Laggan. I must mention the beauty of the ford of Simpson Pass where we crossed the Bow. The river formed a foreground for the graceful range of distant peaks to the S., whence we had come.* Our circuit by the Vermilion had taken 13 days from Castle Mountain round to Cascade, and we had travelled nearly 150 miles.

I flagged the train next morning and was soon at Laggan, where I was joined in two days by Carryer, who rode the horse up the Tote road, arranging, however, not to stop at Eldon. Further explorations being impossible, owing to continued snows, I left shortly for the east.

IN MEMORIAM.

CHARLES PACKE AND THE PYRENEES.

I.

As an intimate friend of the late Charles Packe, and his fellow-mountaineer in the early explorations of the highest regions of the Pyrenees, thirty-three years ago, perhaps I may claim the melancholy privilege of reviewing his long Pyrenean career, dating from the year 1858 (or 1859).

In those distant times, whatever may have been the case in the Alps, mountaineering was, in the Pyrenees, quite in its infancy, and climbing entailed all sorts of privations, hardships, and even risks, unknown to the present generation. Ice-axes had never been heard of, and when we crossed or scaled steep slopes of blue ice or frozen snow, we had to cut our steps either with a microscopic pocket-axe, which was often dropped and lost, or with sharp stones and slates. Speed was impossible. The rope had only just made its appearance: it was scarcely ever used, and in crevassed glaciers we trusted almost entirely to sounding with alpenstocks. As for guides, there were barely half a dozen good ones in the whole range of the Pyrenees, and even those only knew their own district. They were useless elsewhere, and we had to guide them ourselves, with the help of a compass and of the most rudimentary maps, full of mistakes.

On the Spanish side things were still worse, for there were neither maps nor guides; *à fortiori*, no guide-books. And yet it was just there, behind the frontier, that the proudest Pyrenean summits solemnly stood in unknown and snowy solitudes. Indeed, to a mountaineer, their mystery made them as attractive as the North Pole or the peaks of the moon. The Néthou (3,404 m.) had been climbed about a dozen times, but the Posets (3,367 m.) only once or twice, and the Maladetta (3,312 m.) never. As for their

* The Vermilion range, so beautifully seen from the bridge spanning the Bow at Banff. That peculiar flat-topped peak, furthest E. of those seen from the latter point, while bearing, as do the others, glaciers of considerable size upon the N. slopes, should offer easy rock climbing from the S.

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numberless satellites exceeding 3,000 m., they had not yet even a name! Even the great frontier peaks were little known in those distant times (1860), and very few of them had been conquered.

Such was the state of things when Packe first made his appearance in the Central Pyrenees, where, with only two exceptions (Mont Perdu and Cylindre), are grouped all the Spanish summits exceeding 3,300 m. This was thirty-six years ago (1860). In that year Packe first explored the now famous valley of Arras (or, rather, Ordesa), which runs E. and W. on the Spanish side of the Cirque de Gavarnie, and very much resembles the great American cañons. It is the haunt of the bouquetin. Although Ramond had had a glimpse of its wonders in the beginning of the century, they had so utterly been neglected and forgotten for sixty years that Packe's exploration was a second discovery. Following, eastward, the southern or Spanish side of the chain for about 50 kilomètres, through Fanlo, Escalona, and Benasque, he finally re-entered France by the Port d'Oo (3,001 m.).

In the same year (1860) we find him on the summit of the Néthou, the highest peak in the Pyrenees, and then very seldom climbed (3,404 m.). He then passed into Catalonia, explored the Montarto, and scaled one of its many peaks, or rather 'teeth' (over 3,000 m.).

In the following year (1861) he accomplished the third ascent of the mighty Posets (3,367 m.), which he reascended by another route in 1863; and about the same time he made the first ascent of the Maladetta (3,312 m.) and of the Malibierne (3,067 m.).

In 1864 he, with his friend Mr. Mathews, crossing the snowy Col de la Salenques, east of the Néthou, went all round the immense and chaotic mass of the Monts Maudits—a long and thoroughly 'Alpine' tour of four or five days in the most intricate, loftiest, and most mysterious regions in the Pyrenees.

The Spanish slopes of the Port d'Oo (3,001 m.), a majestic desert of huge boulders, eternal snow, and frozen ponds, often became his home for days together: he loved to explore them, sleeping no matter where or how; and another district which he also seemed to cherish was the Lac Glacé du Portillon (in France) —a sort of polar lake, always studded with ghastly icebergs. But Charles Packe's most memorable feat in the Spanish Pyrenees, and his greatest service to the geography of the loftiest part of Aragon, was his admirable map of the Monts Maudits, of which the whole credit is due to him alone, for no one could help him; he had neither predecessors nor even books to guide him, and the wild and vast regions he so conscientiously explored and mapped in 1866 covered no less than 1,000 square kilomètres, where none but chamois hunters had trodden before him.

Of course there are many unavoidable errors and gaps in such an immense work—the very first of its kind, where all was new, and done by *one* man, whose sole guides, practically speaking, were his compass and his instinct. However, even now, when more perfect, though smaller, maps have completed our knowledge of

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those bewildering masses of snowy peaks, Packe's map of thirty years ago is very useful, and its author has much simplified the task of those who followed him on that particular ground.

When rest became necessary, fishing was a relief to him, and consoled him for inaction. Many a romantic night have I spent with him on the desolate shores of the Rio Bueno lakes, buried in sheepskin bags, under the stars and moon, and happier than children or monarchs. And yet it was terribly cold. When the sun rose, we shook hands and parted for the day, but always met in the evening, the very best of friends, though we had not the same pursuits or tastes. Whilst I indulged in eccentric, solitary ascents of untrodden and snowy peaks, which swarmed in those times in Aragon, and where I never met a human being, Packe did more useful things. He mapped those peaks, he measured and named them, botanised in their valleys, and read their history in their rocks and fossils. For he was a mountaineer in the best and noblest sense of the word; he was the Tyndall of the Pyrenees. Although he lived to see the deplorable transformation of 'Alpinism' (which, to him, was a sort of religion) into mere athletics and gymnastics, he could neither condone nor understand acrobatic performances in the mountains, unless they could not be avoided. He did nothing for 'show,' never cared for 'effect'; everything 'theatrical' shocked him, and he never tried to excite wonder. Indeed, he was the most modest of men, and never spoke of his own achievements or merits. Even in his splendid 'Guide to the Pyrenees,' where almost all the ascents described were accomplished by himself, his personality scarcely ever appears.

He had a marvellous constitution. He enjoyed nothing so much as sleeping in the open air, even above the snow-line, in a bag of sheepskins, and taught me to do so. A sleeping-bag is the best friend of a Pyrenean mountaineer; he cannot do without it. We never had a tent. Hundreds of nights have I spent in my bag, and in the open air, at all heights, even on the very summits of the loftiest Pyrenean peaks: on the Néthou (3,404 m.), on the frozen and stormy Mont-Perdu (3,352 m.), on the Vignemale (3,298 m.), &c., and, except in snowstorms, I generally slept well, even with the thermometer below freezing point; so I could not help saying a word in favour of the bag.

And now, to sum up Packe's labours in the Spanish Pyrenees, and without ignoring or trying to minimise in any way the very great merits or the splendid discoveries and achievements of his many disciples and successors—MM. Schrader, Wallon, Lequeutre, Gourdon, Trutat, Comte de Saint-Saud, Emile Belloc, and others—I think I may fairly and safely say that he was our master, model, and leader, and that we all owe him admiration and gratitude.

On the great frontier peaks of the Central and Western Pyrenees, Packe also distinguished himself by scaling the Perdighero (3,220 m.), where it is probable no one had ever gone before him (in 1860 or 1861), by the first ascent of the Munia (3,150 m.),

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near Héas, and above all, by his memorable ascent of the Balaïtous (3,146 m.) in 1864, after a fruitless attempt in 1862.

This threatening and proud peak, which was unquestionably the most dangerous in the Pyrenees before the discovery of new and easier routes leading to its summit, had, it is true, been once conquered before; but it was in 1825 by the officers of the Etat-Major. It had never been climbed since, and after the lapse of almost forty years, no one even knew in the least how they had reached it. I may add that our lamented and illustrious colleague, John Ball, made an attack on the Balaïtous in 1863, but without success. Packe's triumph over this noble peak therefore had all the merits of a discovery and of a first ascent. As for the difficulties he encountered, they may be measured by the fact that he wandered for seven days on and almost all round the mountain before setting his foot at last on its real summit, although he was at that time young, experienced, and rash. It was by the western arête he succeeded. I climbed the peak myself ten days later by the same route, and after five journeys up or down this terrible arête, and thirty-seven years of Pyrenean ascents, I still think it is the most perilous *mauvais pas* of the whole chain. But it has long ago been given up for easier *couloirs* on the north-western side of the formidable precipices which surround the whole of this Pyrenean 'Cervin,' and the perils of the Balaïtous are a thing of the past. Ladies have climbed it, although neither cables nor chains have as yet profaned it. It has never been dishonoured!

Packe's favourite guide was the celebrated Henri Passet, of Gavarnie, whose first cousin, Célestin, was mine. These two splendid guides, the best the Pyrenees have ever produced, have also won laurels in the Alps on the Mèje, the Ecrins, the Cervin, and the Dru, &c., and Mr. Whymper had such a high opinion of them, that he offered them the honour of escorting him to the Andes; an honour which, I much regret to say, sentimental reasons induced them to decline. 'Exile' will never be popular in France! However, Henri Passet once went as far as the Sierra Nevada with Packe, some thirty years ago, and they both slept on the summit of the Mulahacen (3,555 m.).

Before ending this imperfect review of my friend's Pyrenean career, perhaps I may add, without trespassing on sacred ground, that Packe was the model of friends. He was sincerity itself, he was almost too transparent, for he could no more disguise his antipathies than his sympathies, or indeed any of his feelings. One read through him at once, he flattered nobody, and would have been a bad diplomatist. Indeed, if plain-speaking can ever be called a failing, it was the only one he had. His death has thrown the Pyrenees into mourning, and I am sure I have not over-praised him in any way, for if love is blind, friendship is seldom so, and certainly not in this case.

HENRY RUSSELL.

Pau: September, 1896.

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II.

Mr. Packe's connection with the Pyrenees has been so fully and picturesquely sketched by his old friend Count Russell that it only remains for me to add the dry facts of his career and a few reminiscences of him which may enable the younger members of the Club to realise a character which was surely unique.

Charles Packe was the eldest son of Captain Edmund Packe, of the Royal Horse Guards, and was born in 1826. He went up from Eton to Christ Church, Oxford, in May 1845, and took his degree in 1848. He had already been entered of the Inner Temple in 1847, and in 1852 he was called to the Bar. He never practised seriously, and the attraction of the mountains soon made itself felt. 'The Spirit of Travel,' now a somewhat rare book, which he published in 1857, shows that though not yet a thorough mountaineer, he had already become familiar with the hills of our own islands and the mountains of Central and Southern France and of Switzerland. It is clear from this that the date assigned by Count Russell for his first acquaintance with the Pyrenees is some two or three years too late. In 1862 he brought out his well known 'Guide to the Pyrenees,' of which new editions appeared in 1864 and 1867. In his zeal for the task he actually passed a winter in the Arctic climate of Gavarnie, when wood was so scarce that the kitchen fire was the only one in the house. So thorough was his work, and (it must be added) so slow is the development of the Pyrenees, that after thirty years it still remains the best work on the subject.

In 1867 his uncle, Mr. Charles William Packe, M.P., of Prestwold, died and left him the owner of Stretton Hall, Great Glen, and of the Branksome Tower Estate at Bournemouth. He could not keep both, and he chose the former as having been longer in the family. A different choice would have made him in the end a millionaire, but he was not the man to regret it. His means were ample for all he wanted, and he could indulge without stint in all his favourite tastes—books of all kinds, costly scientific instruments, travelling, and, last but not least, lavish but half-surreptitious support of deserving charities.

The attrition of our modern life has a tendency to produce some monotony of character. There are numerous types, but within their classes men resemble each other as much as houses in a street. Mr. Packe was more like a rambling old mansion full of all kinds of unexpected and inconsistent nooks and corners. Such a house lacks many modern conveniences. The ceilings may be low, the rooms dark, the floors uneven, the roof eccentric, the passages draughty. At first you cannot find your way about it; you bump your head against beams, you fall down unsuspected steps, you wonder how any one could ever live in such a place, and in the end what happens? You get to know it, and you learn to love it. The convenient modern residence begins and ends as 'a brick box with a slate lid,' but the other is a real home for which you can feel a personal affection. There is an element of romance about it. It

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is endeared to you by its very incongruities; so it was with him. His character was one of the strangest complexity, full of the most striking contradictions. It is not common for the same man to pursue experimental science with zeal and to maintain to an advanced age familiarity with the literature of Greece and Rome; but it is still rarer to find a country squire living in Leicestershire, and owning one of the most famous fox-covers in the county, who, nevertheless, detests hunting. His political views again, though decided enough, defied classification. His frame was feeble, yet capable of enormous exertion. Lastly, under a manner which was often, as he termed it, 'brutale,' and modes of speech steeped in prejudice, he concealed one of the tenderest hearts that ever beat and an unusually open mind.

The love of abstract truth and justice which most people find no difficulty in controlling amounted in his case to an over-mastering passion. Harmless social hypocrisies and conventions were regarded by him as so many breaches of the truth, and compromise of every kind as a deliberate and venal sacrifice of principle. Once convinced that a given course was right, he was ready to maintain it and enforce it against all odds and at any cost of inconvenience to himself or others. In his nature, and even in his appearance, there was something of Don Quixote, and something also of his own tough old Puritan ancestor, Sir Christopher, Lord Mayor of London in 1655, who was such a resolute supporter of Cromwell, and in 1657 so nearly succeeded in changing him from a Protector to a King. He had all the independence of the Puritan, all his contempt for such social accomplishments as tact, diplomacy, and grace of manner, and he had also his rugged sincerity and his thoroughness in work. He showed this in his walking. He was past fifty when I first walked with him, but he went wonderfully well. It was our custom in the Pyrenees to rise at daybreak after a night on the hard ground, take a cup of tea and a nibble of dry bread, and thereupon walk for five, six, or seven hours before breakfast; after that there was no more eating till we made our bivouac a little before sunset, and no rest, except perhaps an hour's siesta in the hottest part of the day. Exertion of this sort maintained for a week on end with scanty food and regardless of weather demands a strong constitution and considerable staying-power. On a good road his whole-day pace was moderate—1 kilometre in 10 min. (i.e. 1 mile in 16 min.)—but he could do much more when he chose, and must in his youth have been an exceptional walker. We walked together a good deal in the 'eighties' among the English, French, and Spanish mountains, to the extent of at least 3,000 miles, so I can answer for his endurance.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the position which he enjoyed in the Pyrenees, and the honour in which he was there held. It was a great privilege to visit them in the company of such a man. I recollect the Prince de Joinville, who went there a good deal, saying one day, 'Mr. Packe is the king of the Pyrenees; he

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invented them'; and he made a point of paying him a call of ceremony. The French Alpine Club recognised the value of his work by making him an honorary member, a distinction which very few Englishmen enjoy, but by the natives he was absolutely venerated from end to end of the Pyrenees. They would do anything for him, even to the length of endeavouring to take an interest in his botanical researches. In many of his wanderings he was accompanied by one or more of his great white Pyrenean wolf-dogs, and he had an ingenious plan for utilising them, believing that a traveller on glacier, duly roped between two of these powerful animals, would be secure against the danger of concealed crevasses. But he was ever an enthusiast on the subject of dogs, and he considered their comfort far more than his own. I believe he began with the idea that dogs were an oppressed race, and that was at all times a passport to his sympathy. There never was a man more ready to fight the battles of the weak against the strong, or to champion the cause of the absent, and he was the staunchest and most loyal of friends. W. P. H. S.

ROMAN IMBODEN.

Roman Imboden was born in 1870. As the eldest son of a famous guide he had early opportunities for learning his profession on the occasions when he accompanied his father, as well as excellent training in what one may call the more intellectual, as apart from the mere physical, qualities essential in a first-class guide.

As far back as 1886 Roman was engaged for most of the summer by Mr. G. S. Barnes, who employed him as porter on the various guideless expeditions which he and his friends made. The following winter Roman spent with me in Switzerland. The first testimonial I find in Roman's 'Führerbuch' is signed Frank Littledale, and dated 1888. It refers to ascents of the Ober Gabelhorn, Weisshorn, Rothhorn, and other first-class Zermatt and Oberland peaks, and describes him as 'a first-rate climber.' That winter Roman spent in England, and his employer wrote in 1889: 'I know of no youth who has the same prospective future,' adding a little later that Roman had saved the lives of his party on Mont Blanc when they were overtaken by a terrible snow-storm, and his keen sight enabled him three times to regain the track. 'It was a fearful half-hour,' he wrote,' 'and but for the boy's intelligence we might never have come down alive.' It is signed S. Aitken.

In 1891 he was for the first time leading guide, and in 1892 I took him with me as my leading guide to Dauphiné, where amongst other expeditions we crossed the Ecrins and ascended the Meije and the Pointe des Etages. In the following year he made a fine series of ascents with Mr. E. Garwood, who has written a notice in his book which any guide would be proud to possess.

In 1894 he led me up the Monte di Scerscen, though he had no knowledge whatever of the Engadine Mountains. The peak had not been ascended for a couple of years previously, nor has it been

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done since that season, and we were handicapped by 3 ft. of fresh snow. Three days later he went up with me again, crossing on this occasion to the Bernina, and choosing his way along the arête so skilfully that we never met with one really hard step, and were back at St. Moritz before dark. The same year Roman made with Mr. Garwood the first ascent of the Täschhorn from the Dom, as well as many difficult ascents in the Dolomites. He subsequently repeated his Dolomite climbs with Mr. B. Wainewright, and invariably led and came down last.

Last autumn, with his father and me, he crossed the Rothhorn twice in one day. He also led us up the Schallihorn by a new route up the central south ridge. On September 25 his father and I made the last ascent either of us ever accomplished with Roman, and strangely enough it was of the Lyskamm. As we stood together on the summit we looked at that fatal ridge from the Lysjoch, of which Roman often said, 'I don't like it, you never know whether you are on the cornice or not,' and then we retraced our steps down the Italian side of the mountain. This is not the place to discuss the catastrophe of September 10. Full details will be found elsewhere. But Roman's friends, and they are many, know well that a better guide never lived, and feel a sharper pang of regret for his loss as having occurred on a place where no skill could have availed.

Roman lies in the little churchyard at St. Nicholas close to the graves of the three Knubels who perished on the same mountain. The value we, who knew him well, attach to his memory, will be borne witness to by the stone which his English friends are placing over his last resting place as a mark of our appreciation of his many noble qualities, and of his ability as a first-class guide.

E. M.

NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1896.

[Contributors of 'New Expeditions' are requested to observe the following rules:—(1) To forward their accounts in the form in which they are to appear. (2) To prefix the name of the peak or pass from the best map, and the altitude both in mètres and feet in a parenthesis after the name. (3) To give the date of the ascent, and the names of the party. (4) To give exact references to any previously published descriptions of allied routes to which they may have occasion to refer. (5) To write the description with the best existing map before them, and to quote the figures of any measured point their route may touch. (6) To use always the points of the compass instead of the misleading words 'right' and 'left.' (7) To record their 'times' exclusive of halts. (8) To make their descriptions as brief as possible consistently with the above considerations. (9) To write on one side of the paper only, leaving a large margin, and to begin a new sheet for each expedition.]

Dauphiné District.

Les Bans (3,651 m.=11,979 ft.) by the South Arête. *July* 25.—MM. A. Reynier and C. Verne, with Maximin Gaspard, Joseph Turc, and Casimir Turc, made this new route, which enables a

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