

## IN MEMORIAM.

## JOHN BALL.

MR. BALL'S death in London, on October 21, at the age of 71, is an irreparable loss to many persons and many causes, and not least to the members of the Alpine Club. While a full account of his life and labours must be reserved for the February issue of the 'Alpine Journal,' it is impossible to send forth this number without a few words to the honour and praise of a man whose work in the Alps may perhaps be most fitly characterised as that of the chief pioneer of mountain exploration, whether in its scientific, its practical, or its literary aspects.

It must be left to persons better qualified than myself to speak of Mr. Ball's services to Alpine botany, Alpine geology, and the accurate knowledge of glaciers, whether rendered in the Alps proper, in the Andes, or in the Atlas. In these pages one is bound to think of Mr. Ball as 'the true Alpine Guide in the body as well as in the spirit.\*' As a mountaineer his most noteworthy feats were probably the famous passage of the Schwarzthor (August 18, 1845), when he guided his incapable guide through the séracs of the Schwarz Glacier; the ascent of the Pelmo in the Cortina Dolomites (September 19, 1857), when he pushed on alone to the highest summit, leaving his trembling guide behind him; and the ascent of the Cima Tosa, the highest pinnacle of the Brenta Dolomites (August 9, 1865), this last expedition being accomplished in the company of his life-long friend, Mr. W. E. Forster. But though these three climbs were the most considerable he made, we must not forget that, as he told the world in the preface to the first volume of his great work on the Alps, he had (by 1863) 'crossed the main chain forty-eight times by thirty-two different passes, besides traversing nearly one hundred of the lateral passes.' In this respect few of his followers have surpassed him, while I venture to state with the utmost confidence that no one man has ever possessed a wider or a more thorough knowledge of the entire chain of the Alps than Mr. Ball. And this knowledge, gained in the course of many years of travel and exploration among the mountains, was not the knowledge of a Dryasdust, but a real living knowledge, always at his command and generously communicated to all who sought information from him. I remember well being immensely struck by this in a conversation I had with him ten years ago. We were talking of the Maritime Alps, which he had visited many years before, and from which I had just returned, and I shall never forget my amazement at the manner in which, without the slightest need of refreshing his memory, he discussed the topography of the remotest glens, never being at a loss for names or other minute details of a most intricate subject.

This marvellous knowledge of the Alps marked him out naturally as a leader when the taste for mountaineering began to spread. Though not, strictly speaking, one of the founders of the Alpine Club,

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\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. vi. p. 263.

he joined it early in 1858, when it was only a few weeks old, and on March 31, 1858, received the honour of being elected its first President. Soon after, he became its first Editor, for it was under his name that the first series of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers' appeared in 1859. Its success with the general public was very great; while for mountaineers it is of especial interest as being the original form of the 'Alpine Journal,' of which the first number was issued in 1863, after the further success of a second series of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers' (1862), edited by Mr. E. S. Kennedy, who in 1860 had succeeded Mr. Ball as President of the Club.

Qualified thus by practical and literary knowledge of the Alps as no other man has ever been, Mr. Ball, on his retirement from the Presidency (in 1860), undertook his great work 'The Alpine Guide,' of which the three volumes appeared in 1863 (Western Alps), 1864 (Central Alps), and 1868 (Eastern Alps). This book is the 'Encyclopedia Alpina,' and the first of Alpine classics. Describing the entire chain of the Alps without reference to political boundaries, summarising the work of previous explorers, and letting fall numberless hints for future explorers, filled with a vast store of local botanical and geological knowledge gathered on the spot, and arranged according to an admirably clear system, it is undoubtedly the most valuable work on the Alps in all their aspects that has yet been published. I venture to quote the opinion which I have recently expressed concerning it: \* 'Speaking for myself I may say that I have had over twenty years' experience of this guide-book, largely in those parts of the Alps least known even to Mr. Ball; and I wish to place on record my profound admiration of the amazing success with which the author has firmly grasped the main lines of the topography of the most unfrequented districts; so that all his followers have had to do has been to fill in the outline sketched out with so masterly a hand.' It has but one drawback—that it has not been kept posted up to date. The task of revision might well be taken up by the Alpine Club as the most appropriate tribute of respect it can pay to the memory of its first President and first Editor, who knew the Alps as no one else has ever known them, and who, full of years and honours, has now passed to his rest, after a life devoted to the advancement of the scientific, practical, and literary knowledge of the Alps, and of some of the other great mountain chains of the world. Amongst the mountains themselves, the name of the Cima di Ball, in the Primiero Dolomites, will preserve the memory of the greatest of Alpine explorers. W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

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#### FRANCIS OTTIWELL ADAMS.

FRANCIS OTTIWELL ADAMS was born at Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1825. He was educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge, called to the bar in 1852, and shortly afterwards entering the Diplomatic Service was appointed attaché at Stockholm in 1854. After filling posts at St.

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\* *Swiss Travel and Swiss Guide-Books*, p. 109.

Petersburg, Washington, and Yeddo, he was promoted in 1872 to be Secretary of Embassy at Berlin, and while there was acting *Chargé d'Affaires* for some months in 1873 and 1874. At the end of 1874 he was transferred to Paris, and having been accredited Minister Plenipotentiary in the absence of the Ambassador, he acted in that capacity for various periods in each of the years from 1875 to 1881, when he was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Swiss Confederation. He was first British Delegate to the International Postal Congress at Paris in 1878 and the International Copyright Conference at Bern in 1884-85-86. He was created a C.B. in 1878 and subsequently K.C.M.G., and retired from the Diplomatic Service on a pension in 1888.

More than one of his old colleagues have told me that throughout the whole of Sir Francis' career he displayed the most untiring zeal and energy in his profession; but like much of the most important diplomatic work, what he accomplished was often of a kind which never came under the notice of the public. He possessed one of the most important qualities of a diplomatist, the power of viewing questions under discussion from an opposite standpoint to his own, and always seemed able to put himself in the place of those with whom he was endeavouring to transact affairs. He was singularly free from local or party prejudice; his thirty-four years of service in all parts of the world had made him a thorough cosmopolitan; and it was impossible to discuss any question in his presence without recognising his breadth of view, and noticing the impartiality with which he acknowledged the claims of those who held opinions entirely different from his own. It was the firm belief in his absolute fairness, and the instinctive knowledge that it was impossible to him to take a mean advantage, which gained for him the confidence of everyone with whom he came in contact during his diplomatic career. He was thus almost invariably able to settle a disputed point amongst his colleagues, or with the representatives of foreign governments, in a friendly informal way, without having recourse to official correspondence.

His wide sympathies led him to take a keen interest in the lives and surroundings of those whose country became his temporary home. After returning from Yeddo he wrote a 'History of Japan,' now out of print but still regarded as the standard work on the particular phases of history with which it deals; and in 1887 while British Minister at Bern he commenced to arrange with me the materials for 'The Swiss Confederation.'

There is certainly no post in Europe where a minister is brought so much in contact with officials who do not actually belong to the central government to which he is accredited. In other capitals a foreign representative has to deal almost exclusively with the Ministry or the Cabinet, but in Bern many questions arise which have to be referred to local officials in one or other of the twenty-two different cantons. And it can well be understood by anyone who ever met Sir Francis Adams, how his genuine kindness of manner at once won the hearts of the Swiss. 'Nous avons toujours regardé votre Ministre beaucoup plus comme un ami, que comme le représentant d'un pouvoir étranger,'

a late President of the Swiss Confederation has often remarked : a sentiment which thoroughly expresses the feelings with which Sir Francis was regarded by all sorts and conditions of the people. He was indeed as popular among the shrewd country-folk in the Oberland as among their representatives in the Palais Fédéral ; and during the years he lived in their midst they would confide to him, with an absence of reserve rarely shown to a foreigner, their hopes and fears for the future and welfare of the little country they knew he loved so well.

In private life few men ever had such a wide circle of devoted friends as Sir Francis Adams. In Paris, at the Legation at Bern, and in later years at 18 Albemarle Street, he was surrounded by those who pursued many various callings in life, and who had perhaps little in common but the one firm bond which brought them together—the great esteem and regard they felt for their host. Many of those thirty odd years Sir Francis spent in the service of his country had been eventful ones. He had served in three of the greatest political centres of Europe, in St. Petersburg, in Berlin during the formation of the new Empire, and in Paris during Macmahon's presidency. He was a capital *raconteur*, and the various incidents of his wide travels possessed, as related by him, a great freshness and charm. His rooms were filled with many interesting souvenirs of his stay in foreign lands, each of which had some special history of its own.

It was in 1882 that Sir Francis first became acquainted with the High Alps; he ascended the Galenstock, crossed the Mönchjoch, and did many other excursions which were no mean performance for one who began his mountaineering career when nearly sixty years of age. In 1886 he was elected honorary member of the Alpine Club. He had the most intense delight in mountain scenery, and often referred with pleasure to the fact that from his windows at Bern the great peaks of the Oberland were constantly in sight. I well remember how he would rise from his writing-table in the Legation, and drawing aside the curtains gaze upon these snowclad giants in the starlight of a frosty winter's night; it was a picture of which he never seemed to tire. Not a year passed without his paying several visits to Grindelwald, where he was wont to speak of the Bär as his 'country house.' It was indeed pleasant to watch the eagerness with which one who had spent so many years at foreign courts and great capitals counted the days till it was time to start for that Oberland valley. And when the time came for Sir Francis to present his letters of recall, the thought that in the future he would be able to spend months instead of weeks in his favourite mountain haunts seemed in a measure to counter-balance those regrets everyone must feel at retiring from active service in a useful and honourable profession.

But this was not to be. During the first visit he paid to Grindelwald after resigning his post, Sir Francis returned to the Bär over-fatigued from an excursion, and the following afternoon he passed quietly away, the immediate cause of death being paralysis of the heart. In accordance with the wish he had often expressed he was laid to rest in the little churchyard at Grindelwald under the shadow of the great peaks he loved so well. The coffin, covered with Edelweiss and Alpenrosen,

was carried shoulder-high by some of the 'old guard' of the Oberland guides, many of whom had often accompanied Sir Francis among the mountains. His successor, Mr. Scott, C.B., the staff of his old legation, and some of his old colleagues and friends from Bern were present; the President of the Republic sent a representative, one of the greatest marks of respect it is possible for the Confederation to give and an honour they but rarely bestow. Many of the guides and country-folk, who will long remember Sir Francis' kindly greeting as he passed their châteaux, came to pay a last tribute of respect. Each one of the sad group who stood around that grave shared in the same sorrow, and the words with which Pfarrer Strasser concluded his funeral address found an answering echo in every heart, 'Edler Freund unseres Vaterlandes, treuer Freund unseres Thales, gut sollst du hier ruhen. . . . Dein Andenken lebt fort und fort in vielen treuen Herzen.'

C. D. C.

#### ALPINE ACCIDENTS IN 1889.

It is a matter for congratulation that the list of accidents this year, at any rate above the snow-line, is but a short one, and that no English traveller has lost his life by a mountain accident.

On July 14 two of the three persons of which a party was composed were killed while on the way from the Sonnblick inn (10,181 feet) to the Hochnarr, or Hohen-Aar (10,690 feet), and Heiligenblut, along the ridge between Carinthia and the province of Salzburg. The party consisted of Herren S. Bernatschek and Andreas Klein, and of the guide Pichler, of Heiligenblut. They had reached a point just beyond the Pilatusscharte (9,515 feet), when the travellers at the Sonnblick inn saw the three climbers suddenly lose their footing and slide rapidly for 330 or 440 feet (100 or 150 mètres) down the steep snow-slopes falling to the Hohen-Aar Glacier, or Pilatus kees, on the Salzburg side of the ridge. Assistance was at once despatched. It was found that Pichler had been killed on the spot, Herr Klein surviving for a few minutes only, while Herr Bernatschek escaped with comparatively trifling injuries. From the account of the survivor (in the 'Oesterreichische Alpen-Zeitung' for July 26, pp. 180-1) it appears that Pichler had (without the knowledge of his Herren, who trusted entirely to him) taken an unusual but shorter way, so as to gain the Goldzeuscharte and Hochnarr more quickly, though the Sonnblick landlord had warned him against doing this. The guide slipped on a bit of ice projecting from under the soft snow, and, as they were all roped together, pulled his two companions out of the steps in the deep snow. None of the party had put on their 'Steigeisen,' or crampons, but it would seem that the guide neglected to cut steps in the ice, and when he slipped his Herren were unable to resist the shock of his fall. As the two travellers were firmly planted in deep snow, the fact that they had not put on their 'Steigeisen' is irrelevant. Pichler should certainly either have put