's length. This ascent is made over a 10 m passage of average difficulty but with a great tendency to crumble. It should be made with extreme caution on a free rope, or with the use of 1 piton. It is necessary to keep to the left and comparatively solid portion of this stretch. Above it, a much crumbled perpendicular rocky groove leads upward. In this groove there is a small triangular ledge (1) with dimensions of less than 0.5 m each way. However, the party must be consolidated at this point. There is no place for securing safety ropes here, however, and for this reason each climber must attach himself as firmly as possible before the next team member begins to climb. This ledge can be reached by means of the use of 6 to 7 pitons, and climbers have a partial view of their team members.

The steep and sometimes perpendicular rocky groove is about 90 m long. In some places it resembles a chimney, and it has many sectors with a serious tendency to crumble. The climbing of this groove is rendered difficult by the dearth of cracks in the rock and by the fact that the perpendicular passages merge in some cases into small overhangs which must be climbed with great care and cautious movements.

The first 6 to 7 m of this groove should be negotiated along its right hand side, where the hand and footholds are comparatively more solid and secure, especially those for the right hand. Beyond this perpendicular sector, one encounters a sector of the groove which is on an average incline but has a great tendency to crumble. One continues on a free rope for 15 m along the groove. About 20 m along on the second rope length, there is an opportunity to drive in a piton, although it cannot be relied upon as completely solid. On the right side of the groove, one full rope's length along, safety ropes can be securely belayed by means of a piton and a snap ring.

One moves diagonally into the rocky and crumbling groove to the left which was previously abandoned, and climbs another 15 m on a free rope along it across very much crumbled passage, emerging 5 to 6 m below a clearly defined cavity in the rock (The Nest) (2) of the groove. Above this point, the groove narrows into a chimney-like overhang of average dimensions. To the left and on the level of the rock cavity, there is a steep grass and rock traverse which leads toward the center of the wall. It ends in a rust colored slab. It is not recommended that the chimney-like continuation of the groove be pursued above "The Nest," since it is blocked by the overhang. One should continue diagonally across the right hand rock wall of the groove. It also tends to crumble,

but is more solid than the other possible stretches. One can use 1 or 2 pitons to cover 10 m of this wall on a diagonal to the right (in the direction of the right rocky arete of the groove) to reach a large juniper covered ledge (3) on this right arete. It is clearly defined and can be seen when looking at the wall from a distance. Here the party is consolidated. A traverse $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths long extends from this ledge to the right on a horizontal plane. The route follows this traverse.

From the ledge (3) one can reach the right hand arete of the groove. Following this for 10 m, across a patch of small and easily crumbled blocks, one comes to an increasingly solid arete of grey limestone. From the arete one has access to the badly crumbled main crevice which was abandoned beneath the cavity in the rock ("The Nest"). It continues upward to the left of the arete previously described. After some 10 m over easy rocky passages one reaches a convenient ledge where safety ropes can be belayed. It is recommended that one proceed along the right side of the arete, where there are solid patches of rock covered with strong alpine grass. One full rope length, using 2 large pitons, leads one to a very steep rock and grass ledge (4) about 4 m to the right of the right hand arete of the groove. This ledge can be used to belay safety ropes.

On this level (4), the principal groove cutting through the wall disappears into several smaller rocky crevices. By following these for 100 m on a free rope, one emerges on the summit of the peak, and to the right of it. It is recommended that 2 or 3 pitons be used for each of the final rope lengths in order to control the movement of the rope more precisely. Otherwise it may dislodge stones, since the upper half of the route lies over rocky passages where rocky blocks are easily crumbled. There are no ledges specified for use along the upper part of the wall. It is recommended that the right hand side of the wall,

or the arete itself, which is not very clearly defined here, be used for the ascent. There are more plentiful cracks in the rock along these surfaces. The final meters of the climb provide full view of all climbers to each team member.

The ascent of Momin Peak via this route is recommended for teams of no more than 2 climbers each, because of the limited number of ledges for assembling a larger party and the crumbling nature of the rock.

This wall is 200 m high, and the route laid out over its right hand portion is 8 rope lengths long. The ascent takes 3 hours. Eight pitons of various types, and as many snap rings, should be carried. If the team leader is short, a ladder is needed for certain maneuvers. The lower part of the route provides varying degrees of visibility for the climbers, while a full view is afforded on the upper portions.

Difficult passages predominate in the lower portion of this route, and easy stretches comprise most of the upper portion. Because of the remote location of the peak and the crumbling nature of the rock, this wall is classified 4 A in difficulty.

From the wall one can see the Sinanishki Lakes, Georgiytsa Peak and the Vlahinaka River. Beyond these the northern Pirin Mountains are visible.

Atmegdan

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration between pages 160 and 161, orig.]

Bashliyaki Chukar Peak is bordered on the southwest by a denudational surface called Atmegdan (2700 m). This plateau-like surface descends to the south between the Bashliytsa cirque and Malko Spano Pole cirque.

On this hill, which rises like a small plateau between the vase, grass covered Bashlytza cirque and Malko Spano cirque, a horse market was held in olden days. The Turkish name "Atmegdan", which means "horse platform", has endured even until today.

The southeastern slopes of this plateau are covered with large blocks of rock and drop off steeply toward the grass covered Bashlytza cirque. The northwestern side of the plateau is a large, perpendicular alpine wall, 200 to 250 m high, which borders the Malko Spano Pole cirque. To the southwest, Atmegdan slopes off toward the Spano field.

Because of theremoteness and the inaccessibility of this site, the Atmegdan wall was long neglected as a subject of alpine study.

On 23 June 1953, a group of alpinists from the "Stroitel" DSO camped near with wall with the intention of studying and eventually climbing it. On 25 June of the same year, Senior Instructor Konstantin Dyulgerov, Master of Sports, and Instructors Aleksandur Khizhov and Khristo Genkov, as well as alpinist Ivan Borisov, began the ascent of the wall in 2 teams. Despite unfavorable weather and the danger of rock slides, they completed the ascent of the peak in 6 hours. The first ascent of the northwestern wall of Atmegdan was made in honor of Physical Culture Day.

The route by which the first ascent of the northwestern wall was made is now called the "Stroitel" route.

On 23 August of the same year, Senior Instructors Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, Todor Ignatov, Valentin Filipchenko, Instructor Yordan Machirski and Petur Moskov of the "Septemvri" DSO made another attempt to climb the wall, and laid out a new route across its left side. These alpinists of the Alpine Section at the Central Club of the People's Army achieved a valuable victory in a matter of a few hours -- they laid out a new route, the "People's Army" route, which is the most difficult route across this wall.

The first group ascent of the northwestern wall of Atmegdan was made on 6 September 1953 by alpinists of the Alpine Section of the "Torpedo" DSO. Several teams attacked the various routes across the wall, laying out new ones under the leadership of Senior Instructor and Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov.

The wall of Atmegdan is shaped like a crescent. It covers the northwestern side of the Atmegdan denudational area and the western side of Bashliyski Chukar Peak, bordering the Malko Spano Pole cirque on the southeast. On the north, the wall becomes the steep, grass covered western slope of Bashliyski Chukar Peak, and on the southwest, it slopes off into the rocky arete which borders the cirque.

It is composed of granite, and contains very steep grass covered passages. There are 2 broad and deep rocky crevices which divide the wall into a northern (A) sector, which has a western exposure, and a western (B) sector, which has a northern exposure.

The northern groove, which lies between the routes II and III, is a broad one. The entire wall can be climbed to the summit by following along it. It is about 6 rope lengths long, and is composed of crumbling rock. There is a danger of dislodging loose rock. The first rope length leads one out above a large rock block which has fallen from higher up. Above it there is a rocky crevice about 30 m long. This can be climbed by means of the use of several pitons, and the remainder of the distance to the summit of the peak can be covered on a free rope.

The western groove, which lies to the right of route VI, divides the western portion of the wall into a lefthand and a righthand portion. It begins with a rock heap, two thirds of which forms a part of the wall. The upper third of this groove is composed of easy rocky passages. The entirety of the rock heap can be climbed without a rope. The upper part

of the crevice is blocked by a fallen rock, 30 or 40 m above which one emerges on the summit of the peak after climbing a vertical chimney of 5 to 6 m or bypassing it to the right.

In addition to this vertical division of the wall, there is a large, grassy traverse which runs across its entire width. This traverse is interrupted in places by easy rocky passages. The traverse is the broadest and steepest along the northern part of the wall. Toward the northern groove, it narrows gradually. This groove intersects the traverse. Beyond the right arête of the northern groove, toward the center of the western portion of the wall, a comparatively broad and steep continuation of the traverse is to be found. It is interspersed in some places with rocky stretches, and in the center of the western part of the wall (B) it becomes a large, grassy platform which merges into a rocky groove. By following this groove it is easy to reach the summit. Beyond the groove the traverse reaches the western groove up the wall, on the other side of which it continues, clearly defined, across the right portion of the wall to end on the right arête of the wall. One can easily cross the entire width of the wall -- the left, central and right hand portions -- by following this traverse.

There are many routes across the northwestern wall of Atmedgan, and they can be combined in various interesting variations depending on the experience and knowledge of the climbers.

The Northern Part of the Northwestern Wall of Atmedgan (A) --

The Bashliyska Wall

This part of the wall faces toward the west. It covers the western side of Bashliyski Chukar Peak, and is divided into well defined upper and lower parts where the large traverse is the widest. The lower part of the wall, especially the left end of it, is the

easiest. From the bottom of the wall a 100 to 120 m grass and rock passage extends upward. There is no route specified for the ascent of this stretch. Toward the right end, this stretch becomes gradually rockier, and near the northern groove, it is entirely composed of rock. This traverse is about 80 m long, and requires 3 rope lengths. Sloping passages covered with strong alpine grass predominate in its lower parts. It is strewn with loose granite blocks which have fallen from higher up. Above these grassy passages extend predominantly rocky and easy stretches for about 30 m. These are only slightly inclined, and following them on a free rope one can easily reach the foot of the upper and rock portion of the left and side of the wall. This rocky portion has the form of a quadrangle, like the Lokatnishki massif.

The most difficult of these routes have been laid out across the northern part of the wall. These are the "People's Army" route (I) and the "Stroitel" route (II).

The "People's Army" Route (I). This route lies across the center of the northern part of the northwestern wall (the Bashliyska wall).

It was laid out on 23 August 1953 by Senior Instructors at the TsDNA Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, Todor Ignatiev, Valentin Filipchenko, Instructor Yordan Machirski and Petru Moskov of the Septemvri DSO in Sofia. The ascent was made under favorable weather conditions in a few hours' time by Valentin Filipchenkov and Yordan Machirski, who alternated as leader.

The route begins along the lower portion of the northern part of the wall. It is not rigidly specified. Four and one half to 5 rope lengths across small grass and rock passages lead to the widest part of the large traverse. This in turn leads to the bottom of the upper part of the Karato (1).

An easy angular rock crevice 5 to 6 m long leads to a 15 m high grassy passage which is steep and which leads to a small and convenient grassy ledge. The crevice can be climbed on a free rope. This ledge lies at the foot of another rocky crevice 7 to 8 m long and slightly inclined to the left. This crevice is perpendicular, and is composed of solid granite passages covered with lichen and moss. The groove merges at its center into an overhang, and it ends in another well defined overhang of average difficulty. The ascent of this angular groove is difficult. Three to four pitons facilitate the climb. From the center of this angular groove to its top, the structure of the crevice forces the climber to the left. Before reaching the overhang of average difficulty, the party must shift to the right wall of the angular groove, above which there is a small rocky ledge covered with grass.

Following the solid granite passages above the ledge for 7 m on a free rope, one reaches another small rocky ledge which is also covered with grass. To the right of this ledge it is possible to belay safety ropes. Up to this point, climbers can keep each other in sight to varying degrees.

From this rocky ledge one continues the climb on a diagonal to the left. Here the climbers have a full view of each other. There are difficult passages here which can be negotiated by means of the use of 4 or 5 pitons. Beyond these one reaches the foot of a 5 to 6 m rocky angular crevice which is perpendicular. It contains a convenient crack where a heavy horizontal piton should be driven and a safety line attached. The ascent of this short angular rocky groove is difficult. The right side should be used for the ascent in order to take advantage of the small but solid handholds there. Above this crevice one works diagonally to the

left toward a steep grass and rock ledge (2) to the left and above the angular groove. It can be reached in one full rope length. The rope must round certain protrusions, however, and extra snap rings should be used to avoid friction which may restrict the free movement of the rope.

Above this very steep rock and grass covered platform (2) there are 2 possible routes leading to the summit.

1. Following a steeply inclined, almost perpendicular rocky and angular crevice which bears slightly to the right, one can emerge, using several pitons, on a grassy platform of average size. From it one can climb the remainder of the wall on a free line.

2. Following a steep grassy traverse (15 m long and 0.5 m wide) diagonally to the left, one can emerge at the foot of a 10 m chimney by means of which one completes the ascent of the wall. Two pitons are used to reach the foot of the chimney via the traverse. Four m above the foot of the chimney there is an inclined ledge which can be reached via the solid left side of the chimney, using 1 piton. To the left of the ledge secure safety lines can be belayed.

The remaining 15 m of the chimney can easily be climbed with 2 pitons. Care must be taken in the ascent of this chimney, because large blocks of rock have lodged in its upper portion. One emerges above the chimney on a large slightly inclined ledge, one half rope length above which lies the highest left hand portion of the Kareto.

The "People's Army" route is 7 rope lengths long, and its height in absolute figures is 150 m. The ascent of the wall can be made via this route with excellent visibility for the members of the climbing party. Seven to eight pitons and as many snap rings should be used. This ascent should be made by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. It takes 2 to 2½ hours.

Easy passages predominate along the lower portion of the route, and what difficult passages there are lie in the upper portion. The "People's Army" route is classified 4 B in difficulty.

The Stroitel Route (II). This route lies across the part of the northern sector of the Atmegdan wall which is farthest to the right. It is found to the left of the northern rocky crevice which divides the wall into its western and northern sectors.

The first ascent of the northwestern wall of Atmegdan was made on 25 June 1953 (description on page 183).

The route begins along a clearly visible crack which lies to the left of the rocky northern crevice which divides the northern from the western part of the wall. Following rocky passages for about 15 m with the help of 2 or 3 pitons, one reaches a steep grassy ledge. From it one can reach the upper end of the large traverse with $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths and several pitons (1).

The ascent can be made either via this crack or farther to the left, over a comparatively easy passage. In either case the climbing is done over solid granite passages. Seven to eight pitons are used over a distance of 2 rope lengths, beyond which one emerges on a steep grass and rock stretch. A rocky couloir begins here which can be negotiated on a free line for 3 rope lengths to reach the foot of the rocky angular crevice (2) on the part of the Kareto which lies farthest to the right. It is found to the left of a deep groove formed by the break between the western and northern parts of the wall. Via this groove one can emerge at the top of the wall.

The first 10 m of the rocky angular crevice is difficult. These passages can be climbed with the help of several pitons. Here there are secure concave hand and footholds. Above this point the climbing

of the crevice becomes easier. One or two pitons can be used to reach (after a total climb of 25 m along the groove) a small, very steep rocky ledge. Secure safety ropes can be belayed here on the ledge, and the left side of the groove provides convenient opportunities for the leader to attach himself.

Above the ledge previously described, there is an overhang of average difficulty formed by large, unstable and light colored blocks of rock which have tumbled down from a point higher up. This overhang can be negotiated with one piton securely driven in. Above it, the rocky angular groove continues, gradually disappearing. The passages above it form a wall which offers numerous possibilities for the continuation of the ascent (2). Climbers have a full view of each other during the ascent of this wall, but great caution should be exercised, as there are many loose blocks of rock. Three to four pitons should be used to regulate the movement of the rope in order to avoid dislodging stones. There are ledges in this area which provide suitable sites for consolidating the party. In one full rope's length, one reaches one of these ledges.

The next rope length lies over solid rocky passages which gradually become even more so, particularly at the end of the rope length. Several pitons can therefore be used, although this passage is not a difficult one. The ascent of these passages is much facilitated by the grassy patches which intersect them. These are covered with strong alpine grass. After one full rope's length, one reaches several ledges, which will not be described in detail, but which serve for the consolidation of the party and for the belaying of safety lines.

The rocky passages become more solid, and the granite here is covered with black lichen. Climbers should move in the direction of a clearly defined solid granite arete along which one can emerge on the highest point on the righthand side of the Kareto site via one rope length on a free line.

The length of the "Stroitel" route is 9 rope lengths, and its absolute height is about 180 m. This route can be climbed with 6 to 7 rock pitons and as many snap rings. Climbers have full view of each other during the climb. This route can easily be climbed by teams composed of two alpinists each. This ascent takes up to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Easy and difficult passages alternate along the lower part of this route, while at the beginning of the upper part of the route (the first rope length) there are difficult passages which gradually become easier. This route is classified 4 A in difficulty.

Beside these two specified routes along the western part of the northwestern wall, there are many others which can be used. They are combinations and variations of the 2 routes described, as well as others which have not been specifically laid out, and which can be climbed with full visibility for all climbers.

Such a climb, for example, could be made along the northern arete of the Kareto site. Via this route, after $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 rope lengths one emerges on the highest point of the left side of the Kareto site. Each rope length takes one to a broad, grassy ledge. Several pitons are used to cross the easy and solid rocky passages, especially if one keeps to the northern edge of the Kareto site.

To the right of the "Stroitel" route, there is a broad but steep groove across the northern part of the wall. Its lower part is in the nature of a rock slide in some places. One can easily follow it on

a free rope to emerge at the highest point on the wall. The upper part of this crevice is quite broad, and is covered with strong alpine grass, which facilitates the ascent.

The right hand side of this groove is an easy rocky arete which one can follow over rock and grass passages for 4 rope lengths, using several pitons, to emerge on the top of the wall.

Even farther to the right of the arete described, there are several very steep rock and grass grooves with easy aretes which can be traversed in 4 to 5 rope lengths to reach the top of the wall. These are routes where easy combined patches of rock and grass predominate, but because of their length and the remoteness of this wall, they are classified as 3 A and 3 B in difficulty.

The Western Part of the Northwestern Wall of Atmegdan (B)

The western part of the Atmegdan wall is easier than the northern sector, and has a more rugged surface. It stretches from the northern groove to the west as far as the western arete of the wall, and it faces toward the north.

It is crossed horizontally by three smaller traverses which lie parallel to each other, as well as by the large traverse. The lowest of these 3 sloping traverses begins to the right of the northern rocky groove, cuts upward on a sharp diagonal across the northern wall and emerges on its juniper covered right arete. This traverse is several m wide and is covered with fine gravel. One can traverse this part of the wall along it without a rope.

One rope length above this traverse another, also diagonal, traverse extends from the northern groove across the western part of the wall and comes to an end, still parallel to and above the lower one, on the right arete of the wall. The same distance above the second traverse, the third traverse, which at some points merges with the large one,

also leads to the right arete of the wall. By following these three diagonal stretches, the western part of the wall can be traversed in varying combinations of routes.

By means of the western groove, the western part of the wall of Atmegdan is vertically divided into a righthand and a lefthand part. The bottom of the western groove is a rock heap.

The right portion of this wall is terrace-like in nature. It is composed by rocky passages 10 to 12 m long which are interrupted by large grassy ledges. The ascent of this part of the wall can be made without any particular safety precautions. Easy training climbs for beginners can be undertaken along this sector.

The left portion of this wall is bisected by a broad rocky crevice which divides in a V formation at the center of the sector. It begins at the rock heap beneath the wall, is interrupted by each of the 3 small diagonal traverses, and splits near the middle of the wall, at the large traverse, into 2 distinct grooves via which one can emerge either to the left or the right of the pyramidal marker. The ascent of the groove which emerges to the left of the marker requires greater caution because of the tendency toward crumbling. The rocky passages in this groove are lighter in color than those in the groove to the right, which are both darker and more stable. The ascent of either branch of the groove can be made on a free line, and climbers have full view of each other: there are adequate opportunities for consolidating the party, for alternating leadership, and for belaying safety ropes.

Divided by the broad, V shaped rocky groove up the left portion of the wall, there is an interesting rocky arete to the right of the northern groove, and an easy wall to the left of the western groove.

Following the rocky right hand arete of the northern groove, alpinists Khristo Genkov, leader, and Stefan Khadzhikotev, of the "Stroitel" DSO, made the first ascent in this region on 6 September 1953. This route (III) is difficult at the beginning. Using 3 to 4 pitons over difficult passages, one emerges at the lowest of the diagonal traverses. Following very steep grassy passages where climbers have full view of each other one can reach a point to the right of the arete itself. Four to five pitons are needed. Then, following a 15 m rocky groove, where several pitons are used, one can emerge on the second of the diagonal traverses.

Using one and a half rope lengths, one can reach, by negotiating difficult passages, the large traverse (2), which merges into a large grassy ledge on the arete itself. This site is convenient for belaying safety lines.

Along the rocky arete, which is easy to negotiate above the large traverse (2), one can climb the wall in several lengths of free rope. This ascent is made by way of the easy grooves on either side of the righthand rocky arete of the northern groove.

To the left of the broad, V shaped rocky groove, there is an interesting chimney (4). It begins as a small, rocky groove in the upper half of which there is an overhang of average size. Above this there is a chimney 30 m long. It can be climbed on a free rope. The central portion of this chimney is blocked by a large chunk of fallen rock, which renders the ascent of the small overhang there somewhat difficult. Above this overhang the chimney broadens and becomes a slightly inclined ledge covered with deciduous grass. From it one can continue the climb either to the right or to the left. The chimney as a whole is 50 m high, but the chimney-like parts of it

comprise only 30 m. If one does not choose to climb the chimney, one can ascend from the overhang of average difficulty in the upper half of the small rocky groove and continue to the right of the overhang. After some 10 m one emerges on a grassy ledge (1) 1 to 1½ m in area. One can reach this ledge (1) in one rope's length from the beginning of the route. Emerging at the center of the wall on a free line, one continues to the marker at the summit of the peak. The first ascent via the chimney route was made on 6 September 1953 by this writer and Vasil Georgiev, an alpinist of the "Torpedo" DSO in Sofia. During this climb the members of the party have a full view of each other, and the ascent takes 2 hours.

The first ascent made by alpinists of the "Stroitel" DSO was made along the easy wall to the left of the western groove on 6 September 1953. Two teams, composed of 2 alpinists each, made this climb. The team composed of Georgi Georgiev, leader, and Vasil Georgiev made the ascent (VI) several meters to the left of the lefthand rocky arete of the western groove, while the team composed of Georgi Vasilev, leader, and Asen Bekyarski made the climb (V) even farther to the left, to the right of the broad, rocky V shaped groove. These first ascents took 4 hours each.

The 2 routes (VI and V) were laid out along short, easy, rocky and very steep, almost perpendicular grassy passages. These are interrupted by the traverses which cut across this part of the wall. The lower parts of these routes, i.e., the rock and grass passages leading to the lower diagonal traverse V -- (1) and VI -- (I), are the most difficult. Beyond this traverse one follows an unmarked rock and grass section, using the grassy passages for the most part, to emerge on the next traverse V -- (II) and VI (2). The upper parts of these routes are comparatively easy. By following rock and grass passages, one can emerge on the top of the wall to the right of the marker.

The height of the northwestern wall of Atmegdan is 200 m. The ascent can be made in 5 to 6 rope lengths. Five to six pitons are required, whichever route is chosen. The ascent takes 2 to 3 hours, and climbers have full view of each other. These routes can be climbed by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists.

In general, easy passages predominate along these routes, with the exception of the lower parts, where for some 40 m, there are comparatively difficult stretches. For this reason all of these routes have been classified 3 C as to difficulty.

From the wall of Atmegdan, one has a view of the Sinanitsa, Momin, Georgiytsa, Muratov, Khvoynati, Vikhren, Kutela, Koncheto Peaks, and others, somewhat less clearly visible, in the background. In the foreground one can see the southern part of the Bunderishki Chukar Peak and the Donchovi Karauli Peaks on the right and the Spanopolski Chukar Peak on the left. From the top of the wall, one can see the entire Pirin Mountain range and Slavyanka (Alibotush), Belasitsa, and Ograzhden Peaks, the Macedonian mountains, and Mount Olympus.

The most convenient starting point for trips to the northwestern wall of Atmegdan is the "Vikhren" tourist hut, which is $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours' hike away, or the "Popina Luka" tourist hut, which is 4 hours' hike from the wall.

Dzhangel Peak

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustration between pages 168 and 169, orig.]

The granite parts of the high sectors of the Pirin Mountains include the gangling Momin Dvor Peak, from which a ridge extends almost meridionally to the north between the valleys of the Demyanitsa and Dobrinishka Rivers. The Dzhangel (2730 m) and Mangurtepe (Polezhan) (2850 m) Peaks and the

rocky Ushitsite ridge (2802 m) follow successively along this ridge, along which its northernmost peaks -- Malkata strazha and Golyemeta Strazha (2800 m). Even further to the north lie Kaymakchel (2753 m), Kona-revo (2716 m) and Selskiya Peak, above Bansko. To the west of this side ridge there is at a short distance Gazey Peak (2716 M). To the east of Mangurtepe Peak stands Bezbog Peak (2645 m), to the north of which the short Bisilitza ridge, beginning at Kaymakchal Peak, lies.

These peaks, which are of great interest to alpinists, are characterized by their rugged profiles, and are deeply eroded by the action of water and wind. This side ridge is especially interesting from the point of view of winter climbing. The aretes of all of these peaks are interesting from the aspect of winter traverses. The very rugged and rocky Ushitsite, Strazhite and long and rocky Dzhangalski ridges are classified as among the most interesting alpine objectives.

The side ridge which begins at Momin Dvor Peak is composed exclusively of granite.

Dzhangal Peak with its western wall is considered one of the principal alpine objectives in the central Pirin Mountains. It has a rocky ridge which makes it one of the most remarkable and beautiful peaks in the Pirin Mountain range. It is generally believed today that Dzhangal Peak is that which has the rugged rocky ridge on its top and which rises to the east of the end of the Valyavishki cirque. On the north, the peak ends in a cone shaped rock which forms a part of the rocky Dzhangalsko ridge, and, with the southern slopes of the Maluk Mangurtepe Peaks, the Dzhangalska Porta Pass (Papazgyolski Pass), through which the footpath leading to the largest of the Pirin lakes -- Popovo (Papazgyol) Lake -- leads. To the south of Dzhangal Peak stands Momin Dvor, also located at the far end of the Valyaviskhi cirque -- its southern corner. The rocky Dzhangalski ridge divides the Papazgyolski

cirque, one of the most beautiful in the Pirin Mountain range, from the Valyavishki cirque, which forms the eastern part of the large Denyanishki cirque. The map of the Pirin Mountains drawn up by Dr. Kh. Iui erroneously shows the site where Dzhangal rises as the Sivritepe Peak. Others, also in error, call Dzhangal Peak by the name of the short spur called Dzhangalitsa, which begins at Dzhano Peak, and which is also called Sivriya or Sivritepe. It runs to the north between Popova (Papazgyol) Lake and the Kremenski Lakes. The population of the Bansko region mistakenly calls Dzhangal Peak by the name of its neighbor on the right -- Momin Dvor. It is worth noting, in view of the errors which have been made, that Dzhangala Peak can easily be distinguished at the foot of the Valyavishki cirque by its rugged ridge and the miniature pyramidal peak to the right of it.

In the foothills of Dzhangal Peak is located the Gorno Valyavishko Lake, and beneath it, the Malko Valyavishko Lake. Farther down lies the Golyamo (Dolno) Valyavishko Lake, which contains a small island composed of two small peaks. This latter lake is one of the most beautiful in the Pirin Mountain range.

For the ascent of Dzhangal Peak, one usually starts from the "Demyanitsa" tourist hut, which is located in a pine forest in the Demyanishka valley. It stands on the terrace where the Gazeyska and Vasilashka Rivers merge with the Demyanitsa River. There is a convenient footpath which leads from the "Demyanitsa" tourist hut to the upper part of the Demyanishka valley and to its farther end. This site, known as the "Tiatsite" or "Tikhatsite" site, bears clear evidence of glacial erosion, and is a horizontal and flat plain through which the Valyavitsa River meanders in broad curves. Its waters flow so

quietly that they make no sound at all, and it is for this reason that this site is known as "Tikhatsite". The Valyavishki and Prevalski streams, which form the upper reaches of the Demyanitsa River, merge here.

To the left and east of the Tikhatsite site is Dzhangal Peak. It can be reached via the large Valyavishko Lake. It is easy to climb the peak from the north, by means of the Papazgyol Pass, and the rocky and craggy ridge, or from the southwest, via the arete of Dzhangal, connecting the peak with Momin Dvor.

The ascent of the eastern wall of the peak is more difficult. This has a 30 to 40 m wall, which is relatively easy to climb. The foot of the wall can be reached by traversing blocks of rock on the lefthand side, or, on the right, terracelike passages covered with juniper. The wall can be climbed from several different points. The ascent is easiest along the clearly marked rocky grooves which require alpine equipment. This wall terminates on the right, in the direction of the Dzhangalska (Papazgyolska) Pass, via which one emerges on the ridge of the peak. To the south, the ridge is composed of several smaller walls, which can easily be climbed on a free rope to emerge beneath the rocky dome in which the peak culminates. On the left hand side of this dome, there is a beautiful wall which can be climbed in about three rope lengths. It is divided into two parts by a convenient chimney which starts as a broad rocky groove. From it one can emerge on the peak along the arete farthest to the left without a rope.

The western side of Dzhangal Peak is an alpine wall. Various routes of varying difficulty have been laid out across it. It is the most interesting alpine challenge in the Mangurtepe massif.

The first attempts at the ascent of the western wall of the peak were made on 16 August 1948 by seven alpinists who were members of the "Orlovets" alpine section of the "Planinets" Tourist Society. They camped on the upper lake beneath the peak.

The team, headed up by Instructor Dimo Nedev Dimov, leader, climbed the lefthand gendarme on the ridge, following its right side (I). They began the ascent at 11 A.M. They used a few pitons, but climbed for the most part on a free rope, due to the fact that most of the cracks in the rock are covered. They had favorable weather conditions, and they completed the climb by 3 P.M. Near the rocky cavity beneath the peak, there is a rocky protrusion which serves for belaying safety ropes.

On the same occasion, a team led by Ivan Ivanov made another ascent (I-a), in 3½ hours, from Iglata Peak. They climbed along the righthand side on a free rope, using one not very securely placed piton at a time.

The western wall ends in a very jagged rocky ridge which forms rocky gendarmes. Its southernmost part is the summit of the peak.

There are many varied ascents which can be made along the western wall of Dzhangal. These vary in difficulty and nature. The wall is cut by deep, rocky grooves along which the climbing routes follow. The lower rocky passages of the wall are covered with rocky cracks which have been filled up. Most of the routes follow broad and convenient rocky grooves but are not specifically determined. There are convenient ledges everywhere for belaying safety ropes and consolidating the party. The total height of the western wall of the peak is about 120 m. Climbers have an excellent view of each other during the ascent, which takes 2 hours at the most. Three, four or five rope lengths are needed. This western wall has a clearly defined left and right hand portion.

The lefthand portion of the wall is easier than the right one to climb. It begins with short, easy rocky passages which merge into a large, very steep traverse-like grass and rock covered ledge toward the center of the wall. This extends almost entirely across the left portion of the wall. Above this ledge there are easy rocky passages which gradually become more difficult. The wall ends in a rocky arete. The ascent is made entirely along well defined, easy grooves. The ascent along this side of the wall takes 2 hours, and climbers have each other in full view during its entirety. There are many convenient ledges where safety ropes can be secured and where the party can be consolidated. The wall can be climbed in 3 to 4 rope lengths. Several pitons should be used. The various routes over this portion of the wall are classified 3 A in difficulty, except for those across the center, which are 3 B.

The right hand portion of the wall is more difficult than the left part. It is composed of a rocky gendarme which becomes a beautiful rock needle. From this extends a monolithic part of the peak -- a large, rocky dome with a perpendicular western wall. This is the highest part of the peak. The ascend can be made along the rocky angular groove which has a broad crack in its angle and which runs clear up the wall.

To the left of this monolithic part of the wall stands the Iglata chimney. It is grooved by a broad chimney by means of which the ascent can be made.

In the groove between the monolithic part of the peak and the Iglata, an easy route has been laid out.

The "Deveti Septemvri" route (III) was laid out across the center portion by alpinists of the "Torpedo" DSO on 4 September 1953. The leader of the party was Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov. In

addition to these routes across the western wall of Dzhangal Peak, there are other variations which can be undertaken which differ in degree of difficulty and length. These can be undertaken for the most part on a free rope.

Strazhite Peak

To the north of sprawling Momin Dvor Peak, a side ridge branches off to Dzhangal and Mangurtepe Peaks. To the north of Mangurtepe Peak runs the rocky and jagged Ushitsite and Strazhite ridge. This rocky ridge is about 1 km long and is composed of most varied and strange rock formations. These make it very inaccessible. The highest part, the Ushitsite Peak (2840 m), is located on its southern portion. Rocky gendarmes connect this peak with the next highest heights, which are found on the northermost parts of the ridge -- Malkata Strazha Peak and Golyamata Strazha Peak (2810 m). Together with the rocky gendarmes linking them to the other peaks, these heights form a beautiful and rugged rocky ridge which gives the impression of a series of eternal sentinels watching over the site. It is from these that the name Strazhite [meaning in Bulgarian "the guardians"]. Usually the entire ridge is called Strazhite, although this is properly the name of its northermost peaks -- Malkata Strazha and Golyamata Strazha Peaks. The map made by Dr. Kh. Lui erroneously designates as Strazhata the peak which stands to the north of it, and which is actually Kaymakchal.

The eastern part of the ridge is steep, but not as rugged as the western portion, which forms a wall one km long which forms the eastern border of the Gazeyski cirque. The ascent of the rocky ridge from this side is effected by means of the many crevices which separate its narrow, steep almost perpendicular gendarmes, which rise high above the ridge.

The peak which is the most difficult to climb is Golyamata Strazha Peak, which is usually climbed from the southeastern approach, by means of a crevice which leads to the summit. Malkata Strazha Peak is easier to climb. The other rocky gendarmes are lower, shorter, and, including Ushitsite, not very interesting to climb.

The first attempt at climbing the northwestern arete of the Strazhite Peaks was made in 1934 by BAK members Dr. Lyuben Delcharov, Lyuben Penev and Ilarion Vasilev.

The climbing of this rocky ridge is of particular interest in winter. The arete can be traversed horizontally from the east on the level of the lower parts of the gendarmes. This very rugged ridge is sometimes very difficult to negotiate, necessitating the climbing of the gendarmes themselves. This is of great interest to climbers, and necessitates the use of alpine techniques.

The first winter traverse of Strazhite Peak was made on 1 April 1950 by alpinists of the "Lokomotiv" DSO. The party was composed of Tsanko Bangiev, Khristo Borisov and Dimitur Neshev. The ascent of Golyamata Strazha Peak was effected from the Kaymakchal Peak approach, from which we traversed the arete to the south.

In April 1953, participants in the Second Republican High Mountain Rila-Pirin Alpine Traverse made the first group ascent of the Ushitsite-Strazhite ridge.

The most convenient starting point for ascents of the Strazhite ridge is the "Demyanitsa" tourist hut. The ascent is begun at a point opposite the site where the Vasilashka River and the Demyanitsa River merge. One follows the steep banks of the Gazeyaska River toward the lower Gazeysko Lake. From this point, following the crevices one emerges on the ridge after $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

The Strazhite Peaks are the most beautiful of the Pirin Peaks, and can be seen from almost all the other high peaks in the mountains. Together with the other peaks in the granite part of the Pirin Mountains, these rocks illustrate the grandeur and the power of the Pirin Mountain range.

THE VITOSHA MOUNTAINS

The Vitosha Mountains are to be found almost exactly in the center of southwestern Bulgaria. They are high and massive mountains, and constitute an independent geographic unit. Because they are linked on all sides with lower heights, there are foothills in the mountain plain never less than 700 m in altitude. These are surrounded by the highest plains in Bulgaria, but even so, these hills are high enough to be clearly visible from all sides. The Vitosha Mountains are the only dome-like heights in Bulgaria whose tops are formed in part by the high and very close neighboring peaks -- Cherni and Rezniovete Peaks. These make the Vitosha appear to be a huge and slightly elongated dome stretching from the northwest to the southeast. The Vitosha Mountains are about 18 km wide, about 20 km long, and have an average altitude of 1382 m.

The name of these mountains is no doubt derived from their nature. Skombros or Skombur, the old name for these mountains, implies that Vitosha is a sharp, steep peak. This name has only been preserved today in the name of the highest southern peak -- Skoparnika Peak. Since the Middle Ages, when these mountains began to be known by the Slavic and Thracian name "Vitosha," which means "two ridges," "two-headed," or "two-peaked" mountain. This double top is formed by its highest peaks -- Cherni Peak and Rezniovete.

Morphotectonically, the Vitosha Mountains are comparatively young. The rock structure of their higher parts is of cyanite, the slopes below 1400 m altitude are composed of andesite, and the southern slopes are covered with Triassic materials. The present form of these mountains is a result of the later action of external forces, such as erosion, which over a period of many years carried away the sediments covering these mountains as well as parts of the eruptive rock.

The mountain ridge is an organic whole. It is covered by a plateau-like flat surface with distinctive individual peaks rising from it. There are no mountain sectors as are found in the other mountain ranges, so that Vitosha is usually divided on the basis of its peaks, which are classified in several groups, each of which is known by the name of the highest peak in it. Most of these peaks are linked in an organic whole by their ridges, and most of the elevations on these ridges are referred to as peaks. The predominating peak group is the Cherni Vrukh group, which includes Cherni Peak (2285 m), Golyam Rezen (2278 m), Maluk Rezen (2191 m) and Skoparnik Peak (2228 m). To the south of this group lies the Kupenska group, which lies along the watershed ridge of these mountains. It includes the secondary Golemiyut Kupen (2106 m), Belchova Skala (1831 m), and Siva Gramada (over 2003 m) Peaks. To the southwest of the central part of these mountains the ridged Selinitza (2048 m), Vladayski Cherni (1641 m) and Ostritsa (1695 m) Peaks, which form the Selinishka group. The Vododelska group separates the Boyanska and Vladayska Rivers. This group includes Vododel Peak (1972 m) and Chernata Skala Peak (1869 m). Of the other low (less than 2000 m) peaks which are located in the northern part of these mountains form the Kamendel group, which includes Kamen Dyal

Peak, Kikish, Ushite and Kominite Peaks, and the eastern part of these mountains contains the Golovrushka group, which includes Goliya Peak, Vulchata Skala Peak, Golyamo Gradishte Peak and Malko Gradishte Peak. Apart from these groups there are numerous elevations and lower heights less than 1600 m in altitude.

The most distinctive characteristic of the Vitosha Mountains is the plateau-like flat peat areas which are found between 1800 m altitude and the highest portions of the mountains. The Vitosha Mountains serve as a base for water supply. Beside the high mountain springs in the southwestern limestone sector, the Vitosha Mountains contain karst springs, and the foothills of these mountains are among the Bulgarian regions most generously endowed with hot and mineral springs.

In the entirety of the mountain region, to an altitude of 2000 m above sea level, there is a distinct forest belt. Above it there is a typical high mountain belt -- not afforested but covered with grass.

The Vitosha Mountains contain fauna of varied types. Almost all varieties of microorganisms, insects, reptiles, birds, and animals are to be found, particularly in the forest belt. Fish are less well represented than the other categories.

The folds of these mountains are rich in ores, magnetite in particular.

Bulgarian hiking got its start in the Vitosha Mountains. In 1895 the writer Aleko Konstantinov organized the first expedition to Cherni Peak. Since that year the number of visitors to these mountains has been increasing week by week. The nearness of this region to Sofia has been the reason for the fact that it is the most frequented hiking area in Bulgaria. The Vitosha Mountains rise in great splendor

only 7 km to the southwest of Sofia. Almost nowhere else in Europe is this rare combination -- a great city and a high mountain area nearby -- to be found.

These mountains today are a people's park, which is constantly being improved. Tourist huts and rest homes are being built, the footpaths are being broadened, a highway for automobiles is being constructed, and new ski runs are being laid out. The first ski lift in Bulgaria was built in 1953 on the best slope for skiing in the Vitosha Mountains -- the "Stenata," near the "Aleko" tourist hut. By the end of 1955, a second ski lift, from Dragalevtzi village to the "Usoite" shelter, had begun operation (Bay Krustyo). This ski lift will be continued to a point higher on the peak, and several other ski lifts are to be constructed in the future.

Despite the fact that the Vitosha Mountains cover a small area and do not contain the dizzying valleys and precipices of the Rila and Pirin ranges, they are of great importance to Bulgarian mountaineering. They contain small alpine peaks, which, because of their proximity to Sofia, serve as splendid training sites for the city's climbers. After a climb of only a few hours (less than one hour's hike from the upper lift station) alpinists from the capital can reach the Kominite snow drift, which endures well into the spring. Only a little farther along they will encounter the snow drift which lies between the Reznyovete Peaks, and which does not melt at all most years. In summer, climbers can easily reach the cyanite and granite walls of the Kominite, which are no less difficult than many other high mountain walls, in a short time. On these training areas, which closely resemble the high Bulgarian alpine sites in structure, climbers from Sofia can practice so as to writey later in their climbing careers,

glorious new chapters in the history of Bulgarian alpinism. These natural training sites have understandably become the best known of the Bulgarian alpine practice areas.

Momina Skala Peak

This peak stands above Boyana village. It rises on the left side of the Boyanska River at the point where the river emerges from the narrow mountain pass. It was formed by the erosion effected by the river and the wind.

The peculiar location of this rocky peak has suited it since ancient times for use as a natural fortification. It was here that the ancient "Batil" fortress was located. It was named after the Pechenek leader of the same name. According to one legend, one lone maiden guarded this fortress during the period when the Turks invaded the Sofia region and burned the monasteries, converting the population to Islam or killing those who resisted. She was urged by an emissary from the Pasha to surrender, but she defied him and forced him away. Maddened, the Turks besieged the fortress in full strength. When the maiden was about to be captured alive, she jumped from the great height to her death. From that time on the Turks referred to the height as "Maiden's Rock" -- Kuztepe -- which name has been preserved to the present time.

Momina Skala rises to the left of the Boyanska River -- it is a small alpine peak, composed of andesite rock which is much more seriously eroded than that of the Kominite Peaks. The southern slope of this peak is divided by a steep rocky crevice into 2 parts -- an inner and an outer side. The former is the smaller of the two. The arete of this portion is a high one (12 to 15 m) and can be used as a training sector for alpinists. There is an angular crevice at the beginning

of the arete which broadens higher up to culminate in an overhang at the middle of the arete. Above this one can emerge on the summit of the peak.

The outer side is higher -- about 30 m high -- and has an almost perpendicular wall on the east, which is laved by the foamy waters of the Boyanska River. On the southeast it ends in a beautiful rocky arete.

Both slopes of Momina Skala Peak and the rocky crevice between them are used as training sectors for rocky passages. The parts most easily climbed are the passages near the aretes where the solid rock provides convenient hand and footholds and cracks which will take pitons.

Momina Skala Peak is only 20 minutes' hike from Boyana village, which can be reached by streetcar from Sofia. The proximity of this peak to the city greatly aids Sofia's alpinists in their daily training maneuvers.

The Kominite Peaks

[All symbols in parentheses refer to illustrations between pages 184 and 195, orig.]

The Kominite Peaks (1620 m) are 2 small heights which are rounded on all sides and which rise to the right of the pass of the Dragalevska River, whose foaming waters lap at their bases on the east. These peaks belong to the Kemendelska group. These two small peaks have been formed by the erosion of wind and water on the andesite ridge which rises perpendicular above the river. From a distance they have the appearance of 2 haystacks, one above the other.

From the western shore of the Dragalevska River Dolniyut Komin Peak rises directly. Its foot stands in the rocky river bed, and its perpendicular andesite walls rise from an altitude of 1550 m. These

walls are about 50 m high at the highest point on the peak (1600 m). Dolniyut Komin is linked by a large grassy saddle with Gorniya Komin Peak, which is 1620 m high.'

The slopes of the Kominite Peaks are composed of perpendicular walls on which Bulgarian alpinists begin and constantly improve their skills and knowledge. During the first years of the Bulgarian alpine movement, training climbs were made on these granite surfaces before the climbers progressed to high mountain ascents.

The first ascents using alpine ropes in Bulgaria were made in the summer of 1919 by Krum Novakov (Kumata), Panayot Minkov (Pinyot), Boris Kovachev and Khristo Yordanov, all of whom were members of the Sofia branch of the "Vitosha" Youth Hikers' Union. A special alpine rope was used as well as crampons and ice picks brought by Krum Novakov from Innsbruck, Austria.

In the summer of 1932, BAK members Eng. Yordan Yordanov and Borislav Yordanov undertook the first ascent using a free rope of the eastern wall of the Golemiya (Dolniya) Komin Peak, and of the eastern arete of the left side of Malkiya (Goren) Komin Peak. This route later became one of the most popular routes in Bulgaria. This route is called the "Tsepkata" (Dyulferut) route.

During that same year, BAK members Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovki, Kr. Lyuben Delcharov and Lyuben Penev made the first ascent of the righthand wing of Dolniya Komin Peak, laying out the route which has since become known as the "Damski tur" ["Ladies Route"]].

In August 1933 BAK members led by Ivaylo Vladigerov made the first ascent of the southeastern wall of Golemiya (Dolen) Komin via the arete. They made the climb in three hours on a free rope.

On 24 May 1935 BAK members Meritorious Physical Culture Worker Gancho Ignatiev, Niso Gershon and S. Schlesinger made an ascent of the southern wall of the Kominite, using rock pitons. Fourteen pitons were used during the climb, which took $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Gradually an increasing number of ascents of the Kominite Peaks were made. These mountains became favorite sites for Sofia mountaineers and alpinists, and became well known as among the most convenient and suitable of the training sites.

Dolniya (Golemyat) Komin Peak

This height rises directly from the rocky bed of the Dragalevska River. Its walls are 50 to 60 m high and have eastern and southeastern exposures. They are composed of solid andesite rock. This is a thick bodied rocky peak with many convenient horizontal, vertical and diagonal cracks which serve in the various maneuvers with pitons. For this reason it appeals to alpinists.

Dolniya Komin Peak is divided into two parts by a broad, very steep grassy crevice -- a northern wing and a southern wing, along which various climbs along routes which have been laid out can be made.

The Northern Wing. The northern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak is reached by means of a small rocky footpath which follows the foot of the southern wing and leads to the lowest part of the northern wing. Along it there is a clearly marked route called the "Damskiya route."

The Damskiya Route (I). This route is about 80 m long, and can be climbed in three rope lengths. The ascent can be made on a free rope, using the many convenient and solid rock protrusions for belaying safety ropes. This route lies over solid, dark andesite rock passages

where there are convenient hand and footholds. There are also numerous convenient ledges along the entirety of the route where the party can be consolidate and leaders can change off. This climb can equally well be made by teams of two and teams of three persons each. Climbers have an excellent view of each other during the ascent, which takes one hour at the most.

Due to the convenient features mentioned, the "Damskiya tur" is a route easily climbed, is safe, and is suitable as a training area. During the climbing of this route, the beginner comes into contact with the various rock formations, becomes familiar with the macro and microrelief of rocky passages, and can make a practical application of the theory of ascent on a free rope. He also accustoms himself to altitudes. This route stimulates in climbers who traverse it the desire to perfect their alpine techniques so as to be able to climb rocky passages.

The Southern Wing. The southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak rises directly from the rocky bed of the Dragalevska River in almost perpendicular walls 50 to 60 m high. Its upper part culminates in a rocky dome. There is a large interior angular groove called the "Vinkelut" which runs from the bottom to the top, splitting the wing, dividing it into two clearly defined aretes -- a lefthand one and a righthand one. The classical routes most frequently climbed have been laid out along these two aretes. These two aretes and the "Vinkelut" dividing them form parts of the many different variations of the route of the climb. The following routes lie across the lefthand wing.

The Tsepkata Route (II). This route follows the right arete of the southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak, and was first laid out by BAK members Eng. Yordan Yordanov and Borislav Yordanov during the summer of 1932.

This route is 60 m long and can be climbed, using 3 or 4 pitons and as many snap rings, in 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths. Except for the first portion, where the rock is rather crumbling, the ascent is made across solid rock, and there are many cracks, hand and footholds. Several ledges break this area up into short rocky passages. The ascent can be made with excellent visibility for all climbers, and takes a maximum of 1 hour.

There are several difficult passages, alternating with easier ones, which require the use of pitons and snap rings. The crevice provides an excellent practice route. There are during the ascent of this route practical applications of the theory of manipulating technical equipment -- the driving of pitons at various altitudes and the careful handling of snap rings and alpine ropes.

The Tsepkata route is a convenient route by means of which beginners can descend en rappel from a considerable altitude. This is possible because of the several ledges which provide protrusions by means of which the lowering of the climbers can be controlled.

The Malkiyat Vinkel Route (III). The "Malkiyat Vinkel" route lies between the Vinkelut and Tsepkata routes, to the left of the latter. It also follows the right arete of the southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak.

It was so named because of its peculiar form. It differs from the Vinkelut, which is a larger rocky angular crevice.

The Malkiyat Vinkel route is 60 m long, and can be climbed in $2\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths, using 3 to 4 pitons and as many snap rings. The ascent is made over solid, light colored rocks which contain convenient cracks

and grips. The ascent takes 1 hour, and can be made by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. Climbers have full view of each other during the entire ascent.

This route is used as a practice climb, and is useful from the point of studying ascents via interior crevices. It has a typical angular form, is easy to climb, and is therefore attractive to beginning alpinists.

The Arete Route (V). This route has been laid out along the left-hand arete of the southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak. It was first traversed in August 1933 by BAK members under the leadership of Ivaylo Vladigerov (in 3 hours).

The route is 50 m long, and takes 2 rope lengths. Another half rope length is necessary to reach the summit of the peak. Five to six pitons and as many snap rings are used. This ascent is made across solid and dark colored andesite which contains many cracks, holds, steps and ledges convenient for consolidating the party and belaying safety ropes. It can easily be climbed by teams composed of two or three alpinists each. Climbers have a partial view of each other over the beginning stretches, and a full view during the second half of the climb, which takes 1 hour.

This is a practice climb. The difficult passages in its first half serve to perfect techniques in the use of alpine equipment and to train climbers in the ascent of difficult passages.

The Vinkelut Route (IV). The southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak is divided by a large, almost perpendicular angular crevice. By following along its perpendicular walls via the crack between them one ascends the "Vinkelut" route. There is a difficult overhang in the upper portion of the route.

This route is 70 m long. It can be climbed in about 3 rope lengths, for each of which one uses 3 to 5 pitons of varying types, as many snap rings, and a ladder (if the team leader is short). The ascent is made via very solid, light hued andesite rock which has cracks convenient for the driving in of pitons, but few and small hand and footholds. The ledges are convenient for teams composed of 2 alpinists each. This climb takes 2 hours or less. Additional equipment can always be used to facilitate the crossing of the more difficult passages -- a ladder, rope loops, etc. A double rope may be used for the ascent. Climbers have an excellent view of each other throughout the ascent, except at the overhang, where they have only partial visibility.

This route, which is the most difficult one on the Kominite Peaks, should not be undertaken until the climbers have climbed all the other routes on these peaks with assurance and ease, and are very familiar with the more complex alpine techniques. This climb provides a splendid practice route for those planning to undertake high mountain ascents.

Apart from the routes described herein, many combinations and variations can be undertaken for the sake of variety, taking into consideration the accomplishments of the prospective climbers. Typical combinations of this sort include the following.

The Traverse Route (T).

1. Following the left arete of the southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak, one reaches a ledge at the center of the "Rubut" route (T) from which a traverse is made to the right to emerge on the right arete of the southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak. The further ascent can be made along the upper half of the "Vinkelut" route, the "Malkiya Vinkel" route or the "Tsepkata" route.

2. Following the right arete of the southern wing of Dolniya Komin Peak, one reaches a ledge at the point where the "Tsepkata" comes out, and from which one makes a traverse to the left in order to emerge on the "Arete" route. From this point the ascent can either be continued along the upper part of the "Arete" route or via the "Vinkelut" route, which the alpinist crosses first.

The Natvesut Route (H).

The rocky and angular crevice to the left of the "Vinkelut" route is interrupted by a large overhang which is split vertically by a broad crack. By means of the use of wooden pitons and a double rope ladder, this crack can be utilized to negotiate the "Golemiya Nadves" [the large overhang] so as to continue along the "Arete" route.

Gorniyat Komin Peak. Golemiya Komin Peak is a natural continuation of Dolniya Komin. It begins at the large grass and rock covered saddle where Dolniya Komin ends, at 1600 m altitude. Above this saddle, Gorniyat Komin is divided by 2 steep rock and grass groves into 3 aretes all of which face east. The andesite rock of which this chimney consists is more seriously eroded than that on Dolniya Komin. It forms rugged block-like sections which have convenient hand and footholds as well as cracks. The rocky blocks are covered with lichen. The highest part of this chimney is the rocky dome in which it ends -- 1600 m [sic].

In general, the individual rocky passages along the 3 aretes are easily climbed with 2 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths. Climbers have full view of each other during these ascents, which can be made on a free line.

The southern side of Gorniyat Komin Peak is composed of a wall 70 m high which is less steep than the walls of Dolniya Komin Peak. It is cut vertically by three clearly defined and very steep rock and grass crevices, and it is divided horizontally by several traverses. Several training routes and areas are to be found on this wall.

The route of the ascent of Dolniya Komin Peak, which is the more difficult of the 2, can be continued to include Gorniyat Komin. This considerably lengthens the route and aids alpinists in developing endurance. It also trains them in routine techniques, further accustoms them to altitudes, and gives them practice over the type of terrain prevailing in the high mountain regions.

The Kominite Peaks lie $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours' travel from Sofia. The most convenient starting point for climbs along these peaks is the "Bay Krustyo" shelter, 30 minutes' hike from the peaks, or the "Aleko," "Rodina," "Tintyava," "Bor," "Sredets" or "Kamen Dyal" tourist huts, each one hours' hike from these peaks.

The Reznyovete Peaks

These peaks are located in the eastern part of the Vitosha Mountains, and to the east of Cherni Peak. They are linked to this peak by a plateau-like watershed ridge. Seen from Sofia, they are clearly defined by their steeply inclined eastern wall. Beyond them in the distant background Cherni Peak looks like a continuation of these peaks, although it is higher than they are.

These peaks are not mountains in the narrow sense of the word. They are more nearly peak-shaped elevations above a plateau stretching 1 km from north to south and 400 to 500 m from east to west. Its highest point is Golyam Rezen Peak (2278 m). Its northern portion is a rocky dome which rises above the "Aleko" tourist hut -- this is Malkiya Rezen Peak (2191 m). To the east this plateau drops off as a steep wall which in some places is perpendicular, and which is 200 m high.

The name "Vitosh," by which the Vitosha Mountains have been known, means "two slices." This name is therefore appropriate to the two Reznyovete Peaks [Rezen in Bulgarian also means "slice"]. This

Thracian word has persisted in our Slavic language and has acquired a broader meaning. It has now been applied to the entire mountain group, and the exact translation of this name into the Slavic language has been given to this part of the mountains -- the Reznyovete Peaks.

The rocky structure of the Reznyovete Peaks is pyroxene cyanite which is poor in mica.

As an object of alpine interest, the eastern wall of Golyam Rezen Peak has great appeal. This wall is 200 m high, and even 250 m in some places. It rises above the Politsite terrace-like site and extends from the Mecha meadow to the summits of the Reznyovete Peaks. This wall is composed of cyanite blocks and grassy ledges which facilitate the ascent on a free rope.

By means of 22 corridors -- a southern one and a northern one -- the eastern wall of Golyam Rezen Peak is divided into 3 parts -- the north, central and southeastern sectors.

The northern and southern corridors are crevices partially filled with rock heaps. Large amounts of snow collect in them and in early spring it begins to turn to firn. These stretches are used from that time until the beginning of summer for training in climbing on firn.

The Northern Wall

The northern wall of Golyam Rezen Peak, frequently called the Bistrishka wall, is the most beautiful climbing site on the Reznyovete Peaks. For many years it has attracted the attention of Bulgarian mountaineers. In 1924 and 1925 Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski made the first attempts at the ascent of this wall, but it was not successfully climbed until May of 1932. Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski and Zhivko Kraev made the first ascent of the northeastern arete of the wall on a free rope in 3 hours' time.

The first winter ascent of the wall was made on 24 March 1935 by BAK members Dr. Iyuben Telcharov, Dr. Iyuben Redoslavov and Vladimir Zagorov. The climb was made along the northeastern and rocky arete where A. Belkovski had made his earlier attempts. The ascent was made in 3 hours' time under excellent weather conditions. The terrain was covered with snow, and in some places, ice.

On the north, the wall begins as a step-like ascending ridge, which has 3 clearly defined rocky depressions, one above the other. The lowest is the widest and deepest, and the topmost is the smallest but most angular, and therefore the most difficult to negotiate. The route here demands the classical technique for ascending a chimney. There are several variations possible, and the ascent can be made on a free rope. This climb can be made by teams of 2 or 3 persons each. There are many convenient hand and footholds, cracks, chimneys and ledges. The ascent can be made with full visibility for all climbers, and it takes 1 hour.

This wall is excellent for acquainting beginning alpinists with the elementary practical maneuvers in alpinism. The gradual nature of the slope, the solidity of the hand and footholds and the broad platforms facilitate the beginners' ascent to a considerable degree. In choosing the sequence of routes to be attempted by beginners, this should be made the first.

The Arete

The central part of the wall consists of an arete formed of steep, slab-like rocky walls which provide the profile of Golyam Rezen Peak as seen from Sofia. The fore part of this arete, as a matter of fact, is a rocky triangle formed by 2 rocky aretes bounded by the southern and northern corridors. The arete has a lower and an upper portion, clearly defined. The upper portion in turn is divided by 3 steep crevices

of rock and grass into two interior and independent rocky aretes which are about 50 m long each, and which merge with the aretes on the side higher up form a broad rocky arete about 70 m long.

A variety of easy routes, which are not exactly specified, follow along this arete. Some of these keep to its farther end and others keep to the central portions of the large arete.

This part of the wall is of no particular interest from an alpine point of view. Individual rocky passages provide opportunities for practical experience in climbing on a free rope, for belaying safety ropes, and in the handling of alpine lines.

The Southeastern Wall

This wall extends to the left of the southern corridor, and, in its southernmost portion, becomes a steep slope.

The first ascents of this wall were made in July 1933 by BAK members who were led by Ivaylo Vladigerov.

The southeastern wall begins just next to the southern corridor and is composed at that point by numerous individual rock masses. The lower parts of these rocks join to form a slightly inclined wall with a broad front portion about 60 m high. As it rises it narrows gradually to end in a broad terrace. Above this the rock masses are linked by a very jagged ridge which comes to an end just below the marker on the summit of the peak.

There are no exact routes specified on this wall. The ascent of all parts of it is easy, and the alternation of easy and difficult passages is typical of it. Numerous variations can be made here for training purposes.

The ascent of the eastern wall of Golyam Rezen Peak takes a maximum of 1 hour, and can be done on a free rope. Climbers have a full view of each other. The rocky aretes on this wall are excellent

practice routes for beginning climbers. Thanks to the slightness of incline where the easier and more difficult passages merge, these climbs are of great help to beginners in accustoming themselves to altitudes and overcoming the natural fear of rock passages. The hand and footholds here are very solid.

During the summer the Reznovete Peaks provide very easy climbs, and the ascent of the walls and corridors (couloirs) between them in winter poses problems of a certain difficulty. Between the 2 Rezen Peaks lies the bed of a large avalanche site, which contains snow until very late in the summer, and sometimes even until the next winter's snowfalls begin. Because of the many possible variations on these ascents, and to the varied nature of these climbs -- snow, firn and rock passages, the Reznovete Peaks constitute ideal training sites. These locales are exceptionally helpful in accustoming beginning climbers to the alpine characteristics found in the high mountain regions.

The most convenient base for climbs along the Reznovete Peaks is the "Aleko" tourist hut, which is one hour's hike from them. The foothills of these peaks can be reached by means of a beautiful forest footpath, which starts out through a dense pine forest and later emerges into the open, providing a beautiful view of the Stara River and the Bistritsa and Simeonovo villages. This footpath leads to the Mecha meadow, where it disappears. The terrace-like Politsite site where the Reznovete Peaks begin can be reached by small footpaths which frequently seem to disappear among the blocks of rock and tiny juniper covered meadows.

THE STARA PLANINA MOUNTAINS

The Stara Planina Mountains comprise the longest mountain chain in Bulgaria. They extend the entire length of Bulgaria, beginning to the west of the valley of the Timok River, and ending at the shore of the Black Sea. The Stara Planina Mountains are linked on the north-west through the east Serbian Mountains with the Carpathian Mountain range, and, on the south, by means of Mounts Gulubets, Koznitsa and Krustets, with the Sredna Gora Mountains. On the north they are linked somewhat imperceptibly, by means of numerous submountain areas known as the Prebalkan Mountains, with the hilly Danube Plain.

These mountains are a part of the young, folded Alpo-Himalayan mountain system, and they date from the Tertiary Epoch.

It is incorrect to assume that the name Stara Planina [meaning "old mountains"] refers to the era in which they were formed. This name was used by the population in recognition of the fact that these mountains were Bulgarian from the very moment the independent Bulgarian state was established.

The Stara Planina Mountain range is the longest one in the Balkan Peninsula. They are about 600 km long and between 15 and 60 km wide.

The elevation of these mountains occurred in several stages, during which 3 or 4 plateau levels were formed. These mountains consist of 4 or 5 central folds lying, in general in an east-west direction. The southern folds are the highest and the most gently sloped, while those on the north are lower and of a more regular shape. Taken as a whole they form an over all profile of a norther, gental ridge and a steeper southern sector for the mountain range. This impression is strengthened by the folds which border a large portion of the southern part of the mountains.

The rock structure of the Stara Planina Mountains is greatly varied. It is principally composed of mesozoic layers which have been interrupted or replaced in spots by crystalline schists, gneiss, old volcanic rock and others. In the river valleys, gravel and more recent formations are to be found.

The Stara Planina Mountains are a high range, and have a well defined orographic ridge. Although this is but a single mountain chain, this range can be divided into three sectors on the basis of internal and external characteristics. These are the western, central and eastern parts.

The western part of the Stara Planina Mountains begins at the valley of the Timok River and ends at Botevgrad Pass. This mountain sector is formed by the Midzhur, Kaduboaz, and Murgash areas, which are local regions bearing the names of the settlements nearest to them. The highest peak is Murgash Peak (2168 m). Mount Vrachanska and the Iskur River Pass are of interest to alpinists.

The central part of the Stara Planina Mountains consists of an uninterrupted chain of peaks between the Botevgrad Pass and Vratnik Pass, which is located above the city of Sliven. The highest part of the ridge in this sector of the mountains is of a high-mountain nature. In terms of the predominant altitudes in the central part of the Stara Planina Mountains, there are two areas -- the western portion, which is high -- over 2000 m in altitude, and the eastern portion, which is lower.

The individual areas, although not sharply defined, bear the names of neighboring settlements. The highest peak in the Stara Planina Mountains -- Botev Peak (Yumrukchal -- 2376 m) -- is found in this sector. There are also others of the highest peaks in this range to be found in this sector.

To the north of the central sector of the Stara Planina Mountains and within the Prebalkan Mountain region, lies Mount Turnovska, where there are numerous alpine training sites.

The eastern sector of the Stara Planina Mountains stretches from Vratnik Pass to Emine Cape on the Black Sea. In this sector Bulgarka Peak (1191 m) is the highest, while the others are all less than 1000 m in altitude. They give this sector of the mountain range the appearance of a hilly region. There is no clearly visible orographic ridge to the mountains here, but the area can in general be divided from north to south into 3 parts -- Mount Lisa, Mount Mator and Mount Utvoy.

The Stara Planina Mountains include 12 peaks with altitudes of over 2000m and dozens with altitudes greater than 1500 m. Except for the high mountain ridge between Levski Peak and Mazalat Peak, the Stara Planina Mountains is not of the alpine nature of the Rila and Pirin Mountains, since there was no glaciation here during the Quaternary Era. Only the high mountain ridge between Levski Peak and Mazalat Peak has rather sharp high mountain rock formations.

No other Bulgarian mountain range has been of such great importance to the Bulgarian people -- strategically, historically, politically and economically -- as the Stara Planina range.

Climatically, these mountains are also of great importance, as they protect the Transbalkan Plains and almost the entirety of southern Bulgaria from the cold northern winds. Because of these mountains, the climate to the south of the mountains is milder than farther north and permits the raising of heat-loving crops.

Many rivers, which are of great economic importance, have their sources in the Stara Planina Mountains. Those which flow into the Danube River form the natural irrigation system of the hilly Danube

Plain. The economic importance of these mountains is very great. The flat slopes, the low foothills, the protected valleys, the fertile soil and the large amounts of precipitation have contributed to the development of agriculture. The high, rounded and grassy peaks and ridges are convenient sites for livestock breeding, while the vast forests in the Stara Planina Mountains have aided the development of the forest economy.

The Stara Planina Mountains have been the subject of many artistic interpretations. They have been depicted throughout the centuries in many forms, as seen through the poet's creative prism, but in all cases they have been shown as a dear, truly Bulgarian, and totally unforgettable mountain range.

The many beautiful sites in these mountains are much visited by the Bulgarian people. The Stara Planina Mountains are one of the major Bulgarian tourist sites.

The vast grassy and rocky slopes and rounded peaks make excellent natural ski runs.

The Stara Planina Mountains are also of great interest to alpinists. They include numerous sites which serve as exceptionally valuable alpine training areas for the instruction of alpinists intending to climb in the high Bulgarian mountain ranges -- the Rila and the Pirin Mountains.

The perpendicular limestone walls of the western sector of the Stara Planina Mountains, which rise from the Zgorigradski Pass to form the Vrattsata site, the picturesque Iskur Pass, etc., are splendid climbing sites, worthy of comparison with many such foreign areas. Bulgarian alpinists are particularly interested in the middle part of the central Stara Planina Mountains -- the picturesque Kosiya wall

and the high mountain ridge extending from Levski Peak to Mazalat Peak, the sharp rocky Golemyat Kupa and Malkiyat Kupa Peaks, the rocky ridge leading to Ravnets (Dyustchal) Peak, along with the rocky Krusttsi and Kostemurkata Peaks, the southern and northern Dzhendem Peaks, the northern rocky walls of the Ushite, Paradzhiha, Yurushki Chal and Rusalka (Mara Kidik) Peaks, the Malkata Kosiya wall, which rises above the foamy Tuzha River, the northern, rocky walls of the Triglav (Kademliya), Pirgos and Mazalat Peaks, the walls of the Sinanitsa (Korudere) Peak, the Peeshtite rocks, and the sharp rocky peak above the "Mazalat" tourist hut, which is also called "The Bulgarian Matterhorn," etc.

The wonderfully colored Sini Kamuni [Blue Rocks] near Sliven, the perpendicular limestone rocks which rise above the Yantra River Pass and near the historic Dryanovski Monastery, etc. are splendid training sites. All of these alpine sites in the Stara Planina Mountains are of interest in the winter as well as in the summer. They are far less difficult than the alpine sites in the Rila and Pirin Mountain ranges, but they are splendid sites for the mountaineers and alpinists living in the Balkan and near Balkan settlements to keep in form on.

Vratsata

Mount Vrachanska branches off to the north from the main watershed ridge of the western sector of the Stara Planina Mountains. It is a plateau-like elevation covered with pastureland which rises in a grandiose fashion between the steep rocks of the Iskurski Pass, the Vratsa Plain and the valley of the Glavarka River. Its highest peak is Pirshevitza Peak (1433 m).

The deep Zgorigradski Pass and the valley of the Glavarka River interrupt this ridge in a drastic fashion.

The Ieva River flows through the Zgorigradski Pass, and through it leads the highway from Vratsa to Zgorigrad village and Vurshets.

The narrowest part of the pass is only 30 m wide. This is at the rocky "Vrattsata" Pass, which is located 1 km to the west of Vratsa city.

The perpendicular limestone walls of the pass around the Vrattsata site made interesting alpine climbs. During the morning, they appear bluish; at noon they are white; and in the evening they are lilac, gilded by the rays of the setting sun. These perpendicular 400 m walls rise directly above the pass. They run straight upward from the highway which runs through Zgorigradski Pass. In some places there are large landslides which have piled up materials at the foot of the walls. Many limestone aretes, needles and sharp or jagged rocks provide the variety which characterizes this beautiful climbing site.

The first studies of this wall were made in the summer of 1948. On 24 November of that same year, alpinists of the "Orlovets" alpine section at the "Spartak" NFD [Narodno fizkulturno druzhestvo -- People's Physical Culture Society] undertook the ascent of the Kucheshkiya Zub rock on the occasion of Alpinists' Day. They made the ascent under extremely poor atmospheric conditions.

In August 1949, the Supreme Committee for Physical Culture and Sports organized a climbing course for beginning alpinists from all over Bulgaria on the rocky massif of the Vrattsata site. The course was directed by Master of Sports Konstantin Dyulgerov. The instructors in the course were thoroughly familiarized with the walls in the vicinity.

On 27 and 28 August 1951, the first ascent of the perpendicular Vrattsata wall (about 300 m high) was made by Senior Instructor Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, and Khristo Borisov, in honor of the People's Freedom Day, 9 September, and in honor of the People's Army. They climbed this wall in 23 hours' time.

On 30 and 31 August 1951, Senior Instructors in Alpinism Encho Petkov, Master of Sports, leader, and Nikola Shopov undertook the first ascent of the Vrattsata with an encampment at the middle of the rocky arete. This ascent was made in honor of 9 September, the People's Freedom Day, and took a total of 28 hours.

The ascent of the rocky Vrattsata arete begins along the highway itself (359 m altitude).

It can be begun along the rocky arete which is difficult from the very start. For tactical reasons, it is better to begin the ascent a little to the left of this arete. This avoids delay and the unnecessary expenditure of strength involved in starting the climb across the arete itself. This would involve high mountain rock techniques and equipment (double rope, wooden pitons, etc.).

One climbs to the left of the arete on a free rope for about 10 m to reach the first convenient ledge where the party can gather. From this point the ascent continues over easy passages of comparatively solid grey limestone for about 1 rope length. Several rock pitons are used to reach the next ledge, where the party is consolidated.

One then continues across the arete itself, which is crumbled more than the previous passages, since the rocky limestone has been eroded here. Three rock pitons are used to reach another platform after a climb of another full rope's length.

Still another ledge is reached across easy passages on the solid arete. It is above this point that the most difficult part of the wall lies. The ascent continues along an almost perpendicular limestone wall, yellowish in color and rather crumbling, which is the most difficult pitch along the entire route. This takes a full length of rope. This wall is divided into 2 parts of 15 m each. The lower part begins with a slight overhang. The rock is more solid here than in the second half of the wall, which is entirely formed by an overhang. In order to traverse these 2 difficult portions, 7 to 10 rock pitons must be used. If one of the team members is short, a ladder must be used here. There is a small ledge which is found above this difficult passage and it can be reached without the climbers' losing sight of each other.

The ascent then continues along the eroded arete. By using 2 or 3 pitons over a full rope's length one can emerge on a convenient rocky ledge. From this point on the passages are easy, and pitons are required only occasionally. One continues over large, jagged rocky blocks which are not very stable and are covered with lilac bushes. After 1 rope length the climbers emerge on the horizontal section of the arete. After two lengths of free line, during which climb all team members can move simultaneously, the party reaches the end of the first part of the arete. It was here that Master of Sports Encho Petkov and Nikola Shopov made camp during the first ascent of the arete.

From this highest part on the Vrattsata, the team can climb 80 m simultaneously to reach the end of the great break in the arete. It is at this point that its second part begins.

~~The beginning of the arete here is a difficult and solid wall~~
 about 25 m long. It can be climbed with 4 or 5 pitons. Above it lie passages which become increasingly easier. After a climb of about 20 m along the arete, one reaches the foot of the third consecutive break in the arete. This break begins as a difficult wall, the upper part of which is even more difficult, culminating in the last 15 m in an overhang of average size. Rather than following the route described, which passes 2 m to the left of the arete, one can make the ascent across the arete itself or to the right of it. The ascent of this 30 m passage is effected with 10 or 11 pitons, since the overhang, which is composed of yellowish, crumbling rock, is difficult to surmount. It may be necessary to use a ladder. Above the overhang one continues along the arete over easy passages. All team members can progress together to the foot of the fourth break in the arete. It is 3 rope lengths long.

The first rope length is climbed by means of the use of 4 to 6 pitons. One then continues along the solid arete. All team members can move simultaneously here.

After 60 m of climbing, the party reaches the fifth break in the arete. This is climbed by means of the chimney to the right of the arete. The lower part of the chimney -- about 25 m -- is easily climbed. After one rope's length there is a convenient site for consolidating the team. The remaining 10 m of the chimney, i.e., the part which it is difficult to climb, should be avoided by following a step-like couloir 15 m to the right. This leads to the next ledge. From it 6 lengths of free line lead across the arete to the foot of its final portion, which can be climbed with one rope length. The party can then progress without safety precautions and simultaneously to emerge on the highest point on the arete.

The Vrattsata arete is about 350 m high in all, or 22 to 25 rope lengths. Climbers have full view of each other during the climb which takes 4 to 5 hours.

Ten to twelve rock pitons and as many snap rings, a ladder and an auxiliary rope should be carried on this climb.

The length of this route and the lack of a water supply render this a difficult climb, particularly on warm summer days. For this reason only climbers with extensive technical and tactical experience should attempt this wall. This climb is used as a practice ascent for climbers ready for difficult ascents. It is exceptionally useful in developing endurance as well as judgment and determination in climbers.

Easy and moderately difficult passages predominate along this route, and there is only one rope's length where there are very difficult problems.

The Iskur River Pass

The Iskur River runs through the western sector of the Stara Planina Mountains. It cuts through the broadest part of these mountains, and forms its second and extremely beautiful pass. The Iskur Pass is one of the most beautiful in Bulgaria.

At the end of the Pliocene Era, the waters of what was then the Sofia Lake began to drain toward the north, and during the Quaternary Era, with the elevation of the mountain range, these waters began to cut into the rising terrain.

Thus the deep groove which cuts through all the folds of these mountains between the Sofia Plain and the hilly Danube Plain was formed.

The Iskur Pass extends from Kurilo village, Sofia okoliya, to Lyutibrod village, Vrassa okoliya. It is about 65 km long. At many points the waters of the river flow between perpendicular walls.

A railroad line and a highway linking western central Bulgaria and northern Bulgaria have been laid through the pass. They greatly facilitate visits to the interesting sites in the pass, where during the hot summer months, the people of Sofia like to come.

Erosional forces have for centuries contributed to the formation of the picturesque and decorative rocks in the pass which give it its peculiar and unusual charm.

The perpendicular western walls of the pass constitute splendid climbing sites. These are much frequented, particularly by alpinists from Sofia.

The walls facing the Lakatnik and Bov railroad stations, those near the Levishte railroad station and the Ritlite site above the Lyutibrod railroad station are among the more important climbing sites.

Ritlite

Opposite Lyutibrod village, where the beautiful Iskur Pass ends, and rising directly from the Iskur River, there are several elongated, high and perpendicular limestone walls, several hundred meters high and 4 to 6 meters broad. They rise 70 to 80 m apart. The harder parts of these walls lie above the softer perpendicular sections.

The Romans considered the Iskur Pass of great importance. They used the Ritlite walls as natural fortifications. Today the ruins of the Roman city of Korintgrad can still be seen.

Because these walls resemble a cart rail, the local population has given them the apt name "Ritlite" [meaning "cart rail"]. There are several of these walls. Three rise near the railroad tunnel and are of some interest as climbing sites.

The first studies of the Ritlita walls with a view to climbing them were made in the summer of 1949 by the "Orlovets" Alpine Section of the "Spartak" Physical Culture Society. On 18 July of that year the second study was completed by this group, but one team met with disaster. Preparing to climb the northern face of the first Ritlita wall, below which the railroad line runs, the team composed of Krum Popov, leader, Dimitur Yanev and Vasil Draganov had an accident. This route was laid out later.

There are no exactly specified routes for climbing the Ritlita walls. The climb can be made along the aretes, but these are not of great interest. Training routes could be laid out, however, along the individual parts of the Ritlita walls.

It is recommended that the ascent of the wall faces of the Ritlita be avoided, since these portions are eroded and very crumbling, as well as of little interest.

The following peaks rise grandiosely above the Ritlita walls: Okolchitsa, Kipenut and Volut. These are the mute and century old witnesses to the final destruction of the Botev group, which occurred at the Rashov Dol site near the Ritlita following Botev's death.

The most convenient starting point for trips to the Ritlita walls is the Lyutibrod railroad station, only 10 minutes away.

The Lakatnishki Rocks

The Iskur Pass is most picturesque near the Lakatnik railroad station. The Lakatnishki rocks, some of which are blue, some whitish, some rust colored and some black, rise perpendicular from the bends in the Iskur Pass.

A 300 meter high wall rises perpendicular from the river itself opposite the Lakatnik railroad station. This was formerly called the "Osikovska wall" or the "Osikovski stone" by the local population. These rocks, along with the Osikovsko karst plateau on which Osikovo village is located, stand among aspen trees. Osikovo village (now called Milanova) has played its part in recent Bulgarian history.

Tourists and alpinists call the perpendicular wall opposite the Lakatnik railroad station the "Lakatnishki rocks." The geological structure in the upper portion is Triassic limestone. Below this there is red sandstone, in several well defined terraces. These rocks can be reached via an arching bridge of red sandstone which lies beyond the Lakatnik railroad station. One follows a narrow and rocky footpath beyond the station which begins at a small mill operated by the waters of the "Zhitolyub" karst spring above it.

The small footpath, twisting upward across the rocky terraces, leads to the "Temnata Dupka" Lakatnik cave, which is a complex labyrinth. The river in the cave forms several thunderous waterfalls, links several beautiful little lakes, and emerges beneath the cave to form the "Zhitolyub" karst spring. The many natural formations in the cave, including "Chetalut," "Svurdelite" and the unexplored "Rayat" section, where there are beautiful stalagmites which touch the opposite stalactites to form tall Gothic columns, "Lebedut" and the other karst formations, are of interest.

Alpinists, however, will want to continue along the footpath which leads diagonally across the wall to a small meadow where the southern wall of the Lakatnishki rocks ends, and where the Kuklite site is found. To the south is the TurSKIya Pass, through which there is an old cart track which leads to Milanovo village. On the north,

rising directly from the small meadow, there is a large rocky block. Its front face, toward the river, appears as a huge rectangle which is called the "Black Rock" by climbers. Above this rock and on the north rise the 100 m perpendicular walls of the highest parts of the Lakatnishki rocks -- the Kuklite site. A cross was erected in memory of mountaineers who have perished on the highest elevation here in 1939. A grandiose monument of red limestone has been erected on a neighboring elevation in honor of the "September Men" who fell heroically in 1923. This "Kukla" or elevation is known as Milanovo Rock or Milanova Kanara.

At the sight of this monument, one trembles at the height of the precipice beneath his feet, and stands silent, reflecting upon the immortal deed of Osikovo citizen Milan Petkov and his communist comrades Yordan Kurtev, Stefan Trifonov, and Mityu Boyadzhiev, who, following the failure of the September Rebellion, sought refuge here, and who, when surrounded and forced to retreat to the precipice, perished heroically.

To the north of the monument to the heroes who perished lie the beautiful Dvortsii sites, where the Prozoretsa and Kamilata rock formations are found.

From the Lakatnishki rocks one has a splendid view of the Iskur Pass, of mount Folyama opposite, where Yavorets Peak is to be seen, and the highest peak in this area -- Izremets Peak.

The Lakatnishki rocks have interested Bulgarian alpinists since mountain climbing became an organized sport in Bulgaria. Their names appear frequently in the accounts of ascents made, since even today, alpinists make practice climbs, add to their abilities and perfect the techniques which increase their proficiency as climbers on these perpendicular walls.

During the earliest years of existence of the Bulgarian Mountain Club, which later became the Bulgarian Alpine Club, Bulgarians have been making climbs along the rocks in this pass.

In the summer of 1931, alpine ropes were first used in ascending the Lakatnishki rocks by Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, a member of the BAK, and Georgi Simeonov and Nikola Chipev, members of the Sofia Ski Club. They made an ascent on a free rope as far as the "Dvortsi" site, above the red limestone bridge at the Lakatnik railroad station. Ascents of some of the walls in the foothills of the slope near the Prozoretsa site where the last cave is were also made.

In August 1933 BAK members including Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski and Nikola Chipev made the same ascent on a free rope for the second time.

Later in the same year, a group of BAK members made the first group ascent of the Lakatnik rocks. Ten people, climbing in parties of 3, made the ascent of these rocks to the Dvortsi site for the third time. This group included Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, Dr. Lyuben Telcharov, Meritorious Physical Culture Worker Gancho Ignatiev, Ivaylo Valdigerov, Lyuben Todorinov, and others. The 3 climbs were made on a free rope from the bridge across the steep grassy slope leading to a small chimney which is clearly visible from below. One can emerge from the chimney into a slight rocky crevice, above which, beyond 2 or 3 steep and grassy terraces, one comes to a broad ledge. Above this various different routes lead to the summit of the rock.

The next year in April, BAK climbed the chimney farthest to the left on the massif of the Lakatnishki rocks, and made an attempt to climb the Kuklite site on a free rope (without pitons or snap rings).

However, there are other alpine sites in this pass. There are many walls along the pass where climbers have been training since the earliest years of Bulgarian mountaineering.

The introduction of new alpine techniques was begun in the summer of 1934. This included the utilization of auxiliary equipment. Engineer Yordan Yordanov and Georgi Tsenev (BAK members) used the first rock pitons ever employed in Bulgaria. They were climbing the rocky massif near the Cherepish railroad station. Since that time ascents of the formations along the Iskur Pass have been made using pitons and snap rings.

During that same year, BAK members Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, Konstantin Savadzhiev, Georgi Stoimenov, Nikola Stoyanov, Ivan Petrov, Engineer Yordan Yordanov, and others toured other sites in the Iskur Pass, including the rocks near the Levishte railroad station, those near the Proboynitsa River, and elsewhere, but they found no climbing sites superior to those on the Lakatnishki rocks. There are, however, some beautiful and suitable sites not visited by climbers due to their remoteness from the railroad stations or because of the inconvenient train schedules.

During the succeeding years (1935-1936) ascents of the Lakatnishki rocks were made over routes of constantly increasing difficulty. This was made possible by the fuller utilization of alpine equipment. Rock pitons, snap rings, rope ladders, etc., have been used.

On 21 October 1934, a group of BAK members, including Meritorious Master of Sports Aleksandur Belkovski, Dr. Lyuben Telcharov and Ivaylo Vladigerov made an ascent to the left of the Kuklite site.

On 30 April 1935, a group of BAK members, including Niso Gershon and S. Schlesinger, began to lay out a route to the left of the Kuklite site, where the cross stands. In 2 hours they attained considerable altitude, but were forced to descend en rappel by a heavy rain.

The same team continued the ascent on 5 May of the same year, reaching a height of 45 meters. Then, because they lacked the proper equipment, long pitons included, they were again forced to descend en rappel.

On 6 May they tried the ascent again, reaching an altitude of 80 m, from which they descended en rappel, leaving all the pitons in place.

Using these pitons, the same team continued the climb on 12 May of the same year, ascending the most difficult pitch on the route -- an overhang 17 m high, which required 24 pitons and 8 hours. Because of fatigue, the team descended again in 4 rappel maneuvers.

They completed the ascent on 19 May of the same year, when the team, using the pitons which they had left in place, made the climb in 10 hours, including the last 30 meters, to complete the marking of the route. It was 120 to 130 m. Fifty-eight pitons were required for the entire ascent.

On 2 June 1935, BAK members including Meritorious Physical Culture Worker Gancho Ignatiev and S. Schlesinger and others made an ascent of the perpendicular chimney located to the right of the Black Wall, i.e., to the right of the "German route", in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours, using 15 pitons.

On 6 June of the same year, BAK members including Meritorious Physical Culture Worker Gancho Ignatiev, Ivaylo Vladigerov, S. Schlesinger and others made an ascent of the rocky couloir to the right of the "Idealniya Rub" [Ideal Arete] of the Black Wall (the "couloir" route beneath the alpine shelter). The ascent took 3 hours. Sixteen pitons were used.

That year the splendidly trained German alpinists Toni Widemann and Herman Hund visited Bulgaria. They, together with a member of the BAK, made on 28 July the first and most difficult ascent of the right arete of the Black Wall ("the German route") in 4 hours under favorable atmospheric conditions.

On 21 August 1935, BAK members including Ivaylo Vladigerov made an ascent of the "Prozoretsa" site along the wall to the left of the entrance of the "Water Cave." They climbed the righthand wall of the cave, using 12 pitons. The ascent took 12 hours.

On 18 August 1935 BAK members including Meritorious Physical Culture Worker Gancho Ignatiev started an ascent via a new route to the left of one of the Ritlite walls between the "German route" and the cave. The climbers were forced to turn back after four hours due to great fatigue. On 25 August of the same year Engineer Yordan Yordanov and Vladimir Zagorov joined the group, and the entire party continued along the route where the ascent had been begun and was subsequently abandoned. After $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours' climb, the ascent was completed. The party used about 30 pitons. It was the party's opinion that this constituted the most difficult climb in Bulgaria.

In the summer of 1936 almost all of the routes over the Black Wall and near it were climbed.

In the following year, 1937, attempts were made to master the overhangs and the reverse slopes. Bulgarian climbers began to perfect complex alpine technology, to work with double ropes in crossing the "uberhanger" (overhangs), and at the same time they experimented in the use of pitons, called "rollplug" pitons which are placed in especially prepared holes or in very small cracks. The most unrelenting efforts in this connection were made by BAK members

Konstantin Savadzhiev, Engineer Yordan Yordanov, Georgi Stoimenov, and others. As a result of these continuing training activities on the Lakatniskhi rocks, the ascent of the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak was successfully completed in the summer of 1938. (The conquest of the Triugulnika was the peak of achievement in Bulgarian alpine rock techniques at that time.)

Following the conquest of the wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak some of Bulgaria's most active alpinists, BAK members Konstantin Savadzhiev, Georgi Tsenev, Georgi Stoimenov and Todor Boshkov (Tarzan), started the construction of a small alpine shelter on the "Idealniya Rub." After several months' hard labor, they completed the "Orlovo Gnezdo" [Eagle's Nest] alpine shelter at an altitude of 600 m. This is a small, unfurnished wooden building with a little porch. It covers an area of 4 sq m, and is built on an iron pipe foundation. These are cemented into the perpendicular wall about 300 m above the level of the Iskur River.

Beneath it, the waters of the Iskur flow monotonously on, flashing silver on the rapids on sunny days, reflecting the sun's rays blindingly. At other times, these waters thunder down toward Levishte, dark flooding masses.

The blows of alpine hammers often echo around this alpine shelter. It is here that climbers take their first steps along a perpendicular wall; that advanced alpinists improve their alpine techniques.

With the modest funds collected from climbers during the summer of 1939, the comrades of the mountaineers who perished here erected the cross in their memory which stands on the highest part of the Lakatnik massif, facing the railroad station.

In the years which have followed, the Lakatnishki rocks have become a popular training site for Bulgarian mountaineers. Bulgarian alpinists have devoted many days to adamant and systematic practice in training themselves on these rocks so that they would be prepared to make the important climbs in the high Bulgarian mountains.

Because the routes marked out across the Lakatnishki rocks are classified as training climbs, they are not listed by the ERSK. A further factor which would exclude them is that they lie at altitudes less than the minimum specified for alpine climbs. All the routes lying across these rocks are well marked, and permanent pitons have been driven in along their entire length. Orientation and climbs can be effected easily for this reason, since one of the most important alpine maneuvers, the driving of pitons for the ascent, has already been effected. In view of these considerations, we will not go into a detailed description of the various passages here, but will only describe the most important routes, noting their typical technical features.

The best known and most important routes which cross the Lakatnishki rocks are given here in a progressive sequency by degree of difficulty which should be taken into consideration by every beginner or instructor in alpinism, so that they can ensure the maximum degree of security during these ascents. Thus, by gradual and systematic training beginners can increase their athletic and technical abilities regularly and independently, and will be able to evaluate their achievements in terms of their experience and in accordance with the requirements of the ERSK.

The Damskiya Route (3). [See illustration opposite page 209, orig.]

This route lies on a diagonal along the southern wall of the Lakatnishki Rocks. It begins at the angular part of the wall, and ends on the rocky

arete of the wall. It has been given this name because in comparison to the other routes over these rocks it is easy, and it usually is climbed by beginners and women.

The "Damskiya" route is two rope lengths long. It was laid out across easy and varied rocky passages. It can be climbed with the help of several pitons.

It can conveniently be climbed by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. It takes $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to climb this route, and climbers have full view of each other.

The height of the "Damskiya" route is not great, and for this reason progress can be made along it calmly. Beginners use this route to familiarize themselves with rock formations and to practice the use of pitons and snap rings. The Concheto and Traverse sites can be crossed only with difficulty, but this climb is very interesting. These passages attract beginners because of their difficulty, which is mitigated by the fact that there is no serious danger.

The Couloir Route (8). [See illustration between pages 208 and 209, orig.] This is the name given to the second route to the left of the "Ideal" arete. It is so-called because it runs through a broad and perpendicular rocky crevice, the only such groove found on the Chernata Wall.

The height of the Chernata Wall, along which this route lies, is 30 m and the route is one and a half rope lengths long. It passes across solid, rocky passages. It can be climbed on a free rope, but the use of several pitons and as many snap rings is recommended. It can conveniently be climbed (in about half an hour) by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. Climbers have an excellent view of each other during the climb.

The "Couloir" route is the easiest one across the Chernata Wall. In difficulty it is even easier than the "Damskiya" route, but it has considerable height. One climbs more than 200 m. It is used as a practice climb to familiarize beginners with altitude and also with the manipulation of alpine equipment at great heights.

The Overhangs Route (7). [See illustration between pages 208 and 209, orig.] This route lies to the right of the "Ideal" arete along the Chernata Wall. It is so-named because it has two overhangs, one above the other, in its central portion. These are the distinctive feature of this route.

The altitude of the wall here is 30 m, and the route is $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths long. The lower part of the route runs across yellow limestone which has already begun to erode, while the upper part lies across solid grey limestone. Pitons are used for the lower part of the route, but its upper portion can be climbed on a free rope. A total of 6 or 7 pitons and as many snap rings are used. Teams of 2 or 3 alpinists can conveniently make this climb, which takes 1 hour. Climbers can keep each other in full view.

This route is easy, but the two overhangs command the respect of alpinists. It is excellent as a training route for practice in climbing on a double line. The attention of beginning alpinists who have acquired some experience in using a double line should be directed toward this route. The comparatively difficult rocky passages along the lower part of the route and the two overhangs in its central portion can easily be negotiated on a double line. Since the lower portions are climbed with facility if a double line is used, beginners become accustomed to the altitude from the very beginning of the climb and can

manipulate both lines calmly and without confusion. This maneuver requires greater attention, concentration and familiarity than the use of a single rope. Training ladders can be used to negotiate the overhangs.

The Combination Route (5). [See illustration opposite page 209, orig.] The "Combination" route runs up the first angular part of the southern wall of the Lakatnishki Rocks, from which, across a small traverse, one emerges on the upper part of the "Ideal" arete, where the route ends.

This route is a combination of the beginning of the "Damskiya" and "Zhultata Tsepka" routes, a separate traverse, and the upper part of the "Ideal" arete.

The first ascent via this route was made in the spring of 1936 under the leadership of Konstantin Savadzhiev by BAK members in 1½ hours time. They had good weather.

The route is about 2 rope lengths long. It lies across difficult and varied passages. It can be climbed in about 1 hour, and climbers have full view of each other. Five or six pitons and as many snap rings are used. It is suitable for climbing by teams of two or three alpinists.

This route is interesting from the point of view of practice on various typical rock formations, which is of great importance in the early training of beginning alpinists.

Another practice route begins between the lower part of the "Combination" route and the "Ideal" arete. It can be followed on a double line to the point where it merges with the upper part of the "Combination" route. These passages of several hundred meters are the most suitable spot in the Lakatnishki Rocks for demonstrating ascent by means of a double line.

The Zhultata Tsepka Route (4). [See illustration opposite page 209, orig.] The "Zhultata Tsepka" route lies in the angular folds of the southern wall of the Iakatnishki Rocks and follows a rocky and angular groove which is easily climbed. There is a wide crack in this groove which is called the "Tsepka" by alpinists. This route takes its name from the yellow rock passages which predominate along most of the length of the route.

The first ascent via this route was made in the spring of 1936 by BAK members led by Konstantin Savadzhiev. The climb took $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours under favorable weather conditions.

The route is 2 rope lengths long. It lies across difficult rocky passages, and can be climbed in 1 hour, using 6 to 7 pitons and as many snap rings. Climbers can keep each other in partial view. It should be climbed by teams of two alpinists each.

It is particularly valuable as a practice climb for young alpinists because it is a difficult climb but does not boast the dizzying heights which are found on the other routes over the Chernata Wall. It offers beginners the opportunity of making a safe climb of difficult rocky passages using large numbers of pitons.

The Iyulyakut Route (9). [See illustration between pages 208 and 209, orig.] The "Iyulyakut" route lies to the right of the "Couloie" route, almost in the center of the Chernata Wall, at the point where there is an angular break in its upper part. It is so-named because it is covered with lilac bushes.

The first ascent via this route was made during the summer of 1936 by BAK members including Niso Gershon and Khari Khaimov. The climb took them 4 hours under favorable weather conditions.

The height of the Chernata Wall here is 35 m and the route is $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths long. It lies across solid dark colored limestone parts. The ascent is made with the help of 6 to 7 pitons and as many snap rings. It takes about 1 hour and climbers can keep each other in full view. It can conveniently be climbed by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists. From the point of view of technique, this route is useful in perfecting beginners' manipulation of alpine equipment.

The Faktor Route (10). [See illustration opposite pages 208 and 209, orig.] This route lies between the "Iyulyakut" route and the "Shemineto" route, and covers difficult rocky passages. The Chernata Wall here is 40 m high. The route is $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths long.

The route begins at a very difficult groove which runs through a small projection in the form of a balcony, and above which an angular crack expands considerably and can be climbed, using the hands extensively. In the middle of the route there is a small overhang to be climbed. A few pitons are used along passages which are relatively quite difficult. The route can be climbed in 1 hour, and climbers can keep each other in full view. It can be climbed by teams of 2. Five to six pitons and as many snap rings are used. Additional wooden pitons can be used in the angular crack. This route should be attempted only by experienced alpinists.

The Ideal Arete Route (6). [See illustration opposite page 209, orig.] The "Ideal" arete route is formed by the merging of the eastern and southern parts of the Chernata Wall. This route takes its name from the typical rock formation here, which is a rocky arete difficult to climb but where visibility is good.

The first ascent via this route was made in August 1936 by BAK members under the leadership of Konstantin Savadzhiev. They had beautiful weather and completed the ascent in 6 hours. Here roll plug type pitons were first used in Bulgaria. These are usually used in complex rock climbing.

The "Ideal" arete is 55 m high, and the length of the route is $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths. It lies across solid rock passages, which in the lower parts are much eroded, but higher up are grey limestone. There is a difficult overhang in the middle of the route. It can be negotiated in 1 hour by means of the use of 4 to 5 pitons and as many snap rings, and in some places the old type of roll plug type pitons are needed. If the team leader is short a ladder should be used while climbing this overhang. The "Ideal" arete can easily be climbed by teams of 2 alpinists, but groups of three can also be used. This latter number is not recommended. Climbers can keep each other in full view.

The "Ideal" arete should not be climbed until the beginner is entirely familiar with alpine techniques. He can then try this route in order to perfect his knowledge and to improve his climbing abilities.

The Shemineto Route (11). [See illustration between pages 208 and 209, orig.] The "Shemineto" route lies to the left of the "German" route. It takes its name from the fact that its larger portion (the upper half of the route) is a chimney which is the principal feature of this route across the Lakatnishki Rocks (cheminea means "chimney").

The first ascent via this route was made in June 1937 under the leadership of Konstantin Savadzhiev by BAK members, and took 6 hours. The Chernata Wall is about 45 m high here, and the route is 2 rope lengths long. It lies along solid rocky passages which are more difficult in its lower portion, where 6 to 7 pitons and as many snap rings must be used. The upper chimney can be climbed on a free rope (the use of pitons is recommended here as well). This route can be climbed by teams of 2 alpinists. If the ledges are carefully used for consolidating the party and alternating leadership, a team of 3

alpinists can make the climb, but this is not recommended. Team members have a clear view of each other. The "Shemineto" route can be climbed in 1 hour.

The "Shemineto" is very valuable as a training route. There are passages in its lower part which are very difficult for beginners. A difficult elliptical overhang, a difficult diagonal passage and a difficult diagonal and almost perpendicular traverse demand thorough technical and tactical training of those who would climb this route. The upper part of the route is a chimney which is not very difficult, but since it is climbed on a free rope and at a great height, it is rated as difficult for beginners. This route should not be undertaken by beginning alpinists until they are very familiar with chimney climbing techniques.

The "German" Route (12). [See illustration between pages 208 and 209, orig.] This route lies across the highest part of the Chernata Wall and that which is farthest to the right. It takes its name from the fact that it was first climbed by German alpinists. Seventeen pitons were used, and the ascent took 4 hour. This route was at the time the most difficult route up the Lakatnishki Rocks which had ever been climbed.

The Chernata Wall is about 45 or 50 m high at this point, and the route is 2 rope lengths long. It crosses solid and in some places very difficult rocky passages. The route can be climbed with a dozen average and large size pitons and as many snap rings. The climb takes about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, and climbers have a partial view of each other. This route can conveniently be climbed by teams of 2 or 3 alpinists.

It is used as a training route but is the most difficult route across the Chernata Wall. Numerous pitons must be used for each rope length, and the central part of the route lies across an overhang which overlooks the pass from a great height. Beginners should test on this route the knowledge they have acquired in climbing the others.

The Svinskata Dupka Route (1). [See illustration opposite page 209, orig.] This route lies across the lefthand part of the southern wall of the Iakatnishki Rocks and to the left of the "Danskiya" route. It is formed by two cave-like holes in the rock through which runs a route which ends at the rocky arete of the wall to the left of the upper cave. This route takes its name from the fact that the first successful attempt to enter the lower hole was made by alpinist Georgi Stoimenov (Svinyata) [Svinyata means "the pig"].

This route was first climbed in June 1938 by Konstantin Savadzhiev and Georgi Tsenev who climbed it on a single line and with no ladders. They used several pitons, and in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours reached a spot below the upper cave, where they turned back. That same year, during the following month, Georgi Stoimenov attempted this route. He succeeded in reaching the upper cave, while secured from below. He made an unsuccessful attempt to climb higher, but was forced to descend en rappel.

In September 1948 Senior Alpine Instructor Vasil Nastev, secured from below, managed to cover the entire route by means of the use of complex alpine techniques.

This route is one rope length long. It covers difficult to very difficult passages. It can be climbed on a double rope using 10 to 12 pitons and as many snap rings. Two ladders are needed. It can conveniently be climbed by teams of two or three alpinists,

but it is recommended that teams of two be used. The route can be climbed in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, and climbers have each other in full view.

Beginning alpinists can increase their abilities and perfect complex rock techniques on this climb. For this reason this climb should not be undertaken until the handling of a single line has been thoroughly mastered and all the other routes along the Ghermata Wall have been successfully negotiated. Climbers should also have climbed the "Overhangs" route on a double rope, and the rocky passage to the left of the "Ideal" arete.

The Diagonal Route (2). [See illustration opposite page 209, orig.] This route forms a diagonal link between the lower part of the "Svinskata Dupka" route and the upper portion of the "Damskiya" route, and for this reason it has the name it does.

The first ascent via this route was made on 24 August 1948 by this writer and Vasil Nastev in 6 hours. We had favorable weather and made use of complex rock-climbing techniques.

The route begins in the cave which forms part of the "Svinskata Dupka" route. Above it, along the traverse which lies beneath the 2 rocky holes, one continues diagonally upward to the right toward the upper part of the "Damskiya" route. The ascent is made along a clearly visible rocky furrow. Along this diagonal some of the rocky passages are projections.

The route is 30 m long. The ascent is made on a double line, using 10 or 12 pitons and as many snap rings. The passages here vary between difficult and excessively difficult. This route can conveniently be climbed by teams consisting of 2 or 3 alpinists. If

there are 3 climbers, a full rope's length must be used between each pair of climbers. However, a team of 2 is recommended, in which case the diagonal stretch should be climbed only after the second climber has emerged upon the rocky platform beneath the 2 rocky holes, where the first climber is secured. This avoids the great friction which otherwise endangers the rope when the first climber moves to the right from the "Svinskata Dupka" route. The ascent takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hours, and climbers have full view of each other.

This route is used to develop the climbing abilities and practice complex-rock climbing techniques.

The Septemvri Route ($1\frac{1}{4}$). [See illustration opposite page 216, orig.] The "Septemvri" route lies along the rocky Kukla site above which stands the monument to the September Men who perished here.

The first ascent via this route was made on 8 October 1936 by BAK members Konstantin Savadzhiev, leader, and Vasil Menkov. They completed the ascent in about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours under favorable conditions.

The route climbs a total of about 75 m and is $\frac{1}{4}$ rope lengths long. Its beginning lies across solid passages which gradually tend to crumble more and more. Five to six pitons and as many snap rings are needed, and a ladder is also recommended. The climbing of this route, which can be done with full visibility, takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

In general, this is an easy route but a long one. For training purposes, it is used to accustom climbers to altitude. It can be climbed once all the routes on the Chernata Wall have been negotiated.

The Krustut Route (13). [See illustration opposite page 217, orig.] This lies along the Zhultata Wall, above which stands the cross in memory of the mountaineers who have perished on the rocks. The first ascent via this route was made in the autumn of 1948 by Master of Sports Encho Petkov, leader, and Stefan Kamburov. They made the climb in memory of the communists who were killed in 1923.

The highest part of the Zhultata Wall is the "Krustut," which is 630 m in altitude. The route begins with about 30 m over perpendicular and crumbling passages of soft grey limestone. There are convenient handholds, but no cracks where pitons can be driven. Above these passages the rock is surrounded by a traverse (about 50 cm wide) where the party should be consolidated. One continues along a clearly marked groove 10 m high which lies to the right of a large overhang. The groove leads into another short crevice, above which there is an angular and rocky groove. After 10 m, one leaves the groove, moving left toward a platform located in the middle of the wall, which is only 25 m from the end of the route.

The wall is 70 m high, and the route is 4 rope lengths long. The beginning and the central portions of the route lie across crumbling rocky passages which gradually become more solid and secure. The ascent of the route can be done with about 5 or 6 pitons and 12 snap rings, and if the team leader is short, a ladder is also necessary. The upper part of the route contains secure permanent pitons. The route can be climbed in about 2 hours, and visibility is excellent. It can conveniently be climbed by teams of 2.

This route is the longest and most difficult on the Lakatnishki Rocks. The most difficult portions of the route are in its upper part at great altitudes. It is for this reason that this route should

only be undertaken at the end of a beginner's training period. This route develops endurance and climbing abilities. It should be the final ascent on the Lakatnishki Rocks for Beginners. In length and difficulty it represents a transition to the harder ascents which will eventually be carried out in the high mountain regions.

The Triugulnikut Site at the Bov Railroad Station

The most beautiful portion of the Iskur Pass begins at the Bov railroad station. Beyond this point the pass deepens increasingly and the perpendicular limestone walls rise higher and higher. The river makes several consecutive turns here, giving a particular charm to the scene.

Opposite the Bov railroad station and rising directly from the river towers the steep western wall of the pass. It culminates in perpendicular limestone rocks, ranging in height from 30 to 110 m. The highest wall, which looms grandiose above the other, is called Visokiya Kamek by the local population. It is a large triangular section which faces the railroad station. To the left of it stand Kumanov Kamuk and Tsumnyov Kamuk. On the right the wall is divided from the Dulgite Podmoli Wall by the Penchova ravine. The Dulgite Podmoli Wall is an elongated surface about 30 m high which ends at the Zliya ravine.

The geological structure of the perpendicular walls here is the same as that of the walls opposite the Lakatnik railroad station, i.e., limestone.

These rocks have provided the opportunities for the laying out of many training and practice routes. They are not much frequented, since the routes are widely separated from one another. Also, the Lakatnishki Rocks, which provide even better climbs, are not far away.

The most beautiful of these walls is Visokiya Kamuk Wall, which is known to alpinists as the "Triugulnikut at Bov railroad station."

These walls can be reached from the Bov railroad station by means of the suspension bridge across the Iskur River just beyond the railroad station. One then follows a small footpath which winds beneath the Dulgite Podmoli Wall. When one has reached this point he leaves the footpath and continues along a steeper one which passes near the wall and leads to the Visokiya Kamuk - Triugulnikut, Kumanov Kamuk and Tsurmyov Kamuk Walls. From Bov railroad station it takes one hour to reach Visokiya Kamuk.

A grandiose view of the Iskur Pass can be seen from the rocky walls opposite Bov railroad station. In the foreground is the foamy river with its several consecutive turns. Above it runs the railroad, which disappears into the dark mouths of the tunnels. Along the river in the background one can see the Lakatnishki Rocks, and opposite them the following peaks: Leshtke (Bovski Peak), Izmerets Peak to the right of it, Kobilishte Peak to the left, and beyond them Yavorets Peak.

The triangular wall of Visokiya Kamuk began to attract Sofia alpinists after the Lakatnishki Rocks had been entirely mastered.

In June and July of 1938 the first attempts to climb the Triugulnika Wall were made, following a perpendicular route. These attempts were made by BAK members including Professor Doctor Marin Petrov and Georgi Stoimenov. The ascent of the wall via the perpendicular route was finally successful on 26 July 1938 after great difficulties had been overcome, and after the lower part of the route had already been laid out and roll plug type pitons driven into the perpendicular monolithic rock. The climb was made in 8 hours under

favorable weather conditions. The route begins at 680 m altitude with a very difficult crumbling passage which is perpendicular and 8 m long. It is almost in the center of the wall, and lies between two large overhangs. This passage should be climbed with great care, and an old type roll plug piton should be placed at about the center of the passage. Above this passage there is a broad angled but perpendicular crevice about 20 m long. At its bottom there is a small triangular rocky ledge with a rock edge around it. The lower part of the crevice is climbed by means of the chimney technique, benefitting from the rough surface of the wall, as there are no cracks in it. Three roll plug type pitons have been driven into the right hand wall of the angular crevice at intervals of 1 m, beginning from the bottom. These make the ascent of the crevice easy as far as its center. At this point there is a slight overhang, beneath which a secure piton may be driven in. A ladder may be needed for the climbing of the overhang. From it one continues along the left wall as far as a pair of narrow (10 cm) rocky railings which run along the two sides of the crevice. Above these, there is a permanent old type roll plug piton on the left side of the groove. It is impossible to continue the climb above the railings over the 8 m, very crumbling passage of yellow rock with no cracks. On the right side of the groove there is a twisted piton which has been driven in horizontally, as well as a roll plug type piton. The yellowish passage is avoided by making a traverse to the left side of the angular groove (the railing disappears in some places) and to the left hand rocky arete where an old, secure rappel piton is to be found. This traverse is very difficult, especially the crossing of the left hand rocky arete, where the railing along which the traverse is made is interrupted. Beyond

this arete one continues to the right some 6 m to the beginning of a difficult rocky crevice (about 8 m long) which leads to a large grass covered platform just above it. This stretch can be crossed with the help of 2 pitons. The upper part of the groove forms a small, easy chimney, from which one can emerge after careful preparations on a large but very steep grassy ledge 1 m wide and 10 m long. The left hand side provides opportunities for belaying secure safety ropes. The ascent of this part of the route, which is the most difficult portion, can be made with full visibility on the part of the second member of the team and partial visibility for the leader.

Above the large grassy ledge one follows a 10 m rocky and angular groove leading upward from the left portion of the ledge. Two rock pitons take one along the rocky railings which run along both sides of the groove to a point above its center. The upper part of this groove crumbles easily and is very difficult to negotiate. For this reason, the last several meters of the climb are made along the left hand arete, using the more solid passages. Above this arete there is a small rocky ledge. From it one bears to the right, traversing the passage along a small rocky railing toward the grey stone passages, taking care to avoid the crumbling yellowish passages which form the continuation of the rocky crevice below the ledge. After traversing these grey passages, one continues on a diagonal traverse to the right over difficult passages. Using 2 pitons, one can emerge on a clearly visible small rocky ledge to the right. From this ledge one traverses diagonally to the left across a poorly defined broad rocky groove. Following it, one uses 1 or 2 pitons to reach a rock ledge covered with soil which lies above two rather protruding and unstable looking rock blocks which are tilted against

each other. The ledge, however, is a convenient safety point, and the party should be assembled here. The ascent of the crumbling passages thus far described provides only partial visibility. They should be crossed with extreme care, testing hand and footholds carefully, since they are exceptionally unstable and unsafe. The neighboring passages are poor in cracks, for which reason 8 to 10 m at a time must be climbed without the aid of pitons.

Above this soil covered ledge there is a large hole in the rock ("Gnezdoto" [The Nest]) which merges into a long, yellowish, easily colored chimney. The upper part of this chimney disappears into yellowish, crumbling rocky grooves which lead to the highest part of the wall. The ascent of these grooves should be avoided !

From the ledge one follows the beginning of the "Gnezdoto" and traverses several meters to the right to emerge on a comparatively solid grey limestone arete. One piton along this arete leads one to a convenient rocky ledge which is to the right of the upper part of the "Gnezdoto." The ledge is 1 m wide and 4 m long. From it one follows a convenient rocky and angular crevice to emerge on a large grassy ledge to the right of the top part of the wall. One can leave the wall from this ledge by making a traverse to the right.

The part of the wall which lies just below the top is climbed on a free rope. One follows a rocky couloir to emerge on the top of the wall, 790 m in altitude.

The wall is 110 m high and the route is 4 rope lengths long.

The first part of the route lies across solid rocky passages which are very difficult to cross. Toward the center of the route, however, the passages tend to crumble increasingly. The upper part of the route contains relatively solid passages. All in all, eroded

passages provide the bulk of this route's terrain. Six to eight pitons of various sizes and types, with heavy and ling pitons predominating, 12 snap rings, a ladder and auxiliary ropes should be carried for this ascent. Climbers have excellent visibility, and the climb takes 2 hours. This climb is suitable for teams of 2 alpinists.

The interesting rocky passages at the beginning and in the middle of the route will accustom alpinists, particularly those who are relatively advanced, to independent thinking and orientation, both important prerequisites to the undertaking of greater ascents. This route also develops endurance and the climbing abilities of alpinists. It should be used as a transition between easier training climbs and the major ascents in the high mountain regions.

Kozya Stena Peak

Kozya Stena Peak (1670 m) rises from Mount Troyanska in the Sredna Stara Planina Mountains, to the south and above Chiflik village, Troyan okoliya. To the west of it stands Kolikon Peak, and its gradual southeastern slopes lead downward toward Troyanski Pass (the Kurnarski road). The northwestern part of the peak is made up of perpendicular rocky passages accessible only to the wild mountain goats, for which reason this peak is called Kozya Stena [Goat Wall].

The northwestern part of the peak is formed by a wall 100 m high which rises to the south and above the Koriyata site. It has steep grassy passages and ledges, and short, perpendicular rocky passages made of Triassic limestone. Edelweiss is found here.

There is no specified route for the ascent of this wall. The grassy ledges and terraces found on it make the ascent possible. Its rocky passages can be negotiated by means of the use of alpine equipment. Easy training ascents on a free rope can be undertaken along this wall, using a few pitons in some places.

These ascents take a maximum of 1 hour.

Kozya Stena Peak is famous for its exceptionally beautiful location. The most convenient starting point for hikes to the peak is the "Kozya Stena" tourist hut located at the Khayduk Cheshma site one hour's walk to the west of the peak. This hut is on the southern part of the ridge of Mount Troyanska. Another convenient starting point for trips to the peak is the "Troyanski Prokhod" shelter (Beklemeto), 1½ hours' walk from the peak. It is located on the northern side of Troyanski Pass.

The crossing of the rocky ridge from Kozya Stena Peak to Vezhen Peak in winter is of special interest to mountaineers.

Kupenut Peak

Kupenut Peak (2169 m), which is frequently called Golemiyut Kupen, rises as a great, triangular rock pyramid from the central ridge of the Sredna Stara Planina Mountains. It stands between Levski Peak (Ambaritsa) on the west and Ravnets Peak (Dyuschal Peak) on the east. Its name comes from its haystack shape. On the Russian 3 verst map, this peak is shown as Ostra Mogila.

Short, rocky walls composed of gneiss and granite gneiss which are interspersed by very steep and grassy passages form all the sides of the peak.

The rocky passages are suitable for training ascents on a free line, and in some places several pitons may be used. There are no specified walls for making the ascent of the peak.

To the west of the peak the central ridge is rocky and jagged, and it links this peak with a lower one, Maluk Kupen Peak, which is much easier to climb. It has shorter rock passages. To the south-east the ridge continues as a very rugged rock formation and

forms the rocky gendarmes called Krusttsite. Beyond this the rocky ridge slopes off gradually toward Ravnets Peak.

Near Kopenut Peak stands Kostenurkata Peak [The Turtle].

This is a rocky dome resembling a turtleshell, from which fact its name is derived.

The ridge between Levski Peak and Ravnets Peak is an excellent example of the classical ridge form. It is totally alpine in nature. Golyam Kopen and Maluk Kopen Peaks, as well as the rocky gendarmes and sites along this ridge are interesting training sites, and are the most beautiful alpine sites in all of the Stara Planina Mountains from the point of view of winter climbs.

The most convenient starting points for trips to these alpine sites are the "Ambaritsa," Dobrila," and "Vasil Levski" tourist huts and the "Khubavets" shelter, which are between 2 and 3 hours' hike from these sites.

Botev Peak

This is the highest peak in the Stara Planina Mountains (2376 m), and it rises in the center of the mountain range. It is shaped like a huge fist. It rises from Mount Kaloferska (Sredna Stara Planina Mountains), and is the third highest peak in Bulgaria.

Seen from the south, the peak looks like the fingers of a closed fist. The several grooves which cut deeply into the southern side of the peak are filled with snow until late in the summer, and remind one of the crevices between the clenched fingers. The black protruding ridges where there is no snow look like the fingers themselves. The northern, grass covered side of the peak has three grooves which resemble the hollows between the knuckles.

One of the earliest groups of visitors to this peak were the shepherds from Asia Minor called the Yuruks. Now nomad shepherds from the neighboring settlements keep their herds on these high mountain pasturelands. Linguists who know Persian and Arabic say that Kumrukchal means "high peak" in Arabic. Others say the name goes back even further than that, and is of Thracian origin. They say that the word "chal" means "high mountain pastureland." In summer, the snow remains here until late in the season, and on the southern side of the peak there is a large snowbank which serves as the source of the Pruskalska River. This snowdrift does not melt completely at all during most summers. It is not known whether the name of the peak is a translation of some older Bulgarian name for this mountain giant or if it has an Arabic-Persian, or possibly Thracian, origin. The truth is that the neighboring population has used this name for generations, although they even more frequently refer to the peak as Yumruka, and occasionally as Chala, because the top of the peak forms a "chal", i.e., a pastureland.

The Council of Ministers of the Bulgarian People's Republic changed the old name, Yumrukchal, to Botev, after the great poet, Khristo Botev.

The southern and northern slopes of the peak are perpendicularly grooved. This forms the so-called Dzhendemi sites, which are inaccessible except to the wild mountain goats and eagles. The top of the peak is a long, vast and slightly inclined grassy area of some 10 decares. Botev Peak is most easily reached from the east or northwest. Botev Peak is easier of access than the other high peaks in Bulgaria, but in bad weather it is very easy for a climber to lose his way. The frequent storms and fog and the vast and monotonous

grassy meadow on the top make climbing difficult throughout most of the year. The high mountain meteorological observatory which was built between 1940 and 1941 now serves to make access to this champion of the Stara Planina Mountains much easier.

Botev Peak is characterized by sudden snowstorms, accompanied by heavy fog, especially in winter. These make it difficult for climbers to find their way along the flat, identical stretches on the top of the peak. In January 1952 the mountaineer Metodi Blagoev and his son perished in such a storm. The steep, grassy and slippery slopes, which are grooved by crevices on all sides of the peak, are avalanche-prone. On 31 December 1954, an avalanche killed alpinists Drago Ivanov, Artin Artinyan and Nikolay Yurukov of Plovdiv, who were at the Severniya Dzhendem site beneath Malkiya Yumruk Peak, en route to Botev Peak.

The Rayskite Rocks

The southern slopes of Botev Peak are very steep and are in places interrupted by perpendicular rocks. Beneath the peak itself are found the Dzhendemut and Rayut sites. These are 2 huge labyrinths of jutting rocks over which thunder the perpendicular waterfalls of various mountain streams. These falls are called "Sprinklers" by the local population, because the water, falling from great heights, sprays out in innumerable small droplets.

Dzhendemut is the largest and most difficult precipice to reach found on Mount Kalofer. This terrible precipice is bordered by the Steep, and in some places perpendicular southwestern slopes of Maluk Kopen Peak and the northeastern slopes of Chafadaritsa Peak, which is also called Chamlukut. Between these slopes a stream thunders over the Kalofersko sprinkler to the east of Khaydut Peak.

The local population calls this precipice Eliders (50 Rivers). The population and the shepherd who graze their herds in this region also call it Dzhendema, because the precipice has such a demoniacal appearance and sound [Dzhenem in Turkish means "hell"], and because if one fell into the river here, there would be little chance of his escaping. This name has become popular in mountaineering circles as well. From Dzhendemut one can hear the terrible pounding, deafening thunder and wild thrashing of the numerous mountain streams which converge on the precipice from the high and very steep neighboring mountain slopes along which there are many small waterfalls.

It is hard to get a really good view of Dzhendemut -- this is possible only for eagles, goats, and those alpinists who can surmount its perpendicular walls with alpine equipment.

The Rayut site [Ray in Bulgarian means "heaven"] is to be found above the Dzhendemut site. It is entirely different from it, as it represents a real paradise, although one populated only by wild mountain goats and eagles. Standing on one of the perpendicular rocks here, one might remain transfixed by the extraordinary beauty -- the bluegreen waters of the Dzhendemut, whose thundering is a constant disturbance to the mountain's calm, lie below. These waters make a noise which creates the impression that below there is a terrible confusion. It is hard to distinguish in the chaos the sound of the largest waterfall in Bulgaria -- the Pruskaloto -- which adds its beauty to the grandeur of the mountain scene here.

The Rayskoto or Kalofersko-Pruskalo waterfall is the most beautiful and grandiose cataract in Bulgaria. It is formed by the waters of the Kaloferska River, which has its source in the eternal snowbank to the south of and beneath Botev Peak. The waters of the Kaloferska River

The local population calls this precipice Eliders (50 Rivers). The population and the shepherd who graze their herds in this region also call it Dzhenema, because the precipice has such a demoniacal appearance and sound [Dzhenem in Turkish means "hell"], and because if one fell into the river here, there would be little chance of his escaping. This name has become popular in mountaineering circles as well. From Dzhenemut one can hear the terrible pounding, deafening thunder and wild thrashing of the numerous mountain streams which converge on the precipice from the high and very steep neighboring mountain slopes along which there are many small waterfalls.

It is hard to get a really good view of Dzhenemut -- this is possible only for eagles, goats, and those alpinists who can surmount its perpendicular walls with alpine equipment.

The Rayut site [Ray in Bulgarian means "heaven"] is to be found above the Dzhenemut site. It is entirely different from it, as it represents a real paradise, although one populated only by wild mountain goats and eagles. Standing on one of the perpendicular rocks here, one might remain transfixed by the extraordinary beauty -- the bluegreen waters of the Dzhenemut, whose thundering is a constant disturbance to the mountain's calm, lie below. These waters make a noise which creates the impression that below there is a terrible confusion. It is hard to distinguish in the chaos the sound of the largest waterfall in Bulgaria -- the Pruskaloto -- which adds its beauty to the grandeur of the mountain scene here.

The Rayskoto or Kalofersko-Pruskalo waterfall is the most beautiful and grandiose cataract in Bulgaria. It is formed by the waters of the Kaloferska River, which has its source in the eternal snowbank to the south of and beneath Botev Peak. The waters of the Kaloferska River

tumble down the southern slope of Botev Peak, and upon reaching the Rayskite rocks, form a waterfall 130 m high, over which they flow, separating into a fine spray as they fall. Beneath the Pruskaloto waterfall, the waters of this river form a foaming mountain stream which passes near the great Khan Maara cave, and seems to disappear into the confusion at the vast Dzhendemut precipice.

Here, between the Rayut and Dzhendemut sites, in the only small meadow here, and on the southern slopes of Botev Peak, stands the "Ray" tourist hut (1600 m altitude). It is a small, trim building which offers shelter to those climbers who join the eagles in peering down at the Dzenđemut site and climb the dizzying heights of the Rayski rocks, enjoying the most grandiose views provided by the Stara Planina Mountains.

The southern slopes of Botev Peak are interrupted by perpendicular walls which form a rocky belt around the southern part of the peak between 1700 m altitude and 2100 m. To the west, this rocky belt merges into the steep, grassy slope of the peak, interrupted only occasionally by perpendicular rocky stretches. The eastern part of the rocky belt (above the "Ray" tourist hut) is the most nearly monolithic and perpendicular section, and has the highest walls. These curve around the eastern slopes of the peak, gradually becoming lower. Beyond the Sukhoto waterfall, these merge into the very steep rock and grass covered slopes leading toward Malkiya Yuruk Peak.

The rocky belt which encircles the southern slope of Botev Peak is composed of dark granite and gneiss -- layers of granite gneiss. The gneiss materials are composed of large grained feldspar. Beneath these layers, limestone is to be found. In general the rocky materials forming this belt are much eroded and tend to crumble badly in some

places. The all rock passages are not convenient for alpine ascents because there are few cracks in the rock in some places, while in others there are only monolithic slabs. Climbing is facilitated by the steep and grassy passages and ledges which cut deep into the rocks at many points. The rocky belt above the "Ray" tourist hut is generally known as the Rayskite rocks.

This section is divided by the Pruskaloto waterfall into a western section and an eastern section.

The western portion includes rocky walls which rise perpendicular one above the other and which are interrupted by grassy passages and ledges. Across these walls lies the Tarzanova footpath, which links the "Ray" tourist hut and the high mountain meteorological observatory on Botev Peak. This footpath was laid out in 1941 to serve the needs of the observatory, and it is the most direct and fastest route to it. Since the winter of 1941, this footpath has been called by the name of the climber who perished on it -- alpinist Todor Bozhkov (Tarzan), a high mountain meteorological observer.

The western passages of rock in the Rayskite Rocks provide convenient training sites. They are interesting in winter from the point of view of alpinism. The peak can be reached from here only by means of alpine techniques.

The eastern part of the Rayskite rocks consists of perpendicular walls, which to the right of and very near the Pruskaloto waterfall, are 150 to 200 m high. Despite their slab-like nature, and the strongly eroded rocky passages along the eastern part of the Rayskite rocks, it is possible to do alpine climbing here.

High mountain meteorological observer and longtime resident of the Stara Planina region, alpinist Blagoy Khristov, was the first person to make the ascent along the eastern part of the Rayskite rocks after the observatory was built. He laid out the first routes over this section of the rocks, leading in the direction of the peak. Alone and with no alpine equipment, guided only by a burning passion to know the mountain, he laid out 2 alpine footpaths across the Rayskite rocks above the "Ray" tourist hut, leading toward the highest summit in the Stara Planina Mountains. These footpaths are now called the Blagovite footpaths by Bulgarian mountaineers.

The Blagovite footpaths begin at almost the same point at the base of the walls over which they pass. One begins the climb to the right of the river beyond the Pruskaloto waterfalls and crosses a steep grassy slope covered with easily dislodged materials to a broad break in the wall which lies to the right of the Pruskaloto waterfall at the point where the rocks form a dome protruding perceptibly above the "Ray" tourist hut. From the bottom of the wall, the two footpaths climb separately. The left hand one ends between the two rocky domes at the end of the wall on the left, near the Pruskaloto waterfall, and the right hand one leads onto the rocky dome above the tourist hut.

The left hand Blagova footpath begins beneath the small but clearly visible tree which is the highest one in this portion of the rocks. An easy rocky passage several meters long leads to very steep perpendicular grassy passages which in turn lead to a pure rock passage which is almost perpendicular but can easily be climbed. Beyond this passage one can only continue upward along the diagonal and very steep grassy traverse leading to the left to the two rocky domes in which the wall ends. These are located just to the right of the Pruskaloto waterfall.

The ascent is made along very steep grass covered passages which are interrupted in some places by short, easy rock passages. The ascent is facilitated by the strong, tall alpine grass which grows in tufts which can be used for foot and handholds. It is recommended that this climb be made on a free rope and that several rock pitons be used.

The right hand Blagova footpath begins along a grassy steep groove which leads up the wall. Higher up the groove is cut by a rocky passage several meters long. Above this there is a very steep grassy passage where easy, short rock and grass patches alternate. Beyond these, there are several variations which will lead one to the peak of the rocky dome in which the perpendicular walls above the "Ray" tourist hut culminate.

It is recommended that a free rope be used for this ascent, as well as several rock pitons, which will facilitate the climb.

The left hand Blagova footpath is about 6 rope lengths long, and the right hand one is about 4 rope lengths long. Both routes can be easily climbed. There are convenient ledges for assembling the party. Climbers have full view of each other during these climbs, which serve to familiarize them with altitude, safety measures, orientation on alpine walls and with great care in choosing handholds and steps, since many of those found here are not secure, alpine grass must be utilized, and numerous crumbling passages must be crossed. This route can be climbed in about 1 hour. On the basis of the difficulties encountered, both routes are classified 2 B in difficulty.

The highest part of these rocks is found to the right of the Pruskaloto waterfall. Between the waterfall and the left hand Blagova footpath, there is a 200 m perpendicular wall which ends in a rocky dome. Despite the slablike nature of this wall, and the lack of cracks, it intrigued alpinists because it offered an opportunity to lay out one of the most beautiful climbing routes in the Rayskite rock sector.

In order to study the possibilities of laying out such a route, Ivan Staykov, Blagoy Khristov and this writer started up the wall on 14 August 1949, from a point several meters to the right of the Pruskaloto waterfall. After 2 rope lengths, we reached a large, rocky overhang which made a ceiling above us. We were unable to continue because a stone fell, severing the rope linking the second and third climbers.

At the beginning of August 1951, Senior Instructor Andrey Todorov and this writer made a second attempt to climb the wall. After reaching the overhang where the first attempt had ended, we had to use special rock pitons. We made a study of the possibilities of completing the ascent and the probabilities as to the best route, but were forced to descend for lack of an adequate supply of pitons.

On 3 August of that same year, we made a third attempt to climb the wall, expecting to reach the top. This time we reached a small rocky ledge above which there was a great rocky overhang (X) [see illustration opposite page 233, orig.]. From this point only some 15 m separated us from the top, but there were no cracks at all in the rock.

Thus even this attempt ended unsuccessfully. The perpendicular 200 m wall to the right of the Pruskaloto waterfall was abandoned again to the mountain eagles.

In the summer of 1950, a team composed of Yanko Montanov, leader, and Yanko Miyakov undertook to lay out a route through the rocky angular groove formed by the black slabs of rock to the left of the waterfall. They were unsuccessful.

In 1950 and 1951 alpinists of the Plovdiv Alpine Section laid out training routes along the wall of the rocky dome above the "Ray" tourist hut.

The walls of the eastern slopes of Botev Peak are not convenient for climbing. They are slab-like in nature, and there are no specified routes up them.

The Northern Dzhendem

This is the name given to the northern and rocky slopes of Botev Peak. They drop off almost perpendicularly to the Vidima River, which is formed by the merger of the Lyava Vidima and the Dyasna Vidima Rivers. This Dzhendem is a confusion of scattered and inaccessible rocks among which the foaming waters of mountain streams rush, forming beautiful little waterfalls -- sprinklers.

The rocky structure of the northern Dzhendem is composed of granite and gneiss, like the Rayskite rocks.

The northern Dzhendem has no specified routes across it. This area can, however, be used for training climbs on a free rope.

Similar possibilities are to be found along the low, short walls on the northern parts of the Ushite, Parazhik and Yurushka Gramada Peaks. The western slopes of Rusalka Peak (Mara Gidik) and the northeastern slopes of Yurushka Gramada Peak form a labyrinth of interesting walls, miniature peaks and aretes. These rock formations also continue across the northern slopes of Rusalka Peak, which itself ends in a wall about 50 or 60 m high.

These constitute a large number of easy alpine sites, from which the view is beautiful.

The Malkata Kozya Wall

The Malkata Kozya wall is also called the Golemoselska Kozya wall. Its perpendicular face begins at the western bank of the Tuzha River above the old wood turning shop. This site is one hour's walk from the Petorechieto site (Smesite) above it, where the Tuzha River is joined by four foamy mountain streams which collect their waters from the Pashovsko ravine, the Pozhardere ravine and from the slopes of Rusalka Peak (Mara Idik). The rushing waters of the Tuzha River run southward between the steep, rocky eastern slopes of Triglav Peak (Kademliya) and the rocky Malka Kozya wall. Seen from the west, the Malkata Kozya wall appears to be a slightly raised heap of rocks. Its highest peak is only 1709 m in altitude. The Malkata Kozya wall disappears to the west into the vasy Rusaliyska meadow, across which runs the Rusaliyska footpath linking Kalofer city with Ostrets and Novo Selo villages, Troyan okoliya. The height of this wall is best seen from the steep western slopes of Triglav Peak (Kademliya), along which the footpath leading to Tuzha village leads.

The Malkata Kozya wall, which rises high above the foamy waters of the Tuzha River, is about 100 m high. It is composed of dark limestone mixed with thick layers of dark sandstone, black clay and gneiss schists. These are the same rock formations as those which cover most of the steep western bank of the Tuzha River.

There are no routes specified over this wall, but ascents can be made in varying combinations, usually on a free rope, since there are few convenient rocky cracks. The grassy passages and ledges on the wall facilitate climbing. The climbing of the wall takes up to 1 hour. From this wall a broad view of the rose valley and the Sredna Gora Mountains opens up.

The most convenient starting point for climbs along the Malkata Kozya wall is the "Tuzha" tourist hut, which is $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours' walk away along the upper reaches of the Tuzha River.

Mazalat Peak

Mazalat Peak (Balabanut) rises from one of the southern ridges of the Sredna Stara Planina Mountains which begins with Triglav Peak (Kedemliya). It lies between the eastermost rocky part of Triglav Peak, called Pirgos, and Sinanitsa Peak. On the east, the deep valley in which the G brownitsa village lies separates it from the main ridge of the Stara Planina Mountains. Besides gneiss and granite, which are principally found on the northern slopes of Mazalat Peak, one finds here red and grey limestone, and, in the higher parts, dolomites and limestone (the upper part of the valley of the Sokolna River).

The upper parts of the northern slopes of Mazalat Peak, together with the eastern, rocky part of Triglav Peak, called Pirgoz, represent interesting and typical Stara Planina Mountain walls. They are made up of very steep or perpendicular grassy and rocky passages. Despite the fact that there are no routes specified across the northern slopes of Mazalat and Pirgoz, satisfactory climbs on a free rope can be made.

Perpendicular limestone walls, bordered on the east by the valley of the Akdere River and on the west by the valley of the Koruldere River, rise from the southern parts of the Mazalat and Sinanitsa Peaks, which are their lower slopes. Along these rocks, which rise like towers above the precipices where one hears only the rushing of the foaming streams, edelweiss grows. The valleys of these 2 apparently bottomless rivers appear bluish when seen from above, for which reason the local population calls the rocky area between them and the peak which towers over it Sinanitsa ["sinyo" in Bulgarian means "blue"].

The walls of Sinanitsa Peak which rise from the Korudere site lie one above the other, and there are no routes specified for climbing them. They are separated by large, very steep grassy ledges called by the beautiful name Chilimite [The Carpets] by the mountaineers. On them the beautiful Stara Planina edelweiss is found. Climbs, for the most part on a free rope, can be undertaken here.

The most convenient starting points for climbs along Mazalat and Sinanitsa Peaks are Tuzha and Skobelevo villages, which lie in the southern foothills of the Stara Planina Mountains, and the "Mazalat" tourist hut. From any of these points, the peaks can be reached in about 4 hours.

The Yantra River Pass

The submountain areas of the Sredna Stara Planina Mountains, which rise between the Iskur and the Yantra Rivers, bear various names in the differing locations: Mount Loveshka, Mount Sevlievskia, and Mount Turnovska. They connect the folded Stara Planina Mountain system with the hilly Danube Plain.

Mount Turnovska is split by the picturesque Yantra River Pass. The topography of this pass is peculiar in geological structure. The morphology of the pass is closely linked with the centuries-old erosional activities of the Yantra River and of its tributaries. These have cut into the limestone of Mount Turnovska.

The Yantra River runs into the pass from the south between two rocks, i.e., the southern Useto, or Ustie Pass. It meanders, deeply entrenched, among the rocky terraces, forming 4 peninsulas, which are actually perpendicular walls, and the 2 passes on which the ruins of the historic Tsarevets and Trapezitsa fortresses stand. The river then runs out of the valley northward, forming the beautiful Durvenito canyon -- this is the northern entrance to the city.

On both sides of this picturesque pass, which is about 7 km long, rise perpendicular limestone rocks which serve as splendid training sites for climbing. No such practice facilities are available in any other Bulgarian city.

The beautiful limestone walls of these peninsulas; the rocky promontory on the Boruna peninsula, in which the Sveta Gora hill, which rises, wooded, to the south of and opposite Turnovo city, ends; the rocks to the east around the Usteto Pass; and many other sites -- all these form splendid training sites for the climbing of walls.

The most convenient climbing sites for alpinists from Turnovo are the perpendicular rock walls which rise on both sides of the river to the north of the city, and which form the pass. On the left side of the Yantra River rocks rise above the Preobrazhenski Monastery, and on the right side, above the "Sveta Troitsa" Monastery, stands the rocky Zandanut massif.

The Rocks Above Preobrazhenski Monastery

The western side of the Yantra River Pass between Semovodene village and Turnovo city ends in perpendicular limestone walls. The most interesting to climb are those between Turnovo and the Preobrazhenski Monastery, which are located 5 km to the north of the city on the western side of the Yantra River. The walls are lower toward Turnovo, and rise toward the monastery to an altitude of 1000 m in some places, especially above the Preobrazhenski Monastery itself.

These walls are composed of solid limestone, and it is only toward the Preobrazhenski Monastery that they become somewhat eroded and tend to crumble. There are climbing routes here of varying degrees of difficulty which constitute splendid training climbs. The abundance of the various rock formations make possible the thorough training of beginning alpinists.

The first routes were laid out in the area between Turnovo and the Preobrazhenski Monastery by students in the beginners' course in climbing organized by the Turnovo City Committee for Physical Culture and Sports in November 1951, under the guidance of this writer and Instructor Grigor Grigorov.

The "Zelenka" tourist shelter is a convenient base for climbs and training courses. It is located 20 minutes' walk from the rocks. The nearest rocks are 30 minutes' travel from Turnovo city.

The Zandanut Site

High on the eastern side of the picturesque Yantra River Pass, in a dense forest to the northeast of Turnovo, lies the Pera site (meaning "lonely place"). At this site stands the "Sveta Troitsa" Monastery. Above it rises the grandiose rock massif called Zandanut by the local population.

The rocky Zandanut massif is a huge angular promontory of rock which points toward the southwest. The western wall is higher but easier to climb than that facing south, which is lower and more crumbling, and is therefore less suitable for ascents. The western and southern walls join to form an angular corner which is almost a right angle. The 40 m rocky arete is of interest as a training site for superior rock climbing techniques.

Most of the western all of Zandanut has a very crumbling approach below it. This is particularly true for the routes across the right hand portion of the western wall, which lies between the arete at the angle formed by the 2 sides of the massif, and the rocky Zub formation which divides the western wall into a right hand and a left hand portion.

Five to six m to the left of the rocky arete in the middle of Zandanut there is another rocky arete which it is not possible to climb. Between the 2 aretes there is a rocky, angular crevice which forms a chimney which can be climbed.

The routes which lie along the left hand portion of the wall can be climbed with the aid of 5 or 6 pitons, while those to the right of the Zub formation are longer and require some dozen pitons.

The western wall of Zandanut provides an excellent site for training in rock climbing. All types of rock formations are represented. This area provides good practice climbs and excellent routes for the training of beginners in alpine climbing.

The rocky Zandanut massif is one hour's travel from Turnovo. Its surroundings provide excellent camping sites.

The Rocks Around Dryanovski Monastery

Along the northern slopes of the central Sredna Planina Mountains and on the left bank of the picturesque Dryanovska River which is an important right bank tributary of the Yantra, and which bears here the name Lefedzha, stands Dryanovo city at an altitude of 255 m.

About $3\frac{1}{2}$ km to the southwest of the city and among the surrounding hills rises the "Monastery Rock Plateau." Its perpendicular limestone sides, which can be seen from far off, form the southwestern and western boundary of the Dryanovska valley. The plateau is bisected by the Dryanovska River, which, beyond Vurbanovo railroad station, runs through a deep canyon, and upon emerging, is joined by its tributary, the Anduk River. The karst spring of the latter river is found in a cave near the end of the canyon.

The historic Dryanovski Monastery is located at this junction of the waters; at the foot of a triangular formation composed of high limestone rocks which have been beautifully sculpted by the 2 rivers.

This monastery is an important monument of the Bulgarian Renaissance, and it was twice burned by the Turks. It is 3 km from Dryanovo city. Some 50 m from the monastery runs the Transbalkan railroad line, linking the city with Vurbanovo railroad station.

The Monastirski Heights are a plateau-like elevation composed of white limestone. The caves, crevices and precipices prove the true karst nature of the plateau.

The monastery is bounded on the left and the right by the perpendicular limestone walls of the plateau, and at the far end of the site, between the Dryanovska River canyon and the Anduk River there is a beautiful and rounded, rocky triangular wall about 50 m high.

The Strazhata Wall

To the west of and above the monastery there is a perpendicular limestone wall called Strazhata. It is about 30 m high. It has no well-marked routes across it, and is not easy to climb. There are three interesting caves in the wall, however, and 2 underground water basins. About 20 to 30 m above the river, the Polichki cave, in which evidences of pre-historic man have been found, forms a part of the wall. Higher up, along the narrow footpath leading across the plateau-like ridge of the Strazhata wall toward Gabrovo city, there is a beautiful cave. From its entrance comes the Anduk River, flowing down from its karst spring. Slightly above it there is another cave, with a low opening. Its interior is a vast labyrinth.

The Momini Rocks

To the east of the monastery and above the railroad line rise the beautiful perpendicular limestone walls of the Momini rocks. These provide the most convenient training sites in the vicinity of the monastery.

The first studies of these climbing sites were made by 17, 18 and 19 November 1951 by students in the beginners' course in climbing organized by the Turnovo City Committee for Physical Culture and Sports under the guidance of this writer and Instructor Grigor Grigorov.

A 30 m arete, the front of which is formed by a slab 5 to 6 m wide, divides the Momini rocks into 2 parts. The right hand portion, which is parallel to the railroad line from the arete to the railroad tunnel above the Dryanovska River, slopes off gradually from its 30 m height, while the left hand portion, which lies perpendicular to the right hand portion, is shorter, and merges gradually into the plateau.

The left hand portion of the Momini rocks is a steep wall composed of very solid grey limestone. It is about 50 m broad, and about 40 m high at its highest point, but it lowers gradually to the left, forming a steep rocky slope covered with shrubs. It is divided by 3 angular grooves, between which run 2 angular aretes which are impossible to climb. There are 4 convenient routes across the wall which provide ideal opportunities for training in relatively complex climbing techniques. The most difficult of these is along the rocky angular groove to the left of the rocky arete.

The ascent of this wall takes a maximum of 1 hour. Between 8 and 10 rock pitons must be used, and the various routes are $1\frac{1}{2}$ rope lengths long each. Along all the routes there are convenient ledges for consolidating the party and belaying safety ropes. There are many cracks in the rock. Ascents for training purposes can be made along this wall over varying types of rock formations. It is also a convenient training site for large classes, since an instructor can keep several teams in full site at the same time.

The righthand portion of the Momini rocks is a perpendicular wall about 40 m high at the arete, which slopes off gradually toward the railroad tunnel.

To the right of the arete in the direction of the railroad tunnel, the wall is deeply cut by three rocky grooves. The rock is yellow and crumbling limestone. There are great overhangs on this part of the wall which it is impossible to climb. Beyond the third of the rocky grooves, which contains a large overhang, the rock becomes darker in color. There is a rocky arete of grey limestone here, along which an excellent route has been laid out. The ascent via this route takes about 1 hour.

To the left of this route, the wall continues as yellowish slabs which are not easily climbed since there are no specific routes laid out across them.

In the center of the right hand portion of the Momini rocks, there are 2 caves. One can conveniently spend the night in the first, since it is rather broad, is dry, low-ceilinged and is not deep. There is in it a small well which provides cold water. Thanks to this cave, all-day training exercises can be carried out here, since a comfortable base can be set up inside it.

To the right of these caves (above the railroad tunnel) the wall slopes off toward the Dryanovska River, where it is only 25 m high. The limestone becomes increasingly grey, and contains convenient cracks. In some places, short paths are clearly visible.

Above the river, this same wall reaches a height of 40 m and is perpendicular, but is not easily climbed.

The curving rocky angular protrusion between the Dryanovska River and the Anduk River is about 40 m high. The walls of which it is composed are greyish yellow limestone of a slab-like limestone.

They do not provide much opportunity for climbing. This part of the wall in general is not convenient for ascents.

The best starting points for the climbing sites near the Dryanovo Monastery are the Bacho Kiro railroad station, ten minutes' walk away, and the Vurbanovo railroad station, one hour's walk distant.

The Dryanovski Monastery has facilities for putting visitors up overnight. Here valuable documents from the famous Dryanovsko Rebellion are on display here. This rebellion was organized in 1876 under the leadership of Bach Kiro and Father Khariton.

The Sinite Kamuni Site

The Sinite Kamuni site is located on the southern slopes of the eastern Stara Planina Mountains to the northeast of and above Sliven city. This site covers about 25 sq km and stretches to the west of Bulgarka Peak, the highest peak in the eastern Stara Planina Mountains. It continues in a curve toward the southeast toward the Sliven Plain, and ends at the Zhultite walls to the west of Golemiya Dzhendem and 12 km east of the city of Sliven. The rocky Kutelka (119 m), Golyama Chataalka (1065 m) and Malka Chataalka Peaks, the Karandilka rock and the Orlovo Gnezdo Peak dominate in the huge rocky mass of the Sinite Kamuni site. These latter peaks are less than 1000 m in altitude.

This rocky chain, because of its peculiar coloring, has been given the name Sinite Kamuni [Blue Stones]. And here indeed, more than anywhere else in these rocky parts, one can see the blue hue of the rocks.

The rocky peaks, projections and ridges at the Sinite Kamuni site are composed of eruptive rock -- andesite.

The Sinite Kamuni site is one of the most beautiful locations in all of Bulgaria, as well as in the eastern part of the Stara Planina Mountains. The romantic formations, the peculiar color, the jagged rocks which project their strange forms against the blue sky, and the various color harmonies to be seen here from sunrise to sunset arouse the admiration of nature lovers.

The Sinite Kamuni site is of interest to alpinists as a good locale for training climbs. Despite the fact that in some places the rock tends to crumble and that there are few cracks here, training climbs, for the most part on a free rope, can be made here. There are rocky passages in some places which permit the use of some of the advanced alpine climbing techniques.

The Kominut site and the western slopes of Mount Mala are of the greatest interest to climbers. The Kominut site has walls 60 m high, and in some places as high as 80 m. Many varied ascents can be made along these. Ascents on a free rope can be made on the rugged, haystack shaped rocks which rise from the western slopes of Mount Mala, for the purpose of accustoming climbers to altitude, safety precautions and of developing endurance.

The rocks of Golyama Chataalka and Malka Chataalka form interesting walls which are for the most part easily ascended on a free rope, which is necessary because there are no convenient cracks in the rock.

The other rocky peaks, such as Kirtelka, the Orlovite rocks, the Karandiliska wall, etc., which tempt the eye from afar, are of no interest.

The most convenient starting point for ascents along the rocky projections of Golyama Chataalka and Malka Chataalka is the "Spas Georgiev" tourist hut (Karandilyat) which is half an hour's hike from them.

The most convenient starting point for climbs along the rocks at the Kominut site and along the western slopes of Mount Mala is Sliven city. These sites can be reached via the beautiful Mochurite valley along the reaches of the Novoselska River. The hike takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Climbing Sites

In addition to the alpine walls previously described there are many climbing sites used for the training of alpinists who live in cities at some distance from any mountains.

The Bryanovshitsa Rocks

One of the sites at which the alpinists of Plovdiv like best to make practice climbs is the rocky Bryanovshitsa site.

It is located on the spur beginning at the main ridge of the Rhodope Mountains near the old Roman settlement called Tumresh. This ridge slopes down from the Tiklakula site to the Plovdiv plain. At the point where the Sitovska and Tumreshka Rivers join, the eastern side of the ridge is formed of very rugged, terrace-like rocks which are covered with beech and oak forests.

The grandest of them all is the Gesheva rock, beneath which the Gornata rock lies exactly opposite the junction of the Sitovska and Tumreshka Rivers. This latter rock is about 80 m high. It is divided into 2 parts and in some places into 3 terraces, which are covered with oak scrub.

The wall of the Gornata rock began to attract Plovdiv alpinists after the establishment of an alpine group in the city in 1949. In the summer of 1950, alpinists Yanko Montanov and Yanko Mlyakov made the first studies of these sites. Along with the easy routes along the Gornata rock, there is a route called "The Overhang," the most difficult of all, has been laid out across it.

The chimney here is formed by a rocky projection of rare beauty which rises from the shores of the Sitovska River about 100 m from its junction with the Tumreshka River. Agreeable climbs for training purposes can be made via this chimney.

Beyond the Gornata rock lies the Dolnata rock. It is also an excellent climbing site; and several routes have been laid out across it. The most interesting of these is the "Buzludzha" route.

These sites are 900 m in altitude and are located near the "Bryanovshitsa" tourist hut, from which it is $\frac{1}{2}$ hour's hike to the rocks. The walking time from Plovdiv is 4 hours, 3 hours from Brestovitsa, and 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours from the nearest village, Sveti Spas, to which there is bus service.

The alpinists of Plovdiv train on these sites every week. In 1950 Plovdiv alpinists Yanko Montanov, leader, and Yanko Myakov made the first major ascent of the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak, after extensive training at the above-mentioned sites.

The Chervenata Rock

This less well known climbing site is located near Asenovgrad. It is rarely visited by alpinists from Plovdiv.

The Rocks Along the Rusenski Lom River

After it is joined at Ivanovo village by its 2 main tributaries, the Beli Lom and the Cherni Lom rivers, the Rusenski Lom River runs toward its Danube estuary through a pass comprised of limestone rocks which are as high as 100 m in some places. These walls serve as excellent training sites for the climber living in Ruse city.

These limestone rock walls in the Rusenski Lom River Pass were studied in the autumn of 1949 after the establishment of an Alpine Section in Ruse.

The first ascent of these rocks was made of 10 October 1948 by this writer and Instructors Boycho Boychev and Vladimir Lobodin. The picturesque Pismata rocks were climbed at that time. They are south-east of Ivanovo village, near the broad Buzaluk curve in the river.

The studies were also continued during the autumn of the next year by Senior Instructors Aleksandur Belkovski, Meritorious Master of Sports, Mikhail Krushnyak, Tsanko Bangiev, Master of Sports Encho Petkov, Khristo Borisov and Boycho Boychev. Climbs were made in the vicinity of the church, where there are interesting old murals. The rocks opposite Koshov village were also climbed.

When the Ruse Alpine Section was reorganized, still more extensive studies were undertaken in connection with the climbing sites along the Rusenski Lom River.

In the summer of 1950, Senior Alpine Instructor Khristo Popov, Petur Kovachev and Vurban Popov climbed the walls near Koshov and Ivanovo villages. Later, studies of the climbing sites near the Kulata, Basarhovo, Vetovo (where there are walls about 120 m high), Cherven (Golemiya Ray), Krasen, and Pepelna villages were made under the leadership of Senior Instructor Khristo Popov by Dimo Mateev, Ivan Mitev, Gancho Georgiev and others.

The first high mountain ascents by Ruse alpinists were the result of these climbs. Ruse alpinists climbed the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak, the southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak, the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak in the Rila Mountains, the northern wall of Vilkhren Peak in the Pirin Mountains, and many other difficult sites.

Brezhani

These rocks were first studied by Senior Alpine Instructor Emil Milchev, Master of Sports, and Instructor Vladimir Lobodin, in 1951. Numerous climbs were made for training purposes in this locale by the alpinists of Brezhani village.

Apart from the climbing sites which have been examined above, there are in Bulgaria a large number of such sites which are still unexplored. These include the Belogradchik rocks, the Teteven rocks, the Kyustendil rocks, the rocks along the Stara River in the Rhodope Mountains, those along the Karlovska River in the Stara Planina Mountains, and many other sites which are splendid climbing areas for training purposes, and might serve especially for the many settlements in which Alpine Sections could be established.

APPENDIX

Addendum IAlpinism: Requirements for Qualification for ERSK Ranks

Rank	Category of Difficulty								Total		
	3 B		4 A		4 B		b				
	Sum- mer	Win- ter	Sum- mer	Win- ter	Sum- mer	Win- ter	Sum- mer	Win- ter			
V	U	V	U	V	U	V	U	V	U		
[meaning of "v" and "u" unknown]											
Master of Sports											
Ascents	2	11	1	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	20
Traverses	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	3	-	-	15
First Rank											
Ascents	2	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	11
Traverses	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	6
Second Rank											
Ascents	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
Traverses	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2

The III rank will be granted to alpinists who take part in one ascent or traverse in the 3 B category of difficulty.

Note: I, II, and III ranks are given to sportsmen who have earned the "Alpinist of the Bulgarian People's Republic", rank I, badge.

Additional Requirements

Master of Sports

1. To be an Instructor in Alpinism, and to have trained badge earners in courses in alpinism.
2. To have made 3 of the required ascents in the Pirin Mountains and 4 in the Rila Mountains.
3. To have made 3 of the required traverses in the Pirin Mountains and 2 in the Stara Planina Mountains, as well as 2 in the Rila Mountains.
4. To have made as test ascents in the 5 A category of difficulty.

First Rank

1. To have organized and led one winter climb across 2 ridges and 2 passes at an altitude of at least 2500 m, including overnight camping.
2. To have made 2 of the required climbs in the Pirin Mountains.
3. To have made at least 1 of the required traverses in the Pirin Mountains, 1 in the Rila Mountains, and one in the Stara Planina Mountains.

Second Rank

1. To have participated in a winter climb across 2 ridges and 2 passes at an altitude of more than 1800 m.

Note: 1. For women, all requirements are reduced by one category.

2. To maintain one's rank, each 2 years at least one ascent or traverse one category lower than the highest category of ascent required for that rank must be made.

Addendum II

Excerpts from the "Classification of Winter and Summer Ascents" and "Instructions for Supplementing the Categories of Ascents", issued by the VKFS on 20 January 1956, and concerning the categories of difficulty for ascents in the Rila, Pirin and Stara Planina Mountains.

I Ascents

A. Summer Ascents -- 30 April to 1 December

The Rila Mountains

Category of difficulty II

1. Zliya Zub Peak, along its western arete
2. The western wall of the Ezerniya Peak (Armiyata), southern portion

Category of difficulty II A

1. Iglata Peak from the Dvuglav Peak side
2. The southern wall of Elenin Peak
3. Zliya Zub Peak, from the north
4. The northern wall of Orlovets Peak
5. The northern wall of Kamilata Peak, via the chimney
6. The northern part of the western wall of Ezerniya Peak (Armiyata)

Category of difficulty III A

1. Elenin Peak, via the routes across the southeastern wall
2. Dvuglav Peak, via the "II Republican Alpine Competition" route
3. The southwestern wall of Ushite Peak
4. Mal'ovitsa Peak, via the northwestern arete
5. The middle of the western wall of Ezerniya Peak
6. The western part of the northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak
7. The northern wall of Malkiya Kupa Peak

Category of difficulty IV C

1. The southern wall of Dvuglav Peak

Category of difficulty V A

1. The northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak
2. Zliya Zub Peak, via the "Varnikut" route
3. Iglata Peak, via the "III Republican Alpine Competition" route
4. Dvuglav Peak, via the "9 September" route

Category of difficulty V B

1. Zliya Zub Peak, via the "Slavyanskiya" route
2. Dyavolskite Igli Peak, via the VIF route

The Pirin Mountains

Category of difficulty II B

1. The wall of the Koncheto, from Sukhodol
2. The northwestern arete of Gazey Peak

Category of difficulty III A

1. Vikhren Peak, via the "Classical" route
2. The western wall of Banski Sukhodol Peak

Category of difficulty III B

1. Atmegdan Peak, via the routes across the northern wall
2. Dzhengal Peak, via the routes across the Stenata

Category of difficulty IV A

1. Dzhengal Peak, via the "9 September" route
2. The northwestern wall of Atmegdan Peak, via the "Stroitel" route
3. Monim Peak -- the Sinanishki sector
4. Atmegdan Peak -- the variation to the left of the 4 A "Stroitel" route

Category of difficulty IV B

1. The southeastern wall of Sinanitsa Peak
2. Vikhren Peak, via the "Triugulnikut" routes
3. Atmegdan Peak, via the "Narodna Armiya" route

The Stara Planina Mountains

Category of difficulty II B

1. Botev Peak from the south -- via the footpath east of the Priskaloto waterfall

B. Winter Ascents -- 1 December to 30 April

The Rila Mountains

Category of difficulty II B

1. Orlovets Peak, via the Petlite couloirs
2. Stalin Peak from the Ledenoto Lake

Category of difficulty III A

1. Mal'ovitsa Peak, via its eastern arete
2. Zliya Zub Peak from the south

Category of difficulty III B

1. Mal'ovitsa Peak from the west

Category of difficulty IV B

1. Dvuglav Peak, via the "II Republican Alpine Competition" route

Category of difficulty V B

1. Dvuglav Peak, via the southern wall

The Pirin Mountains

Category of difficulty II B

1. Muratov Peak, via the eastern and northern aretes
2. Vikhren Peak, via the arete of Khvoynati Peak

Category of difficulty III A

1. Todorin Peak, via the arete facing the "Eltepe" tourist hut

Category of difficulty III B

1. Bunderishka Chuka Peak, via its northern wall
2. Vikhren Peak, via its northeastern arete
3. Vikhren Peak, via the aretes facing the "Eltepe" tourist hut
4. Kamenitsa Peak, via the couloir
5. Kutelut Peak, via the northeastern arete

Category of difficulty IV A

1. Vihren Peak, via the couloir of the northern wall
2. Yalovarnikut Peak, via the northern arete
3. Gazey Peak, via the northeastern arete

Category of difficulty V A

1. Vihren Peak, via the classical "Funiyata" route

Category of difficulty VI A

1. The wall of Vihren Peak, via the "Narodna Armiya" route
2. Sinanitsa Peak, via the TsDNA (Tsentralen dom na narodnata armiya, Central Club of the People's Army) route

Addendum III

Excerpts from the "Instructions on the Method of Categorizing Alpine Ascents", published by the VKFS in 1955

C. Categorization of the Walls

The Bulgarian walls are divided into 6 categories and subdivided into 6 subcategories on the basis of the elements of difficulty encountered in ascending them.

Category of difficulty I A

This is assigned to a route which a climber can negotiate using only his feet, and where no safety precautions are necessary. Elements of difficulty: the route must lead to a peak, and the slope along which the ascent is made must be 40° or more and at least 180 m in length. This category includes for the most part grass covered slopes.

Category of difficulty I B

This is assigned to routes which lie in the first category of difficulty, but when the slope tends to crumble and there are loose stones.

Category of difficulty II A

This is assigned to a route where an alpinist, to negotiate it, must in the more difficult section use his hands as well as his feet, and where he must be secured by alpine ropes.

These precautions may (optional) be provided by a second climber.

These slopes are usually composed of grass, slabs and stones.

Category of difficulty II B

This is assigned to routes like those in the II A category but where the surface of the slope is very crumbling and both hands and feet must constantly be utilized for the ascent. Climbers must be secured to one another.

Category of difficulty III B

This is assigned to routes where at least three belaying points, rocky protrusions and the like are used for safety precautions, and where climbers must be secured by lines for the entire length of the route.

Category of difficulty III A

This is assigned to routes which have all the elements of those in the III B category and where rock pitons must, in addition, be used in some difficult sectors.

Category of difficulty IV A

This is assigned to routes which cover slopes of an incline greater than 60° and at least 130 m long. Such routes must have difficult rocky sectors for which rock pitons are needed. Such routes should have excellent hand and footholds and convenient platforms for belaying ropes. The rock here should be solid, and with no free stones which can be dislodged.

Category of difficulty IV B

This is assigned to the following routes:

1. Those containing the elements in routes of the IV A category, and also having badly eroded and crumbling surfaces.
2. Those across rock pitches which are nearly perpendicular and having smooth, small hand and footholds and small platforms for assembling a party. The absolute necessity for rock pitons is an essential here, including the need for creating belaying points with pitons, i.e., moving pitons as needed to secure oneself.

Category of difficulty V A

This is assigned to routes where the general pitch of the slope is 75° or more, and on which pitons alone will enable climbers to negotiate the difficult passages. An easy overhang must form a part of the rocky sector, necessitating a climb out, up and over it. Formations requiring ladders to support the climbers must be included, and the routes should be at least 150 m long. Slopes in the II A category often form the beginnings of such routes. There must be at least 2 key points classified V A in difficulty where highly developed techniques and considerable endurance on the part of the alpinists are essential in overcoming the obstacles. By key points of this difficulty, 2 sections of at least 3 m each, where ladders, double line, wooden pitons, etc., are necessary, are meant.

Category of difficulty V B

This is assigned which have all the elements of those in the category V A, plus very crumbling rock and loose stones which threaten the safety of alpinists and place them under considerable psychological strain throughout the ascent. These routes must be such as to demand considerable training, excellent powers of observation, and perfect

coordination between hand and footwork. Routes similar to those in category V A, but with rocky topography of much greater difficulty, are also included here. There should be small holds and small ledges where the leadership can be alternated. The key points must be such as to require the use of ladders and the creation of artificial supports for the hands and feet.

Category of difficulty VI A

This is assigned to routes over 200 m long. The approach is often a slope of the III A category of difficulty. Two key positions at least, in the VI A category of difficulty, must be included in the route. These are passages of more than 5 m in the form of overhangs, which necessitate the climber's climbing out under them in order to negotiate the ascent. These must be difficult enough sites to require great physical endurance and the use of complex rock techniques and equipment -- double ropes, ladders and wooden pitons.

Note: The ascent of these routes demands years of practice, excellent training, great mastery of safety precautions, foresight in training, judgment in making camp on the rocks, and great endurance.

Category of difficulty VI B

This is assigned to the most difficult routes in the Bulgarian People's Republic -- the perpendicular walls with high and difficult overhangs, slabs, and sheer rock faces, to overcome which the highest degree of climbing techniques are necessary the entire length of the route.

Note: For these routes a climber must be a master of climbing techniques, be physically well trained and in excellent condition, have a cool head, be accustomed to the sudden changes of weather in the mountains (be acclimatized), have rapid reflexes, excellent judgment, good foresight and exceptional powers of endurance.

D. Classification of Winter Ascents

a) Winter ascents on routes with a clockwise exposure of 270 to 45° are classified $1\frac{1}{2}$ categories above the same routes ascended in summer (V A in summer, for example, and VI B in winter).

b) Winter ascents on routes with a clockwise exposure of 45 to 270° are classified as one category higher than the summer ascent of the same routes (for example IV B in summer, and V B in winter).

E. The First Ascent of New Routes

1. A first ascent is considered to be the climbing of a route corresponding to one of the listed categories of difficulty, and which has never been previously covered in its entirety by another team.

2. An ascent over a site previously climbed, but via a new route for at least two thirds of the entire length of the route, is considered a first ascent, provided the key sector (the most difficult section) lies within the new route. It is then assigned a category of difficulty.

3. If a previously climbed site is ascended again by the same route, with the exception of a deviation across its most difficult part, the old route's category is assigned to the new variation, which is then listed separately.

4. If the most difficult sector of the route previously climbed is bypassed on the fresh ascent, a new category is assigned in accordance with the difficulties encountered, and the new route is listed as a variation.

5. An ascent is considered completed when it has been carried out without outside aid.

6. The use of a traverse to leave a wall because of poor weather or other necessitating circumstances, and the renewal of the ascent the next day is considered an incomplete ascent. To be recognized the ascent must be begun again from the bottom.

7. The first winter ascent of a climb previously made only in summer is also considered a first ascent.

8. The most nearly vertical route is always considered the basic route.

F. Credit for Leading Teams

1. Leading a team for traverses or hikes along an entire route results in a credit for the alpinist.

2. Leading an ascent for at least half of the entire route results in a credit for an alpinist.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Deliradev, Pavel, Rila [Rila Mountains], Vols I, II, 1933, Sofia

Id., Vihsha [Vitosha Mountains], 1927, Sofia

Id., Turisticheska karta na Rila [Hiking Map of the Rila Mountains], 1946, Sofia

Chankov, Zhecho, Geografski rechnik na Bulgariya [Geographical Dictionary of Bulgaria], 1939, Sofia

Ishirkov, A., Khidrografiya na Bulgariya [Hydrography of Bulgaria], 1927, Sofia

Klissarov, G.; Mironski, Nikola, Turisticheskite khizhi v Bulgariya [Tourist Huts in Bulgaria], 1953, Sofia

Velev, V.; Dinev, Dr. L.; Kostov, D., Nashata strana, Geografska khristomatiya [Our Country: A Geography Reader], 1950, Sofia

Godishnik na BPK [BPK Yearbook], No 1, 1933, Sofia

Godishnik na BAK [BAK Yearbook], No II, 1934; No III, 1936-1937;

No IV, 1938-1940, Sofia

Izvestiya na BAK [BAK Bulletin], No 1, 1934; No 2, 1935; No 3-4, 1935

Sofia

Sp. "Bulgarski turist" [Bulgarian Tourist Magazine], 1901-1943, Sofia

Sp. "Naroden turist" [People's Tourist Magazine], 1945-1952, Sofia

Sp. "Mlad turist" [Young Tourist Magazine], Sofia

V. "Naroden sport" [People's Sports Newspaper], Sofia

Sp. "Priroda" [Nature Magazine]

FIGURE CAPTIONS

- [Opposite page 8, orig.] A panoramic view of parts of the eastern, central, southwestern and northwestern Rila seen from the pass between Lopushi Peak and Popova Shapka Peaks. Behind Cherney and Baba Peaks the forms of the northern Pirin Mountains can be seen.
- [Opposite page 16, orig.] Sketches showing the location of alpine walls in the Mal'ovishki sector.
- [Page 20, orig.] The Mal'ovishka valley, seen from the south.
- [Page 21, orig.] "BAK" alpine shelter.
- [Page 22, orig.] Central Alpine Camp.
- [Opposite page 22, orig.] Panoramic view of the central part of the Mal'ovishki sector of the Rila Mountains, seen from the north.
- [Opposite page 24, orig.] The Mal'ovishka valley, with Malka Mal'ovitsa and Mal'ovitsa Peaks (on the right).
- [Opposite page 25, top, orig.] The alpine shelter on Strashnoto Lake.

[Opposite page 25, bottom, orig.] Mal'ovitsa tourist hut.

[Opposite page 32, orig.] The northwestern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak.

Legend: ... the route of the first ascent of the western wing in 1934; --- the first ascent of the Mal'ovitsa corridor in 1935; ... the first ascent of the eastern wing in 1930; --- the first ascent of the northwestern arete of the Triugulnikut in 1934; = the route of the ascent of the eastern arete of the Triugulnikut via the Mal'ovishki corridor; T the northeastern wall (Triugulnikut).

[Opposite page 33, orig.] The northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak

(Triugulnikut). Legend: ... the classical route; X the site where camp was made on the first ascent of the wall in 1938; --- "the Kaminite" variation.

[Page 36, orig.] The box containing the notebook with a record of the ascents which was left in the middle of the northeastern wall of Mal'ovitsa Peak (in "The Cabin" (3)).

[Opposite page 40, orig.] The southern wall of the Ushite Peaks.

Legend: ... the route followed for the first ascent; --- the variation by which one can leave the wall.

[Opposite page 41, orig.] Mal'ovitsa, Orleto, Malka Mal'ovitsa, Ushite, Orlovets, Zliya Zub, Kamilata, Lovnitsa and Kупenite Peaks, seen from the west.

[Page 47, orig.] Mal'ovitsa and Elenin Peaks seen from the east.

[Opposite page 48, orig.] The eastern wall of Elenin Peak. Legend:

I the classical route; X the overhang above the upper chimney; II the route to the right of the classical route; III the route to the left of the northeastern arete of the wall; IV the northeastern arete of the eastern wall with the starting points a and b for climbs indicated.

[Opposite page 49, orig.] The southern and western walls of Elenin Peak.

[Opposite page 56, orig.] The northwestern wall of Orlovets Peak, showing the route followed on its first ascent.

[Opposite page 57, orig.] The Mal'ovishka valley in winter.

[Opposite page 64, orig.] The southwestern side of Zliya Zub Peak.

Legend: ... the route along the southern arete, (a) variation;
 --- the route of ascent along the western arete; ↓ ← the pass between Zliya Zub and Orlovets Peaks, from which the Siniya ravine runs south.

[Opposite page 65, orig.] The northern wall of Zliya Zub Peak.

Legend: ... the route of ascent via the northern arete;
 --- the route of the first ascent of the northern wall.

[Opposite page 72, orig.] The southeastern wall of Zliya Zub Peak.

Legend: HH the two great overhangs called "The Eyebrows" ; I the "Varnikut" route; X the most difficult passage on the route "Varnikut"; A and B the two rocky holes; II the Slavyanskiya route.

[Between pages 72 and 73, orig.] Elenin Peak, Mal'ovitsa Peak, Iglata Peak, Dvuglav Peak, Dyavolskite Igli Peaks and Zliya Zub Peak, seen from the Partizanska meadow.

[Opposite page 73, orig.] Typical ravines cutting through the southern slopes in the Mal'ovishki sector.

[Opposite page 80, orig.] Dvuglav and Iglata Peaks and the route of ascent (...) along the ravine between them, emerging on the saddle (x). To the left of the saddle is the route for the ascent of the northern arete of Iglata Peak, and on the right that (---) for the ascent of Dvuglav Peak from the west.

[Between pages 80 and 81, orig.] The southern wall of Dvuglav Peak.

Legend: ... the route of the first ascent of the wall; --- the "Kaminite" route; --- the "Plochite" route; -.-.- part of the route of the first group ascent of the wall. To the right of (7) is the "Sdravets" variation; [] the "Portala"; ~ the route from the Siniya ravine to the foot of the southern wall of Dvuglav Peak.

[Opposite page 81, orig.] Iglata, Dvuglav, Zliya Zub and Lovnitza Peaks (from the left to the right) seen from the Partizanska meadow, with the Partizanski shelter -- a forestry hut.

[Opposite page 88, orig.] The southern wall of Dvuglav Peak.

Legend: ... "9 Septemvri" route; --- "Diagonala" variation; -.-.- "II Republican Alpine Competition" route.

[Opposite page 89, orig.] The Sulchoto Lake

[Opposite page 96, orig.] The arete linking Dvuglav and Zliya Zub Peaks.

[Between pages 96 and 97, orig., left] The southern arete of Iglata Peak, with the route along it indicated (...), and the approach from the Siniya ravine along the western grassy slopes of Iglata Peak to the center of its southern arete (---).

[Between pages 96 and 97, orig., right] The western wall and the northern arete of Iglata Peak. Legend: I the approach via the Siniya ravine from the beginning of the western couloir (1); II the traverse along the western grassy slope of Dvuglav Peak leading toward the saddle (2); III the route of ascent from the saddle (2) or for descending from Dvuglav Peak.

[Opposite page 97, orig.] The southern arete of Iglata Peak, seen from the southeast. (1) marks the center of the arete, from which the routes begin; <Kaminite route; --- ← the ravine between Iglata and Dvuglav Peaks.

- [Opposite page 104, orig.] The southern wall of the Dyavolskite Igli Peaks. ---I the first attempt at ascending the wall; ... II the second attempt to ascend the wall; the route by which the wall was climbed.
- [Opposite page 105, orig.] The Dyavolskite Igli Peaks seen from the Partizanska meadow.
- [Opposite page 112, orig.] The northern wall of Kamilata Peak. ... the route followed in the first ascent of the wall; X the overhang in the uppermost narrow part of the upper chimney: --- possibilities for getting on and off the wall.
- [Between pages 112 and 113, orig., left] The northern wall of Lovnitsa Peak. The route (...) for ascent of the western part of the wall; X the overhang at which the attempts to ascend the eastern part of the wall ended.
- [Between pages 112 and 113, orig., right] Seen from the south the Kopenite Peaks resemble haystacks, hence their name.
- [Opposite page 113, orig.] The northwestern wall of the Sredniya Kopen Peak; ... the route for its first ascent.
- [Opposite page 120, orig.] The western wall of the Kharemyata Peak. Routes followed in the ascent of the central (...), southern (---), and northern (-.-.) parts of the wall.
- [Opposite page 121, orig.] The third of the Sedemte Rila Lakes -- Bubreka Lake (Black Lake).
- [Opposite page 126, orig.] Sketch of part of the Northern Pirin Mountains with the location of the Alpine walls, (→).
- [Opposite page 128, orig.] Koncheto Arete.
- [Between pages 128 and 129, orig., left] The northeastern wall of the Koncheto Arete.

[Between pages 128 and 129, orig., right] The southwestern side of the Koncheto Arete.

[Opposite page 129, orig.] The carst arete under snow.

[Page 130, orig.] Alpine shelter on the Koncheto Arete.

[Opposite page 136, orig.] Vihren Peak with Khvoynati Peak in foreground seen from the Bunderishko Lake.

[Between pages 136 and 137, orig.] The northern wall of Vihren Peak ("Kazana"). A-- "Triugulnika" with I -- "Skalniya Zhleb" route ending at IA and IB; II -- the Route to the right of the "Skalniya Zhleb"; III-- the route left of the "Kaminata"; IV--"Kaminta" route. B-- the right side of the wall with V-- "Kuloara" route; VI-- "Funiyata" route ending with VIA, VIB, and VIC.

[Opposite page 137, orig.] Vihren tourist hut and the Bunderishka river valley.

[Page 140, orig.] Memorial slab to deceased army alpinists.

[Opposite page 146, orig.] Panoramic view of the Pirin Mountains from Kamenitsa to Vihren Peaks.

[Opposite page 152, orig.] The northeastern wall of Sinanitsa Peak. a, b, and c -- approaches to the feet of the rocky part of the wall -- the terrace (1); X -- the most difficult part of the wall.

[Opposite page 153, orig.] The northwestern wall of Momin Peak.

[Opposite page 160 , orig.] Muratov Peak

[Between pages 160 and 161, orig.] The northwestern wall of Atmegdan Ridge. A--the northern part of the wall (Bashliyskata wall) with routes "Narodna Armiya" (I) and "Stroitel" (II). B--the western part of the wall with routes marked by alpinists of the "Torpedo" DSO in 1953 (III,IV,V,VI).

- [Opposite page 161, orig.] Fog over Vasilak Peak.
- [Opposite page 166, orig.] Panoramic view of the ridge between the Demyanishka and Dobrinishka Rivers, from Kaymakchal to Kamenitsa Peaks.
- [Opposite page 168, orig.] Dzhangal Peak seen from the east.
- [Between pages 168 and 169, orig.] The western wall of Dzhangal Peak. First ascends in 1948 (I and Ia). Routes marked in 1953 by alpinists of the "Torpedo" ISO (II, III-- "9-ti septemvri route" and IV).
- [Opposite page 169, orig.] Dzhangal Peak and the upper Valyavishko Lake.
- [Page 170, orig.] The eastern side of Dzhangal Peak.
- [Opposite page 172, orig.] The Vasilashki Lakes and the Strazhite, Ushitsite and Gazeite Peaks.
- [Opposite page 173, orig.] View of the Strazhite, Ushitsite, Mangurtepe and Gazeite Peaks, and the Demyanishka valley.
- [Page 177, orig.] Kamen Dyal Peak
- [Page 178, orig.] Malkiyat Rezen Peak.
- [Page 179, orig.] Sketch of Vitosha Mountain Alpine sites.
- [Opposite page 184, orig.] Gorniya Komin and Dolniya Komin (Southern wing) Peaks. "Tsepkata" route (II), "Malkiya Vinkel" route (III), "Vinkela" route (IV), "Nadvesa" route (V), H -- the overhang, "Ruba" route (VI), and "Traversa" route (T).
- [Opposite page 185, orig.] The northern wing of the Dolniya Komin Peak with the Damskiya route (1).
- [Opposite page 198, orig.] Vrachanskite Rocks.
- [Opposite page 200, orig.] Vrattsata and the route along the arete.
- [Opposite page 201, orig.] Ritlite rocks near Lyutibrod. The catastrophic route marked in 1949 (---).

- [Opposite page 202, orig.] The Lakatnishki Rocks,
- [Opposite page 208, orig.] The Iskur River Pass at Lakatnik.
- [Between pages 208 and 209, orig.] The Chernata Wall at the Lakatnishki Rocks. "Ideal Arête" route (6), "The Overhangs" route (7), the "Kuloarut" route (8), the "Lyulyakut" route (9), "Faktor" route (10), "Shemineto" route (11), and the ~~Sennan~~ Route (12).
- [Opposite page 209, orig.] "Svinskata Dupka" route (1), "Diagonalut" route (2), ~~Dama~~ route (3), "Zhultata Tsepka" route (4), the ~~Combina~~ route (5), and the "Ideal Arête" route (6), ↓ shelter.
- [Opposite page 216, orig.] "Septemvri" route (14). Left of it is the Zhultata Wall.
- [Opposite page 217, orig.] "Krusta" route (13).
- [Pages 218 and 219, orig.] Panoramic view of climbing sites facing Bov railroad station.
- [Opposite page 228, orig.] Dzhendema and Raya sites.
- [Opposite page 232, orig.] The Kalofersko Waterfall.
- [Between pages 232 and 233, orig.] Rayskite Rocks.
- [Opposite page 233, orig.] Attempted route of ascent of the "Pruskaloto" wall.
- [Opposite page 240, orig.] Dryanovski Monastery -- the "Momini Rocks".
- [Opposite page 241, orig.] The Dryanovski Monastery and the "Strazhata" peak.
- [Page 245, orig.] Sinite Kamuni Rocks.
- [Page 248, orig.] Gesheva Rock.
- [Page 250, orig.] The rocks around Ivanovo village.