

THE NAPES NEEDLE.

From a photo. by R. WILLIAMS.

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

Edited by E. RAYMOND TURNER.

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AN ASCENT OF THE NAPES NEEDLE, GREAT GABLE.

BY SHOWELL ROGERS, M.A., LL.D.

“This pinnacle of isolated crag.”—*Shelley*.

THE Montenegrins have a saying: “When God made the world He held in His hand a sackful of mountains. Right above Montenegro the sack burst: hence the fearful chaos you see before you.” In England the sack may be said to have burst over the greater part of Cumberland and Westmorland, and the large outlying portion of Lancashire. The result was the Lake District; which has been aptly described as the most perfect pocket edition of a great mountain range to be found in all Europe. But let not the luggage-laden tourist, who in the summer season traverses its length from Windermere to Keswick on a crowded coach, suppose that he has seen, much less exhausted, its grandeur and beauty—no, not even though he have secured the box-seat! It is to the adorer who seeks her in her secluded recesses, over wild passes, on lofty and lonely peaks guarding dark mountain tarns, in deep-cut gorges, and amid stupendous crags, that Nature discloses her most secret charms. Deep in Eskdale, Ennerdale, and Wastdale lie the inmost *penetralia* of her shrine. The vulgarities of civilisation have not hitherto invaded these veritable paradises of the pedestrian and the climber to any disturbing extent. These dales of Lakeland resemble those spots, now few and far between, in Switzerland, which have not as yet—to borrow an expressive phrase from over the Channel—become “*Oberlandisées et Zermattisées*.” May it be long before the serpent of civilisation in the

shape of a coach road winds its way up from Borrowdale and over the Sty Head Pass down into the heart of Wastdale, one of the few oases still left in the desert of British touristdom.

Wastdale is the English Jotunheim—the home of the giants of Lakeland. In it lies, on the mountain verge of the open country that extends from the shores of the Irish Sea less than a dozen miles distant, the sombre Wastwater—wildest and deepest of English lakes, its greatest depth being two hundred and fifty-eight feet, of which exactly the odd fifty-eight are below the level of the sea. Its foot is towards the plain, and it stretches, flanked on one side by the wall of its magnificent Screees that sweep grandly up out of its dark waters, and on the other by high frowning fells, three miles into the heart of the mountains. At its head, set in a huge amphitheatre of summits, is Wastdale Head, a hamlet the maximum population of which has never, it is believed, reached the number of fifty. There, almost from the lake shores, rise the highest mountains in England, Scafell and Scafell Pikes (3,210 ft.), with a girdle of attendant peaks of little inferior altitude. I know not to what saint the little church at Wastdale Head, which till modern times boasted but eight tiny pews and three cottage windows, is dedicated; but it might fitly be consecrated in honour of St. Martin, the patron saint of mountaineers. At any rate, Tyson's Inn, most hospitable and welcome of hostelrys, which has attained to the dignity of the "Wastwater Hotel" since the days when, under the humbler and more picturesque sign of the "Huntsman's Inn," it was kept by stalwart Will Ritson—name dear to many generations of climbers—might well be called the Mecca of English mountaineers. What wonder, then, that on St. Lubbock's Day, to wit the August Bank Holiday of 1898, I escaped thither with a knapsack and stout oak stick—the sole survivals in these latter days of the pilgrim's wallet and staff—in order for an all too brief three days to be rid of "the weariness, the fever and the fret" of city life? I had, moreover, lately been reading Mr. Owen Glynne Jones's recently-published and strikingly original book, "Rock-Climbing in the English Lake District" (Longmans, 1897). His fascinating chapter on the ascent of the Gable Needle, or Napes Needle as it is more generally called, and the admirable photographs by which it is illustrated, had filled me with a strong desire to make its personal acquaintance.

Standing at the door of the inn at Wastdale Head, and looking N.E. up the dale at Gavel Neese (Gable Nose), the grassy rounded spur of Great Gable, you descry on the steep-sloping sides of the

latter, high above the bridle track from the Sty Head Pass, and some 2,000 feet above sea-level, a dark pile of rock bastions that stand out with precipitous buttresses from the mountain mass, like the embattled crags depicted in Doré's illustrations of Dante's "Inferno." Those who know where to look for it can, especially with the aid of a good glass, discover among these crags, against the background of the mountain wall, a sharp pinnacle rising vertically from their base. This "prepicissitous pinniccle"—as a luckless foreigner, struggling at the same time with it and with our language, designated it—is the Napes Needle. Though it has soared there on high for centuries, it long lay *perdue*, a virgin *aiguille*, unseen or unnoted by any but the wandering shepherds of the fells. It was not until June, 1886, that Mr. Haskett Smith made, unaccompanied, the first ascent. The Needle was not vanquished again till 1889, when three separate ascents were successfully made by three well-known climbers. In the following year, 1890, it was attacked by a climbing party at Easter, who managed, after three-quarters of an hour's exertion, to fling a rope over the top of the rock for the benefit of the leader, the late Professor Milnes Marshall. This party included an adventurous lady, Miss Koecher, who had the honour of being the first of her sex to gain the summit. It has been frequently climbed since, and not a year goes by now without numerous ascents being duly accomplished.

A "Climber's Book" is kept at the "Wastwater Hotel," which contains this instructive and naive prefatory note:—"This book was started for the use of climbers in January, 1890, with a view of relieving the pages of the ordinary Visitors' Book." This dedicatory and polite euphemism affords at once a much-needed warning against, and a welcome antidote to, the banal inanities—in praise, for the most part, of mutton and beef, and ham and eggs, in prose or worse—that ordinarily disfigure the Visitors' Book at nearly all tourist hotels. This Climbers' Book, though itself not free from some rubbish, contains "full many a gem of purest ray serene," of which the following is one of the best specimens:—"Found on the Fells—A flask of brandy, found on the Pillar Rock, last climb. Owner may apply at the top of Scafell Pillar. The bottle will be found there—minus the brandy—anxiously awaiting the insertion of its owner's or anyone else's card." Quite a pretty battle royal, though short and sharp, has been waged in this book concerning the comparative merits of the Napes Needle. The contributor of the well-known article to the "Pall Mall Budget" of June 5th, 1890, had written of the Needle

that: "It is the *Dent du Géant* of the Lake District, the climbing being equally difficult, although in extent it cannot be compared with that well-known rock." Upon this a climbing commentator in the book neatly remarks, with sarcastic courtesy, "If he has climbed the *Dent*, I hope he will pardon me when I say that I do not agree with him. If he has not, allow me to say that his informant was certainly in error." Yet another annotator adds: "M. Henri Bulle says the great Napes Needle is harder than even the lower *Aiguille du Dru*. He has done both climbs, the former with me." It is an instructive controversy, and moreover affords an amusing lesson in polite polemics: but one feels inclined to ask, "Who shall decide when climbers disagree?" and to say with Virgil:

. . . *tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?*

which is, being interpreted, "Can so much gall find place in climbers' souls?" Having seen the two Chamonix *aiguilles* from a respectful distance only, I am not in a position to decide between the controversialists, or to rise to the height of their great argument. I entertain, however, a shrewd suspicion that to institute such high-sounding comparisons with its Continental congeners is but to bring our Needle into needless and undeserved contempt. I am reminded of the story of the American lady on the Ullswater steamboat. The skipper proudly explained that she saw in front of her the Monarch of Mountains, "the mighty Helvellyn." "Hell what?" exclaimed the lady. "Helvellyn," replied the skipper. Whereat the lady from Chicago, to his discomfiture, incontinently laughed, and guessed that "If the Rockies could just see him they'd laugh some." At the same time there is no occasion unduly to belittle our Needle; nor to say of it—as a member of the Alpine Club is stated to have said of the neighbouring Sphinx Rock, "that it is a little difficult to find if the grass is rather long!" It is somewhat strange that no writer in the Climbers' Book, nor elsewhere so far as I know, has attempted to explain the meaning of the name Napes. In default of better, I venture, therefore, to offer the following solution, by way of an essay in epigrammatic etymology:—

Napes Needles! ever pointing high,
In rolling mist or azure sky
Tall, tantalizing, tapery;
Could'st thou thy name's hid secret tell,
Would'st say: "Ere days of inch or ell
I sewed the vesture of the fell,
And brodered Nature's napery?"

The first of my three days' holiday was spent with three congenial spirits in climbing the famous Pillar Rock in Ennerdale. We went up in glorious weather by the "West Climb," and down by the "Notch and Slab" route; then up again by the difficult "West Jordan," alias "Left Pishah," climb, descending by the "Ledge and Slab." The third day, which was dull and misty, the same party climbed Scafell Pinnacle; working from Lord's Rake up Deep Ghyll, a magnificent chasm piercing the Scafell precipice from top to bottom. As an instance of how ideas of mountaineering have changed of late, it may be mentioned that Mr. Herman Prior in his "Pedestrian Guide to the Lake District," published many years ago—the only guide-book, by the way, that has ever made any pretence of assisting the climber properly so called in his fell enterprises—describes Deep Ghyll as "wholly impassable"! It is sufficient comment to say that it is now ascended by dozens, nay scores, of climbers every year.

The intervening day was Sunday; and as the weather was unpromising and I wanted an easy day, I strolled out for a solitary scramble towards the Napes Rocks, to make a mere bowing acquaintance with the Needle, and with the virtuous intention of doing nothing rash in the way of venturing upon a single-handed attack upon it; though I confess I thought I might perhaps be tempted to climb a little way up the bottom crack. As I toiled up the steep ridge of the green slopes of Gavel Neese that Sunday morning, there came into my mind the prayer of the Japanese pilgrims, with whom the ascent of mountains is part of their religion, who chant as they breast the slopes of Fuji-yama, or Ontake, "May our six senses be pure, and may the weather on the honourable peak be fine." But it was not to be. At the moment of leaving the grass and taking to the rocks I stepped into cloudland, and there came on a miserable drizzle that was not far removed from rain. The area of vision was limited to a few yards, and I began to think that Horace Smith, of "Rejected Addresses" fame, was right when in his amusing verses "A Tour to the Lakes" he wrote:—

. . . that not e'en one day

In a Lake-week deserves the name of Sun-day.

Nevertheless, like him on I went,

— Maugre this soaking of the scenery;

though traversing the steep and dripping rocks was slow work. There was nothing for it but to get wet. No one can climb in a waterproof, even though it be only a cape, and as for any other protection against such weather, you might as

well—as the late lamented James Payn says in his facetious account of a Lake District expedition—offer mackintoshes to a family of otters! Somewhere up above was the Needle, but whether I had passed the place or not I could not tell. So I ensconced myself in a sort of cave amongst some huge boulders to consider the plan of campaign, with the aid of a quiet pipe, and had almost given it up as a bad job and made up my mind to return, when I heard voices through the mist. Setting up a halloo and

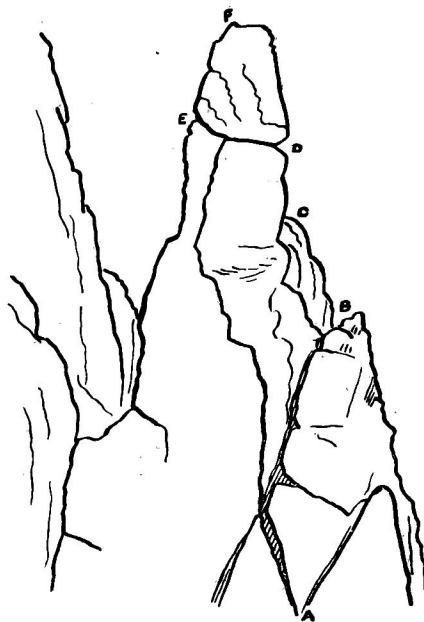


Fig. 1.

getting a response, I shouted : “ Is the Needle up there ? ” “ Yes, we are on it, come up,” was the answer. I had been sitting all the time at its very base. So up I went; and scrambling up a steep but easy gully I soon gained the narrow rocky platform, a few feet below the crack indicated as A in Fig. 1 of our diagrams, which marks the beginning of the climb of the Needle that towered above like a great violoncello, with which its striking form has often been compared. There I found Messrs. W. R. Reade and W. P. McCulloch,

two first-rate climbers, who were staying at Wastdale Head, and who had only a few days before made the first ascent of the west gully of the Jordan gap on the Pillar Rock, long previously regarded as unclimbable*. They had just completed their climb of the Needle, which was no new thing to them, and were discussing lunch. They very kindly expressed their willingness to go up again if I wanted to make the ascent.

Here was a chance not to be lost; so I gladly accepted the offer, and we were soon roped and ready. Reade was leader, I was

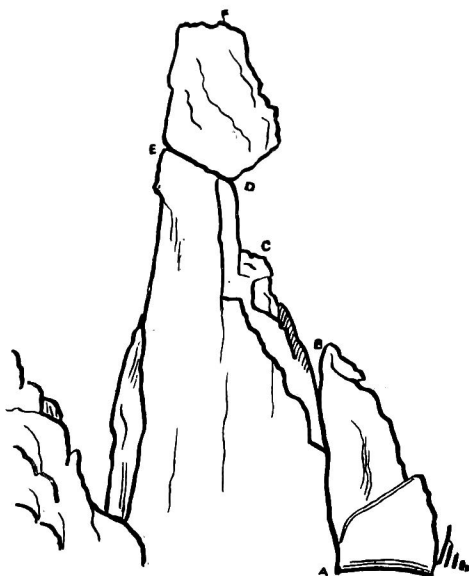


Fig. 2.

middle man, and McCulloch came last. The start off from A (Fig. 1) up the crack to the left is easy enough, but one does not get far up before one's right foot gets tightly caught in the cleft. I suppose no one ever did the climb for the first time without undergoing the same experience. Indeed, it has been humorously suggested that if a number of gentlemen would each leave a boot there it would materially assist lady climbers in their upward

* See above, page 42. The second ascent was made just a month later (August 23rd, 1898), by the Messrs Broadrick, a party of three.

endeavours, by enabling them to pull themselves up by the tags! The crack now turns sharply and steeply up to the right; but is, nevertheless, a trifle too safe for the new-comer, as Mr. Owen Glynne Jones—from whose accurate description of the details of the climb I borrow freely—well puts it. “He gets his left thigh almost hopelessly jammed into the crack, and can move neither up nor down. The best plan is to work more with the left foot and knee in the crack, both hands on the edge of the leaf of rock, and the right leg getting general support by pressure outside, until the most constricted bit half-way up is passed. Then the leaf of rock can be swarmed up with much greater ease, and the climber soon finds himself looking down the other side of the crack.” This is at B, where it is seen that the fissure goes right through the rock, which has been rent from the main mass. The rock can be climbed on the further side up to the same point B; but the climbing on that side, though usually regarded as less severe, is some twelve or fifteen feet longer. I went up by that side this year (Whit-Monday, 1899) when the rocks were damp, cold, and exposed to the wind; and, under those conditions, I found this route more difficult than the crack. “The terrors of the crack,” continues Mr. Owen Jones, “often scare off people from the final piece. They almost did our little party. I found my watch-chain broken—some links still remain in the heart of the Needle—and my watch badly dented.” I confess I found this upper part of the crack awkward enough, even with the security of the rope. The rock was wet and greasy, and I felt that if my left leg, which got jammed in the orthodox manner, had suddenly come free, while both hands were spread over and pressing on the outside edge of the leaf of rock, it would be easy to pitch forward and be dangling on the nearly vertical face. From the point B the route lies practically straight up for ten feet to the shoulder at C. The hand and footholds between B and C, though not many or first-rate, are good enough. At one point there is a curious handle caused by a completely perforated stone, which can be grasped like a sword-hilt; and which, although cracked through both at the top and bottom, and consequently shaky, seems quite secure. At any rate it must have been tested often enough. From C you pass round to the back, where is a rock platform which affords amply sufficient standing room, though not luxurious accommodation, for two or, at a pinch, even three or four persons.

Now comes the tug of war. The summit rock F E D—I fear the letters in the diagrams make it look horribly like an isosceles triangle in a proposition of Euclid—is a huge block, to all appearances

detached from the main mass, and resting by its own weight. The crack E D goes right through the pinnacle, the overhanging character of which is shown in Fig. 2, and terminates at the back in a jutting ledge from two to four inches wide. It is necessary to climb on to this ledge. "It is difficult to climb alone, and exceedingly daring work, for the climber drags his body on to it over a sheer drop of a hundred feet, and feels no certainty of safety till he is up. It is like climbing on to a narrow mantel-shelf five feet high, that is only just wide enough to allow standing room. An ice-axe offers a useful take-off in the absence of a sufficiently responsible shoulder. The disposition of one's centre of gravity must be carefully considered, and there is a sense of alternate peril and safety in inspiration and expiration. . . . Practice on ordinary strong mantel-shelves enables one without help to mount up this corner" (i.e., the D end of the ledge) "with a certainty of success, the right hand being thrust into a thin horizontal cleft rough enough to offer some friction for the back of the hand as well as the palm." My leader also got up at D, but I found the E end the less formidable of the two; and it was, as we shall see, by the E corner that Mr. Haskett Smith made the first ascent. Reade, who is blessed with uncommonly long arms, having neatly mounted the ledge, appeared to double the corner, and at the same time to grasp the pinnacle with both hands and literally to swarm up it. He was on the top of the rock in an incredibly short time, and looking down inviting me to follow. His ascent—barring the bad weather—reminded me forcibly of Tennyson's fragment "The Eagle":—

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

Being, however, fresh from the desk of toil, and with muscles out of training for such a gymnastic feat as the mounting of the ledge in the manner above described, and the rock being wet and slippery, I was not disinclined to avail myself of any reasonable adventitious aid. We had no ice-axe to plant and so use the head as a step; but McCulloch kindly offered me the use of his shoulder for the occasion. He crouched down on the platform, and stepping with my left foot on to his right shoulder, and with my right hand grasping the outside edge of the rock just above E, I mounted in sybaritic fashion on to the ledge. As my weight came on to him, and the iron nails of my boot entered into his soul, or rather shoulder, he sententiously observed, "The plowers plowed upon my back, and made long furrows," a quotation which I suppose he felt singularly

appropriate. The mist was boiling up all round us, so that we could not see the foot of the rock; and Reade, who ought to have known better, shouted down just at the psychological moment when I was making the step up, "Come, hurry up down there; this beastly weather makes me think of 'sunnier climbs'!" Sidling along to the end at D, I found, round the corner, a jutting ledge eighteen inches higher that offered good hold for both feet. The next foothold was for the left foot, a small projection about an inch wide, and several inches higher on the face of the rock. I found this about the most ticklish part of the whole climb. It is necessary to step with the left leg confidently up on to this projection, which slopes slightly the wrong way. To make a false step in doing so might entail serious consequences, as the hand support is of the slightest. Moreover, I had an uncomfortable feeling that to slip here might cause a fall forward, with the result that the rope would slew round the pinnacle and put an awkward side strain on the man at the top. Even if he sat firm and held me up I should be swinging on the face of the rock between F and D (Fig. 1), where recovery would be difficult, and he might have to lower me like a bale of goods to the C shoulder. Such apprehensions were probably wholly groundless, but it was disconcerting enough that they should exist even for a moment. A boot edged with good ice-nails would get a firm grip of the projecting ledge; but my boots were merely studded, and the rounded leather-edge felt insecure enough on the wet and smooth ledge. However, the step was successfully accomplished, and I was then able easily to grip the right-hand and top edges of the boulder in a close embrace. A final pull up and I lay on my chest across the summit, and after a gasp of relief drew my legs up after me. I should have done better to follow Mr. Owen Jones's example in similar circumstances. It was no feeling of reverence or sense of awe, but the laudable instinct of self-preservation that caused him, having un-nailed boots, to take the shoes from off his feet at the platform below and do the top boulder in his stockings. The top of the rock is about four feet long by two feet in the widest part, and shaped something like a coffin-lid. *Absit omen!* I should say the whole length of the climb is from 60 to 100 feet. The descent needs no description. It follows the exact route of the ascent. I expected to find it more difficult to manage, but found it much easier. At the beginning of the start down I found a nice, smooth knob of rock which I utilised as a temporary chin hold when I wanted to move my left arm to enable me to see the next foothold below. Reade promptly christened it "The Chin Traverse."

Only those who have done the climb can fully realise what an intrepid and hazardous feat was Mr. Haskett Smith's first ascent of the Needle. It may be regarded as one of the pluckiest and most brilliant bits of cragmanship ever done in this country. At every other step he must have had doubts of success, and uncertainty as to return, and when trusting himself to the detached and overhanging summit boulder (see Fig. 2) he cannot have been absolutely certain, although it must weigh some tons, that it was, as it is now known to be, perfectly securely based.

It is noteworthy that the Napes Needle was the last of three pioneer climbs which Mr. Haskett Smith achieved by himself in a single day. First he went up the Ennerdale face of Great Gable, up to that time unclimbed. Then, crossing the mountain, he made the first descent from top to bottom of the Needle Ridge, and finally he climbed the Needle itself. He has never written any account of the details of his first ascent; a characteristically modest abstention, although regrettable in the interests of the climbing fraternity. I am, however, now permitted to give a few interesting particulars with which he has furnished me; and I will do so for the most part in his own words: "On reaching the foot of the *arête* of the Needle Ridge I was tempted by the crack in the west side of the Needle itself. It is curious, by the way, that before the next ascent was made several strong parties to my knowledge tried and failed, because they could not manage this crack! The top part was done in the usual way from the shoulder at the back, up at the right hand end of the ledge, along to the left, then round the corner, and a pull up to the top. I had no rope, or axe, or stick, or mechanical aid of any sort, and the beginning of the descent requires some nerve. It cured a headache with which I had started out." By way of token of his successful climb, he left a handkerchief upon the top. As there was no nook or cranny in which to fix it, nor even a loose bit of rock to weight it with, he tied it round a small knob at the north-west corner of the top rock. There it could be seen from below with a glass for some days, a fluttering proof positive, until at length it was blown away by the wind.

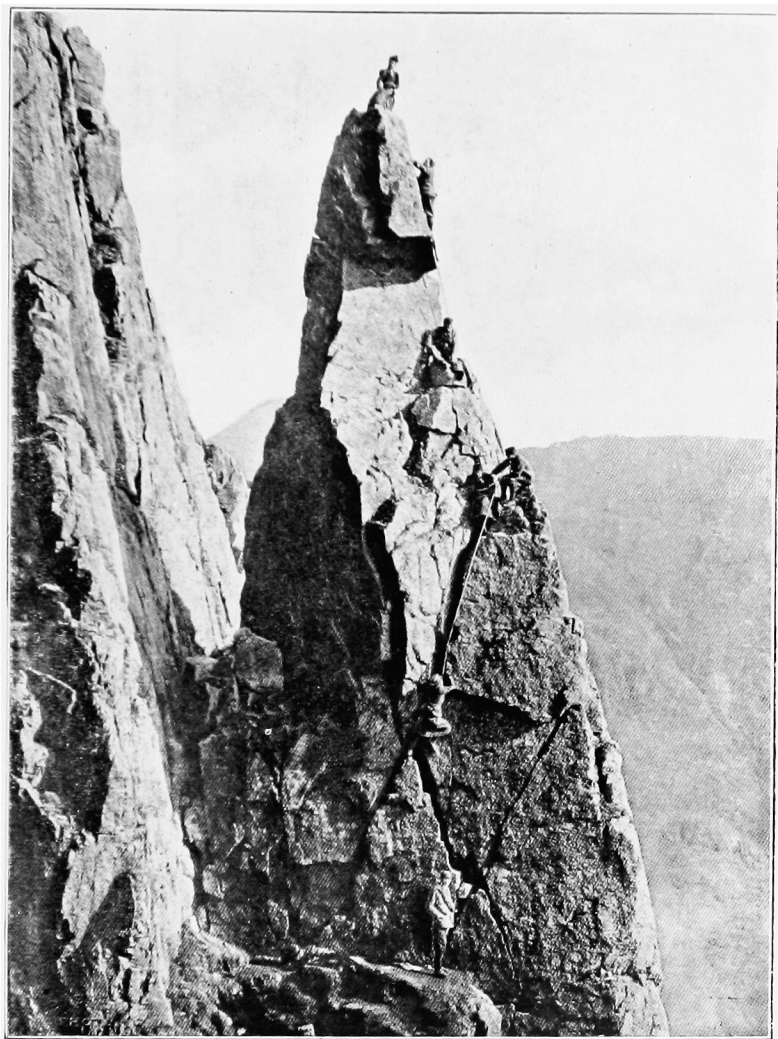
In speaking of pioneer work of this kind one is more than ordinarily justified in employing the hackneyed quotation, "*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*" It is a wonderful encouragement and stimulus to those who follow to feel at every step that one is only treading where others have gone, instead of where mortal foot has never stood before. "The true mountaineer," said the late Mr. Mummery, "is the man who attempts new ascents;"

one who, in the words of Lucretius—if we may substitute "*montes*" for "*fontes*"—says to himself—

Avia peragro loca nullius ante
Trita solo, iuvat integros accedere montes.

Next in order of merit comes the leader of a climbing party, and finally his companions on the rope.

Even experts do well to remember that some well-known "courses" tend to become more rather than less dangerous; while climbs, with the way up well "blazed" by the nail-marks of previous climbers, are calculated to tempt unseasoned novices to embark upon ignorant and rash attempts on their own account. "*Via trita, via tuta*," like most wise sayings, has its qualifications. Hand-holds do not tend to become firmer, and foot-holds which originally afforded a firm grip get worn smooth by constant use. This applies to the Napes Needle. It is perhaps the best known because the most striking rock problem in the Lake District. For this reason it is more likely than others to be rashly attacked. Sooner or later it will no doubt be the scene of a fatal accident. If the bottom crack do not prove the "crack of doom" for some too venturesome novice, the top rock—which looks so tantalisingly tempting when the B shoulder or the C platform has once been gained, and the summit looks so near yet is, in point of difficulty, so far—may yet claim its victim. But of all the climbs at the Lakes the ascent of the Napes Needle, by reason both of its unique appearance and its inherent qualities, must ever possess a strange fascination for all true climbers, the latest Nibelungs, the modern Children of the Mist.



THE NAPES NEEDLE.

*From a photo. by G. P. ABRAHAM,
KOSWICK.*

PALINODIA.

By PRAED, JUN., A.C.

There was a time when I could feel
 All Alpine hopes and fears ;
 When I was light of toe and heel,
 Like other mountaineers.
 Those days are done ; no more, no more,
 The cruel fates allow ;
 And, though I'm barely forty-four,
 I'm not a climber now.

I never talk about the clouds ;
 I laugh at girls and boys
 Who do the Matterhorn in crowds ;
 I've done with childish joys.
 I never wander forth "alone
 Upon the mountain's brow ;"
 I weighed last winter sixteen stone—
 I'm not a climber now.

When guides at midnight shout "Away !"
 I'm deafer than the deep,
 Just when they're "eager for the fray"
 I'm eager for a sleep.
 Climb, beardless boys, with boyish zest,
 I don't care where or how ;
 But let me have my proper rest—
 I'm not a climber now.

The rocks that roughly handle us,
 The peaks that will not "go,"
 The uniformly scandalous
 Condition of the snow,

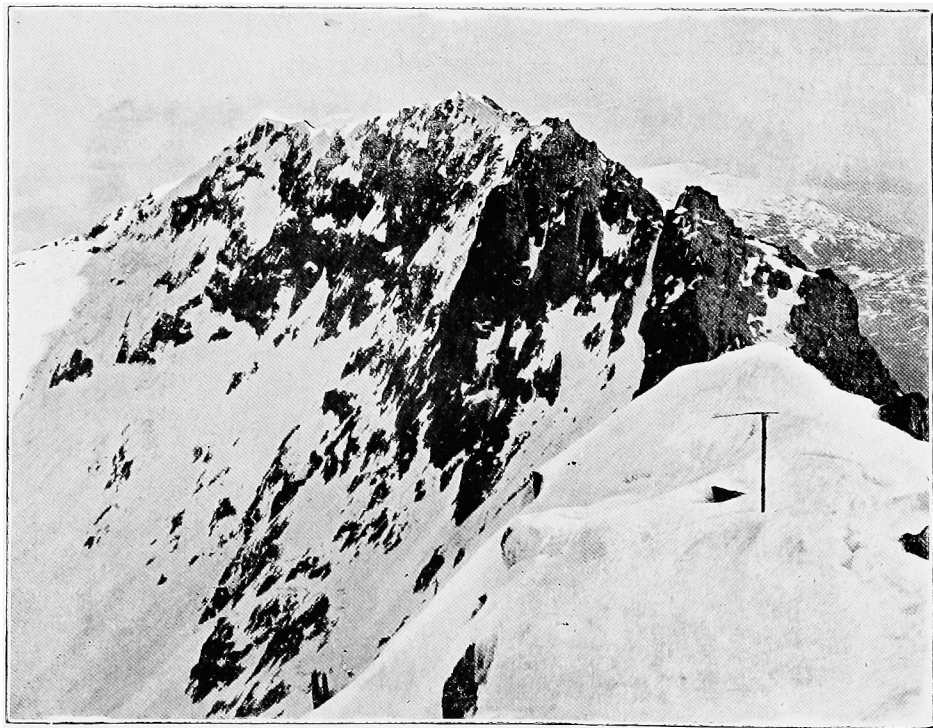
All these have quenched my ancient flame,
And climbing is, I vow,
A vastly over-rated game—
I'm not a climber now.

I see no point in "first ascents,"
And "variations" pall;
It's grinding toil, at huge expense.
Why do men climb at all?
Ah! all too soon will "snows" be seen
Upon my "frosty pow,"
But—seek them?—no! I'm not so green—
I'm not a climber now.

I've long been shaky in the houghs;
Uphill I'm very "cheap;"
And now the chimneys and the rocks
Are all made much too steep.
They charmed, with "pleasure at the helm,"
When "youth was on the prow;"
To-day, they almost overwhelm—
I'm not a climber now.

I don't dream now of wild alarms,
Of overhanging slopes,
Of "Cols," "Arêtes," "Seracs," "Gendarmes,"
Of axes and of ropes.
At that most unattractive "grub"
I soon should make a row;
I miss the comforts of my club—
It's not the "Climbers" now.

By permission of the Proprietors of "Ariel."



CRIB GOCH FROM THE WEST.

From a photo. by H. SPEYER

A FORTNIGHT AT OGWEN COTTAGE.

A PARTY of variable size and constitution, though as a rule led by Mr. George Abraham or Mr. Glynne Jones, spent the latter half of the month of April in the neighbourhood of Ogwen. As some of their expeditions were new, and others only slightly known, it is hoped that these notes of their doings may prove interesting. A continuance of evil weather debarred any exhaustive examination in that short period of the climbs on the Glyders and Tryfan; but with the exception of an hour or two spent on the lower crags of Braich Du, the end buttress of Carnedd Dafydd, the attention of the party was given entirely to these two familiar mountains.

Of the two popular gullies on the south side of Tryfan nothing need be said, excepting perhaps that the pinnacle at the divide in the North Gully has a summit large enough for a lunching party of five, the displacement due to lunch not exceeding six cubic inches for each member present. The buttress to the right (looking upwards) of the North Gully offers magnificent scrambling, if it be taken directly up the central line of rocks to the foot of the overhanging green chimney. There it seems desirable to work round to the left for a few yards, and make for the "Low Man," now marked by a small cairn, by some steep wall-climbing high up above the North Gully. The scrambling above the Low Man is less difficult, but a beautiful crack of twenty feet gives an excellent finish to the whole. The other buttresses on this face of Tryfan appear to be easier, and to justify Mr. Haskett Smith's complaint of the superabundance of holds hereabouts. A subsidiary buttress on the lake side of Tryfan starts from about the 1100 feet level close to the milestone. The first three hundred feet are delightful, and if the same general direction be followed after the buttress has merged into the mountain side, slabs and cracks and pinnacles in plenty will attract attention and extort both time and tissue. One pinnacle in particular has a difficult chimney on its north side that is well worth visiting. How sad it is that the events which took place in the chimney should have so much impressed themselves in the minds of the ardent pair who led up, and yet have obliterated from their memory all recollection of the pinnacle itself, and the way to find it!

Besides the two great gullies on Glyder Fawr, of which the party all thought the western the more difficult, two others to the east were ascended without trouble. The one is distinctly on the same face as the great gullies; it is identified by the two projecting blocks at the top and a diminutive cairn marks the finish. The

other marks the eastern boundary of the face, and is only interesting when snow is about.

Continuing upwards in the same direction from the head of this easy gully, we enter the great Cwm contained by the Glyder Fawr ridge and Cribyn. In the highest eastern buttress of the former, a short but difficult gully is to be found.

This was climbed twice by its right branch, the left being impossible on the first occasion on account of the drapery of ice, while on the second the great mass of falling water compelled the party to choose the easier way.

It was found that the big pitch in the left branch could be turned by a rather awkward traverse from the right, and that the climb could be varied by digressing considerably to the left towards a remarkable slab pinnacle, scarcely distinguishable from the main mass of the mountain excepting when viewed in profile. The doings of the party when first investigating this gully are scarcely fit reading for earnest climbers. There were thirteen present of whom four were ladies, and the majority novices. The snow and ice were really difficult, the rope was lamentably insufficient. A pocket knife was the nearest approach to an ice axe that they possessed, and their garments were better adapted for a sultry grind up the southern slopes of the Glyders on a summer's day, rather than for the dreary sunless waiting beneath an incessant fall of ice-chips and snow-balls that characterised the greater part of the four hours that they spent in the gully.

An ascent of the Devil's Kitchen was made by Messrs. Abraham, Jones, Hill and Puttrell. The crack leading to the upper grass patch will always be difficult; but it is believed that in future the second man may ascend to the grass patch without fearing that any slight mislake of his will bring down the leader. For the leader can now belay himself firmly by looping a rope through a hole recently unearthed beside the grass patch, and as a double security, specially useful when he comes to starting along the traverse, he can steady himself by a rope passing behind the little rocky projection that marks the beginning of this traverse. While this projection holds on, the Devil's Kitchen climb is feasible, but a close examination shows that its base is weathering away, and it is to be hoped that climbers will deal with it gently as they pass by.

The splendid wall of rock that runs northward from the Kitchen towards y Garn is probably unsurpassed for steepness in the whole district. A boulder rolled over the edge, a few yards from the Kitchen, fell for 5 seconds before striking, indicating a

clear drop of about 400 feet. Corresponding to the easy walk over scree up to the top of the cliff, by the left (or south) side of the Kitchen, there is a similarly easy walk along a ledge by the right side. From a distance these two form a symmetrical bow-shaped ledge, concave upwards, terminating each extremity at the skyline, and enclosing three well-marked gullies. The greatest of these is the Devil's Kitchen itself. A short distance to the right may be identified a long black vertical crack dividing near the top into two branches; this we propose to call the Devil's Staircase, disregarding the owner when pressed for space. Still more to the right a similar formation occurs, looking a trifle easier at the bottom, but with a branching top as before. This was labelled the Hanging Garden; rare plants are there in profusion, but one has to hang, almost overhang, before picking them.

To start the Staircase from the very base of the cliff probably requires a dry day, which our party never got. But by traversing along an interestingly narrow grass ledge from the Kitchen, Messrs. Abraham and Jones entered the gully above the first pitch, and had a magnificent scramble to the top. A great obstacle, about 200 feet up, required combined tactics to overcome. Then a vertical wall followed, like the Moss Ghyll wall below the Tennis Court, and the right hand branch of the gully led them far into the interior of the mountain, up a veritable chimney, and out near the top of the crags.

The Hanging Garden was climbed by the same pair directly from the foot. It is not so difficult, but towards the finish considerable care had to be exercised in ascending the thin crack that represents the right branch. The crack is vertical, and too thin to be entered. The holds are on the right wall, and are not to be trusted implicitly. It is in the central portion that botanical specimens abound, providently placed by nature just between the two hardest pitches in the gully.

Off-days at Ogwen may be profitably spent on the lower crags of Braich Du. There are many little ridges and walls of rock worth visiting, a few hundred yards on the north side of the pass. Also, it may be added, that the lowest portion of the Glyder Cribyn is composed of excellent rock, and that one crack in particular offers sport of a rather advanced order. It faces the cottage, and is rather grassy for the first half. Then it dwindles almost to invisibility just below a broad ledge (on which a cairn now marks the resting-place of a Whitsuntide party). Above the ledge there are two or three cracks by which the scramble may be terminated, perhaps the best being a fifteen feet problem round on the Idwal side of the cliff.

A "HIGH LEVEL" WALK

FROM THE BRENNER TO THE BERNINA, WITHOUT GUIDES.

BY HENRY CANDLER.

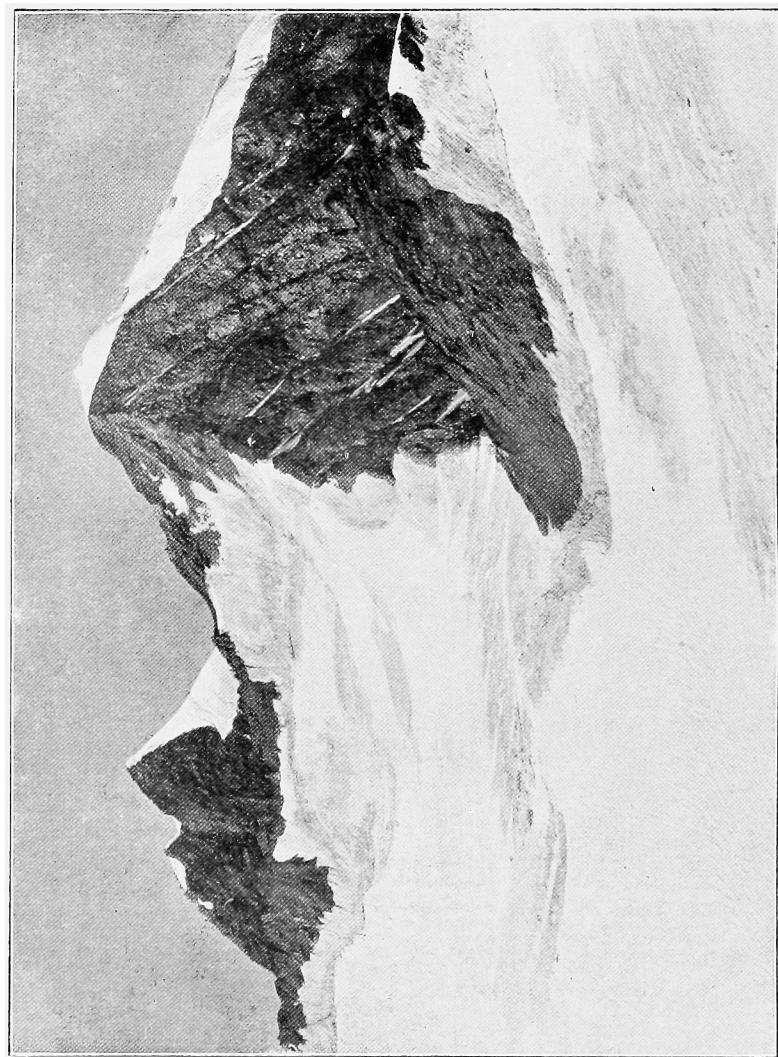
CLIMBERS who are ambitious of forming a practical acquaintance with the topography of the Alps will find a good example before them in the expedition so graphically described by Sir Martin Conway in "*The Alps from End to End.*" To many of us both time and means are wanting to carry out such an extensive enterprise in one journey. But the route may very well be divided into sections, to be "joined on" to one another as opportunities occur. It was in pursuance of some such plan that the present walk was undertaken.

The Tyrol offers many advantages to mountaineers who wish to gain experience in climbing without guides, and who are not sufficiently practised to attempt the more formidable ascents in higher ranges. The peaks are lower and the glaciers less extensive than those of the Western, Central and Southern Alps. There are very few summits above 12,000 feet, whilst the vast majority are considerably below this height. The district is liberally supplied with huts, admirably situated and well provisioned, by the German and Austrian Alpine Club; and by the use of these huts expeditions of moderate length can be made, without the discomforts of unnaturally early starts, and without the labour or expense of portage for provisions and fuel. Seasoned climbers will perhaps scoff at these remarks as condoning the luxurious spirit of the age; but we are a degenerate race, and cannot afford to despise such aids as our advancing civilization provides. There is certainly one great drawback in this "climbing made easy," inasmuch as it attracts only too many who are quite out of harmony with the true spirit of the mountains, and who never would have dared to brave the hardships of the heroic age of climbing.

The route we proposed was briefly as follows:—Starting from Steinach on the Brenner road, to strike south-west up the Gschnitz Thal and traverse the Stubai Alps to Sölden in the Oetz Thal; ascend that valley to the Hochjoch Hospiz, cross the Oetz Thäler group via the Weisskugel and descend the Matscher Thal to the Vintschgau valley; then, turning south up the Sulden Thal, to cross the Ortler range to Santa Caterina, and thence proceed westward to the Bernina Pass, taking on our way some of the little known peaks of the Dosdè-Piazzì group—a walk of about a hundred miles.

After a short stay at the charming, old-world town of Innsbruck our party of three took train to Steinach, an hour's journey up the Brenner Railway, and spent the night at the Steinbock, a very comfortable hotel. Next morning (July 13th) we started on a seven hours' tramp up to the new Bremer-hütte (7,350 feet) at the head of the Gschnitz Thal. It is a charming walk up to Gschnitz, the highest hamlet, the path leading over green meadows beside a clear stream fringed with thickets of willow and alder; bold rock peaks overtop the fir woods on either slope of the valley, and at its upper end the Schneespitze, a sharp snow cone, showed now and then through the cloud rents. There is no inn at Gschnitz, but we were provided with an excellent lunch at the house of the curé. Two miles beyond Gschnitz the path zigzags up the side of a deep ravine to circumvent a big waterfall, passes near a gloomy lake, and finally up a steep rocky spur, where snow lay deep in every hollow, to the ridge on which the hut stands overlooking the Simming glacier. The caretaker was absent, but a friendly Saxon climber and his wife helped us to cook our *erbsuppe* and initiated us in the ways of the D. u. O. A.V. houses. The weather had been cloudy and threatening all day and in the night snow fell heavily. Next morning (14th) we started for the Nürnberger Scharte in a fine driving snow and dense mist. Despite the compass we managed to lose our direction and get involved in some complicated snow slopes, and were at length compelled to beat an ignominious retreat to the hut and thence down to Gschnitz again. The curé here, as is often the case in remote alpine valleys, combines the duties of innkeeper with those of parish priest; he joined us in a friendly chat over cigars and wine after supper, and a very courteous, well-informed gentleman we found him. Our comfortable quarters here soon reconciled us to our unpropitious start. The storm blew over in the night, and next morning in brilliant weather we strolled leisurely back to the Bremer-hütte. Just above Gschnitz, through the Sandesthal, a narrow valley running south, there is a splendid view of the Tribilaun, a massive and precipitous rock pile, said to be the best climb in this district: it is best reached from the Pflersch Thal on the south side. A plunge in the cold clear pool of a burn on the way up was very refreshing. The hut was full of excited German tourists (we never met an English climber on this journey), whose uproar continued far into the night and made sleep difficult. 16th July—Started at 4 a.m., in perfect weather, for the Kaiserin Elizabeth-hütte on the Becher. A scramble over hard winter snow and easy rocks brought us in 1 hour 15 minutes to the crest of a ridge whence we overlooked the upper end of the Stubai

Thal. The Wilder Freiger was now in sight, a broad, flattened snow peak, flanked by bastions of cliff on the south; to the left of it rose the sharp conical rock peak of the Becher with the hut perched on its summit. Crossing the level upper névé of the Simminger Ferner we came to the brink of a steep declivity, down which we scrambled by snow couloirs, ice glazed rocks and scree to the right moraine of the big Gröbl Ferner. (We ought to have passed to the south of the Aplerer Feuerstein before making this descent, thus striking the glacier at a higher point). A two hours' tramp up gentle snow slopes, under a blazing sun, brought us to the Freiger Scharte. From this col we climbed the Wilder Freiger (11,245 feet), in 1½ hours, going up easy rocks and snow on the south-east ridge and crossing a plateau of névé between the lower peak and the summit. From this point there is an admirable view of the Stubai group, which presents, roughly speaking, the form of a horse-shoe, open to the north-east, where it encloses the upper branches of the Stubai Thal, and culminating at its apex in the Zuckerhütl (11,540 feet.) Descending on the west side of the mountain by steep rocks, which were now smothered in snow, and down which we went face inwards kicking steps very gingerly, we crossed the névé to the foot of the Becher, and climbing its sharp north ridge reached the hut (10,411 feet) on its summit in 35 minutes from the Wilder Freiger. A finer situation for a hut it would be difficult to imagine. The Becher, which is a southern spur of the Wilder Freiger, stands on the rim of the Übelthal Ferner, an undulating basin of spotless névé about two miles in diameter, encircled by peaks of no great height but exquisite in form and contour. The circle is broken on the east by a gap through which the glacier sinks in a steep ice fall towards the Ridnaun Thal, and through this opening a magnificent view of the distant Dolomite ranges is displayed. They presented from this point a confused array of steep rock peaks, fantastic in form and rich in colour; walls, towers, domes and pinnacles, mingled with clouds, their hues changing from blue to purple and purple to red as the sun declined. Despite the fascination of the scene the cold on this exposed summit drove us early into the hut and our bunks. 17th July.—Feeling stiff and scorched from a hot and tiring first day on the snow we resigned ourselves this day to complete idleness. Various incidents enlivened the time. A porter arrived staggering under a load of about 100 lbs.; the poor fellow was knocked up by the heat and labour and was very ill. Three ladies with a small dog and guide were visible for hours toiling over the snow towards the hut. Choughs and snow-



ZUCKERHÜTL AND WILDER PFAFF FROM THE BECHER.

*Photo, by FRITZ GRATE,
INNSBRUCK.*

finches paid us a visit: the chough always turns up where any pickings are to be had. There was, moreover, always the amazing view of the Dolomites to fall back upon. 18th July.—Started at 5.30 a.m. for Sölden in the Oetz Thal. We roped at the hut, descended the north arête of the Becher and crossed the Übelthal Ferner west to the foot of the Wilder Pfaff (11,388 feet), which we climbed by the easy rocks of the east ridge, reaching the summit at 6.50. (These rocks are being converted into a staircase by the too zealous labours of the D. u. O. A.V.). The view was much the same as that from the Freiger. After a leisurely breakfast we descended a steep snowslope and crossed the head of the Sulzenau Ferner west-north-west to the Pfaffenjoch (10,598 feet), passing beneath the Zuckerhütl, whose steep, snowy cone stood out dazzling and spotless against a sky of deepest blue. A sharp descent over the Pfaffen Ferner, keeping at first near the rocks on its north side and then steering west-south-west across it, brought us to the icefall (1 hour 5 minutes from the Wilder Pfaff) where we struck a zigzag path down the rocks on the right bank which led to the Windach Thal. Coming down from the col we passed a fine crop of the beautiful glacier Ranunculus growing on a protruding patch of rock. On the opposite south side of the glacier is a fine rock pyramid, the Geisskogel, which ought to afford a good scramble. On the path we met an old man toiling up with a huge load of wood for the new Hildesheimer-hütte; he looked so exhausted that we offered him the wine tin; without a word he put it to his lips and drained it eagerly, a look of intense relief overspreading his worn face as he handed it back empty. An hour's walk down a barren valley brought us to Fiegl's Inn, where night quarters may be had. It is a charming walk thence down to Sölden (4,595 feet) through a grand wooded gorge. We put up for the night at the inn "Zur Traube". One finds these homely Tyrolese inns very restful after the big Swiss hotels with their interminable *table d'hôtes*, where the polyglot babel of voices and ever recurring courses of tough veal and fleshless fowl are apt to pall on the wearied climber. Here the guest can order a simple dish at any time and have it well and promptly served; he is troubled with no hotel bill, but pays on the spot for what he orders. Wine too is cheap and, as a rule, very good and wholesome. Sölden is pleasantly situated in an oval basin of green meadows and corn patches, fringed with forest, with a view of the snow-capped Nöderkogel up the valley. The valley must be a populous one for the churchyard is crowded with graves; each grave has a cross of gilt iron scroll work, and crudely painted panels are affixed to these crosses depicting the deceased in their

Sunday clothes kneeling before an altar with attendant angels; when the deceased has met with a violent death, the artist represents the scene of the accident. Iron bowls for holy water are hung on rods at intervals in front of the long line of crosses.

19th July.—From Sölden to the Hochjoch Hospiz is a walk of about 7 hours exclusive of halts. We sent our rucksacks up to Vent by the post mule and enjoyed the luxury of a walk unencumbered. After skirting the meadows above Sölden the path enters a wild ravine and is carried above the right bank of the glacier torrent which thunders through a deep rock cleft below. At Zwieselstein the Oetz Thal divides, and crossing the stream we struck into its western branch, the Venter Thal. The track now led for some while through a grand pine forest, whose cool shades and delicious fragrance were most alluring; huge boulders overgrown with moss and fern lay scattered beneath the trees; gorgeous butterflies swarmed about every sunlit clearing. An open, grassy valley lay beyond, its slopes flecked with countless small torrents that gleamed like delicate lacework in the brilliant sunshine. At Heilig Kreuz we halted for a rest and lunch “Zum Curat,” and a tramp of two hours farther brought us to Vent (6,205 feet), one of the highest villages in the Alps. Being the starting place for the Wildspitze, the highest peak of the Oetzthaler group, and also for the Hoch Joch, which is the *Theodule* of the Tyrol, the place is inundated with tourists. We had to wait some time here for the arrival of the post mule with our baggage and, fortunately for us, beguiled our time by an early dinner at the parsonage. It was interesting to find a colony of housemartins in this lofty and remote spot; we counted a dozen nests on the walls of the house. The valley again branches at Vent, the western arm (Rofen Thal) leading up to the Hochjoch. The weather was changing as we started; a warm south wind sprung up and the sky became rapidly overcast. It is a stiff 2½ hour's walk up to the Hospiz (7,970 feet); above Rofen the last hamlet, the valley is very stony and desolate. On nearing the Hospiz we had a clear view of the Weisskugel, our objective for the morrow; it rises from the head of the Hintereis Ferner, a glacier which resembles the Aletsch in its broad level surface and long sweeping curve. The Hospiz stands close to the foot of the Hochjoch glacier, whose terminal moraine must be crossed in order to reach the Hintereis glacier. On the opposite side of the valley the Kesselwand Ferner descends in a grand icefall to join the Hintereis. The sharp peak of the Wildspitze is conspicuous about 5 miles to the north. Heavy rain came on just as we arrived. The prospect of a night here was not inviting; the

guestroom was densely packed with clamorous German tourists, but after a while we managed to squeeze into a smaller room, where we supped in company with thirteen stalwart guides. We went to bed, one could hardly say to sleep, in a crowded and ill-ventilated attic.

20th July.—The weather was so bad that we were obliged reluctantly to abandon any attempt on the Weisskugel, and at 6 a.m., feeling impelled to turn our backs on this cheerless shelter, we started for the Hoch Joch. A short track on the right bank leads to the level glacier above the icefall, and thence there is a very gradual ascent up a shallow snowy trough, whose smooth surface is unbroken by crevasses, to the scarcely perceptible saddle (9,060 feet). The Hoch Joch is certainly a very tame pass, though there is some fine ice scenery on the range which bounds it to the east. The crowd at the Hospiz was already dispersed, and could be seen straggling far up the glacier in long black lines. The scene was strongly reminiscent of the 'march to Klondike' that one so often sees depicted in the illustrated papers nowadays. We fell in with a Munich apothecary and his mother, a friendly and enthusiastic pair. The old lady, in bonnet and apron, stepped out bravely over the sloppy snow, carrying a rucksack and a stout umbrella. She deplored the growth of Alpine railways and giant hotels which, said she, "takes away so much from the poetry of the mountains." We breakfasted with them at a little inn near the south foot of the Pass. From this point the Schnalser Thal descends south-east to the Vintschgau. To follow this route would have involved a wide detour, so we decided to join our original route by crossing the intervening range to the west at the Oberetten Joch, a little glacier pass lying between the Aussere Quell Spitze and the Schwemser Spitze, about a mile south of the Weisskugel, and thus reaching the head of the Matscher Thal. We enlisted a stray guide here, a superfluous luxury, as the way was plain; but he was useful to carry things and to stamp down the soft snow for us. We sallied forth again at 10 a.m., and bearing west traversed slopes of grass and débris, mostly snow covered, to the *Teufel's Eck*, where we struck the left bank of the Steinschlag Ferner in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours from the inn. Crossing this glacier to the south-west we reached our col (10,710 feet) in 45 minutes. The last slope was rather steep. The weather up to this point had been atrocious, but as we crouched under some rocks eating our lunch a freezing squall blew up from the other side of the pass, followed by a rapid clearing and bright sunshine. There was an imposing view of the Ortler group to the south and of the Silvretta to the west.

Scrambling down a bank of snow and over a choked bergschrund we rapidly descended the steep slopes of the Oberetten Ferner to the Karlsbader-hütte (8,700 feet), 40 minutes from the col. The turf around the hut was carpeted with a small purple primula (*Primula glutinosa*) which, though abundant in Tyrol, is (save in a few favoured spots in the Engadine) unknown to the Swiss Alps. A long descent over grass and stones and then level pastures dotted with ancient larches brought us to the lonely inn of Glieshof, where heavy rain kept us under shelter till 7 p.m. Then we pushed on to Matsch, arriving wet and weary, in a drenching rain, about nightfall. This village is a cluster of massive old stone houses, intersected by a filthy, cobble paved street. The 'Weisskugel' Inn at which we lodged is clean and comfortable.

21st July. — Weather again fine and hot. An hour's walk down the valley, with a splendid view of the Ortler mountains before us, brought us to Schluderns in the Vintschgau. Here, in order to save time and avoid the tedium of a long tramp over dusty roads, we engaged a *zweispanner* to drive us up to St. Gertrud in the Sulden Thal. The broad, fertile Vintschgau is quite on a scale with the Rhone Valley. Our route followed that of the Stelvio as far as Gomagoi, where we diverged to the left up the Sulden Thal, passing through beautiful pine forests with the cliffs of the Ortler towering on our right. We had tea at St. Gertrud, and afterwards an easy walk of two hours up to the Schaubach-hütte (8,840 feet). This house is finely placed on a spur above the right bank of the Sulden Ferner and facing the Königspitze, Zebbru and Ortler. We encountered here the usual vociferous crowd of German tourists, many of whom appear to come to see the sun rise.

22nd July. — The morning was clear and cold, and there was a rosy alpine glow on the sharp peak of the Königspitze when we set out at 5 a.m. for Santa Caterina in the Val Furva. Our route lay over the Eissee Pass, Sulden Spitze and Langenferner Joch. The Eissee Pass is a gap in the eastern wall of a grand amphitheatre which encloses the crevassed upper basin of the Sulden Ferner. Going up the right bank of the glacier we made for a projecting spur which conceals the pass from view. In trying to avoid a maze of crevasses we soon found ourselves engaged in continuous step cutting on a frozen snow slope above them. As this sort of work grew monotonous we cut up to the rocks above, but they proved to be rotten and treacherous, and we soon took to the snow again. Presently we espied two porters threading the crevasses below us and evidently making for our pass, and after a

little more step cutting we rounded the spur and overtook them. They were carrying supplies for a new hut which we now saw above us on the pass. A well trodden zigzag up steep snow slopes brought us to the summit (10,280 feet) in two hours from the Schaubach-hütte. After a halt for breakfast we followed the ridge south of the pass to the summit of the Sulden Spitze (11,108 feet), which was gained in 50 minutes. The ridge is at first broad and shaly, but finally rears itself steeply against the summit in a very sharp crest of snow. The actual crest was frozen hard, as was its western slope, but on the east side, which had caught the sun, we kicked laborious footholds upwards, the keen wind driving fine snow in our faces which overtopped the arête. Just below the summit the ridge abuts against a corniced ice wall, which afforded an exciting scramble. The axe came into play, and a little hacking and hewing followed up by vigorous shoves and hoists speedily landed our party on the top. If one were disposed to judge an ascent by the character of the view it afforded—a principle which the writer by no means adheres to—then the Sulden Spitze should be a first-rate climb, for the outlook is superb. The particular glory of the view is the Königspitze, a lofty and symmetrical cone of snow supported on massive buttresses of blue-grey fluted cliffs. South-east a wide plateau of névé stretches to the foot of the graceful Cevedale snow peaks. To the north lay the upper Vintschgau with its chain of lakes shimmering in the sunlight. The Austro-Italian frontier crosses the summit of the Sulden Spitze. Descending the south slope we reached in a few minutes the Langenferner Joch or Passo de Cevedale (10,720 feet) whence there is an abrupt descent of several hundred feet over rock and snow in the Cedeh glacier. Crossing this to the south-west we got on to the moraine and below it came upon the Campanna Cedeh, an Italian Club hut, which bore an elegant Latin inscription. Here two Austrian guides tried vainly to persuade us to stay and climb the Königspitze with them next day. On the Alps below the hut were large flocks of sheep, a big handsome breed with lop-ears, straight, silky fleece and Roman nose. Opposite the Forno glacier the path turns sharp to the west and descends a deep gorge; the rocks here, of mica-schist, shone like quicksilver in the blazing sun. Below the gorge the valley spreads out in a level grassy basin, and here the village of Santa Caterina lies. The place seems to have altered but little since Leslie Stephen wrote his charming and humorous description of it nearly thirty years ago.* The life of the village still centres about that huge ugly barrack, the Stabilimento di Bagni, and the visitors

* See *The Playground of Europe*.

are mostly Italian, amongst them many priests in black cap and cassock. There is another hotel now, the Albergo Tresero, where, during our two days' stay we fared excellently, and which possesses in Luigi Baldassari the most accomplished of waiters. An amusing incident occurred here. Two Germans had set out for the Passo di Gavia, and in the evening one of them returned greatly excited to say that he had lost his companion. The chief guide, who spoke German, was summoned, and after a lively discussion agreed to go in search of the missing man, but, on the point of starting, he halted and announced firmly "*aber unter fünf gulden geh'ich nicht!*" On the 24th, two of our party made an interesting ascent of the Tresero. We took with us a young porter, one Valentino di Pietro Compagnoni [perhaps a son of the guide who was with Leslie Stephen in 1869]. Leaving the hotel at 3.15 a.m. by lantern light we followed a rough track through the woods on the west side of the Val Gavia for an hour, crossing the stream at the Ponte delle Vacche. Mounting steep grass slopes for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours we reached the foot of the Tresero glacier, where we halted for breakfast and fixed Mummery spikes in our boots. After we had surmounted the steep snout of the glacier the graceful snow pyramid of the Tresero came in view. Facing us was the long, easy south-west arête by which the ascent is usually made. To the left a much steeper arête descends directly towards Santa Caterina. Turning north across the névé we made for this north-west ridge, striking it above the point where it springs from a steep cliff. Loose, shattered rocks presently gave place to a heavily corniced snow arête, which grew very steep towards the summit and cost us over an hour's hard work at step cutting. Above us a slender cornice overhanging the summit became almost transparent as the sun-rays filtered through it, producing an exquisite effect. We reached the top (11,820 feet) at 9.20, or in 5 hours from Santa Caterina, excluding halts. A huge cornice overhung the steep ice slope on the north face of the mountain. Santa Caterina nestling in the green meadows more than 6,000 feet below reminds one of Grindelwald as seen from the Wetterhorn. There is a good view of the neighbouring Adamello and Presanella groups. Descending by the ordinary route, plunging and glissading down the snow slopes, we reached the foot of the glacier again in half-an-hour, and the hotel in $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours, from the summit. In the evening we drove down to Bormio, which Baedeker describes as "an antiquated little Italian town at the entrance to the Val Furva, with many dilapidated towers." Here we found very comfortable night quarters at the Albergo della Torre.

25th July.—Having engaged a strong, active lad, one Sertorelli Costante, to carry our supplies, we set out at 8 a.m. for a long tramp to the Italian Club hut on the Passo di Dosdè (9,351 feet). A short way up the Stelvio road we diverged to the left into the Val di Dentro. At Semogo, the last hamlet on our route, we rested and refreshed ourselves at a rustic inn, and then entered the Val Viola Bormina, which we followed for some miles by a mule track over pastures dotted with chalets. A turn in the path disclosed a grand view of the snowy Cima di Piazzì set in a frame of dark pine forests. The glacier presented a formidable array of ice cliffs, but a sinuous ridge of snow running up the middle of it seemed to offer an approach to the steep final slope of the mountain, which was seamed by a huge bergschrund. Ahead of us rose a fine rock peak, the Corno di Dosdè, which guards the entrance to the valley of that name. On nearing it we crossed to the right bank of the Viola. We halted for lunch and a noontide *siesta* in the shade of some larches, and Costante fetched us a pail of fresh milk from a neighbouring chalet. Following up the stream which emerges through a picturesque gorge from the Val di Dosdè, we crossed some remarkable glaciated rocks and entered a secluded, grassy hollow. Marmots whistled about the rocks and scurried off to their holes as we passed; once a ptarmigan got up right under our feet, and, unhappily, one of her chicks was trodden on and crushed. In front of us was the triple-peaked Cima Viola, its three summits, rising one above the other towards the south, presenting from this point a long line of precipices. We crossed to the left bank of the stream near the Dosdè chalets, and followed the west branch of the valley, which is stony and crossed by numerous streams. A long pull up tedious moraine and soft snow brought us to the hut at 7 p.m. It is a small stone cabin scarcely discernible, at a short distance, from the big granite boulders surrounding it. A cheerless reception awaited us. The key would not turn, and to gain an entrance we were obliged to force the lock with a pickel. Water stood an inch deep on the floor, the stove was choked with sodden ashes, and, worst of all, there was no fuel. However, we swept out the water, and by carefully raking together various odds and ends, we at length got a fire, boiled some cocoa, and concocted a remarkable *pot pourri*, to which every item in our larder contributed. This hut appears to be but rarely visited; the visitors' book contained scarce a dozen entries since the opening in 1891.* The situation is most romantic, the hut standing on the

* For a description of this group, see Mr. Coolridge's interesting paper, "To the Cima di Piazzì and back," in the *Alpine Journal* for November, 1898.

brink of a steep declivity of rock overlooking the head of the Valle Vermolera, which is hemmed in by a wall of fantastic cliffs and aiguilles; in the hollow lies the Lago Negro, which was now frozen.

26th July.—Starting at 5.45 a.m., we made the ascent of the Cima Viola (11,103 feet), which rises on the east side of the Passo di Dosdè. Crossing a hollow in the glacier and traversing a steep little snow couloir, we struck the foot of a long rib of firm granite rocks which we climbed for about forty minutes; above these rocks we found the track of an earlier party, and followed it up steep *névé*, and across a *bergschrund* to the south ridge, by which we gained the summit in 1 hour 20 minutes from the hut. An hour sufficed for the descent, and after some time spent in cleaning up at the hut and arranging with Costante for repair of the lock, we set forth again at 10 a.m. for the Passo di Corno. This is an old smugglers' pass across the ridge which connects the Cima di Saoseo with the Corno di Dosdè, and forms the boundary between Italy and Switzerland. Traversing the moraine below the glacier on the north-east flank of the Saoseo, we turned north-west and reached the pass (9,620 feet) in $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, after a toilsome ascent over grass and scree, where the snow was still deep, and finally up terraces of rock. The pass is a mere notch in a razor-like ridge of red granite slabs. The bold crags of the Corno di Dosdè, springing abruptly from this ridge, offer some inviting problems to the rock climber. To the west lay the beautiful snow peaks of the Bernina group, in the foreground of which the huge, crevassed icefield of the Palü shone with dazzling brilliancy. Farther south the isolated peak of the Disgrazia cleft the air like some gigantic fin. The rocks fell away steeply on the west side of the pass, and nearly 3,000 feet below was a lake whose turquoise blue waters were fringed with vivid green turf and scattered larches. Letting ourselves down a narrow crack below the notch, we descended by snow-covered rocks to a ravine filled with large granite boulders, the passage of which required great nicety of balance. On reaching the lake we enjoyed a refreshing cold plunge, and lingered for some time on its grassy banks. In the background the grand precipices of the Saoseo made a fine setting to this exquisite spot. Beyond the lake we struck a path which led down to the Valle di Campo; near the foot of this valley we diverged to the right and following a short cut which traverses woods and pastures above the high road, reached the wayside inn at La Rosa, on the south side of the Bernina Pass, in $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours' walk from the lake. Our return to the beaten track was signalled by an

A "*High Level*" Walk.

utter collapse of the weather, and certain projects of extending our route across the mountains of the Engadine were perforce abandoned.

It is to be feared that the intrepid rock specialists of the Climbers' Club may find this narrative of a "high-level" walk in the Alps prosaic and devoid of thrilling episodes. The only apology for offering it is that much of the ground traversed seems to be undeservedly neglected by English climbers. The scenery through which our route passed is mostly of the highest order, whilst the route itself offers many interesting digressions, some of which the writer has endeavoured to point out.

[The climber will find Part I. of "*Der Hochtourist in den Ostalpen*," by Purtscheller and Hess (Meyer's Reisebücher, Leipzig and Vienna, 1897) an invaluable guide to this district. Some excellent maps of the Oetzthal and Stubai groups have recently been published by the German and Austrian Alpine Club (in four sheets, scale 1:50,000). Sheet No. 522 of the "*Topographischer Atlas der Schweiz*" includes the Cima Viola. For the Ortler group the "*Special Karte*" of the German and Austrian Alpine Club (1:50,000) is fairly good.]

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER.

The Annual General Meeting of the Club was held on Friday, May 5th, at the Monico Restaurant, Piccadilly Circus, and was attended by about seventy Members. The principal business was the election of Officers and Committee in accordance with Rule III.

The President, Mr. C. E. Mathews, was promptly re-elected, as well as Mr. Frederick Morshead, one of the Vice-Presidents. Mr. F. H. Bowring, the other Vice-President, wished to resign his office on the ground of imperfect health, which had during the past year rendered it difficult for him to be present at any of the Meetings. This decision on the part of one of the earliest of English rock-climbers so intimately known to most of the founders of the Club gave rise to feelings of great regret. In Mr. Bowring's place, the Club elected Mr. R. A. Robertson, the head of the Scottish Mountaineers, and it is hard to see how it could have done better. Mr. Robertson was thus preserved to the Committee, from which the ballot had removed him as well as Mr. Roderick Williams. The latter gentleman could ill be spared, but Rule III., like all the others, is inexorable. Two new members of the Committee were elected, namely, Mr. A. O. Prickard of New College, Oxford, and Mr. William Ernest Corlett of Liverpool.

The re-election of Dr. T. K. Rose as Honorary Treasurer and of Mr. George B. Bryant as Honorary Secretary, followed.

The accounts for the year 1898 as audited, copies of which had been sent to all the members and which shew £73 2s. 6d. balance in hand, were then approved and passed on the motion of the President.

The dinner was, if anything, a greater success than that of the previous year, and on this occasion members had the privilege of bringing guests, among whom were:—

Sir W. Martin Conway, Dr. H. R. Dent, and Messrs. Sidney Lee and C. R. Canney.

After the toast of "The Queen," the President proposed "*Success and Prosperity to the Climbers' Club.*" He said that the Club, born only a year ago, was already a healthy and prosperous

bantling—that it no longer derived its sustenance from extraneous sources—and was prepared to get its own living in a vigorous and satisfactory manner.

A year ago he had stated that the healthy and aggressive spirit of the English character had discovered a new sport for our countrymen, and that during the last 40 years climbing clubs had been founded all over the world, having for their objects the study and the worship of the hills.

Our pursuit had not only public opinion in its favour, but even biblical authority. For surely the great Poet of Scripture was not poet only but prophet when he wrote those words, impressed upon our minds by one of the divinest melodies of a mighty musician, "Lift thine eyes unto the mountains, whence cometh help." He called the attention of his hearers to some of the reasons which made our sport superior, in kind and in results, to any other form of manly recreation for which the English nation was celebrated. A country is great, he said, not in value of its material prosperity, but in value of the greatness of the souls that it breeds. To be successful in business was good, but no mere business success would ever make a man.

The man who was a lawyer, or a merchant, or a manufacturer, and nothing more, was often the dulllest and sometimes the most miserable of mankind. But the man who, while holding his bread-winning occupation jealously in the first place, yet took his fair share in the wider life of the world, in politics, in science, in literature, even in some form of manly sport; was not only the better fitted for the ordinary duties of his career, but lived a life that must contain some element of nobleness, and was often capable of rendering genuine service to mankind.

It was interesting to reflect that our sports had thriven and multiplied with the growth of the material prosperity of this country. Business and sport had counteracted and sustained one another.

In his younger days there was very little boat-racing; lawn tennis, golf, cycling, football, and mountaineering were practically unknown.

What was the case now! Boat-racing was practised by thousands, and had attained the dignity of a fine art. Cycling had hundreds of thousands of votaries; the very construction of machines had become one of the most important staple trades of the country; and this at least could be said of cycling, that it had been the salvation of the wayside inn, and that it had restored to the English people the beautiful roads and lanes of our common

country, which the railways had taken away. Football was not only popular, but its exhibitions were attended by millions.

But boat racing was after all for the few rather than for the many. Cycling, whether in rational or irrational costume, filled the earth with scorching demons who were not a blessing to society; and football seemed to attract almost as many blackguards as horse racing, where the comfort of the spectators was too often conspicuous by its absence, and the life of the referee was in jeopardy every hour.

How was it, he asked, that mountaineering was the noblest pastime in the world? How was it that of all sports it appealed most to the cultivated intellect? How was it that scholars and statesmen, bishops and deans, men of science and men of letters, senior classics and senior wranglers, had found the best solace and recreation amidst the gloom or the glory of the hills?

The reasons were not far to seek.

When we were "worn and hard beset," what better could we do than go back to the earth, our mother? When Antæus was wrestling with Hercules and was thrown again and again, he rose with renewed strength each time he touched the ground. So did we. We got renewed vitality from personal contact with our mother earth, in her best and noblest forms.

In the next place we were able to separate ourselves, at least for a time, from our daily avocations. Black care ceased to occupy his usual place behind the horseman. We began to feel what freedom meant when we caught our first glimpses of the hills. A new life seemed to open to us.

And the cares that infest the day
Fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

The nature we sought was everywhere the most beneficent of friends.

If we could not reach the Himalayas, the Andes, or the Caucasus, the blessed Alps were within easy reach of us, pure, bracing and invigorating. And if even these were too remote from some of us, remember that Helvellyn and Scawfell were only a day's journey from London, and that God created Great Wales! Wherever we went our minds were expanded and our bodies restored, unhealthy tissue was replaced by sound muscle, and when we got to middle life and began to bulge beyond the boundaries of the beautiful, there was no specific to modify the protuberance of the human abdomen comparable to walking uphill! Again, their pursuit could be protracted to late periods of life. Dr. Clifford

Allbut, a member of the Club, and no mean judge, had told them "that theirs was a sport that might be pursued into later life, both with pleasure and safety." Of what other sport could such a statement be honestly made! What a future the younger men had before them, and what a blessed reflection for some of those who were no longer young, and whose hair was already beginning to be whitened by the silver of years!

The greatest blessings of life were health and friendship, and surely no form of sport ensured these blessings like theirs.

The most enduring friendships he had ever formed would have been impossible but for his love of climbing. The greatest prizes of his life had been owing to friendships formed in the Alps, with such men as Moore, Adams-Reilly, Hinchliff, and Kennedy among the dead, and Stephen and Morshead among the living.

He had spoken of material prosperity. A good thing no doubt, but not the only thing or even the best thing. No mere wealth ever gave a single human being any real happiness. If all our houses were built of gold, what then, they might cover as many aching hearts as hovels of straw!

What is wealth? asked the President. Not the so much per annum which we were all of us striving and struggling to obtain. Not the hoards of yellow metal stored up in the vaults of the Bank of England. A thousand times, no! But the fairy tales of science; the insight of the painter; the dreams of the scholar; the visions of the musician; the sweet fancies of the poet. These were true wealth, to attain which man has not to grovel but to climb, and before which the goldfields of Australia and the diamonds of Golconda must pale their ineffectual fire! Their craft was the antidote to much of that selfishness which material prosperity too often brought in its train. Their craft, unsullied by professionalism and unstained by cruelty, brought them face to face with nature. It combined the study of natural phenomena with beauty of which no painter ever dreamed.

"Let us," he concluded, "drink to the health of the Climbers' Club, both for its own sake, and for its infinite possibilities. For I look upon our men as the raw material out of which the explorer of the future will be evolved. The triumphs of mountaineering are advancing with rapid strides. Its literature is increasing by leaps and bounds. Let it be ours to uphold what is best and noblest in the traditions of our craft, and to determine that the future of mountaineering shall be worthy, alike of its present and of its past."

Mr. W. P. Haskett Smith responded in a lighter vein, especially commenting on the value of the statistics which he had intended to inflict upon the Meeting, had they been provided for him. The proposal of "The Alpine Club," by the Rev. John Nelson Burrows, received the welcome it deserved. Mr. Burrows, who coupled the name of Sir Martin Conway with the toast, stated that that great traveller and he were old climbing companions. "In the seclusion of my study," he said, "I have with Sir Martin travelled the Alps from end to end. With him also I have wandered in imagination among the snow-covered wastes of Spitzbergen, explored the enormous ranges of the Karakoram Himalayas, and ascended some of the highest volcanoes in the Andes." Sir Martin Conway, in his reply, held the attention of the assembled members for nearly half an hour, and general regret was felt when he resumed his seat. If anything were necessary to justify the action of the small party of climbers who barely two years ago conceived the idea of the formation of a club that, while paying special attention to the mountains of the British Isles, should be capable of expansion in every direction, justification was given by Sir Martin's statement that all his experiences point to one conclusion—that in the vast mountain regions which remain unexplored the chances of success rest almost entirely with the British amateur.

Mr. R. A. Robertson, our newly elected Vice-President, who is perhaps better known as the President of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, proposed "The Visitors." In the course of a humorous speech he remarked that since the government of England had fallen into the hands of his countrymen, the Southerners had sought to avenge themselves by repeated inroads into the wild fastnesses of the Scottish Highlands, where native enterprise now had to compete with the energy of intrepid English climbers who, not being tied down by the traditions of the Alpine Club, had no hesitation in attacking, unaided by guides, even the most difficult of 300 difficult peaks over which he presided. Such visitors were, however, always welcome ones.*

In replying, Mr. Sidney Lee suggested that although he understood ladies had not so far been considered eligible as members of the Climbers' Club, it might be advisable, if not too late, to consider the desirability of electing Queen Elizabeth, on account of the soundness of her views, as expressed in the well-

* We do not assume any responsibility for the report of this speech. We have no confidence in our reporter after 11.0 p.m.—ED.

known words with which she replied to the aspirant who "fain would climb did he not fear to fall:"

If thy heart fail thee, do not climb at all.

The toast of "The President," proposed by Mr. A. O. Prickard, called forth some closing remarks from Mr. C. E. Mathews, which concluded a most satisfactory and enjoyable evening.

COMMITTEE NOTICE.

Since our last issue the following gentlemen have been elected members :—

Jas. Graham Leslie, Esq., 3, Hare Court, Temple, E.C.

R. W. Broadrick, Esq., Highfield, Windermere.

William Norman Ling, Esq., Wandales, Wetheral,
near Carlisle.

T. H. Milton, Esq., 8, College Avenue, Crosby,
Liverpool.

Walter Marler, Esq., Dover Lodge, Woodvale,
Lordship Lane, S.E. .

George Henry Twigg, Esq., Ludgate Hill,
Birmingham.

The Treasurer will be glad to receive unpaid subscriptions for the current year.

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.

On 1st January five Geneva Tourists—A. Chouet, A. Hirschi, E. Ferrand, A. Clerc, and A. Lenormand—started from the village of Leytron at 10.15 a.m. to ascend to the Rambert Hut (7,500 feet). They were accompanied by Placide Arragoni, a porter of Leytron, who had assisted in the construction of the hut, and who was consequently well acquainted with the ascent. The mountaineers had sufficient provisions for several days, but appear not to have been suitably equipped for a winter ascent. The weather was cloudy, and owing to the unfavourable condition of the snow progress was very slow. When near the Saille Hut, Arragoni suggested the desirability of returning to Leytron, and upon the tourists declining to accept his advice, he at once disclaimed in writing any further responsibility for the expedition. At about 10.0 p.m., when about 450 feet below the Rambert Hut, Lenormand, who was leading, fell down in the snow and told his companions that one of his feet was frozen and he could proceed no farther. After an ineffectual attempt to restore feeling to the limb, the others decided to continue the ascent, so, leaving one of their number with Lenormand, they proceeded to the hut, which was reached at 10.30. Arragoni then went down and fetched up the tourist who had remained behind, and subsequently made another journey for the purpose of taking covering and provisions to the unfortunate Lenormand, who, they decided, would have to pass the night in the open. A snow storm had been in progress for some hours, and at midnight, when Arragoni regained the hut, the wind was so violent that they feared the roof of their shelter would be blown away.

Next morning the porter expressed his intention of going down to the valley for help. This was opposed by the tourists, but finding he was determined they allowed him to have his own way, and eventually Clerc resolved to accompany him. When they reached Lenormand they found him none the worse for his exposure, but still unable to move. He told them he was all right, and could wait until assistance arrived; this, as had been arranged, was signalled by means of a horn to his companions in the hut. Chouet, Hirschi and Ferrand say that during the next two days they made several attempts to reach their comrade, but were unable to do so on account of the wind.

On the 4th January, when the storm abated sufficiently for them to make the descent, they found no trace of Lenormand, who was completely buried under deep snow. Arragoni, as soon as he arrived at Leytron, organised rescue parties, but no ascent could be made until it was too late to render any assistance to the unfortunate man.

Our authority for the above is the "Alpina," the journal of the Swiss Alpine Club. Comment and criticism on the conduct of Lenormand's companions are, we think, quite unnecessary.

* * * *

A correspondent sends particulars of two caves which he thinks may prove useful to any member finding himself in the neighbourhood of Geneva during bad weather. One is the Grotte des trois Feés. It is situated east by south of Archamp, on the south-west side of the buttress at the north-east end of the main scree slope of Mount Piton. The entrance is behind a block leaning against the rock and lodged on a ledge about eight feet above the top of the screes. The other, name unknown, is west by south of Collonge, on Mount Saleve. There is a depression in the face of the rock, the face being of a lighter colour here than the general tone of the mountain. The entrance is at the bottom of this depression, and is best approached from the west until just below the level of the entrance.

Either of the above gives a good day's underground climbing, and takes eight to ten hours. Old clothes are advisable, and plenty of candles necessary. Details of these caves were some time ago unobtainable either in Geneva or in the villages.

* * * *

The following is a copy of a recent entry in the Wastdale Head Book (page 174):—

"Kern Knotts crack (see page 150) was ascended by Miss Nicholls on 21st April, 1899. She climbed up to the niche without help; then I followed and joined her there. She determined to try getting up by herself, so she went up to the second jammed stone without assistance, but was then too tired to proceed, and came back to the niche. After resting, she made a second attempt, taking a shoulder from me, and then went on to the top. I then descended from the niche and went round to the chimney, which I ascended, and I joined her at the big boulder. I may mention that Miss Nicholls has once before been up the crack (last year), but on that occasion she did not lead.—O.E."

A correspondent suggests that this seems to show the applicability to Lakeland rocks of Mummery's oft quoted observation, "Every mountain appears to pass through several stages. At first it is inaccessible, then it is the most difficult climb in the Alps, and finally it becomes an easy day for a lady." But we cannot agree with this. Miss Nicholls is a rock gymnast of unusual ability, who has made many ascents that few of either sex would consider "easy." Kern Knotts crack is a climb of most forbidding appearance. The face of rock in which it is is practically smooth and unbroken and almost vertical, consequently at times (more particularly between the niche and the second jammed stone, where the crack is so narrow that the climber's body is outside) it is rather nerve destructive—to people who have nerves. Messrs. C. W. Patchell, E. V. Mather, and John Simpson, who watched the first ascent, which was achieved by one of the best-known of our Cumberland climbers on April 23rd, 1896, described it in the *Wastdale Head Book* as a marvellous exhibition of strength and skill. We may mention that upon this occasion the climber, not having the certain knowledge that the route was a practicable one, wisely took the precaution of having a rope lowered from the great block at the top of the Chimney, but this was simply as a safeguard and not in any way used to assist the climber.

* * * *

A contributor is preparing a paper on Lake District Guide Books from a mountaineering point of view. In order that it may be made as comprehensive as possible, we shall be glad if all members who can give any information on the subject will communicate with the Editor. In Mr. Frederick Hutt's Index we can only find one mentioned—"Mountain Ascents in Westmoreland and Cumberland," by J. Barrow, 1886—but there must have been many published before that date.

* * * *

Mr. Hutt's Index, or rather Catalogue of Mountaineering Literature, is an exceedingly useful and interesting publication. It is constantly under revision, and the last copy we have received contains a list of 408 volumes all devoted to mountaineering. It will be sent free of charge to any member who will take the trouble to apply to Mr. Frederick Hutt, Bookseller, Clement's Inn Passage, Strand, W.C.

*The Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL,**6th March, 1899.*

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Gotch (page 71), raises the question of the appropriateness of the word "crazy," as applied to the Crib Goch Pinnacle. It seems to me—looking at it from an etymological point of view—a very happy name.

Crazy (in early modern English also *crazie*, *crasie*, or *crasig*) is derived from *craze*, together with the suffix *y*. The latter is a common suffix used to form adjectives from nouns and verbs (as in hilly, icy, rocky, rainy, stony, wary, etc.). *Craze*, noun, is from *craze*, verb; the latter (in early modern English also *crase*) was in middle English, *crasen*, from the Swedish *krasa* (crackle or break). The French word *écraser* is derived from the same root.

The original meaning of *craze*, verb, is to break, shatter, crack, flaw, *e.g.*, Milton, *Paradise Lost*, XII., 210:

"God looking forth will trouble all His host,
And *craze* their chariot wheels."

And Lily, *Euphnes*, *Anatomy of Wit*, p. 58:

"The glasse once *crased*, will with the least clappe be cracked."

The meaning "weak of body or intellect" (given by Mr. Gotch) is a later derived one.

Yours very faithfully,

"OLD ETYMOLOGY."

REVIEWS.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PENNINE ALPS *by* G. P. ABRAHAM.

PROBABLY many of the readers of this Journal are acquainted with Mr. Abraham's views of English and Welsh mountain scenery. During last summer he paid a visit to Switzerland, and brought back with him a number of photographs, chiefly taken in the neighbourhood of Zermatt. His experience has served him well in subjects comparable to Welsh and Lakeland rocks, and his panoramic views of snowy peaks and glacier scenery are evidently the result of conscientious and skilful work. In looking through these views one is struck with the fact that the composition would almost invariably be improved by the addition of more sky, and in many of the photographs a discriminating use of the scissors would have a beneficial effect. In several cases so large an extent of country is embraced that the eye is bewildered in attempting to take it all in. The experience Mr. Abraham must have gained from this first year's work in the Alps will probably be of great assistance to him in his next visit. I have no doubt that he fully realizes the defects I have pointed out. In my opinion, also, a lense of greater focal length might be employed with advantage, and I feel certain that the use of a yellow or green screen would improve the skies, where I am sorry to see hand work and artificial effects have been resorted to.

As a whole the series is wonderfully interesting, and the excellent technical skill with which the photographs are produced must give pleasure to a critical eye. The hardness and want of atmosphere which occasionally characterise the Welsh series are entirely absent. As a topographical aid to new climbers they should be very useful. The details of rock pitches, faces, arêtes, and chimneys give just the information required. As some of the finest, both artistically and technically, one might mention the following:—"The Summit of the Matterhorn," "The Old Hut on the Matterhorn," "The Rothorn" (the vertical view), and "On the Riffelhorn." These are as good of their kind as I have ever seen. I must add that all the photographs are what is known as whole-plate size, that is, about 6 inches by 8 inches, and are printed on platinotype paper. Mr. Abraham will, no doubt, be pleased to send lists to intending purchasers.

S. B. D.

THOROUGH GUIDE TO NORTH WALES. PART. I. *Chester, Rhyl, Llandudno, Bangor, Llanrwst, Bettws-y-Coed, Llanberis, Beddgelert and Ffestiniog Sections*, by M. J. B. BADDELEY, B.A., and C. S. WARD, M.A., with 16 Maps and Plans and 3 Panoramas by J. BARTHOLOMEW. Sixth edition. (London: Dulau & Co.) 3s. net.

MESSRS. BADDELEY & WARD are again revising their guide to North Wales. The first part, which deals principally with Carnarvonshire, including the mountain district of Snowdonia, has just been republished in a very up-to-date form. As a practical guide to the foot paths and other easy ways up the mountains it leaves little to be desired. The directions are clear and concise and, we speak from experience, of great use in any weather. The authors make no pretence of assisting the modern rock-climber, but what they do undertake they carry out thoroughly and well, and although we have read the book in a most critical spirit, the errors we have discovered are strikingly few in number.

As in most guide books the names of the paths from Gorphwysfa to the summit of Snowdon lead the reader who has the advantage of a cursory knowledge of the country into a hopeless tangle. In the text the old upper track is accurately described, but it is stated that it is popularly known as the "Pig Track." This we need scarcely say is an error; the "pig track" (or should it be "P-y-G track"?) being on the north and not on the south side of the hummocks. In the inch-to-the-mile map of Snowdon, on page 219, the "pig track" is correctly traced, but is erroneously styled the "Donkey's path." All the maps, by the way, are by John Bartholomew, of Edinburgh, which, to any one who knows Mr. Bartholomew's maps, is a sufficient guarantee of their excellence.

We should like to know the author's grounds for giving the name of the little inn at Pen-y-pass, as "Corphwysfa." That it is intentional and not a printer's error is evident, for in the index, as well as in every other place where they have occasion to mention the "Resting place," the initial "C" has been substituted for the "G," to which we are accustomed. We also take the strongest exception to this reference to the Snowdon Hotel, which we feel is calculated to give a very wrong impression:—

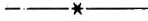
"At present the summit—Y Wyddfa—is occupied by a neat temporary structure. The old, untidy huts have disappeared since the Tram Road Company acquired control of the summit. It is to be hoped that the intention of the Company to substitute an unobtrusive hotel a little way below the actual top,

where the space is so limited, will before long be carried out. The Portmadoc magistrates were very ill advised in refusing a license for this most obvious improvement on the first application."

We are not going to attempt to defend the "old, untidy huts," no doubt they were an eyesore, but the present erections are still worse, because they are so much more conspicuous. From the Pen-y-Gwryd side they altogether change the appearance of the true outline of the summit. In refusing the license at the first application the Portmadoc magistrates adopted the only course compatible with justice. The owners of the then existing structures (whose license was attacked) had carried on their business for three generations and it was proposed to turn them out without compensation. By buying the vested interests in question the Company has since put itself entirely in the right, and if the intention really is to clear the summit and erect a new building in a less conspicuous position, we feel certain that the gentlemen who voluntarily went into the witness box at Portmadoc to oppose the granting of the license to the Tramways Company would be only too willing to make another journey there in support of a fresh application.

There are also a few other points that seem to require explanation—for instance, the persistent reference to the Carnedd range as "Eastern Snowdonia"—but these are trivial matters that will no doubt be corrected in the next Edition. We do not object to Twll Du being referred to as "impassable," because that chimney is probably still inaccessible to most of us, in spite of the structural alterations that have recently been effected.

CLIMBERS' CLUB.



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