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THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL

EDITED BY
E. RAYMOND TURNER

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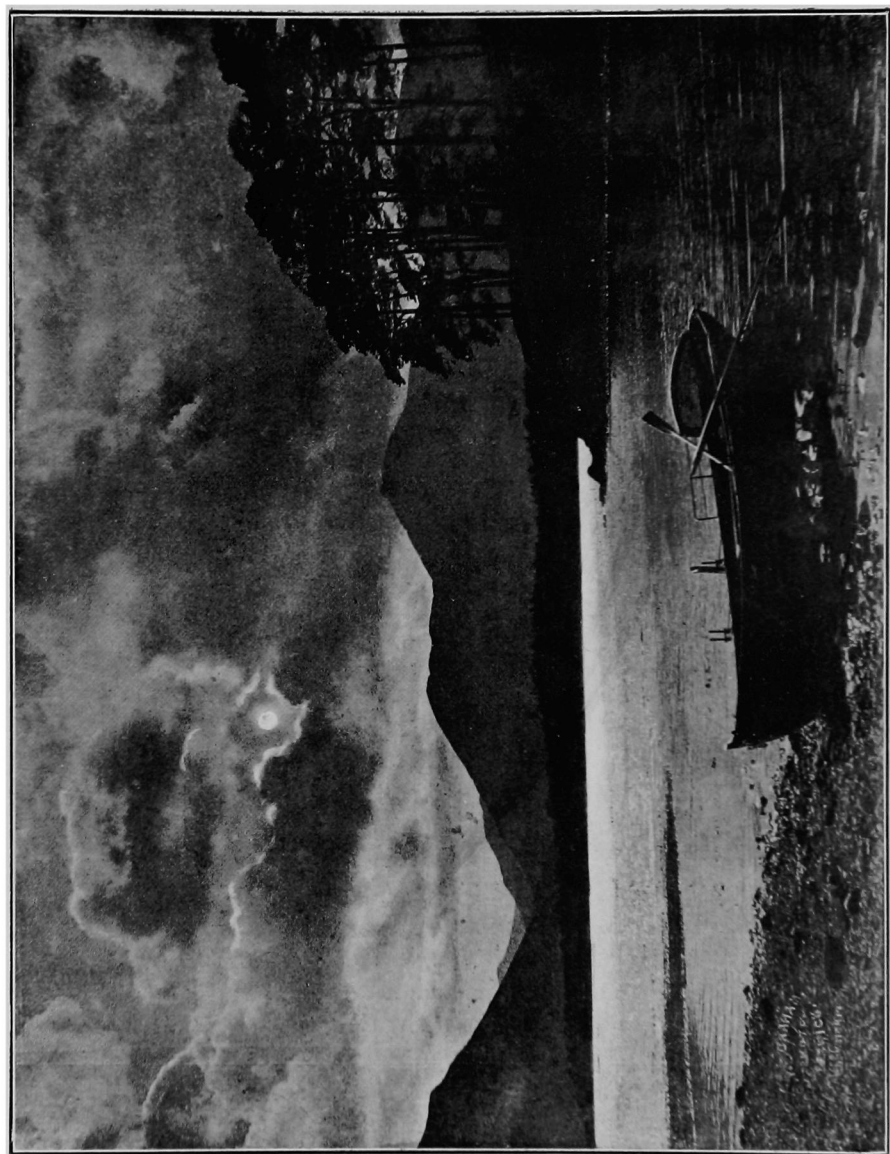
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MOONLIGHT ON DERWENTWATER.

From a photograph by G. P. ABRAHAM & SONS, Keswick.

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

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[No. 18.

A DAY DOWN THE DENE HOLES.

THE climber resident in London labours under the disadvantage of having no place within a half-holiday journey where he can enjoy the freshness of the upper air, and, at the same time, experience a little healthy excitement. But within sight of the Crystal Palace towers he can at least breathe the untainted, though somewhat chilly, atmosphere of the nether world, and if of a moderately imaginative temperament, experience a really respectable little thrill, and find himself decidedly stiff from his exertions.

The rural village of Bexley lies within 15 miles of Charing Cross, and close to it are the Dene Holes, known practically only to archæologists, but eminently worthy of the attention of London climbers as affording a means of gently stretching their muscles after the manner of our Kyndwr brethren.

The worthy inhabitants of Bexley seem not to realise that fame lies so close to their doors, and regarded, with mildly derisive astonishment, an imposing procession that wended its way through their streets and struck for the open country one bright August morning some two years ago. The party consisted of a member of this Club and his wife, and the writer of this article, who had put themselves under the leadership of a brother of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, who "had been there before."

We were well equipped with rope, ice-axes, Alpine lanterns and well-stocked rucksacks, and, as it transpired later, our leader had a big revolver and a large supply of cartridges. Our implements naturally excited some comments among the inhabitants, and I regret to say that the juvenile members of the community, looking at our ice-axes, persisted in the belief that they were pole-axes, and that we were a horse-slaughtering expedition, the rope being for the purpose of hauling the carcase home.

A pretty walk of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles brought us to Stankey Wood, which the owner, C. Harston, Esq., J.P., had very kindly given us permission to enter, and had, moreover, placed at our disposal a long rope ladder. The wood is everywhere encumbered with a very thick undergrowth of brambles, through which we had to carry that rope ladder swung on an ice-axe. I will say no more than that ladder weighed at least two hundredweight, and that my shoulder was stiff for a week.

We came suddenly, very suddenly, upon a funnel-shaped hole of about nine feet in diameter, and overgrown with brambles, having at the bottom what appeared to be a well. The funnel part was about six feet deep, with sides of loose earth which afforded no foothold. As it was rather difficult to find a suitable object to which to fasten our ladder, we went forward a few yards, and came across another hole with only a very small funnel at the top, so that it was possible to look right down. This hole looked exactly like a disused well. Our ladder was fastened by one end to a tree, and the other dropped down the hole. Then a lighted lantern was lowered to see if the air below was pure. This being satisfactory, we next plumbed the hole, and found the bottom 75 feet below.

Here it will be convenient to give a general description of these puzzling excavations. They consist of a shaft driven first of all through about six feet of overlaying mould and earth, then through the Kentish sandstone for any distance from 30 to 120 feet, and, finally, just into the chalk and flint strata, when they open out into a beehive-shaped cavern, which may consist simply of one chamber, or more frequently

of a central chamber surrounded by five or more smaller recesses separated from it by columns of chalk. The shaft is circular, about three feet in diameter, and provided on either side with footholds about six inches deep and two feet apart ; by these the cavern was ascended and descended before the days of rope ladders. For about 20 feet below the surface the shaft is clothed with moss, which gives it a very beautiful appearance. From the floor of the cavern there generally springs up a cone of earth whose apex is immediately under the opening of the shaft, and either comes up so close as almost to close it, or is anything up to 20 feet distant. This is caused by the *débris* of ages having fallen down. By means of this cone it is sometimes possible to enter and leave the cavern without any adventitious aid, although the loose earth at the top of the shaft always occasions some difficulty.

Having satisfied ourselves about the air and the depth of the hole, we threw our ice-axes down, and proceeded to follow them. Ice-axes are not a necessary portion of the equipment, but they may sometimes be very useful for sounding, as the following experience will prove. Our leader was one day exploring a hole in the neighbouring Joyden's Wood, and, having arrived at what he thought was the bottom, gave a vicious prod with his axe, when, to his astonishment, it went through up to the head. Examination proved that he was standing on a false floor, formed of some rotten branches that had been blown in and covered with leaves and debris, and that the floor of the cavern was about 30 feet below him.

We at first descended by the rungs of the ladder till the loose earth strata was passed, then bestraddling the shaft, and feeling cautiously for the footholds, completed the descent by that means. This is rather an exhausting operation, as the holds, being very sloping, require the toes to be driven firmly in to ensure safety, throwing a great strain on the thigh muscles. There was a distinctly eerie sensation about the descent for the first time, but I found this wear off very quickly. Part of this cavern had fallen in, so, instead of entering by the centre of the roof as is usual, we had to go in

by a sort of side door, and then run down a slippery heap consisting of big blocks of Kentish sandstone mixed up with earth and leaves fallen in from above. Lighted by our Alpine lanterns, the cavern presented a very picturesque appearance. The tall white columns of chalk streaked with flints, the side recesses shrouded in gloom, and the absolute silence, made up a *mise-en-scène* that was at once beautiful and a trifle awe-inspiring. We could not help trying to picture what scenes must have been enacted in this subterranean burrow some two thousand years ago, or reflecting on the incredible labour expended on its excavation in an age when the most effective digging implement that man possessed was the horns of the elk. The silence was remarkable. It was that intense silence in which one imagines that he can almost hear the blood hissing through his veins. The only other place where I have experienced such absolute silence was in the punishment cell of Newgate prison, where the delinquent is absolutely shut off from all light and sound. In this cavern a shout was a short sharp sound: not the slightest trace of echo. The air was still and fresh, but very damp, and we soon experienced a creepy, chilly sensation. Although no water is found, the chalk strata here has a wet feeling, and has the appearance peculiar to a lump of chalk that has been percolated by moisture. The lining of moss, and the bright sunshine glinting through the foliage, made a view up the shaft a very beautiful spectacle.

Like true mountaineers, we did not permit our contemplation of the beautiful or the weird to interfere with our respect for the wants of the inner man, and so, having explored our hole, we discussed lunch, and drank to the health of our ancient British forefathers who had so generously provided us with a new experience. After lunch, the *raison d'être* of the revolver became apparent. An empty bottle was stuck up on a ledge, and in turn we took pot shots at it. Several holes in the chalk, about three feet on either side of that bottle, testify to the truth of the proverb, that every bullet has its billet, though it may not be the one intended. We found nothing down there except some deplorably modern beer bottles and

cutlet bones, relics of the visit of some archæological society, and also the skeletons of several small animals that had fallen down and been starved to death. Having inscribed our names, we ascended. At the top we experienced a curious sensation. The air down below was so damp and chilly that, on getting into the bright sunshine, it was like going into the tropical house at Kew, and, throwing off coats and hats, we flung ourselves down under the nearest shade, and waited till we had got acclimatised to our new surroundings. A move was then made to another hole. This was much the same as the first, only larger, and the entry hole in the roof was about 20 feet from the apex of the earth cone. This distance had to be traversed by means of the rope ladder, and going down an unknown depth in pitch darkness by means of a ladder having one end roving about unattached is a distinctly exciting and exhausting experience. The weight of the body drives the free end of the ladder far away into the darkness, and the next rung has to be felt for with the toe and hooked back into proper position.

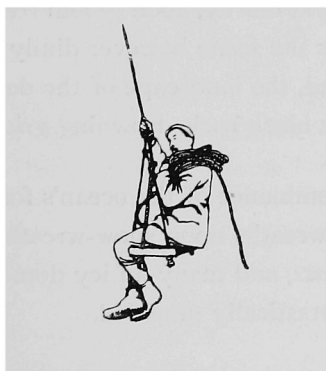
Finding nothing very especial here, we ascended, and sought fresh adventures. A hole was discovered much covered with brambles, and looking as if it had not been previously descended. We discarded the ladder, and I was lowered by means of the rope through the brambles—a decidedly prickly operation. Arrived at the footholds I cast off the rope, and proceeded to get down unaided. About half-way down, I suddenly realised that my right foothold had disappeared, the only instance in which we found the holes were not sound and good. As I had no light at that moment, it was decidedly unnerving, but the next one being all right, I got down without further difficulty, and found it quite possible to get in and out of the cavern by means of the earth cone without any aid. This cavern was quite the largest and finest we had seen. The shaft was over a hundred feet deep, and the centre chamber was provided with several large recesses. When we came up, our number was reinforced by another member of this Club, and we proceeded to let him down our first hole.

We omitted to mention the fact of our revolver practice, and, as the smoke had no current of air to drive it off, it was there when he arrived, and we soon heard him shouting up, in tones of consternation, his fears that an active volcanic eruption was taking place down there. After he had been introduced to our other holes, we moved off to the gamekeeper's cottage for a very much-needed wash, and thus brought to a close a very novel and delightful outing.

As regards the objects for which these holes were made, archæologists have no satisfactory answer, all theories being open to great objections. The number of the holes is extraordinary. In the neighbouring woods of Cavey Springs and Joydens, in an area all told of only a few acres, there are over forty of them, separated from one another often by only a few feet. Yet no communicating passage has been found. It would be most interesting if a party could undertake the task of thoroughly clearing out one of these holes, and deciding if there may not be a communicating passage hidden beneath the accumulated debris of probably more than 2000 years. The existence of such a passage would favour the theory that they were habitations, although their dampness and difficulty of defence would negative that idea. Again, some suppose that they were excavated for chalk for agricultural purposes. But then in some cases, in other localities, the shafts are driven right through the chalk, and we have no evidence that our woad-painted ancestors were sufficiently advanced in agriculture to the use of chalk; and about two miles from Bexley there is an out crop of the chalk strata. Another theory is that they were hiding-places; but it is a poor sort of refuge that affords no possible retreat when discovered, and only requires your enemy to sit on top and throw down lighted straw to smoke you out, and then drop a big rock on your head as you come up. Their size and number seem to negative the idea of granaries. Sufficient wheat for a nation could be stored in the Stankey Wood holes alone, and their dampness would be detrimental to grain. The question of their use is for future explorers to answer. Some gentlemen

think they can trace the use of iron tools in the markings on the chalk, the presumption being that the original workers excavated them for some unknown reason, and that much later they were worked as chalk pits. There is no doubt as to their antiquity. Pliny and other classical writers make mention of them.

The Ordnance Map gives the name "Dane Holes." This is wrong. The word is derived from Anglo-Saxon "Den"=a hole. They exist in other parts of the country, viz., at Grays in Essex, near Canterbury, in Hampshire and elsewhere, shewing their presence often not by holes but by cup-shaped depressions in the soil, almost always in thick woods. I suggest that this Club, possessing much surplus wealth, as it does, might rent one of these woods and run it as a sort of recreation ground for jaded members. A summer dinner down a Dene Hole would be a decided novelty.



NIGHT ON THE MOUNTAINS.

DREARY and chill the snowfield stretches wide
 Into the dark, inhospitable distance,
 A wilderness of death on every side,
 No token of existence,

No trace of home, or man, or life amid
 The bleak and universal desolation ;
 The blessed lights of day and night are hid ;
 No star nor constellation

From the thick, murky, ebon gloom o'erhead
 Illuminates the scene however dimly ;
 Above, around, the landscape of the dead ;
 The black rocks frowning grimly,

The frozen semblance of the ocean's foam,
 The snow-wreaths upon snow-wreaths thickly folded,
 Toppling *séracs*, and many an icy dome
 Fantastically moulded,

And closing nearer yet, and yet more near,
 The Azrael of the Mountains' spectral curtain,
 That chills the pulsing blood with creeping fear,
 Most real—and most uncertain,

Draped like a winding sheet or funeral pall
O'er hungry tombs of black crevasses yawning ;
Night ! Cold ! and Death ! But life and hope for all
Come with the gracious dawning :

The summits flash and sparkle into gold,
The snowy wastes flush into warmth and glory,
In witness to the tale so often told,
Our grand old Mountain story,

Whose every page with health and manhood glows ;
Those glorious records we so proudly cherish,
Writ broad upon the everlasting snows.
What though the writers perish !

Their spirit lives. Their brave example thrills
Our hearts. So press we upward to the meeting
Of loyal souls upon the eternal hills
Where they shall give us greeting.

CLIMBING IN SOUTH AFRICA.

FROM the annual reports of the South African "Mountain Club" it is evident that the recent war did not prevent the climbing enthusiasts of the Cape from indulging in their favourite pastime. The Mountain Club consists of between 400 and 500 members, under the presidency of Dr. R. Marloth, and has sections at Cape Town, Worcester and Stellenbosch, and among the first ascents made during the last two or three years are the Frenchhoek Peak; the highest peak of the Zanddrift Mountains; the face of the Jonkers Hoek Turn-Peak; and the Great and Little Winterhoek from each other (a feat which was locally believed impossible). The exploration of up-country peaks was naturally restricted by the exigencies of martial law, but among a number of peaks of considerable altitude that have been ascended since 1898 we notice the following—

Seven Weeks Poort Berg (7600 feet).

Matroosberg (7434).

Eastern Portion of Toverkop (7200 feet).

Roode Krantz Berg (7100 feet).

Groot Hoek (6860 feet).

Tafelberg (6800 feet).

Milner Peak (6567 feet).

Sneeuwkop (6335 feet), and

Buffels Hoek Twins (6100 feet).

A Winter ascent of the Great Winterhoek, from Theron's farm (August, 1900), is described in spirited language :—

"The wonderful rocks of the Little Winterhoek, shaped somewhat similarly to the Funffinger spitze in the Dolomites, with sharp, card-like edges, or in mighty precipices, grew

larger in scale. Below, more and more of rich valley, or grim mountain top, lay extended. Beautiful though the views were when ascending the saddle, they were far surpassed by the scenery we gazed upon from the top. Everything had changed. We came from a district where rich, teeming soil merged gradually into a grim, barren rock. A ring of mighty Titans there guarded the land, hoary-headed, and with dry, red faces. None, save perhaps the Little Winterhoek, stand out boldly or prominently amongst the rest. And now, from a height higher than many of these mountain summits, there suddenly burst into view another and greater mountain, pyramidal in form, towering up into the heavens in cold, majestic stillness, flecked with snowy ridges and ravines for four thousand feet: a great impenetrable mystery: a vision of implacability, of purity, of steadfast, almost chilling, endurance. Nor is the great mountain alone worthy to attract notice. There is a something in all the surroundings which enforces wondering attention. Deep shade and violent drop of valley torrent laving the mountain's foot enhance the effect of light illumined lofty peak. Vast contortions and writhings of rock, immense snappings and sinkings, show what dreadful convulsions have taken place in the far distant ages. Yet the great peak towers still, serenely, unperturbed, the predestined survivor of the human race; heedless alike of man's birth, of his emergence from savagery, of paltry struggle in war, of his eventual disappearance.

"We could not long gaze from our vantage ground; a problem arose. Were we to attempt cliff scaling and sleep upon the mountain heights, or should we descend and search for a cave into which the midnight blasts could not penetrate? A man may be very courageous, and yet object to being frozen. All our party did. Therefore some of us may be courageous. Some masses of rock fallen together answered our purpose. 'What a Blackman's ventilator draught,' or words to that effect, came from each on entering. After that each followed his main inclination. I forget whether Austin told any anecdotes. Jackson, of course, constructed a beacon for future guidance. Westerton hauled up some wood by means of our 60 feet

Alpine rope. I also attended to creature comforts, and partly blocked up one of the four open sides of our 'cave' with bush. Two sides and the top side, or chimney, remained open. Assistance obtained from the proper use of healthy appetite and sound appreciation of virtues inherent within whisky toddy, enabled us to sleep satisfactorily. Our leader, indeed, declared we had slept 'not wisely, but too well,' as it was seven o'clock before our climb commenced. But then he is teetotal—inwardly we registered him faddist.

"Very little time elapsed before we gained the snow. Melted and then frozen on surface, it afforded very insecure foothold. More than once we must record a fall. Fortunately the worst was in a ravine, where the snow slope trended towards one side. Down the unlucky gentleman came, attracting everybody's notice by a sound like 'ugh, ugh, ugh,' till ramming his shoulders into a rise against an uplifted rock, he pitched a correct somersault and landed on his feet in the hole below. Tobogganing upon one's back for close upon a hundred feet upon an unprepared slide is not recommended by anyone who has passed through the shaking and resulting soreness. It is a futile performance. Nobody's ardour was in the least abated by this incident. Three men were not hurt, and the fourth was the first to arrive at the beacon constructed on the topmost rock, three hours exactly after quitting camp.

"Very diversified were the views obtained from this point. In one direction was a crushing together of sharp ridges and concentration of mountains. In another a great fertile valley hemmed in with rock over the crests of which could be seen other peaks and ridges extending into the distance as far as eye can reach. But chiefly remarkable was the view westward, where, far below, lay great seas of white mist—not level, but foaming and torn in wildest fury, submerging valleys, but baffled and broken as they beat against mountain sides. So wild and real seemed this sea that rents at edges and visions of sunlit lands below, appeared strange, almost startling. White seas that swallowed valleys and mountain slopes in the distance were surely of more solid stuff than this. Greater irre-

sistible floods seethed behind, and might not be restrained. Our most difficult work was to come, and these seas of mist caused one member, at least, of the party some anxiety. We had decided to return to camp along a rough and dangerous ridge; a difficult route at any time, but with snow and ice around, an impossible task in mist. However, a special providence watches over children, drunkards, and sometimes over mountain climbers, and the mists held back until our dangers were past.

"Starting our descent over frozen snow three in turn slid down the rope. Then Jackson, whom nothing ever daunts, descended unsupported, those below holding on to the lower end of the rope so that, in case of a slip, some chance still remained of arresting his fall before much damage had been done.

"This reminds the writer of a curious notice he once read in a hotel in Norway. In an upstairs room of a wooden building at the window lay coiled a long rope, with directions for use printed in Norwegian, German, French and English. The English was to the effect that 'in case of fire one end of the rope should be securely fixed round the body, and the other end must be thrown out of the window.' This is exactly what Jackson did on the mountain, and it answered well enough in his case.

"The most difficult place to negotiate was at a sudden drop and rise again in the ridge, just as though a slice of ground right through the mountain had sunk down a couple of hundred feet. Here the descent was only difficult down to the last fifty feet, after which it was also excessively dangerous owing to ice upon the rocks, which themselves ended just at the apex of two long slopes of frozen snow. A fall would have necessitated a long slide right or left of three thousand feet. Unless, that is, there were sudden stoppage points upon the way. Pieces of ice sent in either direction went singing down like the music of skates on good ice, and could be heard long after their despatch.

"Jackson, avoiding the ice, worked his way to one side, obtaining precarious fingerholds only, but clinging like a lizard.

He safely descended, whilst the rope, as before, was held by those below. Our journey up took us three hours. That going down took five. We found our camp quite easily, as a mist, which in the later part of our descent enveloped us, suddenly cleared, and we recognised a curious coffin-shaped rock, then a group of Anglo-Saxons, man and wife, two fair children and grandfather; and lastly, distinguished the small beacon erected on the previous day."

The climbers of Cape Town are exceptionally fortunate in having at their back door such an ideal practise ground as the face of Table Mountain appears to afford. New climbs are, apparently, now almost as scarce there as on the Pillar Rock, and the recognised routes have so multiplied during the last ten or twelve years that descriptions of them are said to have ceased to interest the local climbers: but there is always an interest in possible new routes, and, from the following description of an attempt upon "Fernwood" gully, it is evident that Table Mountain still further resembles the "Pillar" in forcing the would-be pioneer to choose climbs of exceptional severity:—

"Skirting up the slope to avoid a series of petty waterfalls, the ravine itself was entered fairly high up, and a short scramble up the bed of it brought them to their first halt before a very awkward cliff. Close against the southern wall, however, a curiously-shaped tree was found, with its trunk half-embedded longitudinally in the soft rock, or what seemed to be a kind of clay reef. This was, however, found to be an igneous dyke, extending up the southern side of the gully, and which seems similar to that noticeable in the granite on the Kloof-road. Dr. Marloth had previously noticed the outcrop of this dyke at the back of the Newlands Brewery. The formation was overhanging; nevertheless, though a most interesting climb, no serious difficulty was experienced in ascending by the tree to a foothold on the rock above, whence further progress became possible, though not without difficulty, for about a

couple of hundred feet. The gully then narrowed, became almost vertical, and, in some places, again overhanging.

"Jackson, who was the lightest and most expert climber of the party, acted as leader, and, by means of the rope, distinct, though very slow, progress was made, the difficulty seeming to increase with the altitude, although the watercourse always gave one the idea that it was easier of negotiation "further up." Early in the serious part of the climb, when hauling up the rucksack, a small stone was dislodged, which struck Henry, who was below, on the forehead. He was the next man to ascend, and was fortunately admonished to rope himself very carefully. The blow had, however, dazed him, and shortly after commencing this part of the climb, his fingers got jammed between the rope and the rock, rendering his hands, for the time being, practically powerless, and he had to be hauled up, almost unconscious, by Jackson and Amphlett.

"Individual progression had so far been necessary, but a place was at last reached where all four were able to sit down together and rest. This was a small rocky spur against the northern wall of the Kloof. Leaving here direct ascent was found impracticable, and a traverse was cautiously executed to the southern side, up which progress was made with the greatest difficulty. The rock in this portion of the gully was not reliable. It was in many cases loose, and to a large extent covered with moss and tufts of grass, affording most unsatisfactory handholds. In no place was water running, and all began to suffer from thirst.

"Eventually a ledge was attained affording firm footing, where, however, the party found themselves before a wall of vertical rock, from 40 to 60 feet high, on the lower part of which no handgrips were visible. Higher up the cliff seemed a little more promising, and Jackson climbed on Smith's shoulders, but was still unable to reach a safe holding place. It was suggested that another man should climb upon the pair, but the ledge on which they were standing was barely two feet wide, and if the upper man had fallen, even though roped, the others could not have held him, and they would, in

all probability, have joined him in his descent. In fact, while standing there, a matted mass of moss and fern roots, six feet square and two or three inches thick, peeled off the rock in front of Smith. It was reeking with moisture and very heavy, and had to be sent carefully below without prejudicing Smith's position and handholds. Great relief was felt when it was got rid of.

"The party had now been climbing from 5 a.m. to 2.20 p.m., and, as further attempts to scale the ravine from this point would have been foolhardy, it was decided to descend. This, however, was a very different business from going up, and, if the ascent was difficult, the descent was far more so. The first man lowered by the rope (Amphlett), was uncertain where he would land, for the climbing had been necessarily zig-zag, and to divest himself of the rope in a place where it could not conveniently reach him again, or where there was not room to anchor himself or for the next man to stand, would merely have added to the difficulties of the situation. In one case Amphlett was dangling some time on the rope, being hauled up and down, and working from side to side, before a suitable landing place could be found. On the first stage of the descent, Jackson, who assumed the post of honour as last man, found matters so hazardous that it was at once decided he must be assisted by another of the party. Accordingly, on the second stage, Smith, who was nearest, remained with him, and the two mutually assisted each other, though often being in one another's way, the other two, while anxiously watching, being, of course, powerless to render help. Ultimately the resting place near the northern wall of the gully was reached, when, after munching a little chocolate, the third stage was commenced, as the shadows were already deepening. The descent here, however, was so difficult that it was found necessary to fix the rope round a projecting rock ; and for the last man to slide down some twenty feet and then cut away the rope. Over 100 feet had been paid out at this place, but it was known that the remainder was ample for requirements below.

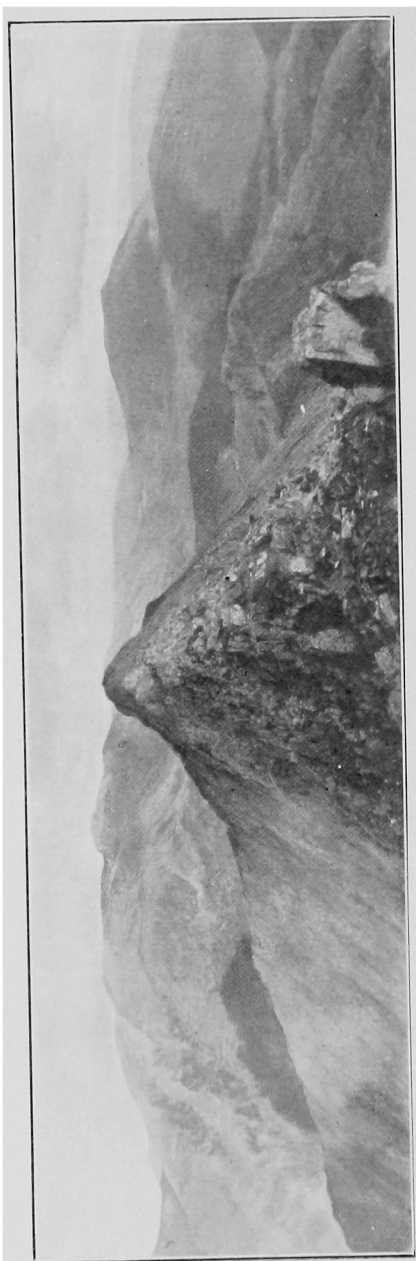
"It was now 8.15 p.m., the party having taken six hours to descend less than 700 feet. Only the last portion of the actual climb remained, but darkness was rapidly setting in, and to attempt to go on would have been most unwise. The ledge on which they were standing was but a foot wide, and seemed to lead round the southern wall of the gully. It soon narrowed to six inches, but widened again further on to two or three feet, and then pinched out altogether. It was decided to remain here until daylight. A little food was in the rucksack but nobody was hungry: thirst was the only distress, no water having been attainable for about thirteen hours.

"Knowing they were above a fall of at least a couple of hundred feet, it was considered imprudent to sleep, and, in fact, all were in too merry a mood to do so, as it was now merely a question of waiting for daylight. The night, fortunately, was warm. The switching off of the municipal lights, first in Wynberg, then in Rondebosch, was noticed, and known to indicate midnight. By this time the moon had risen, rendering the position more cheerful. At four a.m. dawn broke, and an effort was made to continue the descent; but although the line of ascent was known, the reverse movement seemed too difficult to attempt. It was then decided to traverse the gully and endeavour to work round the northern buttresses into Hiddingh's ravine, but, on reaching the other side a further determined effort was made to descend, when, with the increasing light, the difficulties, which were trifling to those that had been faced, seemed all at once to vanish, and the quartette rapidly finished the awkward portion of the climb, the last man coming down by a slip-knot round the upper part of the curious tree before alluded to. It was now simply necessary to proceed down the bed of the ravine. Getting on the bicycles at Fernwood, Rondebosch was reached at 7.30 a.m., just as arrangements were being made for the despatch of a search party.

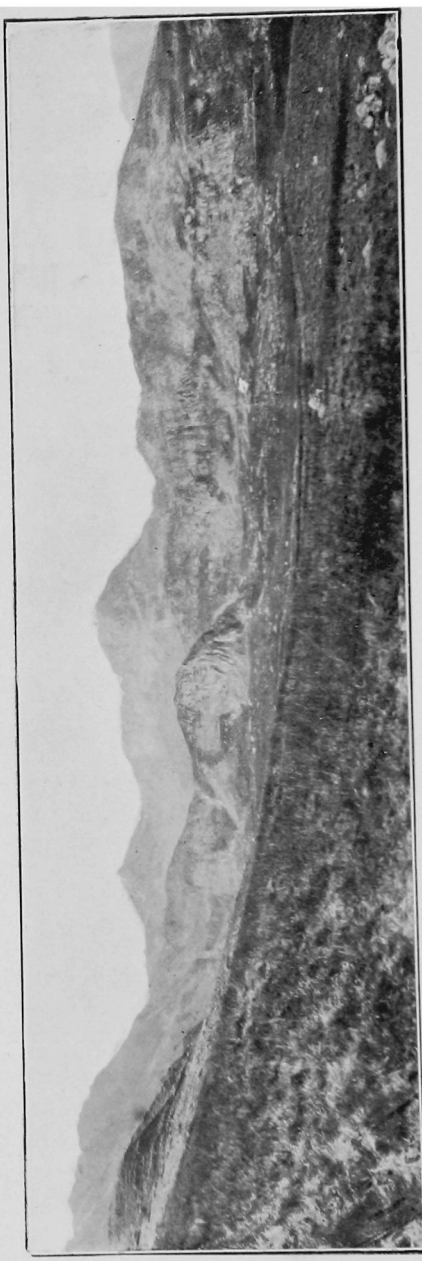
"The week following the same four proceeded to the top of the mountain to find the mouth of this particular gully, which was not easy to discover being somewhat hidden by bush.

They descended some three or four hundred feet without much difficulty, and looking over the edge of the vertical rock face which had baulked them, judged the depth of the unscaled portion to be from 40 to 60 feet."





(1) Crib Goch from the West.



(2) Snowdon from the Slopes of Galt-y-Wenallt.

From photographs by W. P. MARLER.

SONNET.

TO THE MOUNTAINS OF THE WORLD.

YE broad-based citadels that reverent
In adoration front the sapphire sky,
Whose coronetted minarets on high
Of Nature's grandest mood are eloquent,
Ye adamantine castles lightning-rent
That silent-speaking, grim and sombre lie
Like zealous-watchful monsters, and descry
The hidden secrets of the firmament,
Once more I seek your shrines to gain repose
From turmoil of the marts. Befriend my quest ;
Let me be numbered of the spirits blest
That in the ethereal region of your snows
Find peace on earth, and clearer hear the chime
Of the celestial harmony sublime.

RUDOLF CYRIAX.

THE CLUB LIBRARY.

WE have pleasure in giving another list of books that have been presented, and are again greatly indebted to Mr. W. R. Rickmers.

In addition, the Club has purchased the *Alpine Journal*, Vols. 1 to 18, which, together with the odd parts presented by Mr. W. Maude, and noted in our last number, gives us a complete set of this fascinating and invaluable publication. Good bookcases have also been purchased.

Our Hon. Secretary has kindly given us the temporary use of a room at 2 King William Street, E.C., where members may consult the books on application.

The Honorary Librarian will endeavour to be at the Library on Thursdays between 3.30 and 5 P.M.

Presented by Mr. W. R. RICKMERS.

- Agassiz, L. Geologische Alpenreisen in der Schweiz, Savoyen und Piemont. Edited by Dr Carl Vogt. Maps, &c. 1847.
 [Bordier, A. C.] Voyage pittoresque (*sic*) aux Glacières de Savoye, fait en 1772. 12mo. 1773.
 Bourrit, M. T. Description des Glacieres . . . du Duché de Savoye. Plates. 1773.
 Do. A relation of a journey to the Glaciers . . . of Savoy, translated by C. & F. Davy. 2nd edition. 1776.
 Beattie, W., and Bartlett, W. H. Switzerland Illustrated. 2 vols. (vol. 1 only). 1836.
 Barnard, G. Switzerland: Scenes and incidents of travels in the Bernese Oberland. Tinted plates, imp. folio. 1843.
 Berlepsch, H. A. Die Alpen. Tinted plates. 1871.
 Bouvier, Dr. L. De Saussure, sa vie, ses voyages et ses observations dans les Alpes. 1877.

- Browne, G. F. (Bishop of Bristol). Off the Mill. 1895.
- Catlow, A. and M. E. Sketching Rambles ; or Nature in the Alps and Apennines. Tinted plates, 2 vols. (1861).
- Caviezel, M. Tourist's Guide to the Upper Engadine. Map. 1877.
- Cheever, G. B. Wanderings of a pilgrim in the shadow of Mont Blanc and the Jungfrau Alp (edition de luxe). N.D.
- Do., and Headley, J. T. Travels among Alpine Scenery. Illustrated. 1855.
- [Cole, Mrs. H. W.] A lady's tour round Monte Rosa. Coloured plates. 1859.
- Edwards, Amelia B. Untrodden peaks and unfrequented valleys, a midsummer ramble in the Dolomites. 1873.
- Forbes, J. D. A tour of Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa. Illustrated. 1855.
- George, H. B. The Oberland and its Glaciers, explored and illustrated with ice axe and camera. 1866.
- Grube, Dr. A. W. Alpenwanderungen. Tinted plates. 1886.
- Hinchliff, T. W. (a former President of the Alpine Club). Over the sea and far away. Illustrated. 1876.
- King, Clarence. Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada. 1872.
- Kohl, J. G. Alpenreisen. 1851.
- Leonhardi, G. Das Veltlin. Map. 1860.
- Liddiard, Rev. W. A three month's tour in Switzerland and France. Plates. 1832.
- Morf, C. Les Pionniers du Club Alpin (Suisse). 1875.
- Parrot, Dr. F. Journey to Ararat. Translated by W. D. Cooley. Map and illustrations. 1845.
- Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers. Edited by John Ball. 5th (knapsack) edition. Maps. 1860.
- Pfaff, Dr. F. Die Naturkräfte in den Alpen. Diagrams. 1877.
- Plantinus, J. B. Helvetia antiqua et nova. 1656.
- Rasch, G. Touristen—Lust und Leid in Tirol. 1874.
- Roth, A., and Fellenberg, E. Von. The Doldenhorn and Weisse Frau ascended for the first time. Coloured plates. 1863.
- Simson, A. Travels in the wilds of Ecquador. Map. 1886.
- Stubei. Thal und Gebirg, Land und Leute. Beautifully illustrated. 1891.
- Stephen, Leslie. The Playground of Europe. 2nd edition. 1894.
- Swiss, A. C. (issued by). Die Gletscher der Schweiz. 1874.

- Switzerland. Dictionnaire historique, politique et géographique de la Suisse. 3 vols. in 1. 1788.
- Do. A walk through, in September, 1816. Maps. 1818.
- Do. A summer's tour . . . to Chamouny over the Col de Balme, etc. Map. 1834.
- Talfourd, T. N. Recollections of a first visit to the Alps. Privately printed. (1841).
- Theobald, Prof. G. Naturbilder aus den Rhätischen Alpen. Maps and illustrations. 1862.
- Trench, Rev. F. A walk round Mont Blanc. 1847.
- Tyndall, John. Mountaineering in 1861. Illustrated. 1862.
- White, Walter. To Mont Blanc and back again. 1854.
- Do. Holidays in Tyrol. 1876.
- Whymper, E. The ascent of the Matterhorn. Maps and illustrations. 1880.
- Wild, F. S. Essai sur la Montagne Salifère . . . situé dans le Canton de Berne. 1788.
- Zincke, Rev. F. B. A walk in the Grisons, being a third month in Switzerland [see below]. 1875.

Presented by Mr. RODERICK WILLIAMS.

- Hinchliff, T. W. Summer months among the Alps, with an ascent of Monte Rosa. Tinted plates. 1857.

Presented by Mr. C. W. NETTLETON.

- [Barrow, John.] Expeditions on the Glaciers, including an ascent of Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, Col du Géant and Mont Buét. Portrait. 1864.
- Drummond, Rev. D. T. K. Scenes and impressions in Switzerland and the North of Italy. Tinted plates. 1853.
- [Ellis, Mrs.] Summer and winter in the Pyrenées. Illustrated. (1841).
- [Johnson, Anna C.] The Cottages of the Alps, or life and manners in Switzerland. 2 vols. in 1. 1860.
- Murray, John. A glance at some of the beauties and sublimities of Switzerland. 1829.
- Zincke, Rev. F. B. A month in Switzerland. 1873.
- Do. Swiss Allmends . . . being a second month in Switzerland. Map. 1874.
- [Completing the Club set of Zincke's Alpine Works.]

The following have been presented by the various publishers, as undernoted :—

Presented by Messrs. DULAU & CO.

- Baddeley, M. J. B., and Ward, C. S. Ireland. Parts 1 and 2. 1901-2.
Do. do. North Wales. Parts 1 and 2. 1899-02.
Do. do. South Wales. 1901.
Baddeley, M. J. B. Bath and Bristol and Forty miles round. 1902.
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Ward, C. S. The Eastern Counties. 1902.
Karl Baedeker. Austria, including Hungary, Transylvania, Dalmatic and Bosnia. 1900.

Presented by Messrs. HURST & BLACKETT.

- Benson, C. E. Crag Hound in Lakeland. 28 plates. 1902.

Presented by Mr. JOHN MURRAY.

- Whympers, Ed. A guide to Chamonix and the Range of Mont Blanc. 1900.
Do. A guide to Zermatt and the Matterhorn. 1900.

Presented by Mr. L. UPCOTT GILL.

- Perry, Alex. W. Welsh Mountaineering. A practical guide to the Ascent of all the principal Mountains in Wales. 1896.

Presented by Messrs. ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE & CO.

- Filippi, Filippo de. The ascent of Mount St. Elias (Alaska). 1900.

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* * * *

THE Committee has decided that the price of all future numbers of the *Journal* shall be 2/- per copy to non-members.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

BOG-FIRES.

DEAR SIR,

Taken in connection with Mr. Prickard's very interesting letter on this subject in a recent issue, some experiences of mine last September, when staying at Corphwysfa, may be worth recording.

A tramp round the "Horseshoe" by moonlight was one I had long decided to take on the first opportunity.

The nights of September 17, 18 and 19 were all that could be desired ; there being a full moon, nearly cloudless skies, no wind, and a very clear, still atmosphere.

The first night I missed. The second was even more perfect ; Old Crib—whose untoward influences in that same matter of clear skies I knew by sad experience—being powerless for the time to attract the smallest fleck of cloud.

Without more ado, at about 11 P.M., taking a rucksack containing, among other things, a sleeping-bag, I started.

Stumbling along the P.-y-G. track in deep shadow, I made slow progress, and did not reach the col overlooking Llydaw till 12 P.M. The cairn here—just where one leaves the track for Crib Goch—being a favourable spot, I took off my boots, got into my sleeping-bag, pulled my soft hat with a big brim well down over my eyes, and went to sleep, tired, but contented, warm and comfortable.

A gentle breeze on my face waked me now and again, and at 2.30 A.M., thinking it time I made another start, I sat up and looked about me.

I now felt refreshed, fit, and in excellent spirits, and the sky being absolutely without a cloud, and the moonlight so bright that one could distinguish both near and distant objects as easily as by day, I decided to go over Crib Goch to the summit, and down over Lliwedd, instead of taking the zig-zags, as I thought of doing before going to sleep.

As I sat facing Llydaw putting on my boots, I was suddenly aware of two lights close together — evidently lanterns—right under Lliwedd, near Evan's Cross,* one stationary, and the other, rather higher up, being moved rapidly to and fro. Everything was still, and the atmosphere so clear that, as I stared, it seemed as if I ought to be able to distinguish the party, and hear their movements.

Two ideas occurred to me at once—three—miners going round over the shoulder of Lliwedd to Nant Gwynant; an accident; or, a party having started as I had, and lost their way—or their nerve.

Miners I gave up; it was neither likely they would be going or returning at that time in the morning, or that they would use their lanterns in this way.

The fact of one lantern being stationary and the other evidently waved to attract attention, led me to the conclusion that they belonged to a party, possibly of two, one of whom was sitting down exhausted or incapacitated, the other being all right. [To think all this did not take long, of course.]

Directly I satisfied myself, by the size and intensity of the lights, their evident distance from the ground, and other indications, that they were lanterns, I stood up and shouted—but without reply.

This puzzled me somewhat, for, though my voice is not a stentorian one, in the still air and the midnight quietness it sounded as if it could have been heard all over the amphitheatre.

* I am not *sure* whether I was able to distinguish the cross from the col, but I fancy so, because, as far I remember, before crossing Llydaw I located the positions of the lanterns, and the cross shining in the moonlight, by their relative position to a vein of quartz, very distinct, running through the shoulder of rock on their left as I faced it.

I finished putting on my boots; and then, standing against the sky-line, I waved my hat and arms and shouted again, more than once, and still not a sound in reply. I knew I must be as noticeable as in the daytime, even more so, because, there was neither sound nor object to distract attention from me. I felt still more puzzled.

It was only now that the idea of Wills-o'-the-wisp, Ignis-fatui, &c., occurred to me at all definitely. I had, however, never met with these phenomena, and had a hazy idea that they were always of a gaseous nature, and only to be met with on marshy ground; that their appearance was very intermittent, and never of greater intensity than, say, the light of a match, or of several separate matches.

These, on the contrary, were much bigger lights, steady, or, if moved, evidently intentionally.

I packed up, wavering between the two opinions. It was now 2.45 A.M., and the lights had disappeared. As it did not matter to me which way I took the "Horseshoe," I decided to drop down, cross Llydaw and investigate the thing, then get up over the Miners' Path on to Lliwedd and the summit, returning by Crib Goch.

At my best pace I started; crossed the causeway and the stream by the plank bridge (which I could easily see long before reaching it), and made for the spot, taking the before-mentioned quartz as my guide.

As I neared the place I shouted from time to time (I wonder if I have been able to convey my impression that there might *so easily* be some one requiring help, though now I could not half believe it?), still without response, and the nearer I got the more convinced I felt that I had been very badly "had!"

I found the spot—about 20 yards to the left of the Evans' Cross—no one there; no sound or sign of a soul.

It was uncanny to a degree, and being now in the shadow of Lliwedd made it more so; when, hang it all! as I looked across at the Crib—just below the ridge at Gable End to the right of where the vein of quartz bisects it—I saw another lantern

moving slowing and stopping, irresolutely moving and stopping again. For the moment (in spite of experience) I felt certain *that* must be a lantern; it was so exactly the movement of a man too far below the ridge, carefully trying to get back to it again.

However, my better judgment told me I must be wrong, and I turned and hurried up round Lliwedd, keeping as close under as possible, anxious to get to the top out of its shadow, and away from this solemn, silent place, eerie with false lights and gruesome with the glittering reminder of untimely death.

I had to finish up with a gully (more or less), and although I was here in deep shadow all the time, could see to choose each step, and do not remember any slip.

This brought me out on to Lliwedd quite at the right-hand side of the saddle, and at the top I built a cairn of seven small stones, and, probably,

"There it stands until this day
To witness if I lie."

I built this at 3.40 *a.m.*; arrived Lliwedd Cairn, 4.20; and a little farther had a rest of 10 minutes watching the dawn breaking over Siabod, while to the south the coast line still lay clear and distinct in the moonlight. It was all bewitchingly beautiful.

In spite of the length this letter has already reached—of which I feel quite ashamed—I must just mention one curious effect. To the horizon in every direction not a cloud was to be seen, but, to the south, just below me, Nant Gwynant was filled with clouds from end to end, the appearance of the whole valley suggesting some huge torrent, a mass of seething foam, rushing headlong to Portmadoc and the sea.

As I toiled up the Watkin Path, by turning now and again and looking back between Siabod and Lliwedd, I could watch the ever-changing glory of a magnificent blood-red sunrise, which reached its zenith as I gained the summit.

It was now 5.35, and being unable to get coffee, tea, or anything to eat, or, in fact, anything at all but spirits, although

the hotel was open and full (it happened to be the morning following the Llanberis sheep fair, when it is a local custom to signalise the event by going to the top of Snowdon and seeing the sun rise), ten minutes saw me started on my homeward journey along Crib Goch.

I reached the Cairn at 6.45 A.M., having had a blazing sun, but not yet hot, in my eyes for the last hour; and entered the hotel at 7.41 A.M.

Yes, I certainly "slacked" that day—a broiling hot one—and—for that matter—so did every other man in the hotel!

I am, &c.,

J. L. B.

To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,

Having read with interest the description of the climb directly up the East face of the Criman or Crimiau, the highest point of the ridge between Bwlch Ciliau and Bwlch y Saethau, described in the *C. C. Journal* of last March, I was anxious to try the climb, which I accomplished last Tuesday (Feb. 17th) from the Gwynan Valley, accompanied by a man from the locality. It is certainly a very interesting bit of rock climbing, and on a fine day is a grand way of crossing from Cwm Dyli to Cwm-y-Llan.

I find we practically followed Messrs. Farmer and Morland's route, except that we kept closer to the first gully till we reached the rock rib (C); at the foot of the terminal gully (D) we followed up the right face till it widened out under precipitous rocks, then traversed across to the left face and up to a flat and narrow grassy platform immediately under a large overhanging bluff of dark, red rock, just 60 feet (the length of our rope) below the edge on the south side of the top. Then we turned to the left, and after a steep, slanting chimney of

very good rocks, but very long reaches, we emerged on the grass some 15 to 20 yards south of the top.

About half way up the climb we found an old tin of "apricot jam," and some remains of blue paper, probably left by another party also inspired like myself by Messrs. Farmer and Morland's description.

I estimate the height from the screes to the top to be about 1000 feet, and the slope to average 45° to 50° ; we took $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours over the climb, including halts, but as we twice had to retrace our steps, having got into rather impossible places, it took us a little longer than it need have done.

We could not find the cairn mentioned, but as the top was in the clouds, and a strong, cold wind blowing, we did not linger long, and must have missed it.

This ridge of rock is generally called by the local Welsh "Criman," or "Crimiau," meaning a "ridge," and the highest point, Craig y Griman, or Pen y Griman. I have never heard it called Cribin, or Pen y Gribin, and it would be interesting to know how Messrs. Farmer and Morland got this name.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

J. W. WYATT.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE ALPINE JOURNAL. Edited by GEORGE YELD. Vol. XXI., No. 157.
August, 1902. Containing :—

- From Vallouise to Courmayeur. By J. J. Withers.
- Some reasons why the science of Altitude Illness is still in its infancy. By M. L. Hepburn, M.D., F.R.C.S.
- Alpine Exploration in New Zealand—Past and Future. By Arthur P. Harper.
- An Attempt on Kolahoi. By Ernest F. Neve.
- In Memoriam : J. Oakley Maund. By C. T. Dent.
- The Alpine Club Library.
- Alpine Notes, &c., &c.

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THE ALPINE JOURNAL. Edited by GEORGE YELD. Vol. XXI. No. 158.
November, 1902. Containing :—

- A Day on the Arguille de Tacul. By H. V. Reade.
- Through the Tarentaise and Beyond. By Wm. Anderton Brigg.
- The Gspaltenhorn 3,442m. From the Tschingelfirn. By G. Haster.
- The Dammastock from the Goscheneralp. By H. J. Heard.
- The Colle Fiorito. By the Editor.
- In Memoriam : Florence Craufurd Grove.
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THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. Edited by WILLIAM DOUGLAS. Vol. VII., No. 39. September, 1902. Containing :—

- Sgoran Dubh.
- Ben Buidhe. By Scott Moncrieff Penney.
- S.M.C. Guide Book. The Mamore Forest Group. Ben Nevis.
- Excursions, &c., &c.

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THE MOUNTAIN CLUB ANNUAL. Edited by A. M. THORPE. March, 1899. Containing :—

- The Scorpions of the Cape Peninsula. By W. F. Purcell, M.D.
- The Excursions to Sandhills in the Hex River Valley.
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The Aerial Ropeway. Table Mountain. By G. T. A.

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Mountain Accidents, &c., &c.

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CONWAY AND COOLIDGE'S CLIMBERS' GUIDES. The Bernese Oberland.

By G. HASTER. Vol. I. From the Gemmi to the Monchjoch.

(London : T. Fisher Unwin. 1902. 10/-.)

CHAMONIX AND THE RANGE OF MONT BLANC. By EDWARD
WHYMPER. Seventh Edition.

(London : John Murray. 1902. 3/- nett.)

ZERMATT AND THE MATTERHORN. By EDWARD WHYMPER. Sixth
Edition. (London : John Murray. 1902. 3/- nett.)

MOUNTAINEERING ON THE HIMALAYA AND OTHER MOUNTAIN RANGES.
By J. NORMAN COLLIE, F.R.S. (Edinburgh : Douglas. 1902.)

THE LAKE COUNTIES. By W. G. COLLINGWOOD AND OTHERS.

(London : Dent. 1902. 4/6 nett.)

ACONCAGUA AND TIERRA DEL FUEGO. A Book of Climbing, Travel,
and Exploration. By Sir MARTIN CONWAY, President of the Alpine
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Edited by E. RAYMOND TURNER.

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