

THE FORTHCOMING NEW EDITION OF THE 1-INCH ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP.

THE report of the Director-General of the Ordnance Survey for the year ending March 31, 1913, contains the following statement regarding the new edition of the 1-inch map, which has been in active contemplation since Colonel Close's appointment to command the Survey:—

“Experiments have been made during the year with a view to improving the character of the coloured edition of the 1-inch map. It has been found that, without adopting any heroic measures, there will be no difficulty in greatly improving the map in the new issue. It is not likely that any sheets of this issue will be published before 1914.”

By the courtesy of the Director-General an advance copy of the Killarney District sheet has been sent to the Society, and may be seen in the Map-Room. This sheet is of remarkable beauty. It deserves the more careful examination inasmuch as we are assured above that no “heroic measures” have been necessary. We may understand by this that no new engraving has been done. All the new plates necessary have been inexpensively prepared on transfers from the original copper plates; and the success of the map is due to skilled use of all the recent improvements in colour printing and in transparent inks.

The existing coloured 1-inch map of Great Britain (3rd edition) shows the relief of the ground by spot heights; by contours, rather heavy, in red; and by hachures in sepia. In the new edition the spot heights of course remain unchanged; the contours are fine dotted lines in black; and the hachures are in warm pale brown. The depth of the hachures is, as before, sensibly independent of the direction of slope: they are nearly equivalent to “vertical” hill-shading, their nominal superiority being, in fact, pretty well discounted by the conventionalization that has overtaken them in the process of engraving.

Superposed on the contours and vertical hachures we have two features new to the inch map—an oblique hill shade in bluish-grey, and a pale set of layer tints. Between sea-level and the 300-feet contour the tint is pale yellowish-green. Above 300 it becomes slightly browner and warmer, with increased depth of colour at 600 and at 1250 feet. At least, this appears to be the system. But the changes of layer tint are so delicately graded, and so much overlaid by the hachures of the same tone of colour, that it is difficult to be quite certain that the above analysis is correct. That any uncertainty should be possible is the best testimony to the soft and perfectly blended effect of the whole map.

We believe that this is the most complex system of hill representation yet adopted. The French 1 : 50,000 map has contours, and the two-coloured vertical and oblique hill-shading, but no layer tints. The Bavarian staff map on the 1 : 250,000 scale has contours, oblique shading in grey, and

layer tints, but no vertical hill-shading. It has been left to the Ordnance Survey to employ every canonical method of hill representation in an admirable blend.

Some of the minor features of the map are of considerable interest and value. The classification of roads has been made more precise by colouring the main roads a deep reddish-brown, the second-class roads remaining the usual yellow. Some further sub-classification is promised in the forthcoming English sheets. Woods are shown by black tree signs on a pale green ground. Rivers are in a curious opaque Egyptian blue. Lakes and sea are tinted by fine horizontal lines, presumably of the same colour.

It may be thought, perhaps, that the only feature of the map which is not quite successful is this representation of water. In accordance with the old convention the lake margins north and west are shown by a heavy line, that is to say, by a river (on the system of colouring here adopted). The sea margins, on the other hand, are delicate continuous black lines. Thus the junction of river with lake or sea is not quite happy. But it is probable that any improvement would require the addition of one or more to the already large number of printings on the sheet.

An improvement of capital importance is promised for the new edition of the English map. *Contours at 50-feet vertical interval will be shown right up to the top of the mountains.* This, if not "heroic," is at any rate a bold solution of the problem which must have vexed every Director-General since the unhappy day when it was decided that at 1000 feet the vertical interval of the contours should suddenly jump from 100 to 250 feet. A generation or two of users of the 1-inch map have prayed for the day when they might see the 100-feet interval carried upward. The 50-feet interval right up is a splendid gift.

There can be no hesitation in pronouncing the Killarney District sheet to be a long way the best topographical sheet of gently mountainous country yet published. Geographers will be foremost in acknowledging the great service to the country done by the Director-General of the Ordnance Survey in producing this beautiful map.
