



caused so much talk and doubt and misunderstanding—that I feel, after long thought, that the answer must be given. As will be clear, it is not for my own sake that I give it. Nor is it for Hillary's. It is for the sake of Everest—the prestige of Everest—and for the generations who will come after us. “Why,” they will say, “should there be a mystery to this thing? Is there something to be ashamed of? To be hidden? Why can we not know the truth?” . . . Very well: now they will know the truth. Everest is too great, too precious, for anything but the truth.

A little below the summit Hillary and I stopped. We looked up. Then we went on. The rope that joined us was thirty feet long, but I held most of it in loops in my hand, so that there was only about six feet between us. I was not thinking of “first” and “second.” I did not say to myself, “There is a golden apple up there. I will push Hillary aside and run for it.” We went on slowly, steadily. And then we were there. Hillary stepped on top first. And I stepped up after him.

So there it is: the answer to the “great mystery.” And if, after all the talk and argument, the answer seems quiet and simple, I can only say that that is as it should be. Many of my own people, I know, will be disappointed at it. They have given a great and false importance to

### ▲ Critical Viewing

Describe how Hillary and Norgay must have felt as they looked ahead and back from this point.

[Infer]

### Reading Strategy

**Distinguishing Fact From Opinion** In fact, who reached the top of the mountain first?

the idea that it is good and wonderful—Everest—and to behind Hillary, it was that. Nor me that I tell the “What will future achievement to s of us—two com from the world?” “Only the truth enough for Ever

Now the truth

We stepped up

What we did f of their mounta Everest. I waved Hillary, and we t oxygen, we were eleven-thirty in t the deepest blue coming from the always blows from the far side of the from the earlier e Shekar Dzong, th Glaciers, the Nor made Camp Six in ourselves had con Col; onto the West down to Thyangbo

Beyond them, a Himalayas, streto peaks—giants like sharply downward sweep of the great seemed only like I sight as I had nev wonderful and ter mountains too wa moment for which to me a lifeless th living. She was a r under her wings. I cover and shelter t

3. Kangchenjunga (Kangchenjunga)  
Mount Everest.