

In Memoriam :

WILLIAM BROWN, M.A., LL.B.,

Died 15th September, 1901.

IT is our melancholy duty to record the death, since our last issue, of a well-known member of the Club, Mr. William Brown, advocate, Edinburgh. Most of Mr. Brown's friends were aware that for some time his health had been far from satisfactory, though, up to the last, it was hoped that his exceptionally strong constitution would enable him to withstand the insidious disease that had attacked him. But such hopes were not to be realised, and we now mourn the removal of one, "dead ere his prime", who, if life and health had been granted him, would have attained to high distinction, not only in his own profession, but in wider fields of achievement.

It is not necessary here to recount in detail Mr. Brown's brilliant University career, or to do more than refer to his well-merited forensic success. No counsel of his years had heavier or more important cases, and his standing on the academic side of his profession was sufficiently shown by his election only a few months before his death to the important lectureship on Court Procedure in the University of Edinburgh. We would rather say something of the personal qualities that endeared him to his friends, and of his mountaineering career.

It was, we think, just about the end of his Arts curriculum at Aberdeen that Brown began to take long pedestrian excursions. These soon developed into still longer hill walks, and in these days, and for years after, his powers as a pedestrian were something appalling to weaker mortals. Winter expeditions over the Cairngorms, from Speyside to Braemar, marked a further stage in his progress, and, shortly after, he became a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and definitely took to climbing as his recreation. The evolution, in this way, of the hill-walker into the mountain-climber is happily

touched on in his interesting article on "Climbing in Scotland"—the last of many interesting articles he contributed to this *Journal*.

As a climber, Brown showed all his personal qualities at their best. Unflinching and determined in all he undertook, he was never more unflinching and determined than in his attacks on "the passionless resistance of the cliffs". As a comrade and companion, no man was more loyal to his friends. His grit, tried and proved in many a stiff climb, had, alas! its greatest trial and its most complete proof in his last pathetic struggle, while in the toils of his illness, to do justice to his work, and give his best to the clients whose interests were entrusted to his care.

Few of the climbing fields of Scotland were unknown to Brown. He had long been familiar with the Cairngorms in all their aspects; and he was as much at home on the ridges of Skye as on Ben Eighe, or in that "Paradise of climbers", Glencoe. He was one of the pioneers of climbing on Ben Nevis, where perhaps his most notable achievement was his—the first recorded—ascend of the North-East Buttress. Another feat of his was his well-known climb, along with Mr. Tough, right up the face of the middle precipice of the great corrie of Lochnagar. Since then, some of the gullies of the Lochnagar corrie have been climbed, and others have been attempted, but, as yet, no one has been bold enough to try to repeat this great climb. As a climber on rocks, Mr. Brown was indeed one of the most daring and skilful of his time. We have referred to his articles in these pages, but they are only a few of his many contributions to the literature of mountaineering, all marked by much literary grace, and by an inherited charm and felicity of diction, that marked all his spoken as well as written utterances.

In writing these lines, one feels all the pathos and truth of the old Virgilian lament, *funer inani munere*; yet it is a consolation to be able to add a stone to the cairn of remembrance of our departed comrade, and to express, in this way, however imperfectly, our tribute to his memory, and our sympathy with his sorrowing relatives.