



The Highest Andes: A Record of the First Ascent of Aconcagua and Tupungato in Argentina, and the Exploration of the Surrounding Valleys (Classic Reprint)

E. A. Fitz Gerald

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Excerpt from *The Highest Andes: A Record of the First Ascent of Aconcagua and Tupungato in Argentina, and the Exploration of the Surrounding Valleys*

This book is the outcome of seven months' work by myself and my colleagues, Mr. Stuart Vines, Mr. Arthur Lightbody, and Mr. Philip Gosse, in the Andes of Argentina. My expedition had for its object primarily the triangulation of the country immediately surrounding the peak of Aconcagua, America's highest mountain; and secondly, the scaling of the great peak itself, which had up to that time defied the efforts of all who had attempted to gain its summit. The success that we met with was due to the unflagging help and splendid efforts of my companions, who in the face of many difficulties and hardships assisted me with unflinching cheerfulness and great courage. The delay in the appearance of this narrative is owing to a severe attack of typhoid fever as I was about to leave South America. No sooner did I become convalescent than my friend Mr. Vines was stricken by the same malady, with the result that it was not till January 1898 that we reached England.

The genesis of the expedition and the history of Aconcagua are set forth in the first chapter. It may be of interest, however, to reproduce here a short passage written in 1876 by the late Mr. T. W. Hinchliff, an ardent mountaineer of the early days of the Alpine Club, upon the prospect of an ascent of Aconcagua and Tupungato. He wrote: -

"Lover of mountains as I am, and familiar with such summits as those of Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, and other Alpine heights, I could not repress a strange feeling as I looked at Tupungato and Aconcagua, and reflected that endless successions of men must in all probability be for ever debarred from their lofty crests. When we used to look at the highest peaks and passes of the Alps the only question which suggested itself was 'Which is the best way to get there?'

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