



**Looking up at Mount Tasman from the West. The peak of Mount Cook, which is not on the Main Divide, is showing over the right shoulder of Tasman.**

Pass, occasionally crossed by venturesome mountaineers. From the west you wonder why only occasionally. The approach looks easy—and it is easy. But wait until you cross into Canterbury and the difficulties show.

An understandable misconception exists about the sectional topography of this region. Probably the glaciers are responsible. On the east side of the range the main glaciers are rivers of ice; on the west, waterfalls. This gives the impression to many that the east slopes are gradual; the west, abrupt. A mountaineer attempting a crossing soon learns that the reverse is the case. He will find that his pass is easy to reach from the west. It is when he steps from Westland into Canterbury that his troubles start. From the top of Pioneer Pass the Tasman Glacier is not far away, but it is a long way down.

No trouble to your magic carpet, of course. Over the divide and out into the blue 5,000 ft. above what looks like a big white road. It is New Zealand's longest glacier—the Tasman, eighteen miles long and a mile wide. Notice that it doesn't flow *away* from the chain of high peaks; it flows parallel with them, taking tribute from each in turn; a gutter with a mighty high kerbing. At the head of the glacier stands Elie de Beaumont, most northerly of the "ten-

thousanders." Not for nothing is it called the beautiful mountain. Here the glacier has its source, to flow south past the Minarets, de la Beche, Malte Brun, Douglas, Haidinger, and Haast.

And now another phenomenon is evident. While the glacier is descending to lower levels, the mountains alongside, conversely, rise to greater heights. A mile below Pioneer Pass the famous Hochstetter Icefall comes into view. It is a masterpiece among Nature's works in ice—3,000 ft. of crystal chaos framed by mountains gone superlative in grandeur. Here, within a three-mile

triangle, there is more mountain in less space than you have seen before. This is the view: at 4,000 ft. the Hochstetter joins the Tasman. Let the eye climb where no man has dared climb, up the cascade of tortured ice to the Grand Plateau. This is a shelf about a mile wide, lying at 8,000 ft. Beyond, the scenery climbs up rock rampart and hanging ice to the summits of Cook, Dampier, Silberhorn, Tasman, and Lendenfeld, standing sharp against the sky. All this, and almost heaven too, in three miles.

Cook is like an outsize tent, badly put up, with a slope in the lofty ridge pole. The mountain spreads her solid mantle on the floor of the Tasman Valley at 3,500 ft., where the impudent Ball Hut road winds among the moraines. This eastern face, a mile and a half from top to bottom, will make your magic carpet look like a moth against a skyscraper. If you linger now, it will be to take a last look at Mount Tasman.

When the sun is right, just after midday, the east face of Tasman has all the superlatives floored. It is like the draped, shadow-lit curtain at the movie theatre, only this curtain is 3,000 ft. high and a mile wide, and the drapings are of ice. The sun lights each bulge, each fluting, and throws shadows down the face. This is the queen of snow peaks—hardly a rock shows. Climbers go up and come down, and touch no rock all day. Occa-