

W-A-B. Coolidge

(about 1890).

IN MEMORIAM.

THE REV. W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

1850-1926.

THE death of the Rev. William Augustus Brevoort Coolidge, which was briefly recorded in our last number, removes from the Club-list the name of one of the last and most remarkable of the pioneers of Alpine travel and exploration, of one who as a writer was recognized both in this country and on the Continent as a supreme authority on all subjects connected with the Alps and Swiss history. Coolidge combined in an unusual degree the energies of a climber with the interests and the accuracy of a scholar. As an Alpine explorer he was for thirty years even more ubiquitous than F. F. Tuckett, whom he claimed as his model; while as an author he added to the untiring industry which was one of his distinguishing qualities the great advantage of having always at hand the unique Alpine library which he had collected and conveniently housed in his Grindelwald home.

I am now called on as one of Coolidge's earliest friends and colleagues in the Club to furnish our members with a fuller and more adequate account of his services to the mountaineering community than was possible six months ago. I am asked to supply an estimate of his achievements as a climber and of his accomplishments as an author, and at the same time—what is less easy—to attempt an outline of an eccentric temperament and character which will be recognized as a sympathetic sketch rather than as a complimentary portrait. Such an attempt seems the more called for since its subject having outlived two generations of Victorian Alpine Clubmen had, in the twentieth century, become to the third a legendary hero—or a name on the back of a guidebook.

It was in 1872 on my taking over from Leslie Stephen the editorship of this JOURNAL that I first made the acquaintance of the lad of twenty-two who was already known in the guide-rooms of Alpine resorts as 'the young American who climbs with his aunt and his dog.' At that moment the Club was suffering from a temporary depression and the JOURNAL, abandoned by its late captain, who had embarked on the larger venture of 'The Cornhill Magazine,' seemed in some danger of becoming a derelict. Its editor's drawer was almost empty! It was mainly due to the energy in securing papers and articles of my colleague, the newly appointed Honorary Secretary, A. W. Moore, that we were able again to feel the wind in our sails. But the situation was critical and an anxious and inexperienced editor hailed gladly any recruit who gave promise of developing into a frequent contributor. And thus it happened

that Coolidge and I became intimate fellow-workers, that I learnt to appreciate his ability and enthusiasm for the Alps, and that our Committee, eight years later, felt no hesitation in selecting him as my successor in the editorship. The following testimonial from our then President, Clinton Dent, may serve as evidence of how well Coolidge performed the task. Dent in 1889 wrote in these pages (vol. xv.) :

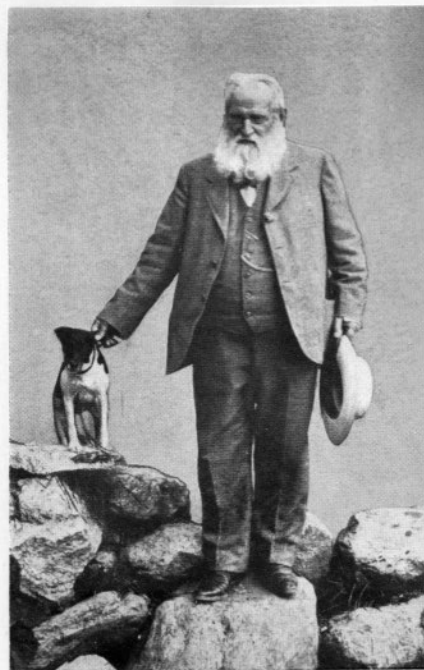
‘ I should be ungrateful were I not to acknowledge the extraordinary accuracy and thoroughness which have characterised the JOURNAL throughout its late editorship. For more than nine years Mr. Coolidge has with unremitting industry and most conscientious labour been slowly piling up a monument of which the credit is too much apt to be absorbed by the Club. No comparisons are permissible or needed, but this much I may say, that we have never had an editor who better deserved the grateful recognition of the Club.’

But I must not allow old personal reminiscences to lead me to delay any longer in setting out briefly the main facts in Coolidge’s life. He was born in the neighbourhood of New York in 1850. His father’s ancestors were Bostonians, his mother was a member of an old Dutch family long settled in the States. His maternal grandfather seems to have been a man of intelligence and wealth : he owned part of the ground now occupied by Broadway, a property which, had it been held long enough, must have brought his descendants a large fortune. Desiring for his children a European education, Mr. Brevoort placed his two sons at the well-known school at Hofwyl, near Bern, and his two daughters at the Convent of the Sacré Cœur in Paris, then in fashion as a place of education. The parents finally joined their children in Europe, spending their winters in Paris and their summers in Switzerland. They made Alpine excursions and Coolidge had in his possession a document proving that his grandmother had as early as 1835 ascended the Faulhorn. It may be claimed, therefore, that his love of climbing owed something to heredity as well as to subsequent environment.

On their parents’ deaths the two sisters, W. A. B. Coolidge’s mother and Miss Brevoort, returned to New York, where in 1849 the elder married Mr. F. W. Coolidge. After her husband’s lifetime Mrs. Coolidge continued to live with her unmarried sister. The mother being a confirmed invalid, it fell to the aunt to take the principal part in the boy’s bringing-up : she in a sense adopted him ; it was to her, as he acknowledged in the dedication of his first book, that ‘ he owed his love for and his knowledge of the great mountains.’ Miss Brevoort’s was an anxious task, for the future mountaineer was—to quote his own description of himself—‘ a delicate lad of frail health, whom his doctor recommended to seek a European climate.’ The party accordingly crossed the Atlantic and hired an apartment in Paris. Here the nephew unfortunately caught typhoid fever and was consequently ordered to spend the following winter



1875-1880.



1916.

MR. COOLIDGE.

1864-5 at Cannes. Judged too weak to share Miss Brevoort's excursions in the Esterels he consoled himself and showed his literary bent by a project to write upon the story of the Îles de Lérins. When summer came, the trio crossed the Mont Cenis and settled at Thun where Coolidge's health must have improved rapidly, for by July he was able to climb the Niesen, while in September he crossed with his aunt the Strahlegg, the St. Théodule, and the Col du Géant, and ascended the Cima di Jazzi. All these expeditions were carried out within a fortnight: a creditable record for any boy of fifteen! He was, however, forbidden to share in Miss Brevoort's ascent of Mont Blanc, which she accomplished on the late date of October 3 in the same year.

After a sojourn at Elizabeth College, Jersey, Coolidge in 1869 went up to Exeter College, Oxford. Having gained a first-class in the History School and a second in Jurisprudence he, in 1875, obtained a Fellowship at Magdalen College. This, having been elected in Pre-Commission days, he was able, despite his residence abroad, to hold till his death. In 1882 he was ordained and served for twelve years as curate of South Hinksey, an Oxford suburb. But his main purpose in life was settled. As the years went on he became more and more engrossed in Alpine exploration and historical studies. In 1896, finding his health suffered from the damp of the Oxford climate in winter, he made the bold resolve to give up his college rooms and to establish himself at Grindelwald with the store of books he had accumulated. There he bought a chalet in which he lived, his household arrangements being in the charge of the son of his constant guide, Christian Almer. At a later date (about 1909) finding his library inadequately housed, and young Almer's family increasing, he leased a more roomy and comfortable home at the lower end of the village, in which he lived for the remainder of his days. But his health, despite the change of environment, gradually gave way. His last ascent, the Ortler, was made in 1898. After a serious illness and operation he became more or less a prisoner among his books, and his outings were limited to rare drives among the lowland towns of Eastern Switzerland.

Coolidge was elected a Member of the Alpine Club in 1870, and became an Honorary Member in 1905. He received the distinction of being appointed an Honorary Doctor of the University of Bern, and was an Honorary Member of the American, French and Italian Alpine Clubs.

Such are the leading general facts and dates in Coolidge's life. It remains for me to indicate the extent of his activities as a climber and explorer, and to estimate his literary services to our Club and the mountaineering confraternity. I must return to the point in his Alpine career at which I left off. His fortnight among the glaciers in 1865 had excited in the lad of fifteen a longing for further adventure which was encouraged by Miss Brevoort's enthusiasm, and further stimulated by the perusal during the next winter, spent at Florence

of the lately published volumes of 'Peaks, Passes and Glaciers.' In the following summer his desire was gratified by the accomplishment of the High-level Route from Chamonix to Zermatt, and in 1867 he climbed the Strahlhorn, crossed some high passes and conquered several new peaks in the Grisons. In these expeditions he had the services of François Dévouassoud, whose visit to the East and the Caucasus with me in 1868 broke the connection, and led to Coolidge's long employment of Christian Almer.

Coolidge's mountaineering career may be held to divide itself into two sections. In the first, up to 1876, he enjoyed the company of his devoted aunt. In the second, after Miss Brevoort's death, he went on assiduously piling up the stupendous score of his expeditions—a catalogue only rivalled by that of his friend Frederick Gardiner. Those who care to follow in detail the list of his climbs may be referred to Mr. Mumm's admirable Alpine Register, in which they are fully set out, year by year. Coolidge went on from strength to strength. In 1870 he first visited Dauphiné. In 1871 he attacked the great Swiss peaks; his bag included the Dent Blanche, Weisshorn and Matterhorn, the Wetterhorn, Jungfrau and Eiger. In 1874, with Miss Brevoort he made the first winter ascents of the Wetterhorn and Jungfrau, and in 1879, alone, that of the still more formidable Schreckhorn. In 1876 he travelled east to the Adamello group and the Dolomites. In successive summers he thoroughly explored the glaciers and crags of the Dauphiné and in 1878 crowned his exploits in that region by the second ascent of the redoubtable Meije. He left unvisited no crest or corner of the then little-known Cottian and Maritime Alps. These were his favourite haunts; but he constantly varied his field of action, returning from time to time to the great Zermatt and Oberland peaks, or making excursions into Eastern Switzerland. Central Tyrol, Carinthia and the Bavarian Alps, were, I believe, the only parts of the Alpine region not included in his wanderings.

By his own confession Coolidge preferred snowpeaks to rock-climbs, and, though he scaled the Aiguilles d'Arves the Meije, and the Matterhorn, he left alone the needles and pinnacles on which the more athletic climbers of to-day display their hazardous agility. He invariably employed guides whose companionship he enjoyed and of whose technical help he felt no scruple in taking full advantage.

I must now turn to Coolidge's labours with the pen. In 1912 he printed a complete list, extending to some 220 items, of his literary productions up to date; in this are included translations and books or articles to the authors of which he had rendered substantial help.

No reader who undertakes to study and form an estimate of Coolidge's output can fail to be struck by the minuteness and extent of his topographical knowledge, the breadth of his literary research, and his untiring exactitude in putting it to account. These qualities were coupled with a passion for exhaustive thoroughness in supplying references to his authorities. Whatever he wrote

was crowded with information from the most various sources—German, French and Italian as well as English. Nothing that had been printed on the mountains from the days of Gesner and Simler to the last *Zeitschrift* or *Annuaire* of some Foreign Club but was at his finger-ends. In his pages tables of peaks and passes, of heights and ascents, jostle with historical details and incidents of travel. Bent on completeness, he was incapable of compression, as editors were wont to find to their cost! He was born to be an expert both in mountain craft and in book lore: the combination is rare. But in dealing with his material he lacked both the talent for selection and arrangement and the literary touch that gives charm to some of our earlier Alpine books. Coolidge was overburdened by the weight of his own knowledge; and he did not carry the burden lightly. Consequently his books, though valuable as works of reference, have made no wide appeal to the Alpine public. It is a pity, for they are a store of curious knowledge, local, literary and historical, and contain many chapters that may serve to entertain as well as instruct an intelligent reader.

The most important work Coolidge has left us is a monumental volume of 943 pages published at Grenoble in 1904 and entitled *Josias Simler et les origines de l'Alpinisme jusqu'en 1600*. In this he reproduced the text of Simler's famous treatise *De Alpiibus* (1574) with a French translation, elaborate notes, and an essay on the early literature connected with Alpine peaks and passes. On this foundation he planted a number of passages from old writers relating to climbs from the time of Philip of Macedon to the ascent of the Rochemelon in 1588. This unwieldy but fascinating work concentrates a mass of information otherwise difficult of access, and well deserved the honour it gained of a Silver Medal from the French Geographical Society.

Coolidge was a born critic and commentator and his unrivalled acquaintance with Alpine literature and cartography led to his being invited to re-edit more recent classics such as Forbes' 'Travels through the Alps' and Tuckett's 'A Pioneer in the High Alps.' Needless to say, he performed his task with characteristic thoroughness and a microscopic eye for figures. Some readers—it is averred—to whom the original works had been familiar friends have been known to be ungrateful enough to look on the editor's abundant comments and corrections as in places superfluous, or at least meticulous!

Next in rank among Coolidge's contributions to Alpine literature we may reckon the three volumes in which he brought together a number of his articles and essays from various periodicals. These were, in order of publication, 'Swiss Travel and Swiss Guidebooks,' 1889, 'The Alps in Nature and History,' 1908, and 'Alpine Studies,' 1912. The first consists of an account of the earliest works provided for the use of Swiss travellers, followed by a sketch of the history of Zermatt before it became a mountaineering centre. The second is in substance an expansion of an Encyclopaedic article on the Alps,

dealing with their political history, their topography, their recent exploration, their people, and the rise of mountaineering as a sport and a form of travel. 'Alpine Studies' includes narratives of some of Coolidge's climbs, including his remarkable winter ascents in the Oberland; an account of the origin of the names of Monte Rosa and the Matterhorn; the early history of the St. Théodule Pass, and some short sketches of travel in the Swiss lowlands. All the volumes combine much information of a general character with tables and catalogues useful to students and experts.

Coolidge's love of detail and exactitude, if it was some hindrance to him as a popular writer, served him well in another branch of his literary activity. Supplemented by his wide interests and sound historical knowledge it made him an ideal editor of handbooks and compiler of 'Climbers' Guides.' In his first book, 'Swiss Travel,' he had written:

'Murray writes for the leisurely, cultured traveller whose mind is filled with poetical and historical reminiscences. Bädeler is strictly practical and modern, while Ball represents the advance in natural science as well as the assault on the mysterious iceworld. Yet, though there are so many Swiss Guidebooks of such great though different degrees of merit, I venture to think there is room for two more, which might be roughly described as a revised Murray and a revised Ball.'

Coolidge lived himself to perform the double task. His editions (1898 and 1904) of Ball's 'Western Alps' and Murray's 'Switzerland' are planned for educated and intelligent travellers whose interests go beyond hurried sight-seeing and who are not content to be carted over the Regular Round in a train or a charabanc under the charge of a bellowing conductor. They are books the old mountaineer loves not only to turn to on his travels but to study by his fireside. For they serve to remind him of discoveries to which they once led him, the waterfalls of Val di Genova, the towers of the Cima Tosa, or the cliffs and chestnuts of Bignasco; and they may still suggest fresh beauties to explore, even if it may only be in a motor-car!

The 'Climbers' Guides,' initiated by Coolidge and Conway, had a different aim. The object of the editors was to furnish climbers, in the form of a small pocket-book, with the exact topographical information they needed on the spot. The first volumes supplied an obvious want and their success was at once assured. To the growing band of 'Climbers without Guides' they render an indispensable service, and the yearly issue by various publishers and in different languages of booklets covering fresh districts is the best proof of their usefulness.

I must again refer readers to Coolidge's list of his publications. For it is impossible here to do more than roughly classify the perpetual flood of papers and pamphlets that flowed year after year from his hermitage at Grindelwald. They were very various in character. Weighty essays on 'The Saracens at Saas,' on the 'Inter-

course in old days between the Vallais and Grindelwald,' or on the 'History of the Col di Tenda,' alternated with monographs dealing with the Legend of Mont Iseran or the story and ascents of particular peaks or passes. One of the most attractive papers, reprinted in 'Alpine Studies,' is a biography of Coolidge's beloved dog, Tschingel, who was for several years his companion in many of his ascents, and after accomplishing thirty-six peaks and thirty passes reached a peaceful old age and died and was buried at Dorking.

Coolidge was also at one time a frequent and valued contributor to encyclopaedias and dictionaries. His work in this direction might have been more extensive had not his exigencies often proved a serious stumbling-block. The unlucky editor who found himself compelled to condense or curtail Coolidge's contribution drew on his head a volley of vigorous protests. Always bent on having his own way, whether as to the dimensions of an article or as to details such as the orthography of local names, Coolidge was apt to be very difficult to deal with.

In correspondence Coolidge could on occasions be found impossible, even by his most intimate friends. He would take up some contentious point in the annals of mountaineering and assert his own view with an obstinacy and a force that were deaf to argument and sometimes even to fresh evidence. His opponent was apt to find himself denounced in terms that—unless he knew Coolidge well—made him shrink from pursuing the controversy. These moods were a form of self-indulgence which grew on Coolidge during the ill-health and seclusion of his later years. I was myself more than once the victim of his temporary wrath. As long as he was resident at Oxford I was able to make my peace by telegraphing that I meant to come up and spend the next week-end with him in his delightful rooms at Magdalen. I never failed to find a genial host looking for me on the railway platform! In later years after Coolidge's move to Grindelwald I was at times driven to meet the situation by sending him a Latin *Panegyric* or a few Encomiastic Rhymes after the Elizabethan fashion. These he welcomed and even cherished, and sooner or later the postcard arrived which announced the term of my excommunication.

One of Coolidge's most intimate climbing companions once summarised him as 'a fiery lamb.' The paradox was not without its point. In sympathetic company Coolidge was the ingratiating yet frisky lamb; it was not till he sat down at his typing machine that his pugnacity showed itself, that fiery retorts and angry arguments were shot out in quick succession at the absent antagonist. Then the quiet recluse became like Horace's description of Achilles :

'Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer.'

But it was only in his language that he recalled the irascible Greek warrior.

In person Coolidge, in his later years, suggested the man of letters rather than the mountaineer. His figure, never that of an athlete, might readily recall to his visitor some contemporary print of a Renaissance scholar, sheltering beneath his crowded bookshelves. Short in stature and sturdy of frame, in his old age he became unwieldy and grew a venerable beard, while his bad sight compelled him constantly to use glasses. On first meeting strangers his manner was shy, and his sentences frequently interrupted by a short laugh—a sign of his nervous temperament. But in travel he proved a cheerful and unselfish companion, and in his own home he was an assiduous and agreeable host, who delighted to pour out for his visitors' benefit memories and tales of his adventures in the remote fastnesses and among the primitive people of the French Alps. I may record here an unexpected testimony to his conversation. On one occasion when Mr. Gladstone was on a visit to Magdalen, Coolidge was placed next to him at dinner. The statesman told his hosts afterwards that he had greatly enjoyed talking to a mountaineer who not only took interest in the peaks he had climbed but in the people who lived under their shadow. I relate the incident on the authority of Dr. Hogarth, who was present.

Coolidge, however, was in talk, as he was in action, the *Homo unius montis*. It was difficult to induce him to take interest in any range beyond the Alps; even the assault on Mount Everest failed to stir him. He would lament over the backsliding of those of his fellow-climbers who were in the habit of wandering off to distant lands. Conway and I in particular used to be held up as shocking examples of dissipated energy. Coolidge was also intolerant of any attempts at picturesque description, such as were prevalent in the Ruskinian era. They tended, he held, to looseness in topographic detail. My crimes in his eyes were in this respect manifold. On one occasion he wrote to me: 'It is notorious, my dear friend, that your accounts of your climbs are *frightfully vague*; you care more for aesthetic impressions than accurate topography.' I ventured to retort by a quotation from the *Mikado* concerning a certain character of whom it is asserted that 'his taste exact for faultless fact amounts to a disease.' Not that Coolidge was himself insensible to the beauties of Alpine landscapes. He revelled in the sunset view from the Besimauda, a green spur of the Maritime Alps to which I led him on a cloudless midsummer afternoon, and he was so enchanted with the stately seclusion among its chestnut woods of the Certosa di Pesio, to which we descended in the gloaming, that he subsequently spent the whole month of October in the old Convent Hotel.¹

Coolidge by his assiduous labours with the ice-axe and the pen has rendered immense service to all true lovers of the Alps; he has added largely to our knowledge of the mountains and to our opportunities for their enjoyment. Future generations of climbers will

¹ See *Alpine Studies*, pp. 25-7.

agree that he has fully earned for himself a permanent place beside John Ball in the list of Alpine Worthies. His literary feuds—to a great extent the safety-valves of an abnormal constitution—will soon be forgotten. But his name will hold its place in our annals as one of the last of the Alpine Pioneers, and for a few years his surviving friends will remember affectionately not the eager controversialist, but the retiring scholar who delighted to welcome them among his books, or to spend the summer evening out of doors in ‘talking mountains’ under the shadow of the Eiger.

The villagers of Grindelwald were right to crowd to Coolidge’s funeral. For he represented the early type of mountaineer to whom his guide was not only a constant and indispensable companion but a lifelong friend. The names of Coolidge and Almer will, like those of Leslie Stephen and Melchior Anderegg, remain inseparable in the traditions of the Bernese Oberland. By devoting himself to the exploration of the mountains and the study of their people, by making these the ruling passions of a somewhat detached and solitary life, Coolidge succeeded in living up to the motto carved on the rocks of the Niesen, the first climb of his youth, by some unknown scholar of the Renaissance:—

ὁ τῶν ὄρων ἔρωσ ἀριστος.²

D. W. F.

Coolidge as a controversialist was indeed difficult to deal with, but at Magdalen he was a delightful host. When we were preparing the ‘Climbers’ Guide to the Mountains of Cogne,’ I worked with him from Monday till Thursday without going out of college. That and other visits are still very pleasant memories.

In 1885 I spent August 7 to 21 with him in the Cogne District. He had with him young Christian Almer, and Séraphin Henry accompanied me. August 7 to 10 furnished a fairly severe test of temper and adaptability to circumstances, for we spent successively one night at the chalets of Monei, two at La Muanda di Tellescio, and the fourth at La Bruna—almost the last word in discomfort. I remember two occasions on which there was a slight flash of the ‘fiery lamb,’ but the net result was good-natured laughter. Our last expedition was the Grand Paradis in a snowstorm, when, although unwell, he showed great pluck and determination.

In 1888 I was with him from August 5 to 16. Coolidge brought with him the guides young Christian Almer and his brother Rudolf. It was a terrible season, but we happened upon a fortnight of glorious weather.

² I have elsewhere mistakenly stated that it was on the Stockhorn that Benoît Marti found this and other inscriptions. Marti scaled both summits about A.D. 1557. See Coolidge’s *Josias Simler et les origines de l’Alpinisme*, pp. xlv and 227.

Amongst our new expeditions were a descent of the Grand Paradis to the Col de l'Abeille, the Cresta Gastaldi, the descent of the Col de l'Abeille to the Noaschetta glacier, the Bec de Noaschetta, the Tête and Col de Valnontey, and the descent of the Col de la Lune to the Noaschetta glacier. Our last expedition was the ascent of the beautiful Bec de Monciair and the crossing of the Col du Charforon to Ceresole. We began the campaign with forebodings of failure owing to our distrust of the weather, but finished it in high spirits. Coolidge as a climber was uniformly good. As Mr. Freshfield says, he preferred steep ice to steep rocks. His surefootedness and endurance were quite exceptional. I never knew him slip even slightly. He was, as in 1885, the cheerful and welcome companion alike in discomfort and success.

G. YELD.

I STOOD in a somewhat different relationship to Mr. Coolidge. I was his disciple. I learned much from him. The 'historical method' which I am credited with introducing in the 'A.J.' was learned entirely from him, Mr. Freshfield, Dr. Dübi and M. Ferrand, to mention only the great names, who had been its exponents long before. My 'researches' were founded mainly on material and old documents got together from many sources by my friend Montagnier, my own contribution consisting in tolerably complete personal knowledge of the particular mountain whose history was being investigated.

Be that as it may, my writings and actions were apt to be visited by the Alpine historiographer with periodical denunciation and excommunication, followed by eventual receiving back into grace. When my master treated with dead silence opinions which I expressed in articles on the early ascents of the Finsteraarhorn, and, in conjunction with Dr. Dübi and Montagnier, on the early ascents of Monte Rosa, I felt convinced that silence meant assent, possibly unwilling, and rejoiced accordingly. Once I remember his forbidding me even to mention his name in the 'A.J.' My reply was that I might as well attempt to write a treatise on Theology and omit the Almighty. This answer was literally correct, for no name will, I think, ever recur so often in Alpine history as that of Coolidge. I seem to remember that, soon afterwards, I was restored to grace.

At times, however, my periods of excommunication embarrassed the despotic recluse, for it was reported to me that he said, on one occasion, with some impatience, 'I wish Farrar would not stay so long in Grindelwald. It makes it awkward

for me to go out. I might meet him, and if I did I should make it up, and I don't want to.'

The admirable notice in *The Times* contained one inaccuracy. It said he was an adept in the gentle art of making enemies. But we steadily declined to be his enemies. He was to us the Great Master. We felt that his knowledge of the practice and his even greater knowledge of the history of mountaineering, his indefatigable work in the interests and for the convenience of mountaineers, gave him such a claim to general recognition that if he chose to indulge occasionally in violent polemics it was for us to hold our peace and to wait till the clouds rolled by. Eventually they were sure to do so, and the sun shone out once more, for the time being, in a cloudless sky. Two or three of his friends seemed to escape, notably Fred Gardiner and Dr. Poole the historian, his colleague at Magdalen. I once asked another somewhat militant but exquisitely ingenious and tactful friend how he had managed to avoid friction. 'Oh,' he answered, 'I first carefully found out what our friend had made up his mind to do, and then strongly advised him to do it.'

The Times added that he had no idea of burying the hatchet. But he kept it out of sight up his sleeve, and when it fell with a resounding whack on the pate of a less fortunate mortal there was vast amusement among those whose turn had been and was yet to come. So it was all for the good, especially for us writers and editors who worked warily, very warily, with eyes all round our heads on the valley of Grindelwald and its most watchful and militant inhabitant.

Once indeed the hatchet fell on the Club itself and he resigned his Hon. Membership. Again we waited for the cloud to pass, and then re-elected him, with some trepidation lest he should not accept. We are glad that he died one of us. Such double election to Hon. Membership was some testimony to the Club's feeling for him and appreciation of difficulties of temperament due no doubt in part to illness and loneliness.

Mr. Coolidge's services to the Alpine Club were indeed numerous and of a character to call for our warm appreciation and gratitude. He was for several years an able and indefatigable Editor of its JOURNAL, forbearing and helpful to young contributors. I remember well his assistance with my first contribution five and forty years ago. He put out a series of admirable Climbers' Guides, collecting from every source carefully edited details of ascents. They have done much to foster mountaineering and to develop the minute and systematic

exploration of the Alps. But his great work for the Club was his new edition (1898) of the already famous 'Ball's Western Alps,' undertaken quite gratuitously. For many districts covered by this work there existed at the time no other guidebook. He enriched his edition with great stores of his own knowledge so as to double its value and to render it even to-day a fascinating and accurate companion, right away from the Mediterranean to the Simplon. He told me that it had taken him two years of hard work, that he had been snowed under by it. Few of us at the time appreciated what he had done.

His other contributions to Alpine literature were very numerous and of great value. He was an indefatigable worker notwithstanding his sufferings from ill-health for many years.

I should like, in conclusion, to bear warm testimony to the indefatigable care and attention paid him by his attendant, Albert Hürzler. He understood how to manage his somewhat restive master by a combination of command and persuasion that was very instructive. His care without a doubt lengthened Mr. Coolidge's useful life and did much to ensure its quiet, painless ending.

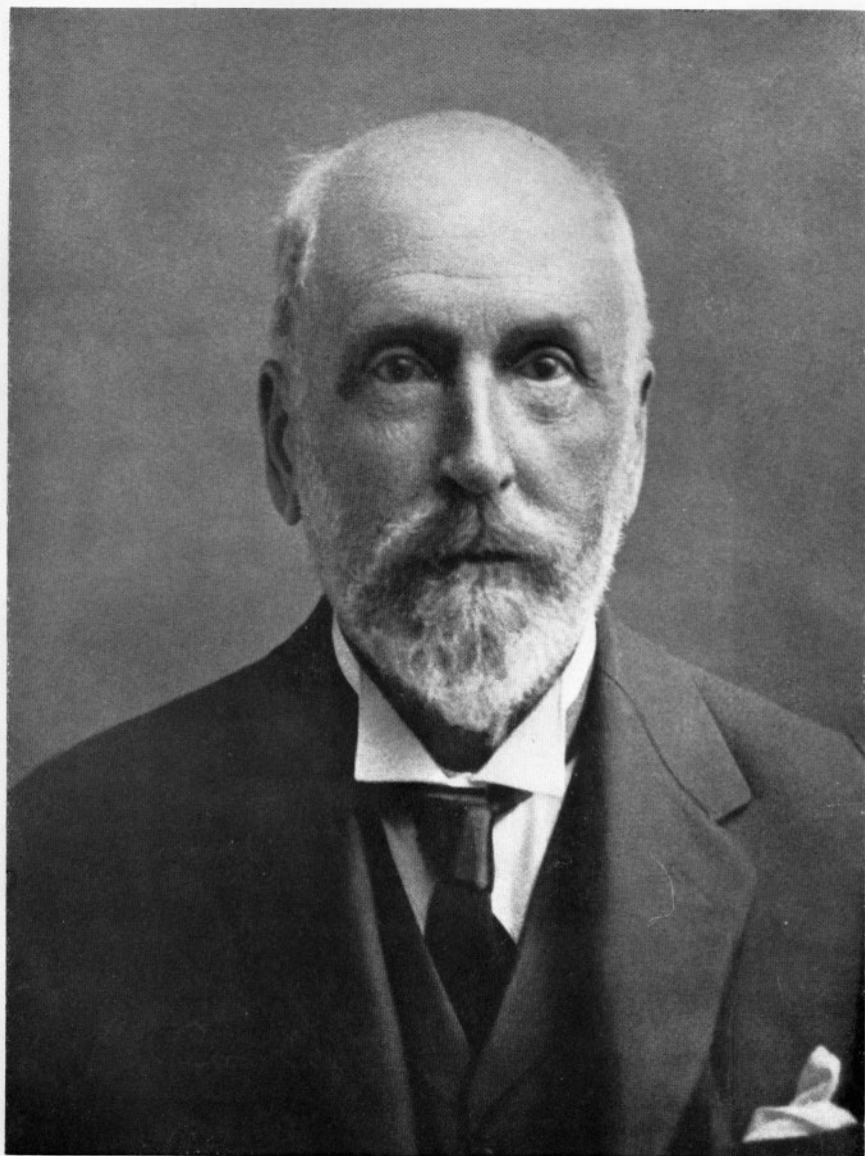
J. P. F.

C. H. R. WOLLASTON.

1849-1926.

CHARLES HENRY REYNOLDS WOLLASTON was born on July 31, 1849, at Felpham Rectory, Sussex, the eldest son of the Rev. Charles Wollaston, rector of that parish. He was sent to school at Lancing, and proceeded thence to Trinity College, Oxford, where he matriculated as a Commoner in October 1869. At Michaelmas 1870 he was placed in the second class in Classical Moderations, and in the same year he became an Exhibitioner of the College. But his University career was then interrupted by the death of his father. He took a Pass School and his degree in 1871.

He then came up to London, was articled to Messrs. Kirby, Gedge & Millett, and was admitted a solicitor on June 12, 1875, but he never took out a practising certificate. In 1878 he was appointed Assistant Secretary to the Union Bank of London. He was promoted to the Secretaryship in 1885, and on his resignation of that office, in 1898, was elected to the Board of the Bank. He remained a Director of that institution until 1902, when it was transformed into the Union of London and Smith's Bank, on the Board of which, and of the National Provincial Bank (with which it was in turn amalgamated), he served during the remainder of his working life.



CHARLES H. R. WOLLASTON

1849-1926.

As a young man Wollaston was a keen cricketer. He was a slow but reliable bat, and at times, when the condition of the ground suited him, a very useful slow right-handed bowler. He played on occasion for the Gentlemen of Sussex, but his principal cricket was in connexion with holiday touring clubs, an active association with one of which he continued until 1890.

At Association football he attained considerable distinction. The Inter-Varsity matches were not inaugurated until 1874, and he, therefore, never had the opportunity of playing for his University. But, after going down, he played for England *v.* Scotland in 1874, 1875, 1877, and 1880, and for the South *v.* the North in a trial match in the last-named year. He was also associated with the famous Association club of those days—the Wanderers—and was their captain in 1880. He is said to have been very quick on his feet, and he remained until almost the end of his life very nimble and sure of foot, even when advancing years had rendered him in other respects slow. His curious tripping gait will be long remembered as one of his principal physical characteristics. It was also characteristic of him that he never in after years spoke of his athletic achievements, and many of his most intimate friends never suspected that he had attained the honour of four International caps.

Wollaston appears to have paid his first visit to the Alps in 1889, and then began what was to be, with the Bank, one of the two main interests of his life. He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1892, being proposed by J. A. Luttman-Johnson, who had been an undergraduate with him at Trinity and was in those years his chief Alpine counsellor, and seconded by F. O. (now Sir Felix) Schuster. He joined the Committee in 1906, and became Secretary in 1912. His term of office as Secretary came to an end in 1916, but his successor was engaged on military duties, and Wollaston performed all the functions of the office as Acting Secretary until 1919—an unexampled period of service—under the presidencies of Edward Davidson, William Pickford, and Captain Farrar. In 1918 the Club conferred upon him the honour of the Vice-Presidency. Until the war, Wollaston never failed to visit Switzerland in August and scarcely missed some stay, however short, in every year at Zermatt. For many years after he became a Director of the Union Bank he was the last visitor to leave the Monte Rosa Hotel when the season closed, and the village could hardly settle to its winter sleep until he had helped the hotel servants to fold up the blankets and had seen the door locked. When peace was restored he resumed his former habits. But in 1925 failing health rendered the journey too dangerous for him. He died at his house in Belgrave Road on June 22, 1926.

It rarely happens that a man who commences mountaineering at the age of forty attains any special skill or pre-eminence. Wollaston was no exception to this rule. And, in addition to the handicap of age, he suffered from the liability to sudden and violent attacks of a

malady, in the nature of mountain sickness, agonising in themselves and most distressing to witness. They usually came on after a long hut walk, and often rendered him wholly incapable of movement on the succeeding day. With undiminished courage, however, after a day's rest in the hut, he would resume the enterprise which he had undertaken, and the fear of a fresh onset by his enemy would not deter him, after another day's rest in the valley, from further expeditions. When free from these attacks he was, though a slow walker, absolutely sure and safe both on rock and ice. His knowledge of the limits of his own powers deterred him from attempting modern rock climbing in its extreme form, and as years went on he more and more avoided very long or difficult expeditions. No one who knew Wollaston in the Alps could think of him apart from his two old friends and companions—A. Gentinetta and Josef Biner. Together the three made a perfect combination, for each understood exactly the physical and mental powers and limitations of the other two. Gentinetta, as is well known to many members of the Club, was worthy to take rank, if not among the greatest of all guides, still in the next and very high class. His gigantic strength and his great instinctive knowledge of the mountains were united with a genial wisdom and a shrewdness and coolness of judgment which made him a delightful companion and an excellent leader. This is not the place to speak of Josef Biner, who is still alive. As for Wollaston himself, his sweetness of temper, his joy in every incident of the day's march, and his cheerful acceptance of bad fortune as of good, made the partnership as happy as it was successful.

Above all, Wollaston was endowed with a love of the mountains and of mountaineering and with an indomitable perseverance. Thus equipped and thus accompanied, he was able to accomplish an amount of work in the Alps which in its range and variety was not only surprising for so late a beginner but remarkable in itself. He set himself to learn the craft gradually. His first season, which was spent at Zermatt and Saas, with an expedition to Macugnaga and a short visit to Grindelwald, comprised no summit or pass of the first or even of the second class. In 1890 he made the low tour of Mont Blanc and again visited Zermatt and Saas, but his best expeditions were the Wellenkuppe and Portjengrat. 1891 was spent in the Oberland, and in that year he ascended the Wetterhorn, Eiger, Oberaarhorn, Finsteraarhorn, and Jungfrau, and crossed several of the usual Oberland Passes. In 1892 he walked from the Val de Bagnes to Arolla by the Col de Seilon and the Ruinette, climbed the Dent Perroc, and then made his way by grass passes to Zermatt, where he ascended the Rimpfischhorn, Ober Gabelhorn, Zinal Rothhorn, and Matterhorn. This was a memorable year for Wollaston and his friends. He completed his qualification for the Club. Happy chance caused the renewal of an old friendship with Pickford, founded in undergraduate days and built up on the cricket field, but interrupted by Pickford's residence at Liverpool.

J. A. Hamilton (now Lord Sumner) was also at Zermatt; Davidson at the Riffel Alp; and Wollaston performed the first of a long series of kindly acts to him who has now the mournful privilege of writing this memoir. Bad weather had involved me in a late start for a big expedition and a correspondingly late return. When I reached Zermatt I found that Wollaston had spent a long afternoon in calming my over-anxious relatives and in encouraging them to view with favour my continuance in mountaineering. Age and memory deceive one. But he appeared to me almost to the end much as he looked on this, my first introduction to him. I remember clearly, as I saw him then, the clear-cut upper features, the pointed beard (already, I fancy, a little grizzled), which did not conceal his expression, half shy, half humorous, even his clothes, the curious gesture of his well-kept hands, the odd little wooden cigarette-holder which, if ever it was worn out, was replaced by another so like it as to be indistinguishable, and a hundred little tricks and mannerisms, too slight to be reproduced, which made up in the whole his bodily presence.

Wollaston did not keep any diary or other climbing record, and, although his Alpine wanderings extended over the whole chain of the Alps from Monte Viso to Maloja, details (except those within my own experience) are lacking. In 1896 I had two or three walks with him at Saas. In 1901 I joined him at Pontresina, intending to make a series of expeditions on the Italian side. We went up the Schwestern for a training walk, and I was delighted to note how well he went, and formed high hopes. But bad weather and illness conspired to disappoint us and we did practically nothing in company. In the glorious August of 1906 we were more fortunate. We crossed the Lys-joch to the Gnifetti hut, walked up the Lyskamm, and slept on the Signal-kuppe; and then climbed over the Zumsteinspitz to the Höchste Spitz and so back to Zermatt—an expedition made more laborious than usual by the illness of one of the party (not Wollaston) who, continuously from the Regina Margherita hut to the Bétémps, expressed in moving terms his desire to be left behind and die. We then crossed the Alphubeljoch to Saas, climbed the Nadelhorn and walked down to Stalden in appalling heat. At Zermatt Wollaston took two days' rest, and then hustled me, comatose from a long expedition and two broken nights, off by train to Chamonix, where we celebrated Pickford's retirement from mountaineering by a grand combined expedition—five amateurs and five guides—of Mont Blanc from the Tête Rousse. This short but delightful season must have been one of his best. He went steadily, and only once suffered from any approach of his old enemy, a threat of which compelled us to forgo the ascent of the Südlenzspitz.

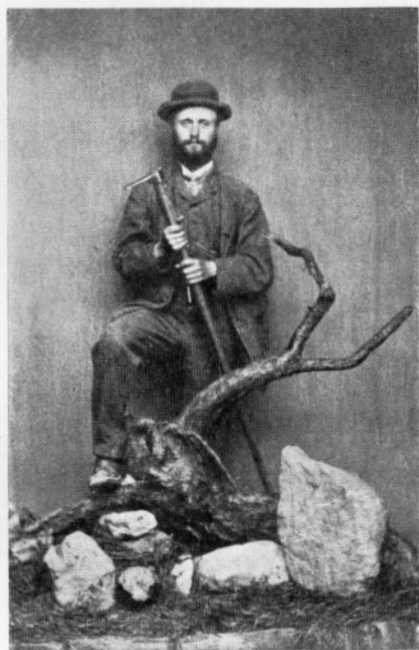
The year 1907 was as energetic but less fruitful. We crossed the Col de Valpelline to Pra Rayé and proceeded thence to Cogne. Here we were again and again hampered by bad weather, but we managed to accomplish the Herbetet, Grivola, and Grand Paradis

before a final break drove us to return to Switzerland by rail through the heat and thunder of the Italian plain.

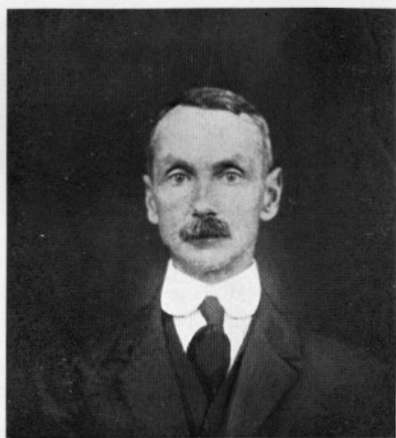
This was the last of our Alpine expeditions. In 1912, with Edward Broome, J. J. Withers and R. A. (now Mr. Justice) Wright, we passed a pleasant Whitsuntide at Macugnaga. And, in the very short time which I was able to give to the Alps that August, we had some days together at Zermatt. He walked at least as fast as I desired, and a great deal faster than Edward Davidson. But, so long as I was there, he was unwilling to undertake any substantial expedition.

It was in keeping with Wollaston's character that he should never have been photographed except for the purpose of his passport, and the presentment of him which accompanies this memoir was obtained from this source. Indeed, one of his most distinctive marks was a shrinking—so excessive as to be almost morbid—from any form of public appearance, or anything which he regarded as savouring of self-advertisement. Thus he never spoke in public or semi-public except when literally compelled to do so by the necessities of business, as, for example, on the rare occasions when the Secretary is forced to address the Club. He did not indulge in the vain habit of self-depreciation, but he avoided it by never speaking of himself at all, and no one would have suspected, when the conversation turned on Alpine subjects, the width and depth of his Alpine experience and knowledge. Though he was called to high office by this Club, by the Bank which he served so long, and by the United University Club on whose Committee he acted (being its Chairman during two separate years), and though these employments were pleasing to him, both because others wished him to undertake them and because he enjoyed the work, he never sought for these or any other marks of recognition. To all these institutions he gave unstinted labour; and his scrupulous spirit made him ready at any time to sacrifice employments which had become dear to him, upon the least suspicion that his period of usefulness was approaching an end. No one was ever less aggressive or easier to 'get on' with, or more capable of inducing others to get on with one another by arts which were none the less effective because they were concealed. Though he was generous and indeed lavish in his hospitality, his friendship and his charity, he had no liking for general society and his pleasantest hours were spent with small groups of old and intimate friends. Yet he could be almost equally happy when wandering—sometimes for weeks—in the companionship of his guides among the districts of the Alps where his countrymen were rare.

It must not be supposed, because modesty and amiability were the chief notes of his character, that he was weak or negative in his feelings. He had strong affections, for his family, for certain chosen friends, for the hills, music and the sea; he had also hearty hatreds. Of his affections he did not speak. The best evidence for them is the feeling which they in turn inspired among those who



THOMAS HOWSE.



RALPH TODHUNTER.

knew him best. On his hatreds he was, at times, eloquent. For particular men and particular kinds of men, and particular manners of life and particular kinds of food, he had aversions which were as violent as they were sometimes whimsical and prejudiced. But, as with many men of his type, the persons whom he disliked most were usually those whom he knew least, and his prejudice against them faded if, through some fortunate chance, he was thrown into their company. He was firm of purpose and determined to the verge of obstinacy. He had no doubt about what was right and what was wrong, and followed unswervingly, both in small things and in great, that which he believed to be right.

His later years were saddened by rapidly failing health and by bereavement, though he was soothed by remembrances of a long and happy life, and he awaited the end without any touch of bitterness. He survived a large family of brothers and sisters. Luttmann-Johnson had died in 1904, and from that time on his closest friends were William Pickford (Lord Sterndale) and Sir Edward Davidson. In a society such as ours, whose associations are often all but lifelong and are knit together by memories of much that has been enjoyed and suffered in common, death falls with a heavy hand on those who outlive their contemporaries, and the blows become harder to bear as the might lessens.

‘ Like clouds that rake the mountain summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother,
From sunshine to the sunless land.’

Gentinetta was the first to go. Then in succession departed Davidson, Pickford, and finally Gerald FitzGerald—the last survivor at the Riffel Alp, as Wollaston was down at the Monte Rosa, of the little company of veterans, whose welcome made the return to Zermatt a true home-coming and whose forms will, for us, linger for ever among the glens and streams.

He was then glad himself to go, and he died mainly because he had no wish to live.

C. S.

THOMAS HOWSE.

1834–1926.

BORN in 1834, Mr. Howse was educated at Ramsgate, Paris, and Neuwied. He was formerly a partner in Howse and Co., St. Paul's Churchyard, but retired in 1866 and, assisted by his wife, devoted himself to geology and botany.

Elected to the Alpine Club in 1864, Mr. Howse, at the time of his death, was senior member. He contributed to ‘A.J.’ xxxi. a paper on ‘The Exotic Granites of the Habkerenthal.’

I suppose I am the last person alive with whom he ever climbed, and that was thirty-two years ago, when he was over sixty and, owing to a badly set ankle, could only manage passes. He was able even then to get over a good deal of ground at a good pace. His staying powers were remarkable. He used to say that he practised mountaineering solely as a means to study geology and botany. He was associated for many years with Mr. C. Packe, the great authority on the Pyrenees, formerly Honorary Secretary of the A.C. Of him he often spoke to me, and they had much common interest in botany. He belonged to several botanical societies in France and England, and nearly poisoned himself in his anxiety to prove that so many forms of fungi were eatable. He was very proud when, in his old age, the Alpine Club asked him to arrange their botanical specimens.

He was an F.R.G.S. and an F.L.S., and contributed to the *Field*. He married in 1864, but lost his wife and only son, a great friend of mine, in 1920. He was a very interesting personality and of a lovable disposition. He retained his faculties to the end, and was in his usual good health the day before he died. His daughter-in-law, almost his only connexion left, was with him at the end.

J. A. B. B.

RALPH TODHUNTER.

1867-1926.

TODHUNTER was a man of brilliant gifts and of concentrated interests. A nephew of Isaac Todhunter, the famous mathematician, his own life and pursuits appeared to reflect a like balance, lucidity and precision of purpose. A mathematical Scholar of Clare College, a Wrangler, and later elected to a Fellowship, he remained throughout his life a valued advisor of that Foundation, of which the Alps have taken heavy toll in his death, following upon that of his close friend and colleague, H. O. Jones. After leaving Cambridge he became a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries, and a member of the Council. He acted as official tutor to the Institute, made some valuable contributions to its proceedings, wrote one of its text-books, and for many years edited its Journal. In former years he was assistant Actuary to the National Mutual, and afterwards became Actuary to the University Life Assurance, a post which he held until his death.

He was very widely read, a lover of music and of literature; but in all that affected himself personally he was reserved to the point of reticence and modest almost to a fault. His one relaxation was mountaineering, his enthusiasm rock-climbing. His Alpine record covers many years, and includes a very large number of ascents. It also illustrates his love of breaking new ground. Probably his best season was in 1911 when he made, with Josef Knubel, a new ascent of Monte Gruetta, and took part in the third ascent of Punta

Margherita and Punta Elena and in first ascents upon the Ecrins, Grandes Jorasses and Grépon, climbing in addition the Aig. Noire de Peuteret, Aig. de la Brenva and Aig. du Géant, and traversing the Meije, Mt. Blanc and a number of passes. Of the Mer de Glace ascent of the Grépon he wrote a delightful account in the *Climbers' Journal*. He looked upon it as his finest expedition; and his comrades on that day could never forget the accomplished ease with which he dealt with its prolonged severity. His skill and nerve upon rock were quite exceptional. For many years he devoted himself to exploring the Welsh cliffs, and was an indefatigable collaborator in the production of the series of Welsh climbing guides, to the last of which—just about to appear—he contributed greatly, with his own invariable efficiency and self-effacement.

Probably he was little known, even in the Club, except to those actively engaged upon the same fields. To those who knew him he stood for a model of gallant enterprise, good comradeship, and good climbing. It is characteristic of his finished style, equable courage, and disciplined physique that in his 60th year he should have been leading the ascent of a very difficult rock climb. It is equally characteristic of the strenuous and chivalrous spirit which ruled his conduct of life that he should so, also, have died; unwilling to concede to time the indulgence which he would never concede to himself in the pursuit of a good purpose.

G. W. Y.

MISS GERTRUDE LOWTHIAN BELL.

1868-1926.

THE death of Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell at Baghdad, during the night of July 11-12 of this year, removed from the world a figure of distinction and importance: to the British Empire her death signified the passing of a great Englishwoman. It was due to that rare complex of qualities of mind and soul which goes to the making of a great Englishwoman that Gertrude Bell was able to enter into the mind and soul of the Arab peoples, to win their confidence, to conquer their respect, and so to lay the foundations of an understanding of East and West in Irak which was the culmination of her career and the end to which the last years of her exceptionally full and active life were devoted. She was happy in her death in that it came to her at Baghdad among those she had worked for and who trusted and loved her.

Looking back at her career one feels that all the years of ceaseless activity (for she was one who was never idle) and great achievement in travel, in archæology and in scholarship were but a preparation for the ten years during which she in no small measure moulded the destinies of Irak. Into those last ten years of unremitting work were concentrated in a most vital manner all that

tenacity of purpose, self-sacrifice, idealism, and cheerful endurance which were hers by right of birth, for she was typically English, one may almost say typically Yorkshire, as befitted the daughter of a great Yorkshire iron-master, Sir Hugh Bell.

Soon after leaving Oxford in 1888 she began her Eastern travels by a visit to her uncle, Sir Frank Lascelles, in Teheran. This journey probably determined the course her life was to take by imbuing her with that love of the East which became her master passion. Two brilliant books, 'The Desert and the Sown' and 'Amurath to Amurath'—published in 1907 and 1911 respectively—record the experiences of her travels in the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia. These journeys, in spite of their important contribution to archæology, were but a prelude to the adventurous undertaking which she carried out in 1913, a journey to Hayil, the little known capital of Ibn Saud, which was accomplished in spite of the opposition of the Turkish authorities and the suspicions of the inhabitants of that remote and almost unknown kingdom of the Rashidi Emirs. Then came the war, and with it Gertrude Bell's opportunity to place at the service of her country her remarkable gifts of character, capacity and intimate knowledge of the politics and personalities of the Arab tribes among whom we were soon to be involved in operations against their Turkish rulers. What this meant during our campaign in Mesopotamia is illustrated by this story which is too good not to be true. During our operations against Kut in 1916 it became important to ensure the neutrality of an Arab tribe which was in a position to threaten our long-drawn-out line of communication. Miss Bell was sent to a secret meeting with the Chief of the tribe to endeavour to persuade him not to throw in his lot with our enemy. At the interview she emphasized the Chief's duty to his tribe and asked him to weigh carefully the difficulties of his position if the Turks were victorious after he had thrown in his lot with us, and pointed out that he, in conversation, had exaggerated the strength of our force, which she gave him correctly, telling him, at the same time, to send emissaries to estimate the Turkish strength in guns and men (which she knew he had already done) before coming to a decision. Her completely detached attitude—so unlike the eager appeals for help, alternating with threats, with which she knew the Turks had already overwhelmed the Sheik—impressed the astute Arab with the might and power which must be at the back of a negotiator who could display such restraint and integrity at a moment of obvious difficulty for her own side. It is said that on returning to his tribe the Sheik, having assembled his elders and recounted the course of the negotiations, said 'And this is one of their women! Wa'lla hi, what must their men be like!' He came in on our side.

The work which came to her demanded courage and steadfastness of purpose, qualities of soul which she had developed and strengthened in her days of Alpine climbing. Her achievements



MISS GERTRUDE LOWTHIAN BELL.

in other fields of her active life have had justice done to them elsewhere, but in this JOURNAL it is fitting that more detailed reference should be made to Gertrude Bell as a mountaineer.

R. P.-H.

I do not know when Miss Bell commenced her mountaineering career, nor when it closed. It was, however, in the first years of this century that her ascents attracted attention, and about the period 1901-1903 there was no more prominent lady mountaineer. Everything that she undertook, physical or mental, was accomplished so superlatively well, that it would indeed have been strange if she had not shone on a mountain as she did in the hunting-field or in the desert. Her strength, incredible in that slim frame, her endurance, above all her courage, were so great that even to this day her guide and companion Ulrich Fuhrer—and there could be few more competent judges—speaks with an admiration of her that amounts to veneration. He told the writer, some years ago, that of all the amateurs, men or women, that he had travelled with, he had seen but very few to surpass her in technical skill and none to equal her in coolness, bravery, and judgment.

Members of the Alpine Club have read, in a letter to Mr. V. A. Fynn, Fuhrer's generous tribute on what was probably the most terrible adventure in the lives of all those concerned.¹ . . . 'You who have made the climb will perhaps be able to correctly appreciate our work. But the honour belongs to Miss Bell. Had she not been full of courage and determination, we must have perished. She was the one who insisted on our eating from time to time. . . . The scene was high up on the then unclimbed N.E. face of the Finsteraarhorn, when the party was caught in a blizzard on that difficult and exposed face and were out for fifty-seven hours, of which fifty-three were spent on the rope. 'Retreat under such conditions, and retreating safely, was a tremendous performance which does credit to all.'² The date was July 31 to August 2, 1902; the occasion was a defeat greater than many a victory. 'When the freezing wind beats you almost to the ground, when the blizzard nearly blinds you, half paralysing your senses, . . . when the cold is so intense that the snow freezes on you as it falls, clothing you in a sheet of ice, till life becomes insupportable . . .,' then, indeed, was Miss Bell pre-eminent.

The Lauteraarhorn-Schreckhorn traverse was probably Miss Bell's most important first ascent, July 24, 1902. It is related that she and her guides, meeting on the ridge another lady with her guides making the same ascent from the opposite direction, were

¹ *A.J.* 34, 385-7.

² Thus Mr. G. Hasler, who with Amatter made the first ascent of this face, *A.J.* 34, 270.

not greeted with enthusiasm. In the seasons 1901-1902 Miss Bell was the first to explore systematically the Engelhörner Group, making with Fuhrer many new routes and several first ascents. An extract from a letter of the chief Alpine authority, dated December 10, 1911, may be quoted. . . . 'You ask me for some notes on Miss Bell's ascents, and I send all I have . . . she was not one to advertize, and yet, or probably because of it, they tell me that she was the best of all lady mountaineers. . . . (Signed) W. A. B. Coolidge.'

The notes contain the following, all relating to the different Engelhörner and all new routes or first ascents :—

Simmelistock,	August 30, 1901.	
King's Peak	} August 31, 1901.	
Gerard's Peak		
Vorderspitze	} September 3, 1901.	
Gertrude's Peak ³		
Ulrich's Peak ⁴		
Mittelspitze	} September 7, 1901.	
Klein Engelhorn		
Gemenspitze		
Urbachthaler Engelhorn		
Klein Simmelistock,	July 8, 1902.	

For the reasons stated above, it is difficult to name her other expeditions in the Alps, but a well-known climber has stated that his most vivid recollection of an ascent of Mont Blanc was the effort required to follow Miss Bell.

Such, briefly and inadequately rendered, are some of the Alpine qualifications of her who must ever be regarded as one of the greatest Women of all time.

E. L. S.

THE DEATH OF MR. LEROY JEFFERS.

MR. LEROY JEFFERS, a member of the Alpine Club since 1915, was killed by the crash of an aeroplane at Wawona, California, July 25, 1926. He was flying from San Francisco with Dr. Sterling Bunnell, president of the San Francisco branch of the National Aeronautic Society, for the purpose of viewing the Sierra Nevada Mountains from the air. For twenty years he had been connected with the Purchasing Department of the New York Public Library, but he had travelled widely through the scenic regions of the United States

³ Named by Fuhrer.

⁴ Named by Miss Bell.

and Canada. His principal climbs had been made in the Canadian Rockies, the Selkirks, the Cascade Mountains, the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the Teton Mountains, where he made the first ascent of the N.E. peak of Mt. Moran. His book 'The Call of the Mountains,' published in 1922, narrated his climbs and travels. He made many contributions on mountaineering, travel, psychology, and library economics to technical and popular magazines. He also lectured on the natural wonders of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. He was 48 years old.

In 1916, when the Bureau of Associated Mountaineering Clubs of North America was organized, he became the secretary and conducted it successfully for ten years. At the time of his death it numbered sixty-three organizations devoted to mountaineering and various out-of-door interests, including the preservation of natural scenery. He was a member of the National Institute of Social Sciences, and of the California Academy of Sciences, and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

Since 1916 he served as librarian of the American Alpine Club. In this capacity and as secretary of the Bureau of Mountain Clubs he performed a valuable function in bringing diverse interests into contact and association with one another. The annual Bulletin of the Association, which he conducted for ten years, was a unique enterprise, and afforded a wide distribution of interesting information about mountaineering and conservation matters. Through the instrumentality of the Bureau, the libraries of the constituent clubs were built up to an extent that would not otherwise have been likely.

HOWARD PALMER.

MORITZ Inderbinen.

1856-1926.

MORITZ Inderbinen died last May, aged about seventy. Though the number of members of the Club with whom he had actually climbed was small, he had been a familiar figure at Zermatt for many years past, and will be missed there by many acquaintances, and by a small circle of very warmly attached friends. In his younger days and in his prime he had no opportunities of developing to the full his powers as a climber or a master of ice-craft, and he was lacking in the commanding qualities necessary for great leadership. I have no wish, therefore, to claim for him a place among the eminent guides of

his generation, but his career was an unusual one, so curiously different from that of any of his colleagues that I think it deserves to be recorded in some detail.

When little more than a boy he crossed the Atlantic with three or four of his Zermatt contemporaries to try his fortune in Canada. They soon scattered, and after a few months' trial he decided to abandon the experiment. He had just enough money to get home, and, after a very narrow escape from being shanghaied and robbed in New York, arrived at Visp one morning with only a few centimes in his pocket and walked home to breakfast.

Not long afterwards Dr. Montagu Butler was at Zermatt, and employed Moritz to help in carrying his invalid wife on short excursions in a chaise à porteur. Moritz was an engaging youth and could speak a little English, and Dr. Butler invited him to come to England and take the position of 'general utility' man in the boys' part of his house at Harrow. Here Moritz spent several years, only once failing, by a few minutes, to ring on the very stroke of 6.30 or 6 o'clock, the bell with which he roused the household to the life of a new day. He of course spent his summer holidays at home, and must have learned his business as a guide during this period.

When I first encountered him, he was in London, in the service of Mrs. Lewis Balfour, whose son, Mr. Henry Balfour, had just emerged from his Final Schools at Oxford.¹ I do not know how this translation was effected, nor can I say what brought his later engagement to an end; it was certainly not any lack of good-will on his side or on that of his employers, for shortly afterwards he returned to Switzerland with Mr. Balfour and Charles Cannan, A.C., and the three had rather a rollicking season together, finishing at Zermatt with ascents in very rapid succession of the Weisshorn, Monte Rosa and the Matterhorn.

In 1886 I accompanied Cannan to the Alps, and we took on Moritz as a matter of course. Towards the end of our time we met at Zermatt Mr. Adolphus Turner, then Solicitor-General for Jersey, who told us he knew nothing of mountaineering but wished to make a start; could we recommend him a good, reliable guide, who could speak English? We handed him over to Moritz and went our way.

Mr. Turner, too, succumbed to Moritz's engaging manners and efficiency, and carried him off to Jersey, on the understanding that they would return to the Alps every summer and that Moritz was to be his butler and valet during the rest of the year. This association lasted, I think, for eleven years, but it was a pathetic business. Mr. Turner, aged then about forty, had set his heart, with tragic intensity, on qualifying for membership of the Club, but his physique was entirely unequal to the demands made upon it by ascents of even moderate length and difficulty. He persevered with great tenacity,

¹ Mr. Balfour is now a distinguished member of the University, and, amongst other things, Curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum.

but finally abandoned the struggle, and Moritz, who, in the meantime, had married an Englishwoman, returned to Zermatt, where for about ten years he pursued the calling of a guide on ordinary lines, while his wife acted as English letter-writer for half the guides in the valley.

In 1905 I had the good fortune to join Mr. Freshfield in a visit to Ruwenzori, and acquired the taste for distant travel. Moritz was with me then, and also subsequently in the Himalaya (1907) and the Canadian Rockies (1909-10-11, 1913). He was immensely popular in Canada, both at the Club camps of the A.C.C. and with the packers when we were travelling in the mountains 'on our own.' I think he enjoyed these trips as much as I did, but he told me that he would not have gone with anybody else, and I am not at all sure that I should have persevered in them so long without him. There was one more visit to the Rockies in 1920, when he seemed nearly as capable as ever, but the following year in the Alps he suffered severely on one occasion from difficulty in breathing, and our subsequent programmes were very unambitious. In thinking of him I dwell with peculiar pleasure on our last season, 1924. Except during a fortnight at Pontresina, he was my sole companion, but I enjoyed to the full such modest walks and climbs as the weather permitted, and never for a moment felt the loss of other society. 'Good old Moritz.' So his friends thought of him. I have known very few people so lovable, not one of such angelic temper.

A. L. M.

DR. EMIL BURKHARDT.

1846-1926.

THE death took place at Bâle on August 23 of this veteran member and Hon. Member of the S.A.C., one of the best known of the older generation of mountaineers. He commenced his climbing career in the 'sixties, his earlier guides being Hans Grass and Peter Egger, and later the well-known Christian Jossi, whose great ability and enterprise he was the first to recognise.

He had travelled wide in the Swiss Alps and had done nearly all the principal ascents in the Oberland, Zermatt, and Bernina districts, and possessed a good acquaintance with many expeditions in other parts. He published very little but was a most acceptable lecturer to his Bâle friends. For some years he had suffered much from ill-health. His name, as a great pioneer, will not be forgotten.

J. P. F.

PROFESSOR GOTTFRIED MERZBACHER.

1846-1926.

WE much regret to note the death at Munich on March 16 of Professor Gottfried Merzbacher. He was born at Baiersdorf near Erlangen, Bavaria, in 1846, and played a considerable part in the opening up of the Dolomites of S. Tirol, where, served by the guides of the day, he could claim many first ascents. In Switzerland he had done the Bernina Scharte and the traverse of the Cervin among other climbs.

In 1891 he paid, with Purtscheller and two Kals guides, a long visit to the Central Caucasus, climbing Tetnuld, Janga, Gimarai Khokh and other mountains.

The same autumn he went to the Thian-shan, but did very little, so returned in 1892 through Turkestan to the Eastern Caucasus, where he was joined by two other Tirolers and was able to carry out many expeditions.

He published in 1901 two stout volumes on his two journeys, and the book, especially on the less known E. Caucasus, is of considerable merit.

Subsequently he devoted several seasons up to 1908 to the exploration of the great group on the borders of Siberia and Chinese Turkestan which attains in Bogdo-Ola 6500 m. He turned his activities, however, to exploration as distinguished from mountain climbing, which played a subsidiary part. His first Thian-shan journey was described in the 'Zeitschrift des D. u. Oe. A.-V.,' 1906. The later journeys are fully recorded in the elaborate book 'Die Bogdo-Ola,' published by the Bavarian Academy.

[From an article in the 'Ö.A.Z.,' by Professor Dr. Karl Diener, the well-known geographer and mountaineer, formerly Hon. Member of the Alpine Club.]

A. DE REGGI.

1906-1926.

JUGOSLAV Alpine climbers—and this means above all the small community of Slovene mountaineers—have sustained a great loss by the death of Mr. Aloys de Reggi on Sunday, November 7. Mr. de Reggi was climbing by himself on the Grmada (Beacon) about four miles from Ljubljana, when he fell some 40 m. on to the scree below, apparently part of an entire ledge having collapsed. These rocks are a favourite training ground and Mr. de Reggi knew every inch of them. They may have been affected by the recent heavy rains and thunderstorms. Mr. de Reggi was generally considered the most promising among the younger generation of mountaineers; he was a good all-round athlete, one of the best long-distance runners in all Jugoslavia. His loss to Jugoslav Alpine

climbing is not to be measured by his years (he was only 20 when he died), but by his personality. He was a true sportsman, honourable, generous, chivalrous, perhaps too modest. He was always ready to help those less expert than himself, and when he undertook the trouble and responsibility of acting as guide on climbing expeditions—no small matter in a region where professional guides are practically unprocurable—he was cautious and considerate. At the University of Ljubljana he had already shown exceptional gifts. Had he lived, his name as a mountain lover and naturalist would certainly have extended beyond the borders of his own country.

F. S. COPELAND.

NEW EXPEDITIONS.

Le Dauphiné.

BARRE DES ECRINS (4100 m. = 13,448 ft.¹) DIRECT FROM THE GLACIER NOIR. July 31, 1926. MM. R. Toumayeff and J. Vernet.

The first party to make the ascent from this side was Dr. Paul Güssfeldt with Alexander Burgener on June 18, 1881. Making use of the slopes of the little secondary glacier des Barres they gained the snowy plateau to the E. at the foot of the Barre Noire and inaugurated the passage of the Brèche des Ecrins.² This is not the place to praise the qualities and the beauties of their route, which has fallen into oblivion. Relatively easy, it is, all the same, on a higher plane than the regulation 'great classic,' like the Meije, but it presents certain dangers from stonefall. It was repeated on July 15, 1926, by MM. Jean Costé, Roubène Toumayeff, and Jean Vernet.

On August 9, 1893, M. A. Reynier, with Maximin Gaspard and Joseph Turc, from the same starting place as Dr. Güssfeldt, attempted to climb diagonally the S.E. face of the Ecrins direct to the summit.³ He had been misled by an appearance which misleads everybody. Up to 3600 m. everything went marvellously, but his caravan was then under the necessity of forcing a passage to the E. arête, describing

¹ This is the altitude given in M. Helbronner's *Description Géométrique des Alpes françaises*.

² Full particulars of Dr. Güssfeldt's passage with Alexander Burgener of the Brèche des Ecrins will be found in his book *In den Hochalpen* (1892), p. 209.

³ Details of M. Reynier's ascent are given in *A.J.* 17, 136-7, where it is stated that the whole of the route can be followed on Signor Cav. Sella's photograph No. 522 from the Pelvoux and No. 507 from the Pic Coolidge. There is a paper on the expedition in *S.T.D.* 1893, pp. 91 and 105-24, by M. Reynier himself.