

BUCHAILLE ETIVE MOR FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

*Photo. by G. P. ABRAHAM & SONS, KESWICK.*

THE  
CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL

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Edited by E. RAYMOND TURNER.  
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## BUCHAILLE ETIVE MOR AND THE CROWBERRY RIDGE.

By ERNEST A. BAKER, M.A.

STOB DEARG, the highest peak of the greater Buchaille Etive at the head of Glencoe, presenting the shape of a towering cone sliced away at a sharp angle from summit to base, strikes the traveller across the Moor of Rannoch as one of the boldest mountain forms he has ever beheld, finer and more symmetrical even than that comeliest of the Lake mountains, Great Gable: to the climber, when he sees it first, Stob Dearg is an irresistible challenge. The tourist sees top-heavy crags hanging over steep slopes of scree, and perfectly inaccessible, he thinks, to anything but the ravens that soar clamorously out from the misty cliffs; and even the climber's educated eye has to scan the mountain long ere he can make sure that the furrows will grow into deep gullies, and the sheer buttresses into continuous ridges, that may each afford a route to the summit, while offering difficulties and hazards worthy of his best skill. To the Scottish Mountaineering Club this imposing north-east face was pointedly a defiance, but it was believed to be quite inaccessible until, in 1894, a member of the Club, Dr. Collie, exorcised its terrors by making a way to the summit over the ill-defined ridges and cliffs to the south of the Central Buttress. Since then, ascents have been made by most of the

obvious routes, the whole of the north-east face has been mapped out; and though there remain, doubtless, a number of minor routes, variations, chimneys, and the like, to be marked down and bagged by anyone who has leisure, there is now no important climb uncaptured, save, perhaps, one by way of the "Chasm." The Crowberry Ridge, by far the finest climb on Buchaille Etive, was climbed from end to end for the first time, so far as can be ascertained, on the 24th of May last, though its upper part was vanquished as long ago as August, 1896, and pronounced then to be a prince among climbing routes. It is the main object of this paper to describe the recent ascent of the entire ridge as effected by a party, consisting of Messrs. G. D. and Ashley Abraham and J. W. Puttrel, with myself as last and least—an ascent of which the most important and difficult portion must be regarded as a brand new climb. Dr. J. H. Wigner was with the party for some days, and climbed most of the Crowberry during the exploring operations, but had unfortunately to leave on the eve of the complete ascent.

Puttrel and I had the pleasure of taking down into this corner of the Highlands the joyful news of Mafeking's relief. Our locomotive flew the royal standard all the way up from Glasgow; and at Bridge of Orchy, inspired by memories of De Quincey, we mounted a pair of ice-axes in front of the wagonette, and, as we had been unable to get any bunting in Edinburgh at six o'clock in the morning, we tied a handkerchief of ample breadth and sanguinary dye on this warlike flagstaff, and so drove in triumph over the thirteen miles to Kingshouse. We did not stir up much noise, it is true, but that was owing to dearth of spectators in this desolate region, and not to lack of patriotism. The Abrahams and Wigner arrived after nightfall, having had a mishap on the road, necessitating a change of conveyances at Inveroran. We took possession of the old-fashioned little hotel of Kingshouse, and made things lively in this quiet spot for near a week.

The first thing to be done was to explore the front of the Buchaille so far as to be able to locate the various climbs,



first and chief, of course, the redoubtable Crowberry. From a low spur of Meall a Bhuiridh, on our side of Glen Etive, we had taken advantage of an interval between the mists to trace out most of these as visible from the south-east, but the configuration of the Stob made it not so easy to recognise them from the direction of the inn. Starting fairly early, the five of us went a mile along the Glencoe road, crossed the Coupal River dryshod, and went straight over the moor to the foot of our hill. We quickly marked down a conspicuous scar on the hillside, made by a sloping slab, nearly a hundred feet long, and perhaps sixty wide from top to bottom, with the drainage from a snow gully crossing it in a water-slide, and making a shower-bath below. This great slab turned out to be very useful as a finger-post to the base of the Crowberry Ridge; it is distant an hour's walk from the inn. After a brief halt and a drink below the water-slide, we pushed on up the hill, and were soon among the broken rocks, short scree-slopes, and rough water-courses, that lie beneath the crags. Above us the Buchaille was clearing itself slowly of mist, the flatness was disappearing, and the gullies were cutting deeper hollows, insulating the ridges which jutted forward now as individual buttresses. We began to feel confident that the big ridge, whose extremity towered directly above us, its projections and salient cliffs assuming the aspect of separate pinnacles, must be the Crowberry; and, though our dubitation was prolonged and certainty delayed, we were not in error.

To make this account clearer, I will anticipate the result of our investigations, by indicating briefly the position and main features of the ridge. As you face Buchaille Etive on your way from the Glencoe road, where the Glen Etive road joins it, looking in the same direction, in fact, as that of the photograph facing page 3, you will notice a broad and massive buttress supporting the right side of the peak, with a deep, capacious gully bounding it on the right, and another, steeper and narrower, to the left. This is the great North-East Buttress. To the left of it across the narrow gully, which feeds the water-slide on the big slab already alluded to,

is the Crowberry Ridge. Seen from any point of view, this is, to a climber's eye, the most striking feature the mountain can show; so well-defined and continuous is it, springing, as is well seen in the photograph, from twelve or thirteen hundred feet below to a point within stone's throw of the cairn on Stob Dearg. On each side it presents sheer and lofty walls towards the demarcating gullies, and it has a very steep, straight-cut nose. The rough plot of grass and stones immediately below this nose can be located more easily now by a little cairn built on its edge. A stone man hard by marks the beginning of the climb. To reach this spot after passing the slab, steer for the gully between the Crowberry and the North-East Buttress; two chimneys or narrow gullies, branching out of this gully against the wall of the Crowberry, may also help to identify the place. These are conspicuous in the photograph facing page 8.

A little above the slab, to return to our first day, we passed the lowest snow, a pile of large blocks that had seemingly rolled from above. Two higher patches, lying in converging directions, had been observed as we crossed the moor to enclose the bottom end of what we thought must be our ridge. After a spell of rough scrambling we reached one of these snow patches, and found it to be part of a slope of snow, nearly 500 feet long, occupying the bed of a gully. Crossing it to the foot of the conspicuous ridge, we began to reconnoitre. The weather was anything but propitious. From time to time showers made us uncomfortable and rendered the rocks greasy. Our guide-book was an old number of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, and though its descriptions of the climb were plain enough when we had mastered the topography of the mountain, we were nonplussed for a while by our inability to make this steep and prominent end of the ridge we had been heading for, fit in with the details of the ascent related there. However, as this was a day devoted to exploration and to pegging out the ground for future doings, I shall not linger over it. We zigzagged from gully to ridge and back again, and George Abraham eventually mapped out a direct



line up the Crowberry. We made out also that the earlier climbers, whose achievements we had been reading about, went up the gully for 350 feet, and reached the sky-line of our ridge by a flank movement, utilizing one of the pair of chimneys on the left and a big slab that leans against the ridge; the point where the two climbs converge is marked by their stone man. Two of us, Wigner and I, went on to the summit and made sure of the cairn; then, determining to spend a good day in doing the ridge systematically, we all returned to Kingshouse.

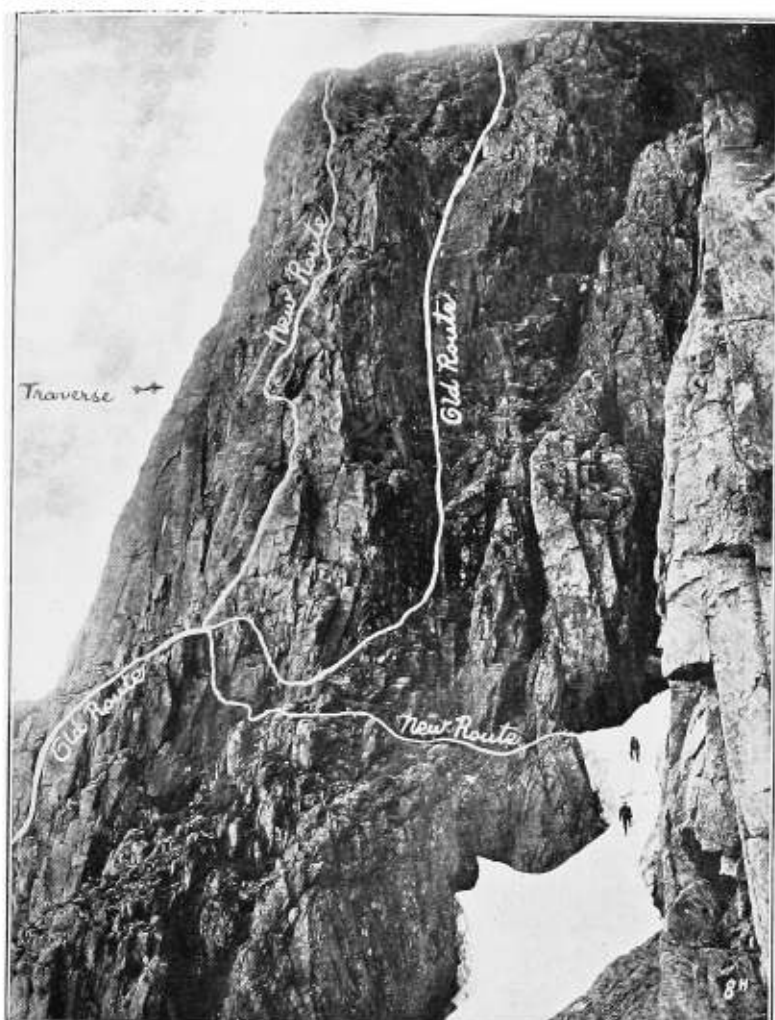
Next morning we were awake betimes, but rain was falling, the clouds hung low on Buchaille and the Clachlet, and for three long days, unfortunately, the weather was too rainy for serious climbing to be attempted. The Buchaille was almost continually swathed in mist, and the gullies, we could see afar off by the tracks of white, were spouting water copiously.

While the rainy weather lasted we caught plenty of small trout from the Etive and a beautiful little burn near at hand. Ashley Abraham, who had never wielded a rod before, just dropped a worm artlessly over the bridge and pulled up the biggest trout we caught. With a solitary exception, we hunted the locality in vain for serviceable boulders. But sport of another kind we got from a little pond outside the inn, though it was at the expense of the hapless trout that inhabit its quiet waters. This innocent-looking, but treacherous sheet of water possessed among other things a boat, various submerged rocks, reed-beds and marshy shores. By marking out a course among these obstacles, and subjecting each competitor to such conditions as to make him sit on a stile, with the craft drawn ashore and oars unshipped, we arranged several paddling and sculling matches, often getting pounded among the obstacles, losing sculls, catching numberless crabs, and providing each other plentifully with the supreme delight of seeing a friend in difficulties. Our evenings, needless to say, were very, oh! very, melodious.

At last, one morning at the witching hour of six, Ashley Abraham, pyjama-clad, thundered into our room, tore Puttrell

and me from our beds, swept out again like a hurricane, and in trumpet tones summoned the staff of the hotel to awake and get breakfast, for, behold, it was a fine day. Our number was now reduced to four by Wigner's departure. By eight o'clock we were afoot, bound for the Buchaille, which towered above the glens, clear and magnificent, only the topmost pinnacles catching and delaying the stray wisps of cirrus. We found the Coupal in spate, but were able to cross in a fairly dry condition, by jumping the cascades and eddies, where the stream breaks over a sudden outcrop of porphyry. Hence, keeping an eye on our beacon, the slab, we plodded straight across the sodden peat-moss, and were soon sweating up the heathery slope beneath the Crowberry. On the yesternorn there had been a fresh fall of snow on the hill-tops, but the rain had since played havoc with the masses of old snow that lay on the peaks round about. The couloir up which we had kicked steps the other day was wearing thin in places; there was quite a good sized bergschrund; and in going ahead up the gully I suddenly came across a crevasse, narrow on top, wide at the bottom, and some 16 feet deep, completely sundering the upper and lower beds of snow, except for a frail bridge. Puttrell held me with the rope while I kicked solid foothold, and then spreading out I got my forearms in above the rift, and went ahead safely to an anchorage forty feet higher, whence all the party were steadied over the gap. In a brief space we were lunching at the foot of our climb.

That the 350 feet of nearly vertical cliff, which forms the nose of this beautiful ridge, had never been climbed till now, is not a thing to wonder at. A writer in the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* (Vol. IV., p. 150-1), says, concerning it:—"At its lower end also, the rocks which formed the crest of the ridge are hopelessly steep, and nearly unbroken for some 300 feet. . . . I will not prophesy that that cliff will never be scaled in a direct line, but before then I think mountaineering science will have to advance to a higher stage of development. It is conceivable that a line might be chosen up those rocks any part of which could be climbed if it were,



THE CROWBERRY RIDGE—Lower Part.

*Photo. by G. P. ABRAHAM & SONS, KESWICK.*



say, on a 'boulder,' or even if there were a reasonable number of platforms or anchorages. But in the absence of these, a continuous steep climb of 300 feet is at present generally regarded as 'impossible,' because it would make too great demands on nerve and muscular endurance." The photograph on page 8 shows this difficult end of the ridge, and also the gully, by climbing which the writer just quoted avoided a direct ascent.

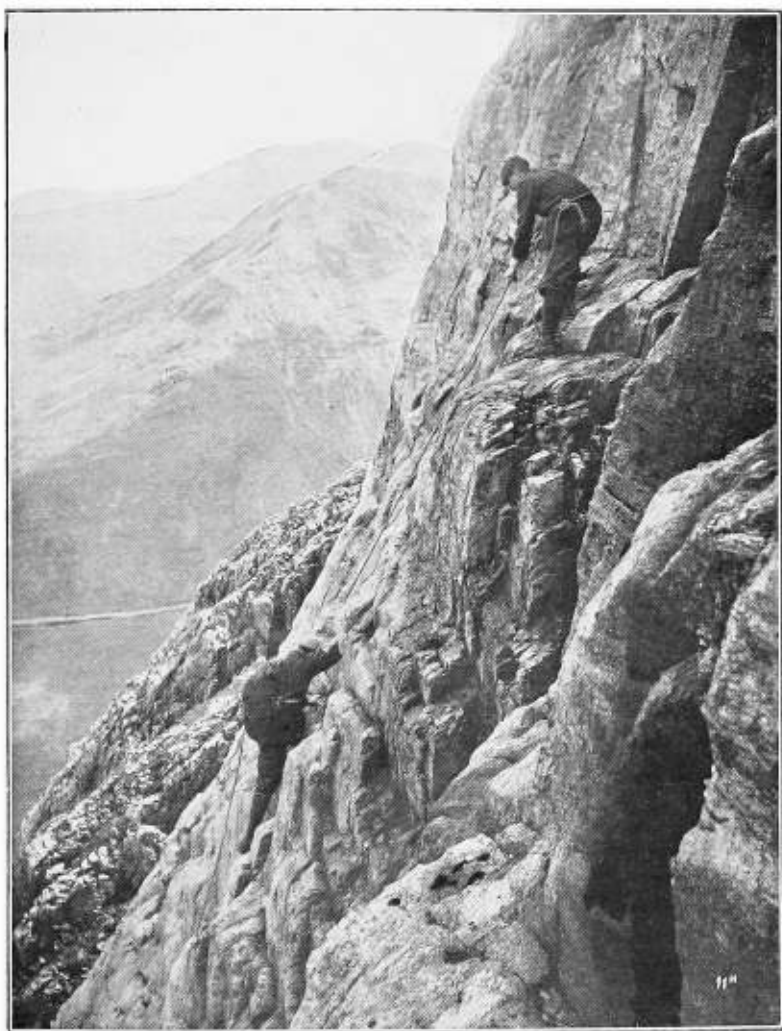
Our climb starts from the lowest part of the middle of the buttress, at a place marked by a stone man, and ascends at first by an indefinite sort of crack, where the rocks are much broken. For about 80 feet, though the face is exceedingly steep, it offers no great difficulty. At a height of 30 feet a little ledge provides safe anchorage. Above it a yet steeper section of cliff leads to a platform, measuring about 12 by 2½ feet, which we marked by a stone man. Here begins the severest portion of the climb, some 70 feet of open face, very nearly vertical, and for the most part almost destitute of good holds, those that exist being shallow, and sloping the wrong way, so that to cleave to the rock at all calls for a sustained effort in balancing. It is a place that makes demands equally on a leader's caution and audacity. Should any party prefer not to tackle this arduous pitch, they may descend into the gully from the corner of the platform on the right, and traverse back again along some objectionable ledges to the higher platform on the ridge, so regaining the direct route.

There was a general unroping here, for the usual 40 feet of rope between each man was quite inadequate for this formidable stretch. George Abraham led up it in admirable fashion. Anxiously we watched him quit the platform to the left, stepping out on to a tiny ledge with his left toe, and, moving cautiously leftward and gradually up, disappear from our sight. The rope went out inch by inch, and we waited patiently for a shout to tell us that the distant platform was won. At length the eighty-footer was nearly all paid out, and the welcome shout fell from above with a summons to Puttrell

to come on. Now, with a brief pause for photography, there was another period of waiting, but not the anxiety of having a man climbing on a hopeless length of rope above us. Next the rope-end was flung down for the camera and some of the impedimenta to be swung up, and then it fell for me. Lower down the rocks were splintered and loose to a large extent; they were perfectly sound just here, but the solidity entailed extreme paucity of holds. After the short traverse to the left, just at the beginning of the 70 feet, a shallow depression, breast-high, sloping outward and not allowing any grip, has to be utilized as a hold by pressing the hand squarely downward, and is the only fulcrum to be had for lifting the body over four and a half feet of vertical rock; and situations not a whit less sensational occur again higher up. In fact, there is hardly a place where there is at the same time hand-hold or foothold enough to admit of a comfortable pause for breath. The rocks are slabby, moreover, and were still wet and greasy, in places, with rillels left by the rain. Standing on an open face, on the edges of cracks or excrescences, to be measured by fractions of an inch, one sees as a vague background far below, as one looks for foothold, a wide stretch of precipitous hillside, jutting crags, and snowy gullies. But the thrilling sight only nerves one to quiet and sustained effort, though a bulky rucksack pulling backwards almost outweighs the psychological encouragement of the rope. Our admiration for the leader's conquest of this intimidating pitch waxed enthusiastic. Ashley Abraham came up last, and pronounced the climb, so far as we had done it, to be at least equivalent in difficulty to the direct route up the Eagle's Nest Arête on Great Gable.

We had arrived now at a sort of Tennis Court Ledge, where another stone man was duly erected. Our climb was lost to sight, and we looked straight down on a snow-patch a thousand feet below, gleaming amidst a maze of ridges and gullies. As usual on a fresh climb, we had found many splinters lying about, and the more dangerous of these we cleared away. The porphyry in various parts of the ridge tends to flake off,





ON THE CROWBERRY RIDGE.

*Photo. by G. P. ABRAHAM & SONS, KESWICK.*



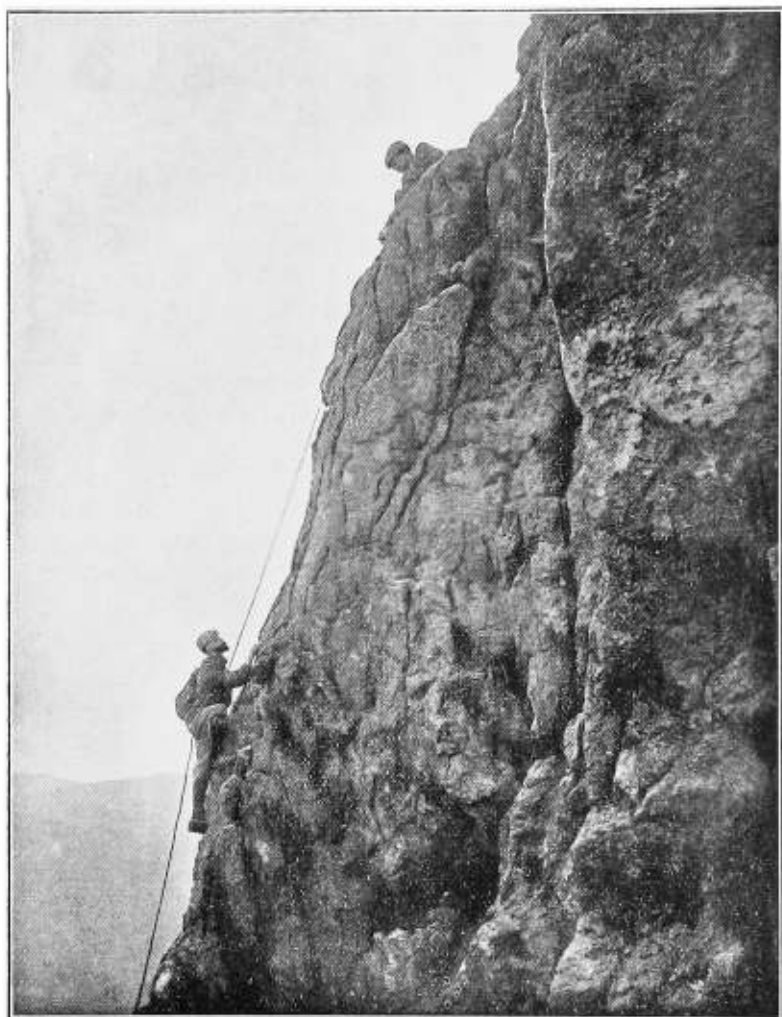
and we had to test our holds warily. One large flake, suspended in unstable equipoise at the end of this ledge, gave rise to a memorable incident. Being last man on the ledge, I was steadied by the rope while I gave this flake a slight shove that dislodged it: its weight was perhaps three tons. Thirty feet lower a pinnacle stood up on the face, a squarish rock, measuring roughly some twenty-five feet in height, and, on an average, sixteen in girth. You may discern it in the middle of the photograph of the crag, facing page 8. George Abraham had previously examined the pinnacle in his traverse out from the platform with a view to getting up that way, but had been alarmed by its threatening condition. We calculated, very moderately I think, that this rock would weigh about 80 or 90 tons, the same practically as a heavy locomotive and tender. The falling flake just happened to hit the top of it. The big rock swayed in its socket, lurched forward, bowed majestically over, and, almost before we knew what was happening, went hurtling down the cliffs and gullies far below. It cleared some hundreds of feet at a leap; then, striking a prominence, bounded off, leaving a glaring scar behind, and thundered on down the crags, smashing off corners, crashing into the screes in the gullies, and splashing up the snow like water. In a few moments a storm of fragments was flying down the mountain-side, but we could see only the stones that rebounded above the dense cloud of dust hanging aloft. The air smelt sulphurous. The whole ridge vibrated like a bridge over which a heavy express is rushing, and we clung to the crags nervously, wondering if the shock would not bring some more pinnacles about our ears.

Ten feet above our resting-place there is a smaller ledge. Next comes a shallow corner, not easy to negotiate with a burden, followed by another section of open face, at the same steep angle as the big pitch below, and furnished with the tiniest holds. This brings us to a platform of smaller area, whence we step out to the left, and find ourselves confronted by an awkward pitch, up which we get by a stout pull with the arms, and so reach the next ledge. In front the ridge

towers up steeply, covered with very slabby rocks, but we find no grave difficulty; and for about 150 feet we enjoy a thoroughly pleasant and sporting climb over a sort of "nose," emerging on a sloping area of broken rocks, tufted with herbage, where earlier climbers have erected a cairn to mark the point where they struck the ridge proper. Peering over into the gully on our right, we discover at once the postern by which they effected an entrance into the stronghold. A pair of chimneys or minor gullies leading up to the crest of the ridge from the main gully have already been referred to. At the top of these a broad lean-to slab, similar to the well-known slab on the Easy Way on the Pillar Rock, lies just under our present position, and communicates therewith by a rough and awkward, but safe scramble of twenty or thirty feet. Though a long and interesting climb was before us to the top of the ridge, all the real difficulties of the Crowberry had now been conquered, and we sat down in this commodious halting-place to review the incidents of our morning's work, and to watch the tall summits of Mamore Forest and the vast Aonachs tardily divesting themselves of mist. A rainbow flickered between us and the hill on the other side of Glencoe's portal, tingeing the heather with aerial colours. George Abraham thought that the full-length ascent of the Crowberry Ridge might be said to equal the North Face of Pillar Rock plus the Eagle's Nest Arête; or, better still, the three arêtes on Great Napes placed end to end. It would be hard indeed to point out another ridge in Britain equal to the Crowberry, either in grandeur of contour or in "technical difficulty," to use Norman Neruda's phrase.

The vividest emotions of the rock-climber arise from the conflict between his rational perception of dangers overcome and eliminated, and the impression these dangers inevitably make on the sub-consciousness: in climbing a broad and open precipice like the front of this ridge, these emotions are at their keenest. A Coolin ridge, or an arête that one can sit astride of, may afford equal exhilaration, but the ability to grip something lessens the feeling of insecurity; while the





ON THE CROWBERRY RIDGE, nearing S. M. C. Cairn.

*Photo. by G. P. ABRAHAM & SONS, KESWICK.*



imprisoning walls of a gully often nullify a legitimate sense of danger. Here, with every part of the body we have direct sensation of the vast space over which we are suspended ; the infinite modulations of the sound of rushing water, giving perception of distances apart from sight, the touch of the wind currents, glimpses of crags and of voyaging cloud-shadows far below through the depth of air, all enter the soul with an intensity the merely contemplative spectator cannot know.

Starting again after a pleasant halt and much-needed refreshment, we found the ridge growing easier in slope, and the rocks more broken up ; there is ample choice of holds, and even of routes. A rugged and splintered cliff, where the sole danger is from the loose stones that abound, leads over a sort of Crazy Pinnacle, and on over a narrow neck to the easy slope crowned by the rock tower that marks the extremity of the Crowberry Ridge. This tower looks far from imposing on this side, but makes it uncertain for a time how the gap between us and the summit of the mountain is to be bridged. There are divers ways up the Tower from the subjacent gullies, the obvious one for us being up a short cleft facing us, while we return over a little flight of stairs luxuriously upholstered with thick and elastic cushions of moss. We coast round the Tower to the right by shaky holds, and descend to a narrow isthmus, against the sides of which the two boundary gullies of the Crowberry terminate. The fine gully to the right has split into two, and we pass the head of the other branch higher up ; both finish in long and narrow funnels that promise sport. Hence, clambering up a loose stone-shoot and over 200 feet of rocks and scree, we rise over the brink of a little cliff and see the cairn a few yards away.

A wide prospect, hitherto eclipsed by our mountain, bursts upon the eye. Around us, save where extend the brown levels of Rannoch Moor, is a tumultuous throng of mountain masses, not sharp and peaky, but bulky and gigantic in outline, and most of them loftier than Stob Dearg. Bidean nam Bian's cluster of snowy cones draws the eye at once across the depths and ridges between ; and under Bidean, Glencoe's mysterious

abyss yawns, full of gloom, the bluffs that look so colossal to travellers in the pass being diminished by the parent mountain's altitude, and reminding one strongly of the not less impressive shapes of Cairn Toul and the Devil's Point overhanging the Larig Ghru. Further on is a dun-coloured reach of Loch Leven. Through a break in the northern rampart of Glencoe, we have glanced many a time all day into the heart of—

“The lofty Lochaber, where, silent upheaving,

Heaving from ocean to sky, and under snow-winds of September,

Visibly whitening at morn to darken by noon in the shining,

Rise on their mighty foundations the brethren huge of Ben Nevis.”

But the Ben's head has been cloaked in mist, while his enormous base and snowy sides seem the proper supports for a peak twice 4,000 feet high. Looking the other way, we are arrested by Ben Starav's bulky figure, with a corner of Loch Etive visible under his flank. Then, above a wilderness of summits, tower the two highest peaks of Ben Cruachan, a cherished old friend of mine, with the great Cat Corrie full of snow.

We enjoyed a long look at this panorama of Scotland's highest hills, with an appropriate foreground in the lesser peaks of the Buchaille, dark, craggy stobs, overlooking fields of snow, and the high ridges and stacks of the Clachlet, separated from us by the huge vacancy of Glen Etive. Then we returned to the corrie below the Crowberry Tower, and began sliding down slopes of scree into the easy gully. Crossing on to the Curved Ridge, and from gully to gully, we came eventually under the end of the Crowberry, and looked for traces of the rock-fall of the forenoon. They were very conspicuous hereabouts. The former site of the pinnacle showed as a scar, the sides of the gullies were marked by rocks that had fallen vertically, and by splinters flying across, and the snow was sown with deep holes; our cairns, however, had not been touched. A rough-and-tumble descent brought us down to the neighbourhood of the slab. It had been unnecessary to rope up at all on the way down, the sole check occurring in a pair of steep chimneys, where we untied the

three rucksacks, with their valuable contents, and passed them down from hand to hand for fear of damage. These rucksacks, (for we had carried a full-plate camera and nine slides with accessories throughout,) had been a substantial addition to our labours. We got back to the inn after twelve hours of absence, pleasantly tired, pleasantly hungry, and conscious of a day's work creditably done.

From Kingshouse we tried no other mountain than the Buchaille, though Wigner and I looked one day covetously at the peak of the Clachlet, seen at the head of a corrie from the hotel, between the truncated pyramid of Sron Creise and the spurs of Meall a Bhuidh. Great quantities of snow covered the tops and ridges of these, and many snow gullies of striking length were visible. Our friends, however, looked with such disdainful eyes on any attempt at peak-bagging, that we were abashed. Careful exploration of the neighbourhood only yielded one useful boulder, a fine specimen nearly 40 feet long, on which seven different ways up and down were immediately found, varying in character, according to the Celtic terminology, from A.E. to A.P. and O.H. Somebody proposed to call it the Alphabet Stone, till we learned it had long ago been christened, not inappropriately, the Clach-nan-Gilleann or Stone of the Young Men. It lies between the road and the foot of the crags, nearly under Collie's Climb.

We had a look also at the "Chasm," a deep ghyll that clears the south-eastern side of Stob Dearg, beginning high up as a narrow gully, and expanding into a profound rent of a similar type to Piers Ghyll, which extends from the 2000 feet contour-line nearly to the bottom of the glen. Making our way up the stream-bed, half in the water, we were stopped altogether by a waterfall 20 feet high, filling the narrowed width of the ravine, and quite impassable, except with bathing attire, which had unfortunately been left out of our equipment. Looking up the narrow cleft, we beheld it filled, as far as we could see, with a staircase of high waterfalls, all in spate. In a broadening of the gully an abundant litter of chocolate wrappers, sandwich papers, and empty tins of ham and chicken, showed that earlier

parties had lingered here to admire this aquatic climb. We clambered out of the "Chasm" as quickly as we could, over shale and vegetables, and followed the right wall of the ghyll up to the point where a high pitch suddenly alters its whole character, meeting on the way with plenty of easy scrambling: the rock scenery is of the finest. Here the "Chasm" sends a steep and narrow branch up the precipitous face to the crest of the mountain; but whether the pitch was a possible one could not be discerned, it was so deeply enveloped in snow. Like another Rake's Progress, the Crowberry Traverse runs aslant up the crags from the foot of this pitch towards the Crowberry Tower. But other obvious routes converge, and the climbing, though full of diverse interest, is of a random and ill-defined nature.

Kingshouse is one of the loneliest of Highland hostelrys. Deer-forests surround it, herds of deer come browsing within a stone's throw of the front door, and during the longer half of the year a human visitor is almost an extinct mammal. But the solitude makes evenings of good-fellowship all the sweeter; and the people of the inn, who used to come out with a telescope to watch our mad antics on the Buchaille, will also have something to report about the clothes-basket trick and other postprandial amusements of their English visitors.

## EVIDENCES OF GLACIAL ACTION IN SNOWDONIA.

BY ONE OF THE COMMITTEE.

*(Continued from Vol. II., No. 8, p. 161.)*

THE valley which has now been reached is Cwm Idwal, which for wildness and general picturesqueness is unsurpassed by any glen in the district. It also abounds in evidences of ice action. Omitting all detailed reference for the present, it will perhaps be sufficient to say that a great mass of ice flowed from the valley and joined the Nant Ffrancon glacier. At the mouth of Cwm Idwal is a little hill surmounted by an ordnance post, a few yards below which are two well-perched masses of rock. The whole face of the parent rock has been abraded by the passage of ice, and is furrowed in a N.N.E. direction, that is towards the shoulder of Carnedd Dafydd, which stands as a sentinel at the entrance of Nant Ffrancon. At this point the stream from Lake Ogwen passes under the Holyhead road, leaps down a rocky chasm, and then flows quietly to the sea at Bangor. The valley through which it winds is Nant Ffrancon—the Valley of the Beavers—one of the most beautiful in Wales, but lacking the wildness which characterises Cwm Idwal. On the west it is bordered by a lofty ridge which sends down spurs enclosing steep and rarely visited cwms. At the northern extremity of this ridge lie the Penrhyn slate quarries, whilst on its western side are those of Llanberis. On the east the valley is shut in by a spur from Carnedd Dafydd frowning in precipices high above the road. From time to time great masses of rock, loosened by the action of the weather, fall from the cliffs and go bounding down to the stream hundreds of feet below. In spite of these

falls it is quite easy to trace the glaciation, although it is not so well marked as on the opposite side of the valley. Starting near the bridge, a few yards from the western extremity of Lake Ogwen, we find abundant traces of the rocks having been abraded by ice. In spite of the weathering the furrows can be followed without much difficulty. The direction of these groovings, however, is at first sight very puzzling, for they head nearly N.N.E. straight across the valley towards the spur from Carnedd Dafydd, which drops steeply near the outlet of Lake Ogwen. This is understood when Cwm Idwal is carefully examined. A great mass of ice came from this valley and struck some distance across the head of Nant Ffrancon. Indeed, Professor Ramsay suggests that it actually abutted on the shoulder of Braich-Du, and there are certainly evidences on this spur to justify the suggestion. Thus the furrows referred to were caused by the Idwal glacier, and not by the ice which flowed where Lake Ogwen now is. Between the stream and Braich-Du the rocks are finely rounded and also bear some scorings. In fact, from this point to Lake Idwal, it is hardly possible to find a single exposure of parent rock which does not exhibit marked evidence of being ice worn. By taking a reading of the barometer at the level of Lake Ogwen, and then following the marks of glaciation up Braich-Du, it is possible to obtain some estimate of the thickness of the ice at this point. The scrambling is rough, but presents scarcely any real difficulties. In August, 1887, I succeeded in tracing these evidences to a height of 465 feet above Lake Ogwen, when mist and a rain storm drove me down. This imperfect observation shews that the ice could not have been less than 465 feet thick at the spot where the Ogwen falls now are. On the way up some very characteristic grooves are passed. One set runs N.W. by  $10^{\circ}$  N. at a small angle *up* the rock face, which slopes at  $30^{\circ}$  in a totally different direction. Exactly at the falls the road has been cut through a finely ice worn rock, and  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile towards Bangor there are others of the same character high above the road. It is, however, on the other side of the stream in Nant Ffrancon



that the most striking evidence is to be seen. Proceeding down stream, dozens of ice-carried blocks are seen, some perched on the very edge of steep little banks. Gradually the direction of the striations changes to N., then N. by W., and further on N.N.W., as the glacier from Cwm Idwal slowly swung round and adapted itself to its new quarters. Observations made under Cwm Perfedd and Cwm Bual shew that the ice here ran down Nant Ffrancon, and that the tributary glaciers from these cwms were not of sufficient size to override the one in the main valley, as was the case with the Idwal glacier. Indeed this might be expected when the size of these little valleys is considered. At the mouth of Cwm Bual, which is about 2 miles from Lake Ogwen, the old road is a considerable distance above the stream in Nant Ffrancon. On dropping to the middle of the valley, here and there rounded rocks are met with much worn by the action of the weather, but having distinct grooves on them, running N.N.W. towards Bethesda and traceable on both sides of fissures which seam the rocks. Half-a-mile further on, the direction of the striations is still the same. This is under the south border of Cwm Graianog, the edge of whose terminal moraine can be easily distinguished some 400 or 500 feet above. From it a double line of blocks stretches down to the road, easily seen from the opposite side of Nant Ffrancon. Still further towards Bethesda, where the bare rock crops out, it is finely rounded and smoothed and has grooves upon it 2 inches wide, which here, too, bear N.N.W. along the valley. About half-a-mile further the road forks, one division bending towards the stream. To the left of this branch is a rounded rock almost covered with grass. The little surface which is bare, is so much weathered that it is difficult to satisfy oneself whether the furrows have been caused by ice or not. Another, a few yards away, gives more satisfactory evidence. The top is grass grown, but the west face is exposed and has on it several grooves ranging up to 3 inches in width and running in a northerly direction, thus shewing another change in the course of the glacier as it followed the windings of the valley.

Beyond this point, which is very little south of the great slate quarries, I have no observations, but, doubtless, evidences of glaciation might be found still nearer the sea coast.

The tributary valleys are well worth examination, some of them yielding striking traces of having been ice worn. From the Ogwen falls there is no subsidiary valley on the east side of Nant Ffrancon for a distance of 3 miles, but on the west there are half a dozen in a corresponding distance. All are small and but little visited in spite of the attractions they possess for the climber, botanist, and geologist. Immediately south of the Penrhyn slate quarries is a ridge called Bronllwyd, from most points of which a fairly easy but somewhat rough descent can be made to Cwm Ceunant; or the valley can be reached with less exertion by striking up to it from Nant Ffrancon. On the north side of the centre, at an elevation of about 1,570 feet above sea level, is a distinct moraine heap running in the direction of the length of the cwm; a few yards higher is another nearly in the centre, and still higher are two others, one on each side of the valley. These mounds are partly covered with bilberry bushes mixed with short grass and a little moss, but the bare stones crop out pretty plentifully. The moraine debris extends at intervals over a distance of some 200 yards or more, and includes a number of travelled blocks which reach to the very edge of the cwm. In fact, there are some shed here and there on the slope down towards the road. The south face of Bronllwyd above the mounds in several places has been smoothed by the grinding of the ice as it slowly moved downwards. The surfaces of rock are much weathered and often covered with grey lichen; however, some striations can be seen running towards N.E. The whole of the lower slope of Carnedd-y-Filiast, between Cwm Ceunant and Cwm Graianog, is strewn with blocks, travelled and perched. In places, too, the rocks are smoothed, but have been so much weathered that it is difficult to say whether the furrows are lines of weathering or ice groovings. On crossing the shoulder and reaching the Cwm Graianog side, there are distinct striations which bear N.N.E. This

side of Carnedd-y-Filiast has an average slope of  $46^{\circ}$  to  $50^{\circ}$ , and is too steep to scale, except in a few places where advantage can be taken of fissures extending almost from top to bottom. At the head of the valley, on the south side, stands Moel Perfedd, from which stretches a great belt of serees. A descent into Cwm Graianog can be made from the col joining the two ridges which border it, but this requires some care owing to the sheets of rock from Carnedd-y-Filiast striking across the valley and ending in a series of abrupt drops, which, to say the least, are not at all inviting. A passage can be made a little to the left of the summit of Moel Perfedd, and from this point there is a fine mountain walk to the Llanberis slate quarries. Four lines of moraine debris run down Cwm Graianog, ending in a splendid terminal moraine, which stretches in a curve right across the mouth of the valley. The sweep of this can be readily seen from the opposite side of Nant Ffrancon. The rocks in this terminal moraine are piled up in a most confused manner to a height of many feet. Almost at the middle of the curve, the convex side of which is as usual directed outwards, stands a rock 9 feet by 6 feet and 6 feet high, perched on the top of others and seamed with quartz. Higher up the cwm, on the Moel Perfedd side, the water can be heard gurgling under the moraine matter, so that probably the finer debris has been washed away. This valley is unequalled by any in Snowdonia for the really perfect terminal moraine which extends across its mouth, and should certainly be visited by all interested in the geology of the district. All the cwms on this western side of Nant Ffrancon exhibit, more or less clearly, traces of having been ice worn, but particular reference will be made to only one other—Cwm Cywion. High up, on the south side of a little pool, are some finely rounded rocks with scorings as much as 7 inches in width. Contrasting with these are the fine markings on another rock close by, where 20 striations can be counted in a breadth of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, all heading towards N.E., in the same direction as the valley. These rounded and furrowed rocks reach up the valley almost to the foot of the cliffs of Y Garn, which forms its southern boundary.

Summing up briefly the evidences in Nant Ffrancon, and its tributary cwms, we find that it received ice from both sides, but by far the larger quantity came from the west. At the upper end of Lake Ogwen, above where Nant Ffrancon really commences, the glaciers from Cwm Tryfan and Cwm Lloer united and flowed W.S.W., turning west under Cwm Bochlywd, from which there came a reinforcement. Cwm Idwal sent out a vast mass of ice which certainly pushed its way far across the valley, even if it did not reach the other side. This tributary glacier flowed towards N.N.E., but a little further towards Bethesda the whole ice mass gradually swung round to N.N.W., as it adapted itself to the lie of the valley. From each cwm on the west side smaller glaciers flowed and joined the main one. Finally, below the mouth of Cwm Ceunant there was another swing round to the north. The traces of ice action are not confined to rounded and furrowed rocks, but embrace, likewise, travelled and perched blocks, although these are not usually of any great size, and the latter, in particular, not specially striking. Nant Ffrancon, and all the valleys bordering it, present most unmistakable signs of having once contained glaciers slowly but steadily making their way downwards, rounding, polishing, and scoring the rocks over which they passed, and carrying a great burden of moraine matter which was deposited as the climate became milder and the ice melted. Gradually these glaciers shrank, retreated to the higher recesses among the mountains, and finally disappeared under the influence of the increasing temperature. They have, however, left permanent monuments behind them, and by their aid we can recall the time when every valley was to some extent being eroded by the glaciers which held them all in an icy grip.

## THE "A" GULLY ON PIKE'S CRAG.

By F. E. ROSS.

THE "A" Gully is, as may be supposed, on the extreme left of the Pike's Crag series. It is also the easiest—at anyrate of the three main gullies—but, though it presents no real difficulty when free from ice, it has two interesting pitches, the second of which is shown on page 24. Both are formed by chock-stones, and both are capped to the very edge with steep and unstable scree, gratuitously graduated by gravity, with all the largest stones nearest to the brink. Between the two pitches there is a face of rock extending across the gully, which would probably form a difficult obstacle when coated with ice. Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether it can be described as a pitch, except in the strictest and most pedantic sense.

There are two entrances to the gully, and several easy exits on the right-hand wall by which the difficulties, such as they are, may be avoided. The left-hand wall is steeper and much less broken up. The first pitch is a sort of two-storeyed cave, formed by a large chock-stone with several smaller ones below it. The method followed by the writer's party in September, 1899, was to ascend the left-hand wall of the gully close to the pitch, and then, entering the upper storey of the cave, to cross over on the lower chocks to the right-hand wall, and ascend in the corner. Careful balancing is necessary while crossing, as there is not enough head-room for an erect position, and the holds in the cave are few.

The late Mr. O. G. Jones described a direct way up in the *right-hand* corner, but the writer's party did not find this feasible.

The scree slope comes down to the extreme edge of this pitch—and indeed of both—and it is difficult to avoid sending down stones. Safe anchorage for the second man can be found on the left-hand wall some distance above the top of the pitch.

The cross wall or intermediate pitch having been surmounted without trouble, the upper one was tackled in the same manner as the first, viz., by the left wall, over the stone to the right, and so up. As before, good anchorage was found on the left wall above.

A little way above this pitch the "A" gully is joined by "B," and both finish together in a vague and uninteresting manner.

The "A" gully was remarkably dry throughout, the cross wall alone showing signs of water, and even here it was no more than a profuse perspiration, and this, be it noted, was on a day when "C" had been reported by another party to be too wet to attempt.



UPPERMOST PITCH OF "A" GULLY, PIKE'S CRAG.

*Photo. by A. W. L.*





*Photo. by A. W. L.*



*Photo. by W. E. W.*

# STABLE TRAVERSE.



## A WET DAY AT WASDALE.

By C. B.

SOME apology is needed for introducing this subject into the annals of our *Journal*, especially as reference to the "ultra-gymnastic" feats described below was made by Mr. Oppenheimer in the September number of last year.

The snap-shots, however, being somewhat unique, the Editor has kindly promised to insert them for the amusement of our readers, and, to the uninitiated, they may require a small amount of explanation.

Last September a merry party was gathered at the Inn, though the Fates were unpropitious, and in three weeks we were only allowed the same number of fine days on which any serious climbing could be attempted—hence, we had plenty of time to explore the diversions in the Inn, invented from time to time by well-known climbers in search of exercise, as an outlet to their superfluous energy.

As an example of the shocking weather, it may be mentioned that a party of four enterprising climbers, being disgusted at the fickleness of Nature, determined to reverse the order of things, and climb by night if not by day. A start was accordingly made from the Inn at 3 a.m., headed by a frequenter of the Alps, the possessor of a folding lantern, and the Pillar being safely reached by sunrise, the party were rewarded by a splendid climb on the North Face, bathed in sunshine all the while, returning to the Inn in time for breakfast.

To their inward satisfaction—an outward display of it not receiving much enthusiasm—the rain came down soon after breakfast, and continued in the usual fashion of Lake rain all day, preventing everyone from leaving the shelter of the Inn!

Best known, perhaps, of all the gymnastic feats is the "*Stable Traverse*," there being numerous ways of reaching the desired niche under the conspicuous notice, "Post Horses,"

the easiest being by the stairs at the side of the building. As, however, climbers prefer the hardest method of climbing anything, be it the summit of Sca Fell or the upper floor of the Inn Stable, the wall on the right-hand side of the double door is scaled, and a traverse made into the upper doorway.

After an exhaustive examination of this wall, it was discovered that an ascent could be made, and was made, without using the ring or the large projecting stone which is just above the level of the first floor.

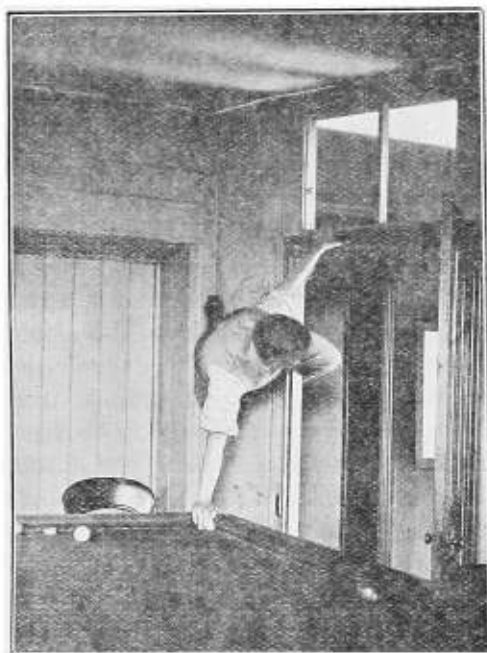
The "trick" about to be given away consists of two insignificant but safe hand-holds, on which the whole weight of the body can be supported while the left foot is swung into the doorway, the right foot being on a small ledge just above the ring. Contrary to expectation, this can be performed by a short-limbed man, provided he is strong in the arms. A descent can be made in the same way, though the large projecting stone is necessary to ensure a descent of not too rapid a nature.

Another method of ascent is to spring from the ground and seize the stone sill of the doorway with the hands and pull up the rest, but if the lower doors are opened so that a kick off with the feet is not permitted, and the upper door closed so that the hands are unable to grip the inside of the sill, this will be found exceedingly difficult, and has, I believe, only once been successfully accomplished.

Being now driven indoors altogether, and resting from our labours on the wall, a party of dripping trippers arrives from Seascale, one of which remarks with a chuckle—"There seems to be a good deal of Waste Water about here." This drives us incontinently from the door to the Billiard Room, the refuge from wet weather and bad jokes, where fives, a dangerous though unequalled game, is generally in progress—cloth, cues, and balls being too bad for anything else.

Here a suggestion is made for the "*Billiard Room Traverse*," which consists of walking on one's hands round the table, the feet resting on the wall at the back, varied with finding their way through a picture. The two difficult turns are at the

mantelpiece end, where one must come down to the mantelpiece and chance knocking everything on to the floor, and then raise the legs on to the wall on the other side. If this is done successfully the rest can generally be accomplished, and an excellent finish consists in getting out of the door and backing down the passage into the parlour. The change of position is effected by the left leg being passed round the



DOOR TRAVERSE.

*Photo. by A. W. L.*

doorway, and the left hand gripping the top of the door frame, as seen in the photo. The old traverse consisted of sidling along and round the table on the arms held straight while the legs dangled below, but this, like most "easy ways," has been relegated to the aged and infirm.

If the details in the photos. are not quite so clear as they might be, the reader is asked to bear in mind that the

"ultra-gymnast" was called upon to remain in this position for two or three minutes, as the photograph was taken during heavy rain, and the fault in no way lies with the photographer. Perhaps the most difficult feat in the Billiard Room is the "*Table Leg Traverse*," which consists of getting round a corner of the table by the obvious method of going under the leg! There are two methods of accomplishing this somewhat ungainly feat, both invented, I believe, by a climber well known for his length of limb and reach, as well as his skill in manipulating difficult rocks. One method, perhaps the easiest, is to lie face downwards on the table (the penalty for so doing being half-a-crown), and gripping the inside of the cushion with the right hand and foot as seen in photo., to slide the left hand down to the leg, and the left leg under the table, where accommodating cross-pieces can be utilized for wedging purposes. A struggle then ensues to get the head on the other side of the leg, when the left hand can reach the side cushion, and the left leg find a hold on the mouldings of the leg itself. After this the rest is obvious, the finish landing the performer on the table, having accomplished the traverse without allowing any part of the body to touch the floor. The other method consists of making the descent feet first, when both feet must be wedged simultaneously under the table.

Our next move is to the Hall, where, finding the humorous tripper has removed himself, we turn to the bannisters for more exertion. These are generally occupied more or less by ropes hung or stretched out to dry, and after their removal, and also the removal of sundry garments on the top landing, our performer is asked to try the "*Bannister Traverse*." There are two ways of reaching the top landing other than mounting the stairs, the U. G. going on his hands alone on the outside of the bannisters all the way in both cases. The first method is a similar position to the now discarded "table traverse," with arms below and dangling legs, and a start is made from the very bottom of the stairs. There are three corners, the second being the hardest, as the rise is necessarily up hill, and a finish must be made right along to the wall at the end. The other

method, far more sensational, is the position adopted in the famous "hand traverse," in which the whole weight of the body is hanging on the arms, and in this case, unless strength of grip is assured, it is best to be accompanied by a muscular friend, who will walk up the stairs and be ready to seize the wrists on the first indication of giving muscles. In this case the trip is shortened, as a start is usually made above the first corner, at a point where the hands naturally reach and grip the bannisters.

The last feat to be described is, I believe, new, and was only invented during our visit. This consists of jamming in the passage at the end nearest the hall, care being taken that the solid wall and not the partition is used, or a somewhat hasty entry into the parlour may be the result. When fairly jammed thus, the problem is to reverse one's position (*i.e.*, to place the back where the feet are, and *vice versa*) without coming to ground. This is not difficult in a chimney on the rocks, where the surface is necessarily rough (*e.g.*, the Oblique), but with the perfectly smooth walls it will be found almost, if not quite, impossible without the help of rubber shoes. It is accomplished by throwing the right leg back beneath the body, and as high up as possible, and then leaning across and forcing the left shoulder hard against the opposite wall. This can also be practised outside between the wall of the Inn and an out-house, where excellent practice in backing up may be obtained with a small percentage of damage to one's clothes.

Altogether, there is no lack of amusement to be found at the Inn even on the wettest of wet days, and it is to be hoped that the above will assist some of the uninitiated to wile away an hour or two, when prospects of better sport are denied.

"No game was ever yet worth a rap  
For a rational man to play,  
Into which no accident, no mishap,  
Could possibly find its way.  
There's danger even where fish are caught  
To those who a wetting fear;  
For what's worth having must aye be bought,  
And sport's like life and life's like sport—  
'It aint all skittles and beer.'"

## KYNDWR CLUB NOTES.

WHARNCLIFFE CRAGS. By the invitation of Mr. J. W. Puttrell, a party went on June 16th to Sheffield, where they were met by Mr. Puttrell and Mr. Watson, and taken to Wharncliffe Crag. These crags are one of the gritstone escarpments, which are usually called "edges," and rise on the crest of a hill overlooking a richly wooded valley, almost within sight of Sheffield. Although the climbs vary in height between the narrow limits of 20 and 40 feet, they comprise almost every conceivable form of mountain gymnastics, and every grade of difficulty. There may be longer climbs in Derbyshire, but certainly no place in Peakland affords anything like the variety and number of these Wharncliffe scrambles. At one spot a little cove, surrounded by towers of gritstone, gives immediate access to seven or eight distinct climbs, mostly difficult; chimneys for back and knee work, chock-stones that have to be embraced with fearsome contortions, awkward corners, and, most sensational of all, a rock-tower, which the climber has to ascend from another slightly lower by stretching his arms straight overhead and falling horizontally at full length across the intervening rift, 5 feet wide and 40 feet deep. Dropping on the palms of his hands, and toeing the smooth side of the rock-tower, he lifts himself by the arms over the edge into safety. The Monkey Jump is a still stranger affair. Leaping a chasm 5 or 6 feet wide, one has to alight on a shelf that is closely overhung by a mass of rock, compelling one to twist slightly in mid-air so as to finish in a stooping position. Altogether a most intimidating nerve-test, though on a small scale. Hard by is another innocent-looking problem—a corner with sloping top that has to be scaled by means of a peculiar "pick-up" on the wrists, with a tumble into a rocky gully for the forfeit. Our Sheffield friends are in the habit, from strictly scientific motives, of

course, of eliminating the more convenient holds from any given climb, much in the way a crafty examiner leaves out the handiest logarithms ; and so they can set the newcomer some exceedingly severe problems. A certain face climb, for example, was stiffened by the imaginary removal of a large boulder ; and it was gratifying to the Sheffielders to see how regularly the Kinderites dropped off on the rope as, one by one, they reached the level of this desirable stone. A good deal of diversion was created by a non-climbing visitor. Bond and Baker had struggled with much ado up a difficult cleft, when this gentleman, after watching them compassionately, called out, " But why don't you chaps do it this way ? " and straightway ran up the cliff after the fashion of a cat storming a wall, quite heedless of the fact that he ought to have nails in his boots. This gentleman must be kept out of the Climbers' Club at all hazards, for climbing will soon cease to be an art if our pet scrambles are to be massacred in this summary way. The day was concluded by an informal concert, the songs and canticles wherewith the peaks of Wales and Cumberland are now so well acquainted, being re-sung with the usual gusto ; and the hospitable Sheffielders departed a little before midnight.

Next day the others started from Crowden Station to cross the high moors into the head of the Derwent valley. For wildness and perfect solitude this walk, which traverses a tract of land about 50 square miles in extent that is not crossed by a single right of way, can challenge any in south Britain. From Bleaklow Stones (2062 feet) the view is that of a wilder and more beautiful Dartmoor ; the boulder-crowned tors are there ; and the deep furrows, where the Alport and Westend rivers cut through the elevated land, are singularly like Tavy Cleave and the grand defile of the Okement. But the going on Bleaklow is intolerably hard. The peat moss is like the one on Kinderscout. As soon as one deep and slimy grough is painfully scrambled through, and the cornice of bilberry surmounted, another grough yawns a few yards in front. No wonder several fellows were to be seen going

through the peat and mire barefoot. At a big pool, below a waterfall on the youthful Derwent, three members had a delicious bathe, and played some amusing antics in the water, or, as an onlooker put it with greater exactitude, performed some interesting evolutions in the aquatic element. The total walk to Bamford was well over 20 miles in length.

KINDERSCOUT. Later in July, Messrs. Baker, Oppenheimer and Puttrell, by permission, visited the Downfall. Several climbs of an excellent minor order were discovered. One brief scramble, involving a pull on the arms that landed the climber in a deep crevice, out of which he had to back cautiously, holding on to nothing, and thrust a hand over the rock on top, was the awkwardest imaginable. Next a lofty crack was found, which afforded an admirable climb till it narrowed away within 6 feet of the top, and then resolutely declined to go. Retiring 15 feet, Puttrell made a zigzag across the cliff, and a beautiful little balancing-problem in a dangerous spot ended the scramble. Leaving a nice assortment of slanting chimneys and gullies for a future occasion, they crossed from the north to the south side of the Kinder Clough, where they had marked down a scramble at the right corner of the Downfall, about 120 feet of wet ledges, impassable if there be much water coming over, and a chimney with a jammed boulder in it. On Kinder Low the party got befogged and nearly came down to Hayfield instead of Edale—an instance of Kinder's treacherous climate, for at Derby the morning had been so brilliant that it had seemed ridiculous to bring a compass.

ELDEN HOLE, &c. Several days about the August bank holiday were employed by Messrs. Bagley, Baker, Croft and Puttrell, in ransacking the Peak for scrambles, though the bad weather made the job rather unproductive. Elden Hole was examined superficially, Bagley descending 70 feet; Puttrell's own particular climb, the Dargai Crack at Castleton, was tried by the other three, who were much impressed by the



proprietor's original exploit in climbing 50 feet of vertical and disintegrated limestone, quite alone and unassisted; Robin Hood's Stride, Cratcliff Tor, Row Tor, the Black Rocks, and other places were visited, and a good deal of sport was obtained in spite of the rain.

## HELVELLYN.

Take thy flight ;—possess ;—inherit  
 Alps or Andes—they are thine !  
 With the morning's roseate Spirit  
 Sweep their length of snowy line ;  
 Or survey their bright dominions  
 In the gorgeous colours drest  
 Flung from off the purple pinions,  
 Evening spreads throughout the west !  
 For the power of hills is on thee,  
 As was witnessed through thine eye,  
 Then when Old Helvellyn won thee  
 To confess their majesty !

W. W.

IN the days of old the leisurely wanderers who strayed among "the Lakes" thought a great deal of Helvellyn. Then, to climb Helvellyn was to win renown : to brave the precipices and horrible abysses "which do abound among these mountains" was considered a noteworthy achievement, and we can imagine the tragedy of the recital by the youth of those days, of how "I climbed the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn." And yet we, with our ordnance surveys, and carefully written guide books, should be in no hurry to laugh at the mountaineers of the past. How would Helvellyn appear to us, if its height were a matter of conjecture, and if we knew not that cliffs are only to be found here and here, that such a ridge down to Patterdale, and such another leads away to somewhere else ; imagine ourselves, ignorant of these facts, but conscious only of a many ridged height, its summit wrapped in storm, its sides eaten away into deep hollows, filled with rocks and silence ; should we not then respect it ?

However, times have changed. Leslie Stephen, Whymper, and Mummery, Haskett Smith and Owen Jones, have opened



HELVELLYN.

*Photo. by G. P. ABRAHAM & SONS, KESWICK.*



our eyes. Scafell and the Gable have been unravelled from the mists of higher Borrowdale—men have left “th’ oppen fell” and taken to gullies, chimneys, and cracks, and nowadays the reader of any monthly magazine may find The Pillar Rock or Gable Needle figuring amongst his sixpennyworth of pictures. All of which, of course, is very desirable, showing, as it does, both enterprise on the part of the publisher, and a certain interest in higher things on the part of the reader. But some of us still find pleasure in a simple slope, and who will not forgive us for a certain sympathy with those easier hills, now scorned by climbers, that seem to have been handed over entirely to the timid, the aged or the ignorant.

Do we ever give a thought to the old poets who named our hills? Not that we would fight over a derivation—let wranglers have their theories—enough for us that we acknowledge the rhythm and swing of these fine old names. If we think of our modern “Jubilee Mounts,” our Mount Browns and Washingtons, our Queen Adelaide’s Hill, and Our Pilkington Pikes, and all the phonetic horrors of the Yosemite Valley, and then go back to Helvellyn and Skiddaw, to Scafell and Glaramara; to names full of meaning, as Wastwater and Wynandermere, perhaps even the most advanced of us may grant that in this respect at least we have made no progress.

There is a charm about the older mountain literature. One likes old West’s remarks in 1779—

“The range of mountains on the right are tremendously great, Helvellyn and Cachidecam are the chief; and according to the Wythburn shepherds, much higher than Skiddaw. It is, however, certain that these mountains retain snow many weeks after Skiddaw. But that may be owing to the steepness of Skiddaw’s northern side and shivery surface that attracts more forcibly the solar rays than the verdant front of Helvellyn, and so sooner loses its winter covering. The road sweeps through a thousand huge rocks, along the naked margin of the lake.” Again, speaking of Ullswater he says, “Behind many wooded hills rises Stone Cross Pike, and over all, steep Helvellyn shews his sovereign head.”

By the way, this forerunner of Murray and Baddeley gives the following statistics of heights, which may interest a few:—

Snowden, in Wales	3456 feet.	By Mr. Waddington, 1770.
Whernside	4050 do.	do.
Ingleborough	3987 do.	do.
Helvellyn	3324 do.	By Mr. Donald.
Skeddaw	3270 do.	do.
Saddleback	3048 do.	do.
Ben Lomond	3240 do.	By Mr. Pennant.
Ben Nevis	4350 do.	do.

It will be seen that the above, with the exception of the Yorkshire fells, are not so very far wrong. It may be presumed that Mr. Waddington hailed from the county of broad acres, and had not that modesty with regard to his native shire which modern Yorkshiremen possess.

From West to Wordsworth is not so very far, and it is pleasant to think what an honoured place in Wordsworth's affections was held by Helvellyn. Close at hand, easily highest amongst his nearer neighbours, to Wordsworth it must have been the king of the fells, and so we find him at all times and seasons wandering there, alone or with his friends; now perhaps with boisterous North, or again, with Scott and Humphrey Davey, or perhaps dragging Coleridge or De Quincey up, to scatter the cobwebs of the brain. Not that Wordsworth did not know the "region of Scafell."

"He had been alone

Amid the heart of many thousand mists

That came to him, and left him on the heights."

Have we not his note of the colours on Scafell top: of the view into the "Den of Wasdale at our feet, a gulf immeasurable"? "Yon precipice, vast building of many crags" he knew full well (if not its long climb intricacies); and Skiddaw "with his double fronted head in higher clouds," Glaramara's "inmost caves" and Fairfields' "mountain tone" were not unloved—and "those twin peaks," with their "harmony of silence";—but what hill can not be named? It is of

Helvellyn that he most often sang, and this is our choice to-day.

Perhaps one of his most widely known poems is "Fidelity." It contains two of his grandest verses.

It was a cove, a huge recess  
That keeps, till June, December's snow ;  
A lofty precipice in front,  
A silent tarn below !  
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,  
Remote from public road or dwelling,  
Pathway, or cultivated land ;  
From trace of human foot or hand.  
There sometimes doth a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak,  
In symphony austere ;  
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—  
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;  
And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast,  
That if it could, would hurry past ;  
But that enormous barrier binds it fast.

Whether you choose your day, or simply trust to chance, the charm remains. Go up when Grisedale lies in a blue-grey haze—when prospects of "good views" are poor, and across the way, St. Sunday's crag looks colourless and dull, when the flat, untidy heather and the lonely tarn—seem all 'so drear that you sit subdued. "The crags repeat the raven's croak in symphony austere." Then when the summit is gained, and you look back upon those

"Huge skeletons of crags which from the coast  
Of old Helvellyn spread their arms abroad  
And make a stormy harbour for the winds,"

you feel that, on days like these, Helvellyn is indeed a mighty mountain.

But there are other and different times—"when with heat the valleys faint"—when the woods are green, when the

flowers are out, and all is liveliness, and colour, and bustle of char-a-banc and coach, and tourists are abroad. What an accommodating old hill he is then ; how he spreads his broad back, like the elephant at the Zoo, for us poor human atoms to mount, and carries us along with a kindly, benevolent air. And who shall laugh at the holiday makers ? At mater there, on the pony's back, " Just exactly like Lucerne, my dear, and so much more pleasure to see dear father enjoying his own country " ; and pater, toiling along in front, hot and perspiring, and not a little overjoyed to find himself still equal to a climb ; and then Amy, coming along behind with George's boy—delaying a little at the streams, it's true—but then it's very hot—and she always did love to find forget-me-nots. But why say more—discreet Helvellyn, what a kind old wink you gave.

But memory flits past—to the storm ; when the mountain has called the wind to its aid, and the snows are swirling, and there's tempest, and noise, and struggle.

And past this again, and now it is evening. The day has been spent in glorious wanderings from ridge to ridge, and our hearts are full of thankfulness as we thread the valley, and see around us richer gifts—the green, velvety turf, and the waving wood. The air is gently filled with the murmur of the stream and the ceaseless hum of living things, and we look away to our mountain, far back in the darkening sky. Even now his bare shoulders will be chilled by the early dew ; ere long the midnight cloud will pause, gently covering each topmost rock, and will give moisture, so that still the streams may flow. And in other seasons, when the heavens are a rushing storm, he will catch the seething mists, and battle with the sleet and hail and rain, and when their fury is spent, and his reservoirs are filled with plenty, like a great father he will open his arms, and pour upon the world below, on every hand, its life, and health, and beauty.



## COMMITTEE NOTICE.

1. The Committee have recently given some consideration to the advantages to be gained by a thorough and systematic examination in detail of the mountain areas in Wales by members of the Club, and have come to the conclusion that good results might be expected. The following suggestions are therefore laid before the Club:—

2. That the country in question should be divided for this purpose into nine sections, namely:—

- (a) The Snowdon section; bounded by the road from Llanberis through Pen y Pass and Beddgelert to Bettws-Garmon and an imaginary line drawn thence N.W. of Moel Eilio to Llanberis.
- (b) The Hebog section; the district south-west of the road from Beddgelert to Carnarvon as far as the Sea, *i.e.*, Moel Hebog, Garnedd Goch, Mynydd mawr and Yr Eifl.
- (c) The Glyder section; bounded by the road from Llanberis through Pen y Gwryd, Capel Curig and Ogwen to Bethesda, *i.e.*, the two Glyders, Trifaen and the hills beyond to Bethesda and the Llanberis Lakes.
- (d) The Carnedd section; including the whole country between Nant Ffrancon, Capel Curig, the Conway River and the Sea.
- (e) The Siabod section; including, besides Moel Siabod, all the hills between Nant Gwynant and the Valley of Ffestiniog, the Manods, Moelwyn and Cynicht.
- (f) The Arenig section, contained in the triangle Ffestiniog, Bala, Dolgelly.
- (g) The Rhinogs and other hills west of the road from Ffestiniog to Dolgelly.
- (h) The Arans, and the Berwyn range.
- (i) Cader Idris.

3. It is proposed to form an exploring party for each one of the nine sections, and members willing to co-operate are asked to notify the Honorary Secretary as early as possible

to which one of the sectional parties they desire to attach themselves, in order that some at least of the parties may start work this autumn. As soon as six names have been received for any one party, its members will be invited to elect a leader, who will take charge of all arrangements for the exploring of his section.

4. The work can commence as soon as the party is organized, and proceed without limit of time.

5. Reports of the work done to be sent from time to time through each sectional leader to the Committee, under cover to the Honorary Secretary, the first reports if possible, not later than October next. The Committee to arrange for the publication of such reports through the Club *Journal*.

6. As a general idea the Committee contemplate that the exploration should be as complete as possible, not only from the climbing, but also from the scientific, point of view. It is hoped that the members who take part in it will include those who can observe and collect exact information upon the geology, botany and physical features of the hills, and all other facts of interest to the student of the mountains, as well as those who are more closely concerned with the discovery, recording, and classification of the actual climbs. Many members of the Club, now hardly on the active list, are doubtless in possession of special knowledge gained long ago, which will enable them to make valuable suggestions. The question of nomenclature, for instance, is of great interest, and has suffered much at the hands of the Ordnance Survey.

7. The Committee anticipate good results in the direction of the original objects of the Club if this proposal should secure the cordial approval and hearty support of the members generally, and in that case the present scheme, which is necessarily of a tentative character, might be extended to other districts within the sphere of the Club's operations.

## NOTES.

THE Editor will be glad of any information concerning the fatal accidents that are reported to have occurred this season on Cader Idris, Glyder Fawr, and Pavey Ark. Up to the present no details have been forthcoming.

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THE footbridge over the Glaslyn river (near Llyn Llidanaw), which was destroyed in the early part of the present year, is being replaced at the expense of the Climbers' Club. The work is being carried out under the superintendence of Mr. Clee of Pen-y-Pass.

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AT the request of some of our Midland members, a Club Dinner will be held at the North-Western Hotel, Birmingham, during November or December. The arrangements are in the hands of a local sub-committee, and details will shortly be sent to every member.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SCRAMBLES AMONGST THE ALPS IN THE YEARS 1860-69. By EDWARD WHYMPER. With Maps and Illustrations. Fifth edition. (London : John Murray, 1900.)

THE CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL. Edited by A. I. M'CONNOCHIE. Vol. III. No. 15. Containing :—Types of Mountain Scenery. By the Rt. Hon. James Bryce, M.P. The Ordnance Survey Maps and the Cairngorms. By Col. Sir John Farquharson, K.C.B. Adam's Peak. By George R. Marnoch. Glencoe. By George Duncan. "In the Shadow of Cairngorm." By Robert Anderson ; &c., &c. (Aberdeen : The Cairngorm Club. July, 1900. 1/-.)

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. Edited by WILLIAM DOUGLAS. Vol. 6. No. 33. Containing :—Some Climbs on Salisbury Crags. By W. Inglis Clark. Benighted on Ben More Assynt. By W. W. Naismith. Northern Pinnacles of Liathach. By A. M. Mackay. A Gallowegian Wander. By Edred M. Corner. A'Mhaighdean. By H. T. Munro. On the North Face of Stuc a Chroin. By J. G. Inglis. (Edinburgh : The Scottish Mountaineering Club. Sept., 1900. 1/-.)

## REVIEWS.

ROCK-CLIMBING IN THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT. By OWEN GLYNNE JONES, Member of the Alpine Club. Second edition. With a Memoir and Portrait of the Author. 31 full page illustrations in collotype, nine outline plates of the chief routes, and an Appendix by George and Ashley Abraham. (Keswick: G. P. Abraham & Sons. 1900. 20/- net.)

THIS new edition will certainly meet with a warm welcome. Mr. Crook's introductory chapters are a valuable feature of Jones's book. They give clearly the main features of his career, and (with the aid of Mr. Spender) tell in a dramatic manner the story of the final disaster. It was a capital idea to append the list of ascents, for in no other way could the indomitable energy of the man be brought more clearly home to the reader.

The book has been brought up to date by useful additions and omissions, though some small errors noticed in the reviews of the first edition have been allowed to remain. There were also certain descriptions with which he had told me he was dissatisfied, and certain doubts which we had planned to clear up in company, but—*Dis aliter visum*. The story of the author's very remarkable climb in Walker's Gully, and of another fine performance on Iron Crag, is told with great spirit and clearness by one of the Messrs. Abraham, and altogether the second edition, though not quite as good as the author himself, had he been spared to us, would have made it, is greatly improved.

The titlepage, curiously enough, does not give any indication that the author is not living, and is disfigured by a quotation which, even if it were not grotesquely inappropriate, would be in very questionable taste. It may have been selected by the

author himself, but it strikes a jarring note now when we are all grieving over his untimely death.

Untimely it was in many ways; not only because it cut short a useful and perhaps brilliant career, not only because his Alpine experience was maturing while his physical powers were still in their prime, but because he was beginning to be better understood by climbing men, and therefore of necessity better liked.

The temptation is strong to throw the book aside and to talk about the author as I knew him.

I do not know whether the famous character of the Athenian people has ever been applied to mountaineers as a class, but certainly many of the words of Thucydides are curiously applicable to climbers in general, and to Jones in particular.

"They are fond of doing new things, keen in forming plans and swift in carrying them out . . . They are enterprising beyond their strength, adventurous against their better judgment, and sanguine in the midst of perils. They are energetic and constantly travelling, thinking that their absence may be of advantage to them. None make more of a victory; none recoil less after a defeat. For the credit of their country they treat their bodies as if they were the bodies of other men, and husband their intellectual powers as if they had a monopoly of them. When they fail to carry out a scheme, they hold themselves robbed of their own property; when they succeed in an enterprise, they regard it as a mere nothing in comparison with what they mean to do. For the casual miscarriage of an expedition they indemnify themselves by forming larger hopes, and, owing to the rapidity of their attack, none bring hope and fruition so close together. In this way they pass their whole lives in toil, hardship and danger. Incessantly pushing on, without leisure for a moment's indulgence, they look upon a holiday as simply an opportunity for exertion, and think indolent repose a worse affliction than laborious activity. To sum up their character it may be truly said, that they were born neither to enjoy peace and tranquillity themselves, nor to allow others to enjoy them."

Surely no one ever treated his body more completely "as if it were another's" than poor Jones. He kept it always in the severest training, and forced it to do the utmost of which it was capable. One great secret of his success lay in the fact that he was generally in harder condition at the beginning of a Swiss trip than most men are at the end of it.

His conversation, too, which often struck a stranger as somewhat self-absorbed, treated himself in reality with an amusing aloofness and impartiality. His attitude towards himself was precisely that of a marine engineer towards his engines. He quite admits that the machinery is high-class, but his modest pride centres in the fact that he knows how to make the most of it, and can get more work out of it than another man would. He is great on the relative values of different sorts of fuel and different lubricants, and can tell you exactly what his beloved engines have done under "forced draught" or "all-day-steam," with a leading wind or against head-seas. He knows, too, the value of a pilot, but frankly admits that he is content to leave navigation to him. This was Jones's attitude towards guiding. He knew that he could not dispense with it, but he took comparatively little interest in it, possibly because he had no experience of first-rate guides, and very little of first-rate amateurs. The soul of mountaineering did not appeal to him so much as its physical charms, and though he talked from time to time of making an expedition into new and unexplored countries, such as the Himalaya, it may be doubted whether that kind of thing would have suited his special talents half as well as the more familiar Alps. The fact is that his originality preferred to work within narrow limits. He took more pleasure in improvement than in discovery. The book before us gives many hints of this tendency, and also of his extraordinary faculty for climbing under unfavourable conditions. Cold and wet seemed to stimulate him, and the worse the weather the better he climbed. In Wales and Cumberland this gave him a great advantage, but in the Alps it led him to under-estimate the importance of weather, and brought him a reputation for imprudence. Mr. Crook's estimate of his powers as a rock climber will probably meet with general approval. For what is called "style," he perhaps trusted rather too much to his unusually powerful grip; but, in all-round effectiveness, he had scarcely a superior among amateurs.

MOUNTAINEERING. (The Badminton Library.) 3rd edition.  
1900.

THAT excellent volume of the Badminton Series which relates to mountaineering has just reached a third edition. The Alps are proverbially unchanging, and so no doubt is the art of scaling them. No great changes are therefore to be expected in a work of this kind when it goes through a new edition. However, a new chapter by the President of the Alpine Club has been added on "Mountaineering in Far-away Countries," in which there is an interesting summary of what has been done lately in exploring the Cordillera and Himalaya ranges. The statements of the times taken to ascend various great heights, and the effect on the muscles and lungs of the climber have been brought up to date, and include McVine's ascent of Aconcagua. The Alpine distress signal (nothsignal), full instructions for making which are to be found in most Alpine huts, is fully described, and some remarks are made on heliographic communication: this presupposes a knowledge of the Morse, or some equivalent code, in both the sender and receiver, which probably only a small percentage of climbers possess. Signalling with a looking-glass is also recommended, but anyone who has tried to heliograph without a proper instrument will appreciate the difficulties of this method of communication.

Mr. Dent's inexhaustible supply of humour finds vent in a new piece of advice given to the unhappy climber, which is that he is to treat himself as a photographic plate, screen himself from actinic rays, and wrap himself up in red flannel. In looking through this new edition, one is amazed at the quantity of good advice contained in its pages which one has systematically neglected. The book, however, is great fun, and every member of the Climbers' Club must have laughed at the various comic drawings.

If there is one quality which all climbers possess in common it is a disposition to be funny about their various climbs, and the volume is full of the same spirit. And yet the

book contains a statement that in mountaineering it is better to take things too seriously than too lightly. The caution is perhaps not unnecessary.

Some of the pictorial jokes have now become classical, and, as an instance of this there is the picture opposite p. 242 in the new edition, called "Crack Climbers." The art of climbing, as practised by the common housefly, is also well illustrated on p. 256. The illustrations will always remain one of the great features of the book, but some of them are drawn more to teach the art of mountaineering than to represent things as they are. No one ever found ledges to put the rope over occurring in just the right place, as they do in the picture called "Backing Up." One feels that it would have been a pity not to have had a slip under the circumstances there depicted.

The Badminton "Mountaineering" is to be recommended to everyone, but it has an especial value to members of the Climbers' Club, as it gives valuable assistance in determining what a climber really is. To quote from p. 132:—"On no occasion is the distinction between the climber and the mountaineer brought into more marked prominence. The climber urges, 'Go on because it is possible to do so;' the mountaineer says, 'It is possible, but it is unwise and imprudent, therefore we will turn back.'" Who, after that, would be a mere mountaineer?

E. R. C.





