

EDITORIAL

NOT many times before in a single year has the mountaineering world lost so many famous figures. Tasker, Boardman, and Kato died on Everest, MacIntyre on Annapurna, Malatyanski on Masherbrum, and many other young climbers died on the Himalayan mountains. Quite a few among these were members of the Himalayan Club. In a sport like mountaineering with 'calculated risk' death always looms on the horizon. But does this number of deaths simply point to an increasing number of participants or the types of routes tackled? Perhaps both. But it certainly points to the supremacy of nature, that with all the modern aids, equipments and development of new techniques it still exposes the fallibility of a human challenge.

In passing away of Col Eric Goodwin, the Club has lost a valuable connection with the past. Their likes will not be seen.

There have been many notable climbs like Manaslu and Nanga Parbat by east pillar, a two-man ascent of Sri Kailas, Ohmi Kangri, Kabru Dome and others. An increasing interest in scientific research is evident. Ascent of Everest by a team of doctors, geology and botany, diet problems at altitude to name a few. All this should lead to a better understanding and enjoyment of mountains.

Along with challenging the hard routes and peaks, many pursue serious trekking involving crossing of high passes and covering long distances. With the logistic problems it causes and variety of terrain it covers such treks are far more serious than usually imagined. Some treks covered familiar terrains like Nanda Devi Sanctuary, few combined good deal of climbing with it, while some traversed the full length of Himalaya. One can recall a Shiptonian quotation: 'I became less and less concerned with the mastery of technical difficulty or even the ascent of individual peaks but more and more absorbed in the problems and delights of movement over wide areas of

mountain country. It was not that I lost any of my enjoyment in climbing peaks but simply that I found the other still more rewarding.'

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