

TWO MOUNTAIN WAR MEMORIALS.

A NOTABLE war memorial and one of peculiar appropriateness has been secured in the English Lake District, where the Fell and Rock Climbing Club has acquired a large tract of mountain land and dedicated it as a monument to the members of the Club who fell in the war. With this event we may link the memorial which the Mountain Club of South Africa has placed on Table Mountain and which was unveiled by General Smuts. His speech on the occasion is the finest interpretation of the mountain spirit that has been delivered for many a day.

The idea of acquiring a mountain as a memorial was first suggested to the Fell and Rock Club in 1919. Several schemes had been under consideration, amongst them one for providing shelters on the hills, but none found acceptance, and, when H. P. Cain said, "Let's buy a fell," the suggestion, though at first fanciful, began to attract notice and gradually gained favour. Pillar Rock is the most famous climbing crag in the Lakes and Lord Lonsdale, the proprietor of Ennerdale, was asked if he would sell it as a memorial. He declined. Napes Needle was then considered and there seemed to be a prospect of securing it, as the Musgrave estate, on which it is situated, was for sale. The owners, however, refused to sell the Needle alone. For a time the position was black but it was changed when Mr. Herbert Walker of Seascale purchased the Musgrave property. The Club found in him a sympathetic listener, for he was an old climber and former member of the Club, and when they asked him to sell not only the pinnacle of Napes Needle but Great Gable itself and the adjoining tops, he agreed. The price was £400 and for this the Club has secured all the land above 1,500 feet in the very heart of the Lake District. Twelve mountains are comprised in the area—Kirkfell, Great Gable, Green Gable, Brandreth, Grey Knotts, Base Brown, Seathwaite Fell, Glaramara, Allen Crags, Great End, Broad Crag and Lingmell. The famous Sty Head Pass from Borrowdale to Wasdale runs between Great Gable and Great End, while Scafell Pike lies less than a mile south of the latter. This splendid range of mountain scenery has been handed over by the Club to the National Trust and it will now be secured for all time as a public possession and as a noble memorial to the men whose self-sacrifice

inspired its purchase. A dedication service was held on the summit of Great Gable on the second Sunday of June, when some 250 people assembled. It was a strange ceremony, as a participant described it, "held in the clouds—gathering, enfolding, dissolving : pierced momentarily by a gleam of sun ; thickening again, and at times turning to phantoms folk a dozen feet away." It should be added that Lord Leconfield has given the upper cone of Scafell Pike as a memorial to the men of the dales.

The war memorial of the Mountain Club of South Africa takes the shape of a bronze dial or indicator on the summit of Table Mountain, overlooking Cape Town. It was unveiled by General Smuts, the Prime Minister of the Union, and a large company of members of the Club and others made the ascent for the occasion, among them being two blind soldiers who had lost their sight in the war. General Smuts' address was of such an inspiring character that we give it practically in full. It will appeal to all mountain-lovers :—

" Those whose memory we honour to-day lie buried on the battle-fields of the Great War, where they fell. But this is undoubtedly the place to commemorate them. Nothing could be more fitting and appropriate than this memorial which the Mountain Club of South Africa has erected to the memory of those that fell in the Great War. And this, the highest point of Table Mountain, is the place to put the memorial. The sons of the cities are remembered and recorded in the streets and squares of their cities and by memorials placed in their churches and cathedrals. But the mountaineers deserve a loftier pedestal and a more appropriate memorial. To them the true church where they worshipped was Table Mountain. Table Mountain was their cathedral where they heard a subtler music and saw wider visions and were inspired with a loftier spirit. Here in life they breathed the great air ; here in death their memory will fill the upper spaces. And it is fitting that in this cathedral of Table Mountain the lasting memorial of their great sacrifice should be placed. Not down there in the glowing and rich plains, but up here in the bleak and cold mountain tops. As Browning put it :

" Here, here's their place,
Where meteors shoot,
Clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go."

" Geologists tell us that in the abyss of time Table Mountain was much more of a mountain than it is to-day. Then it was more than 18,000 feet high, of which barely one-fifth remains to-day. And in another million years no trace may be left of it. Here there is no abiding city, neither is there an abiding mountain. Human life

itself may be but a passing phase of the history of this great globe. But as long as human memory lasts, as long as men and women will remember and be interested in the history of their storied past, so long the Great War—perhaps the greatest ever in human history—will be remembered, and the memory of the great sacrifice here recorded will endure as part of it.

“The attraction of the mountains for us points to something very significant and deep in our natures. May I illustrate the matter by a little story which is not quite true, but neither is it entirely mythical, as it finds some support in the testimony of science.

“Once upon a time, in the far-off beginnings of things, the ancestors of the present human race lived far down in the deep blue pools of the ocean, amid the slimy ooze from which they had themselves sprung. There they lived and developed a long time, and in the sounds of the sea, in the rhythm of the waters, and of the rising and falling tides, they learnt that sense of music which is so mysterious a faculty in us, and which is in a much smaller degree shared by so many marine animals. The music in a sea shell pressed to our ear carries us back to the very beginnings of life on this planet. It is a far-off echo of our most ancient experience as living things. As our ancestors thrived and developed they gradually found the pressure of the waters too much for them. They felt stifled and longed for more freedom to breathe. And so they rose slowly on to the beaches, and finally emerged into the air on the seashore. What a blessed relief was there, what an unconscious sense of lightness and exaltation! No longer submerged in the stifling depths, but with full lungs expanding in the invigorating air. The rising from the sea was the most glorious advance in the forward march of terrestrial life. But it was not enough.

“The same process of development and advance continued on the seashore. In the course of time the heavy air of the sea levels became too much for the ever-forward movement of the forms of life. The pressure on the lungs was too great, and the forward movement seemed to be arrested in a sort of atmospheric morass, in which a great heaviness hung on the spirit of life. At this stage a new great advance was registered. The rise to higher levels took place. Some animals developed wings with which they could fly upward and for longer or shorter periods remain in the high places and breathe a keener air. And in this rise they shook off their ancient sluggishness and lethargy, and developed a spirit of joy which had hitherto been unknown to them. The skylark rising in an ecstasy of song high into the air is an illustration of the new great advance.

“Other forms of life developed other means of locomotion and of ascent from the heavy low levels. As the dull dead-weight was removed from the lungs a new sense of lightness, of progress, of joy

and gladness dawned on the ever higher rising forms of life. The great relief was not only of a physical character, but had the most far-reaching and spiritual values. And so it has come about that finally in man all moral and spiritual values are expressed in terms of altitude. The low expresses degradation both physical and moral. If we wish to express great intellectual or moral or spiritual attainments we use the language of altitudes. We speak of men who have risen, of aims and ideals that are lofty, we place the seat of our highest religious ideals in high Heaven, and we consign all that is morally base to nethermost hell. Thus the metaphors embedded in language reflect but the realities of the progress of terrestrial life. The Mountain is not merely something externally sublime. It has a great historic and spiritual meaning for us. It stands for us as the ladder of life. Nay, more, it is the ladder of the soul, and in a curious way the source of religion. From it came the Law, from it came the Gospel in the Sermon on the Mount. We may truly say that the highest religion is the Religion of the Mountain.

“What is that religion? When we reach the mountain summits we leave behind us all the things that weigh heavily down below on our body and our spirit. We leave behind all sense of weakness and depression; we feel a new freedom, a great exhilaration, an exaltation of the body no less than of the spirit. We feel a great joy. The religion of the mountain is in reality the religion of joy, of the release of the soul from the things that weigh it down and fill it with a sense of weariness, sorrow and defeat. The religion of joy realises the freedom of the soul, the soul's kinship to the great creative spirit and its dominance over all the things of sense.

“We must fill our daily lives with the spirit of joy and delight. We must carry this spirit into our daily lives and tasks. We must perform our work not grudgingly and as a burden imposed on us, but in a spirit of cheerfulness, goodwill and delight in it. Not only on the mountain summits of life, not only on the heights of success and achievement, but down in the deep valleys of drudgery, of anxiety and defeat, we must cultivate this great spirit of joyous freedom and uplift of the soul. We must practice the religion of the mountain down in the valleys also.

“This may sound a hard doctrine, and it may be that only after years of practice are we able to triumph in spirit over the things that weigh and drag us down. But it is the nature of the soul, as of all life, to rise, to overcome, and finally to attain complete freedom and happiness. And if we consistently practice the religion of the mountain we must succeed in the end. To this great end Nature will co-operate with the soul. The mountains uphold us and the stars beckon to us.”