

## LORD HALDANE AS MOUNTAINEER.

### SEVENTY-THREE MILES IN TWENTY-THREE HOURS.

IN the opening chapter of his *Autobiography*, Lord Haldane has some interesting references to mountaineering which, through the courtesy of Miss Haldane and the publishers, we are permitted to quote.

“As we grew up,” wrote Lord Haldane, “we developed considerable capacities for physical exertion. We became energetic walkers. I have more than once started from Cloan on foot to walk to the top of Ben Lawers, a mountain four thousand feet high in the Grampians, opposite to our home in the Ochils. I recall once starting at two in the morning with my younger brothers and walking to the top of the Ben and back, seventy-three miles within twenty-three hours. When we got to the foot of the great hill we found a rival party, who had slept the night in an inn, aspiring to do the climb in record time, but our wind was better than theirs, owing to our having been walking over hill and dale all night, and we easily left them behind. These same younger brothers, a little later, walked from Ballater to Cloan, again over the intervening Grampians, doing a walk of one hundred and one miles in thirty hours and fifty minutes, without over-fatigue. In after life, when I was at the Bar, I was able, without being in training, to walk from Brighton to London easily in between thirteen and fourteen hours. Later on in life, when I was War Minister, I remember going down to Lewes, there to inspect the troops commanded by the General of the Division. The motor which was to have taken us to our destination after the inspection did not turn up, and the General asked me rather timidly if I felt equal to walking a little of the way along the Brighton to London road. I smiled and proceeded to set the pace.

“In the glens around Cloan we had some experience in stiff climbing. Afterwards, when I went to the University of Göttingen,

I accompanied the Professor of Geology and a party of students on an expedition through the Hartz Mountains to search for fossils. We came opposite to a steep and high cliff, and the Professor said that if we could only do what was impracticable, get at some rock which appeared on the face near the top, we should probably find some striking specimens. I said nothing but put my hammer in my pocket and suddenly proceeded to scale the cliff. The Germans were not, in these days, as athletic as they afterwards became. There was an agonized abjuration to me to come down. But I got to near the top, and with my hammer extracted from the surface of the rock a likely looking lump. When I got down again, after a not really difficult climb, this was examined and from it was extracted a rather valuable specimen of fossil. I was reproached for the supposed risk to which I had subjected the party as well as myself. But the fossil was extracted and cleaned and placed in the University Museum under the title 'Petrefactum Nomine Haldane.'