



THE  
CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL

EDITED BY  
A. W. ANDREWS

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# CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

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Edited by ARTHUR WESTLAKE ANDREWS.

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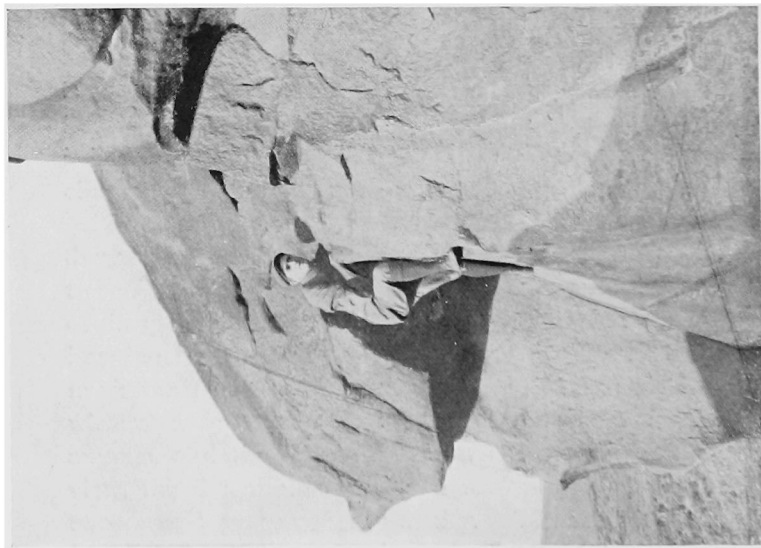
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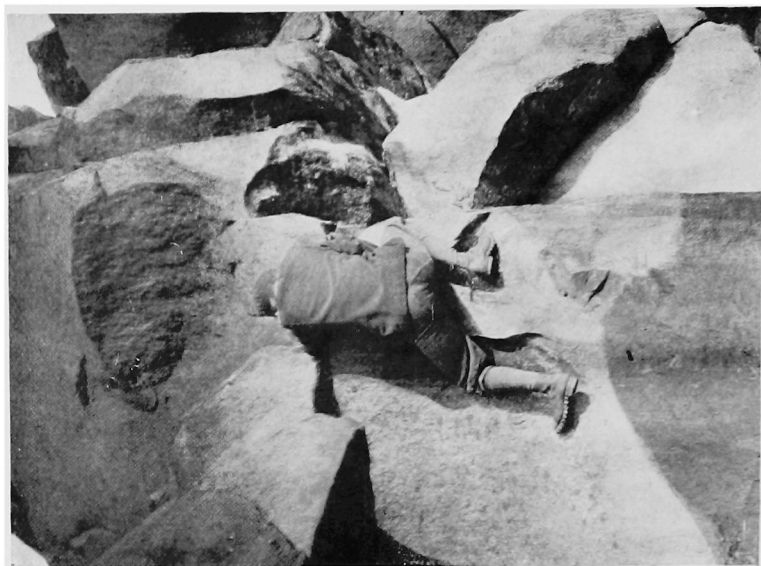
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(FRONT VIEW.)



(BACK VIEW.)

# **THE MANTELPIECE (Low Man).**

THE

# CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

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## ALMES CLIFF CRAGS.

By C. E. BENSON.

(BY PERMISSION OF THE EDITOR OF THE "YORKSHIRE POST.")

[About twenty minutes from Weeton Station, between Harrogate and Leeds. By road from Leeds 12 miles; from Harrogate about 6.]

MANY strange beasts came out of Noah's Ark; and out of Noah's Ark (a farmhouse close to Almes Cliff) on Saturdays and Sundays, and even Wednesdays, issue a modern development of the *familia homo*, to wit the *Scansor Eboraciensis*, with kindred scansores from other counties, on scrambling intent. (N.B.—It is contrary to custom to go through gates; the correct procedure is to climb the wall.)

Almes Cliff Craggs ("Great Almias Cliff" of the Guide Books) are a happy hunting ground for lunatics, nuisances, and qualified nuisances, *i.e.*, climbers, tourists, and trippers who throw about glass bottles. The tourist regards the scrambler as a lunatic, the bashful scrambler looks on the curious tourist as a nuisance; for a terse and comprehensive expression of opinion as to the third species, you are referred to the scrambler who has just met with a good, satisfying

handhold in the shape of a broken lemonade bottle. I write as a scrambler.

Lunatic though the scrambler may seem, there is method in his madness. To the uninstructed and unenterprising Almes Cliff Crag appear two insignificant outcrops of millstone grit, at no point exceeding sixty feet in height, standing on the brow of a small hill overlooking Weeton. To the climber they are full of interest. He wants practice to keep himself fit for more serious mountaineering, and, if he knows how to look for it, he can get all he needs on Almes Cliff. Without effort, I can recall more than fifty problems, all offering sport, and some calculated to tax, and indeed to overtax, even the very best.

About the stiffest thing on the High Man (the upper outcrop), and possibly the hardest climb on the Crag, is a double chimney, shaped something like the section of two overgrown extinguishers, one on the top of another. It is on the side that looks towards Wharfedale (the south-west, I fancy), and cannot possibly be mistaken, and, so far as most men are concerned, cannot possibly be climbed. Indeed, I believe it has only been done twice, its original conqueror being Mr. William Parsons, of the Yorkshire Ramblers, who is reputed to have accomplished everything possible and impossible on the Crag. In my opinion, Parsons' Climb, as it is called, is the most impossible of all the possible gritstone climbs I have ever seen.

I was present at the second ascent the year before last, on a day when I was very much off colour. Last year I happened to be singularly fit. "The lunatic, the lover, and the poet, Are of imagination all compact," and I was lunatic enough to imagine I was equal to tackling the problem. I mentioned my intention to a wise man, who very rightly pointed out that, without a rope from above, the climb was unjustifiable for anyone, and that therefore, from a mountaineering point of view, the ascent was merely a useless gymnastic feat. For two days I preserved my sanity. Then I yielded. I had just conquered, as I conceived, the first difficulty, when I came



off, and, but for the rope, in another second I should have been on the ground "in a fine phrensy rolling."

That is the worst of gritstone; you never know when it is not going to let you down or throw you off. Ordinarily a gritstone Edge is merely a great chunk of glorified, petrified sandpaper. Of course, such material plays mischief with one's skin and clothes, but, as compensation, there are few other kinds of rock you can hang on to by your waistcoat and the seat of your breeches whilst you are feeling about for hand and foot-hold. Then, all of a sudden, without decency or warning, the roughness changes to an absolutely smooth bevel; of course, entirely to your disadvantage, affording no possibilities for either grip or friction. Or else the rock bulges out unexpectedly and knocks you backwards. It has a vicious habit of doing this just at the end of the climb. Three inches will suffice. There is a humorous little problem of this kind on the low rocks at the Rigton\* end of the High Man. It is not more than ten feet high. Its aspect is mild, but its disposition ferocious. There is a splendid right hand-hold, a pocket you can grip with all your fingers and as much of your palm as you wish, a left toe-scape, and in a moment you are up; that is, you have both hands over the top. True, there are no holds, except a sprinkling of broken glass, which is not generally commended, but you friction up on your palms and forearms until your head and shoulders are above the edge. Then the "shameless rock" maliciously bulges out, hits you in the chest, and throws you on the back of your head; and, unless you are safeguarded by a rope, you will hurt yourself.

Close beyond this, on the proper left of the wall with a small gate in it, is one of the best climbs for a lady the Cliff affords, the South Chimney. It is a nice, straightforward climb of 40 or 50 feet, with a resting place half-way up. The

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\* Tea, ham and eggs, milk, &c., may be obtained at the farms, but the nearest "house of call" is at Rigton, and far enough off at that. Like all other houses in that detestable—I mean estimable—estate, it has only a six-day licence, so that total abstainers will do well to take their whisky with them on Sundays.

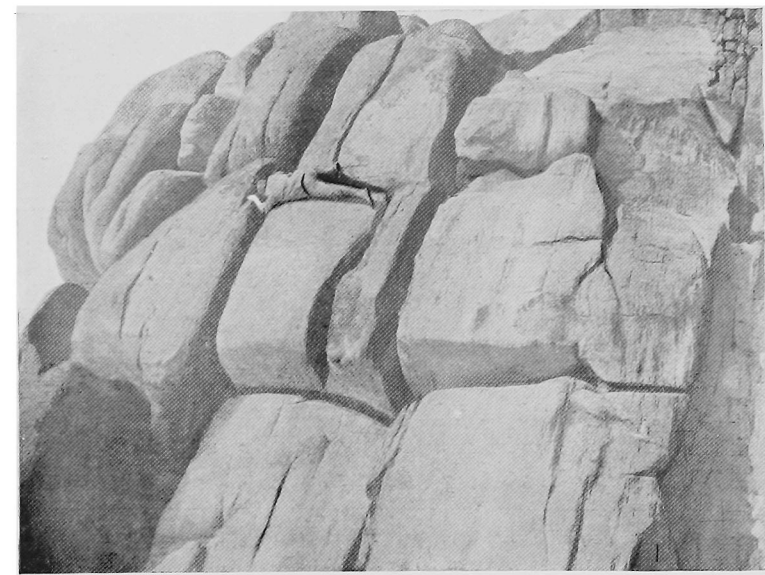
finish is a tight squeeze, and beginners are reminded that in chimneys it is advisable to wear the knot of the rope on one side and not plumb centre. The pressure of a lump of rope the size of a child's fist on that region of the body known as the "mark" is not conducive to comfort, and does your wind no good.

Over the wall is the Three Chockstones, an ideal scramble for novices. I think the orthodox way of tackling the first pitch is to work up with the back against the proper right wall. To suggest how to negotiate the other obstacles would be an impertinence even to a cripple. The direct finish is the most interesting, and perhaps a little difficult to a man with a short reach. I put this forward tentatively, because I am blessed with the reach like a spider monkey, and consequently am not qualified to speak with authority.

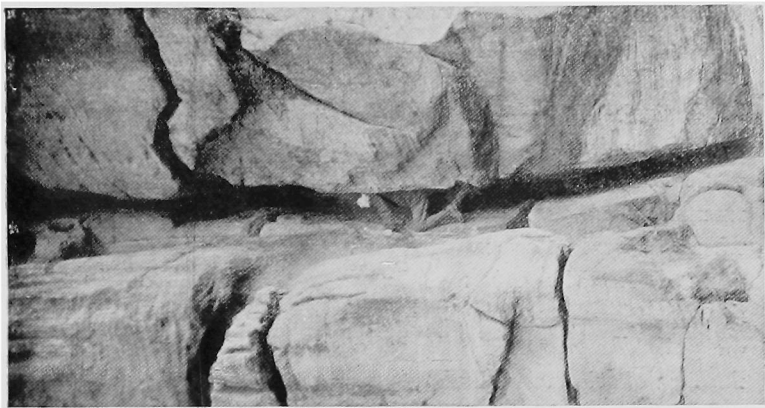
The patter of rain on the window reminds me that grit-stone, like all rocks, becomes more or less beastly when wet. Almes Cliff is peculiarly abominable in this respect. It would seem that the rocks are covered with a minute vegetation, invisible in dry weather, but, in the wet, execrably in evidence in the shape of a nasty, mossy slime. This may seem strong language, but it is nothing to the expressions I have heard applied to the stuff.

I have no intention of going round the rocks inch by inch; I shall take any climbs I like, and in any order I like. I also give notice that henceforward "right" means proper right, and "left" proper left.

The most genuine climb on the whole cliff is on the south-west face of the High Man, to the left of Parsons' Climb. It is some fifty feet of genuine back, knee, and foot work, and consequently is called the Sixty Foot Chimney. All you have to do is walk into the cleft right shoulder first, and wriggle up till you get to the top, a process not so simple as it sounds. About fifteen feet up the work becomes severe for some six feet, and often drives the exhausted climber to an exit, thoughtfully provided half-way up the back of the chimney.



THE STOMACH TRAVERSE.



THE GREAT OR SIXTY-FOOT CHIMNEY.



A little further down the slope, close to the south-west wall, is the Cup and Saucer Climb. There are at least three ways of mastering the first pitch, and quite three dozen of coming off in the attempt. The Cup and Saucer Climb takes its name from a leaf of rock, more like a gigantic mussel shell, concave side up than anything else, that projects from the right containing wall. Whether it is the Cup or the Saucer I have up to date failed to ascertain. If it is the Cup, the puzzle is to find the Saucer, and vice versa. The correct and orthodox method of passing this obstacle is to catch hold of the edge of the Saucecup, then, standing on very little, to press your other foot against something less, shoulder high, and, making use of a finger-hold for balancing purposes, by a vigorous wriggle to assume a sitting position on nothing whatever. Using this as a pivot, you turn round and clutch hold of something else, and you find yourself at the foot of a short crack leading to the top of the pitch.

The second variation starts much like the first, except that, after pirouetting twice on the substantial foundation mentioned above, you traverse to your left, leaving the Cup'cer on your right, and scramble up on to the top of the right buttress. This process, as may easily be gathered, rather turns the pitch than climbs it.

The third route is the hardest. It merely consists of catching on to the Saucecup'cer, and swinging along on your hands, upwards, ever upwards, until you can get a good purchase for your right foot against the left side of the gully, when it is necessary to give a heave and a push, and "there you are." Where "there" is depends. It may be on the top of the leaf of rock; it may be on the rope; or it may be flat on your back at the foot of the pitch. The dangling attitude is the most common, if not the most popular.

After the first difficulties have been passed, the simplest plan is to scramble up some rounded boulders and walk out at the other side of the Crags. This, however, is not "playing the game," and the containing walls of the gallery kindly provide plenty of sport. First, on your left, comes a nice

little crack ; next, a pocket climb, short but severe—when a gale is blowing it is as well to finish this climb without thinking about the wind—and next, a balancing problem. My own attempts on this have hitherto been confined to stepping on to a small ledge with extreme deliberation, and off again with extreme rapidity, the minute interval between the two movements being filled by frantic gropings for holds. I once met a wasp there. A wasp is no earthly use as a hand-hold.\* I have never seen this bit ascended, though one man I know has managed to get down. Since writing these lines, the problem has been solved by the Rev. Harold Firth, Y.R. I gather that the method is simplicity itself. You merely throw your thigh round a buttress that isn't there, and so friction up till a respectable hand-hold comes within reach.

Opposite this problem is a short pitch surmounted by a big chockstone, which gives some pretty hard work. One of the main difficulties is that the top of the pitch is chiefly coarse grass, and it is not orthodox, to say nothing of being most unsafe, to trust the grass holds. On your left, a short, deceptive crack provides an unexpectedly difficult finish to the climb.

Since writing this, three fresh impossibilities have been detected and climbed in this gallery.

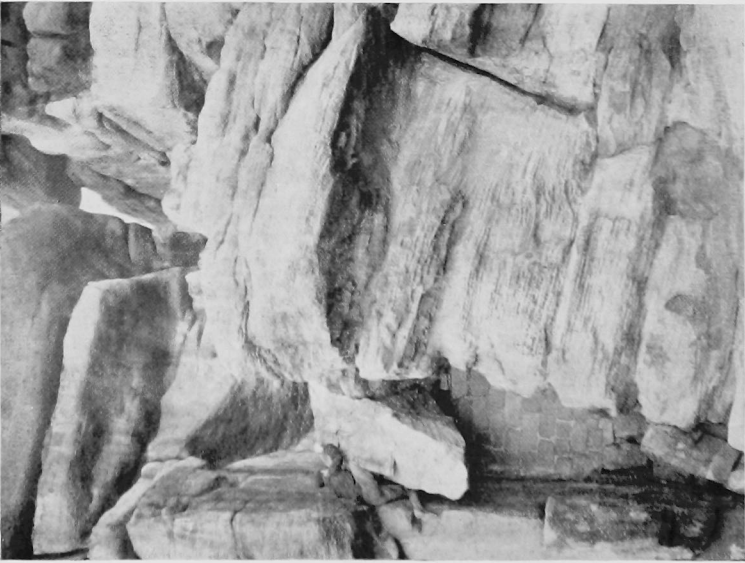
On the Low Man the Fluted Pillars give a really interesting scramble, a model in its way, as the difficulties increase continuously. I believe the finish to be difficult. It appears that it is necessary to wedge yourself with your left arm and knee whilst the body is levered up till a small pinnacle comes within reach. Unfortunately, I did not know this, and, disregarding wedging and pinnacle, shot out, as my companion

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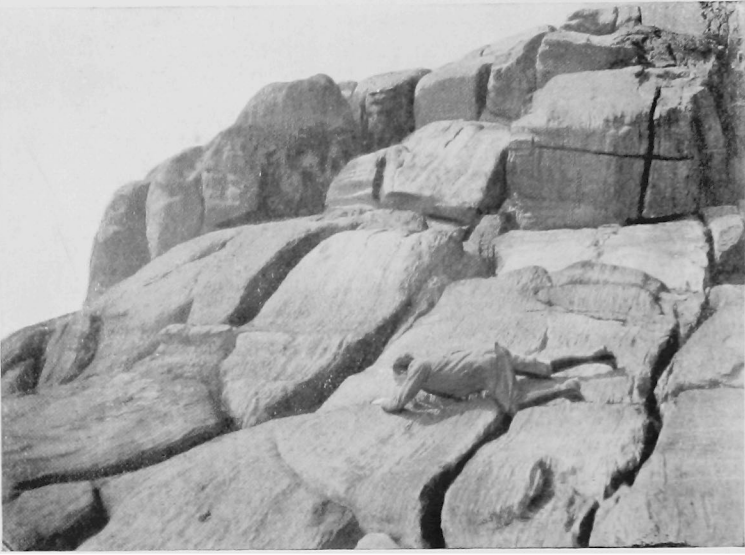
\* On page 131, Vol. III., *C.C.J.*, Mr. H. V. Reade writes of these crags—"A curious feature of the place is that several of the chimneys have been carefully filled up with masonry at the bottom, as though to prevent the sides from falling in." The real object of the masonry is to keep badgers, foxes, &c., from using these rock recesses as "holts." I am glad of it. I conceive a badger might provide an even less satisfactory hand-hold than a wasp.







**THE LEAF CLIMB.**  
(The hard way up.)



**THE BIRD'S NEST.**

said, an extra foot or two of hand, and came up quite easily—which is highly incorrect. I shall know better next time.

Close to the Fluted Pillars is the Square Chimney, a wholly detestable place in a wind. Almost at the start it is necessary to turn round, by a delicate effort of balancing, and that moment is invariably selected by the air to rush down the Chimney like a young tornado and blow you out. Another execrable problem, under similar conditions, is the Leaf on the High Man. To the left (proper) the ascent is easy, but the narrow right crack between the Leaf and the main cliff requires balance, wedging, and muscling up. Just at one point there is considerable likelihood of being blown off. I had rather almost anyone but myself had a fall just here. Once the Leaf is vanquished, the climber may scramble straight ahead through a cleft in the rocks, traverse out to his right to the finish of another climb, the commencement of which is of extreme difficulty, or go right up the edge of the cliff on his left, by far the most sporting route. The most difficult wedge and balance problem is the Bird's Nest on the High Man, to the right of the three Chockstones, though, oddly enough, immediately on the left of that climb there are two severe little tests of the same kind, which lead to a very sporting traverse.

To hark back to the Low Man! Divided from the Square Chimney by the Pulpit Buttress is the V-shaped Chimney. The proper course is to attack the problem on the left side, and then to turn towards the Pulpit, after which it is usual to finish on the broad of one's back. It is more satisfactory to complete the climb by a wild struggle upwards. From the top of the Pulpit a most sensational traverse, which would be impossible, on almost any rock but gritstone, leads across the face to the right and out to the top of the Crag.

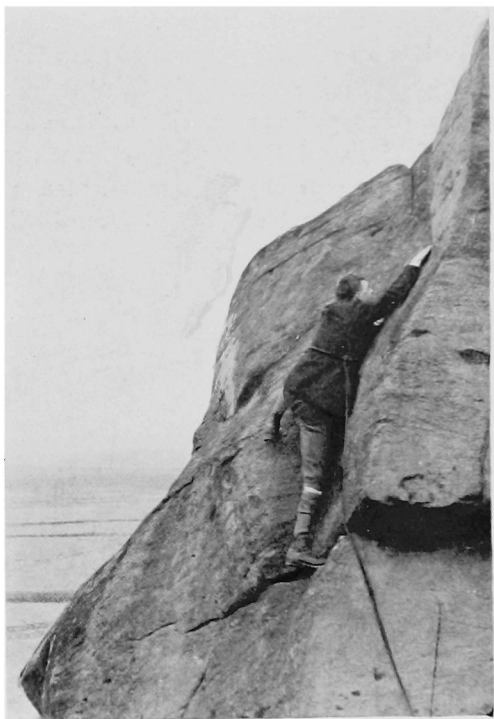
Further to the left, and beyond the Fluted Pillars, is a direct face climb, which is only possible for a man with a long reach. The difficulty consists in holding on to a minute undercut asperity with two finger tips, balancing oneself on the tips of one's toes, and reaching over to a small jammed

stone, the gritstone all the time bulging out and hitting you in the wind in its usual mean way. It is decidedly not an immediately-after-lunch climb. The difficulty can be turned by a slanting crack a little to the left.

The bouldering of Almes Cliff is second to none. The very first clump of rocks you meet on your way up from the farm provides a ridiculously easy chimney, an exceedingly difficult chimney, a nice little traverse, and a crack that won't go at all. One of the most sporting boulders is the Split Block (in the vernacular "The Pair of Trousers") that stands by itself in a field Hubwards. I know the village of Huby. I spent an hour there once, like a newly paid bill, being receipted, or reseated, after a struggle with the Sixty Foot Chimney, which, in mean, petty revenge for defeat, turned and rent me. The Split Block can be ascended in eight, possibly nine, different ways. By the Split, from either side there is little difficulty. The north angle is just nice, the north-east face is just nicer, and the east angle is just nicest, a rare grind for the arms and wrists. Whether the east face has ever been climbed I know not. I fancy a genius might make it go. All the other climbs, which face south-west, are not nice. They entail sprawling on what J. M. Barrie calls "Little Mary," and wriggling up by friction, finger-holds, and the moral support of the rope. I don't know quite what moral support means, but, on the occasions I have officiated from above, I have a suspicion amounting to a certainty, that if the twelve-stone morally supported had been suddenly changed to twelve ounces, the rope would have flicked back over my head like a casting line.

The most terrific boulder problem is the Virgin Peak. It really is quite imposing. The Virgin Peak is a huge chunk of rock just below the Low Man, and is ascended thus: First, you traverse along the base on the Low Man side, like a Gecko lizard, till you can reach the angle of the boulder. Then you swing off and round the edge on both hands. Then holding yourself chin high with your left hand, you reach up to a pocket with your right, after which, by a com-





THE VIRGIN PEAK.

prehensive pull and wriggles, you effect a lodgment for your toes on a minute ledge. Then the difficulties commence.

The problem consists first in reaching a small hand-hold which is only just within reach (7ft. 8in., I think the distance is), the second in utilising it. The face against which you are plastered is almost holdless, the foothold precarious. In fact it is a climb, as the Irishman would say, on which you never know which moment will be your next.

This is the easy way up the Virgin Peak. The difficult way is for all but very tall men, who are blessed with a most accurate sense of balance, impossible. It is directly up the side that faces the Low Man.

The Kleine Matterhorn close by is very severe, if climbed direct to the highest point. The usual way up is by a crack that is said to provide good practice in finger-holds. Here was another instance of what may be lost to a man who is not of a sufficiently enquiring turn of mind. Instead of wrestling and balancing and frictioning up to the hand-hold of salvation, I laid hold of it right away and lost myself a great deal of sport.

In fact, one meets nail-marks everywhere. I should think that almost every yard of cliff and boulder has been tried at one time or another. Some of the methods are not altogether commendable. The run-jump-scramble-and-grab may be very good fun when failure only entails a slither of a few feet on to nice soft grass, *but it is not climbing*. Still, it achieves its purposes. There are one or two other little dodges which, in my humble opinion, are not good enough. For instance, if you came off at the start of a face climb, close to the Leaf, I do not see how you could help breaking your arm. The only way up is to jamb the whole of your left fore-arm in a horizontal crack, and if the whole weight of your body were to come on it, as it is not unlikely, for the problem is severe, "jiu-jitsu" would not be in it.

To attempt to describe other climbs would be tedious. They are easily recognisable by the nail-marks. One last thing it is, however, very necessary to say, in the event of any

tyro scramblers being attracted by the manifold fascinations of Almes Cliff: "Never neglect the safeguard of a rope from above until you are assured by frequent tests that the climb is well within your powers." There is nothing creditable in getting injured, or even killed, on Almes Cliff: to say nothing of the discredit such a silly proceeding would bring on a very fine sport.

"Of a fool and his folly there is no end," may be generally true, but I am afraid there will be an end of some fool some day at Almes Cliff. If, however, he only gets the six months hospital he deserves, it may perhaps be even a good thing for the sport. Example, we all know, is better than precept. All the same, for the purpose under consideration, I personally intend to confine myself to precept.





## ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER.

THE Ninth Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Cecil, London, on Friday, February 9th, 1906. About 40 members were present.

The election of officers for the coming year was the first business.

Mr. William Cecil Slingsby was re-elected President.

Prof. J. A. Ewing, F.R.S., and the Rev. J. Nelson Burrows, M.A., were re-elected Vice-Presidents.

The following gentlemen were re-elected upon the Committee:—Prof. J. B. Farmer, F.R.S.; Prof. L. R. Wilberforce, M.A.; Christopher Cookson, Esq., M.A.; C. W. Nettleton, Esq.; A. W. Andrews, Esq., M.A.; Sidney Skinner, Esq.; and, in the places of Mr. J. M. A. Thomson, M.A., and Mr. E. A. Baker, M.A., the retiring members of the Committee, Mr. C. Myles Mathews, B.A., L.L.B., and Mr. J. Walter Robson, were elected.

Mr. C. C. B. Moss as Honorary Treasurer, and Mr. George B. Bryant as Honorary Secretary, were re-elected.

The accounts of the year 1905, as audited, were passed by the meeting upon the motion of the President.

Rule III. was amended by the substitution of the word "three" for the word "five," as the number of members required to form a quorum at a meeting of the Committee.

It was proposed by the President, and seconded by Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith, that the President be requested to forward to the family of the late Mr. C. E. Mathews—first President of the Club—a suitable message of condolence from the members of the Club, and unanimously agreed.

The following members were present at the annual dinner, which took place after the meeting :—A. W. Andrews, T. Arnold, Jun., Geo. B. Bryant, R. F. Backwell, J. V. Brett, C. E. Benson, W. E. Corlett, A. G. Cheney, C. R. Canney, W. L. Davies, J. H. Davey, A. W. Davey, G. W. H. Ellis, Prof. J. B. Farmer, F. Garrett, W. P. Haskett-Smith, G. F. Hatfield, W. Hooper, D. Hunter, W. W. Lucas, C. T. Lehmann, H. C. Lowen, W. M. Maude, J. C. Morland, C. Myles Mathews, C. C. B. Moss, W. P. Marler, T. Meares, C. W. Nettleton, G. Nicholson, J. H. A. Phillips, W. M. Roberts, Wm. Cecil Slingsby, M. K. Smith, P. Salter, C. H. Townley, O. K. Williamson, R. Williams, W. J. Williams, W. E. Webb, A. W. Wakefield, W. Zimmermann.

The usual loyal toasts having been properly honoured, the PRESIDENT, Mr. WILLIAM C. SLINGSBY, was received with much enthusiasm, when he proposed "The Climbers' Club" as follows :—

Gentlemen,—By your favour and goodwill expressed to me so recently in the adjoining room, it is my privilege to preside on this occasion, and I must say I am exceedingly proud to do so. I never was prouder than the day on which I was elected the President of the Climbers' Club, and regard it now as a great privilege to propose as a toast, "The Climbers' Club." Believe me that the Climbers' Club has a very great future before it, as it has undoubtedly a distinguished present, and has had an honoured past. It is still in its infancy. If a justification for the formation of the Climbers' Club were needed, which of course it is not, I would say, "Look around, and see how many good men and true there are connected with it." (Hear, hear, from the Visitors—and some laughter from the Club.) Although, as I rather gather from the laughter I hear pervading the room, you notice that we are rather fewer in number to-night than we were a year ago, that is neither here nor there. There are satisfactory reasons for it. I know full well that when I first began to ramble over the Cumbrian Fells, the Scottish Bens and the Welsh Mountains, I would have been only too glad to have been a member of a Climbers' Club. There was no such thing in those days, but I am absolutely certain that if there had been one I would have been a member of it, if allowed to enter into its ranks, and I should have been prevented from making many dismal failures and added to a list of successes. I think you will agree with me that the Climbers' Club is making splendid headway. How can it be otherwise with a Bryant at the Helm, a Moss

as Purser, Andrews as Keeper of the Log, and with such a gallant band of able-bodied seamen as the men who form our Committee. (Hear, hear.) The lectures, which were only initiated a year ago, have proved a great success. We have had five. As to the last, I think those who had the good luck to be present will agree with me, that the paper Mr. Eckenstein was good enough to read was a most racy and sporting one. We heard of mountaineering feats in the Karakorum or Hindu Koosh, and it is a great thing to know that one of our own members not only wandered to the back of K. 2, but actually found himself able to take 300 Coolies there to a height of nearly 21,000 feet and to bring back photographs with him. We naturally felt that we were being led by fond fancy over those marvellous upper snow fields on K. 2. How we got there really does not matter very much, and surely we must leave something to the imagination?

The institution of Northern Dinners is a step in the right direction, and, though it is quite likely that our numbers this evening have been somewhat reduced in consequence of the Northern Dinner held in Manchester, I feel absolutely certain that the institution of that section is leading to the consolidation of the Club and not to the disintegration which some pessimistic members seemed to foresee.

During the last twelve months our members have brought to the Club much honour and glory. It would be invidious of me to mention the expeditions and wonderful successes scored by the Club, and exceedingly difficult, too, because the Club is not in possession of a recent Membership List. I have seen many reports of expeditions made in various parts of the world, but if they are by our members or not, I do not know. ("Assume that they are!") Very well, I will do so; but I am not going to give you a list of all the work done, but samples only. Mr. Woodhouse and others have almost, if not quite, exhausted the potentialities of Dow Craggs from a climbing point of view, and although I had made several previous visits, I had not the remotest idea there was such wonderful climbing as was proved to me last October, when our second President led my unwilling or incapable limbs up some remarkable climbs in Easter and North Gullies. In addition to Dow Craggs, our friend Mr. Thompson has also added very greatly to the laurels he had previously earned in Snowdonia. Mr. Geoffrey Winthrop Young made a fine new ascent of the Weisshorn, the second which he has made. New climbs have been made in Skye and in Wales. The Abrahams have enriched the world again with many views of mountain scenery. Nor has literature been neglected. A dainty volume has been written by Messrs. E. A. Baker and F. E. Ross ("The Voice of the Mountains") and I am glad to say that this book arrived in time to give pleasure and solace to the hero to whom it was dedicated a short time before he was called to his long rest.

The hand of death has fallen heavily upon our Club since we last met here. The loss of Mr. C. E. Mathews has removed the most notable of our members, the greatest personality from our ranks. Though it is true that Mr. Mathews could not be called the actual founder of the Climbers' Club, it is equally true that it was his invigorating enthusiasm and genial sympathy with the objects of the Club in its initial stages which gave it real life and form. His foresight led him to realise that the Climbers' Club had a great mission to perform and a bright future before it. We all looked upon Mr. Mathews in the same way as our forefathers looked upon the heroes of old. His sympathy with young climbers and the encouragement he gave them, endeared him to all of us. His eloquence and ready wit were proverbial, and those of us who have enjoyed at any time his hospitality at Caersaer, his beautiful Welsh retreat, or elsewhere, know full well what a great privilege has been vouchsafed to them. We have nothing but happy memories connected with Mr. C. E. Mathews. These memories each and every member of the Climbers' Club holds most dear, and they will never be effaced. I ask you silently to drink in memory of Mr. Mathews. (The company here rose to their feet and honoured the toast in silence—and, after a pause, the speaker resumed)—

Other members have gone to their long rest. Mr. Nicol, who made a speech here at the last Dinner, was more known in the North of England than here, and was very much missed by the Club with whom he was most associated, the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. There was also Mr. Felix Levi (who was killed in the earthquake in India) and Mr. Southgate, who unfortunately lost his life in Wales, an excellent climber, and most delightful company, as I have been told. The deaths of these men are a great loss to the Club and to their many friends who valued their friendship.

On other occasions I have sounded more or less a note of warning, and should not believe I had done my duty if I did not do so to-night. Do not think that I recommend you to confine climbing to eating dinners. I think the dangers which would ensue might be rather greater than the dangers on the mountains. Still, dangers of the latter kind do exist, and I do not think I am justified in occupying this position unless I warn you of them. All great mountaineers have recognised that there is some element of danger connected with mountaineering ; in fact, it is so with every noble sport. We are all agreed, however, that by following well-known maxims, these dangers may be reduced to a minimum. Leslie Stephen has said, "The modern race of mountaineers are in too great a hurry." We know the dangers, and how to avoid them, but only experience can tell us when we have reached the rational limit of our powers, and then let us not be ashamed to turn back, when we feel that to advance would be to court danger.

There is a great field left for the Climbers' Club and for kindred clubs. Never was it easier to get in a short time to the solemn solitudes of the great mountains than to-day. Several hundred miles of the Himalayas have been recently added to our playground. In addition, the Andes have been opened out by railroads in a marvellous way. I feel that Mr. Stutfield will corroborate me when I say that the Canadian Rockies are not yet exhausted.

A young climber recently mentioned to me a fact I had thought of myself, but which had not made any great impression on my mind, and it is this, that there are members of our Club who have never yet made a descent of any difficulty. This is an error which ought to be removed. It is one thing to go up and another to come down, and by neglecting the art of descending, one may sometimes, when least expecting it, get into a place where it is not possible to go up, so you must go down, and that may lead them to be stuck. I most strongly recommend you to climb your rock faces by the line of least resistance, and to come down by a different route. This idea is one that should be followed, but I would suggest that in these descents at first some of the easier gullies or ridges be descended, and then, later on, those more difficult. These truisms pretend to no originality, yet they may prove helpful to the Climbers' Club, in which I do feel that we possess a really good institution—a very grand institution. It is a club with a very great future. I venture to say that in a few years' time the membership of the Alpine Club will be very small compared with that of the Climbers' Club. Gentlemen, I drink to the Club. (Loud cheers.)

Rising to reply for the Club, Mr. DONALD HUNTER approached his task with an air of comic dejection, which added much to the effect of his humorous speech.

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—It is a somewhat melancholy episode in a fairly contented life that in the course of one week, two dinners have been irretrievably ruined. Last night I sat down to a humble meal, cheerful in the resolve that I would reserve my gastronomic efforts for to-night, but for my sins Nemesis appeared in the form of a telegram commanding me to respond to the toast of "The Climbers' Club." My soup grew cold, my humble cutlet went away untasted, and though to-night my neighbours may have observed an occasional fragment making its way to my unwilling mouth, it was like the desperation of the climber, who tries to stave off mountain sickness by taking nourishment against which his soul rebels. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, it cannot be helped. It is a bad thing for me, a worse one for you. I have had the very questionable pleasure of sitting to-night next to the Treasurer. I say questionable, because he did not encourage me in reference to the remarks I had

to make. He said, "Well, you know, it is like this. In the House of Commons, when they want somebody to second the King's Speech, they get a young member or a novice. That's it." (Laughter.) Presently, the Secretary came along, and I thought he was going to encourage me, as he patted me on the back. The value of the pat on the back was taken away by the words that followed, when he said, "Are you speaking to-night. Poor chap!" (Laughter.) While being overwhelmed with the responsibility of having to respond for the Climbers' Club, I do deeply feel the honour that has been done to one who has achieved no reputation as a climber, but still has certainly, in imagination, accompanied that most brilliant climber, Mr. Slingsby, and soared above the clouds with him and other giants of the climbing world. In one sense our President has lightened the task of responding to this toast, in that he has fanned to flame the glowing embers of our enthusiasm. Since he got up to speak, I have felt what I did not feel before, that I am quite qualified to respond to this toast in that I yield to no man, not even to any other member of this club, in my love of the mountains, and that for me there is no sport that has one tithe of the fascination that there is in mountain climbing. (Hear, hear.) Three months ago somebody persuaded me that I had arrived at that mature age when I might indulge in the pastime of golf. I have tried golf. Golf has tried me. But its siren song (or its forcible language) falls upon deaf ears when there is a chance of getting away to the mountains, and even upon the links there are links of mountain memories that one cannot forsake. When I make my tee my thoughts fly to the cold tea of a second breakfast; when I carry back my club, my mind is carried back to the Climbers' Club. (Cheers.) When I make a drive, I think of a drive from Bad Moos to Sexten, in the soothing company of our indefatigable Treasurer, whose motto is, "Never walk when you can get a carriage." (Laughter.) When my rubber-core goes sailing into a pot-bunker, it is not my bad play, it is the irresistible desire of the climber to explore the nearest pot-hole. When I try to play a stymie—I think, gentlemen, it is time I made an end of this painful analogy. (Laughter.) These annual dinners are like a certain pen, they come as a boon and a blessing to men; they are like oases in the desert of our existence. Here we meet old friends and form new friendships. Here we talk over the expeditions we have made, and form plans for new ones, and as one who has profited in times past by the experience of members of the Climbers' Club, I should like to draw the attention of you gentlemen to a field which is practically unexplored. The night before last I attended a meeting of the inhabitants of my native town, a place which you may possibly have heard of, Bury St. Edmunds. It was decided to hold, in 1907, a pageant which will rival Sherborne and the coming one of Warwick. If any members of the Climbers' Club contemplate going to see that pageant, I would point out to them that there is

a magnificent specimen of mediæval architecture in Bury St. Edmunds which has yet to be climbed. There is a legend that a sailor made the ascent, but it is not authentic, and as a member of the Climbers' Club has made the attempt unsuccessfully, I think it may still be recognised as a virgin peak. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, the Club has been drunk—I mean we have drunk the toast of our noble selves—with that satisfaction which always accompanies the contemplation of one's own virtues. It only remains for me to thank the President for the very kind and inspiring way in which he proposed this toast, to thank you, gentlemen, for the cordial and generous manner in which you have drunk your own healths, and to thank Providence that I may now be allowed to sit down. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. A. W. ANDREWS, in proposing "Kindred Clubs," said :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—If I am fated to weary you with a speech, at least I can plead extenuating circumstances, as I also received, rather late in the day, a telegram commanding me to propose "Kindred Clubs" this evening. Necessity knows no laws, but I must say that I feel like the beaver in the American legend. On one occasion a beaver, pursued by a dog, climbed a tree. A man who was listening to the tale said, "Surely beavers cannot climb trees." "Ah," said the man, "but this beaver *had* to climb it." That, gentlemen, is my position. I have to. (Laughter.)

There was one remark that the President made that rather interested me. He referred to my keeping the log. In the event of that shipwreck which the Secretary hoped he might live to see, the bankruptcy of the Club, I shall be consoled by the feeling that it would be quite contrary to precedent for the log to be anything less than two months behind. (Laughter.)

But to return to "Kindred Clubs." We cannot count the hundred thousand members of the German and Austrian Alpine Club, but what we miss in numbers we make up in enthusiasm. We are only the pioneers of that great company of climbers which will one day claim membership in one or other of our kindred clubs. Only the other day I had a letter from a Londoner who had obtained by chance a copy of *The Climbers' Club Journal*, and who appealed to me to tell him of *any* rock within access of London on which he could practise in the week ends. He wished to qualify for climbing in North Wales, Lliwedd, for example, and eventually no doubt for membership of the Climbers' Club.

The demand for rocks to climb is growing among the public, and it is obviously our duty to give any possible assistance to novices. We have perhaps here in these islands as good a training ground on rocks as anywhere in Europe, and as useful an experience of climbing in all kinds of



weathers as anywhere in the world. We climb without guides. We therefore ought to be able to contribute useful information on the technique of rock climbing. There is no doubt that the standard of rock climbing has greatly advanced in late years, but books on the subject have in no way kept pace with it. I am sure that if we could extract the combined wisdom of those present to-night that we could put together suggestions that would be invaluable to climbers. The botanist might tell us how to judge the stability of loose moss on a wet day on Lliwedd, the geologist when knobs of rock can be grasped like door handles, and when they need gentle handling, the physicist might help us to estimate the amount of friction required to maintain the body on a smooth slab. (Laughter.)

To speak seriously, there is a great deal of useful theory that might be laid down, and some day we shall do our duty by putting all this information together. When it comes to practice, the need of theory is sometimes apparently replaced by gymnastic skill. I took a friend to Wales on one occasion who had never climbed, and prepared, without telling him of course, to take a series of photographs of his unorthodox methods of climbing rocks. Unfortunately for my experiment, this particular man climbed like a cat, and the photographs were useless as object lessons. But I consoled myself by thinking that he ran greater risks through want of knowledge, and this was confirmed by his narrowly missing an accident when unroped a little later on an easy place. There is no special stance in climbing which can be photographed, as in golf and cricket, but that there are right and wrong ways of climbing is obvious to any experienced climber who watches closely any rock ascent. It would perhaps be very difficult to define the difference in a way which all climbers could understand, but the more elementary points, such as balance, hand and footholds, friction, use of rope, care not to dislodge loose stones, &c., might well be taught.

The most valuable help, however, would be to hold more meets in England like those of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and to encourage novices to learn climbing in the company of those who have more experience.

Gentlemen, I give you "Kindred Clubs," and especially the Alpine Club, for which Mr. Stutfield will reply.

In reply to the toast of "Kindred Clubs," the guest of the evening, Mr. H. E. M. STUTFIELD, well known as an explorer of mountainous regions in North Africa and North America, and as a hunter of mountain game, made the following remarks:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—When a fortnight ago I received your Committee's kind invitation to your annual dinner, I looked forward to

spending a cheerful evening. I then hoped and thought that any feeling of exhilaration or elevation that arose on this festive occasion would be the effect of something more agreeable and stimulating than the exuberance of my own verbosity ; but two days ago the blow fell. My friend, and your esteemed ex-President, Mr. Haskett-Smith, met me at the Alpine Club and said I should have to make a speech. He did not tell me what kind of speech, or what toast I was to reply to, but he generously gave me a very large licence, and told me I could say anything I liked. I will avail myself of that licence as far as possible. (Hear, hear—and “What you like we like” from Mr. Haskett-Smith.) You had better wait until I have finished ! I shall trust to your good nature, which I feel sure is unbounded, to forgive me if I ramble ; and I have no doubt you will accord me the kind consideration that one climber ought to receive from another.

But when I say “Climber,” I feel some doubt whether in a company like this I have any right to claim the title ; for here I feel myself surrounded by men who have made climbing a fine art. All of you, I believe, are the type of persons at whom old fogies in days gone by pointed the finger of scorn as “athletes” or “mere gymnasts,” and pelted with quotations from Ruskin about greased poles, etc. True, I have done a certain amount of climbing. Yes, as Mr. Slingsby reminds me, I have even been up that terrible crack on the Grépon. But there was a sturdy wight at the top of the crack with a strong rope ; and it was lucky the wight was sturdy and the rope was strong, as for a considerable time I think I was dependent on the support of the first, and dangling at the end of the second ! I have always had the idea—it may be wrong—that the Climbers’ Club is an association of acrobatically-minded gentlemen bound together by the most solemn oaths always to do the right thing in the wrong way. (Laughter.) By “the right thing,” I mean, of course, climbing mountains. By “the wrong way,” I mean always selecting the most difficult route. But here, of course, rises the question as to whether the most difficult way is necessarily the wrong way ; and this brings me by natural transition to another point. As Mr. Andrews has reminded you, there are represented here this evening a number of clubs, associations, and fraternities, who are devoted to the service of the mountains ; but, personally, I have only the right to speak on behalf of one, the Alpine Club. I wonder, by the way, what is the exact relationship between the Climbers’ Club and the Alpine Club, in the opinions of you gentlemen ! Do you consider the Alpine Club as your mother ? (“Grandmother.”) Or your elder sister ?—(Mr. Maude, “Maiden aunt”)—or, as suggested, your maiden aunt ? Anyhow, whatever the relationship may be, I think the Alpine Club possesses one characteristic common to most elderly female relations—she is very prodigal of good advice. She tells us, or used to tell us, how, when, and where we ought to take our holidays. If we are of a gregarious disposition and frequent Zermatt or Chamounix we are told we

are centrics. If we go elsewhere, we are eccentrics. We have been lectured as to where we ought to go, what we ought to climb, and the way we ought to climb it. I remember a discussion at the Alpine Club, not very long ago, as to the right way and the wrong way to climb a mountain. The subject seemed to be dealt with from every point of view except one—namely the point of view of the people most concerned. I, with the rashness and ardour of youth and inexperience, sprang into the fray, and hazarded the opinion that the only way to climb a mountain was the way the climber wanted to climb it;—(hear, hear)—and that the wrong way was the way he did not want to climb it. (Cheers.) From my heart, gentlemen, I thank you for those cheers, because I see that here at any rate my remarks have fallen on more congenial soil than they did at the Alpine Club. Well, gentlemen, the Climbers' Club, as I understand it, exists largely to climb mountains the wrong way. But then, as I said just now, the wrong way, if the climber likes to climb in that way, is the right way; and this seems to involve us in a logical dilemma. At this late hour, and after so good a dinner, my brain cannot solve it, so I will pass on.

I hope that you will not deem me unduly flippant in dealing with these matters, or that I do not fail to treat them with becoming seriousness. Indeed, I sometimes feel a doubt if mountaineering is a proper subject for jests at all. As a true Briton, and also as a member of the Alpine Club, I take my mountaineering pleasures, if not sadly, at any rate seriously. There are some people who say that Alpine climbers generally are disposed to take themselves and their mountaineering just a trifle too seriously. There may be something in the charge. I was reading the other day one of our greatest works on mountaineering, and with pride and gratification I learned that the mountaineer was "undoubtedly 'the noblest work of God.'" Of course, I knew this before, but it is always nice to be reminded of pleasant things. It is no wonder that we are a little uppish sometimes when people pat us on the back like that, and tell us all the nice things I have heard to-night. In my own case, however, pride and gratification were speedily followed by a mood of becoming humility. I reflected that though, as a climber, I was the salt of the earth, I was not necessarily the bread, the butter, the cheese, and the soup, fish, entrée, and joint, as well; and I resolved that henceforth I would endeavour to take myself and my mountaineering a little less seriously.

Now, gentlemen, this very festive gathering, where you are all enjoying yourselves so much, and where I should also be enjoying myself if Mr. Haskett-Smith had not commanded me in this brutal way to make a speech—I say this festive gathering shows me that you do not take yourselves and your favourite pastime too seriously. You, I am sure, treat your mountaineering as what it is, a sport, and nothing but a sport—a sport, no doubt, that (as we are frequently reminded) elevates and ennobles the mind, but one which loses half its savour and charm when it is treated too seriously, and turned into a business.

But I am drifting into a homily, and abusing the licence accorded me by Mr. Haskett-Smith. In the name of the Kindred Clubs, I beg to express to you our sense of obligation for the way in which you have received this toast. I do not think, by the way, we quite decided the exact relationship between the two clubs; but if, as I understand, the Alpine Club stands to you somewhat *in loco parentis*, I am very pleased to see that, in your case, the offspring treats the author of its being with a kindness, a courtesy and consideration such as parents, I fear, in these degenerate days, do not always receive from their children. (Loud applause.)

"The Visitors," Mr. RODERICK WILLIAMS :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I do not think I am better off than Mr. Hunter. He received his telegram last night, just the right length of notice, as his speech proves. I received mine many days ago: so many days ago that I thought it would be absurd to let it spoil all my meals. I therefore did as lazy men do, when they have too much time for the work in hand. I simply neglected it, meaning to prepare my speech in the train this afternoon, and in fact I did then begin it. But I had only just mapped out the headings and sub-headings under which my remarks might be conveniently divided, 15 or 16 of them—(laughter)—I think, when I went asleep; and when I awoke I was neither able to remember the headings nor read even the few notes I had made. Perhaps that is not altogether a misfortune, because if I had not slept then, you might all be asleep pretty soon. This is a toast that does not require any words to commend it to you. You know, from your past experience, that the toast of "The Visitors" has been your introduction to many eminent and eloquent gentlemen who have attended these dinners, and spoken in response to this toast; and I am quite sure that the traditions of the Club will be maintained to-night, and you will agree with me when I tell you that the Rev. Prebendary Dalton and Mr. George Miles will respond. I was told by one of our members, just before dinner, that one of the two gentlemen who are to respond is a climber and the other is not, and that the one who is not a climber has the lowest possible opinion of climbers, unless they happen to be authors who turn out excellent and abundant copy. I am pleased to be able to assure our visitor that many climbers are able to turn out copy, which may be correctly described by one or other of those epithets. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, I offer our hearty welcome to the two visitors who are going to respond to this toast: but I warn them that our welcome is not merely the idle impulse of hospitality. We have, as a Club, at least two distinct objects in asking visitors to our dinners. First, of course, the ever present desire to advertise. Just as an up-to-date merchant sends out free samples of his wares—and not the worst of them—in order that he may secure customers, so we ask visitors

to meet us when we are eating and drinking—when we are at our very best—in order that we may be able to secure them as members of the Club, and that they may, in good time, bring other visitors to share their fate. That object is common to all clubs. The other object is to avoid a little difficulty in which we should find ourselves at these dinners. It is an understood thing among climbers of mountains, that if one of them tells a story, every other climber who hears it is entitled, in retaliation, to tell a story of equal length and equal improbability; and it is recognised as bad form for the first storyteller to go to bed or show signs of weariness until all the other climbers have told their tales. Now, the same thing might happen to-night, because speeches are very like stories. The members of the Club, except those who have spoken, are all mentally preparing speeches which they propose, in retaliation, to deliver as soon as I sit down; but Mr. Bryant, who manages all our affairs generally, knowing that retaliation is going out of fashion, has ruled that those speeches shall not be delivered, but that the members of the Club shall be compensated by hearing two speeches from visitors who, not being members, may be expected to discuss subjects of general interest. (Laughter.) Having brought you up to that point, I cannot do better than leave you in the hands of the two gentlemen whose names I have given, and therefore I ask you to drink to the health of the visitors, coupled with the names of the Rev. Prebendary Dalton, and Mr. George Miles. (Hear, hear.)

The first response to the toast of “The Visitors” was made by the Rev. PREBENDARY DALTON:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—As you may well imagine, I have listened with very great interest to the speech just made, and I was wondering at first very much which of the two respondents I was figuring as, when I heard that one of the persons was a climber and one was not, but the moment I heard that one of them had a very poor opinion of climbers, I knew that description could not possibly refer to me, as, though I can hardly claim to be much of a climber myself, I have always had a high opinion of those who can. It has always been one of my regrets that I was never induced to climb until, unfortunately, I had reached the mature age of forty, and although in the last ten years I have tried to do a little of it, and have learned a great deal of the extreme fascination of it, I think most of the members of the Climbers' Club will agree with me that forty is a little too old to begin. (“No, no.”) However, gentlemen, though it was clear to me that I was not meant, and was not described as that someone who had the poor opinion of climbers, my opinion of climbers is not what it was. It has received a very rude shock to-night, I having hitherto understood and believed that climbers always kept that good old rule of “Early to bed

and early to rise." I know at least that when I have been on expeditions with climbers in Switzerland, I have suffered greatly at their hands in being pulled out of bed at two or three in the morning, and even once at midnight. How I have wished that they were not quite such early risers! But now that I find you going on talking until all sorts of hours, when I have a long eastward journey before me to-night, you will understand what a shock my opinion has received. Gentlemen, I most heartily thank you, in the name of all visitors, for your reception, and for the excellent entertainment, and for the kind way in which you have drunk our health. I am afraid I must acknowledge I was very ignorant of the aims and objects of the Climbers' Club. Naturally, I cannot but rejoice to learn that the Climbers' Club is educationally inclined. We are very strong on Education at the present time. I would suggest the education of the youth of England in the beauties and mysteries of the mountains. I remember, when I was living in a country village, one of my sisters went abroad, and was struck by the mountains, and when she came back she tried to describe to her Sunday school class of biggish lads in Essex the beauties of the mountains, and having done this for some half-hour with the great powers of teaching which she has, one of her boys looked up and said at the end, "And why don't they stub it up, Miss?" (Loud laughter.) She felt, I believe, that her powers of description had not rendered the charms of the mountains so effectively as she thought. There is a great field for all members of the Climbers' Club to try and instil into people—what it is quite impossible to instil into them until you have seen them—the beauties of the mountains, and so to interest them in turn in climbing. Then the members of the Club are to take out young climbers and train them in the right way. This is excellent, as I know from my experience of last summer. I took abroad a nephew of 15. I took him for a climb or two. I do not know that I shall attempt it again. I thought I was going to teach him something. I very soon learned that he was going to teach me. My experience is one which I should like to hand over. When we came in from an eleven hours' day, and the poor uncle thought it time to lie down and get a snooze, and suggested that we had been early up in the morning, and had better lie down—within a quarter of an hour afterwards he was invited to go out for a walk! (Laughter.) I considered that most cruel. There certainly is useful work to be done by members of the Climbers' Club if they will get hold of some of these untiring youths and take them out for a walk, and off the hands of their exhausted relatives, at the end of a long day's climb. But it is already getting late; we have listened to many excellent speeches, which have risen to great heights, and I am not a speechmaker. At least I will not play the restless nephew. I heartily thank you for the kind way in which you drank the health of the visitors, and turn to Mr. Miles, hoping to hear him speak a little more at length. (Applause.)

On the principle that minorities should be treated with fairness, Mr. GEORGE HERBERT MILES was invited to be the spokesman of those visitors (if any) who were not profoundly interested in climbing, and made the following observations:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I really must claim your indulgence to make a personal repudiation. I have been labelled a ‘non-climber’; but I well remember, and desire to state that about the middle of last century, before a good many of you were born or thought of, that I climbed to the top of Primrose Hill, and it appeared to me in those days a very big mountain, though I suppose you will rob me of any credit for that exploit by asserting that it was not a “first ascent.” It is true that when I was asked to dine here, I replied that I was not one of your lot. “Oh,” said my friend, “Never mind that! We will soon make you one.” Well, that’s easier said than done. Mr. Roderick Williams said that I admire your copy, but I don’t always copy what I admire—(laughter)—and besides I am afraid I am too old. (“No, no!”) You surely see that it is just as well for you that we are not all built in the same way, or else there would certainly not be enough mountains to go round. Even now you seem to travel pretty far afield in search of fresh ground, some of you to Ruwenzori in Central Africa, some to distant spots in the Andes or the Himalayas. To my mind, a mountain is rather a silly thing if you attempt to climb it. By great exertion, you get to a point which seems to you the actual top, only to discover that there is another peak above, and then another above that one; in fact it is ten to one that you never get there, because you get so sick of trying that you give it up, and come down again. (Laughter, and “He’s tried it.”) No, I haven’t. I prefer looking at a mountain from a respectful distance; you get it in better perspective. I studied the question at second hand a short while ago. I went to a play called “The Mountain Climber,” and one could not help wondering if it were a faithful picture of real life. That mountain climber at any rate seemed a bit of a fraud. Talk about fish stories! I think that many mountaineers must be fishermen in disguise. (Laughter.) Some of their stories are quite as tall. Still, gentlemen, you have your uses, and my fellow visitors will all agree with me that if you can climb as well as you have entertained us this evening, we hope that the next time you visit the mountains they will give you as hearty a welcome as you have given us. (Applause.)

The last item on the toast list was the health of “The President,” which was proposed by Mr. W. P. HASKETT-SMITH in these terms:—

Gentlemen,—It is only right to tell you at once that I have but one excuse for speaking to-night—the beaver’s—and that the Secretary has

none whatever for calling me up. It is surely more than a mere coincidence that the name "Bryant" contains  $83\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. of the letters which compose the word "Tyrant"—(laughter);—but I am bound to say that, in my case, he shewed himself a fairly remarkable tyrant: for I cannot complain, as did Mr. Donald Hunter, in his very amusing speech, that Mr. Bryant has spoilt two dinners for me. He has, in fact, only spoilt a portion, say about half of this one, because he came to me when we were a little way on — (laughter) — this evening. Do not imagine that either the Secretary or myself was "on," but the dinner was. He said it was all right, there would be no trouble at all, because Dr. Wakefield was the man the Club really wanted to hear, and it was only necessary for me to get that learned man to propose the present toast, and then I should not be wanted; but, in the unlikely event of Dr. Wakefield not consenting to do it, the members would have to put up with me. As Mr. Bryant, in his eagerness to enjoy the expected oratorical treat, had arranged that Dr. Wakefield should sit as near himself, and as far from his unhappy understudy, as the limits of this room permitted, it was not possible for me to bring much moral suasion to bear; but I relied on our Secretary, who, as we all know, is seldom beaten. He approached his victim cautiously, preparing to put forth all his powers of persuasion, but, to his surprise, nothing of the kind was required. The victim simply jumped at it, and said eagerly that he would gladly undertake the task, adding that he liked talking almost as much as walking, and that, if he once started on either, he did not usually stop under twenty-two hours. (Much laughter.) For the first time on record, the tyrant quailed. He fled in terror to about a dozen of the most brilliant members of this Club, who have never given us a speech, and asked each in turn if they would propose the health of the President. One and all replied that the praises of the President formed a subject so large that they would not dare to enter upon it. Nor is my courage greater than theirs. I shall only say that if, at this stage of a most festive evening, after fore-gathering with old comrades of the hills, and hearing delightfully wise and witty speeches, there is the faintest shade of melancholy lingering at the back of the brain of any person here, it is surely traceable to the fact that we are embarking upon the last twelve months of our worthy President's term of office.

As we listened to his glowing periods to-night, did they not seem to be tinged with those golden hues of autumn, which, by their very splendour, warn us that winter is at hand?

Two years have gone by since we saw our President stand a timid novice before us, begging, in tones of deepest pathos, to be informed whether he was an infant or an oil-can? (Laughter.) None of us was able to answer that conundrum then: possibly he has never found out since; but probably he has not been less happy on that account, and we



have endured a similar ignorance with tolerable equanimity. It is enough for us to know that he is "Slingsby"—(cheers)—and almost too much to know that, in another twelvemonth, we shall find ourselves passing out of his beneficent control. Let us then drink to our President, in the hope that for long years to come he may continue to be, as now, a *bona fide* "Climber," and that, for the next year, the cares of office may not prey upon the health of one of the most genial, and, at the same time, most practical Presidents that any Club could ever hope to possess. I give you "The President." (Prolonged cheers, and musical honours.)

In reply to the toast of "The President," Mr. W. CECIL SLINGSBY spoke as follows:—

Gentlemen,—I have been in a good many tight places in my life. I have been in many a tight place with the proposer of this resolution. Mr. Haskett-Smith has proposed my health before, but he has done on numerous occasions a very much more important service to me. Besides proposing my health, he has added to my health by leading me on grand mountain expeditions. Mr. Haskett-Smith speaks of me as an infant. I know he is very proud of that idea. He is awfully proud of it ever since he fished it out of his ingenious brain two years ago; but, gentlemen, he suggests by using it that I am very rapidly approaching second childhood. ("No, no!") That may come in future years, but I have no intention of giving up climbing for a good many years to come. (Cheers.) With regard to becoming a climber at the age of forty, I may tell my friends here that forty is a very reasonable age at which to begin, and I can always instance a great friend of mine who was invited here to-night, but unfortunately is not now in Great Britain, one of the most renowned climbers we have, and he did not begin until he was forty. (Cheers.) I thank you for the most cordial way in which you have drunk my health. Mr. Haskett-Smith reminds me that my tenure of office is coming to an end. That in one way is a great joy, because I shall not then have to prepare a speech. I can do some things in the way of climbing mountains, but cannot for the life of me make a decent speech. Gentlemen, I shall not appear in this position before the Climbers' Club again, though I believe that in a very few weeks' time I have to take a similar position before the Northern Section. A short time ago I was saying what a good idea it was to establish a Northern Section. I now believe it to have been a great mistake, for when I think I have to preside at one of their dinners I rather doubt my judgment. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, brevity is the soul of wit. For once I will be brief. I thank you. (Applause.)

## THE NORTHERN DINNER.

ON the 17th March, 1906, at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, the Annual Northern Dinner of the Club was held. This was the second occasion of the Northern members meeting together at dinner, and the gathering was again a success.

Prior to the dinner a short business meeting was held. The President of the Club (W. C. Slingsby, Esq.) seemed almost to resent the intrusion of serious talk into a festive congregation of climbers, but the proceedings did not last many minutes. Mr. E. A. Baker reported his impending removal to London, and consequent inability to remain on the Northern Committee. Professor Wilberforce retired also, and Messrs. Adam Fox, A.C., and P. Spencer, were elected to the vacant positions.

It is hoped that the Committee will be able to arrange attractive meets for the members of the Club, and that these arrangements will be taken advantage of. The writer has in mind certain contracts for the engagement of rooms at Gorphwysfa at the New Year, and subsequent efforts to appease Mrs. Owen under circumstances which might very well have formed grounds for an action for breach of contract, owing to some of the promised guests not putting in an appearance. It must be said that Mrs. Owen behaved very handsomely in the matter, and those who did pay a visit to Gorphwysfa have nothing but praise for her ministrations to their comfort.

There were some very distinguished guests at the Dinner. There was the great, but modest, Horace Walker; also another mighty peak-hunter, F. Gardiner. G. A. Solly,

T. E. Goodeve (of the Yorkshire Ramblers), W. F. Machray (of the *Liverpool Post*), and Mr. Hechle, were amongst the visitors. The President of the Club presided on this occasion, and all the members of the Northern Committee, and also the Hon. Sec. of the Club, were present, the whole company numbering between 40 and 50.

After the loyal toasts had been drunk, the President proposed "the Club." He said that in the British islands there are only two professional guides. One of these is in Skye, a most appropriate place for those who seek to reach the heavens; the other is a winter visitor from Dauphiné, who endeavours to acquire a knowledge of classical English from the farmers on the Cumbrian Hills. The President gave a little practical hint about the use of the rope, for, he said, its true use was never made on the Continent until it was learned on British mountains. In the belaying of a rope, a climber frequently interposes the hitch between the man to be belayed and himself. There should be a clear rope, as a rule, between these two; the belay being for the purpose of holding the "fixed" man if the strain should come upon him, whilst he himself should act as a kind of buffer between the moving man and the belay, in case of a slip. He thought the Climbers' Club had been the salvation of many young and energetic men who have been unable to continue their school or university sports, and has therefore done excellent service.

Mr. J. Walter Robson responded. He said the Club, though young, was to be congratulated on having its initials still unfilched. The Alpine Club—the well known "A.C."—had been robbed by the Automobile Club, whilst a "Winter Alpine Club" recently promoted, flung down the inference that the mother of mountaineering associations was but a fair-weather Club. Think of these insults to the honourable name and long line of heroes of the Alpine Club! It is filching worse than that of the Broomseller, whose fellow merchant stole the bristles for his brushes, but who himself stole the brushes ready made, and could therefore undersell all competitors. It was to be hoped that notwithstanding the

dramatic farce, "The Mountain Climber," the Climbers' Club would long remain and flourish. The moral strength and the exhilaration of fellowship were only two of a large number of advantages of the Club. The Committee should take into consideration further benefits to members, such as an extra one or even two numbers of the *Journal* per annum, a few Club Huts, and a rebate of say 75 % off all Hotel Bills.

Professor Wilberforce proposed "Kindred Clubs." He emphasized the remarks of the President on hitching a rope. John Robinson, his first tutor in climbing, taught him this, the correct method. Mr. Robson had referred to the optimism of climbers. He (the speaker) thought that, as an optimist was said to be a man who attends to the eyes, and a pessimist one who attends to the feet, a climber ought always to be a pessimist. Climbing down is more difficult than climbing up, and it might be a useful result of the Algeciras Conference that the German Emperor should show us the true art of "climbing down." He was, however, a child in these matters.

Mr. Horace Walker replied on behalf of the Alpine Club. He was glad to be present, as an old climber. He had made the first ascent of Mount Ararat (since the flood), and also that at Mont Blanc, by the Brenva route. The latter ascent was a memorable one, and the painting of the Brenva glacier, which Miss Hechle had kindly lent that evening, was a very true representation, and recalled vividly that famous excursion. He had also led the President to the summit of Mont Blanc, without guides. His sister, Miss Walker, had also done with him a number of climbs. He had had the pleasure of proposing Mr. Slingsby as a member of the Alpine Club, and might assure the Climbers' Club that the A.C., its parent, regarded it with sympathy.

Mr. T. E. Goodeve replied for the "Yorkshire Ramblers." He thought one essential feature of mountaineering was that individual wishes were merged in the common good.

Mr. G. L. Collins, A.C., proposed "The Visitors." "I will not call you 'gentlemen.' I know you too well." As the

first duty of a climber who is not leading is to do what he is told, he consented to propose the toast. He, however, in the prospect of having to make a speech, felt like the bereaved husband at his wife's funeral, who was ordered by the undertaker to ride in the first carriage with his mother-in-law. "Ay," said he, "I'll do it; but tha's spoiled my day!" The visitors were not strangers, but pilgrims—in fact the Club was entertaining angels unawares. He coupled with the toast the names of Messrs. Gardiner, A.C., and Solly, A.C. Dr. Gell, of the Yorkshire Ramblers; Mr. Machray (as representing literature); Mr. Ernest Cottam (who, the President vouched, was an excellent all round sportsman, and deadly with the golf club and the gun); Mr. Hechle (an old friend, and father of Miss Hilda Hechle, the painter of the picture referred to).

Mr. G. A. Solly replied. He said he lived only two miles away, whilst Mr. Collins, who came from Rochdale, had proposed his health as a visitor! However, he would no longer submit to be a visitor, but would join the Climbers' Club. As long as wind and limb allow, climbers and lovers of mountains will go up every mountain they can. In these days of cheap tours, why should not every one see the Alps? If he could speak as a non-climber, he would say, be thankful to the early climbers, who have shown us the possibilities of the mountains, and how to taste the pleasures of life on the high peaks of the Alps. Mr Solly closed his speech with a quotation of some verses—doubtless some lines from Tennyson's "Lotos Eaters"—beginning "As me and my companions!"

Mr. A. F. Machray also replied. He thought it required a good head to be able to climb; speaking for himself, his head had already gone round a good deal, but he was still able to express his pleasure at being present. Mr. Collins had classed his profession amongst those appertaining to literature. Probably, therefore, as a newspaper man, he was invited, with a lively sense of favours to come. Newspaper reports of climbing accidents were, he thought, closely analysed by

the Climbers' Club, and in this they doubtless did a good work. Climbers were incapable of meanness, or ought to be, for they were bound to take lofty views.

Mr. G. B. Bryant proposed "The Northern Sub-Committee." He specially referred to Mr. E. A. Baker, a member of that body, and the convener of this year's dinner. In conferring about the arrangements, Baker had suggested the advantages of having speakers who were "fresh," and he himself desired to be excused. Referring to the composition of the Sub-Committee, Baker was a distinguished member of it, and additionally so on account of his literary contributions in connection with climbing. His book on "Derbyshire Craggs," his admirable "Anthology of the Mountains," and his excellent articles in the *Journal*, entitled him to the gratitude of the Club. The gentlemen of the Northern Sub-Committee had, he hoped, found fresh foothold for the progress of the Club.

Mr. E. A. Baker replied. No one could lay better claim to modesty than he, for he prided himself on an almost morbid modesty. He was, for oratorical purposes, a man of straw, but could at any rate return thanks on behalf of the Northern Sub-Committee. Collectively, they were a fine body of men. It was a deep laid scheme of Bryant's to pay all the compliments to one man, because these were compliments to himself as Hon. Secretary. Bryant was the real Atlas, who accomplishes the great feat of balancing mountaineers on his skull.

The last toast was that of "The President," proposed by Mr. Roderick Williams. He said that the only things he knew about the President were so favourable that they could not be expressed in ordinary terms. He knew nothing against the President. He could only object to his remark that it was a terrible thing to look on the faces of those present. He knew but one thing that was mildly hostile against him. On one occasion he (the speaker) had told a lady — probably swagging about it also — that he was a member of the Climbers' Club. The lady said, "Then

perhaps you know Slingsby?" He replied, "I have been hearing about nothing else since I came to Norway." Was this Slingsby a myth, or did he own the whole of Norway? He has made the Lakes, the Alps, and especially Norway his own. He has made this Club his own, and they were proud of him. They wished him long life and prosperity.

The President returned thanks, and said he hoped the Club would be welded into one perfect whole. He only wished for its prosperity. There had been a good deal of romancing that evening. Horace Walker had romanced, but the solid facts of his brilliant achievements remained. He (the President) was arriving at that time of life when he would welcome the Jungfrau railway and other artificial means of arriving at mountain summits. He thanked the proposer of the all too flattering toast, and hoped for the opportunity of sitting at many Club dinners, if not as President, as an ordinary member.

The gathering dispersed at about 10:30 p.m.



## REVIEWS.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL. No. 49.  
January, 1906.

THIS number is even more excellently illustrated than usual! The frontispiece shows the well-known formidable bit on the famous Crowberry Ridge—direct route. A view of Coire Mhic Fhearchair at page 40 is really magnificent, and makes one wish the place were more accessible. "Buchaille Etive" from Kingshouse is another charming plate.

The three articles are of local interest, and the further instalment of the S. M. C. Guide Book steers the wanderer through a part of Britain which is unknown to the vast majority of even travelled Englishmen.

THE CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL. No. 26. January, 1906.

THIS number contains a photo. of the energetic Secretary of the Club and Editor of the Journal, Mr. A. I. McConnochie; also one of the Club's youngest members, aged apparently 9. The photo. of the Secretary is, of course, of general interest, but, speaking frankly, we think the second might have been dispensed with.

We notice our enthusiastic member, Mr. E. A. Baker, has again been exploring in the far North-West Highlands, and contributes an article, entitled "At the Head of Loch Maree."

The geologist, and those interested in the meaning of place-names, will both find something to interest them in this number.



## COMMITTEE NOTES.

THE following gentlemen have been elected to the Club :—

John Egbert James, Esq., "The Laurels," Wellingborough.

E. B. Harris, Esq., United Service Club, Calcutta.

H. J. Synnott, Esq., Innismore, Glenageary, Co. Dublin.

John Henry Hobbins, Esq., Wilmslow, Cheshire.

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AT the Committee Meeting of March 8th, Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith was re-elected an extra member of the Committee, under Rule III. Mr. Thomas Meares was elected an ordinary member of the Committee.

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THE following members resigned their membership as from the 1st January, 1906 :—

Mr. C. Stewart King.

Mr. L. A. Legros.

Mr. P. Watson.

Mr. Millican Dalton.

During the year 1905 the Club had the misfortune to loose through death the following members :—

Mr. C. E. Mathews.

Mr. J. M. Nicol.

Mr. Douglas Southgate.

Mr. Felix M. Levi.

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ON Saturday, 24th March, 1906, at 8.30 p.m., at the Inns of Court Hotel, High Holborn, London, W.C., a very interesting paper on "British Glaciers and Peat Bogs" was read by Francis John Lewis, Esq., Ph.D. An account of this paper will appear in another number of the *Climbers' Club Journal*.



