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BALL'S 'ALPINE GUIDE.' NEW EDITION.*

MR. BALL'S death, which occurred in 1889, naturally suggested the idea of re-publishing his *Alpine Guide*. It was felt that no more worthy memorial of the first President of the Alpine Club could be imagined, for the last edition—the third—which Mr. Ball himself had prepared, was published in 1870. Although in many parts the original text could hardly be bettered, minute knowledge of the Alps had in the interval become so elaborated that the excellence of the work as a whole was in danger of being overlooked in favour of publications giving the results of recent exploration. The Alpine Club laid a very heavy responsibility on any one who undertook the task of revising the volumes. Ball's Guides—though perhaps not so widely known as they deserve to be—were held in the very highest estimation by those who were best able to judge of the merits of a guide-book, which not only dealt with the whole of the Alps, but devoted special attention to the higher regions. It was necessary that the new edition, if it was to be worthy of its original author, should more than hold its own among the countless guide-books now extant. As yet only one volume of the three is published, but we may say at once, that if the standard of this volume can be maintained, the Alpine Club has reason to be proud of the success that has attended their endeavour to do honour to the memory of their first President. For this result they have to thank their editor. No one was better qualified by wide and intimate knowledge of the Alps than Mr. Ball to write the original guide, and certainly no one, for the same reason, was so capable of revising and reconstructing it as Mr. Coolidge. An additional difficulty in the task of editing lay in the fact that the work was a new edition, and not a new book. Mr. Ball was possessed of a charming literary style, which even the writing of a guide-book could not conceal, and Mr. Coolidge throughout has evidently endeavoured, and not without success, to give us the new edition, so far as possible, as Mr. Ball himself might have penned it. The present volume deals with the mountain groups of the Maritime, Dauphiné, and Pennine Alps, together with the Cottian and Graian districts. The extent of the mountain and glacier exploration achieved since 1870, may be gathered from the fact that the present volume is half as large again as the former one. The actual bulk of the book is not, however, increased, as the whole of the introduction has been cut out. We understand that it is contemplated to publish this also, revised by high authorities, in a separate volume. Mr. Coolidge, however, gives an extensive list of books relating to the

* 'The Alpine Guide: The Western Alps.' By the late John Ball, F.R.S. A new edition, reconstructed and revised on behalf of the Alpine Club, by W. A. B. Coolidge. Longmans: London. 1898. With new and revised Maps.

Western Alps, of guide-books, Alpine periodicals (whose number is legion), and maps, together with a useful list of Club huts.

Without attempting any exhaustive notice of a book such as this—the full value of which can only be determined by actual use—we may note certain features in the new edition. As might be expected, information about the Dauphiné and Graian Alps has been largely extended, for of this district the editor undoubtedly possesses a greater knowledge than any one living. But other regions have by no means been neglected, and the editor has utilized the willing help of the most competent authorities, such as M. Louis Kurz, in the chain of Mont Blanc, and Mr. A. G. Topham, in the central and part of the eastern Pennines, to name only two out of many who have assisted. Those who, like the present writer, have used Ball's guide in the days when it was new, are disposed to be critical, and almost to resent any fresh touch or change in a volume they know so well, even when the alterations are unquestionable improvements. But a reviewer, even though actuated by this feeling, is silenced by the excellence of the work as a whole. To take one instance: we miss, if we can hardly regret, the omission of the well-known description of the ascent of the Dufourspitze of Monte Rosa, but we cannot but admit that it would be quite out of place in a guide-book for mountaineers of the present day. Scattered throughout the volume are numerous historical notes of much interest and value, and in many small points of detail the editor's accurate knowledge is evidenced and common errors are corrected. Thus Mr. Coolidge is careful to point out that the almost time-honoured idea that the Dom is the highest mountain wholly in Switzerland is incorrect, seeing that the frontier line between Switzerland and Italy runs south of the Dufourspitze. Again, as he points out, the summit of Mont Blanc lies wholly in French territory. It may be noted, in passing, that in neither case does the printing of the maps quite bear out these small geographical points. The arrangement of the index is an obvious improvement. In the original guide the entries were made under three different headings, one relating to the peaks or mountains, another to the passes, while the third formed a "general" index. Hotels are mentioned only in the index, and as this part can at any time be separately reprinted, the list can be kept up to date. It would be better also to place the list of Club huts at the end of the volume, for, as is pointed out in the preface, the building of a new mountain inn or Club hut, or the decay of an old one, entirely alters the mountain region from the point of view of the practical convenience of travellers. Included in the new volume are six district maps, one of the maritime, three of the Cottian, and two of the Graian Alps. In some respects these maps are hardly worthy of the work, but this is by no means the fault of the editor, whose work in connection with them seems very thorough. In addition there is a map of Mont Blanc and its

neighbours, including the Sixt district; one of the central Pennines, taking in the Grand Combin and extending east up to the Dent d'Hérens, together with the Val d'Anniviers, the Val d'Hérens and the Val de Bagnes. Also one of the Eastern Pennines which takes in the Monte Rosa group and the Mischabelhörner, extending on the east as far as Domodossola. These three last, altered from the Alpine Club map on a scale of about 4 miles to the inch, are clear and well printed. No doubt it is convenient in a guide-book to have maps for general reference, but the editor points out justly in his preface that explorers of the higher regions of the Alps "*must* employ the more or less perfect maps issued by the various Government Surveys."

We look forward to the publication of the second volume, which will deal with the Central Alps. It is not probable that any further editions of the 'Ball's Alpine Guide' will ever be published, and it is all the more satisfactory to recognize that the present volume is likely to maintain, for a long time to come, its position of the best guide-book for those who are attracted to the sub-alpine or glacier regions.

The publication has been long delayed for reasons set forth in the preface. But the subscribers are not likely to complain in their satisfaction at finding the work so well done. Mr. Coolidge has never employed his encyclopædic knowledge of the Alps to better advantage than in rebuilding of this monument to the memory of one who was justly venerated by all mountaineers.

THE CRAWFORD MAPPEMONDE REPRODUCTIONS.*

By C. RAYMOND BEAZLEY, M.A.

THE three maps here reproduced are: A. The anonymous "Harleian" example, of about A.D. 1536, supposed by some to be the work of Pierre Desceliers of Dieppe, and undoubtedly belonging, like the two following, to the Dieppese school of cartography (British Museum, Addit. MSS. 5413); B. The Desceliers map of 1546, called by Jomard "The Map of King Henri II.," and now belonging to the Earl of Crawford (Bibl. Lind., French MSS. 15); C. The Desceliers of 1550 (B. Mus., Addit. MSS. 24,065).

(A.) is the oldest existing specimen of Dieppese cartography. It measures 8 feet 2 inches by 3 feet 11 inches; is graduated for latitude only, to 73° N. and 64° S.; and is executed on parchment with many ornaments, figures, etc. It bears the royal arms of Francis I. of France, and those of the Dauphin Francis, the latter with some unfinished detail which may hint at the sudden death of the Prince (August 10, 1536) just at the time of the completion of the map.

In this example some of the results of Cartier's first two voyages to Canada in 1534-36 are apparently embodied, and a close resemblance is

* 'Bibliotheca Lindesiana,' Collations and Notes, No. IV. Facsimiles of Three Mappemondes. 1898.