

EDITORIAL

The Himalayan scene is changing. Although high peaks, including Everest, continue to be climbed regularly, these are no longer worthy of news except in unusual circumstances. Such peaks and climbs have become personal achievements and do not interest the mountaineering community too much. The Himalayan range is now attracting climbers for the peaks of 'middle-heights' but difficult routes. More than just climbing, it is a variety of other aspects related to these ranges that are in focus, or should be in focus.

This is what is reflected in the pages of this volume. Himalayan birds and passes attract attention while the word 'fragile' is studied in context of the impact of Global warming. Technology cannot be far behind as indicated by an exploration carried out with help from Google Earth maps and the use of mobile phones that is changing culture and rules of trekking. Climbers too are not lagging behind though and the encouraging sign is that many expeditions are charting new courses, some on difficult peaks like Shivling, others on small peaks in remote areas like the Adi Kailash range and the Pangi valley. Exploration of the Dibang valley, a study of people of the remote valleys in Arunachal, and a remarkable life-time of trekking in major Karakoram glaciers are other prime attractions in these pages.

The journal contains an enlarged Book Review section, including reviews of mountain films for the first time. This illustrates the variety of related subjects and curiosity that the Himalaya can generate. I must mention the scholarly look at the two classics of mountain literature, *Kim* and *Seven Years in Tibet* by Sorkhabi and Aitken respectively. It is indeed one thing to write your own experiences and observations but to reflect so well on books such as these illustrates true love and grasp of literature as well as of the Himalaya.

In his classic book *Himalayan Odyssey*, Trevor Braham writes; '(Richard) Hey's comments on the country were always refreshing; after a sleepless night encamped outside a Spiti village, bothered at all hours by the chatter and curiosity of the local population importuning around our camp, he peered bleary-eyed out of his tent and muttered, "Can you imagine seven years in Tibet?" '.

To this Colonel Creighton would have said, as he did to Kim, 'Thou must learn how to make pictures of roads and mountains and rivers – to carry these pictures in thine eyes till a suitable time comes to set them down upon paper.'

So here it is, many subjects put on paper in the journal, for 'thine eyes' to enjoy reading it.

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