Bo

TRITON AND PROTEUS

SINCE THEN, by Denis Glover. THE IRON BREADBOARD, Studies in New Zealand Writing, by James K. Baxter. Both from the Mermaid Press, Wellington, 10/6 and 5/-.

(Reviewed by James Bertram)

THE re-appearance of Denis Glover as a publisher—his new device shows an athletic mermaid blowing a formidable conch—is a most welcome literary event. Appropriately enough, these modest first volumes (with two admirable title-pages, and one classically frivolous wrapper) are both devoted to verse: one gives us poems from the old Triton himself, the other a garland of seaweed from that agile dolphin, James K. Baxter.

After R. A. K. Mason, Mr Glover has the most distinctive individual style among our poets. *Since Then*—the title comes from an unlocated war-poem, but it has reverberations—is a collection of short poems, many of which have appeared in the pages of *The Listener*, together with the fine lyrical sequence *Towards Banks Peninsula*, and the commissioned, "two-bob-a-line" sequence, *The Air*. The air is not Mr Glover's element, and he was allowed no crashes: a fatal deprivation. Elsewhere a sombre Anglo-Saxon mood *("thaes ofereode; thisses swa maeg")* reigns powerfully and antiseptically, like chlorine. It is relieved, in the epigrams, by a gleam of true Celtic wit.

All of these poems, however resultory or wayward in impulse, show the characteristic tough resolution and hammered-iron craftsmanship. Four of them —"Mountains and the Sea," "Winterset," "Laiene," and the untitled "Mother of Christ" lyric—seem to me vintage Glover; and that haunting piece of Chas. Addams décor, "Loki's Daughter's Palace," remains unforgettably in the mind.

Mr Baxter's seventeen parodies of New Zealand poets are a brilliant *tour de force*. With unflagging zest he deals faithfully with two literary generations; even when the identifying initials repeat themselves, no alert reader will ever be in any doubt about the victim. Perhaps Mr Baxter rather pulls his punches with J.K.B.; and D.G., though acquainted with vulgarity, is not often vulgar in his verse. But these are spots in the sun. My first reaction was that the parodist had over-handicapped himself with his recurring breadboard; my second, that too often he had relied on a single familiar poem as model. But I finished the series with nothing but admiration for the insight that makes this *Jeu d'esprit* a serious work of literary criticism as well as an entertainment, and for the quite remarkable dexterity with which it is brought off.

THE THIRD HIGHEST

KANGCHENJUNGA THE UNTRODDEN PEAK, by Charles Evans; Hodder and Stoughton, English price 25/-.

THE ingredients of success in the Himalayas are now well known. Careful planning on information received from reconnaissance parties, good men picked for their experience and ability to work in a team, splendid equipment, loyal Sherpas, inspired leadership, unselfishness, skill and luck with the weather; these are essential.

Not many years ago it was thought that Kangchenjunga was more difficult and dangerous than Everest. As the third highest mountain in the world, Kangchenjunga (28,146 feet) had attracted brave and resolute parties, notably those led by Paul Bauer between the wars. Bavarian exploits on the north-east ridge gave the mountain a stature it can never lose. More recently young British climbers gave hopes of a route from the Yalung valley to the south-west of Kangchenjunga. Charles Evans, well known for his Everest and other Himalayan work, was an ideal leader for the 1955 expedition. Nine men made up the party, supported by a magnificent team of Sherpas.

The fortunes of the expedition included the usual arrival in rough weather at base camp, the probing of a route beyond the highest point reached by earlier parties on the Yalung side and a retreat to fossick for a better variation. Then, with the discovery of a safe and feasible but very exposed climb, came all the donkey work of forcing a way up broken and perilous slopes and icefalls, establishing airy camps, stocking them with supplies and men, and final success from Camp Six when two parties climbed to within a few feet of the summit—left untrodden because of the religious sensibilities of the inhabitants of Sikkim, who regarded Kangchenjunga as a god and protector called the Five Treasuries of the Great Snow.

That Norman Hardie, deputy-leader of the expedition, took his full part in handling porters, acrobatic reconnaissance work, and was in the second successful summit party is a matter of great pride to New Zealand mountaineers who have followed his career keenly from the days when he climbed the ranges of the Waimakariri, Rakaia and Landsborough.

Charles Evans has written his book vividly, with great modesty, and delightful precision. He has included striking colour photographs, and the best possible diagrams correlating with aerial views, good maps and informative appendices.

—John Pascoe

REWI ALLEY'S TRAVELS

JOURNEY TO OUTER MONGOLIA — A DIARY WITH POEMS, by Rewi Alley; preface by H. Winston Rhodes; the Caxton Press.

THIS little book is the diary of Rewi Alley's visit to the celebrations in honour of the 35th anniversary of the Republic of Outer Mongolia, where, as "persona grata" and indeed important person in the Communist world, he was treated with lavish hospitality. Mongolia is described as a pastoral country

(continued on next page)

Parking Metres

SELF SUPPORTING

SOME experts have advanced the view
That anyone who cares
Should be allowed to do a few
Electrical repairs.
And as for me I wish them well.
It would be nice to know
Without the fear of prison cell
That if my radio
Should cut out like a doodle-bug
However much I kick it,
I'm free to fix the three-pin plug
Without a wireman's ticket.
And scientists could all take pains
And their resources use
To teach their electronic brains
The way to mend a fuse.

—R.G.P.