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T H E

# CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

Edited by E. RAYMOND TURNER.

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## MOUNTAINEERING IN THE CAIRNGORMS.

By ERNEST A. BAKER.

FOR the mountain-rambler, for the man whose chief delight is to wander amid wild scenery and perfect solitude, bagging a fair average of peaks *per diem*, and who rather prefers "roughing it," there is no finer district in Britain than the Cairngorms. Yet I should be slow to recommend these mountains to the professed rock-climber; not because there are no rock-climbs—there are plenty of climbs *in posse* if not *in esse*—but because the very characteristics that make the region such a grand one for the rambler spoil it somewhat for the regular cragsman. The latter demands certain conveniences. He requires a comfortable hotel not far from his climbing ground, he likes to have some sort of road going within an easy distance of his crags, he abhors crossing wide stretches of moorland or high ridges of the mountain to get there. My average experience of Cairngorm climbing may be summed up as a very early start, a long walk amid glorious scenery, a tantalising glimpse of a climb full of thrilling possibilities, and just time enough left to get home before dark. In four visits to the region, always with an ambitious scheme in my pocket, I have obtained about four indifferent scrambles. On the other hand, I and my companions have

beheld scenery unequalled of its particular kind, we have enjoyed among these hills some of the best days of our existence, and have met with some of our most trying misadventures, and most agreeable to look back upon in memory.

The Cairngorms fall naturally into three groups: the Western, the Central, and the Eastern Cairngorms, two long and deeply-cut passes forming the division. I will make a brief and cursory survey of the parts that I know, keeping in mind the points interesting to ramblers and scramblers, and, for exhaustive information on the topography, referring would-be visitors to the articles by the editor, Mr. Alexander Inkson M'Connochie, and others in the *Cairngorm Club Journal*.\*

The Western group lies to the west of the deep cleft running north and south, the Larig Ghru, and comprises the two culminating peaks of Braeriach and Cairn Toul, with several other 4000 feet tops. There is also an important appendage of this group further west, Sgoran Dubh, a ridge 3656 feet high, with several peaks and a magnificent series of crags overlooking Loch Eunach. To ascend Braeriach, follow the mountain-crest round over Sgor an Lochan-Uaine to Cairn Toul, then to turn back and cross the saddle to Sgoran Dubh, and follow this secondary ridge to its extremity, is one of the grandest mountain rambles in the country. It is a heavy day, however, not in the distance alone, but in the ruggedness of the ground traversed. The top of Cairn Toul rivals the Glyders as a chaos of boulders strangely piled. After the ascent of Braeriach, on the other hand, the ups and downs are not considerable, and one can drive, at certain seasons, to and from the base of the mountains. Many excellent points for panoramic views are attained during the circuit, but the thing that by itself is worth all the trouble is the view into the Garbh-Choire, the gigantic hollow embraced by Braeriach and Cairn Toul; this cluster of savage corries, with its

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\* A valuable monograph on the Cairngorms, by Mr. M'Connochie, will be out shortly, and will be exceedingly interesting to mountaineers.

long ranges of precipice, its gullies and pinnacles, its beautiful lochan, torrents and waterfalls, is seen from many different points as one skirts its topmost rim. Glen Eunach, again, with its deep blue loch, ranks with Coruisk and Loch Avon, among the most wildly beautiful combinations of water and mountain.

But where is the climbing? It is to be looked for on the two great series of cliffs already alluded to, the precipitous side of Sgoran Dubh and the miles of lofty crag immuring the Garbh-Choire. As I have already mentioned, bad luck has attended my designs on these climbs—I have come, I have seen, but I have not conquered. But at all events, I have inspected at close quarters the rock-faces, arêtes and pinnacles that overlook the Garbh-Choire from Braeriach; and though conditions were unfavourable then, I hope eagerly for future opportunities to try those splendid crags. Thence, all the way round to Cairn Toul are to be found gullies, chimneys and open climbing of all degrees of difficulty. The rock is granite, but in many places on this side of the Larig I have found it exceptionaily good, by no means so rounded and crumbly as, for instance, we found it on Sgoran Dubh. I had one good scramble on the latter some years ago, but under the worst conditions, the upshot being that the party got badly pounded under the summit, through mist, and only extricated themselves at a late hour. There we found the characteristic defects of granite as a climber's rock very much against us.

The Central Cairngorms consist of Ben Muich Dhuì (4296 feet) and Cairngorm (4084 feet), with their vassal peaks, several of which are individually very fine mountains. The ambition of every tourist who comes to Aviemore or Braemar is to walk from one of those places to the other over these two central peaks. In grandeur, nevertheless, this walk is not equal to that over Braeriach and Cairn Toul. To explore either the Western or the Central Cairngorms at all extensively, it would be necessary to camp out, and Nature has provided a rude kind of lodging, consisting of walls and roof, in the Shelter Stone at the head of Loch Avon, which lies in

a deep recess in the heart of the mountains, overhung by unscalable crags—one of the most romantic blendings of beauty and savagery that Scotland can show. The Shelter Stone is at times rather a popular resort among the youthful and daring of the Speyside villagers, to judge by the curious tales one hears, but it is usually the object of a pilgrimage rather than a means of reaching the more inaccessible parts of the mountains. In default of a movable camp, it might be utilised by rock-climbers as a nearer point for attacking the crags on the Ben Muich Dhui *massif*; I have twice slept there, and can recommend the accommodation as rough but sufficient. There are some gullies hereabouts that offer indifferent climbing; the faces appear to be quite impossible. But the best climbs in the vicinity are probably on the long level wall of precipice that is such a conspicuous object on the skyline between Cairngorm and the Larig's portal, as seen from the Highland Railway. My nearest approach to these imposing crags was during the shooting season, when to attempt a scramble there was a high crime and misdemeanour. These Coire-an-Lochan cliffs certainly look most promising, and so do those of Coire an-t Sneachda, with its long-shattered Fiacail, forming a sort of "Pinnacle Route" to the summit. Further west, forming one wall of the Larig, is Creag-na-Leacainn, well within reach of a day's excursion from Aviemore. Mr. J. W. Puttrell and I enjoyed some fair scrambling on this mass of crags in 1901, ascending directly from the pass to the higher of the two peaks; we also saw and tried other climbs that were too risky without a third man. The granite just here was not good, the dip being entirely against the climber—a contrast to the rocks on Sron na Leirg, Braeriach's buttress, on the far side of the pass, where the scrambles are short but thoroughly enjoyable. Granite varies in soundness, and in other qualities important to the scrambler, to a remarkable extent within a comparatively small distance.

As for the Eastern Cairngorms, I have barely visited them, though I have made several attempts to reach their summits.



They lie to the east of the Larig an Laoigh, the almost untrodden pass running north and south nearly parallel to the Larig Ghru, and their principal heights are Ben Avon and Beinn à Bhuird. From a distance I have regarded the crags on this huge *massif* with longing, but I can only avouch that there ought to be good climbing on them; \* so deceptive a rock is granite that the most attractive crags may, on near inspection, turn out a fraud.

Notwithstanding such technical defects, these mountains are well worth the attention of any English climbers who care for types of scenery quite different from any in England and Wales, or in the better-known West Highlands; and, in spite of the predominance of flat tops, I should advise every party equal to a little rock-work to put a rope in the rucksack.

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\* Mr. M'Connochie, who has kindly revised this paper, observes, "As for Ben Avon, no rock-climbing there; the two east-facing corries of Beinn à Bhuird are shapely, but *not* serious to the rock-climber." It is interesting to hear that "the (Cairngorm) Club proposes to illuminate the top of Ben Muich Dhui on 26th June."

## FIRST ASCENT OF THE GREAT GULLY OF CRAIG YR YSFA IN CWM EIGIAU.

By J. M. A. THOMSON, A.C.

THE fulfilment of a promise rashly given to the Editor of this *Journal* has been long delayed, both by the difficulty of obtaining illustrations of the climb and by a wish to supplement or correct the nomenclature of the Ordnance Maps with regard to the ridges on this side of Carnedd Llewelyn.

Other climbers in this district have doubtless found it hard to discover the exact position of Braich Du, have been puzzled by the fact that Craig yr Ysfa, hitherto assigned to the Nant Ffrancon, has not been heard of by the natives of that valley, and have been perplexed by the profoundly mysterious name Elicydu—a word that has never failed to floor the most erudite and ingenious Welsh philologists of my acquaintance.

The grassy ridge of Carnedd Dafydd which descends towards Bethesda, called Pen yr Oleu Wen, "Hill of the White Light," has a steep and rocky slope extending from the scene of the recent stone-fall to Llyn Ogwen, this slope is known as Braich Du, the "Black Arm," and the seeming contradiction involved in the names is quite intelligible to all who have watched the strong play of sun and shadow on the face under certain conditions of weather.

On the east side of Llyn Ogwen, the hogsback, called Y Braich, which helps to form the cradle of the infant Llugwy, rises gradually to a summit marked Pen Helyg on the Ordnance Maps. The true name is Pen Helyg Ddu, "Hill of the Black Willow," and the restoration of the lost adjective elucidates the difficulty of Elicydu; for this word is obviously nothing more than a corruption of the correct name of the mountain.





*From a Sketch by A. E. ELIAS.*

**The Great Cave Pitch in the Gully of Craig yr Ysfa.**

[The triangular hole on the right is the exit.]

The ridge trending north-west from this summit, and finally connecting with Carnedd Llewelyn, has two distinct cols unnamed on the Ordnance Maps: the first, which is far from level, is fittingly called Y Crib, and the second is Bwlch Hên, the "Old Gap," or, possibly, the "Fairies' Gap." Between these depressions the ridge rises to a well-defined summit, the height of which, not given in the Ordnance Maps, must approximate to that of Cader Idris; descending in a grassy slope to Llyn Llugwy, it throws down on the east side a sheer rock face into the deep hollow of Cwm Eigiau. This is the true Craig yr Ysfa. The word, in the sense of sheep-walk, a description appropriate to the western slope, has become obsolete, and the alternative meaning, "Crag of Craving," is held by the natives to be correct, and to derive its significance from the burning desire felt by all who should venture to look over the verge of the cliff to plunge headlong into Cwm Eigiau. However this may be, the mountaineer will prefer to reverse the route, and a particularly attractive line of ascent is afforded by a deeply cut gully which strikes the face from base to summit; it was the goal of an expedition made on April 22nd, 1900, with R. I. Simey and W. G. Clay.

In conformity with the *habitudes* which prevail at Capel Curig, we made a leisurely start before mid-day, and reached Y Crib by way of Tal y Braich Uchaf, Braich, and Pen Helyg Ddu. It may be worthy of note that the temptation to cut the corner from the road should be resisted, as this route will entail the traverse of a bog, and that a *marche de flanc* from Y Braich to the little col will involve a loss of time upon exasperating slopes of shifting shale.

From Y Crib it is an easy scramble down to Cwm Eigiau, but as the other clefts on the face had not then been explored, it seemed preferable to descend from Bwlch Hên, and thus avoid all risk of mistaking the entrance to the gully.

After a prolonged halt for lunch, we roped at four o'clock, and began the ascent. A grass-grown staircase is passed with ease, but is sufficiently steep to enable the climber to *déroutiller les jambes*, then follow two pitches of the familiar

Tryfân type, which are climbed without difficulty, on the left. Between them the gully narrows to the width of two or three feet, but broadens again in front of the next obstacle; this pitch is of the doorway order, but as one of the jambs overhangs and the other is destitute of holds, the place seems only climbable by means of a human ladder, or some such exceptional method.

We therefore tried a chimney on the right, but mindful of the scriptural warning—"He that removeth stones shall be hurt by them"—finally resorted to strategy, and traversed to a small pinnacle, from the top of which the slabs of the face were reached.

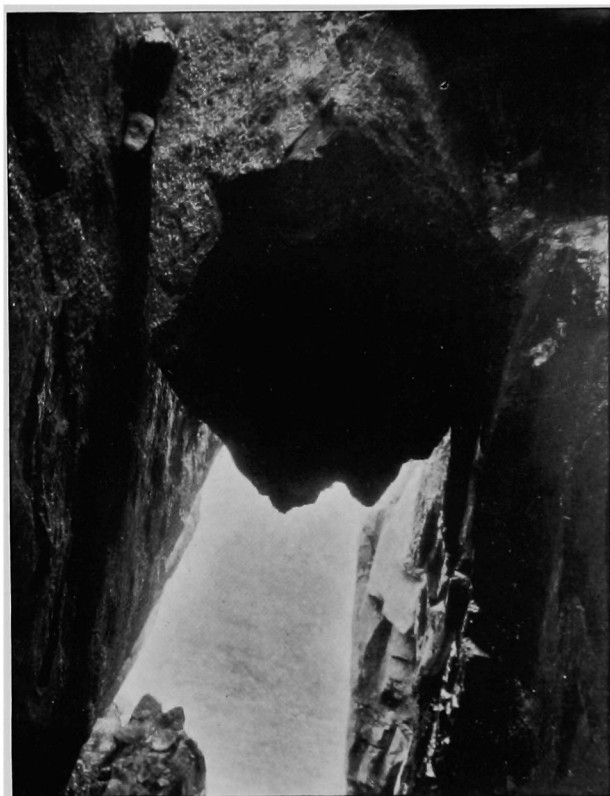
After gaining much valuable experience in step-cutting with a pen-knife, we reached an ample grass ledge about 70 feet above the pinnacle, and followed it to its abrupt termination at a point where a partly detached slab facilitates descent to a small platform in the gully. A line of advance is here afforded by a black chimney, and into its damp recesses the leader must squeeze in order to allow room for the third man of the party to alight upon the platform.

The chimney was liberally supplied with tempting holds, most of which, being undercut and treacherous, have now gone to their own place upon the scree. On leaving the chimney, we have merely to walk up a rushy slope to the next pitch, where a cave, surmounted by four wedged blocks, presents a very imposing obstacle. The vertical side-walls are set at a convenient distance for backing up, and a weathered crack on the right offers some foothold, but at the top a difficulty is experienced, for, while it is necessary to transfer the weight in order to land upon the right wall, the hand-hold much needed for the process does not come within the reach of a climber of average stature. The leader spent much time here, "*gratis anhelans, multa agendo nihil agens*," before effecting a lodgment upon the landing place. His companions showed how skilfully a height of 6 ft. 2 in. could be turned to account in places of the kind. There remains an upper storey to the pitch; of the two parallel chimneys we chose the alternative





.. Line of Exit.



....End of String-course

.....  
Cwm Eigiau.

The Outer Bridge from the Inner Bridge.

on the right, and backed up it with the utmost comfort and satisfaction. After a short interval of easy going, we were confronted by another high obstacle, to which the converging lines of two chimneys give the appearance of an inverted V, we climbed that on the left, as it appeared the more interesting of the two. A pleasing variation was then afforded by a slope of hard snow, sufficiently steep indeed to have seriously delayed a party unprovided with axes; it had, however, so far shrunk from the south wall as to allow us room to ascend sideways by leaning back against the rocks and kicking notches in the angle. Our progress was next arrested by a smooth wedged boulder, over which we climbed directly, but a short chimney on the right seemed to offer an easier alternative. Two obstacles of a similar character lie immediately above, and may be regarded as the threshold of a great cave— unquestionably the finest in any gully of the district. Rocks, fallen from above and jammed between the vertical side-walls of the gully, form both the roof and two bridges, the inner bridge, being the more accessible owing to the slope of the bed, becomes the most vulnerable point for attack.

The removal of débris from these virgin pitches necessitated single climbing, with the result that strange gymnastics were indulged in here, before the top of the rock was reached, for the right wall was streaming at the time with cold water from the snow melting above, and daylight, moreover, had ceased to penetrate the recesses of the cave. The next move was across the bridge to a slippery ledge on the south wall; sidling along this string-course by the light of faith, we reached the outer bridge, where a hole afforded a convenient exit. A faint glimmer on the western horizon sufficed for the ascent of the little pitch above, and we reached the summit ridge soon after eight o'clock. Of the four hours spent in the gully, probably the major part was occupied in pioneering, for while the bed rock was found to be very sound and satisfactory, the obstacles were decorated with so exceptional a quantity of loose turf and moss, that we might almost claim to have found them of grass and left them of granite.

These operations had delayed us beyond expectation, and though nothing could have terminated the day's expedition in more touching harmony with early experiences than a descent without a lantern in the dark and a return to camp between ten and eleven o'clock, yet we could not but regret having been the innocent cause of some uneasiness to the worthy congregation of tourists and fishermen assembled at the Royal Hotel, Capel Curig.

Some further explorations have been made since with Harold Hughes and Roderick Williams. A chimney, seventy feet in height, falling into the gully above the V pitch, affords an alternative exit, the more important as the ledge of the cave is apt to be iced in time of frost.

The loose rocks in the little chimney first mentioned above have now been levered out with an axe; by climbing it we have the double satisfaction of keeping in the gully and of regaining the main channel at the foot of a colossal pitch, 35 feet in height, with a difficult finish.

It is agreeable to general experience that the first impressions of a climb should be materially modified by subsequent visits, yet I have no hesitation in recording my opinion that this is the most entertaining gully climb in Snowdonia.





FIG. 1.

THE CLIFFS OF BEN NEVIS FROM CAM DEARG.

*Photo. by Messrs. ABRAHAM, KESWICK.*



## BEN NEVIS.

By EDRED M. CORNER, M.B., B.Sc.

IT took a long time for people to grasp the fact that Ben Nevis was the highest of the British mountains, and that Ben Muich Dhui was really 111 feet lower. Still longer has it taken for them to realize that it is the grandest of our hills, and that it possesses an unequalled climbing ground. The first purely British climbing club to be formed was the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and its birth may be most conveniently dated from its first publication, January, 1890. And it was not until April, 1895, that this Club paid its first visit to the monarch of our hills. The suggestion that the Club should have its Easter Meet at Fort William was received with dismay, as it was only a very chosen few who knew that there was anything in the district to climb. But the meet at Fort William was a complete success, and, aided by Dr. Norman Collie's knowledge of the country, the Club acquitted itself in a manner to be proud of. Since this date, members of the Club, and of other clubs enticed by them, have always been visiting this district, and a great deal of work has been done; and still there is more to do. It is to give you a succinct account of what has been done, and what may be done, that I offer this article to your Editor.

Ben Nevis forms a *massif* that is about 24 miles in circumference at its base, and horse-shoe shaped, with the opening of the shoe directed to the north. This *massif* is divided into two parts, eastern and western, connected by a long narrow arête. The eastern part consists of Ben Nevis, 4407 feet, Carn Dearg (pronounced jerrack) to the N.W., 3961 feet, and another Carn Dearg to the S.W., 3348 feet. On the north-east faces of the two former the chief climbing is to be found.

The western part is dominated by a separate mountain, Carn Mor Dearg, 4012 feet, and north of it are Carn Dearg Mheadonach, 3875 feet, and Carn Beag Dearg, 3264 feet. Having thus given a brief description of the chief geographical features of this region, I will now indicate the ways to the great northern corrie of the Ben, its chief climbing ground. The old way was to ascend the hill, Meall an't Suie, just over Fort William, and thence pass the Lochan and round under the foot of Carn Dearg, 3961 feet. This has now given way in favour of a line of lesser resistance, namely, the track to the big horse-shoe curve by the above-mentioned Lochan, leaving it at its most northerly point, height about 2000 feet and below the Halfway House, traversing round the foot of Carn Dearg, 3961 feet, crossing the deer fence, and dropping into the corrie of the Allt Mhuilin. The corrie may also be gained via the Long John Distillery from the Glen Spean road. When this spot is reached, the climber will find himself in one of the grandest of corries, with great cliffs 2000 feet in height and over a mile long. Still more interesting to him is the fact that these cliffs are climbable, and that much good work has already been done there, and a great deal still remains to be done. This magnificent cliff is divided into two parts by a recess or upper corrie about the middle, into Ben Nevis and Carn Dearg portions; the corrie is called Coire na Ciste, and from it a number of gullies, separated by unclimbed buttresses, connect with the summit ridge. These gullies will give plenty of step cutting and entertainment in circumventing the cornices, which are frequently large. Beyond these points no special difficulty will be encountered in them, and I may add that only the chief gullies (three in number) in this part of the cliff have been climbed.

The first portion of this cliff to be described is that which belongs to the southern or Ben Nevis portion, in which are two glorious ridges. The \*first of these to be climbed was the

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\* A former descent is recorded by the Brothers Hopkinson in the *Alpine Journal*, xvii., p. 521.



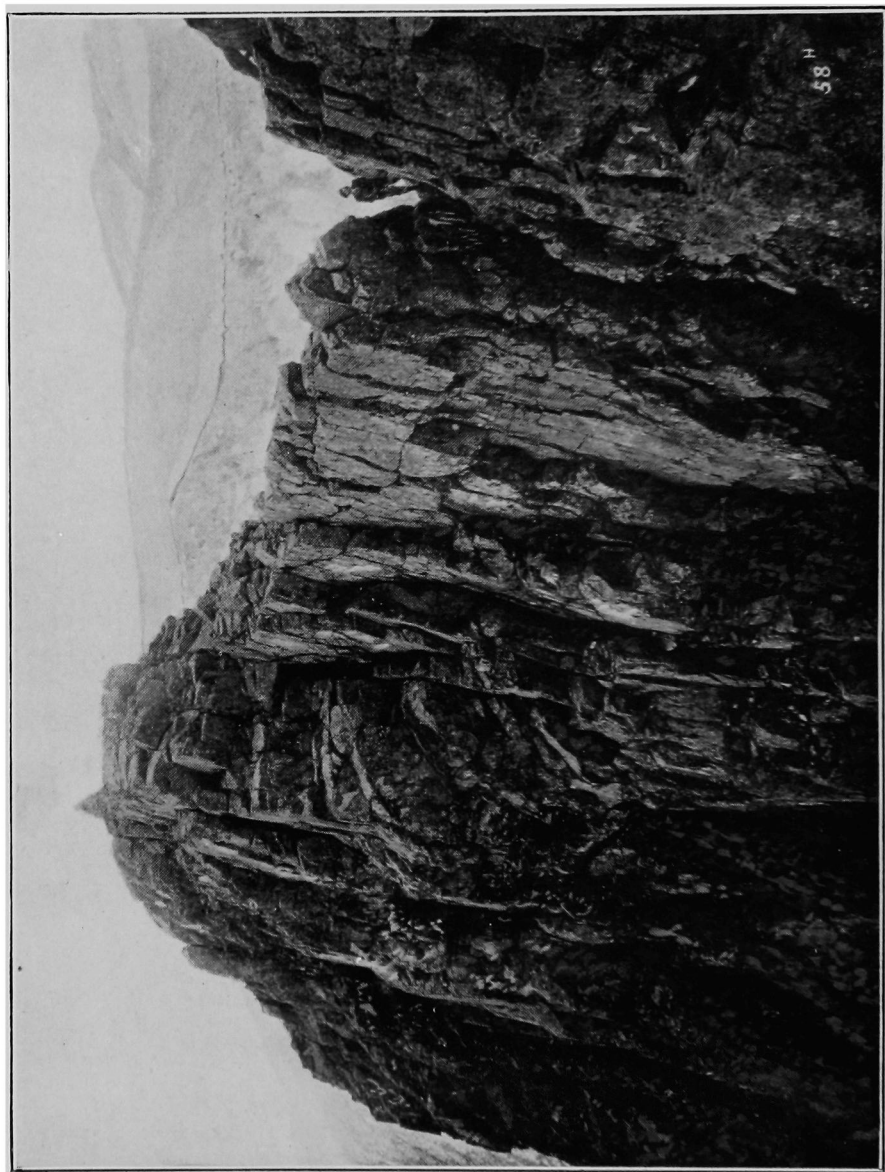


FIG. 2.

THE GAP IN THE TOWER RIDGE.

*Photo. by Messrs. ABRAHAM, KESWICK.*

Tower Ridge, by a party led by Dr. Norman Collie, and described by him in fanciful language in the *S. M. C. J.*, vol. v., p. 151, 1894. The pinnacle at the bottom of the ridge was omitted, and the great rock tower on its upper part, which gives the ridge its name, was turned by ledges on the west side. Above this Tower is a narrow part of the ridge, with a cleft about 10 feet deep in it. Later the Tower was ascended by a more direct and difficult climb up its N.W. angle, recorded page 232 of the same volume. In 1900, the Tower was first scaled on its east side by a route described as not so difficult as the second. The cleft above the Tower is comparatively easy, and it is recorded that the first comers, who explored the Tower from above, being desirous of making the Tower inaccessible, whilst returning, kicked down all the loose stones from the cleft. Below the Tower, the climbing admits of some variation, especially in the lower part. The pinnacle at the base was climbed by Messrs. Hopkinson *Alpine Journal*, xvii., p. 521, and later by a party (*S. M. C. J.*, iv., p. 172), who intended doing the Tower ridge as well, but spent most of their time on the pinnacle, and left the ridge untouched. No one has yet climbed both the ridge and pinnacle together, though doubtless it can be done. The Tower ridge is usually approached at its base from the east side, which is easy. On either side of the col between the pinnacle and the ridge are two easy and dirty gullies which give access to this point, from which the ascent to the ridge proper, or pinnacle top, will afford good sport. In summer the chief difficulty is the Tower, but in winter the ridge is not infrequently unclimbable.

The splendid buttress that is seen at the south end of the corrie and beyond the Tower Ridge, daunted climbers by its appearance, and was not ascended until 1895. A few days afterwards it was ascended by an English party. The ridge admits of more variation in climbing than the Tower Ridge, which it beats in scenically fine views of these crags; but the climbing here is not of so high an order. Both these great ridges are formed of rock that is excellent for holds. In consequence, the N.E. buttress allows more frequently of

winter ascents than does the Tower Ridge. Both these ridges will give climbing for about 2000 feet.

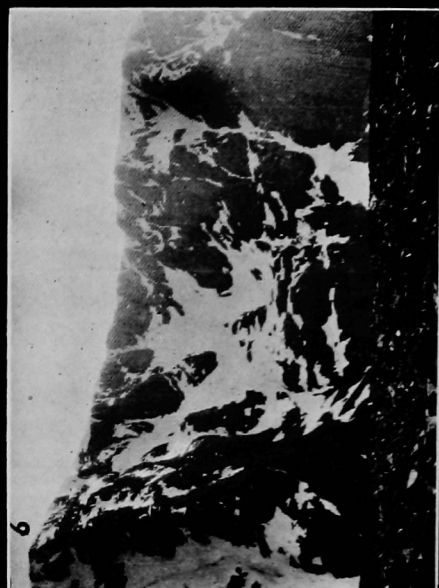
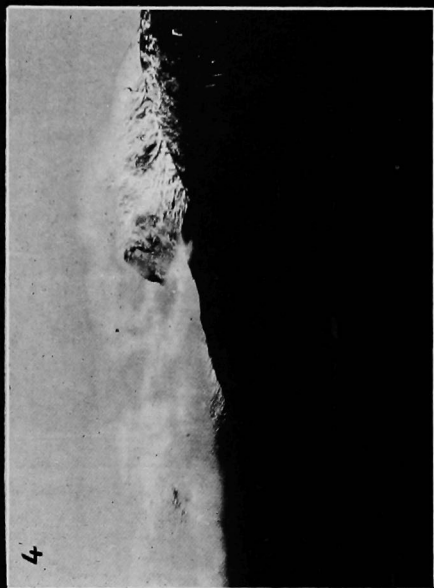
Between these two ridges is a little corrie, for which the name Coire Coille has been suggested in honour of the great exploiter of Ben Nevis, Dr. Collie (*v. S.M.C.J.*, vol. vi., p. 28). Above is a gully, the Observatory gully, which higher up forks into two branches. The left of these is very steep, and has been climbed twice, first by Messrs. Hastings and Haskett-Smith in 1897, and the second time in 1901. The right hand branch, though very steep, is easier. Over 2000 feet of snow-climbing can easily be obtained here. Also descending to this corrie from the side of the N.E. buttress may be seen another ridge, steep, and, let us say it quietly, unclimbed. The lower part of this ridge looks difficult, as does the upper part, and no one has climbed it yet. On either side of this ridge are virgin gullies and chimneys, and higher up still is a shorter virgin buttress. In fact, it is a magnificent spot for energetic climbers to seek new laurels in.

To the northern side of Coire Ciste are the Carn Dearg group. Beginning near Coire Ciste one comes first to a broken-up buttress that will allow of various climbing, a gully of which kept a party sixteen hours on the Ben one New Year (*S.M.C.J.*, vol. v., p. 45). North of this buttress is a gully, up which Dr. Collie lead a party some years ago; the ascent of which has never, to my knowledge, been repeated. North of this lies the last of the four great ridges of Ben Nevis to be climbed. In 1895, it was climbed circuitously by a ledge from the south, which obviated the great initial difficulty (*S.M.C.J.*, vol. iii., p. 345). Later it was climbed more directly by a difficult climb from the other side, and the ridge, above the cliffs, leads easily to the top of Carn Dearg. This rocky promontory is called the Carn Dearg Buttress.

Just as between the Tower Ridge and N.E. Buttress there was a small corrie, so is there a similar one between the Carn Dearg Buttress and the Castle Ridge, which might be named Coire na Caisteal. Like "Coire Coille," this corrie has a ridge coming down into it, The Castle, not to be confused with the







BEN NEVIS.

Castle Ridge forming the northern boundary of this hollow, and which has been climbed once (*S.M.C.J.*, p. 198). On either side of the Castle are two long gullies that have been climbed when full of snow, but, as with most, if not all, of the Ben Nevis gullies, not when the pitches are clear. The most northern of the great ridges of Ben Nevis is the Castle Ridge, first climbed by a party led by Dr. Collie at Easter, 1895, and described in the *S.M.C.J.*, vol. iii., p. 316. A thousand feet of rock-climbing is obtained on this ridge. In one great point the Carn Dearg group of ridges differ from those of the Ben Nevis group, namely, the rocks are more rotten and less satisfactory for climbing purposes.

This concludes the main features of the glorious crags of Ben Nevis, the brief description of which may be of value to climbers who may desire to spend a holiday at Fort William. Two distinct warnings may be given. Firstly, the big corrie of Ben Nevis is part of a deer forest, and though no trouble has yet arisen, it may do so. The chances of friction are much minimised by utilising the track in order to gain the foot of the cliffs. Secondly, any climbers going to the Observatory gully will do well to send a message from the base station to the summit, notifying the observers. Otherwise, the luckless party may receive an avalanche of Observatory débris on their heads, for the left hand branch is the refuse shoot of the Observatory.

With regard to other climbing, long gullies into Glen Nevis will be found on the Carn Dearg, 3348 feet, south of Ben Nevis, and also in the corrie above and to the west of this, Coire Dearg. Several gullies for easy days can be found on Meall au't Suie, above where the track passes.

The eastern division of the Ben Nevis group has for its principal summit Carn Mor Dearg, 4012 feet, which is a fine little top, connected with the Ben by a long narrow ridge. There is no summer climbing to be found on it. A little to the north of Carn Mor Dearg is Carn Dearg Mheadonach, 3875 feet, that has an eastern pinnacled ridge from its summit which has never been climbed. It begins with an

easy looking tower, and then comes a longer stretch of ridge. The appearance is fine, but I think it would yield a pretty easy ascent, or more likely descent. It is, however, unexplored.

One of the finest walks in the kingdom is over Carn Dearg, 3961 feet, Ben Nevis, the arête to Carn Mor Dearg, and thence along the ridge to Carn Beag Dearg to the Glen Spean road, and so back to Fort William (*Cairngorm Club Journal*, vol. ii., p. 383).

In conclusion, I can heartily recommend climbers to visit this region, and let the history of Scottish mountaineering contain English names just as those names are found over the mountain literature of other countries.

#### FIGURES.

1. The Ben Nevis division of the cliffs from Carn Dearg. The North-East Buttress is on the skyline, next to it is the Tower Ridge, between them being the smaller unclimbed ridge. The view is taken across Coire Ciste. By Abrahams, Keswick.
2. The tower on the Tower Ridge from the west. By Abrahams, Keswick.
3. Carn Mor Dearg and secondary summit from the arête. Photo by the Author in the latter half of May.
4. Ben Nevis (on the right) and Carn Mor Dearg (on the left) from the north. Photo by Mr. Lamond Howie in April.
5. Ben Nevis from Carn Mor Dearg. From left to right, the North-East Buttress, Coire Coille, with unclimbed ridge and Observatory gully (showing "avalanche track"), Tower Ridge, part of Coire Ciste. Photo by the Author in the latter half of May.
6. Coire Ciste and Carn Dearg. Tower ridge on the left, then Coire Ciste, the broken buttress, Collie's gully, Carn Dearg Buttress. Part of Coire Caisteal and the Casteal seen on the extreme right. Photo by the Author in the latter half of May.

Since writing the above paper, Mr. Harold Raeburn has published an account of the first ascent of the Observatory ridge of Ben Nevis, *i.e.*, the unclimbed ridge described in "Coire Coille." It is a fine narrow ridge that permits of little deviation from its crest, and is defined "very fine, almost A.P. (absolutely perpendicular), precipices." Mr. Raeburn says that

it has three distinctly good bits in it. Near the top the angle eases off, and traverses may be made to the North-east Buttress or the shorter unclimbed South-west Observatory Ridge or Buttress. The paper is in the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* for September, 1901.



## WHARNCLIFFE CRAGS.

By C. F. CAMERON.

ROCK-CLIMBING is not a sport extensively practised in the neighbourhood of large cities, for the adequate reason that in the neighbourhood of most large cities there are no rocks to climb. The majority of climbers are therefore obliged to limit their activities in this respect to seasons of holiday ; for the pastime has not yet become so popular as to lead to the anticipation that corporations will provide municipal rockeries upon which cragsmen may disport themselves. In one English city, however, the climber is more fortunately situated. The rocks to be described in this article are within a few miles of Sheffield, and the climber may reach them from the town, if the railway be punctually inclined, in about half-an-hour. The mountaineer is most favourably placed in Sheffield. He may maintain his staying power by means of walks among the hills and dales of the Peak District, a mountain country in miniature. If he has a liking for the fancy or gymnastic aspects of the sport, he may gratify that liking abundantly by going northward to Wharncliffe Crag. There he may find climbs in plenty to suit his taste—whether he be a tyro like the present writer, or whether he has achieved that combination of the qualities of cat and chamois which entitle him to consider himself an expert climber.

At Wharncliffe Crag the sport is climbing pure and simple—the mountaineering element is practically absent. If you leave the train at Oughtibridge, a gentle walk upwards through woods leads you to your rocks ; if you proceed to Deepcar, the next station, half a mile across heather, ferns and boulders—awkward going in some conditions of weather

—is the only preliminary. But a little topographical description is necessary. Wharnccliffe Crag is the name given to a broken ridge of gritstone rocks surmounting the hill that rises on the eastern side of the valley of the Don, which runs due south to Sheffield. The land is the property of the Earl of Wharnccliffe, who allows the public to visit the Crag—a popular resort with Sheffield holiday-makers—on three days in the week. A walk of about two miles along the top of the Crag will bring you from end to end of them. The outlook from the ridge is a fine one, characteristic of the hill country of middle England. Below is the deep valley of the Don—somewhat spoiled here and there by the presence of old-fashioned factories employing water power, but much more picturesque than anyone would suppose who had only seen the river a few miles lower down, in its Stygian course through the murkiest regions of Sheffield. Wooded heights lie beyond the river, and at the head of minor valleys are glimpses of the moors on the borderland of Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Hill, wood and water are aptly blended in the prospect, which, without being of the first order, is distinctly pleasing. The human element, provided by the villages of Oughtibridge and Deepcar, and the notoriously insanitary hamlet of Wharnccliffe Side, is anything but a decorative feature of the landscape. But I am not supposed to be writing of scenery or insanitary dwellings; let me return to the Crag. At the southern or Oughtibridge end the rocks are in isolated masses, and the slope at their base is thickly wooded. The climbs here are few and severe. Further north the woods disappear, and the rocks rise in a gaunt continuous line from a wilderness of bracken and boulders. At this, the Deepcar extremity, the climbs are more numerous, and better varied to suit all tastes.

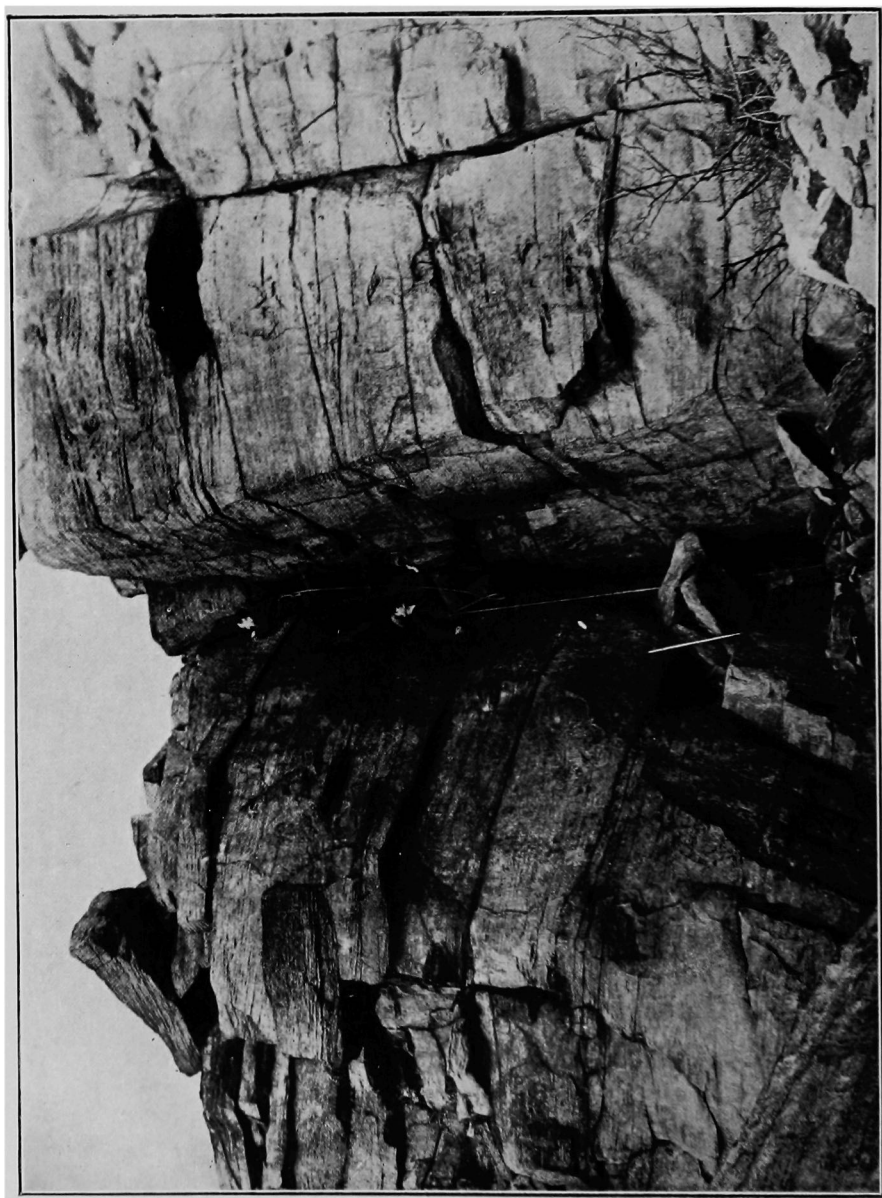
Taking the ridge from north to south, we find the first climbs very small. Nowhere throughout Wharnccliffe Crag indeed, is there a climb of more than 60 feet in height. But the cragsman will find in them everything he wants except height. A crack of some merit is the only climb worthy of

an expert's attention until we reach the Prow Rock, a detached bastion, the comparatively flat summit of which is on a level with the top of the main ridge, and about five feet apart from it. Opposite the Rock are two easy chimneys. The ascent of the Prow Rock is a fairly stiff face climb, with abundance of work for the fingers and small but adequate footholds. When you reach the top, you are expected to perform a feat which is not strictly a part of climbing at all—to jump the five feet from the Rock on to the main ridge. The drop below—25 to 30 feet—is desperately agitating to the nerves, and this jump is an experience which any ordinarily constituted person who is led to attempt it will not quickly forget. A short distance beyond are several interesting cracks and chimneys, and a recess containing several small climbs, including a chimney with a trap-door exit, so narrow that only the lean can hope to pass through it. Close at hand is a notable group of climbs. A square tower of rock presents one of its angles to the main face, at a distance of rather more than a foot; you may ascend by setting your back against the face, clasping the angle with arms and legs, and working upward. There are one or two handholds which afford welcome opportunities of rest. The slide down is more popular than the grind up, but is excessively detrimental to garments. There are two chimneys here, one each side of the tower; the one on the right has perpendicular walls, and provides the best bit of back-and-foot practice that the crags afford. Further to the right is the entrance to the "Twopenny Tube," a good example of the "comic relief" plentifully supplied by these rocks. The climber squirms and wriggles through subterranean passages and up gloomy chimneys, finally emerging at the top in a very dusty condition, and, not impossibly, with a lively recollection of hard bumps.

Between this and the next group of climbs there are to be found some fifteen or sixteen chimneys, cracks, and faces, several of which are comparatively easy; but two or three of them are of considerable interest to the practised cragsman, for whose edification it is that I am now writing. One of







WHARNCLIFFE CRAGS — THE "GREAT CHIMNEY."

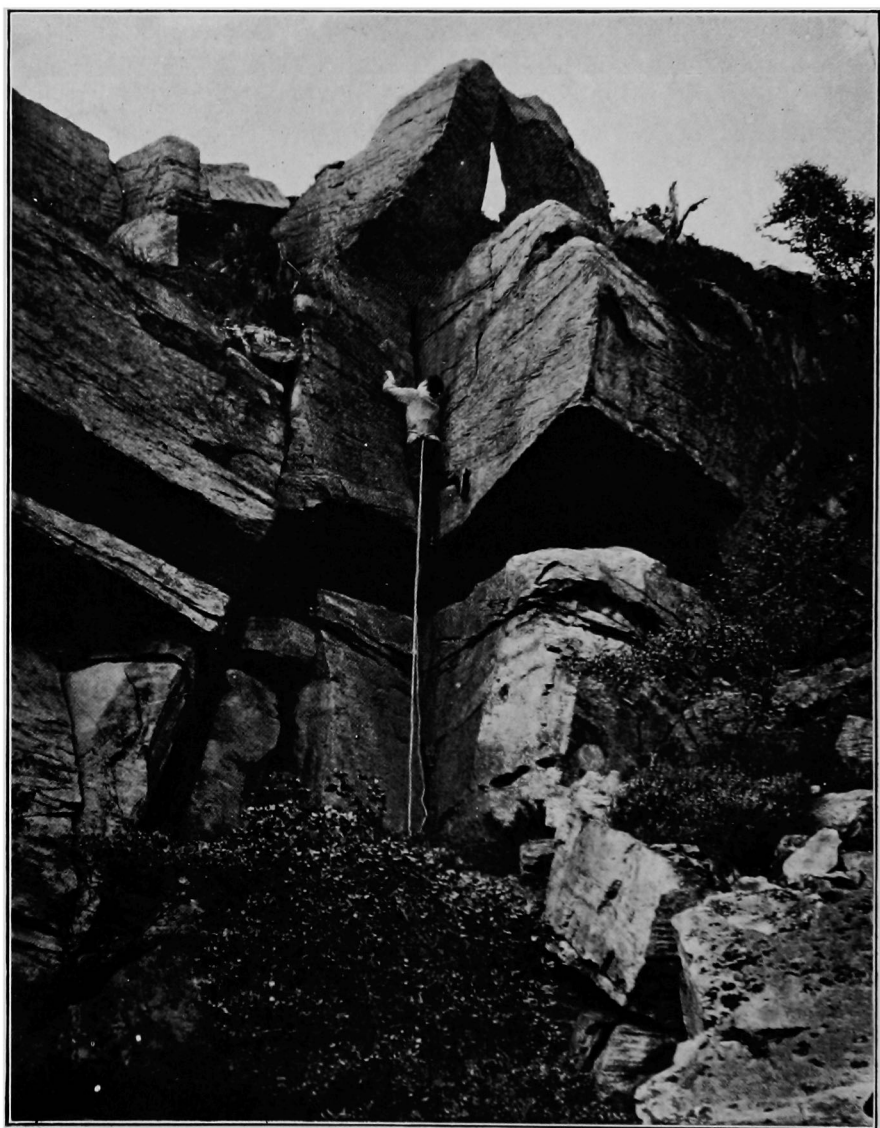
them—the “Imaginary Boulder Climb”—deserves special mention. The ascent is up a difficult face, with very imperfect handhold near the top. Only a good climber, however, can discover the imperfections of the handhold ; for most men are stumped at the outset. It is necessary at the foot to surmount a piece of face which overhangs slightly. This problem may be evaded by scaling a large boulder which lies conveniently at hand ; but the rules of the game decree that this boulder shall be considered non-existent, and the climber must do his best without its aid—and his best is often wholly inadequate.

Until we reach what is known as the great chimney group, there are not more than two or three climbs of merit. The great chimney is a large wedge-shaped gap in the rock face ; at the inner end of the wedge the rocks do not quite meet at the foot, and beyond this incomplete apex there is an inner chimney. To the left of this is an interesting face climb with a dramatic situation which involves steady balancing in a very cramped attitude. To the right is a crack which is exceedingly hard work, for half the ascent at any rate. The next notable group has for its centre-piece a large square-shaped cavern, about twenty feet high, with a perpendicular slab of rock above. On the right side of the cave is a gallery—a partly enclosed ledge, with a small entrance about a dozen feet above the ground. The attack upon this entrance by a novice is accompanied by prolonged and violent kicking at the atmosphere. Having struggled into the gallery, you walk along it, and step boldly into utter darkness. If you step boldly enough, you find a foothold ; thence you make your way upwards to a hole which brings you to the top of the crags. The great climb in this group, however, is the hand-traverse across the rock-face above the cavern’s mouth. I am told that it is bad form to name climbs after individuals ; but I am unwilling to relinquish the title of “Puttrell’s Progress” that has been bestowed on this particular piece of work. Mr. J. W. Puttrell, as every reader of this journal knows, is a capable and daring cragsman. It is more to the point here to mention that he is the discoverer of Wharnccliffe Craggs as a

climbing-ground, and that he has not only wrought mighty deeds there himself, but has been the preceptor of various pupils, good, bad and indifferent. This hand-traverse is at present his monopoly, and is one of the most sensational climbs to be found at the Crag. The difficulties do not end with the traverse, for the ascent to the top of the rock involves some awkward balancing on small ledges that slope downwards.

Some little way beyond the cave is a small hand-traverse a few feet above the ground—useful practice for anyone who wishes to emulate Mr. Puttrell's feat. Presently we come to an interesting group of climbs, the first of which is a chimney with two pitches, and the second another easier chimney, with a trap-door exit so narrow that he who attempts it is apt to fear at the critical stage that he will stay there permanently, like a cork in a bottle. A third chimney has two pitches like the first, but is very simple; and on the platform between the pitches is the entrance to the "Stomach Traverse," with which all who are new to rock-climbing are speedily made acquainted. This entrance is like a large rabbit-hole; and he who essays the troublous journey finds himself in a very narrow cave with perpendicular sides. He is at some height above the ground, and his only means of progression is supplied by a ledge which furnishes handhold. He ventures forth, jamming his feet against the other side of the cave, and clinging to the ledge for dear life. Presently he finds the roof lowering, and he lowers his head accordingly. Then the second part of his route becomes visible—a hole in the cave-wall to which he is clinging. The hole is at the level of his head; and into it he must squirm by pressing his feet against the opposite wall. The rocky recesses are filled with shufflings and pantings and groanings; expletives have been heard there. With great pains the climber heaves his body into the hole. It is not demanded by etiquette that he should rest here, but he usually does. He wriggles forward on his stomach for some feet, until his head projects into the outer air, and he ruefully contemplates *terra firma* some six feet below in the shape of a slab of rock sloping at an angle not far short of 45 degrees.





WHARNCLIFFE CRAGS—NEAR THE OUGHTIBRIDGE.

A final squirm out of the hole, a swing on a projecting rock, a cautious alighting on the slab, and a little run down to level ground, complete his task and bring him perspiring into safety.

Close by the Stomach Traverse—which may be taken in the reverse direction as an agreeable variation—are two more chimneys. One of them is declared to be easy, but the present writer acknowledges that he has a dread of it. Nobody has ever said that the second chimney is easy. It is known as “Hell Gate.” It is the longest climb at Wharnccliffe Crag—not far short of 60 feet. The first pitch is simply awful; it is 15 feet in height, and every inch of the way is a struggle. The man with a long reach has an unfair advantage on this pitch; for at the top there is a hold to which small men can only attain by desperate stretchings upwards from no foothold in particular. The second pitch is longer, but not so difficult. Further on are two or three interesting chimneys; beyond them the rocks lose their continuity, and are broken up into isolated masses. One small rock-face has a crack about twelve feet high, which taxed Mr. Puttrell’s ingenuity considerably. He found that the best, if not the only way up was hand over hand sideways, with his feet against the right face of the crack, which projects two or three inches only. This crab-like method of ascent is not only very hard work, but involves extremely delicate balancing. Not far from this climb—a terror for its size—is the “Long Joe’s Stride” group. The character of the stride itself is distinctly sensational. The climber—or rather the acrobat, for the writer maintains that this sort of thing is not climbing—drops across a gulf on to his hands, brings one leg after him and then the other, and struggles on to the rock. In this group are two chimneys, one of them a perfect nest of chockstones, with a prodigious crowning chockstone at the top. A short distance beyond is the “Sliding Stone,” a large sloping slab, worn smooth by the trouser-seats of many generations of youths. In a rock beside it is a crack—not wide enough for the boot-toe—with a very hard start and finish. Absence of handhold, and necessity for some severe wrist-work, are its main

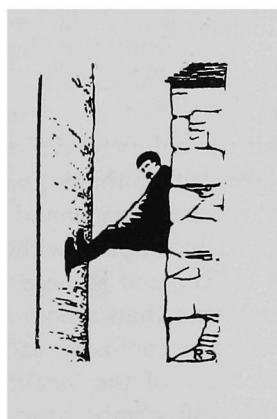
characteristics. The honour of the first ascent belongs to Mr. W. J. Watson, a skilled Sheffield cragsman, who learned his climbing among these rocks.

In the next rocky clump there is the craziest of all the jumping feats for which the Craggs provide opportunity. It is called the "Monkey Jump." The take-off is bad, and the landing-place worse—a comparatively narrow ledge, overhung at the height of between four and five feet by a projecting mass of rock. The jumper has to stoop in the middle of his leap, or risk the cracking of his skull. At this spot is a very difficult face climb, about 45 feet in height, with a severe first pitch of eleven feet. The climb has never been finished, and is never likely to be, owing to the bulging of the rock. There are designs of ascent, not yet carried out, upon the arête to the right. A chimney in this group also deserves mention. By this time we are near to Wharncliffe Lodge and the end of the Craggs. The "den," associated with the mythical dragon of Wantley, has an outlet above which affords a more interesting entry or exit than the conventional one below; and close to the Lodge there is an awkward little climb in which a slip means a very nasty fall. There are some rocks standing back from the line we have followed which provide a couple of hard ascents. One is a chimney, wedge-shaped in the upper part, and involving much finger-work; the other is also a chimney, difficult to get into, and still more difficult to get out of three-quarters of the way up. It was first climbed at a time of snow and ice.

This article would be incomplete without reference to the boulders. In no part of England is there to be found a better variety of boulder problems than among the huge detached fragments of rock that lie in confusion at the base of Wharncliffe Craggs. The resources of the locality in boulders have not yet been exhausted; but climbs have been attempted on some twenty boulders, several of which present three or four problems each. Half-a-dozen of these climbs are stated by experts to be absolutely first-class as boulders go. A hard-working afternoon may readily be spent on boulders alone.



The aim of this article is not to convey that in the Don Valley there exists a rival to Wastdale Head. Sheffield climbers know the limitations of their playground as well as they know its advantages. It is true that, in an article which recently appeared in an enterprising halfpenny morning journal, it was suggested that Sheffield might in course of time become an English Zermatt ; but this was an astonishing flight of imagination of a kind of which only an enterprising halfpenny morning journal is capable in these days. Wharnccliffe Crag do not provide giddy precipices or towering pinnacles ; but they do provide a feast of short climbs on hard, rough, firm-set rock, and by experience on them the climber may acquire a skill which will give him valuable aid in his endeavours after greater achievements. Cragmen who dwell in other towns have good reason to envy Sheffield her possession of a well-equipped training-ground so close to the city's boundaries.

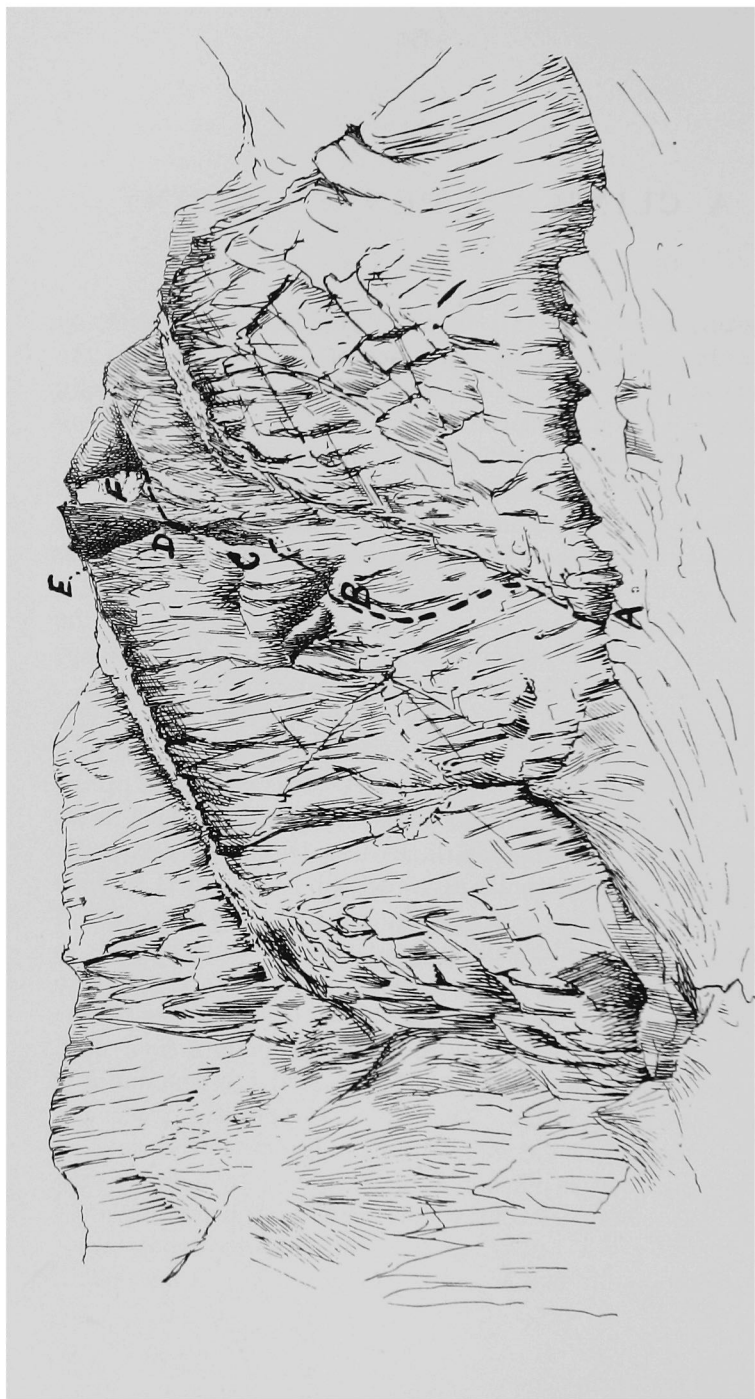


## THE MOUNTAIN HERMIT.

My hermitage is high among the peaks—  
Around whose crests the demons of the air,  
Make seldom-ceasing war ; whose splintered crags  
Defiant mock the random-ranging gale,  
And suffer sullenly the levin-brand.  
Where precipice forbids the step of man,  
Where battlemented ridge and cliff defy  
Unhallowed visit, where the elements  
In all their pow'r unite to keep unstained  
The virgin summit, find I holy calm.  
Transcending rest is mine when wildest leaps  
The torrent, when the tarn is whipped to foam,  
Or deep-toned thunder rends the firmament ;  
For this is peace—to be alone with God.

RUDOLF CYRIAX.





PEN Y GRIBIN.

A. Foot of Climb. B. Scree Patch. C. Rock-rib. D. Foot of Terminal Gully. E. Top part of the Gully.  
F. Rough Quartz Veins on the Top Rock.

## A CLIMB ON PEN Y GRIBIN.

By J. B. FARMER and J. C. MORLAND.

IT seems a singular fact that the possibility of lighting on interesting climbs on the East face of the wall between the Gribin and Bulch Cilia, nin Cwm Dyli, should be so generally ignored. A careful inspection of this cliff from the cart-track between Llyn Llydau and Glaslyn shewed that the neglect is probably undeserved, and it afforded promise of at least one good route up the face directly to the south of the Gribin.

This cliff, the face of which ascends for about 900 to 1000 feet above the subjacent screes, does not appear to possess a distinctive name; but, as it forms an integral part of the descending shoulder which holds up Glaslyn, it may perhaps be appropriately designated as Pen y Gribin.

The ascent, which was made by us on April 2nd of this year, begins at a well-marked slab lying to the right of a badly-defined gully (A on the sketch). It is continued up the rocks as far as a conical red patch of scree (B), which forms a well-characterised landmark, as seen from the cart-track. Thence the route continues up a rock rib to a gable (C), which from below looks like a gendarme, and passes over the face of the latter. A scramble obliquely upwards to the right leads to the well-marked gully (D) which terminates the climb, and, passing under an overhanging black rock, presents the appearance, when viewed from below, of ending in a dark cave (E). The length of this gully is about 150 feet, and it is steep and rather rotten. A very good standing place was found in the right-hand wall, whilst the leader slowly travelled upwards on a slippery ledge, rendered greasy by a heavy mist which had descended during the climb. A promising hold some 25 feet above proved to be hopelessly rotten, and, owing to the bad conditions of rock and weather, it was decided to

abandon the gully in favour of a climb out to the north of the large terminal rock. This alternative route passes upwards from the top of the gable previously referred to, across the foot of the gully, and thence over excellent rock to a large detached block of quartz. From this point, there is a wide choice of directions. The most interesting one lies close under the overhanging summit, just beneath a mass of rough quartz (F), which forms a conspicuous horizontal vein as seen from the side of the lake below. From this point the way is easy, and leads out just north of the highest point of this part of the Gribin.

On a subsequent occasion the exit from the gully was examined from above, and was found to be in a very dangerous state, owing to the presence of large masses of loosely-held rock. These were detached by means of an ice-axe, and about two hundredweight of stone swept down the gully, and, bounding over the face of the cliff, finally came to rest on the screes at the bottom. A descent was then made to the point previously reached from below, and the climb was then finished upwards without great difficulty, except that for the last four or five feet the hand-holds proved rather awkward to reach. They lie for the most part on the upper edge of the overhanging rock, and they happened to be very slippery, owing to the recently fallen and still melting snow. But in good weather there should be no serious difficulty in getting out, though the shoulder of the second man might afford useful help to the leader. A cairn now marks the spot where the gully breaks out on to the grass slope immediately to the south of the summit of Pen y Gribin. We are much indebted to Mr. J. E. S. Moore for his kindness in making the sketch which accompanies this note.

## WASTDALE NOTES.

.Christmas, 1901.

By GEORGE D. ABRAHAM.

THE Cumberland Mountains had just put on their ideal winter garb, ere the usual Christmas visitors arrived at Wastdale.

Though glorious to look upon, the fells were somewhat disappointing on closer acquaintance, for the newly fallen snow masked all the higher rocks, and the gullies were scarcely in a condition to make "the joy of steepness overcome" worth the toil involved.

Immediately after Christmas the wind backed to the south-west, and the weather grew persistently worse.

The following members of the Club were amongst those who had the pleasure of enjoying such conditions:—Messrs. W. G. Clay, J. M. Nicol, J. H. Wigner, H. V. Reade, J. W. Puttrell, G. Ellis, A. P. and G. D. Abraham.

Other visitors also joined in the seasonable games and amusements, and a hotly-waged fives handicap made the stormy days of compulsory confinement pass pleasantly.

All the regulation Christmas expeditions were made, including, of course, Deep Ghyll and all the Great End gullies. Long days out were the rule, and, on several occasions hungry climbers were pacing the Wastdale Entrance Hall, growling at those people for whom dinner was delayed, who preferred stumbling down Sty Head in the dark to partaking of dinner like reasonable mortals, at the appointed time.

Probably the most enjoyable day was spent on the Pillar by nearly the whole party.

Under wintry conditions the walk along the High Level, and across the Shamrock Traverse, to the east side of the

Pillar Rock, is one of the finest mountain walks in Lakeland, and, under such conditions as prevailed last Christmas, an ascent of the easy way up the Rock is almost as much as the short hours of daylight allow. This is still more the case if some member of the party is fortunate enough to possess a spirit lamp and necessary tackle for making a concoction which some persons call tea. A precious hour or more employed in melting snow and keeping the spirit lamp warm may mean disappointment later in the day. However, this Pillar expedition is strongly to be recommended.

Another most interesting course, which is not usually made at Christmas, was the ascent of the Gable Crag central gully. The party climbed on two separate ropes, and the conditions were damp in the extreme on account of a rapid thaw. Whilst one section was enjoying lunch amongst the melting snow at the foot of the first pitch, the other section most indulgently climbed up and absorbed the waterfall, which annoyed those below. When big chunks of ice, dislodged by the leader in his attempt to climb the pitch direct, disturbed their potatoes, the rope was put on and the lunching party quickly climbed out to the left of the pitch and gained the gully higher up. The "mere gymnasts" soon tired of the bitterly cold drenching, indispensable to an ascent of the pitch direct, and were glad to descend and follow the easier route of the first section.

The second pitch was also passed on the left, and, after some exciting climbing on the "Staircase" and higher up, a traverse to the right was made to near the Smuggler's Cave. From here a steep snow gully was followed to the summit without difficulty. Daylight was almost gone as the summit cairn was reached in a dense mist, but a splendid sitting glissade of nearly 1000 feet, assisted the party to gain the regions of dry clothes and dinner in less than 45 minutes from Gable Top.

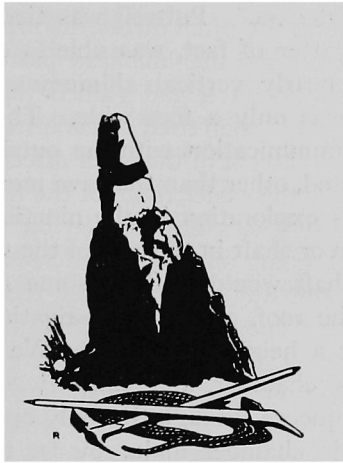
This expeditious descent was only achieved at the expense of many bruises and torn nether garments, for in several places the snow grew rather thin on the rough screes. Shortly after Christmas some climbers visited Deep Ghyll, in hopes of



effecting the new through route up the second pitch. A curious hole has formed there, by the subsidence of some large rocks at the back of the cave, and in summer time this forms the easiest way of passing the obstacle, but, in winter time, the hole is difficult to find, and it is advisable that a party wishing to follow this route should include some one who has ascended the hole in summer time.

This improvement in Deep Ghyll does not meet with universal approval, and rumours are afloat that certain philanthropists contemplate the closing of the through route, by dropping some large boulders which lie close at hand.

At Christmas a wide snow cornice overhung the top of Deep Ghyll and several other of the steeper gullies. Almost everywhere the rocks were beautifully decorated with fantastic fog crystals, and no climber who journeyed to Wastdale for the "festive season" of 1901, is likely to regret his visit.



## KYNDWR CLUB NOTES.

THE exploration of the Peak Cavern, or the Devil's Hole, at Castleton, was carried out, as announced, on 1st March. Several important discoveries were made, for which the chief credit must be awarded to Mr. J. W. Puttrell, who, with the able assistance of Mr. Robert McCrum and Mr. G. F. R. Freeman, made full preliminary investigations, so that the work was practically marked out in detail for the Kyndwriters. The explorers left Peak Hotel on Saturday, the 1st, at 5 p.m., and returned between the hours of one and two on Sunday morning. The first operation was to work out a passage, which Puttrell had discovered in Cave Dale, giving access to the "Choir" or "Orchestra." Puttrell was tied on to a 130 feet rope, but, as a matter of fact, was able to climb most of the way down the nearly vertical chimney or enclosed gully, which in places was only a foot wide. This is the first and only point of communication with the outside world that has yet been discovered, other than the cave mouth.

Martel, in his exploration in the nineties, marks down on his chart an aven or shaft in the roof of the vestibule. Puttrell suspected this shaft would lead to some galleries, probably existing above the roof, and, on investigation, found a stalactitic chamber at a height of 60 feet. We now ascended by ladders into this chamber, and climbed 20 feet further, but were unable to squeeze through the only apparent exit. The stalactites in this chamber make by far the finest and the largest display yet found in Peak Cavern.

At a late hour, the exploring party went through the whole extent of the known caves to the "Victoria Hall," a narrow cavern, immensely high, the top of which is said to be connected with the outer air somewhere 600 feet above. A

balloon was sent up, and was lost to sight behind a corner in the walls, and some 200 feet above the floor, but returned in 15 minutes with the spirits burnt out. Rockets were fired into the cavity with little result. Mr. Bamforth, with a powerful limelight, illuminated the enormous rift overhead, and photographs were taken.

Now began the most interesting stage of the work. At the bottom of the "Victoria Hall," on Martel's chart, an opening is marked "siphon," leading no one knew whither. Through this "siphon" we were now called upon to make a passage, a skiff being in readiness. The passage was a wet one, but not difficult. Instead of a siphon we found two cavernous tunnels, with a wider cave between, both nearly full of water. We got the boat safely through the first tunnel, two men embarking at a time, and lying flat on their backs to avoid contact with the roof, which, however, scraped their noses. The boat could not be forced to the end of the second tunnel, and every man had to wade through mud and water for the last few yards. Beyond this, the cave extended in a general horizontal direction for nearly two hundred yards, with one branch; then we came apparently to the end of everything. In the branching passage a large swallow was discovered, and Freeman was let down into it on the rope, finding deep water, but no visible outlet, at a depth of 30 feet. Curious testimony to the presence of man at some forgotten period, was discovered in this part of the cavern. The first object was a wooden sled, apparently used for carrying ore; the second was a yard or two of rough wall or embankment, built up in courses of rude stones, as if by miners. No record has been discovered of any mining operations, nor of any previous visit to this part of the cave. All has been forgotten.

Dr. Jameson obtained some specimens of living organisms in the cave, which may prove interesting, and certainly show marked peculiarities, as compared with those inhabiting the Speedwell Cavern.

Altogether, there was more variety of interest than in any of the previous cave explorations undertaken by the Club,

the mixture of scansorial and aquatic methods causing much diversion. Some of the climbs can be characterised only as "mud climbs," and, as a sporting variety, are not to be recommended. Several men undressed for the final operations, but whether they came off better, thus accoutred, than those who plunged in with clothes on, is a doubtful point.



## COMMITTEE NOTES.

SEVERAL members having enquired what the attitude of the Club is towards the Deer Forest Question, and whether it is correctly represented by an article on the subject which recently appeared in the *Journal*, the Committee wish to state that the article mentioned, precisely like any other article, represents no more and no less than the private opinions of the writer who signs it.

Secondly, that the attitude which they consider that our members should take up towards the owner of a deer forest is precisely the same as they would naturally adopt towards the owner of a library, a picture gallery, a garden, or any other property, the occasional use of which adds to their enjoyment of life. They feel certain that no member of this Club, whatever abstract theories he may choose to discuss, would in practice do anything knowingly to injure property or to interfere with sport, and, in shewing this consideration, each member incidentally procures better treatment for himself and his clubmates on other occasions.

There must, however, be cases where his experience is at fault, and then he can hardly do better than be guided by that of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, which has of necessity given long and close attention to the matter.

The following gentlemen were elected at the Committee Meeting on 14th February :—

Gerard F. Cobb, M.A., The Hermitage, Cambridge.

Millican Dalton, 81 Cornhill, E.C.

William Lancaster, Morningside, Burnley.

T. G. Longstaffe, Ridglands, Wimbledon, Surrey.

Ralph S. Morrish, Oaklands, Oxshott, Surrey.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE library of a former president of the Alpine Club, the late Mr. William Mathews, attracted many to Sotheby's. A. W. Moore's "The Alps in 1864," of the nature of a private journal, and privately printed, realised 10 guineas (Bain), and three volumes of "Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers," being records of excursions by members of the Alpine Club, published between 1859 and 1862, went for £5 10s. (Quaritch). The Leipzig issue of that solid work in fifty volumes, "Icones Floræ Germanicæ et Helvetiæ," fetched £63 10s. (Wesley), and Sowerby's "British Botany," £33 (ditto).

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IZTACCIHUATL.—This peculiar summit mentioned on page 199, No. 12, Vol. III., consists, with the exception of about a foot of snow on some of its parts, entirely of ice. About five hundred feet of its height are shown in the illustration (the frontispiece to this number), which is reproduced from a photograph taken last year by Mr. O. Eckenstein.

\* \* \* \*

MOUNT ASSINIBOINE.—The *Sphere* for February 22nd contains a reproduction of a photograph of this mountain, which has just been ascended by the Rev. James Outram, son of Sir Francis Outram. Mount Assiniboine, from certain points of view, distinctly resembles the Matterhorn. It is 11,860 feet in height.

\* \* \* \*

MONT BLANC.—Mr. G. P. Abraham of Keswick sends us a new series of mountain and climbing photographs of Chamonix, Mont Blanc and the Aiguilles. A high level of merit is well maintained throughout the whole series, but

21a. "The Petit Dru from Montanvert"; 51a. "The Lower Peaks of the Aiguille des Grandes Charmoz from the Highest Point"; 54a. "The Aiguille de Grépon from the Grandes Charmoz"; 62\*a. "View from the Aiguille du Chardonnet showing the Col du Grand Montet"; 73a. "A View near the Top of Mont Blanc at Sunrise"; 74a. "A View from the Top of Mont Blanc looking N.E."; 79a. "Mist breaking on Aiguille de la Glière, from the Aiguille de la Floriaz"; and 80a. "A View from the Aiguille de la Floriaz—the Aiguille Verte and Grandes Jorasses breaking through the Mist" demand special praise, and such sensational rock-climbing as is depicted in 28a. "Climbing the last Tower of the Aiguille de l'M"; 56\*a. "On the Traverse of the Grépon"; and 58\*a. "Climbing a Crack on the Grépon" cannot fail to give pleasure to the ardent rock gymnast.

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FATAL ACCIDENT IN SKYE.—The January number of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* gives details of the unfortunate accident on Sgurr nan Gillean, on 10th August last, whereby Mr. Alexander Whincup, Advocate of Aberdeen, lost his life. Mr. Whincup, and Mr. James Fraser, a member of the Cairngorm Club, were making the ascent of Sgurr nan Gillean, from the Coire à Bhastier side, and at the time the accident occurred were in a subsidiary gully, between Nicholson's Chimney and the one on the extreme left. Up to this time Fraser had been leading, but Whincup was now in advance of his companion, and about sixty feet above the small scree platform from which the gullies start. He disappeared towards the right, round a rock projecting from right to left across the gully. Directly after his disappearance he shouted to his companion to come and assist him to get a hold for one of his feet. Fraser was about to respond when he was startled by a loud shriek, and on looking up saw Whincup in mid air to the left. He fell with such violence on to the scree plateau that he was precipitated over a steep rock face, and fell to the great scree slope below, a distance, in all, of not less than 200 feet.

Fraser immediately descended, and finding his companion unconscious, and his injuries so manifestly serious, returned to Sligachan for assistance. Willing helpers were found at the hotel, and a party of six, including a doctor, who was fortunately at the hotel, at once started. The body was reached at 6.40 p.m.; death was certified to have been instantaneous. Appearances indicated that the deceased had been seized by a fit, and that this led to the fatality. It is only fair to say that Mr. Whincup's constitutional tendency to such seizures, was quite unknown to his mountaineering companion.

\* \* \* \*

MR. J. W. WYATT writes from Bryn Gwynan, Beddgelert, as follows :—

Starting from Llanberis on 17th January, about 1.30 p.m. I made my way into Cwm Glâs, and endeavoured to climb Crib Goch by the gully between the two pinnacles on the right of the ridge; I got about two-thirds up the gully when I found the gully blocked with a mass of thick ice; being alone, and having no ice-axe, I could not climb the ice slopes, and both sides of the gully were too precipitous to get on to the face of the rock; I was forced, therefore, to go back, with some difficulty, till I could traverse round the main pinnacle, and thence up the face of the slope to the arête and on to the top.\* The traverse round and up the base of the left-hand pinnacle is interesting, but the rocks are rather bad, and the hand-holds poor; the rest of the climb up the face and the arête presents no undue difficulty. I enclose a rough sketch showing the climb. I reached the top about 3.30 p.m., and then descended to Llyn Glâs, and over the Bwlch-y-Saethau, by Gwter Fawr, to Nant Gwynan, reaching here about 5.30 p.m.

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\* Another correspondent also refers to the mass of ice in the main gully, between the pinnacles of Crib Goch. He was one of a party of two, who, on 18th January, descended this gully throughout, and he considers that it would have been absolutely impossible for a man without an ice-axe. The doubled rope was necessary for the last man.



After two days of snow and frost on the hills, I had a very interesting, but incomplete, climb on Saturday last, 25th, with a man from this valley. Starting from here at 11 a.m., we went by Cwm Dyli waterfall, along the watershed above Llyn Teyrn, to Bwlch Moch ; thence got on to the grass and scree, under the N.E. face of Crib Goch : the whole face was a sheet of ice and snow, and steps had to be cut with the axe the whole way till we got on to the N. arête, which we reached by one of the small gullies. We had a fine glissade on ice and snow from the ridge into Cwm Glâs, our intention being to climb the Parson's Nose, and back over Snowdon. We took the small cleft immediately on the W. side of the point of the nose, and found the rocks covered with ice and loose snow, and in a very bad state, almost every foot and hand-hold having to be made with the axe for about 70 to 80 feet up, till the state of the rocks made it impossible to go further without great risk, and being now nearly five p.m., we ran the risk of being benighted : had we had a rope, I think we might have managed it.\* We therefore climbed down again, and came back to Cwm Glâs and the Llanberis Pass, reaching here at 7.15 p.m., after one of the finest mountain walks I have had out of the Alps. I have never seen the scree on the slopes of Crib Goch so completely covered by a sheet of smooth ice before, the tips of the larger stones showing just through. The waterfalls in Cwm Glâs were a magnificent sight, the whole face of the rocks hanging with enormous icicles and slabs of ice, through which the running water shimmered in the sunlight. It was freezing very hard, and Llyn Glâs was completely frozen over.

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CHRISTMAS AT LANGDALE HEAD.—The visitors at the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel occupied a considerable portion of

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\* We understand from Mr. Wyatt that the cleft to which he refers is the thin crack on the face of the first pitch of the Parson's Nose, by which the ascent is usually made. The gullies running up to the lodged rock, behind the first pitch, were found clear of snow on the 18th January, and were climbed quite easily by a party of two, unroped.

their Christmas holidays in pursuit of what has recently been termed the "National Pastime," but, between the games, or sets, they managed to find time for some interesting and exciting mountaineering adventures. On Friday, 26th December, a party of two, with an 80 foot rope, while ascending the great gully on Pavey Ark, had an experience which might easily have had fatal termination.

The cave and the small climb immediately above were successfully passed : then came a steep snow slope of 40 or 50 feet, and a short vertical climb, beyond which lay another slope terminating in what was considered the *mauvais pas* of the ascent, an almost "a. p." wall of from 20 to 30 feet securely incased in ice. After a preliminary trial and failure by the leader, the second man made an attempt, and, although he was unable to proceed far he did valuable work with the axe in creating and exposing holds. He then descended, and his companion resumed the lead. He had got up some twenty feet, and was standing in a critical and insecure position on two narrow ledges, with practically no hand-hold, when, hearing a rush of snow below he turned his head and was astonished and dismayed to behold his companion disappearing down the gully on his back. A bundle of Harris tweed, enveloped in a cloud of snow, shot over the pitch immediately beneath, and the leader waited for the jerk, which he knew he would be powerless to withstand. But the jerk never came, for the second man, during his enforced idleness, noticing a large rock tooth on the left side of the gully, had swung the rope round it in a loop. When the platform of snow on which he stood (and which had appeared to be perfectly secure) gave way, and he was precipitated backwards down the gully, the rope so jammed that it never even tightened between the leader and the tooth. Had it not been for this belay, only the chance of a soft bed of snow as a landing place at the foot of the cave, could have saved the climbers.

The climb was successfully finished, and two days later was repeated by an augmented party.

**NORTHUMBERLAND.**—Those who chance to find themselves in Northumbria on walking or shooting bent may do worse than spare an afternoon to the Simonside, or a day to the Wanney Crag.

**SIMONSIDE.**—Some two miles south-west of Rothbury, and overhanging the Coquet Valley. The north face offers a close succession of firm chimneys and scrambles of varying difficulty, from twenty to fifty feet in height. Some of these, notably one immediately west of the tourists' "Broadstand" route, are not yet known to have been climbed. Round the north-west corner the rocks finish in a fine bluff, with some excellent cracks.

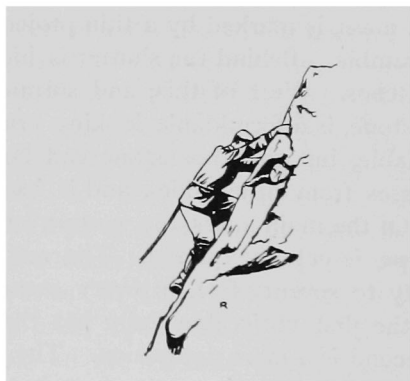
**WANNEY CRAGS.**—In the heart of the moors, eight miles west of Cambo. They are best located, as lying a few minutes north of the large Sweethope Lake. Separated into two masses facing north, the lesser, lying some two minutes north-west of the main mass, is marked by a thin projecting shutter no easy arête scramble. Behind the shutter is hidden a gully of three easy pitches. West of this, and surmounted by an enormous chockstone, is a formidable looking crack; the foot proved unnegotiable, but the chockstone can be reached by interesting traverses from either side; and is itself somewhat disappointing. Of the main mass the western end, separated by a heather slope, is yet unexplored. The rest offers good scrambles, of fifty to seventy feet, in every corner. Starting from the west, the first noticeable gully has three moderate pitches. The second is a mere depression. The third, a huge rift marked by big fallen blocks at its foot, has two pitches more difficult than they appear; the first, climbed on the left, the second, on the right. The next corner to the east contains two chimneys, uniting at their centres on a grass plot; the foot of the most easterly is a cave pitch, held by a fierce family of semi-wild goats. Yet, further east, comes a precipitous corner, with an overhanging block at two-thirds of its height, as yet unsurmounted. Beside this, and immediately west of the stone wall merging in the face, is an awkward looking crack, hitherto untried. Immediately east of the wall is the reward

of the day, a curving chimney, with smooth equidistant walls and a smooth back, parting two large overhanging bluffs. Every part of this can be climbed "back and toe."

These notes by no means exhaust the possibilities, but may serve to draw the attention of those not yet familiar with them to the desolate romance of these moors. G. W. Y.

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THE Editor will be glad to know the present address of Mr. S. Aitken, in order that he may forward the December and subsequent numbers of the *Journal*.



## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL. Edited by ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHE. Vol. III., No. 18. January, 1902. Containing :—

Nights and Days on the Cairngorms. By C. G. Cash, F.R.S.G.S.

A Fortnight at Inverey. By Robert Anderson.

The Monadhliadhs. By A. I. McConnachie and William Garden.

The Club at Schiehallion.

The Knock of Braemoray. By Rev. George C. Watt, B.B.

In Memoriam—William Brown.

Lost on Cairngorm.

'Twixt Loch Ericht and Strath Ossian. By James H. Brown.

Ben A'n. By Rev. Geo. Williams, F.S.A.Scot.

Fatality on Sgurr nan Gilleann.

Excursions and Notes.

(Aberdeen : The Cairngorm Club. 1/-.)

THE ALPINE CLUB JOURNAL. Edited by GEORGE YELD. Vol. XX., No. 154. November, 1901. Containing :—

Mountain Travel and Climbs in British Columbia. By Hugh E. M. Stutfield.

The Coupe de Jaujac. By Tempest Anderson.

August, 1901, in the Bernese Oberland. By H. Somerset Bulloch.

The Punta di Cian. By the Editor.

In Memoriam—

William Mathews. By T. G. Bonney.

Charles Halford Hawkins. By F. Morshead.

The Alpine Club Library.

Alpine Accidents in 1901.

New Expeditions in 1901.

Alpine Notes, &c., &c.

(London : Longmans, Green & Co. 2/-.)

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. Edited by WILLIAM DOUGLAS. Vol. VII., No. 37. January, 1902. Containing :—

Ben Nuis Chimney. By L. J. Oppenheimer.

The "Munro's" of Scotland. By A. E. Robertson.

From Ballinluig to Lawers over Schiehallion. By William Garden.

In Memoriam—William Brown.

S. M. C. Guide Book.

Proceedings of the Club, &c., &c.

(Edinburgh : The Scottish Mountaineering Club. 1/-.)

HIGHLAND OF ASIATIC TURKEY. By EARL PERRY. (London : Arnold, 1901. 14/- net.)

THE RIVER KATUN AND ITS SOURCES. By V. V. SAPOJNIKOF. (Tomsk : Makushin, 1901.)

BATH AND BRISTOL AND FORTY MILES ROUND. Thorough guide series. By M. J. B. BADDELEY, B.A. With Geological Notes and Descriptions of the Cheddar Caves and Cliffs, and 19 Maps and Plans by Bartholemew. (London : Dulau & Co., 1902. 5/- net.)

# CLIMBERS' CLUB.



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