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IN MEMORIAM.

FRANCIS ASTON-BINNS.

This season has been the most disastrous in my recollection except that of 1882 when Balfour and Penhall lost their lives. These deaths came close to me, for Penhall was a pupil of mine, and Balfour was one at whose feet I sat in reverence. But this year a friendship has been torn from my life by the death of Francis Aston-Binns, and the Alpine Club has suffered the loss of one of its most enthusiastic members. He had climbed with me this summer with more energy and enjoyment than ever before in our companionship of ten years. We began early in August with a training walk up the Val de Bagnes, and traversed the Rosa Blanche, then crossed the Bec d'Epicoun to reach Bionaz in the Valpelline, and in that district we climbed the Dent di Vessona, Mt. Morion, and Mt. Faudéry. At Saas we made an attack upon the Dom, but were beaten back at the sleeping place by a storm; we climbed the Weissmiess by the long arête from the Laquinjoch, and when my holiday was over, Aston-Binns ascended the Südlenzspitz and Nadelhorn. On September 4, in the Chamonix district, he ascended the Little Dru, on September 8 the Aiguille Blaitière, on the 10th the Aiguille du Tacul, on the 13th the Chardonnet; on the 15th, with Xaver Imseng, he traversed the five points of the Aiguille des Charmoz, and reached the summit before noon. In the descent the fatal fall occurred which cost both their lives, the bodies being found in a crevasse below the upper Séracs of the Glacier des

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Nantillons. His energy as a climber is well shown by this long list of ascents; moreover to his mountaineering qualifications were added good topographical knowledge and great linguistic ability. At the priest's house in the Valpelline this year the ease and freedom with which he spoke French, Italian and German was remarkable, and his ear for dialects was so keen that he was on popular terms with the peasantry as well as with the priests.

During his youthful training at Balliol, where he learned to love languages and philosophy, he was very favourably regarded by his tutor, Mr. Nettleship, and by Professor Jowett, who then presided over the College. His life at Oxford was followed by a period of poor health, and it was the Alpine climbing which finally so invigorated him that any weakness of body issued in strength, and at the date of his untimely death he was in possession of the finest physical powers. With good looks, and a charm of manner which expressed his real goodness of heart, it is no wonder that he made many friendships.

Dr. Westcott of Sherborne, with whom he worked six years and a half, pays this tribute to his memory and to his character: 'To all his kindliness of heart was fully known. He was a man who shrank from causing pain to any; his whole nature was in revolt against every cruelty. This trait in our friend was obvious and palpable to all. But what all could not see (such things are not obvious) was the wonderful loyalty which was the mainspring of his being. To the outward eye he might seem (and such seeming was wholly wrong) a man whose ideal in life was culture and refinement. But we who knew him best were well aware that he was indeed the most loving possible son, the most affectionate brother, the truest-hearted friend.'

Mutual friends have written to me letters of sympathy, and many letters came, too, from those who did not know me personally, but, appreciating his loyalty and devotion, felt with me how great a loss we had sustained.

From a remote place in Scotland a well-known mountaineer wrote me a letter, from which I quote a few lines of true sympathy. He writes: 'I have had similar losses myself and know what it is to lose a man who has been one's tried companion and intimate friend in circumstances which perhaps make men more intimate than any other. To have lived with a mountaineering chum, and to have shared dangers and disagreeables and the keenest pleasures with him, year after year, sets up a very close link, and when that is suddenly snapped, it is a grievous blow. There is one consolation, though but a slight one, to the companion who remains, and it is that, if one is to die, there is no better way of death, none certainly that I should prefer. It is sudden, quite painless, and meets you probably while in the fullest enjoyment of health and happiness such as is only to be got upon the peaks. My own feelings towards the mountains have only gained a stronger attachment since J. H. Pratt sank in Como, and Lewis Nettleship and Frank Balfour died on Mont Blanc—they are, as it were, hallowed by such associations.'

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Frank Aston-Binns has gone to his rest; he has the beloved mountains for his monument; and of this I am well assured—that there will always live in the hearts of those left behind the memory of his friendship.

GEORGE WHERRY.

REVIEW.

In the Forbidden Land. By A. Henry Savage Landor. (London: Heinemann. 1898.)

IN the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th chapters of 'The Forbidden Land,' a work by Mr. A. Henry Savage Landor, the author of two previous books of travel in the Far East, which has been presented by its publisher, Mr. Heinemann to the Alpine Club, the author describes his ascent to the crest of a Himalayan Pass, the altitude of which he gives, from his own observations made with scientific instruments which, he tells us, he 'was carrying for the Royal Geographical Society,' as exactly 22,000 ft.

The details of the expedition furnished are of a very unique and surprising character, as will be gathered from the following summary, which necessarily does but scanty justice to the picturesqueness of Mr. Landor's narrative. It is, in fact, only a humble endeavour to extract from it certain definite statements as to facts and figures. No dates are given in this part of Mr. Landor's book, but it would appear from the appendix that it was in June or July 1897 that the following adventure took place:—

The author and his party spent, at an altitude of 15,400 ft., a night of storm, during which snow fell in their camp to a depth of 2 ft. About 6 A.M. they started. They marched for mile after mile over sharp stones, with 'their feet in a dreadful condition, cut and bleeding, because it was constantly necessary to walk barefooted.' By 4.30 P.M. they had covered 8 miles, and reached a spot (16,150 ft.) near the sources of the Mangshan river, which is shown on the Indian Government maps of Kumaon. The snow line is stated to be here at 16,000 ft.

Almost immediately, without eating or taking any provisions, although they had already been some ten hours without food, the author, with Dr. Harkua Wilson, 'in charge of Bhot dispensaries, American Episcopal Mission,' and two native companions, started again, and after walking about 3 miles, reached the glacier at the head of the valley (17,800 ft.). Mr. Landor was carrying on his person 'silver rupees, two aneroids, cartridges, a revolver,' &c., the weight of which is elsewhere precisely stated as sixty pounds. It may be noted in passing that one of the aneroids was only graduated to 20,000 ft. (vol. i. p. 6). Mr. Landor was wearing thin clothes (p. 155), a small cap, 'medium thick shoes without nails,' and never carried a stick (p. 7). He adds, 'I think it was due

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