

THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

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[No. 46

EARLY INTEREST IN MOUNTAINEERING.

IT has often been stated that before the time of the Alpine Club, which recently celebrated its jubilee, and even for some years after the date of its foundation, the public took little or no interest in mountain adventure, and regarded it merely as a form of lunacy, for no explanation could readily be found. When, however, we turn to the literature of the period preceding 1857, we find that the charm of mountaineering was, at least, intelligible to a much wider circle than we have been led to suppose. Publishers and editors are remarkably good judges of public interest, and in certain magazines of that time we find that exploits among the mountains were regarded as excellent "copy." Take, for example, "The Recreation" for 1845, published by John Menzies of Edinburgh and W. Orr of London. It contains an article on "An attempt to ascend Mount Wellington," by "Mr. Huggins, a youth of delicate frame, and a person of the name of Cooper." The attempt was soon frustrated, and ended disastrously for the youth, and most uncomfortably for the person.

"They proceeded up the mountain towards that part where the tall basaltic columns so visible on a clear day and deep chasms oppose any further progress. They were puzzled at the difficulties and determined to return." However, they

seem to have lost their way at once ; the stronger of the two struggled down after five days of privation and the other was never seen again. The next article of Alpine interest describes a "Perilous Ascent" in Spitzbergen, undertaken in the course of Capt. Buchan's Voyage of Discovery to the North Pole in 1818. "One of our earliest excursions in Magdalene Bay was an attempt to ascend the peak, which I have described as Rotge Hill, upon which may now perhaps be seen a staff that once carried a red flag, which was planted there to mark the greatest height that we were able to attain, partly in consequence of the steepness of the ascent, but mainly on account of the detached masses of rock, which a very slight matter would displace and hurl down the precipitous declivity to the utter destruction of him who depended upon their support, or who might happen to be in their path below. The latter part of our ascent was indeed much against our inclination, but we found it impossible to descend by the way we had come up and were compelled to gain a ledge, which promised the only secure resting-place we could find at that height." As became sailors, they were evidently climbers of resource as well as agility, and completed the ascent by remarkable means—"striking the tomahawks with which we were provided into crevices in the rock, as a support for our feet ; and some of these instruments we were obliged to leave where they were driven in, in consequence of the danger that attended their recovery." Shortly after this the bold sailors were taught something of the dangers which attend a *glissade*. A sailor of the name of Spinks "began his descent by seating himself and digging his heels into the snow, the surface of which had been glazed and rendered hard. He got on very well at first, but presently his foot slipped, or the snow was too hard for his heel to make any impression, and he began to descend at a rapid pace, keeping his balance, however, by means of his hands. His speed becoming accelerated in a very short time his descent was fearfully quick, the fine snow flew about him like dust, and there seemed to be but little chance of his reaching the bottom in safety. . . . but Spinks, with great

presence of mind and dexterity, to use his own expression, by holding water first with one hand and then the other, contrived to escape the danger, and like a skilful pilot to steer his vessel into a place of refuge midst a bed of soft snow." It was a fortunate escape, and the intrepid glissader did not come off quite scatheless, for, as the narrative delicately expresses it, "he had worn away two pairs of trowsers and something more."

The next item is literally Alpine, for it is a description by an unnamed American clergyman of the celebrated landslide in 1806, near the Rigi in Switzerland. However, so much has been written of that catastrophe, from Lord Byron downwards, that we must pass on at once to "A week among the Glaciers," which is a very full account of the ascent of Mont Blanc, taken from *Silliman's Journal of Science*. The ascent was not completed, as the party did not get beyond the Grand Plateau; but the writer makes some very acute observations on several interesting points, such as the movements of glaciers, the formation of crevasses; avalanches, and the effects of rarified air.

He did one rather unusual thing in having half-a-dozen pigeons carried up from Chamonix to be released at the Grand Mulets. To his surprise the birds did not fly away, "proving that the rarity of the air was too great to admit of their supporting themselves," which certainly seems to be a conclusion somewhat rashly drawn. There has been a tendency among the historians of Mont Blanc to overlook or despise the narratives of all who failed to complete the ascent, but these are by no means always the least interesting.

We pass on to yet another mountain ascent, though here it must be admitted that the main interest is historical. It is the ascent of Mount Sinai, described in some detail as following "a narrow steep ravine," of which the ascent is "difficult and extremely laborious." As, however, the summit of the mountain was reached in two hours and a quarter, the severity of the ascent was probably not much greater than that of Rossett Gill.

There is one more mountaineering episode given — an “Ascent of the Puy de Dome,” made, it would appear, by ladies under a female guide, an exceedingly rare occurrence, and one of which the newly-formed Ladies’ Alpine Club should certainly take notice. The story being merely copied from Miss Costello’s well-known book need not detain us long, especially as there is little of the sensational about the Puy de Dome, except the steepness of the angle at which turf grows, but it all helps to show that even a dozen years before the ascent of the Wetterhorn there was being developed in the British public a very decided appetite for stories of mountain adventure.



ROCK CLIMBING IN THE TENTH CENTURY.

By H. CANDLER.

THE following extracts from old Northern Sagas are of special interest as shewing that rock climbing was a recognized form of sport amongst the Vikings. The story of the rescue of the climber who got "stuck" appears in two versions of Olaf Tryggvason's Saga. The peak of the Smalshorn, referred to in the extract from the *Heimskringla*, as ascended by King Olaf, appears to be identical with the Hornelen (2855 feet), a very precipitous mountain at the eastern extremity of the large island of Bremanger at the entrance of the Nordfjord. That Olaf could climb up and down steep rocks burdened with another man's weight may appear open to doubt, but he was a man of exceptional physique, and an instance of his extraordinary skill in balancing himself is given in the *Fornmanna Sögur*, where it is told that he walked round the outside of his longship *over the oars* whilst the men were rowing, throwing up and catching three handsaxes (short swords) as he went.

(King Olaf Tryggvason fell in battle in the year 1000 A.D.).

"King Olaf was of all men told of the most of prowess in Norway in all matters; stronger was he and nimbler than any, and many are the tales told hereof. One, to wit, how he went up the Smalshorn, and made fast his shield to the topmost of the peak; and withal how he helped a courtman of his who had clomb up before him on to a sheer rock in such wise that he might neither get up nor down; but the king went to him

and bore him under his arm down into a level place." (*Vide* Heimskringla, Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, c. xcii. Translated by Morris & Magnussen in Vol. 3 of the Saga Library, p. 340 (Quaritch); also Index II., Names of Places, Vol. 4, p. 279.)

"King Olaf had brought his ships into a haven, close to which was a very high crag with exceeding steep precipices, and it happened one day that two of the King's guardsmen were talking about their accomplishments, each thinking himself a better athlete than the other, and more expert in all feats of activity. They fell into dispute as to whether of the two was the more skilful in climbing steep rocks, and argued the matter with so much heat that at length they made a wager upon it, one of them laying his head against a gold bracelet of the other.

After their angry dispute and the laying of the wager, the two began to climb the rock. One advanced until he reached a dangerous spot and was on the point of falling, but made his way back in terror, and succeeded, though with the utmost difficulty, in escaping uninjured. The other, advancing further, came higher up on the face of the mountain. Here he neither dared go forward nor return, nor even stir, for there was but little hold either for hand or foot. Into such a position of extreme peril had he come that a fall was imminent, and certain death stared him in the face, if he should make the slightest attempt to move from the spot. In great terror he began to call out for the help of King Olaf or his men.

King Olaf heard his cry, and when he learned the cause of it, bade his followers save the man. "So valiant a deed," said he, "if one could succeed in it, would make a man a nobler fellow." But seeing none come forward to make the attempt, he threw off his cloak and set off. Up the rock he ran towards the man, and coming to a level spot near him took hold of him

under the arms and climbed yet further up the face of the precipice.

Then still holding the man under the arms, the King turned back down the rock, and set him unhurt on level ground. All present confessed King Olaf's feat to be a deed of lofty courage, and it became widely celebrated afterwards."

(*Vide* The Saga of King Olaf Tryggvason, Fornmanna Sögur, translated by the Rev. J. Sephton. The Northern Library, C. 238, pp. 393-4 (David Nutt).

N.B.—The verses by Hallarstein the Skald, which add no details to the story, are omitted.

Haering, the hero of the following enterprise, seems to have been actuated as much by a sheer love of climbing as by desire to fight the battles of his friend. Drangey, the scene of his exploit, is an island in the Skagafjödr on the north coast of Iceland.

"A young man he was, and so lithe that there was no cliff that he might not climb." Grettir had taken refuge on an inaccessible holm called Drangey, which could only be reached by ladders which he kept drawn up. Haering dwelt with Grettir's chief enemy and kept urging him to go to Drangey "saying that he would fain see whether the cliffs were so high that none might come up them. . . . So they fared to Drangey, and set the eastman (Haering, who was a Norwegian, visiting Iceland) ashore in a certain place," while they laid the boat by the ladders and kept Grettir and his fellows in talk. "But of Haering it is to be told that he climbed the cliffs going on the right and on the left, and got up by such a road as no man had gone by before or since." But he was seen before he could make an attack unawares, and Grettir's brother went in chase of him here and there over the island "while the island lasted, but, when he came forth on to the cliff's edge, Haering leapt down

thence and every bone in him was broken, and so ended his life ; but the place where he was lost has been called Haering's Leap ever since." (*Vide* Gretti's Saga. Translated by Morris & Magnussen, pp. 222-4. (F. S. Ellis.))

It is probable that these quotations embody the earliest historical record of rock-climbing extant.



LAKE COUNTRY PLACE NAMES.

STY.

By W. P. HASKETT-SMITH.

WE now come to a word which has more of a climbing flavour about it than either THWAITE or HOW. Although names bearing this termination have been cited by some in jest and by others in all seriousness as a proof of the esteem in which our Teutonic ancestors held pork and bacon, the situation in which they occur is usually so well marked that the meaning declares itself at first sight as "a road by which a ridge is crossed." Add to this that in the North the same word "stee" is in daily use with the meaning of ladder, and that the root STIG occurs in nearly all Teutonic languages with the meaning of "ascend," and there will be no need to linger over the question of what the word means; but there remain the questions of its distribution and of the mode in which it is compounded with other words.

It is very frequent in Cumberland, Westmoreland, Lancashire and Yorkshire, all of which are hilly countries, though in the last-named the word occurs in places where the sense of ascent is not particularly obvious, and reminds us of the Dutch "steg," meaning a lane. There are a few cases in Derbyshire, and many others scattered about the country, which may or may not contain the same element.

In composition it is occasionally used for a prefix, as in Sty Head, Sty Knotts (C. 88), Sty Beck (at the foot of the Sticks Pass), Sty rigg (W. 25), Sty thwaite (W. 18), Sty barrow crag (on Ullswater), (though it may be worth mentioning that the last-named is found as Starbury Crag in 1776); but in the vast majority of cases it is a suffix, appended almost always

to a personal name, often of Scandinavian character, though some of the commonest of these names are not represented. It only remains to note some of the disguises which the word assumes :—

-cety : in Gracety Moor should perhaps be written Graysty Moor, with which we may compare Graythwaite.

-cy : Lucy Close is pronounced Loosty Close, which recalls Lewthwaite.

-tley : Swaintley Clough was formerly Swanesty Clough.

-chede, -chety : Catchedecam is usually regarded as a corruption of Catstycam, though the explanation frequently added that "the pass of the wild cat" is intended must almost certainly be rejected. It is, however, worth noting that on the opposite side of the range, and some five miles to the North, we have Cacheetygill, which to some extent supports the earlier method of spelling.

-sthigh : The fell near the pass out of Bretherdale is called Breast High, which may stand for Brethersty.

-ster : Conceivably in Honister and one or two other cases. We have seen in a former article that *-ber* and *-by* are sometimes exchanged.

-sey : Possibly in Swainsey Crag (W.) and several others.

The word does not appear in Taylor's *Words and Places* ; but Ferguson says it was "added to the names of those to whose dwelling it led." He cites Ketilstig from Iceland and Stygfjeld from Norway, but the latter is perhaps rather an instance of the Norse adjective, meaning "ugly."

In the South of England we must be on our guard against the suffix "tey" or "tegh," preceded by the possessive "s." The safest evidence of genuineness is afforded when the word is in composition with other elements, which are elsewhere found combined with words of undoubted Scandinavian type. Accordingly, in the following list P. is set against those examples which contain a Scandinavian personal name, and

H. T. against those which are found elsewhere with "how" or "thwaite" replacing "sty."

- | | |
|---|---|
| Ain- (Y.). | Ha- Brow (L. 30) and Ha- Mire (L. 8) T. H. |
| An- (Devon and Sussex). | Hubber- (W. 37) P. |
| Bea- Bank (L. 19) T. | Ibul- (Derb.) P. compare the surname Ebbblethwaite. |
| Benne- Knot (C. 65) T. H. | Kid- Pike (W.) H. |
| Bran- (C. 67) occurs as Bransti in 1338. P. T. | Legham- (Derb.). |
| Brea- How (L. 5) T. | Lu- Close (C. 62) P. H. T. |
| Bring- Common (Heref.). | Mane- (C. head of Derwentwater) P. T. |
| Cat- Cam (C.) H. | Pil- Farm (Sussex). |
| Corpu- (Suff.). | Stone- Gill (C. 80) P. T. H. |
| Cow- Moss (W. 27) T. H. | Swane- How (C. 70) P. |
| Cump- (L. 38). | Swin- How (C. 80), Gill (C. 80) P. |
| Dolphin- (W. 36) P. | Thorphin- (L. 8) P. H. |
| Gib- Wood (L. 7) P. | Whelp- How (C. 86) P. H. |
| Gor- (Heref.) probably an adjective formed from "gorst," now "gorse." | Wol- Close (C. 20) P. T. H. |
| Gray- Moor (W. 29) P. T. | Yea- Rigg (C. near Esk Hause) P. |



THE MONOLITH CRACK.

By ARTHUR E. RIDDETT.

(Photographs by L. C. F. Nash.)

THIS climb has been described as being a gymnastic feat rather than rock-climbing, and to some extent this is true. It certainly is the former, but I strongly protest against thus limiting the definition, inasmuch as no one who has not had some previous experience on rocks (or perhaps I should say, between them) however acrobatic he may be, ought to attempt the climb.

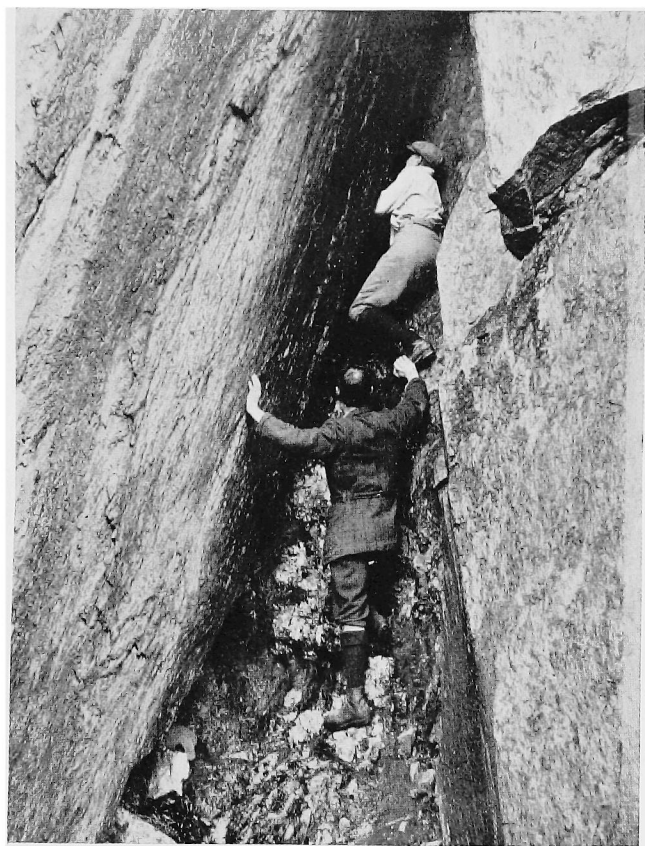
In support of my protest—and because I believe there is only one detailed description of the climb extant, viz.: that in Messrs. Abrahams' book—which is very inadequate—I am tempted to give an account of the climb which was made by Mr. E. F. Nash and myself in September of last year (1909).

The weather was bad—in fact I have since seen the rain of that period, which was more than usually persistent, described by one who came under its influence as “liquid ropes,”—but the Monolith Crack may fairly be considered a bad-weather climb, since the Crack, or at least that part of it up which the actual climbing is made, is very little affected by the rain.

From Gorphwysfa, where we were staying, an interesting way to the foot of the Crack is over Glyder Fawr (keeping to the N. W. of the summit) and down the Screes to the east of the Devil's Kitchen, and then along the east side of Llyn Idwal as far as the iron railings, which should then be followed until they reach the Gribin, when the crack will be seen a few yards to the left.

The climb comprises four pitches, the first and fourth being very simple. With the exception of the first, each

No. I.



pitch should be climbed with the face to the left wall. This is important, because in none of the pitches (except at the finish of the third), when once started, is there any possibility of turning round.

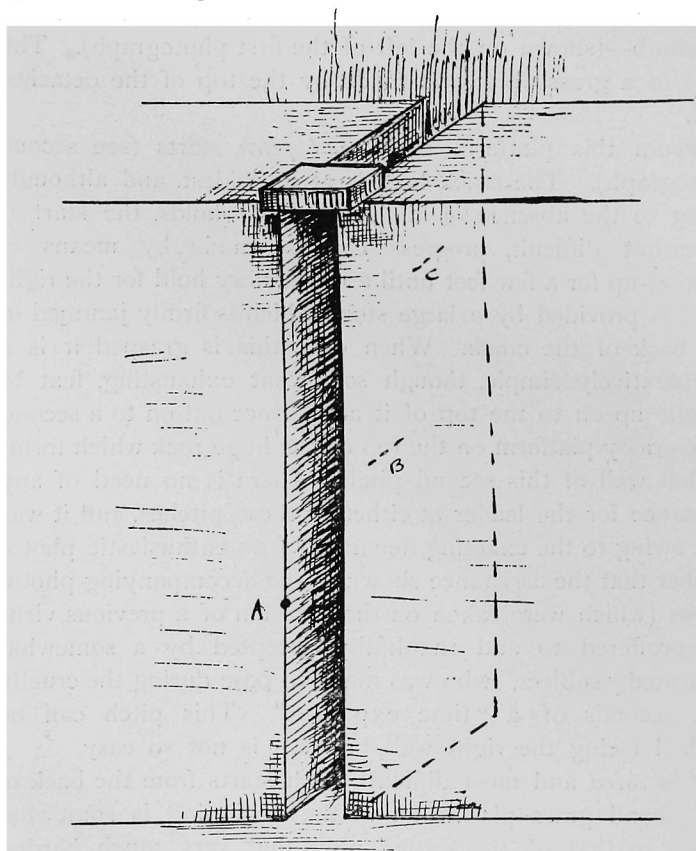
The first pitch entails a short and easy scramble up behind the huge detached rock, or monolith, which gives its name to the climb—(shown on the left of the first photograph). This leads to a grassy platform made by the top of the detached rock.

From this platform *the second pitch* starts (see second photograph). The crack here is at its widest, and although, owing to the absence of all hand or foot-holds, the start is somewhat difficult, progress can be made by means of backing-up for a few feet until a satisfactory hold for the right hand is provided by a large stone which is firmly jammed in the back of the crack. When once this is grasped it is a comparatively simple, though somewhat exhausting, feat to wriggle up on to the top of it and thence out on to a second large grassy platform on the top of the huge rock which forms the left wall of this second pitch. There is no need of any assistance for the leader at either of these pitches, and it was only owing to the exacting demands of an enthusiastic photographer that the assistance shown in the accompanying photographs (which were taken on the occasion of a previous visit) was proffered to and thankfully accepted by a somewhat exhausted "subject," who was made to pose during the cruelly long seconds of a "time exposure." This pitch can be climbed facing the right wall, but this is not so easy.

The third and most difficult pitch starts from the back of this second grass platform and the beginning is somewhat similar to that of the second pitch, but very much harder. This pitch is about 40 feet in height and from start to finish is so narrow that when one ultimately emerges at the top not only one's knees and elbows but even one's chest and shoulder-blades are sore and tender—to say nothing of the tips of the fingers and nose!

"Backing-up"—as usually understood—is impossible, and,

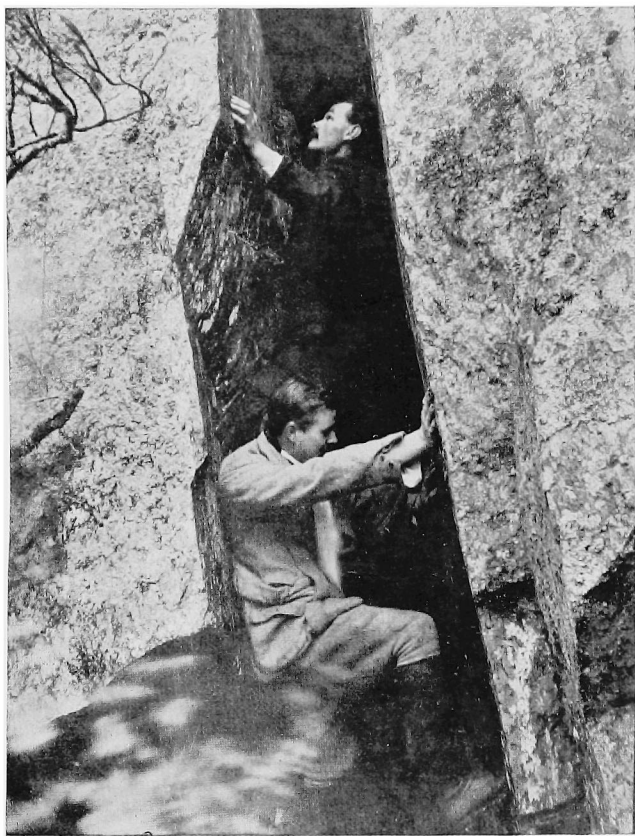
as there are absolutely no holds of any description for the first 18 feet or so of this pitch, it is difficult to say exactly how one does get up. The method of progress cannot be better described than it is by Messrs. Abraham, viz. :—"a series of spasmodic caterpillar-like movements."



Formal Diagram to show holds in the third pitch of the Monolith Crack.

To start this pitch without the assistance of a shoulder—and even a head—to walk on, is so exhausting that it may almost be considered justifiable (subject, of course, to any observations the owner of the head may think fit to make) for the leader to put his pride in his pocket—from which, if he is

No. II.



wise, he will have already removed his sandwiches—and gaily prance about on the head of his long-suffering second, who should jam himself firmly in the bottom of the crack. By this means the leader will reserve his energy for the upper part of the crack—and, incidentally, for the inevitable argument anent “combined tactics.”

In this pitch the key to the situation is a very small but “thankfully received” finger-hold on the extreme outside edge of the left wall about 16 feet up (A in diagram). If this is used, first as a left hand-hold, and later as a foot-hold, the most difficult part of the climb can be overcome, but the difficulty is to reach it. Mr. Nash tells me that in aid of the above mentioned spasmodic caterpillar-like wriggles he was afforded considerable assistance at critical moments, when all hand and foot-holds seemed to vanish, by deep inhalations—the effect of which, in a narrow crack, must be obvious to the merest tyro! However, I had found more substantial support by occasionally jamming my right boot across the crack—which is slightly narrower than the length of an average climbing boot—and by pressing my elbows against the right wall (behind me) and the palm of my hands fingers downwards against the left wall (in front). This must be tried to be appreciated!

Above this microscopic, but satisfying, foothold for about 15 feet the course lies slightly inwards, *i.e.*, towards the back of the crack, until a small ledge in the right wall affords a safe resting place for the right heel (B in diagram). Another similar ledge (C) in the same wall, a little higher up and still further in, can then be used for the left elbow, and, later on, for the left foot, whence the rest of the pitch—about 12 feet—is comparatively easy.* A large boulder has fallen and lodged in the top of the crack at the outside, and in Messrs. Abrahams’ book there is a description of how the leader found it impossible to go up behind this boulder and how, instead, he came out of the crack and went over the outside of it. This

* The crack at this point becomes wider, and it is best, while standing on this small ledge (c), to turn round and finish the climb facing the right wall.

must indeed have seemed a sensational finish to his climb having regard to the exhausted state in which he found himself at this point, but it is quite unnecessary. By keeping well inside the crack until the head is on a level with the boulder, and then by wriggling up on to the top of it from the inside, the last ten feet can be climbed with comparative ease and safety.

The leader can sit behind this boulder and watch the struggles of his second with complacency.

The best of the climbing is now over, as the *fourth pitch*, which starts close by, gives very little trouble, although the difficulties of a small overhanging stone seem somewhat exaggerated by reason of the exhausted condition of one's muscles.

It is an easy and pleasant return journey *via* Bochlwyd, Bwlch Tryfaen and the track across to P-y-G.

There is no doubt the climb, though its dangers have hitherto been somewhat overrated, is a difficult and exhausting one, and should not be attempted until the climber is in good physical condition ; and, inasmuch as it is very destructive alike to the clothing, the patience, and the person, it may well be reserved for the last day of an otherwise peaceful holiday.

It is well known that the first ascent of this climb is claimed by the brothers Abraham, but not long ago when attending one of the Promenade Concerts at the Queen's Hall, I had a descriptive account of the music then being played thrust into my hand which almost seems to throw a doubt on this claim. This descriptive account included the following passages :—

“It suggests the imminence of something solemn and “supernatural and provokes a sense of anxiety, and disquiet “swelling into fear and horror . . . the wind gives out a “few preliminary chords and is then joined by the strings in “passages which are ‘expressive of grief in all its varied “shades.’

“The energetic, yet mysterious, figure already described “dominates the entire movement . . . and we find our-

"selves transported without a break from the inscrutable dusk
"of the *Scherzo* to the daylight splendour of the *Finale* . . .
"after this there is a return to the introductory theme and a
"second climax leads to the conclusion of the work . . .
"a rapid descending scale forms the conclusion of the ex-
"position."

And what could better describe the feelings of a long-suffering second (who is lending a shoulder) than the following? :—"Towards the close of the movement an ascending passage, based upon the second subject, conveys a suggestion of indomitable and aspiring will-power . . . the sorrow-laden soul derives a rapture of resignation which has never found utterance in such intimate tones as here," until perhaps—"a passage of broken octaves presently occurs in the solo part, and with a rapid descending scale this section closes like the exposition."

Can it be that the first ascent was made by Messrs. Mozart, Bach and Beethoven, and that they thus "put the words to music?"



SOME LATER CLIMBS ON ROBIN HOOD'S STRIDE AND CRATCLIFF TOR.

By HENRY BISHOP.

UNDOUBTEDLY Cratcliff Tor and Robin Hood's Stride, some $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-west of Rowsley, furnish one of the best practice grounds for the climber whose lot is cast in Derbyshire. A very pleasant week-end's scrambling may be had here—Alport, about twenty minutes' walk from the climbs, being the best headquarters. Cratcliff farm, at the foot of the rocks, is also available ; it has homely accommodation for four (two beds).

Not only is the sport really good, but it is enjoyed amidst attractive scenery, with fine panoramic views towards Peakland and the heights near Matlock. Of the Boulder and Traverse Route, on the "Inaccessible" Pinnacle of Robin Hood's Stride, the Owl Gully and the North Climb on Cratcliff, etc., the praises have already been sung. In these notes brief reference will be made to climbs of more recent date, some of which have been done only once up to the time of writing. It may, however, be remarked that the longest climbs here appear to be the Long Way of the "Inaccessible," and the Owl Gully, about 50 feet and 65 feet respectively.

The larger of the two pinnacles forming the Stride at once attracts attention. Looking up the 20 feet chimney, which leads easily to the flat platform behind this "inaccessible" one, a narrow, vertical crack is visible immediately to the right. First attaining a ledge on the (true) right of the chimney, a long step across admits of the crack being gained. It comfortably holds the fingers ; but balance plays great part

until the shelf surmounting it is reached. This shelf is followed to the right until, immediately above the "Boulder," a vertical furrow leads to the summit. There is here no belay, and the place is very exposed. The descent will be made by either the "Long" or the "Short" way. It should be noted that the latter route to the summit can now be lengthened by utilising the narrow crack which starts below it, on a level with the foot of the pinnacle. Progress is mainly by hand-wedging until the usual route is joined.

On the extreme corner to (true) right of the chimney previously mentioned is a crack, as severe as it is short. The writer recollects the expenditure of a very great amount of energy ere the top was attained.

"Weasel" Pinnacle.—Despite the breaking-off of a small flake of rock on the side remote from the "Inaccessible," the smaller pinnacle's summit may still be reached by that side, although, in the absence of foothold, the operation is of a heart-breaking character.

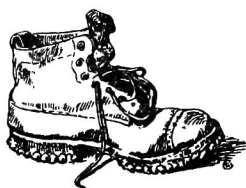
Still nearer Cratcliff Tor, and quite on the end of the mass of rock forming the base of the Stride, is a neat problem rather hard to find. A small chimney is ascended for four or five feet, and a short horizontal crack, communicating at its other end with a vertical cleft, is reached. Once in the latter, the top is soon within touch. Though quite short, this scramble is a good test of balance.

Proceeding next to the foot of Cratcliff Tor, the Hermitage Chimney is noticed. This starts about 25 feet above the base of the rocks; the intervening face has been ascended, and the climb thus done "direct," by utilising an unsatisfactory crack, succeeded by down-sloping ledges. Exact balance is required.

Weston's Chimney may also be gained direct by a climb of about 25 feet from the base of the Tor. The difficulty is at a narrow crack which succeeds the initial trough, and which finishes quite close to the foot of Weston's Chimney. The inexperienced, and those who set too great value on cuticle, had best not "lead" this crack.

Any scrambler wishing to benefit his tailor may well pay attention to a short, narrow, oblique crack at a higher level than, and a few feet to the left of, Weston's Chimney. The punishment meted out by this crack is literally to be taken "lying down."

The cirque of rocks in which occurs Weston's Chimney may be quitted in entertaining fashion. The point to be aimed for is the opposite corner of the amphitheatre, almost on the skyline. Walking away from the foot of the chimney, across comparatively level rocks, and descending a few feet, a narrow, sloping cleft can be entered. This gives out at a corner, and a few feet higher the climber lands on a large flat block on his left, and only about ten feet below the summit of the Tor. Here the downward view is exhilarating. With rope belayed over block, the leader leans out from the farther extremity of the latter, and, swinging out on his hands, is able to get the left knee into a small, sloping trough. Carefully shifting along his hands, he is soon ready to pull up on to a good platform. The latter portion of this climb is well seen from the top of Weston's Chimney.



DERBYSHIRE PENNINE CLUB NOTES.

NOVEMBER, 1909.

ON September 18th, the Jug Hole, near Matlock, was made the object of a Meet, under the leadership of J. W. Puttrell.

Nine members and friends attended. The workings of the mine were thoroughly explored, but no further passages of importance were discovered.

A small shaft, situated about 100 yards below the Jug Hole, was, however, laddered, and at a depth of 70 feet was found to communicate with a finely arched passage leading through several small caverns.

There were traces of stalactitic formation on the walls, but nothing of sufficient interest to warrant further investigation.

Puttrell again took the lead when the Devonshire Cavern at Matlock was explored on October 23rd.

Ten members and friends attended the Meet.

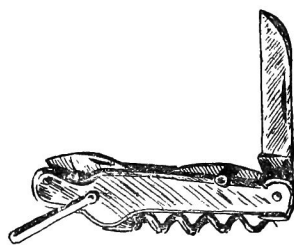
On reaching the cavern, the party divided into two sections, one examining the top portions of the passages (part natural and part artificial), whilst the other contingent worked down from the entrance.

A very low level was reached, and a sump 80 feet deep promised material for a later Meet.

The higher part of the cavern proved of no great interest, and the very loose state of the material did not encourage a prolonged investigation. The above Meet may be regarded more as a preliminary examination than serious exploration, as the great length of the passages made it impossible to visit the more remote parts of the cave in the time at the Club's disposal.

An opportunity will be taken in the near future of finishing the work.

The annual business meeting was held at that quaint and comfortable old hostelry, the Bull i' th' Thorn Hotel, Hurdlow, on November 6th, when there was a good gathering of members and guests from the Peak District and neighbouring shires. The Hon. Secretary's report and the Treasurer's statement were voted satisfactory. The following officers were elected for the ensuing year:—President, Henry Bishop; Vice-President, G. H. Harrison; Hon. Secretary, W. Smithard; Hon. Treasurer, J. W. Puttrel; Committee, F. A. Holmes, G. S. Mitchell, P. Pearson, W. M. Sissons, and F. A. Winder. The annual dinner was extremely well served, and afterwards there were the customary toasts, interspersed with very enjoyable musical items, contributed by Messrs. Amies, Baines, Bishop and Unwin. Mr. Stanley Jeffcoat, of the Rucksack Club, added to the gaiety of the company by his very amusing recitation. There was delightful weather the next day, and it was very pleasant to walk over the limestone uplands and through the dales, which looked their best in the brilliant November sunshine.



COMMITTEE NOTES.

ATTENTION is called to the publication by the Club of the first volume of their proposed series of Climbers' Guides. It is a Guide to Lliwedd, by Messrs. J. M. A. Thomson and A. W. Andrews, published by Mr. Edward Arnold at the price of 5/- nett. In addition to the ordinary sources, copies may be obtained at Pen-y-Gwryd, Pen-y-Pass, and Ogwen Cottage. Members of the Club may obtain copies at the special net price of 3/6 (with postage, 3/10) by applying to the Honorary Secretary.

* * * *

THE Committee have much pleasure in announcing that the second volume of the Climbers' Guides will contain climbs on Tryfan, Glyders, the Carneddys, Craig yr Ysfa, Y Garn, and Foel Goch. The volume will be written by Mr. J. M. Archer Thomson, and it is hoped that it will be published early in the summer.

* * * *

THE last list of the members of the Club is now out of print, and early in 1910 a new list of members will be published. The Honorary Secretary would be much obliged if members would notify him as soon as possible of any changes of address, and of any errors that may have been contained in the last list of members.

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THE Annual Dinner of the Rucksack Club was held at Manchester on 13th November, 1909. The Climbers' Club were represented by Mr. J. W. Robson.

THE Annual Dinner of the Rock and Fell Climbers' Club was held at Coniston on 20th November, 1909. The Climbers' Club were represented at the Dinner by Mr. Lehmann J. Oppenheimer.

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MR. CLAUDE E. BENSON has resigned the office of Joint Honorary Librarian.

* * * *

NEW MEMBERS.—At a Committee Meeting held on 17th December, 1909, the following new members were elected:—

Mr. FRED. C. ALDOUS, 21, Queen's Avenue, Old Trafford, Manchester.

Mr. HENRY J. W. FRANZ, Summerhill House, Litherland, Liverpool.

* * * * *

DONATIONS TO CLIMBERS' CLUB LIBRARY.—Alpine Journal, Nos. 155-186, 32 parts, completing set: Alpine Club. Rucksack Club Journal, 3 parts: Editor, Rucksack Club Journal. Alpine Club Map of Switzerland: O. Eckenstein, Esq. Cairngorm Club Journal, 8 parts; Wherry's Alpine Notes and the Climbing Foot: Hon. Librarian, C. C. Fell and Rock Climbers' Club Journal, part 2: G. Seatree, Esq.

REVIEWS.

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY. Proceedings, Vol. XXVII., Sec. B, No. 11. C. A. HILL, H. BRODRICK, A. RULE. The Mitchelstown Caves, Co. Tipperary. Maps, etc. (Dublin : Hodges, Figgis & Co. 1909.)

UNTIL the present reviewer wrote an account of the larger Mitchelstown Cave in the *Irish Naturalist* in 1906, the result of a visit paid the year before with Dr. Hill, the general idea prevailed that there was only one Mitchelstown Cave. On the accidental discovery of the New Cave in 1833, attention was diverted from the Old Cave, which had been a show-place for generations, and appears to have had interesting connections with Irish history ; and the fame, the traditions, and even actual descriptions of the scenery in the old cave were transferred bodily to the new. In England, at Cheddar and elsewhere, it pays to run two caves for tourist purposes, but Irish enterprise seems not to have been equal to supporting rival attractions. At any rate, for the best part of a century the Old Cave was forgotten or suppressed, although Dr. Hill and his collaborators now show that it is in many respects one of the most interesting series of underground cavities in the British Isles.

The present party devoted a week to a thorough exploration and a careful survey of both caves ; and when it is realised that the total length of the passages amounts to 3034 yards, and the difficulties caused by the intricacy of the New Cave and the variety of level in both are extreme, it will be admitted that they made good use of their time. Of the accuracy of their survey, the fact that when the various circuits came to be adjusted upon the main base lines, the survey was never more

than 20 feet out, is a most convincing proof. All this, mind you, over ground as rough as raw moraine, and in the dark!

The authors give a detailed description of both caves, with itineraries by various routes, which can be followed step by step by means of their maps. They have also summarised the extant history, and in dealing with the geology have elucidated various problems as to the formation of the caves, clearly explaining how the different types of passages came to be produced. The existing maps were not only very incomplete, but full of errors. These have been corrected, and full details everywhere given, not only of the ground plan, but of the height of chambers and passages, the slope and nature of the floor, and the general configuration.

The Old Cave consists mainly of two huge chambers, with a connecting tunnel and a long fissure giving access from the surface. The Eastern Chamber must be an extraordinary cavity. The present writer has not seen it, as this cave was inaccessible in 1905. Its length is nearly 130 yards; the floor, coated with slippery clay, slopes down at an angle of 35° ; and the lofty roof converges to a long, unplumbed pool. "The whole dimensions of this chamber," say the authors, "are on so vast a scale that it is impossible to estimate, in any sense, its true size, even by the aid of magnesium light." The Western Chamber is less vast, but its loftiness and size, "and the magnificence of the stalagmitic deposits which drape its walls and floor, give it a dignity and magnificence hardly to be surpassed in any cavern in the British Islands."

The New Cave is a more complicated and extensive system, the total length of the passages explored measuring nearly a mile and a half. In the Old Cave we have vast bedding cavities inclined at a steep angle; in the New Cave—a far-reaching maze of vertical rifts, tunnels, caverns superimposed, and enormous chambers formed by great slips or by the swirling action of running water—we have almost every type of cave conformation known save the perpendicular pothole of the Ingleborough pattern. Ever since 1833 exploration and discovery have been going on in this gigantic

labyrinth periodically ; in fact, the authors of the present work have only given the finishing touches to the long process of exploration, if, that is, there are no more discoveries to be made in the future. To gauge the value and thoroughness of their work, it is only necessary to put their map side by side with the one published by M. Martel fifteen years ago, in *Irlande et cavernes Anglaises*, which had the benefit of all the surveys carried out up to that date. The chamber here described as the Victoria Cave, the ultimate point reached by our explorers, was entered by the present writer in 1905. This appears to have been the first visit for some 35 years, and the guide could not find the way out until both had searched about for half an hour. He called this "Cust's Cave," but gave the name adopted by the authors for the Demon's Cave which opens out from it. Unfortunately, in the two days devoted to the cave then, it was not possible to do any surveying. It is consequently difficult now to find on the new map a very interesting gallery, richly adorned with stalagmite and still more liberally anointed with wet slimy clay, which was discovered opening out of O'Leary's Cavern. On page 253 the authors speak of this last as ranking with the Garrett Cave "as one of the two largest chambers in the whole cavern ;" on page 263 they state that the two largest are the vast chambers called the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The plan indicates that the former is the correct statement. Those freakishly curved stalactites known as "anemolites" occur in several parts of the New Cave where there are draughts of air, and are rightly explained by the authors as owing their peculiarities of shape to air currents, the immediate cause probably being the different rates of evaporation set up by such currents. This is not the first reference in print to anemolites : a long account of their formation will be found in Messrs. Barnes and Holroyd's article on the Blue John Mine, published in the *Memoires de la Société de Spéléologie*, tom. iv.. 23, Juillet, 1900.

E. A. B.

BADDELEY'S GUIDE. English Lakes. 11th edition. Nelson and Sons.

A FEW months ago an enthusiastic climber and constant frequenter of the English Lakes was asked to solve some topographical question arising out of that district. He could throw no light on the matter, and ultimately confessed that though he had paid many visits to that part of the country, he had never once been near Ullswater, Windermere, Conistone or Derwentwater. When he spoke of going to the Lakes, he should have said to a lake, that lake being Wastwater. He was a centrist in the worst and narrowest sense, having invariably journeyed at full speed to and from Wastdale Head, and spent the whole of the intervening time between the Pillar, Gable and Mickledore. He had not seen or cared to see anything else.

Such one-eyed specimens are not numerous, but it is to be feared that their number is on the increase, and perhaps no better remedy could be found for their deplorable condition than to place in the hands of every one of them a copy of the work we have before us. The earlier editions of it have been without exception admirable as guides to the general traveller, and now improvements have been introduced and special concessions made to the tastes of climbers, fox hunters and fishermen.

To begin at the beginning, the title-page does not disclose the important fact that the originator of this excellent series of guides is no longer with us, and the text does not quite make up its mind on the point, sometimes referring to him as alive and sometimes as "the late." To us perhaps the most interesting feature is the new climbing section, which on the whole is compiled with good judgment. The late Mr. Baddeley and his rival Jenkinson were excellent walkers, but knew nothing of the rocks, and even regarded the practice of climbing with a feeling akin to horror. Thus arose a blank in their works which is here judiciously filled. It is, however, difficult to draw correct information from the statement,

"there is on Scafell itself, reckoning south-westerly from Mickledore, Broad Stand," seeing that the Broad Stand is certainly not in that direction. Moss Gill, too, is stated to offer five variations, which is more than one would expect. There follows a good one-page summary of the more famous fell walks and lists of the openings for sport in hunting, fishing, boating and golf. Another important addition to the plan of the old book and its good series of "Days on the Fells" is made in the shape of 11 pages of advice on the important question of escaping from the hills at night or in bad weather. It might have been entitled, "Nights off the fells, or how to go home in the dark." It is very practical and clear; though, in dealing with Great Gable, a carelessly-worded sentence conveys the impression that Honister Hause is the same thing as the drum-house on Grey Knotts, and in another place we are told that in leaving Red Pike of Mosedale a descent can be made from Dore Head either right or left for Wastdale Head. This is true, but it would be but fair to add for the benefit of a presumably tired man that the former route takes about four times as long as the latter. On inset pages some good tours are sketched out, and details given of times and fares for rail, boat and coach, but, curiously enough, one of the most frequented routes, the L.N.W.R. from London, is omitted. On the other hand, the Eskdale Railway, which has long ceased working, is called "a real boon to tourists," while Pears' coach, which runs thrice a week between Penrith and Patterdale, is not mentioned at all. Cycling and fishing are well cared for, and the glossary is better than it used to be, but still not wholly satisfactory. For instance, the words "band," "dodd," "scarth" might be better dealt with, and it is hard to understand why "fell" is defined as "*in Lakeland* a mountain," implying both that this use of the word is confined to Lakeland, and that the glossary is not. We notice a few slips, such as *Enthwaite*, *Hobcartor*, *Fleetwill Pike*, *Thresheld*, while on page 163 a whole paragraph needs to be shifted, for as it stands it makes the amazing statement that Gash Rock is in Langdale.

In the description of Bowness Church windows it is stated that some glass "came from Cartmel Priory. From Cartmel probably came some Cartmel Fell glass also." This would certainly be understood as stating that this glass came to Bowness, but the intended meaning is that it *went to* Cartmel Fell *Church*, which is distinct and distant from Cartmel Priory. There are many unacknowledged quotations in the book, but one, a quatrain dealing with the ascent of Skiddaw by jackasses and others is scrupulously and precisely ascribed to "Travel, February, 1902," but it chances that that now familiar stanza had been a godsend to magazine writers on the Lakes for many years prior to 1902, in fact all the way back to 1894, when "Climbing in the British Isles" (a work of which the volume before us shews an intimate knowledge) unearthed it from an old poem of local origin.

These slight blemishes have been here pointed out because extreme accuracy is vital to a guide book of this class, but it must not be imagined that they bear more than a minute proportion to the vast mass of accurate information, and the book must be pronounced fully up to the high standard of the series.

THE PYRENEES. By HILAIRE BELLOC.

AN out-and-out climber lighting on such sentences as these : "It is the wildest, and therefore the best excursion one can make," or "the continual presence of overhanging rock" may form high hopes of this book which will not be gratified ; for the writer believes himself to be, and on the surface is, entirely out of sympathy with our nominal aims and objects, though at heart (if he only knew it) he is entirely at one with us. Spiritually he is a climber, physically he happens never to have acquired the art. Hence he is able to write, "Of climbing I can write nothing. It is an amusement or a gamble that I have had no opportunity of enjoying," and elsewhere, like a certain fox who also could not climb, he

consoles himself with an epithet, and refers to "the fantastic exercise of climbing."

But we all know that the joys of the climber are by no means confined to the finger-tip and toe-nail side of the business. Anything which takes one away from civilisation and luxury, and brings him face to face with wild and rugged Nature attracts the true-hearted climber irresistibly, and therefore it may be stated, without the smallest hesitation, that Mr. Belloc is a potential climber thwarted by his environment. To begin with, he detests the fashionable resort; "where such people, especially cosmopolitans, colonials, nomads and the rest, come into a little place, they destroy most things, except the things that they themselves desire, and the things that they themselves desire are execrable to the rest of mankind." The only apparent exceptions we find to this hatred of civilisation are two in number, first a decided leaning towards a comfortable inn and a good dinner, which might be expressed by adapting the Highlander's sentiment—

The mountain food is sweeter ;
But the valley meat is fatter.
We, therefore, deemed it meet
To patronise the latter.

And secondly he seems to be somewhat distressed because the range of the Pyrenees is not quite so regular as a Haussmann boulevard. He explains at very great length, with the aid of numerous natty diagrams, that instead of forming one straight line, as has been vainly imagined by ignorant people, they in fact form two lines, meeting with a slightly overlapping kink in the middle. To many people perhaps this want of symmetry will not seem to be a matter of primary importance; but another feature which always takes the newcomer some time to appreciate is wisely emphasized. This is the fact that on the French side of the range the valleys mainly run northward, while on the Spanish slope they tend to run east or west.

Indeed, to get a rough general notion of the chain it is a useful plan to regard it as merely the most continuous, lofty

and northerly of a series of parallel ranges. Another point which the chance comer misses is the great height of Northern Spain as compared with Southern France. The Spaniard (it might be said) on his flat-roofed house looks over a parapet called the Pyrenees on to the Frenchman in the street below. It must be left to geologists to tell us whether and when that street was a thoroughfare for the waters of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The book is primarily intended for the cultured camper, for whose benefit precise details of a most practical character are given as to outfit and the conduct of a campaign. It is pointed out that at the meeting line of two languages a double set of terms has to be acquired for many common objects. For instance, the indispensable wineskin known as "gourde" on the French side is "bota" on the Spanish side; so, too, hempen "sandales" become "alpargatas" as we go south, though it would have been useful to add that in the latter case we have a third expression, "espadrilles," which is understood on both sides of the range. A rough guide to the cost of a gourde is that you may reckon a franc and a half *plus* one franc for each quart of capacity. Even the cost of a mule is given. A mule and a man can be hired for a day at 10 to 15 francs, or the mule without the man can be bought outright for 300-500.

The ration of bread is an ounce an hour for each man, and by way of meat the traveller is advised to live on "salpichon" (should it not be "salpicon"?) which is "salt pig and garlic." This diet, washed down with Spanish wine, which "has a strength and a roughness and a memory of goatskin" is a sufficient safeguard against over-indulgence in the pleasures of the table. Many local expressions are given, such as "jasses" (valley flats representing drained lake beds), "jeous" (defined as "springs bubbling up through the porous rock," and possibly connected with "jaculare," which in late Latin bore the meaning of "gush out"), though "oule" (walled valley-head) is not given, nor that puzzling Pyrenean use of "colline" as a mere diminutive of "col." This last use

might have formed the subject for yet another complaint in a very amusing and instructive chapter on the perversity and perfidy of "cols." By means of careful diagrams and sketches, the fallacy of the double col is mercilessly exposed in all the forms which its vicious and deceptive nature induces it to assume for the beguilement of the self-guided. Eskhause, Greenup, and other choice examples of this fallacy may be found in Cumberland.

In a book written with so much charm of style one must steel himself to shew discrimination, so be it noted that a passage lamenting the paucity of glaciers overlooks one of the finest and largest, that of the Vignemale, and that spates are not so rare as the author supposes. "One has not to fear (he says) spates such as one might imagine from the multiplicity of streams on the Northern side and the large area of the valleys of the Southern," but his present critic can recall several such incidents, and with especial vividness one in the Rio Bueno region, when, justly fearing that a violent thunderstorm would sweep away a certain bridge, he ran several miles at breakneck speed, carrying a heavy pack, a large telescope, and two rifles, and arrived at the said bridge just in time to see it take its departure down the river. Still it cannot be said that places where this is likely to happen are at all common, and indeed the whole book, with the exception of a few cases of careless spelling of names, is as accurate as it is quaint and interesting.

W. P. H. S.

BRITISH MOUNTAIN CLIMBS. G. D. Abraham. Mills and Boon, London. 7/6 net.

MOST climbers hold different opinions as to the kind of Climbers' Guide they prefer, but they are all agreed that a book to be carried on a climb ought to be as concise as possible, and should be published in sections of a convenient size. No one wants to carry a description of Skye when they are climbing Scawfell. It may well, however, be argued that the climber expects too much, and that he ought to be grate-

ful for any information which will help him, so long as it is accurate. In this we agree, but, so far as we can judge, there is very little in this book which has not already appeared in *Rock Climbing in Wales, the Lakes, and Skye*.

An attempt has been made to bring the descriptions up to date, but with only partial success. In making this criticism we are aware that we are demanding a high standard of accuracy, but in a climbing guide book we consider that this is not unfair. In the section which deals with the Lakes, we find, on page 16, the distance from Drigg to Wasdale is given as 10 miles, instead of 12. Telegrams are only sent to Nether Wasdale, and there is a shilling portorage to Wasdale Head.

Page 23. The Broad Slab on the Pillar is very much less than an angle of 40. The expression "rather less" gives an erroneous impression.

Page 24. The Curtain. This is not overhanging (cf. photo, page 23); it was climbed direct, without divergence, in August, 1909, by F. Botterill and E. Roberts. If illustrations are intended to show climbers the character of the difficulties they will have to overcome, tilting the picture to make it more imposing is hardly likely to inspire confidence in the text—cf. page 188, where the lower slabs of the Central Gully on Lliwedd are made much more fearsome than they really are.

Page 25. The Old Wall is still existent, and is in a wonderful state of preservation.

The Great Chimney is for some reason not treated as a climb, and is left out of the graduated list.

Page 32. The North West Climb. The absence of really good anchorage is noted, but all who have ascended the climb speak well of its belays. Only one party had to be rescued up to 1908. The author suggests that all the others who were not rescued had to descend at considerable risk. If, as we gather, there was greater risk in going on, these climbers should be praised for their prudence, not blamed.

The descriptions and measurements given here suffer much

from the personal equation. We doubt if W. P. H. S. could possibly have crossed this climb, as stated.

Page 39. Walker's Gully. On a climb of this difficulty it seems a pity to advise climbers to avoid the first pitch. Most climbers consider that to overcome a stiff pitch is of great help at the commencement of a climb, and affords a measure both of fitness and ability to master subsequent difficulties.

Page 54. Botterill's Climb on Scawfell. The description leads us to believe that this was ascended by the crack. This is not the case. The ridge on the left of the crack was climbed. This mistake has probably led to the doubtful turf story, which is quite untrue.

Page 94. Engineer's Chimney. Since the dislodgment of the jammed boulder, we know that a strong party has made three unsuccessful attempts. The climb should be approached with caution.

Page 105. Great Gully Screes. The capstone referred to, which weighs some 35 tons, rests upon a 5 feet bed of loose clayey slates. As much of its bed has been washed away, the ascent of the direct route would verge on fatuity.

In the Welsh section we are glad to see that the text is not encumbered with many names of climbers, but the mention of the pioneers in some cases compels us to correct two mistakes. The author asserts that the pitches of the great gully of Craig yr Ysfa, in their normal condition, had not been climbed before his visit in 1905. This is an error of statement, as they had been surmounted four years before he first made acquaintance with the face. The claim he advances here and in the "Complete Mountaineer" to the first ascent of the fine west gully on the Ystgolion Duon is entirely without foundation. The gully was first climbed by a party of three on August 5th, 1901. It is true that the habitués of the Welsh mountains have often been slow to place their climbs on record, but it happens that correct information in both these cases might have been obtained from the ordinary sources.

As to the classification of the Welsh climbs, we do not agree, but no two parties ever have, for the reason that no standard of difficulty can exist. It is not possible to establish a comparison between a route climb of 700 to 1000 feet, with a short fancy climb of the boulder problem order. The Monolith Crack, for instance, some 80 feet high, cannot reasonably be compared with Route I. on Lliwedd, a climb of nearly 1000 feet. The former stands after the latter, but on the same principle the Dinas Mot boulder ought to be placed after both, for its ascent necessarily involves a passage more difficult than any on either of these two.

However, we are glad to note that the writer has altered the place of the Hanging Garden, and now labelled it difficult. He declares in sober earnestness that the chief pitch—an 80 foot chimney—"has become steeper" than it used to be. We agree, for we have ourselves found the same strange phenomenon manifesting itself in all the steep chimneys we have revisited of late years.

Page 235. Pillar of Elidyr. The account is inadequate. The writer says that the Pillar of Elidyr has "fine gullies on either side." The West Gully hardly answers this description, as it is an easy matter to walk up it in five minutes without using the hands. The further statement that the Pillar can be ascended "directly up the front" is ambiguous, as the Pillar, which is semi-detached, has three different fronts, which face respectively north, east and west.

Page 226. Glyder Fawr. The writer expresses surprise that the fine north cliff of the Glyder has not met with more recognition from climbers, and he describes four routes only. In reality the face has been much climbed, and four other routes exist, which are not mentioned at all.

The Cave beside the twisting gully cannot by any stretch of imagination be said to penetrate into the heart of the mountain. It is of the funnel order, and does not penetrate more than twelve feet at most.

Referring to the chief pitch of the East Gully, the writer says that a frontal attack seems impracticable. It is true the

place looks forbidding, but a neat route lies directly up the centre, and has been accomplished more than once.

Page 233. Devil's Staircase. The writer says that the initial pitch offers no severe difficulty beyond the initial ten feet. This is entirely wrong. Practically the whole pitch is severe, with the exception of the first ten feet.

Lliwedd. The writer gives a most misleading generalisation to the effect that the rock of Lliwedd is unsound, which is a natural inference that he has not personal acquaintance of many of the finest routes. Some of these are not mentioned at all, and the accounts of many others are loose and vague.

Page 185. Route II. The "original climb" was not made by way of the Birch Tree Terrace, as stated by the writer (page 189), but by the line mentioned at the end of the paragraph on Roof Route. The writer is evidently not aware that since the publication of "Lliwedd," this direct beginning on steep, sound, clean rock has become the favourite opening to the climb—the best of Welsh climbs—not exhaustive, nor is it easy to discover a principle of selection. While a fancy problem of barely 80 feet—a crack leading nowhere in particular—is described at length, some excellent route climbs, from base to summit of a fine peak or face are omitted altogether.

Some of the accounts of climbs, presumably those with which the author is familiar, are sufficiently detailed to be useful, but of others (and among them some of the best) little more can be gathered than the indubitable fact of their existence. This unevenness is very marked, *e.g.*, an exalted boulder, scarcely 25 feet high, receives a longer notice than one of the finest and soundest face climbs in Great Britain—that up the central slabs of the Lliwedd's East Peak, called by its pioneers, somewhat unadvisedly, we think, the Avalanche Route.

Climbers should be warned against attempting the route described on page 188 as a variation of the Central Gully. The rock is unsound at this part of the cliff, and the publication of the description of a difficult variation is, under these

circumstances, inadvisable. At any rate any climbers induced to attempt it should know that the leader on that climb had previously examined the cliff with a rope from above, either on the route made or within a few feet of it, and removed considerable quantities of loose stones.

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING. By C. E. Benson. George Routledge & Sons.

THIS book is on the whole well written, and should prove of value to climbers. Particularly interesting are the notes on rambling and the use of a map, and the suggestions on the subject of practice climbs. The author advocates constant scrambling over easy rocks and low crags, where more difficult problems can be safely attempted. Of this advice we approve most strongly. Many unfortunate accidents would probably have been avoided if climbers had taken the trouble, both in the British Isles and on the Alps to serve an apprenticeship. Skill and safety on rock, snow and ice is not acquired by a few difficult expeditions, but by constant practice.

On page 145 there are some useful hints on belays. We agree that the second should belay himself, *if possible*, and hold the rope to save friction and strain if the leader falls, but this is seldom feasible unless the third man can *securely* belay the second. Few climbers realize, as the author well points out, the momentum of a falling body and the pull on the rope. Unless the second can be *secured* by the third, or can put the rope round a good belay behind him, he will probably be pulled off, in the event of a clear fall on the part of the leader, if he attempts to lessen the strain on the rope by taking it on his own body or on his own hands.

In most cases he is bound, for the safety of the party, to hold the rope round a belay and behind it, so that the strain would not pull it off, but would come in the direction in which it could best be sustained. We believe that if the leader fell the rope would be torn off the belay far more often than is realized

by climbers, who fancy they are secure because they have placed the rope round a kind of rock. Even if the belay is absolutely safe, it should be remembered, in the case of strain on the rope, that the resulting momentum is first employed in stretching the rope. If, when the rope is stretched to its limit, any momentum is still left unabsorbed, that will then break the rope. Consequently, the most important factor in the question is the length of the rope, for the longer the rope the greater the amount of momentum absorbed before the breaking point is reached. It has been said that 10 stone falling 11 feet will break a new Alpine rope of standard strength. We do not remember how the test was made, but presume that the rope was fixed at a point 11 feet from the falling body in such a way as to obtain the greatest mechanical advantage at the point of attachment. Obviously, if the rope were fixed round a sharp or small belay, it would stand still less strain. It would be of great value if the results of a series of tests could be published.

These might give the breaking strain of a new and an old rope (used for two or three seasons, and well stretched in ordinary use but not frayed), with the momentum of a falling body of 10 stone, for distances of 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 feet, and for lengths of 10—60 feet between the body and the point of attachment. The falling body experimented on should be something on which the conditions of strain approximate to those where the rope is tied round a climber's waist. It would be valuable to have some figures showing relationship between the distances in which a falling body acquires sufficient momentum to break the rope, and the length of the rope. The value of the stretching power of a rope needs more exact experiment than we believe has yet been made. Obviously it is desirable, where possible, to place the rope round a belay, so that it will give several feet, *if* this can be done with security. A double belay will often be found possible.

The author gives much sensible advice as to the use of the rope, and rightly blames its general mismanagement on rock climbs. He may be thought to place unnecessary

emphasis on elementary points, but perhaps this is wise. Climbers, even of considerable experience, often ignore some essential precaution. Unfortunately, unless they are novices, no one warns them. We refer especially to the use of old ropes which have been wetted, stretched and re-stretched till they have very little elasticity left. To the eye, these seem sound enough, that is to say, they are not frayed or cut ; but such ropes are useless to sustain a violent jerk, though they will stand all the ordinary pulling necessary in climbing. We believe that this point needs attention on the part of climbers, as a considerable number seem unaware that the stretching power of a rope is one of its most important qualities.



CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

MATTERHORN VILLA,
14th December, 1909.

HONOURED SIR,

May I crave a small space in one of our Club *Journals* to bring before our fellow members a subject of great interest. I perceive, Sir, that we are in great danger of falling behind the times. No serious calling can now be undertaken by any aspirant without an entrance examination (more often alas, as many of us know only too well, without two, or even three, examinations). Why then, Sir, should not the youthful (or otherwise) aspirant to membership of our Club—to the privilege of association with us in *our* serious calling—not be subjected to trial by examination? How much better a test would this be than that by which candidates are now tried. Who is to know whether that arduous and difficult ascent, which looks so imposing on the candidate's application form, was not made in an improvised sedan chair, carried by a posse of guides? Who is to know how many times the candidate "Herr" was assisted by the rope? No, Sir, the only safe guide, for sorting and selecting those truly worthy of admittance to our life's calling, is the one that experience has led all the other—the lower—callings to adopt—entrance examination by test paper.

To show how eminently practical is my idea, may I state a few questions which could be included in such a paper? The number possible is of course infinite, but take the following as examples:—

1. Where are—Bel Alp; The Beispeilspitze; The Shoehorn; The Venusberg; Primrose Hill; The Climbers' Club Library?
2. Translate and explain—Allez seulment; Kommen sie nur; Mettez la corde; Heisse Platte; Snowdonia; Alpinist.
3. Distinguish between—cramp and crampons; piton and piolet; Alpina and Alpine; climbing and gymnastics (giving illustrations).

4. Who ascended Monte Rosa alone in his shirt sleeves, and what provisions did he carry? Do you consider yourself competent to do the same?
5. Who wrote the following, and why—Running Water; The Complete Mountaineer; On the Roof of the World; My Alpine Jubilee?
6. How many "climbers" can be accommodated in a hut built for twenty people?
7. Describe, with illustrations of each pitch, the ascent of the North Gully of Tryfan. For which pitches would you consider an umbrella preferable to an ice-axe?
8. Name six comfortable climbs for a wooden-legged climber. Under what conditions would he be a safer companion than one with ordinary limbs?
9. How many residents in Switzerland are not members of the S. A. C.?
10. X and Y, who are noted reckless climbers, climb with Z, who has never done anything but an easy course. They reach a smooth wall of rock 50 feet high, without hand or foothold. Advise Z.
11. A, who weighs 16 stone, and B, who weighs 9 stone, are climbing on one rope, when A slips on an ice-slope of 75 degrees. Calculate the strength B will have to exert to hold A up. (Consider $g = 42$ feet per second. Ignore friction.)

But, Sir, I need not "dilate" upon the subject longer, feeling that I have shown clearly the advantage of the system I advocate. I must leave it to the Club to adopt, or not, as the good, or bad, sense of the members may determine. With many apologies.

I remain, my Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

A. WALKER.

THE CLUB LIBRARY.

As a Catalogue of the Club Library will be issued shortly, the Hon. Librarian suggests that any members who have books which they feel inclined to give or bequeath, should send in such donations now, so that the Catalogue may be the more complete. There is almost an entire absence of sets of journals of kindred clubs, and numerous gaps even among the best known works on mountaineering and the chief climbing regions at home and abroad. A list of desiderata will be gladly supplied to any one disposed to become a benefactor. It might perhaps be possible, also, to effect exchanges, as there are many duplicates. Offers of this nature would have to be submitted to the Committee for consideration. Parcels of books may be addressed to the Hon. Librarian, Dr. E. A. Baker, Public Library, Eltham, Kent, who will have them catalogued and placed on the shelves of the Club Library at 2 King William Street, E.C.

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