



*MOUNT TASMAN—No tragedy yet on the toughest mountain of all*

*(continued from previous page)*

in this they are in the company of Public Works or other Government officials who are at hand. It is the thought that he may trouble all these fine men that counsels a climber to keep a high margin of safety.

Now for precautions. It is good insurance for parties to leave notes of their intended routes whether they write them in hut books or leave them in a tin by the ashes of a camp fire or under a bivouac rock. If the party is large, it is good insurance to split it into mobile groups each led by the best experience available. You may be careless crossing a street in a group of twelve, but you will look both ways if you are few. Thus with mountains; you are more alert to danger if you are not in a procession. Conversely, climbing solo is the most dangerous of all, and the most unfair to search parties.

#### **The Club and the Individual**

The most profound influence for safety can be exercised by a wise club. Memorial huts, reports of accident committees, lectures on technique, climbing schools, sensible but not intolerant articles (reason not rant) and the development of a responsible professional outlook are necessary. When every amateur leader realises that his responsibility for his party is morally as great as though he was a paid guide, he has come of age. There are still virgin peaks and new routes in the Southern Alps. No one has had a real sniff at the South Ridge of Mount Cook or the Coxcomb ridge of Mount Aspiring. So there is much for maturity to aim at. Valid improvements have yet to be made, such as the licensing of guides and recognition of their status by generous pay and the training of new men. And always the background must be tolerance for the ambition of the young and its further mountain adventures.



*AN ACHIEVEMENT of the guideless decade—climbers on the high peak of Mount Evans. Notice the wind-carved cornice on the peak*