Switzerland to Japan and the New World, and ranging from the rapid sketch to the highly finished drawings of 'Lake Hamana' and 'Autumn Grass on the Hakone Hills.' They differ from Mr. MacWhirter's drawings in that they are more strictly sketches—complete though summary records of a view—rather than unfinished drawings and studies, and they are remarkable for the accomplished skill of their composition, their suggestiveness, and the strict economy of means employed, as witness 'Esk Hause' and other lake-district sketches. The evening effects of 'Lake Biwa,' and 'Fujisan at Sunset,' and the reflections of cumulus cloud in 'St. Mary's Lake' are charming and delicate, while 'Bourg St. Pierre' and 'Cogne' are strong and realistic.

It is pleasant to record that not only was the exhibition excellent, but that the number of visitors present and the sales effected were also most satisfactory.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

Mountaineering and Exploration in the Japanese Alps. By the Rev. Walter Weston. (London: John Murray. 1896.)

To most of our readers the idea of mountains in Japan is probably limited to a recollection of a picture of the cone of Fuji-san, with a cloud floating away from its summit, and an account in some traveller's journal of a rather wearisome ascent of that mountain; so that Mr. Weston in telling us in detail what the Japanese mountains really are like, and how a holiday may be spent among them, has had the good fortune to find new material for his work. In the centre of the principal island, N.W. of Fuji-san and about 100 miles W. of Tokio, there is a range of mountains, running nearly N. and S., in which many of the summits are about 10,000 ft. in height, the highest, Yarigatake, which is the second highest peak in the empire, being given as 10,300 ft. In this range and the lesser ranges connected with it the author, who was at the time resident in Japan, spent four holidays (1891–94) climbing the principal peaks and crossing the range in many places. Several of his climbs have already been described in this 'Journal,'* and of the others, as pieces of mountaineering pure and simple, none need special mention here; where an ice axe and rope are unnecessary, and any hunter or porter will do for a travelling companion, the climbing cannot be difficult. Still there were obstacles to be surmounted from bad weather and the scarcity of suitable provisions, and in some instances from difficulty in getting information as to the routes, which no doubt added to the charm of the holidays and gave the author memories which it has evidently been a sincere pleasure to him to record.

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xvi. pp. 377–390, 'Mountaineering in the Japanese Alps,' and vol. xvii. pp. 493–510, 'Mountaineering and Mountain Superstitions in the Japanese Alps.'

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We think the result of this book has been to settle finally that there are no mountains in Japan for the sake of which any climber need organise a special expedition. They do not give us a new playground, like New Zealand, or the Caucasus, or the Canadian Rockies; but to those who have the true mountaineering spirit, and wish wherever their lot may be cast to explore the highest ground within reach, Mr. Weston has shown that even in Japan they may find an outlet for their energies.

Of the method of the book we cannot speak very highly, for in a work claiming to describe exploration or scientific travel there should have been more attempt at classification. One has to turn backwards and forwards to find the relative heights of the peaks, and there is no general description of the range, or, except in a short paper in the appendix, by Mr. W. Gowland, of its geological or geographical features. The passages relating to the spirits supposed to dwell in the mountains are interesting, and show that in Japan, as in so many other countries, the tops of the mountains are associated with the dwelling-places of the gods; but to the Japanese there is less of the mountain gloom and more of the mountain glory. Many of the hill-tops are the sites of shrines, which are annually visited by multitudes, and if the highest points have seldom been reached by the natives it is more from laziness or indifference than from fear.

The book is pleasant reading as a truthful account of travels by a genuine lover of mountains, and gives abundant evidence of Mr. Weston's pluck and enterprise.

Victor Puiseux et la Première Ascension du Mont Pelvoux. (Gap. 1898.)

Under the above title M. Paul Guillemin has printed (in the 'Annales des Alpes,' number for May–June 1898) a letter addressed to him by M. Puiseux in 1877. Hitherto no details of that savant's ascent of the Pelvoux in 1848 had been published, so that this letter possesses considerable historical value. The date of the ascent was August 9, 1848. M. Puiseux and his guide, P. A. Barnéoud, of Les Claux, started from the well known boulder of Soureillan (later dignified by the name of 'Refuge Puiseux'), and seem to have taken the old route by the Rochers Rouges, as no mention is made of the traverse of the Clot de l'Homme glacier. Barnéoud stopped when the snow was attained, but M. Puiseux went on alone. He first visited the 'Pyramide,' or second summit of the Pelvoux (attained in 1830 by Captain Durand), and then went on to the higher summit, now called 'Pointe Puiseux,' of which this was the first ascent.

The article is adorned by a portrait of M. Puiseux, who was born in 1820 and died in 1883, while the itineraries of his journeys (for botanical purposes) in 1847 and 1848 add some precise details as to his attempts on Monte Rosa in 1847 and 1848, the first made. Alpine historians are much indebted to M. Guillemin for this paper, and will await eagerly the publication of the other interesting Alpine documents which he tells us are carefully preserved among his Alpine archives. W. A. B. C.

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