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A. W. ANDREWS

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T H E

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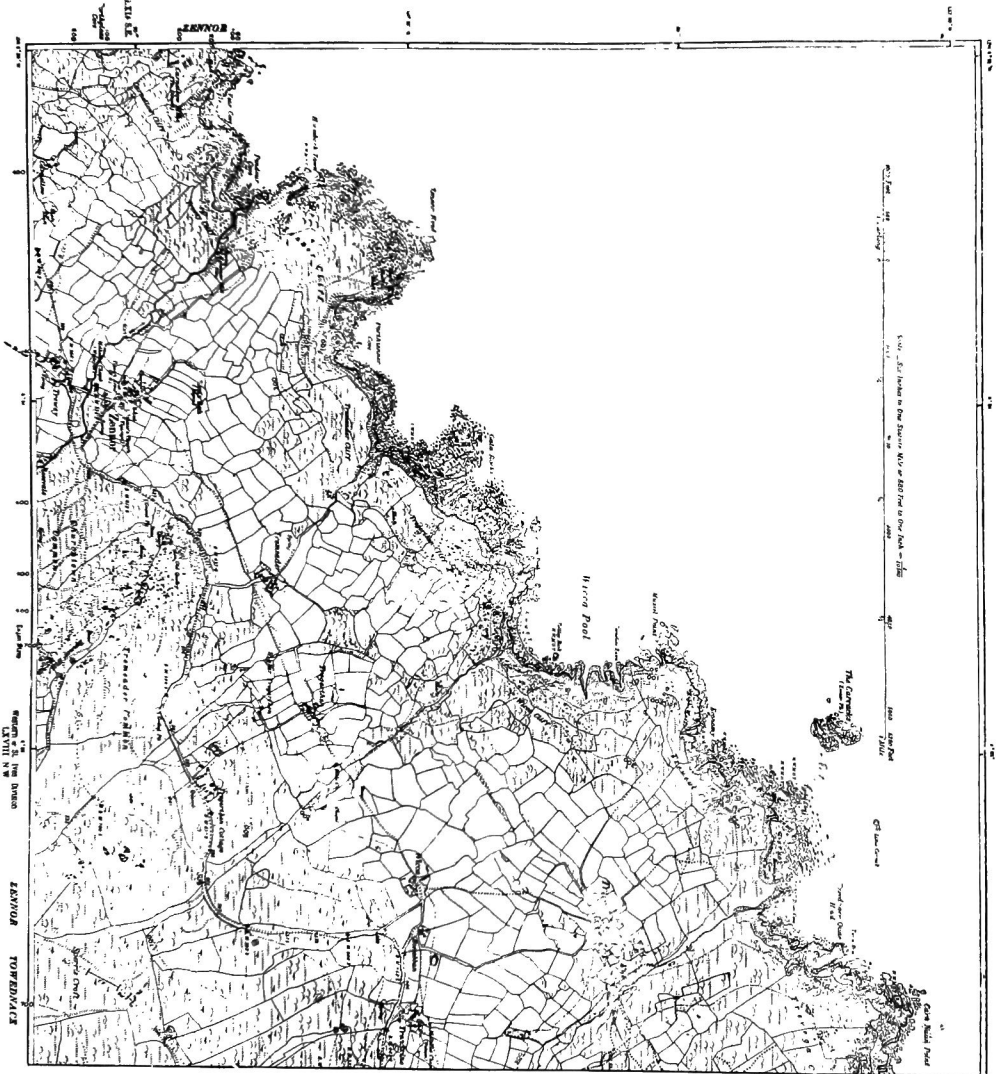
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Moor

Cultivated fields.

Exposed at  
low water.

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CLIMBING ON THE CORNISH CLIFFS.

By ARTHUR WESTLAKE ANDREWS.

“God gave all men all Earth to love,  
But since our hearts are small,  
Ordained for each, one place should prove  
Beloved over all.”

IT is becoming increasingly difficult to find a new field for climbing in this country, but I think I may claim with confidence that there is on the Cornish cliffs an almost unexplored region of the greatest interest.

For more than 25 years I have examined the district which lies on the north coast of the Land's End Peninsula, between St. Ives and Cape Cornwall, and have not nearly exhausted its possibilities.

The climbing is in many cases as hard as anything in the British Isles, and though none of the routes exceed 200 feet of actual work, they are so full of variety that actual height seems of small importance.

The best climbing is on the granite, which is most prominent at Wicca and Bosigran. At Wicca, the comparatively low cliffs terminate in a mass of granite columns, among which the Wicca Pillar stands out prominent, a symmetrical rock-mass, washed on one side at its base by the open Atlantic, and presenting some of the best crack and

gully climbing in the district. At Bosigran, the headland breaks off in steep cliffs, with some pitches of 200 feet towering over the Bosigran Pinnacle, that rises 150 feet or so from the sea below. The character of the climbing is determined by the cracks and ledges caused by the distribution of the joints in the granite, and in consequence of their number and the roughness of the surface, it is often possible to attack faces as steep as those composed of Dolomitic limestone.

The rock is as a whole absolutely safe, if care be taken to test the holding properties of the felspar crystals, which are possibly the cause of the lines of weakness in the granite, and which at any rate are especially prominent on all practicable routes. The following statement as to the size that these accommodating crystals attain to is taken from a geological work of high reputation ; it affords a pleasing confirmation of the climbers' belief that all rocks were created for his use and enjoyment, and suggests the real interests of many a scientist, who veils his private ambitions and interests beneath the formal structure of an official report.

"Some of the granites contain porphyritic felspars in great abundance and of large size ; near Lamorna Cove they are occasionally six inches in diameter."\*

I fear that there are no such giants on the north coast. Crystals built on such a scale as this would almost provide individual climbs, and would at least take the place of the iron pegs occasionally driven into Alpine peaks ; here, however, though less pretentious, they often supply a long and anxiously felt want.

We shall certainly be in complete agreement with the continuation of the same writer's remarks on the granite.

"The first impression that the Cornish granites produce is apt to be that of a general monotony, but they present so many problems of their own that that is only transient, and soon gives place to an absorbing interest."

---

\* S.W. of Penzance.



Surely we may conclude that the writer had ventured to leave the somewhat limited foothold of the scientific student for that of the climber, with his many-sided capacity for attaching himself to rocks.

As Besant tells us in his charming description of granite scenery in *Armored Lyonesse*, Nature has raised no Alpine peaks in Cornwall, but when she addressed herself to the construction of these cliffs, "she brought to the task a light touch: at the moment she happened to be feeling the great and artistic effects which may be produced by small elevations, especially in those places where the material is granite."

No one could call the scenery monotonous who has wandered along the coast, climbed down to the margin of the sea, and turned the heads of the caves that lie far below, unseen and unsuspected from the cliff edge.

There is a whole world there that the tourist can never reach, far from the excursions, which are all focussed upon two points, the Land's End and the Gurnard's Head, both inferior in beauty to Bosigran and many parts of the coast; a world tenanted by seagulls, who, with a wisdom born of experience, build on the more inaccessible ledges.

Rabbits abound on the less steep slopes, and a fox may often be seen climbing the granite rocks with the skill of an old mountaineer. From the sea below, a seal occasionally inspects the scene in the intervals of fishing and visiting his friends in neighbouring caves.

Colour is by no means absent; when the gorse and heather and trift are in full bloom, nothing can equal the gold and purple brilliance of the hill side.

Below all lies the sea, ever moving even on the stillest day, for behind it is the force of the open ocean, and fretting with its line of foam the half hidden reefs that edge the shore, and in a storm driving its spray half way up the cliff. Fishing is almost non-existent on the coast, as it is only possible to launch a boat at a few places, such as Porth Zennor and near the Gurnard's Head, and even there there is, I think, now no boat. Even the coastguards omit their nightly walks over most of the coast, as smuggling is obviously impossible.

To understand the possibilities of granite climbing, some explanation of the structure is indispensable.

As will be seen from the accompanying map, taken from the 6 inch Ordnance Survey (Cornwall, LXI., S.W.), of the region adjacent to Wicca, which lies about four miles west of St. Ives, the outline of the hills from the moor to the sea consists of (*a*) a flattish moor with tors composed of coarse grained granite. These tors do not exceed 20 feet in height, and though many of them afford interesting problems to the climber, they are not broken up by cracks and joints to the same degree as the coast granite, which has been exposed to the continual weathering of the sea.

On a few of them, however, there is good scrambling, in which friction plays a large part.

Under a considerable surface of the moor (7 square miles) is a fine grained granite, which has intruded from below into the coarser granite in subsequent geological time. This forms a good building stone, but does not weather in the same way as the coarser structure. On this area there are no tors, probably because of the absence of the large felspar crystals.

Below the moor lies a steeply sloping hill side, covered with heather and gorse, and lower down a gently undulating plateau, mostly under cultivation, leading to the cliffs, which begin at a little above the 200 feet contour line.

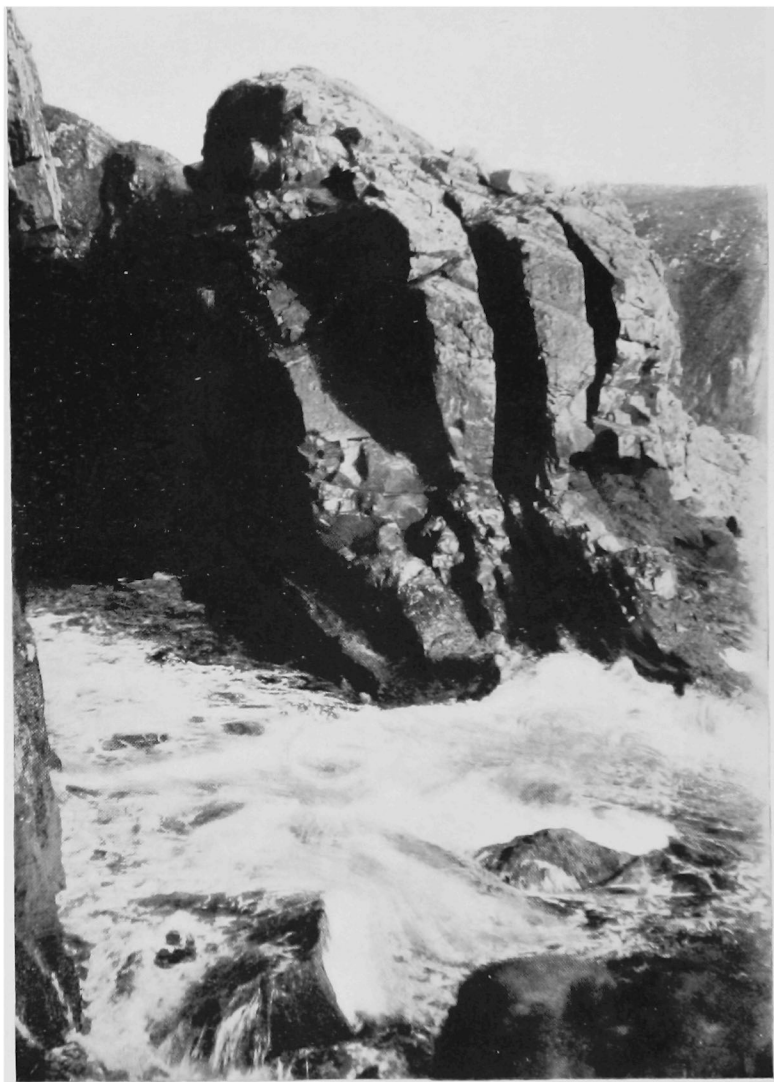
In Pliocene times, the sea probably stood at about 340 feet higher than it does now, and the steep hillside was the cliff then formed, and the plateau below was the plain of marine denudation. When the land again rose, the modern sea began to form the present sea cliffs. The evidence for this interpretation of the outline is not only its general appearance, but the fact that the St. Erth beds, a few miles to the south-east, indicate that there has been a rise of about 340 feet.

These are supposed to have been laid down at about 240 feet below the surface of the sea at the level it then stood, and they are now about 100 feet above the present sea level.

On the sea coast the granite only appears in the area of the map in the south half of Wicca Pool, though the Devonian



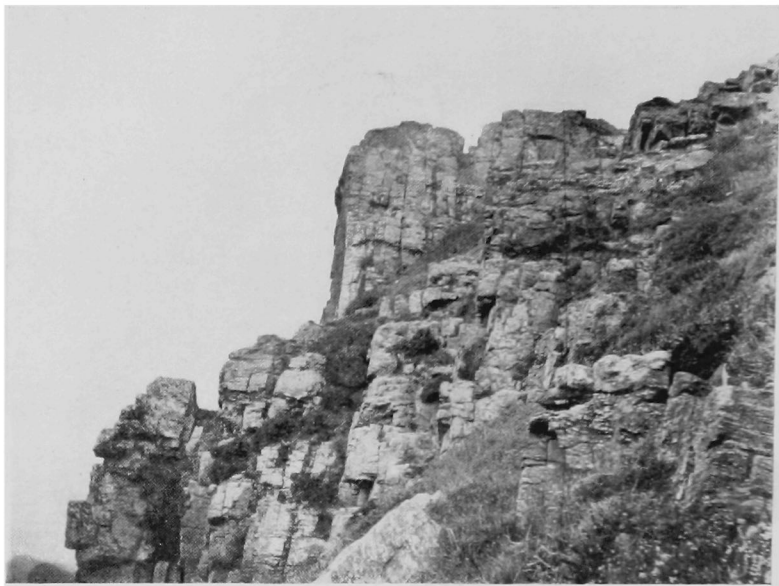
FIG. 1.



Trap Chasms at Church Town Point, Zennor. End of ridge called The Horse's Back.

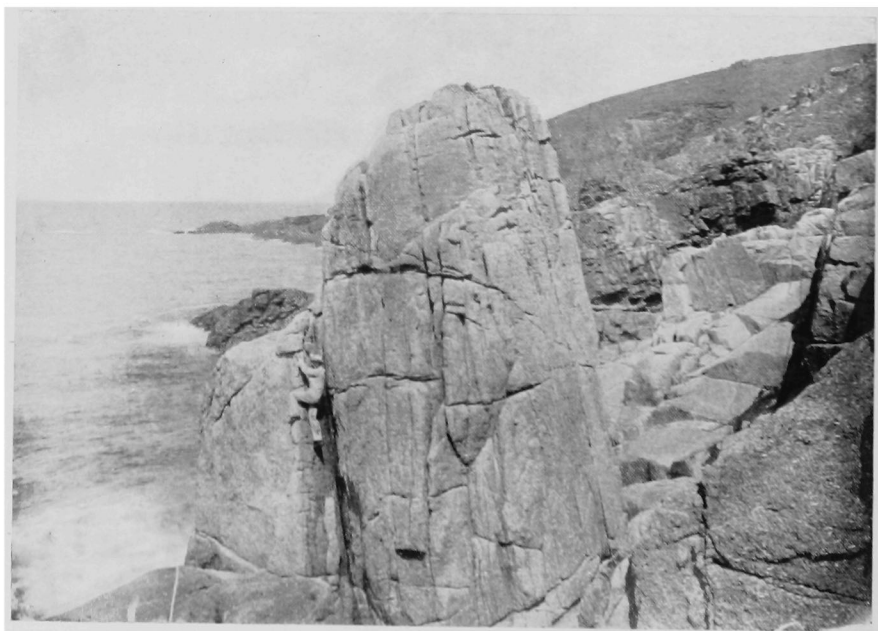


FIG. 2.



**"A Devonian Headland."** Church Town Point. Zennor.

FIG. 3.



**The Wicca Pillar.** (Upper portion.)



below high water west of Wicca, "Gala Rocks" is strewn with the debris of granite which has slipped down over it from the hillside (cf. Fig. 5, "The Slipping Block.") The lines bounding fields shown on the Ordnance Map indicate stone walls formed from the granite debris. The rest of the coast consists of "greenstones" or trap, and Devonian, forming an absolutely distinct scenery to that of the granite.

The "greenstone" or trap is a basaltic rock, which penetrated the Devonian prior to the rising of the granite.

It weathers in great blocks, the joints being much further apart than in the granite, and the lines of weakness seems to lie vertically, hence it tends to form bold and smooth rock, with clear cut chimneys and chasms. (Fig. 1.)

In the accompanying picture of trap chasms at Church Town Point, the rifts seem to have been formed with almost mathematical precision, as if they had been hewn out of the rock by artificial means. They were probably caused by the sea having forced its way along some line of less resistance, thus causing a cavern, and the chasm being produced by the roof falling in. That chasms which run inland from the sea are formed in this way, is shown by the numerous "blow holes" on the coast, where the water is forced out at the upper end of a sea cave. In several cases, the headlands are crossed by one or two broad bands of "greenstones," and are sometimes tipped with the same, which may account for the points not being worn away. From the east of Treveal, past Carn Naun point, to St. Ives, the cliffs are entirely composed of "greenstones," and are far less picturesque and broken than to the west (cf. Ordnance Map).

The Devonian rocks are far less definite in their structure, and often resemble ruined masonry (Fig. 2). There is a certain amount of climbing on both the trap and the Devonian, but it is not equal in quality to that on the granite. The trap is as a rule too smooth and waterworn near the sea level to afford good climbing, though in some cases it forms distinct pinnacles sufficiently disintegrated to offer holds.

To the west of the Gurnard's Head lies one such pinnacle, the sanctuary of countless sea birds, which no fowler has ever reached. This can be climbed by a sound chimney. It must, however, be borne in mind that the trap is somewhat loose, and liable to break away in huge blocks.

The Devonian is more broken than the trap, but often quite safe if care be taken to test the foot and hand hold.

In the granite the joints are particularly well developed. There seems to be three sets: (*a*) The Floor Joint, which may or may not be horizontal. This joint coincides roughly with the outline of the granite mass. There are also joints (*b*) which tend to divide the granite in the direction of north, 10 degrees, west, vertically, called "Cleaving Way Joints." (*c*) There is a set of joints at right angles to the vertical joints, called the "Tough Way Joints" (Fig. 4). The three sets of joints tend to split the granite mass up into a set of roughly prismatic segments. There is of course very considerable variety in the slope and angles which these joints present to each other, but there are always three sets.

In the accompanying illustration, the floor joint slopes towards the sea, hence the masses of granite tend to slide off and strew the shore with fragments. (Fig. 5.)

This jointing is naturally a source of weakness, and when acted upon by the subaerial agents, gives rise to the characteristic granite scenery on the tops of the hills. Where the floor joint is almost horizontal, the tors are formed, and the slabs of granite lie flat, one on the top of the other, like plates, and these are again divided by the other joints. This bedding is very conspicuous on the weathered carns or in the cliffs.

The cause of the joints is stated to be the orientation of the felspar crystals, which, during the movement of the molten rock, have tended to arrange themselves parallel to the surface past which they flowed, that is, with their long axis north, 10 degrees west.

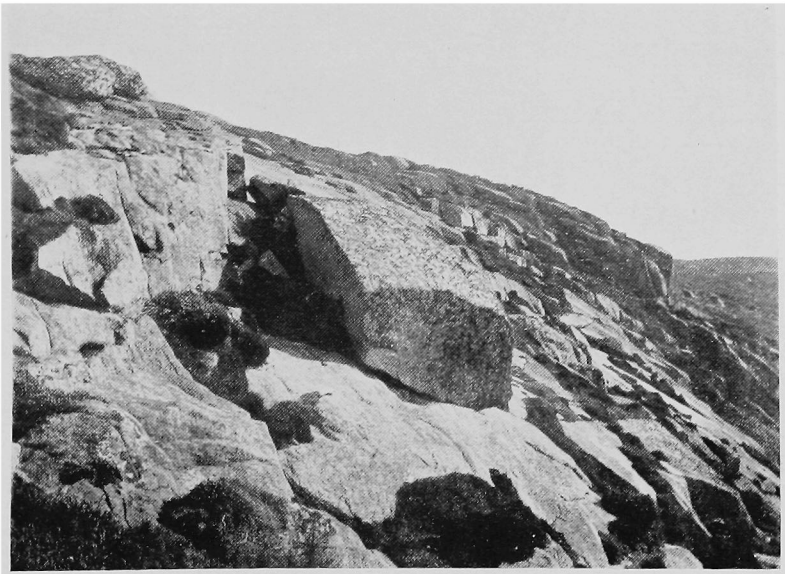
The felspar crystals have a tendency to present their flat or greatest area parallel to the Floor Joint, whilst the smaller

FIG. 4.



Granite Tors, showing "Tough Way Joints."

FIG. 5.



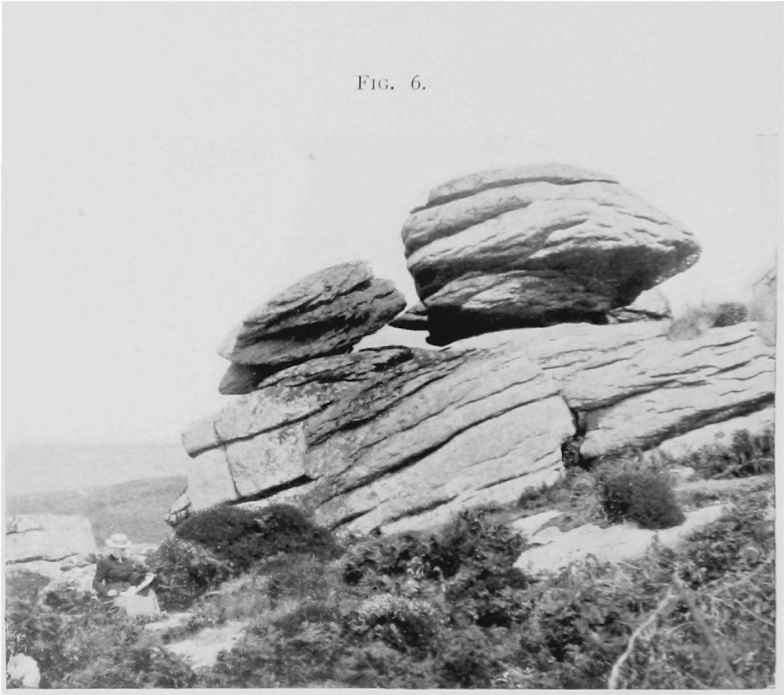
A Granite Block on the Cliff, showing the three sets of Joints.

The "Cleaving Way Joint" is shown on the left, and the "Tough Way Joint" in front.





FIG. 6.



**Granite Tors at Tregerthen.**

A logan rock can just be seen behind the right-hand boulder on the right. Below, on the left, lies the sloping hillside, and beyond that can be seen the fields with stone walls of the old plain of marine denudation (cf. Ordnance Map).





FIG. 7.

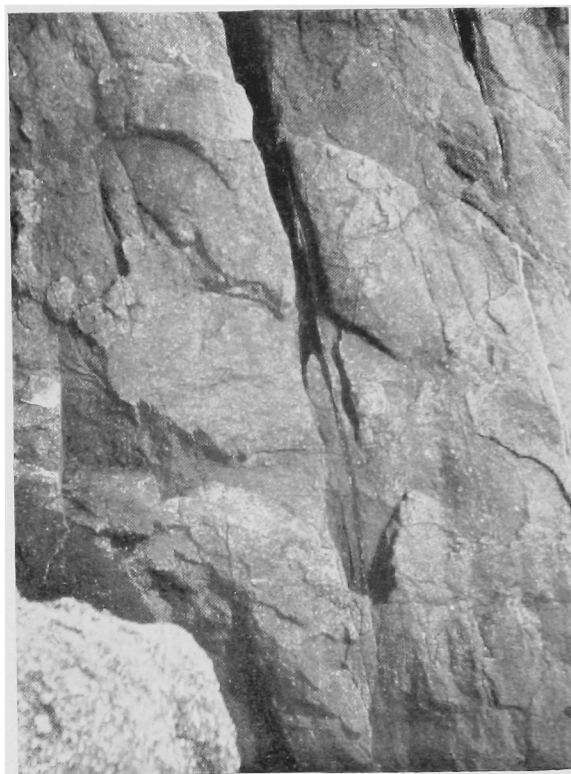
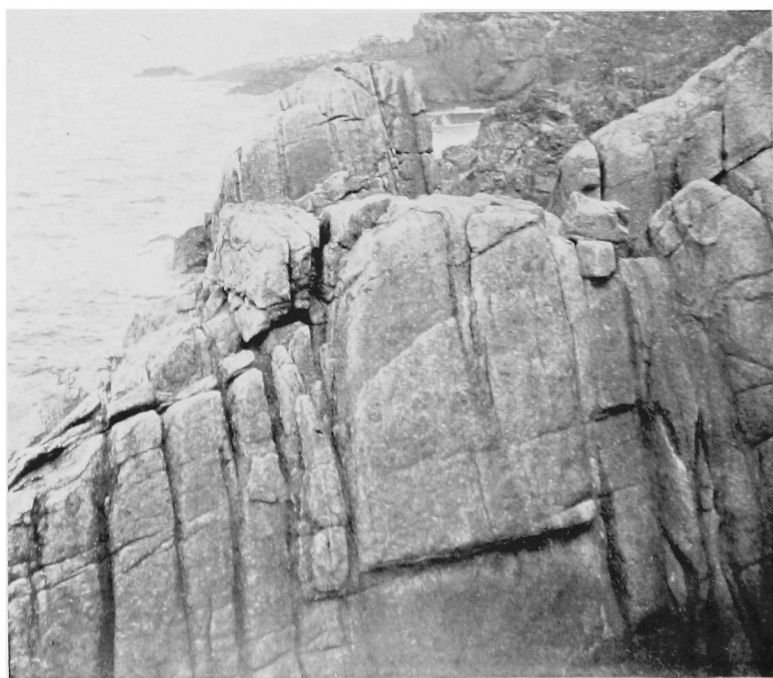


FIG. 8.



area at their sides and ends are parallel to the Cleaving Way Joint and the Tough Joint.

The rock basins, shallow depressions on the granite tors, which abound in this district, have as a rule their longer axis in the direction of the prevalent orientation of the felspar crystals, which affords additional evidence for this point of view.

The logan rocks which exist in this district, some of them quite as fine as the well-known logan rock near Penzance, show the influence of the floor joint when it is fairly horizontal. The rock has been worn away until the upper boulder is supported by a small base, on which it rests in unstable equilibrium. (Fig. 6.)

In the case of the Wicca Pillar, on which I now propose to describe some climbs, the floor joints are far apart, while the cleavage joints and the joints at right angles are decidedly pronounced, hence the tendency of the granite to weather into tall upright pillars.

The Wicca Pillar can be reached in about three-quarters of an hour from Zennor, where good lodgings can be obtained. The path should be followed as far as Tregerthen. From this point turn north, and keep on the left bank of the stream which flows to Wicca Pool; the upper portion of this stream forms an inaccessible thicket of gorse, but it can be crossed near the sea without difficulty. From this point traverse the hillside, keeping on the higher terrace till immediately above the Pillar.

The most interesting route, if the tide is not high, is to descend a steep chimney (Fig. 7) in the granite, of about 40 feet, somewhat to the left of the Pillar, and separated from it by two deep gorges.

The chimney is smooth, but broken by a series of steps, which form the key to the situation, as anyone who possesses an effective reach of about seven feet, will find no difficulty in lowering himself down from step to step. It affords, however, some interesting balancing problems.

At the bottom there is a rather slippery rock, on to which

the climber must step if the tide is not sufficiently low to allow of a circuit being made. In front now rise several conspicuous cracks (Fig. 8) of which more than one afford routes to the summit of the rock, which stands like Pisgah in the Lake District, immediately in front of the Pillar.

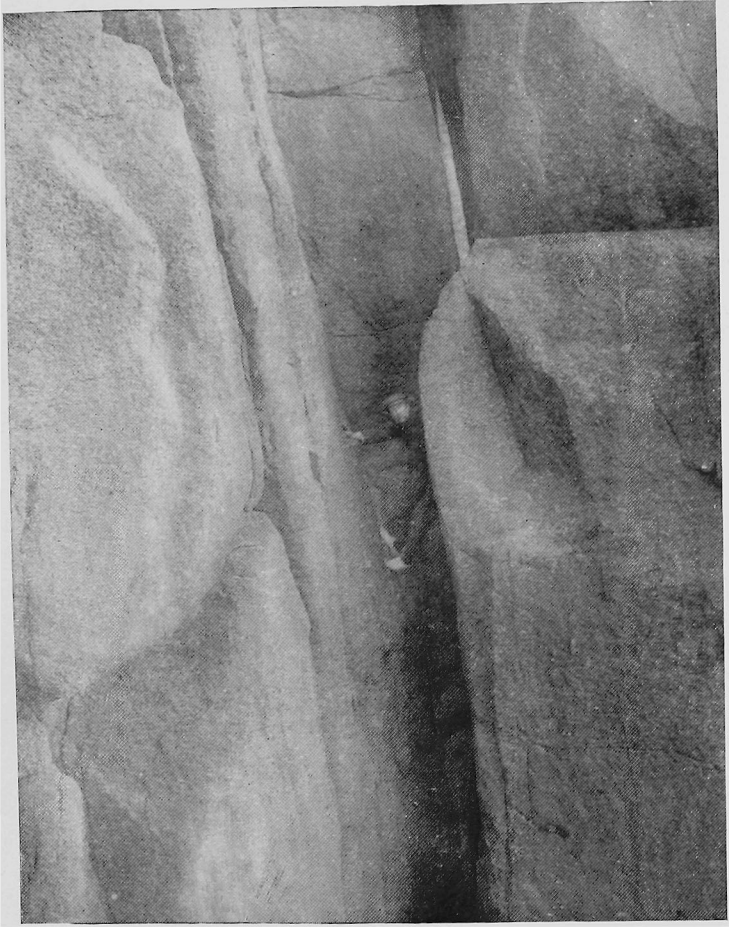
From this point the climber descends into a square recess, at the right hand corner of which lies a well-marked rift, affording interesting back and knee work. (Fig. 9.) The climber is now at the bottom of the Pillar, in the chasm shown in Fig. 10, and he has to climb by another rift which divides the Pillar from the rock on its left.

The chimney is not above 25 feet in height, but its technical difficulties are considerable. Some 15 feet inside it gradually narrows, and should be commenced about halfway from the entrance. For the first seven or eight feet it is possible to work up by the usual method of back and knee climbing; above that the climber will probably find his elbows of considerable service, and inch by inch will wriggle his way to a kind of rough staircase at the end furthest from the entrance which will afford some slight hold and breathing space. From that point he can scramble to the top without great difficulty, where he will probably be able to enjoy a long rest whilst waiting for the others.

This climb should on no account be omitted, as it is absolutely safe, and quite unique in character, and I feel sure that no climber, however blasé, will be otherwise than pleased with himself when he reaches the top. I may add that I have known expert rock climbers spend at least a quarter of an hour over the middle 10 feet, which is, I fancy, a record rate of progress. As it was impossible to photograph the rift itself, I append an illustration (Fig. 11) of a climber resting on the top. After securing this natural and unposed photograph, I woke him up, and we went home to tea and Cornish cream, leaving the remainder of the ascent for another day.

From the platform now reached there are several routes up the Pillar. The most interesting is to traverse to the right along a well developed horizontal crack of about 12 feet, with

FIG. 9.

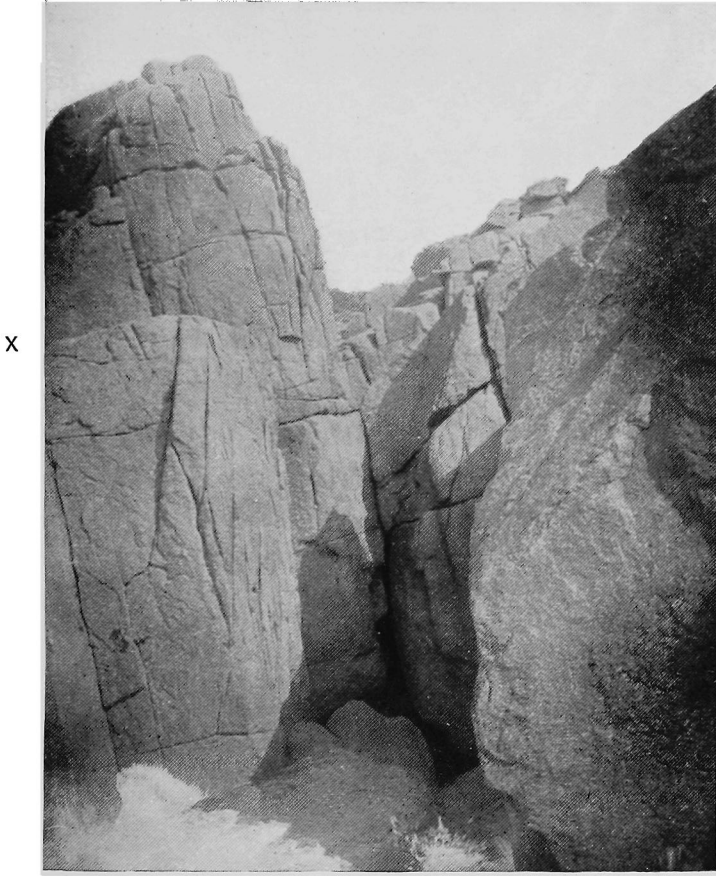


The climber in this illustration descends into the chasm shown in Fig. 10.





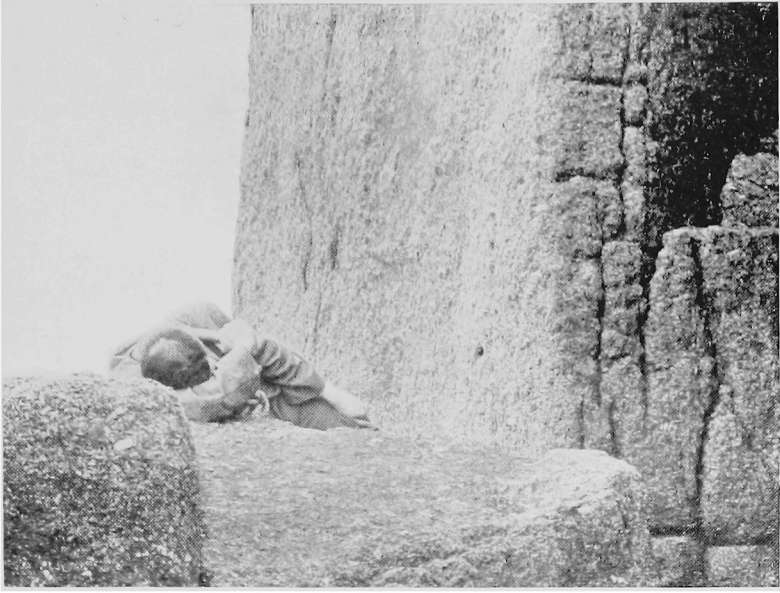
FIG. 10.



The rift in Fig. 9 is on the right, behind the right-hand cliff, and immediately opposite the difficult chimney which separates the Pillar from the lower rock which lies in front of it on the left. The edge of the shadow shows the position of the two chimneys. The "sleeper" of Fig. 11 is on the flat top of the lower rock at the point marked X. The traverse can be seen half-way up the Pillar above the shadow.



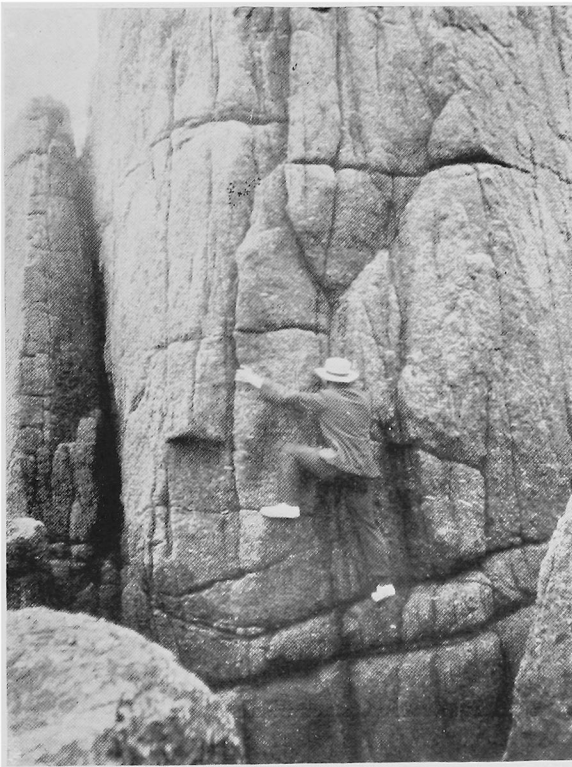
FIG. 11.



**"The world forgetting, by the world forgot."**

The "sleeper" is on the lower rock in front of the Pillar. The chimney up which he has come is on the right. The easiest route up the Pillar is by the broken staircase on the right edge of the vertical wall.

FIG. 12.



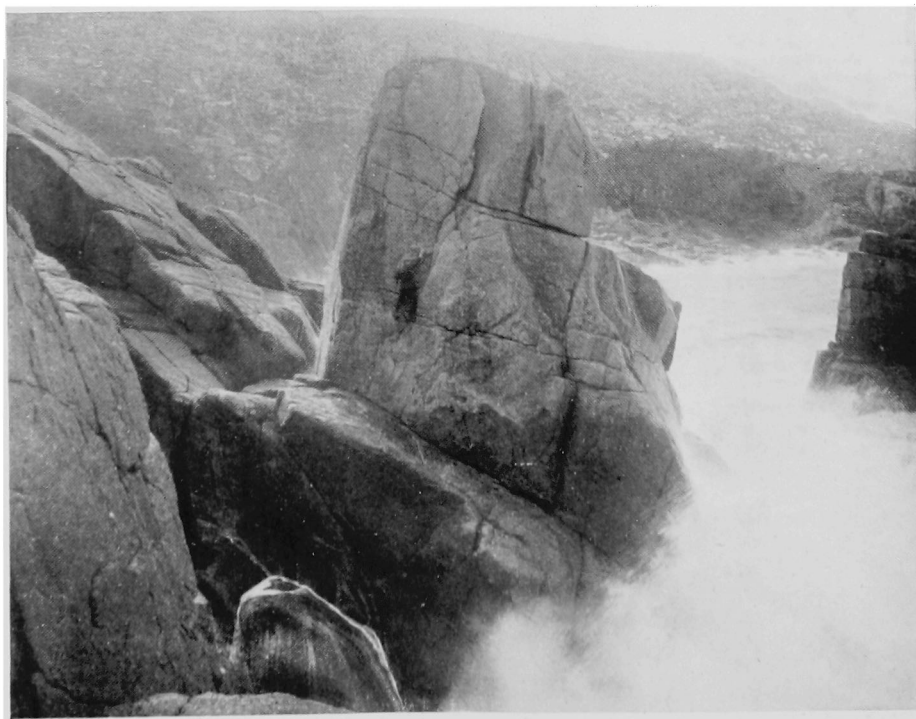
**The Traverse and the Climb above the Traverse.**

On the left lies the easy staircase.





FIG. 13.

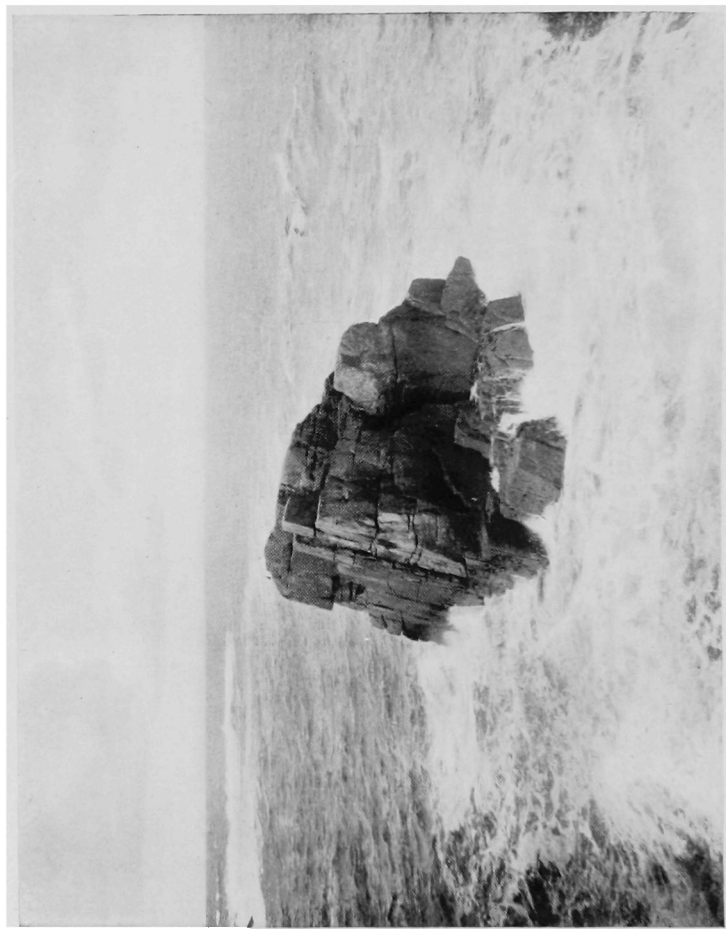


The Wicca Pillar. "The Sea Route."

The "Fox Rock" (Fig. 14) can be seen on the right.



FIG. 14.



"The Fox Rock."



one eminently satisfactory handhold in the middle. The climber will then find himself facing a wall of about 40 feet, with two vertical cracks. (Fig. 3.) Up one or the other of these lies the way. That on the left is possibly the most difficult. These cracks do not exceed three inches in width, and in the lower portion there is very little hold on the wall outside. They do not, however, require gymnastics, and a climber who possesses a good balance will get up without difficulty if he can manage the first 15 feet. It is a matter of indifference which foot he commences with, as there is not room for either comfortably. The Pillar can also be climbed by an easy chimney on the left (Fig. 3), or directly from the corner above the centre of the traverse (Fig. 12). To the right of the cracks there is also a route up the right hand corner. (Fig. 3.)

The most sensational route, though by no means the most difficult, faces east. Owing to the fact that the waves deluge it with spray when the sea is stormy, it has been named the "Sea Route." From above the position of the climbing figure (Fig. 13) a crack leads to the right hand corner nearest the sea, where a shallow chimney brings the climber to the top.

All these routes on the Pillar have been ascended and descended without assistance by the author of this paper, but anyone who is not sure of his capabilities on granite would do well to explore them first with the safeguard of a rope.

There are many chimneys in the granite close to the Pillar, which afford good climbs, one of the best facing what I have called the "Sea Route." Just outside the Pillar stands the Trilley rock, which has been named the Fox rock from the story that a fox swam out to it for refuge when closely pursued by the hounds. No other ascent is recorded.

The climber who has time to spare is recommended to make his way from the Pillar to the east at low tide to Treveal, a route which will afford him much interesting scrambling, with one difficult place where a great chasm has to be crossed. He must begin to the east of the great Zawn or chasm, which lies on the east of Wicca Pool, as that is too deeply cut to be dry at any tide, however low (cf. Ordnance Map).

From Wicca he can also follow the shore to the great Zawn at Church Town point (Fig. 1) where a prominent ridge on the west, bounding the great chasm, is called The Horse's Back. There is no risk of being cut off by the tide, as the cliffs can, with some little difficulty, be ascended at almost any point.

If the climber makes his headquarters at Zennor, he will be in easy reach of Bosigran, where the other granite district lies. This lies about three miles from Zennor in a direct line. The main road to St. Just, which winds considerably, passes between the foot of Carn Galver, where lodgings are obtainable, and the headland of Bosigran Castle, probably the site of an old fort.

The great show point of the district is the Gurnard's Head, a fine trap and Devonian headland which juts out into the sea. If time allows, it is worth a visit, though there is but little climbing on it, as between it and Bosigran lie some of the most magnificent cliffs in Cornwall.

The climber is recommended to descend a steep valley on the west of the Gurnard's Head to a point opposite the trap island, which is so conspicuous from the head itself, and to follow the cliffs as far as possible to Bosigran. He will be obliged to reascend the cliff at several points, but will find some excellent scrambling, and see some of the finest scenery of the district.

At Bosigran the granite reappears, and extends almost to Pendeen Lighthouse, on the west. Only a small portion of this area has yet been thoroughly explored, in the vicinity of Bosigran Castle. The most stately object is the Bosigran Pinnacle or Porthmoina Island, an isolated ridge (Fig. 15), culminating in a point, so that from one point of view it resembles a spire (Fig. 16), and rising about 150 feet from the sea. A rock bridge, only covered at the highest tide, separates it from the land. It lies immediately to the west of the great cliffs of Bosigran, which rise 333 feet from the sea. The route lies down a distinctly marked grass gully, at the bottom of which lies an old rotten rope, once used by coast-

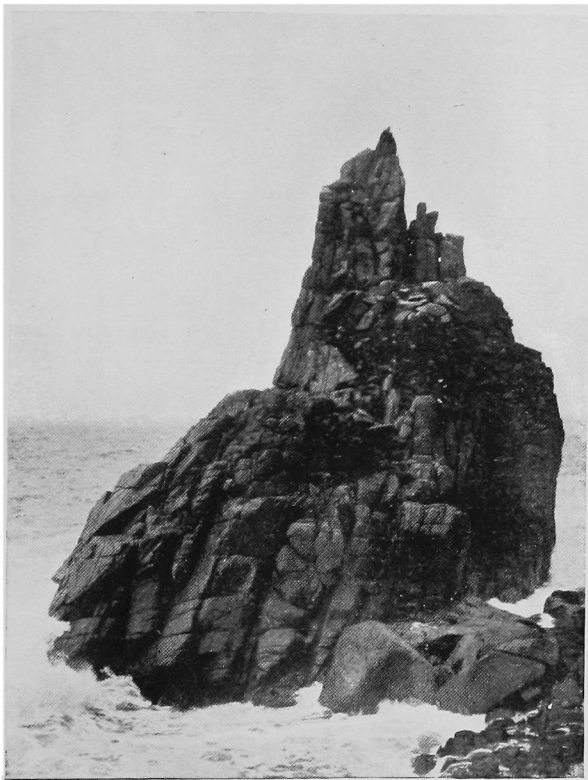
FIG. 15.



**"The Bosigran Pinnacle," from Bosigran Cliff.**

The Great Tower (Fig. 17) is really a cut off on the ridge, not a tower.  
It lies on the right of the notch.

FIG. 16.

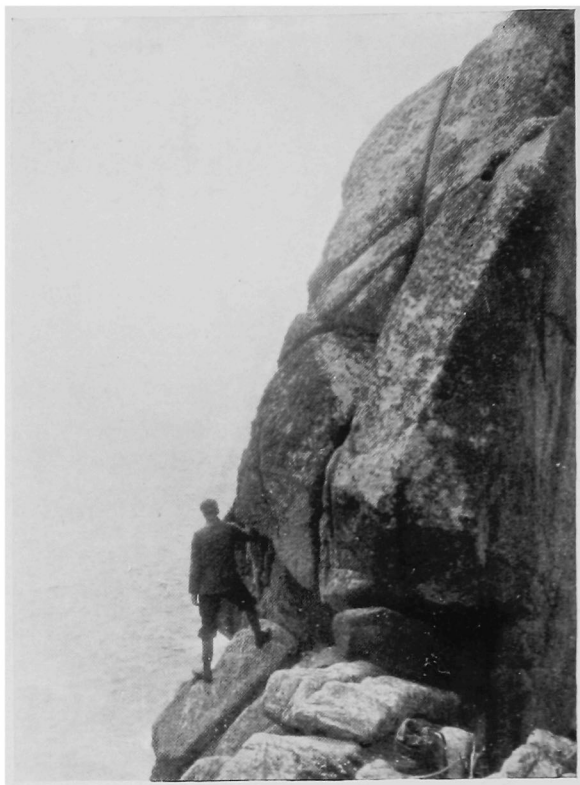


**"The Bosigran Pinnacle."**





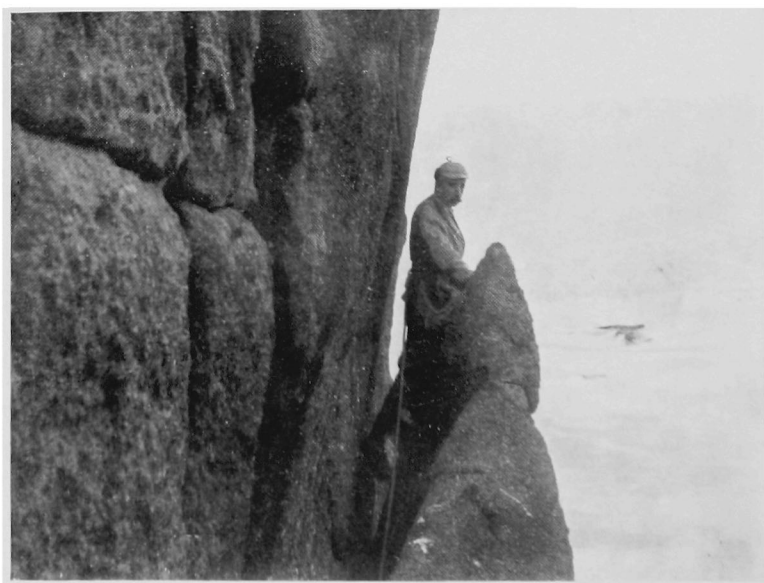
FIG. 17.



**The Great Tower.**

The vertical wall on the right is continued in Fig. 18.

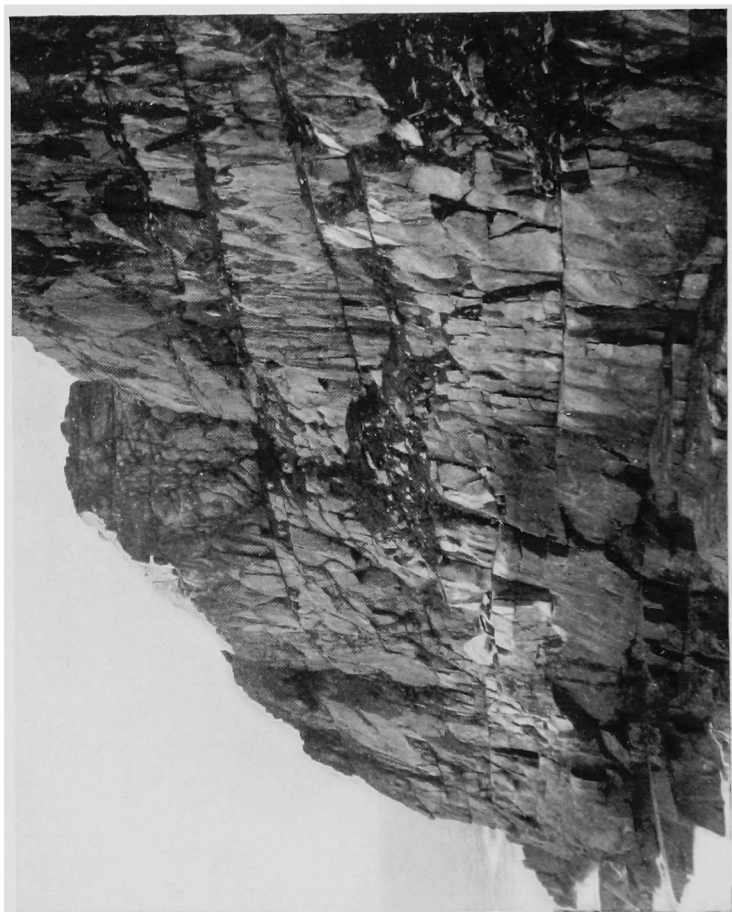
FIG. 18.



A remarkable ledge, which can just be seen in Fig. 15 below the summit. At the point where the climber stands it is broken off, though it might be regained lower down by a difficult chimney. From this point a narrow and broken ledge extends right across the pinnacle.



FIG. 19.



### **The Face of Bosigran.**

The horizontal ledges are very remarkable. An easy descent can be made to the central grass patch, and from there a broad gallery leads to the right. The highest and finest cliffs lie to the right of the picture.



guards to assist the passage of the 25 feet of steep rock at the bottom. The gully is the second from the stream which falls into the small cove, the intermediate one, which forms a kind of natural staircase, being quite cut off at the bottom.

The ridge of the Pinnacle is easily reached, and followed to the Great Tower. (Fig. 17.) This affords an interesting climb up a crack on its face, clearly shown on the photograph, of which the bottom is somewhat difficult to enter. The Tower probably cannot be traversed, as the ledge (cf. Fig. 18) on its right comes to an end abruptly, and the ridge above would be difficult to regain. The very sharp knife-edge ridge is then followed, other towers being climbed, to the end which is furthest out at sea. From this point a descent is made to the left, the corner rounded by a convenient ledge, and the side which faces the cliffs of Bosigran traversed as far as possible a little above the surface of the water by means of ledges and cracks. When these come to an end, a chimney must be climbed which leads to a point close to the first tower.

There are many climbs on the Pinnacle, all sound, though some are distinctly difficult. Want of space, however, forbids their description here. Though in actual elevation the Bosigran Pinnacle cannot be compared with the great mountain ridges of Snowdon or Sgurr Nan Gilleán, the presence of the sea gives it a quite unique character, and for steepness it can hardly be surpassed.

From the Pinnacle ridge the magnificent granite face of Bosigran can be seen in front. (Fig. 19.) On this face there are at least three routes to the summit, one in the extreme left hand corner leading up to the white rock, which looks like a different formation, but is really whitewashed granite. This is not the shallow chimney which comes up below the white patch, but as far as possible to the left. When this patch of white cannot be seen from Pendeen Lighthouse, the foghorn is blown as a warning to ships. The other two lie to the right of the broad and easy gully seen in the photograph, and do not appear in the illustration. The climbing consists of ledges and cracks, and somewhat

resembles Lliwedd. As the cliff at the sea extremity of Bosigran is overhanging for about 30 feet, it is not possible to traverse round the headland.

Opposite Bosigran, to the west, is a remarkable serrated ridge of granite (Fig. 20), ending in a wild and isolated combe. Here good scrambling can be obtained if the ridge is strictly followed from its lowest practicable point.

These short notes are not intended as in any sense an exhaustive summary of the possibilities of climbing in this district, far less of those of Cornish climbing. They must rather be taken as indications of the existence of a fresh field which may perhaps interest those climbers who enjoy variety. One advantage the cliffs certainly possess ; they can be easily reached without too long a preliminary walk, a somewhat important consideration in a short holiday.

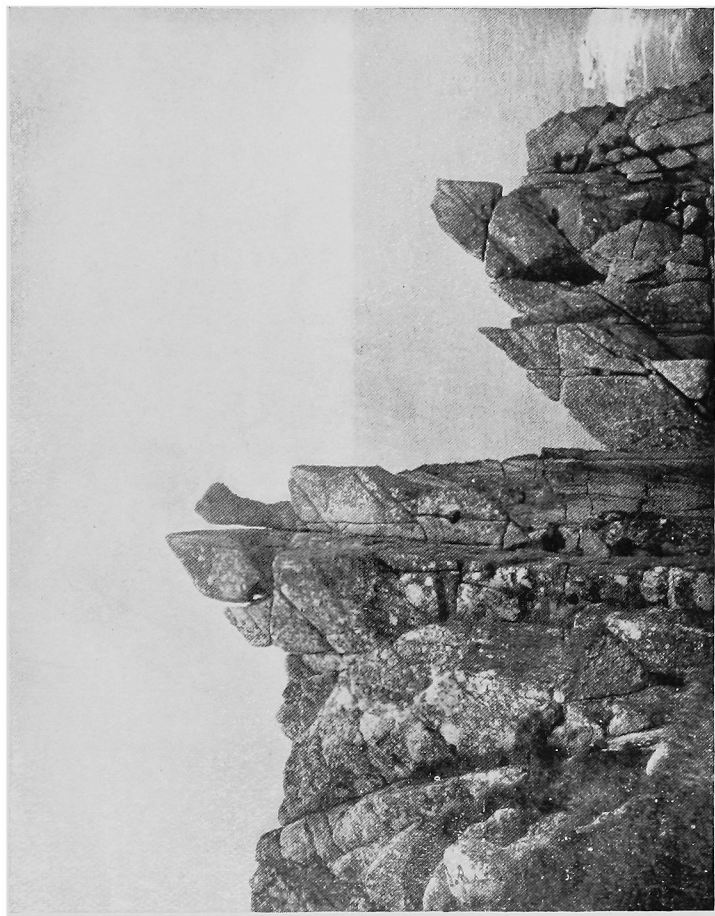
There is also more actual rock-climbing of all kinds of difficulty than in almost any expedition that can be made in Wales or the lakes. Snow work cannot of course be obtained, as the climate is too mild. Even in summer the north coast is never relaxing, like Penzance, as it is exposed to westerly and north-westerly winds from the open Atlantic. The ocean winds bring rain, and the hills are sometimes shrouded in mist, but there is also a large amount of sunshine. I have often found that the sun was shining brightly on the cliffs when a thick curtain of mist was hanging over the edge.

Besides climbing, the country has many features of interest, such as old tin mines, whose ruined shafts, half covered by vegetation, bring to mind the former activity of the district. Only one at Levant is now worked in the whole Land's End peninsula.

Between the Gurnard's Head and Bosigran there is an interesting water-wheel which still extracts a considerable amount of tin from the old tailings which were neglected in more prosperous days.

There are also many cromlechs, hill circles, etc., of great historical interest. But the charm of the region lies in its magnificent cliffs, its wild sweep of moorland, with granite

FIG. 20.



A Granite Ridge West of Bosigran.



tors, which give the scenery a character not to be found elsewhere.

The author of this paper will be glad to give any information to intending climbers as regards lodgings, climbs, etc. He will also be delighted, in his capacity of editor of the *Journal*, to receive notes of experiences or of new climbs.



## TWELVE DAYS IN THE NEW ZEALAND ALPS.

THERE can be very few people interested in mountaineering who have not ardently wished at some time or another to visit New Zealand. The large extent of country which, from a mountaineering point of view, may almost be termed unexplored, a temperate climate, and the fact that there are no foreign languages or officials to be grappled with, perhaps form some of the principal attractions.

I regret to say that I passed some 18 months in New Zealand without ever getting to the Mt. Cook group, being equally prevented by want of an adequate holiday and the lack of suitable companions. At the end of that year and a half, business affairs necessitated my going to live in Australia, and I began to despair of ever seeing the New Zealand Alps. However, towards the end of January, 1900, I succeeded in getting some four weeks' holiday, and was fortunate enough to find that my available time in the Alps would coincide with the date when my friend, Mr. Malcolm Ross, a well-known New Zealand climber, would be going to the Mount Cook district with his wife and a lady friend.

We had a pleasant though hot trip across from Sydney, and I was fortunate enough to arrive in the nick of time for the train to Fairlie Creek, some 40 miles inland from Timaru, being thus enabled to catch the bi-weekly coach which runs from thence to the Hermitage, a distance of about 100 miles. This coach journey takes two days, a night being passed at Pukaki, at the foot of the lake of the same name ; here I found a note from Ross, who had left Fairlie three days earlier than

I; he told me he was going on to the upper hut on the Tasman glacier, and suggested my going directly there. I accordingly left the coach on Wednesday, February 8th, when some three miles short of the Hermitage, at about 5 p.m., and started for the Ball Hut, a walk of some 16 miles. This hut is situated at the side of the Tasman glacier in a narrow hollow between its lateral moraine and the lower slopes of Mount Cook. I reached the Hooker river some two miles from where I left the coach. Even at its lowest, it is a distinctly risky proceeding to attempt to ford this river, and what is known in New Zealand as a "cage" is provided. This consists of a wooden box, hung on small rollers from a standing wire rope which is fixed to strong posts on either side of the river. An endless hemp rope running through blocks on the posts is also provided, and by this latter rope the traveller pulls himself across. On getting to the cage I found that the endless rope had carried away, but luckily the cage was tied up to the post on my side. Getting into the cage, I cast off from the post and found that the cage ran with great facility down to the centre of the wire rope. Hauling it up to the post on the other side proved quite another matter. However, after jamming my fingers once or twice in the rollers, and getting a couple of somewhat squashed finger nails, I managed to get across. After the first few miles it is impossible to mistake the way to the Ball Hut, as the route lies between the lateral moraine of the Tasman glacier and the mountain side. The walking was, however, very rough. I had a heavy load, and when darkness came on, together with rain, I was haunted by the fear of failing to find the hut. However, about 10 o'clock I saw a faint light, and found the hut tenanted by two Australian tourists, and Smith, a porter from the Hermitage, who was taking the place of the regular guide, Clark, who was away.

On the following morning, Smith came with me on to the glacier, and gave me a few directions for finding my way to the Upper Hut, situated near the left bank of, and about 500 feet above, the Great Tasman glacier. This glacier is considerably larger than any in the Alps, being some 18 miles in length,

and about three miles wide in its broadest part. It is usually reckoned from 7 to 8 hours' walk to the Upper Hut, and in the month of February it is dry glacier all the way. I had a very heavy load to carry, including sleeping bag, blanket, ropes, crampons, change of clothes, candles, firewood, and 2 lbs. of butter; my rucksack was stuffed to bursting point, and the surplus articles tied on outside. After plodding over hummocky ice for some hours under a hot sun, it began to be only too clear that I was in poor training, and I indulged in one or two halts to admire the magnificent icefalls formed by the tributary glaciers on the right bank of the Tasman, the Hochstetter icefall in particular is as steep and rugged as it is possible to conceive.

Faithfully following, as I thought, Smith's directions, I found the crevasses growing larger and more numerous, and I soon found myself in a somewhat complicated system of crevasses, had to wind about a good deal, and cut a few steps occasionally. My load seemed to grow heavier and heavier, and my watch having stopped, I had only the vaguest idea of the time; the sun, however, was getting low, so I determined to make for the left bank of the glacier and follow it up until I should find the hut. The rocks by the side of the glacier were easy but steep, and, when darkness came on, I was obliged to stop for the night on a very fair ledge. The night was somewhat chilly, but having my sleeping bag I did not suffer much from the cold. The sunrise next morning was a fine one, Mount Cook and the other big peaks of the main range being seen to great advantage. In about half an hour I found the hut and my companions, who had the previous day made the ascent of the Hochstetter Dome, an easy snow climb at the head of the Great Tasman glacier. As the morning wore on the clouds came up, and by 11 it was snowing hard. The snowstorm continued all that day, during the night, and well on into the afternoon of the following day. We only had sufficient fuel for cooking purposes, so we passed those two days wrapped up in our blankets.

Any ascent of big peaks was out of the question for a few



days, but, on the 12th, Miss T., Ross and I climbed a small and easy peak behind the hut, on which we built a cairn. On the 13th we descended in snow and rain to the Ball Hut. The 14th was spent at the Ball Hut, as the ladies needed rest, and the following day we went again in the rain to the Hermitage. This is an hotel kept up by the New Zealand Government, which has done much to assist and encourage tourists. The Ball and Brodrick huts were also built by the Government. They are provided with a stove, blankets, and a locked chest containing tinned foods, the keys to these chests being obtainable at the Hermitage.

On the 17th, Ross and I, carrying provisions and sleeping bags, walked up to a suitable spot for a bivouac on the right bank of the Müller glacier, our intention being to visit Mt. Sealey on the morrow. Part of our route lay over a steep and most detestable moraine, and, of course, over the remainder there was no path. The absence of paths over the lower ground, combined with the fact that one has to do one's own portage, make the ascent to a bivouac distinctly more fatiguing than it is in the Alps. We had fairly comfortable sleeping quarters under a large rock, and got away the next morning about 5. For about two hours we walked up the Müller glacier, having remarkably fine views of Mount Sefton, probably the most difficult peak that has yet been climbed in New Zealand. We got off the glacier without difficulty, and had a pleasant scramble up some rocks, which brought us to the snowfield leading up to the eastern arête. We knew that Mr. Fitzgerald and Zurbriggen had climbed the mountain, but neither of us had any idea which route they had taken; the eastern arête did not look difficult, so we decided upon trying it. We reached the foot of the rocks about 9.30, and, after a halt for food, started up them. We soon reached the arête, which we followed to the summit. The rocks were steep, but although not difficult were somewhat dangerous, as they were as rotten as it is possible for rocks to be. One almost gave up attempting to clear away loose pieces, as it appeared to involve the demolition of the entire mountain, a task for which the time at our disposal

would have been wholly inadequate. On the summit, a square snow plateau, we found Zurbriggen's cairn, and demolished it in a search for Fitzgerald's card, which, as we had made the second ascent of the mountain, we expected to find. We were fortunate in having an exceptionally fine day, and consequently a superb view. The sea was visible on both sides of the island, and we were at a sufficient height and distance to appreciate the magnificent proportions of Mt. Sefton and Mt. Cook, the two nearest of the big peaks.

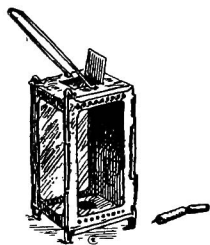
We had an uneventful descent to our bivouac, loaded up our sleeping bags, etc., and then discussed the possibility of avoiding the horrible moraine we had followed during our ascent, which we mutually agreed was to be avoided if possible. The glacier itself was too steep and broken up to be at all easily feasible; but our route from the Hermitage having been in the nature of a semi-circle, we decided to climb the intervening mountain and descend thence to the hotel. This involved an ascent of quite 2000 feet, and this, too, towards the end of the day, but anything seemed preferable to the moraine! We reached the Hermitage at about 7.30, after a very pleasant day. On the following day we did nothing, but agreed on the 20th (our last day) to try the Footstool, a mountain N. of Sefton, from the hotel, without sleeping out. We turned out at 1 a.m., and were rewarded by finding a howling N. W. wind blowing (the bad quarter) and by seeing clouds low down. At the time, I confess that I was glad; I always am glad in the mountains when I am called in the middle of the night if I find that the weather is hopeless, and I can return to my much loved bed.

When one looks back on this trip, and compares it with others made in the Alps, one seems to have accomplished very little, but when one considers the heavy loads to be carried, the very uncertain weather, and the fact that we were not in the best of condition, I suppose we must be satisfied with the little that we did do.

A certain number of the higher peaks in the Central or Mount Cook district of the New Zealand Alps have been ascended, but many still remain unconquered, whilst the

districts lying further North and South and the Goodley range, are, from a climbing point of view, almost untouched, it would be useless to give a long list of names unknown to English readers, but I might mention as examples, Mount Aspiring, some 20 miles from the head of Lake Wanaka, Balloon peak, a magnificent rock peak lying near the track which leads from Lake Te Anau to the West Coast, whilst the rock peaks around Lake Wakatipu would form a perfect paradise for the energetic members of the Climbers' Club. One group of peaks bears the name of Bayonet peaks, a name which is fully justified by their appearance.

Unfortunately, of late years, despite the excellent example set by some of the New Zealanders, mountaineering has not made the progress that one would have expected. This can be to some extent accounted for by the length of time necessary to reach the mountains from even the two nearest of the large towns, viz., Christchurch and Dunedin, and it is undoubtedly also partly owing to the fact, that the number of men who can obtain a sufficiently long summer vacation is very limited.



## THE ENGLISH CLIMBER.

“ A drop into nothing beneath you  
As straight as a beggar can spit.”

What is the English climber ? Several kinds of a fool !  
Far from the shooting ranges, far from the rifle school,  
Keen on his sport as mustard, bubbling with ill-judged fun,  
His leisure is spent on the peaceful hills, and not with the  
warlike gun.

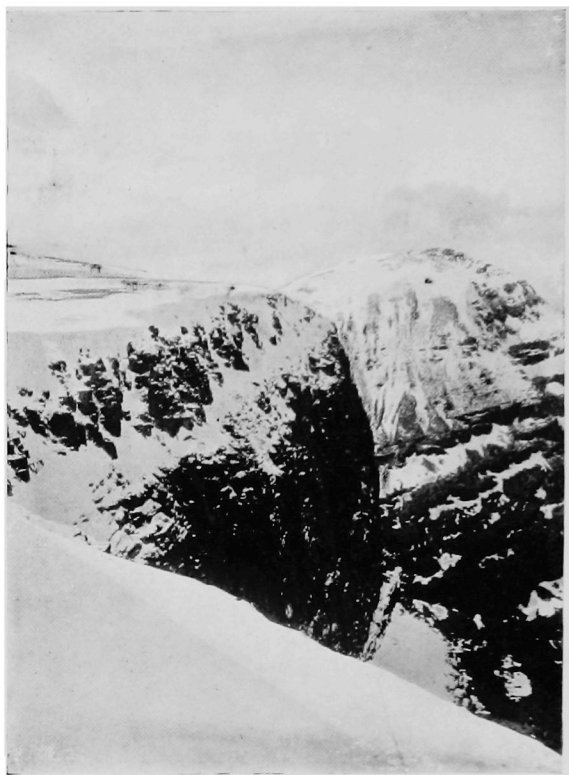
Hid in the unsunned gully ; out on the fierce *arête* ;  
When the sun burns hot on his shoulders, or the water falls  
on his pate,  
Lost in the dreary pot-hole, perched on a peak sublime,  
Heedless of national duties, the climber wastes his time.

\* \* \* \* \*

But the mountains answered in concert, “ Not on the field  
alone,  
“ Where the earth is ploughed with shrapnel and the garden  
of swords is sown ;  
“ Not on the war-worn borders of our empire across the sea ;  
“ Not in the steady refinement of the language of “ Soldiers  
Three ”  
“ Can English virtue alone be found. Come forth to the  
valley and hill,  
“ And strength and health and courage shall be yours if you  
only will ;  
“ You have but our snows to conquer ; you have but our crags  
to dare  
“ To know the English climber. Come forth, you will find  
him there.”

C. E. BENSON.





**The Western Cliffs of Ben Eighe (Winter).**

*Photo, by J. NORMAN COLLIE.*



**Liathach, from the top of Ben Eighe (Winter).**

*Photo, by J. NORMAN COLLIE.*

## THE PEAKS OF GLEN TORRIDON.

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### MIST AND STORM ON BEN EIGHE.

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By ERNEST A. BAKER.

THE circular tourist who prances in a char-à-banc from Gairloch along the shores of Loch Maree, is little aware that the mountainous corner between him and Glen Torridon conceals scenery far more strange and impressive than any that he sees in this famous drive. The quartzite cone that looks down on Kinlochewe, and is pointed out as Ben Eighe, is but the outermost of a noble cluster of peaks, for Ben Eighe is rather a mountain group than a single mountain, and comprises, according to Munro's tables, no less than seven tops more than 3000 feet high. And far out of sight behind are Liathach, Beinn Alligin and Beinn Dearg, magnificent rock mountains, with an individuality of feature as striking as that of the Coolins and the Challichs; grand to look at, grand to look from, but inaccessible except to the more enterprising climber.

I had gone to Torridon with the object of climbing both Liathach and Ben Eighe, but the loss of a day through persistent bad weather forced me to curtail my plans. It was now my intention, if the morning appeared set fair, to try Liathach, but otherwise to make sure of Ben Eighe. Both are formidable in bad weather; but Liathach, with its tier upon tier of perpendicular cliff, and its pinnacled and knife-edged crest, was clearly not the place for solitary

mountaineering, unless on such a fine day as must be very exceptional in Gairloch. The mail-gig leaves Torridon at 7 a.m., and, contrary to my experience of Highland mail-drivers, called for me a minute or two before the time. Last night's deluge had been tremendous, and had succeeded even in making the heavy road worse up the glen. Under Liathach's black ramparts, the boggy land was all awash; several extra burns had made their appearance, and the river, swollen far beyond its ordinary proportions, was coming west like a savage beast. Mists hung gloomily overhead, and we were chased by several showers in the first few miles. This, the driver assured me, was the normal aspect of a morning in Gairloch, but he stated that the weather would probably make a decisive change at twelve o'clock sharp, otherwise a still more hopeless afternoon was a dead certainty.

All these mountains are enclosed in deer forest, the proprietors of which do their utmost to keep the unfortunate tourist from straying off the fenceless roads; not that there is any fear that he will steal the deer, or commit any ponderable injury; the pretext, turned into plain English, being simply the "moral and intellectual damage" this nervous animal may sustain through seeing or smelling a human being in his ancestral wilds. We met several keepers, who may have been patrolling the road, or merely waiting to pass the time of day with the postman, visitors to this carefully secluded region being rare. At all events, in order to avoid unpleasantness, I thought it best to give these gentlemen a wide berth, and when one had been left a mile behind, and the next was rounding a bend of the road far away in front, I seized the opportunity to leave the vehicle, which went on with my belongings to Kinlochewe.

There is a deserted shieling under the slopes of Ben Eighe, near the spot where I alighted. Sheltering here for a few minutes, whilst a smart shower blew over, I proceeded, with the least possible delay, up a stalkers' track, into Ben Eighe's wide north corrie, a route I had already observed as likely to save time and trouble in crossing the ragged moorland below



the mountain. At the height of 1250 feet the track dies away among the scanty deer pasture, the bogs and the heaps of detritus that fill the hollow of the corrie. From this point my chief anxiety was to avoid the immense quartzite screes, which lay between me and the backbone of the mountain, and of whose malignant properties I had heard a harrowing account. Following a burn, I mounted rapidly into a corner full of these screes, between Spidean and Stuc Coire an Laoigh, the pinnacle tipping like a spearhead the long north-west arête; and mounted at the same time into the lower strata of the mist. In a slight momentary clearing I saw the first peak looming high on the left, and noticed a green streak running up the screes towards it. Where there was turf, there would be fairly sound footing, so I made for this. Hard by, a few hundred feet below the crest, I found a spring bubbling out among the stones, and, with a forecast of many hours of drought, I slaked my thirst generously.

Getting at last among those grinding, cutting, slippery screes, I escaped as soon as might be on to a crumbling rib that ran nearly up to the blade-like ridge of the mountain, which I reached at the end of an hour and a half from the Torridon road. Not many yards away was the summit of Spidean Coire nan Clach, 3220 feet, the third highest peak of Ben Eighe, situated about midway between the eastern and western extremities. There was nothing to see. Over the abrupt wall I looked into oceans of boiling mist. The wind made it dangerous to keep near the edge. It drove the mist along in a thin, piercing rain, and forced me to take shelter behind a ruined pinnacle of quartzite, where I crouched and waited for a chance to view my surroundings. Hence, when now and again a gust stirred up the misty brew, I got fleeting glimpses of the eastern summits, Sgùrr Bàn (3188 feet) the White Peak, and the peak of the Black Men, Fìrìh Duibhe (3160), but the Black Men themselves, a line of craggy points into which the ridge between the summits is notched, were invisible. Once only the ridge running out to Creag Dubh, overlooking Torridon, and once or twice the south-east spur,

Sgùrr a' Conghair, broke through the drifts of rain and murk. The squalls were a long time abating, and, as the mist showed no signs of clearing, I set out to make the best of my way westwards for the higher peaks, trusting to the compass for guidance. At this point a wide gap almost severs Ben Eighe into two mountains, and here I found myself for awhile below the flying fringes of the mist, with a clear view into Coire Ruadh Stac, the topmost rim of which I had been blindly skirting. It is a deep, stony cirque, girt about with quartzite peaks. Hardly a patch of vegetable life is to be seen in its shelterless hollows, the light colour of whose rocky sides and bottom gives the place an intensely arid, naked and desolate appearance. The waters that lie in the lap of the corrie derive from the same colouring of the rocks a peculiar brightness; they look the perfection of purity and transparency. One beautiful tarn is held aloft on a high shelf above the corrie by a broad, rocky buttress, over which it pours a sparkling waterfall, the source of a torrent. Even so far away, one could see the warm hue of the stream-bed through the translucent waters, which seemed to be flowing across a tessellated pavement.

Beyond the col, I was not long climbing into the mist again; and now, for an hour or two, the task of finding my way through the white obscurity kept every faculty on the alert. The western half of Ben Eighe is a huge half-moon, the middle part a high mossy plateau, Coinneach Mòr, 3000 feet; and its two distant horns, Sail Mhòr, the great heel, 3217 feet, and Ruadh-Stac Mòr, the great red stack, 3309 feet, are the highest peaks of the mountain. Within the half-moon lies a corrie of extraordinary grandeur and magnificence, Coire Mhic Fhearchair, with a gloomy loch in its bosom, embraced by mural precipices more than a thousand feet high, and said to be nearer the perpendicular than any cliffs in Britain not composed of limestone. For years I had nursed the ambition of journeying to Glen Torridon, in order to ascend Ben Eighe, and see the far-famed cliffs of Coire Mhic Fhearchair, but the day I had looked forward to with so much



Coire Mhic Fhearchair.

*Photo. by J. NORMAN COLLIE.*



anticipated enthusiasm was to be a disappointment. Coinneach Mòr is a smooth and comfortable walk. The top breaks off in a precipitous slope along the eastern edge, making it impossible to stray, and in a little while I reached a small, tumble-down cairn. Very erroneously I took this to be the highest point, but I soon found out the mistake. Turning west again, I went along the edge of Coire Mhic Fhearchair towards the other horn of the crescent, Sail Mhòr, walking on the brink of this grim precipice, but unable to appreciate the grandeur of the situation. Only where a gully bit into the plateau like the mouth of a pit, and one looked down through swirling vapours into utter blankness, hearing the boom of torrents from far below resound up this tremendous organ-pipe, was the nature of the place brought home to one's senses. A rough descent and a rougher scramble brought me to the cairn on Sail Mhòr, where for a second or two there was a commotion in the air which let me see the Allt a' Choire Dhuibh Mhoir foaming down its long ravine, and the sublime prow of Liathach cleaving the mists on the farther side. Next moment, the pallid gloom settled down on the world again, after allowing me just time enough to verify my position.

It had been so short a journey to Sail Mhòr that I could no longer flatter myself that I had been on the rival peak at all. But, having made an irrevocable resolve to attain the point of highest elevation or founder in the attempt, it now behoved me to retrace my steps and enquire into the difficult problem of Ruadh-Stac's actual position. Returning to the mean-looking cairn, which seems to mark the spot where the connecting ridge strikes off, I made a careful calculation with compass and map as to the bearings of the missing peak. Then, keeping half a point west of north, I dropped down the slope, and hit the col exactly. It bends deeply before rising again. Once more I escaped from the mist, and, under its gigantic, wind-shaken awning, beheld the dark waters of the loch in the amphitheatre of Coire Mhic Fhearchair, closely encinctured by the gloom of cloud-wrapped cliffs and buttresses.

The rock-climber who would not be overawed by such a scene on such a day would be daunted by nothing.

Now the gently rising shoulder broadens out. As I crossed the shelterless expanse of stones and scree, a fiercer storm fell upon me with a hail of drenching rain. On up the hill I struggled against the blast, thinking I could see the top at every few steps, and still finding it recede. The summit is a colossal heap of shattered rocks, purple and red, as the name implies, with a respectable cairn upon it. There was no doubt now that I had attained the topmost elevation, but I had no desire to stay there. With the times I had waited for the weather to clear, it was now long past the destined hour of noon, and, if the postman knew anything about meteorology, the weather was a hopeless failure for the day. Two courses were open, either to return over all the peaks, and drop into Kinlochewe from the eastern end of Ben Eighe, or to descend directly into the wild glen at the foot of Ruadh-Stac, and follow it down to Loch Maree. On the map this looked feasible, and I set off downhill without misgiving.

I should be sorry to recommend any one to try this way of getting off Ben Eighe, unless he were perfectly sure of his ground and likewise of his weather. For hundreds of feet the mountain side is a mass of fragments as big as gravestones, in most unstable equilibrium. Two steps out of three set a stone wobbling or sliding or tumbling; one's hands come into play; and often it seems best to proceed four-legged with back to the slope. Scree is an honest kind of foe compared with this treacherous stuff. One big fellow, that I trusted myself to, incontinently took a plunge downhill, hustling me along as it were arm in arm. There was no time to seize anything; but before I had realized what was happening the unruly monster caught against some obstruction, and I found myself sitting on the flat side of the stone, which was making frantic efforts to spin round like a top. This sort of slope is a safer place for one man than for a party; at all events, I could destroy nobody but myself. It took an unconscionable time to reach the bottom of the enormous rubbish heaps. I saw an abrupt

edge below me, outlined against the wall of mist. What lay beyond? It might be a precipice, it might be a talus of nice fine scree; anything would be a relief to these unruly stones. It proved to be a steep slope, broken by lines of crag. After the heavy rain, the mountain was leaking at every pore, making every patch of turf and moss exceedingly slippery. The mist thinned. Between Ruadh-Stac and the opposite mountain, so close beneath me that I thought I could have thrown a stone on to it, extended a wide tract of boulder-strewn morass, speckled with little tarns and watery sloughs, like the back of a leopard. But to reach this uninviting refuge was a bigger task than it looked. Ruadh-Stac Mòr is based on a foundation of terraced sandstone, like that of Liathach. I found myself, all at once, on the top of a sheer cliff, 30 ft. high, without any visible means of getting down it. On the right the cliff grew higher and steeper the further I went, to the left it ran on without a break farther than I could see. I tried place after place, but dared not risk it. My waterproof cape had been clamped down with a safety pin, after being blown over my head several times. I threw it down, sacrificing the only part of my superficies that was still tolerably dry. After six or seven tries, I found a chimney that would go; but as I went down it in close company with a stream of water, my enjoyment of this sporting episode was not quite unmingled.

The other crags offered no difficulty. I crossed the bog, starting two blue hares on the way, and hit the burn, the Allt Coire Mhic Fhearchair, near the 1000 feet contour line. The track shown on the map, coming two miles up Glen Grudie, has been extended to this point, but it ends on the other side of the water, which was too much swollen to be fordable. There may be stepping-stones, but if so they were submerged, and the only way I could see was to walk along the lip of a waterfall, where the stream shallows a little as it glides over a smooth sandstone ledge. Unfortunately, the ledge broke off six feet from the other side, and most of the water poured through the breach, forcing me to jump on to a boulder

half-buried in foam, and take a flying leap thence to the bank. The four miles down Glen Grudie were monotonous but restful. Now and again I glanced back at the two western peaks of Ben Eighe, implacably masked in cloud. Doubtless, no human eye but mine saw the real summit of the mountain that day. On the braes lower down, broken arcs of rainbow were flitting about, making the dun moorland smile, and telling of gentler weather in the glen. Far in front lay

"Soft Maree's dim quivering breast  
Bound round with gracious inland girth of green ;"

Beyond rose Slioch, a dark helm of stormy mist settled on his steep shoulders and giant head. All day long there was storm and strife on the mountains around ; but along the silvan shores of Loch Maree, lapping waves and lapsing streamlets deepened the peaceful hush, which was broken only at long intervals by the clatter of waggons and char-à-bancs on their way to Gairloch. My only trouble was that my weather-beaten and disreputable appearance might prevent my being taken in at the hotel. Luckily, there were precedents at Kinlochewe of strange apparitions from Ben Eighe, which ensured me admittance.





## EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE Editor will be glad of information as to the doings of members of the Club at Easter, and of communications with regard to climbs made by them.

\* \* \* \*

THE Editor begs to thank those members who have kindly co-operated by sending articles and letters for use in the Club *Journal*.

\* \* \* \*

THE following articles, etc., have been unavoidably held over to the next number through want of space:—

Ski-Running. By W. R. Rickmers.

A Day on the Pointe d'Ornay near Champex. By J. W. Wyatt.

The Glydr Vawr. By J. M. A. Thomson.

Dow Crags, Coniston. By G. F. Woodhouse.

A Night Walk on the Derbyshire Hills. By W. Smithard.

\* \* \* \*

THE Editor regrets that through an oversight it was not stated that the picture of Lliwedd in No. 21 was taken by Mons. H. Speyer.

\* \* \* \*

MEMBERS will greatly oblige the Honorary Secretary by assuring themselves that he has been notified of any change of address.

\* \* \* \*

AN evening meeting of the Club was held on January 20th, at the Inns of Court Hotel, at 8:30 p.m. Some very interesting slides of the Alps and Norway were shown by Messrs. S. B. Donkin, W. P. Haskett-Smith and C. W. Nettleton.

## EVENING MEETINGS OF THE CLUB.

ON the 25th of November, the Club came together at the Inns of Court Hotel to hear Mr. A. W. Andrews give an account of his exploration of the Cornish cliffs. The freshness of the subject drew a large audience, and among them a good sprinkling of ladies, the notices having for the first time added to the word "friend" the definition "lady or gentleman."

In the regretted absence of the President, the chair was taken by Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith, who congratulated the meeting on having established a precedent in the history of the Club by brightening itself with the presence of the fair sex. Mr. Andrews thoroughly deserved the compliment of being chosen to lecture on an occasion so important, and before an audience so interesting, because it was a reward due to him for his public spirit in taking over the editorship of the *Club Journal*, of which an excellent number—the first fruits of the new editor's labours—had just been distributed. He (the Chairman) fully expected that, after hearing Mr. Andrews, there would be a rush of ladies ready to lecture before future meetings, and of members ready to supply unlimited articles for future numbers of the *Journal*.

Mr. Andrews then proceeded to give a most fascinating account of his scrambles among the cliffs of North Cornwall, chiefly in the neighbourhood of St. Ives. Judging from the excellent and instructive photographs which illustrated the lectures, there must be a quantity of first-class work there for keen climbers. The impression left on the minds of the audience was that Pen-y-gwryd and Wastdale Head must be on their guard against a serious rival.

Mr. Bentham, who was introduced by Mr. C. E. Benson, very kindly followed with a laughable recitation, of which a great feature was the remarkable facility with which the performer passed so rapidly from speaking to whistling, and back to speaking again, that both of these seemed at times to be going on together.

After this agreeable interlude, Mr. Andrews gave the second portion of his lecture, which was mainly a display of Alpine views of great artistic merit, taken by himself, by Dr. O. K. Williamson and other friends.

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was very heartily accorded, after which some Alpine photographs, taken mostly by Messrs. Donkin and Dent, were thrown on the screen by Mr. Haskett-Smith, and brought a very successful evening to a close. Members are reminded that an attendance book is now provided at every meeting, in which it is hoped that they will make a point of inscribing their names.



## REVIEWS.

### THE ALPINE JOURNAL.

The November number is full of interest.

Mr. W. R. Rickmers writes of Suanetia.

Mr. E. A. Broome, of the Roth-horn.

Mr. A. E. Field, of the Wellhorn.

Mr. D. W. Freshfield, of Mountains and Mankind.

Mr. W. A. Brigg, of Monte Viso.

Mr. G. Yeld, of Le Trident.

There are, besides, an obituary notice (by Mr. C. Dent) of a sister of Mrs. Seiler, well known to all *habitués* of Zermatt, an account of the disaster on the Gran Paradiso to Mr. Clay's party, and one of that on the Gabelhorn to Dr. Demelius. All these are good articles, but none perhaps exceed in importance the first and the fourth. The latter is a philosophical summary of the whole course of relationship between men and mountains, bringing together, in able and striking fashion, the evidences which prove a steady growth of knowledge and of sympathy. Incidentally almost every Alpine topic is touched on, and with a grasp which few have at their command; but for active human interest, the palm must be awarded to Mr. Rickmers' Caucasian paper. Those who had the pleasure of hearing it when it was delivered before the Club will agree that it loses a good deal in cold print, but it could easily afford to lose a great deal, for few of us have ever heard a more vivid and thrilling narrative. Eloquent description, philosophy, poetry, puns and romance pursued one another in headlong haste, while the versatile writer figured, in rapid succession, as a medieval knight, a

modern courier, a campaigner, a troubadour and in fifty other characters. It is a pleasure to think that a large part of this paper is still to come.

The story of the accident near Cogne is clearly given, the facts being evidently drawn from much the same sources with the account which appeared in our last number. It is, however, somewhat curious that the fall is stated to have taken place from steps which had been cut "a few hours before." Now these steps were cut when the party was descending from the Gran Paradiso about 10 a.m. A few minutes later they reached the *Col*, and wasted very little time over the attempt to descend thence towards Cogne. Nor do they seem to have gone very far in the direction of the Piccolo Paradiso. It is in fact possible that they might, in the course of an hour or so, have done all that they are known to have done and got back to the point from which they fell. If instead of one hour they consumed several hours, how was the time spent? If they intended to go back over the top of a big mountain, would they have waited about and made so late a start? Moreover there is a fact which is here omitted, yet has, if we can rely upon it, considerable importance, viz. :—the finding of the watch, which was said to have stopped at 11 o'clock. This is by no means conclusive evidence, because the watch may have been slow, or it may have been stopped by some accidental blow while the party was near the *Col*, but there is a strong probability that the stoppage was caused by the fatal fall of the wearer, and that he would not have taken with him a watch that did not shew time reasonably near—say, within half-an-hour of—the truth. In that case the accident must have taken place before noon, when no great change in the condition of the snow can have been brought about by the action of the sun on a western slope. Perhaps the greatest difficulty of the whole affair is to discover why the party renounced their known intention of joining their friends in Cogne, and attempted the much longer task of retracing their steps over the summit of the Gran Paradiso. These difficulties are not cleared up by an interesting article in the

*Monthly Review* by Mr. R. Hughes, who was not in possession of the full facts at the moment of writing.

Among the new expeditions several of our men distinguished themselves. In the Eggishorn part of the Oberland, Mr. G. W. Young was actively climbing new peaks and adorning them with picturesque names. In Norway our indefatigable President was actually able to find summits which he had not attained before. His exploits on the Lofoten rocks require four or five pages of description.

The illustrations to this number are unusually numerous and fine. Of our own men, Nettleton supplies one, and Rickmers several of very great beauty and interest.

W. P. H.-S.

THE MOUNTAIN CLUB ANNUAL. No. 8 (for 1903.) Cape Town [1904.]

IT is a fascinating pastime to work out an unknown climb with nothing to assist the imagination beyond a vague sketch or a misty "snapshot"; but there is almost as much fun to be got by studying the records of a climbing club in some distant land, and piecing together, from stray hints, the conditions under which it works, the advantages which it enjoys, and the drawbacks which it has to endure. The Mountain Club, which has its home at the Cape of Good Hope, is a case in point. Yet though its publications provide in abundance the particular pleasure to which we have referred, that pleasure is not wholly unmixed. For if there is one thing more than another which makes climbers discontented with their lot, it is to read of the wider opportunities of sport offered by newer and less frequented countries. It is not so much the great snow-clad giants for which we sigh. We can admire them as much—possibly more—from a distance, and do not grudge the time spent in an occasional journey to visit them. But it is a great and enviable thing to have at one's doors playgrounds like Table Mountain and rocky hills like Jonker's Hoek, something in the style of our own fells,

where those who lose their way without a guide, and those who find it with the help of one, seem to be thought equally ridiculous. Perhaps that is a fair test of a sporting country on a small scale, and the Cape seems to offer hundreds of square miles which can stand that test very well. The hills are only about twice as high as our own, and apparently not as a rule very difficult, but the charm of mystery and uncertainty hovers over them. It also hovers to a certain extent over the club which devotes itself to their exploration. It appears to consist of at least three sections. Of these the Cape Town section is vigorous and articulate, bearing on its own shoulders the whole burden of the Club Journal ; but the other sections are shrouded in mystery, and seem to be almost as shadowy and unsubstantial as certain British Army Corps.

The very titles of them are suggestive, one being named after Worcester, which over here we regard as "the faithful city," and another after Stellenbosch, which, in the metaphor of South Africa, holds a place somewhat analogous to that of Coventry in ours. A speech at the annual dinner of the club seems to drop a hint of one, if not two, secessions. "The Club, as now existing, differs doubtless from the ideals of some of its originators." Did these reactionary "Auld Lichts" withdraw to "the faithful city"? Again, "Our roll has been purged of the names of many persons not really in sympathy with our ideas." Were these revolutionaries dismissed to Stellenbosch? The whole thing reminds one of the Irish Professor of Natural History who said, "The rhinoceros is a complete misnomer for two reasons. In the first place he has no real horn. In the next, if we wish to speak with scientific precision, we should say that the one-horned rhinoceros really has two horns, but one of them is not there." In this case, however, the horn which *is* there—the Cape Town section—is full of energy. Having Table Mountain in its back garden, it assumes responsibility for all the rash beginners who get lost upon it, so that the formation of search parties is fast becoming a serious occupation. It has

an annual excursion, a dinner, and a geological lecture. Its members push their bivouacs into the more remote ranges, where a pleasing variety is given to the work by centipedes, scorpions, venomous snakes, large and persistent baboons, and wild flowers of elegant and innocent aspect, which raise blisters on the human skin to the size of a hen's egg. They have not even a compensating escape from the mists which so often trouble us. Indeed these may have something to do with the strange variety of routes on Table Mountain—amounting to not less than forty-five.

Mist, Table Mountain holding,  
More ways to climbers shews  
Than of table-napkin folding  
The cutest *Kellner* knows.

Strange company is to be met with on these mountains, from "goddesses who scale the Stinkwater Needle" (in costume quite in accord with the climate and customs of Olympus, if the poem "Mountain Beauties" refers to them) down to a mountain-loving hermit who long tenanted a secluded cave, and was last seen "wearing the broad arrow of a blameful life."

The articles on Natural History are full of interest. The book is freely illustrated, and misprints are few. "Alpes Vaudoires" must be one, and ruins which "luxuriant climbers *cloth*" is doubtless another, though we have all known rocks too apt to "cloth" themselves at the expense of a "luxuriant climber's" garments. In conclusion, let us quote from a poem by Mr. R. Hymer, which, though the *Alpine Journal* demurred to a former poem of his as being "ungallant," is sure of universal approbation:—

Dame Nature's infallible cure for all ills  
Consists in ascending her mountains and hills;  
Convalescents keep writing in prose and in rhyme  
Unsolicited letters with one constant chime—  
"Doctor Nature's great Cure—worth a guinea a climb."

W. P. H.-S.



SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. No. 44,  
May, 1904.

THIS number will appeal principally to members of the S.M.C., as two-thirds of its contents are devoted to the "Proceedings of the Club" at their New Year and Easter, 1904, Club Meets.

We note with pleasure an announcement on page 121, to the effect that a type-written copy of the original Sligachan Climbers' Book has been made, and deposited with the new lessee of the Sligachan Hotel, for the use of all climbers. The S.M.C. are nothing if not thorough, and they will make to themselves many debtors by having added to the book the following :—

Map of the Cuillins, 4 inches to the mile.

A Guide Book to the Cuillins, by the Editor—Mr. Wm. Douglas.

Various articles which have appeared on Skye and the Cuillins in the *S.M.C. Journal*, together with a number of photographs.

The whole forms a handsome and well bound volume, which should prove extremely useful to all climbers visiting Sligachan.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. No. 45,  
September, 1904.

THE *S.M.C. Journal* has long been noted for the excellence of its illustrations, but, in this number, the Editor has surpassed himself, there being no less than ten full page photographic reproductions.

The articles include one by Mrs. Inglis Clark, entitled "Three on the Centre Grid of the Trident Buttress, Ben Nevis," giving an account of a new climb on Britain's premier peak. This is the first time we remember seeing a contribution by one of the fair sex to any of the British Mountaineering Club Journals—apart, of course, from that of the Alpine

Club. Miss Inglis Clark contributes a charming photograph—"The Ben Nevis Group from Corpach—Sunrise Effect," so we may call this quite a ladies' number.

Another new climb is described in "The Rose Ridge on Sgoran Dubh," and yet a third on Carn Dearg of Ben Nevis (see pp. 179, 180). Evidently Scotland is far from exhausted yet!

A well-known member of our Club, Mr. W. R. Rickmers, writes a very interesting article, entitled "Aquatic Sport on Ben Nevis," or, to put it more plainly, "Ski-ing on Ben Nevis in merciless rain, with a few remarks on whisky." Last, but not least, we mention an article on "Garbh-Bheinn of Ardgour, and the North East ridge of Aonach Beag," by Dr. Inglis Clark, illustrated with some fine photographs taken by himself.

CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL, No. 23, July, 1904.

NINE articles and a poem make up a good average number.

"The Mamore Forest," by our member, Mr. Edred M. Corner, and "Easter at An Teallach," by Mr. Geo. T. Ewen are perhaps the most worthy of mention.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

*To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.*

### ACCIDENT ON THE HAYSTACKS.

DEAR SIR,

As no mention has been yet made in the *Journal* respecting the death of Mr. Bernard S. Wood, who was a member of the Climbers' Club, and who was killed near Buttermere last July, I give you below details of the accident for what notice you may see fit to insert in the next number. I do this as several erroneous accounts have appeared in the daily press, which were naturally painful to Mr. Wood's people.

On Sunday, July 17th, Bernard, his brother Norman, and a cousin, Frederick Wood, left Wood House, on Crummock Water, where they were staying, for a ramble on the Haystacks. They ascended by the "rake" which traverses the face, and eventually reached the broken up rocky wall which forms the head of Warnscale Bottom. Here they were standing looking at the view, the two brothers some distance from their cousin, when Bernard was suddenly attacked, so we presume, with a fit of giddiness; he overbalanced, and Norman clutched him in a vain endeavour to save him. Locked in one another's arms, they fell some hundred feet down a gully giving on to the Screes at the southern end of the Haystacks.

Frederick Wood at once went for assistance, and secured the aid of two quarrymen. They found the body of Bernard lying at the foot of the gully with a fractured skull. Death had been instantaneous.

Norman had, in the meantime, though very badly cut and bruised, and in a semi-conscious condition, managed to reach the farm at Gatesgarth to obtain help for his brother. On arriving there, however, he at once collapsed, and for some days lay in a precarious condition. Afterwards he was moved to Wood House, and eventually to his home at Cheadle, fortunately then in a fair way towards recovery. In spite of his fall, it is not thought there will be any serious after effects. He is at present in the United States, where he has gone for the benefit of the voyage and the change.

The inquest on the body of Bernard was held at Gatesgarth in the open air on the evening of the Monday after the accident. The verdict was of course one of accidental death.

The disaster was by no means a climbing mishap, nor was it in the least the outcome of any foolhardiness; it was purely an accident of the hills, though none the less deplorable.

Bernard, though only in his twenty-second year, had a keen knowledge of, and love for, our hills, notably those of the Lake District. He was able to appreciate and take pleasure in the mountains for their own sake, apart from their charms to the rock climber, though he had a full enthusiasm for rock climbing as well.

In his death his friends have lost a well-loved companion. His last resting-place is a fitting one, in Loweswater Churchyard.

Mild o'er his grave, ye mountains, shine;  
Gently by his, ye waters, glide;  
To that in you which is divine  
He was allied.

This last verse is from Matthew Arnold's "A Southern Night," and seems peculiarly fitting.

Yours truly,

P. SPENCER.

5 ALBERT TERRACE,  
Old Trafford, Manchester.

*To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.*

A NEW GAME FOR CLIMBERS.

DEAR SIR,

May I put a suggestion before the members of the Club? I propose the institution at the climbing centres of a system of organised cross-country runs upon new lines, which, I think, would not only afford good sport and exercise, but would also tend to widen the scope of our enthusiasm for the hills, develop those "deer-stalking" faculties which were found so useful in the South African War, and to increase the opportunities of intercourse in the field—and all without neglecting the particular sport to which the Climbers' Club is devoted. To some earnest souls climbing pure and simple is sufficient, but others would perhaps welcome an occasional variation from the usual round, especially those to whom our British climbs are becoming very familiar.

Here is a rough outline of the game I suggest:—The players are divided into two parties, of which the "besiegers" (for want of a better name) outnumber the "scouts," say as six to one. The object of the scouts is to get from one chosen "base" to another,—for example, from Dungeon Ghyll to Wastdale or Ogwen Cottage to Gorphwysfa—in a given time. The object of the other party is to prevent the scouts from reaching the other base, by intercepting or capturing them. Both parties would set out from their bases at pre-arranged times, and the besiegers would be bound (at any rate up to a certain time) to operate at or beyond a given distance from their base. They would be posted by their captain across the zone of operations, commanding all the probable routes of approach, patrolling the intermediate ground, and concentrating at any point by whistle or other signal. The scouts would aim, of course, at concealment, separating or combining according to circumstances, and choosing always the ground which affords cover. What should constitute "capture" is open to discussion, but

three ideas suggest themselves:—(1) Surrounding or confronting a man with three or four enemies at any distance within earshot, (2) Actual contact and the seizing of a badge worn by the players, (3) Getting within a certain distance of a man. Of these (1) seems to me the most suitable, as it is probable the parties would very seldom get to close quarters; but (2) gives the scout a better chance of retaliation, while (3) is too liable to dispute. But this question can only be decided by actual trial.

The scouts *combined* would be at liberty to capture any single man of their opponents. A system of scoring by points would be arranged so as to give a graduated series of possibilities ranging from total defeat to complete victory, neither of which extremes would be often achieved.

Much must be learnt by experiment before this rather crude idea can be put into practice, and I should be very glad if our members would favour me with their opinions and suggestions on the subject, particularly any having practical knowledge of scouting or deer-stalking. If a sufficient number of men were willing to co-operate, a trial run on a small scale could no doubt be arranged either in Snowdonia, the Lake District or the Pennines.

Yours truly,

F. E. ROSS.

39 HALKYN AVENUE, SEFTON PARK,  
LIVERPOOL, 7th February, 1905.

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*To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.*

AN ASCENT OF HONISTER CRAG.

DEAR SIR,

Yesterday, in company of two brothers, I made an ascent of Honister Crag from the front, *i.e.*, from the road. As we have been informed that this has never been done

before, I should be much obliged if you could tell me if such is the case. The old man who occupies the shelter-hut at the top of the Honister Pass told us that he had never seen it done before, and he has been there 24 years now.

The route taken was the following :—From the top of the pass we struck horizontally across the screes at the base of the Craggs till we reached the gully just below the highest peak. This gully we followed to the summit.

Yours truly,

W. S. ASCOLI.

LODÖRE HOTEL, DERWENTWATER.

[The Editor has not been able to find a previous record of the climb.]

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### “THE HIGH TOR GULLY.”

#### *Note by Editor and Summary of Correspondence.*

THE Editor has received a large number of letters with reference to the High Tor Gully, Matlock.

To publish these in full would take up too much space in the *Journal*, and would probably lead at the present time to no satisfactory or final conclusion as to the desirability or safety of the gully as a climb.

With one sentence, however, he thoroughly agrees. “It seems to me a pity that the noble sport of rock climbing should be sullied by an acrimonious controversy on such points as those raised. The High Tor stands for anyone desirous of so doing to inspect it, and the questions in dispute are surely very easy of solution.”

As regards the actual criticisms of Mr. Baker's letter, there is no doubt, as the writers of several letters claim, that he has changed his opinions as to the desirability of the climb, a course which he is perfectly justified in taking.

On September 19th, 1902, Mr. Baker wrote in a newspaper article, "Twice I have made attempts to climb the great fissure . . . We scrambled down slopes of clay and scree for nearly a hundred feet . . . the stones that we shifted in our movements crashing all the while into the black gulf beneath us, whose depth we could not ascertain . . . Our efforts to enter the gully at the foot were likewise a failure, but not so decisive as to take away all hopes of doing it."

In 1902, therefore, Mr. Baker undoubtedly considered this a desirable climb, though, in the opinion of most rock climbers, the loose stones which he mentions would be considered in too unstable equilibrium for enjoyment. It may be said that these were purposely dislodged for the safety of the party, but the expression "all the while" seems to point to a certain precarious character of foot and hand-hold not to be entirely altered by the process of sweeping, which is often necessary on the early attempts of a climb, successful or otherwise.

In Mr. Baker's letter in No. 25, he says—"I am not going to say that the High Tor Gully is not a legitimate climb, although I know it to be an extremely dangerous one . . . what is illegitimate for me to attempt may be a safe climb for a better man."

It is perfectly clear that Mr. Baker does not mean that a dangerous climb can be legitimate under any circumstances, but that he considers it dangerous, and therefore illegitimate for himself. As, however, this has not been clearly understood by the writer of one of the letters, the first sentence only being quoted, it may be well to suggest that the use of the expression "dangerous," meaning the presence of difficulties which greater skill could avoid, is strongly to be deprecated.

The loose use of the term has perhaps contributed more to the loss of valuable lives than any other.

Climbs A and B are both described as dangerous; A has objective dangers, such as insecurity of hold on certain passages where the leader cannot, however great his skill, avoid reliance on untrustworthy hand and foot-holds, where



there is no opportunity for the use of the body to obtain a friction hold, and where a second climber backing him up on the rope can be of no help.

Such passages are extremely rare on mountains composed of hard rock. They occur more frequently on formations such as chalk, slate, sandstone, or mountain limestone, to take a few instances, and yet any of these may be perfectly safe under certain conditions, as, except at least in the case of chalk cliffs, which, in the writer's opinion, have no good qualities, the firmness of the rock differs enormously in localities which are only separated by a short interval.

It is therefore unfair to condemn mountain limestone, *qua* mountain limestone, though a word of caution should rightly be given to those who have not a thorough knowledge of it.

With this proviso, there seems no reason at present, judging from the evidence, to brand the High Tor Gully as dangerous, though probably so high a degree of skill is required as to render it unjustifiable for any except experienced climbers.

The second class of climb B is far more difficult than A, but "not dangerous" is the sense of the word laid down.

A climber without sufficient knowledge of the particular rock climbs, B, and considers it relatively easy, he then naturally doubts the epithet "dangerous" applied to A, and a disaster possibly follows.

With regard to the alleged "abominations," the Editor can hardly do better than quote from one other letter. "Mr. Baker (whose charming book on our county we have lately so much enjoyed) speaks in an unfortunate moment of 'putrefaction' in connection with the High Tor. Surely what he meant to say was 'petrification.' Of our Matlock petrifications all Derbyshire men are proud. Of anything else we know nothing."

Other evidence points to the view that the abominations referred to are now at anyrate either non-existent or not conspicuous.

The Editor will not undertake to publish any further

letters on the High Tor Gully, unless they seem likely to promote the interests of the Club, but he will be very glad to receive statements as to the character of limestone climbing, with the view of collecting evidence on the comparative merits and demerits of different rock formations, and obtaining suggestions which may help climbers to test their security, or the opposite, for themselves.



