

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

BY CHARLES GRANVILLE BRUCE, PRESIDENT OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

(Read before the Alpine Club, December 14, 1925.)

I APPROACH this résumé of the work of the Alpine Club during the past three years with the utmost diffidence and, when one comes to think of it, in reviewing all that has been done—all the losses, gains, and exploits of the Club, whether actual deeds of superlative mountaineering or of exploration, or, in fact, of the highest that the Club stands for—that is self-sacrifice—or again, in the realms of Art or of Literature—one feels oneself very much in the position of the Friday preacher in the Persian Mosque, a preacher, too, notorious for his lazy mind, with whom I have the greatest possible sympathy.

‘O! ye Faithful,’ cried the preacher one Friday morning, ‘What shall I talk to you about?’ And knowing his mentality, his congregation answered, ‘We all of us know.’ ‘Then,’ said the preacher, ‘I need not continue.’

On the following Friday, when again addressed by the preacher in the same way, the congregation answered, ‘Some of us know, and some of us do not know.’ ‘Then,’ said the preacher, ‘let those that know tell those that do not know.’ And again he left. On the following Friday, as usual, the preacher began, ‘O! ye Faithful! what shall I preach to you about?’ and the answer came, ‘We none of us know!’

Knowing full well that such an answer would be impossible from an audience such as the members of the Alpine Club, with whom the possession of first-class brains—about which we hear so much nowadays—is an outstanding characteristic, I suppress the reply.

Gentlemen, in accordance with the heritage to which I have succeeded, passed down from a long line of distinguished Presidents, I am privileged to review what we have suffered and what we have achieved during the past three years.

The Alpine Club is in a healthy and distinctly encouraging condition, but before saying more about that, I must turn to our rather long and mournful list of losses. For our losses have

been heavy and include many most distinguished members, among them no less than three past Presidents, and others of equal distinction, both as mountaineers—lovers of the mountains—and, if I might put it so, also in their civil life.

Sir Edward Davidson, almost one of the 'Old Guard'—a pioneer, and not only that, but one of the most distinguished mountaineers in the Club. Lord Sterndale possibly had not such a record of mountaineering, but had an almost equal love for the mountains, and was a man who lent distinction to any gathering. And last, but not least on our list of Presidents, Professor Bonney, equally distinguished as a geologist, as a mountaineer, and who is also one of the real old pioneers.

Then we have Sir Henry Hayden, unfortunately lost on the Finsteraarhorn. Sir Henry was head also of the Geological Survey of India, and had a passion for wandering. His friends have told me that he had also a horror of his declining years, when his strength should leave him; therefore, his death on the mountains, however sad it might seem at first sight, was probably the way he would have wished to pass on.

We have also to lament the loss of a past Honorary Secretary, Dr. Wills of the distinguished Alpine family, closely connected with the history of the Alpine Club.

Sir James Ramsay, also a pioneer of great age. He, with Professor Bonney, was named by Captain Farrar the 'Fathers of the Alpine Club'—they were both, I think, over ninety years of age. Then, almost in the same category as a pioneer, comes Sir Clifford Allbutt, himself eighty-nine.

No two men were more deeply regretted than Professor Ker and Dr. Godley. It is often said that no man is irreplaceable, but I think it would be very hard indeed to find two men of such original minds and so many and varied interests, and both of them such passionate mountain-lovers into the bargain, as those two who have gone. Dr. Godley, too, was a Vice-President of the Club at the time of his death.

I must not forget Mr. Gerald FitzGerald, a distinguished Irish judge, an indefatigable and very competent mountaineer and a member of the Club for fifty years.

Among foreign losses we have to chronicle the death of our guest at the Alpine Club dinner two years ago—Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod—who died at Aden on his way back from East Africa. He is best remembered in the Alpine Club by his two expeditions to the Himalaya, when the height of some 22,000 ft. was attained on K², and an attempt made on Kabru.

I must also mention the death of his cousin, Charles Jacot-Guillarmod, who in the last months of his life drew for us the new Everest map.

I must also refer to our Everest loss, and with the name of George Mallory I must, of course, couple that of Andrew Irvine. I will not make any comment, but will only read this quotation :
 ‘ . . . And so these men died after this manner, leaving their death for an example of nobleness and a memorial of virtue, not only to the young but to the great body of their nation.’

Among our Honorary Members we have to lament the loss of Lord Curzon, M. Joseph Vallot, and Dr. Franz Schrader.

It is a long list of distinguished men, such as few organisations could claim. Such members and such men are by far and away the finest justification for the Alpine Club and all it stands for.

Let us turn now to other and more cheerful fields.

First, the literary output has been fairly prolific during the past three years. To begin with we have a book by one of the doyens of the Alpine Club, Mr. Douglas Freshfield, ‘*Below the Snow Line.*’ A book of wanderings which appeals to me personally very specially, for I am a born wanderer in spirit, and the life of mountain peoples in out-of-the-way hills and mountain districts has always had a very great attraction for me.

Then comes Mr. Mumm’s intensely valuable work—the two *Alpine Club Registers*—covering from 1857 to 1876, and I believe and hope there is more to come.

We have next a work, unique of its kind, by His Holiness Pope Pius XI. I can only in my inmost soul sympathise with so great a mountain-lover that his present exalted position cuts him off prematurely from one of his great sources of inspiration.

Then what is Mr. Geoffrey Young’s ‘*April and Rain*’ but himself in verse ?

Among foreign publications come ‘*The Four Thousand Metres of the Alps*’ by Dr. Karl Blodig, whose hobby such mountains are. He is now in the process of being eclipsed by Mr. Eustace Thomas about whom more anon. We have also the magnificent work, ‘*Mont Olympe,*’ by M. Marcel Kurz, accompanied by a truly wonderful mountain map. ‘Henceforward,’ wrote Dr. Godley, in reviewing it, ‘*The Home of the Gods has no secrets.*’

We have also ‘*The Making of a Mountaineer,*’ by George Ingle Finch, including a chapter by Mrs. Finch. With the exception of the first chapter it seems to me to record the exploits of an exceptionally well-made mountaineer.

Lord Ronaldshay contributes 'The Land of the Thunderbolt,' a most delightful book, and describes his travels not only in Sikkim, but in that truly wonderful relic, that most picturesque survival of Asiatic mediævalism, Bhutan.

It also gives one, shortly, an insight into the Buddhist religion in a way which brings it home to one far more clearly than has ever been done before in any work with which I am acquainted.

Any Members who wish to compare the merits of the Greater or Lesser Vehicle will there find out how to set about it.

Then we have 'The Wonders of the Himalaya' by another President of the R.G.S.—our own member, and the chief mover in the Mount Everest Expedition—Sir Francis Young-husband—a worthy exposition of his own attitude, mentally and physically, towards that wondrous range, with a touch of mysticism in it which only adds a still more worthy attribute to the book.

I finish by mentioning the last two books on Mount Everest—'The Assault,' which stands in my name, and 'The Attack,' which stands in that of Colonel Norton.

I will not, in fact I cannot, either criticise or describe either volume. I can only state that no other foreign group has had so much attention paid to it, has been so portrayed, or has had a map of such absolutely outstanding excellence made of it.

We have two more, Mr. Lawrence Pilkington's volume of verse, 'An Alpine Valley' and other poems, and 'Snowdonia,' by Messrs. Lister and Carr. The publication of this work was made mournful by the accident on Snowdon, which nearly deprived the Club of one of the authors and unfortunately caused the death of one of the most distinguished of our younger mountaineers, Mr. van Noorden.

I had hoped to include in this a little brochure, so to speak, which I am sorry to say is not yet ready for publication—possibly it has not even been started—a little brochure by Mr. Eustace Thomas entitled 'Middle Age and the Reduction of Obesity.' Mr. Eustace Thomas will no doubt recommend his invaluable cure, 30,000 ft. of up hill in a day of twenty-eight hours, covering seventy miles. If not already started, may I pray Mr. Thomas to take this useful book in hand immediately for my own special benefit?

We have now shortly reviewed the solemn and more serious side of the work expected from the Alpine Club, now let us turn to its real and more joyous life.

The hon. membership of the Club has been offered to H.R.H. the Duke of the Abruzzi and to Sig. Cav. Vittorio Sella, whose distinguished records alike in mountaineering, in exploration, and in services to the brotherhood of mountaineers are well known to you all. His Excellency the Swiss Minister, M. Paravicini, who so worthily represents in our country the interests of his model confederation, has likewise honoured us by acceptance of hon. membership.

There is a very healthy sign in that we are getting many new members still in the lesser twenties: that, at least, is a magnificent beginning. But don't let us forget also our more mature members, and before I go further I must jog your memories for fear that possibly more brilliant adventures may divert your attention, and therefore I begin by mentioning Mr. Mumm's World Tour. Mr. Mumm has certainly by no means arrived at his second childhood, he is only now getting to his second young-manhood, and so at a certain mature age, on paper, he sets out and climbs in the Rockies, in Japan, and in New Zealand.

The list of the principal expeditions for the whole of these three years is a long one, but I give it for record.

1923.

Direct ascent from the Schwarztor of the E. Peak of Breithorn: Mr. E. G. Oliver, with Adolf and Alfred Aufdenblatten.

Variation on S. face of Gabelhorn: Same party.

Variation on the Col des Nantillons from the Mer de Glace: Messrs. Bower, Pigott, and Morley Wood.

First ascent of Ago del Torrone or Cleopatra's Needle (very difficult): Messrs. Finzi and Rudolf, with F. J. Biner and R. Lager.

First descent of Col dit Infranchissable: Mr. R. W. Lloyd, with Joseph Pollinger and Lager.

First ascent of Piz Badile by the N. buttress, probably as difficult and exposed a climb as ever made: Herr A. Zürcher, with Walter Risch.

First passage of Col du Moyen Age: Messrs. Irving, Bullock, Hawarth, and Overton.

First ascent of Rimpfischhorn by N.W. face and N. arête: Mr. E. R. Blanchet, with H. Imseng.

In New Zealand:

First ascent of Unicorn, N.Z., by Captain H. E. L. Porter, with Milne, during a ten weeks' expedition in the N.Z. Alps

when many other ascents, including Mt. Cook, were made. (See paper, 'A.J.' xxxvi.)

In the Canadian Rockies :

First ascent of Mts. Brazeau and Unwin—Maligne Lake District : Messrs. Howard Palmer and Allen Carpe ('A.J.' xxxvi).

First ascent of N. Twin, Mt. Terrace and Mt. Saskatchewan : Dr. Monroe Thorington and Dr. W.S. Ladd, with Conrad Kain.

Second ascent of Mt. Columbia, the second highest peak in the Rockies—first climbed by Outram : Same party.

Dr. Thorington's ascents were described in an able topographical paper in 'A.J.' xxxv. He made a fine panorama from the summit.

First ascent of Mt. Clemenceau : Messrs. de Villiers-Schwab, Hall, Durand, and Harris. (Paper in 'A.J.' xxxvi.)

We were also glad to welcome to the Alps Captain Chambers, the New Zealand mountaineer, and Mr. Travers-Jackson, the veteran mountain explorer from S. Africa.

1924.

Passage of the Col du Lion (first done by Mummery and Burgener) : Mr. E. G. Oliver, with the two Aufdenblattens.

First ascent by the N. face of the Aig. du Plan originally tried by Mummery, Slingsby, and Carr : MM. J. de Lépiney, Lagarde, and H. de Ségogne.

Second ascent by N.E. face of Aig. Verte : MM. T. de Lépiney, Lagarde, and H. de Ségogne.

First ascent by N. arête of Ebnefluh : Miss F. R. Wills, with P. Almer père et fils. Captain Farrar, with F. Boss.

First passage of Grossjoch : Miss F. R. Wills and Captain Farrar, with P. Almer père et fils.

First ascent by N. face of Lauterbrunnen Breithorn : MM. Richardet and Chervet.

First ascent by N. face of Blümlisalp : MM. Richardet, Amstutz, and Salvisberg.

First ascent of Pt. 3468 on Nesthorn : Messrs. de Selincourt and H. Booth.

First ascent of Pt. 3106 on Fusshörner : The same and G. C. Carlisle.

First ascent by N.E. face of Pt. 4100 on Bieshorn : M. E. R. Blanchet, with Kaspar Mooser and R. Lochmatter.

First ascent by Thälli buttress of Weissmies : Squadron-Leader Beaman, with O. Supersaxo.

In the Canadian Rockies :

First ascents of Mts. Kane, Oates, and Hooker (Paper, 'A.J.' xxxvi.): Dr. Monroe Thorington and Messrs. Strumia and Ostheimer, with Conrad Kain.

First ascent of Mt. Barbican and of Mt. Geikie (Ramparts Group): Messrs. V. A. Fynn, Wates, Geddes, and Slark. (Paper in 'A.J.' xxxvi.)

An important exploratory journey in the practically untouched Cariboo Group, B.C., when eight summits over 10,000 ft. were ascended, seven of which were first ascents, including Mt. Titan about 11,500 ft. (Paper, 'A.J.' xxxvii.): Messrs. Allen Carpe and Professor R. T. Chamberlin, with A. L. Withers and two packers.

First ascent of Mt. Albreda in the Gold Range: Same party.

First ascent of Simon Peak, Fraser Group: Messrs. Thorington, Strumia, and Ostheimer, with Conrad Kain.

Visits to the Tatra and Transylvanian Alps were made by Messrs. L. A. and V. Ellwood, and a visit to the Tatra by Drs. Roger-Smith and R. G. Rows and Mr. R. Graham. These have been described in the Journal.

Dr. J. Monroe Thorington of Philadelphia, the well-known explorer of the Rockies, familiar to readers of this Journal, was able to pay an all too short visit to the Alps.

1925.

A very gallant ascent of Mt. Blanc by the serious Brouillard arête by the two young Cambridge mountaineers, the late Mr. van Noorden and Mr. Wyn Harris.

Ascent of N. side of Jungfrauoch: Mr. E. G. Oliver, with the Aufdenblattens.

First complete traverse of the Pointes des Bouquetins from the S.

First ascent of Combin de Chessette by the arête de Boussine: Mr. I. A. Richards, with Joseph Georges.

First ascent by N.E. face of Brunegghorn: Mr. E. R. Blanchet, with K. Mooser.

Variation on N. face of Aletschhorn: Same party, and A. Rubi.

First ascent of L'Isolée (Aig. du Diable): Mr. E. R. Blanchet, with Armand Charlet, and Antoine Ravanel.

First ascent of S. Corne du Chamois: Same party.

First ascent of Weissmies by W. face and N. ridge: Messrs. Irving, Haworth, and Heywood.

First complete ascent of Aig. Verte by the arête des Grands Montets : MM. Lagarde, Dalloz, and H. de Ségogne.

Variation of Finch's route on Dent d'Hérens, direct ascent to Terrace and thence to summit: MM. W. Welzenbach and Allwein.

In the Canadian Rockies :

First ascent of Mt. King Edward : Messrs. Howard Palmer and J. W. A. Hickson, with Conrad Kain.

First ascent of Mt. Alberta : Mr. Yugo Maki and five other Japanese, with two guides.

First ascent by N. arête of Hungabee : Mr. Fynn, with R. Aemmer.

First ascent of Bastion Peak : Messrs. Howard Palmer and Hickson, with H. Kohler.

New Zealand :

Ascent of Mt. Sefton and ascents of other summits during his second expedition : Captain H. E. L. Porter, with Milne. See his paper in present Journal.

I have had to omit, for brevity's sake, the very numerous variations which may well be termed new ascents that have been made by German and Austrian climbers.

I must not forget to mention the very remarkable explorations of Mr. Visser and Madame Visser-Hooft. The country they are in, which is reached from Kunjut, Upper Hunza, is one of the most desolate in the world. It is a country in which it is most difficult to travel as the valleys are so steep and deep-cut and precipitous. With the exception of one or two settlements of the most primitive peoples, it is entirely uninhabited and without supplies. The Everest country is child's play to it, but there for some months Madame-Visser Hooft has accompanied her husband in his explorations. They have been to the Khunjurab Pass and also to the Gujurab, and have discovered and mapped glaciers and a mountain country about which next to nothing was known. The country is as hard as the language the people talk, that beautiful-sounding Burishushki, which contains more gutturals than the deepest Arabic ; and also includes in its difficulties the Welsh double L. The only previous explorer was Brigadier-General Cockerell.

We now come to the Mount Logan Expedition. The route was prospected by Capt. A. H. MacCarthy in 1924. During the early months of 1925 he made a second journey with two packers in the most arduous conditions to lay caches of provisions to below King Col on the Logan Glacier. In May he

started once more in command of the expedition, and after very great hardships he and five companions reached the summit on June 23. No finer exhibition of thorough preparation and determination is known. The reports received up to date bring it quite clearly home to one what a desperate undertaking it was. It combined the most difficult and arduous of Arctic exploration with mountaineering at a great altitude. How these men, after spending nights in hollows in the ice at 18,000 ft., had still the strength to meet the difficulties of the return journey is difficult to conceive. It will ever rank as one of the greatest and most heroic efforts yet made in the mountains.

I have news also from India of an attempt made on Nondokoote by a Gunner officer who, I hope, was accompanied by Mr. Ruttledge, a very keen mountaineer, in the Indian Civil Service in charge of the Kumaon District. I am sorry to say that I have not yet been able to find out what they have accomplished.

I don't know how much I should refer to the Everest Expedition; members have heard about it *ad nauseam*. The best I can do is to ask every member not to get the new volume from his subscription library, but to buy it himself. My view of the whole of the Everest exploration is that the problem *qua* problem is solved. We have only really one question left. We know that it is necessary to lighten our oxygen apparatus; we know that that will be done; we know the time now when best to employ that oxygen apparatus, and we have learnt an enormous amount of what we may expect by acclimatisation. We have really only one question still to solve, and that is how to prevent the body wastage which occurs after a certain height has been reached. No doubt some time an adequate food which can be assimilated by the body without a great tax on the digestion, and which is both nourishing and appetising at a high altitude, will be evolved. When this is done we shall probably solve the last of the outstanding questions, and then all that remains is to go there once more and do the mountain, offering up any sacrifice that may be necessary to the Gods of fine weather.

Of course, one must also visualise a party of equal merit—a difficulty, I will allow. How to get together a party which will live in perfect amity for several months in the nerve-exciting atmosphere of Tibet, and be also of equal merit as travellers and mountaineers—that is a very great difficulty. Of course, it can be done. We have many fine young mountaineers coming on, but it cannot be expected that many of the

' Old Guard ' will again be fit for work over 25,000 ft. If I dared say such a thing, I would hope that the next expedition will find Colonel Norton as leader, but I would beg and pray him not himself to go one inch beyond the North Col, and if I had my way I would confine him to barracks at Camp 3. But I should be asking for trouble there, for I know that he would break out!

To finish up. I have another pleasant duty. As I have written in another place, during the whole of my life I have been singularly dependent on a *Fidus Achates* to be always at my elbow—and who, to the best of his ability, and I hope occasionally, though not always, with some success, has kept me on the right lines. His chief use, however, is that I can always turn and rend him for any mistake I myself make. That is the chief use of these gentlemen! I here and now offer my best thanks to the Adjutant, Mr. Spencer, and apologise to him for all the anxious moments I have given him during the last three years, which are rapidly depriving him of his remaining grey hairs. You may remember the schoolboy's remark about Cardinal Wolsey: ' It is well known,' said the schoolboy ' that Cardinal Wolsey remarked if I had served my God as I have served my King he would not have deprived me of my grey hairs!' I must now also offer my thanks to the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Oughton, for much assistance, and, last but not least, to the one to whom we all turn in any of our difficulties, and who is always ready at all times in the most unselfish way to come to our rescue—Captain Farrar.

MT. SEFTON AND OTHER NEW ZEALAND CLIMBS.

By H. E. L. PORTER.

(Read before the Alpine Club, February 2, 1926.)

HOWEVER much Englishmen may run down their own country, it is undeniable that they find other lands good or bad in proportion as they resemble England more or less; and the reason why they find New Zealand exceedingly good is partly because it is in so many respects just a younger, less developed England, emptier of men and not yet a chequer-board of neatly fenced green fields, and by virtue of its youth favoured with several advantages over its parent; a land full of hope and enthusiasm and kindness, and, what is more to