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ON SRON NA CICHE

BY ERNEST WOOD-JOHNSON.

It is quite possible that Skye weather during the midsummer of 1928 was exceptional ; it is equally possible that it was normal. It rained ; not occasional half-hearted showers, but the real good and heavy stuff that bounces back a yard from the rocks. We fought our way up the hillsides for days, but towards the end of our holiday, when the rain settled down to mere two-hour showers and drizzle, thought we saw signs of the long hoped for dry spell. Skye weather has a happy trait ; it never depresses one. In a playful manner it will throw rain about in bucketfuls but sometimes it becomes tired of this game and the bucket falls from its exhausted grip and the whole world smiles.

One drizzly morning, I strolled through the wet meadow grass from my sleeping quarters at Miss MacCrimmon's to breakfast at the Post Office. It certainly looked like a real off-day for us ; the mist was very low, the rain thick. Only that day and the next remained of our holiday and into these we had to crowd the wonderful things we had planned—or leave them undone. A few defiant bars of " Fell and Rock " whistled hopelessly out of tune, I fear, helped wonderfully. One simply never knows what a Skye day will bring forth, for that was the beginning of one of the very best days in the career of an enthusiastic climber.

At noon that day, we sat in Mrs. Chisholm's cosy dining room actually enjoying a lunch we had not earned when a glance through the window gave us thoughts of things other than food. The rain had stopped and the mist lifted to within a few hundred feet of the tops. On the far side of Corrie Lagan and clear of mist the precipice of Sron na Ciche glistened, moist and steep. It is a magnificent piece of rock and I need not dwell on the joy with which we hailed its appearance. Our programme, now almost abandoned, had included Mallory's Climb—the Slab and Groove—and the sight of that rock standing boldly out of the mist brought a determination to go and do the climb, if possible. If it kept fine, the rock would " go " by the time we could reach it, for Sron na Ciche soon dries. Taking an eighty foot rope only,

we steamed to the foot of the climb. My two-year-old memory of doing this route with a first-class leader had left a vivid impression of its difficulties, but a more lasting impression of a thoroughly enjoyable climb where interest was sustained until the top was under our feet.

Two of us, Miss E. Knowlton and I, intended to tackle the rock; my sister self-sacrificingly stood in the Corrie and took photos that did not come out. The rock was wet, but not running water as it does after a shower; and under these circumstances I had every confidence in our success. The first pitch tried but somewhat steadied that confidence. It leads up a steep crack to the right of a large overhang and finally brings one to a wall with small holds. It is a long pitch that does not leave much of an eighty-foot rope to spare and the negotiation of it seemed to take a lifetime. Every move had to be studied and very carefully made. The last few feet are severe and with wet rock and rapidly numbing fingers very much so. It began to rain as Miss Knowlton reached the safe anchorage at the top of the first pitch. I knew then that if the severe slab above were not climbed before the water from the higher rocks poured over it, we should have to abandon the climb. A short pitch leads to the slab. My companion was secured as close as possible to the severe spot and I moved on to the apparently holdless gabbro. Balance was gingerly kept and progress made diagonally upwards to the right—the rain increased. At the worst place I had to stop to think, relying on friction alone for hands and feet, whilst the water bubbled gleefully over my finger tips. I was certainly caught. Faint heart told me to use my knees and chance making a scramble for it, but common sense—very limited—said “stand off.” The latter course was adopted; it required all one’s knowledge of balance to achieve the passage of the next few feet and eventually reach the comparative haven of the diagonal gully and subside peacefully into the temporary burn. The pitch proved to more than one climber what is possible in well-nailed boots. It is of interest that four of us had climbed the slab in boots two years before yet there were no scratches to denote our passing. After continuing some distance up the gully, now a small waterfall, we escaped up a crack on the right. The climbing was continually interesting and in places very difficult under the

unfavourable conditions. The run-outs were often long, hands were cold, in places the descending water poured into coat sleeves and overflowed. Fortunately, the rain did not last long. After climbing a rather long crack, we reached a small water-swept cave that was floored by three jerry-looking chockstones. We had been careful not to touch these stones whilst climbing but in the absence of a good belay my companion secured herself firmly to one of them. I faced a long crack on the left of our cave. The higher I climbed the less inviting did that crack appear—I am perfectly certain I had never been in it before. Eventually a cramped niche was reached under an overhang; carefully bridging the crack, I settled down to study the problem. In the first place, there was only a few feet of our wet and heavy rope to spare; a route to the left might go, but there was not enough rope for that. Further, it was steep and hands probably would not have lasted so far. The overhang looked impossible. The right wall was composed of a series of neatly piled loose pieces. Jambed in the crack and along the wall was a flag, a few inches thick and several feet long. There would be no great difficulty in climbing the flag if it were safe. It responded to a gentle kick with a hollow moan. Miss Knowlton would have simply drifted up this place—you see she has read *Mountain Craft* all through. I regretted my failure to do this. There seemed nothing else to do but find out which of the loose pieces on the right wall would jamb and get up them, using the flag as a side hold for a foot. With stockings at half mast, but with rapidity which did not suggest a funeral, this was done, and a noble belay reached at a small but perfect stance. During this performance, my companion had been getting steadily wetter in the cave below and, as I took up the absurdly small amount of slack rope, she stepped into view—a damp looking object with a broad smile. The beauty of that smile lay in its property of increasing in direct proportion to the amount of water about and inversely as the temperature thereof. Soon we were on a dry perch, munching wet chocolate and enjoying a most wonderful situation. After all, the weather clerk must have relented a little, for we had done our best; now he did his. Over the sea lay a dark bank of clouds and below this the outer isles stood in sharp blue profile against a band of gold. On the moor below the

corrie were a number of vigorous light brown objects that we supposed to be Skye cattle, they actually turned out to be reflections in small pools. Looking up the corrie, we saw the Lagan peaks clear of mist and sharp against the sky. The screes from Dearg shone green, below us lay the Cioch top, brown, dry and inviting.

After crossing a rather wide shallow gully on our right we reached a fine, long, knobbly arête. At the start of the arête Miss Knowlton warned me that her hands were rapidly giving out and that I must be quite prepared to take her full weight at any moment. She was wet through and cold but enjoying the climb immensely. One was full of admiration for, and greatly indebted to, the partner whose manful backing had decided the ascent of those long pitches below—cheerfully taking soakings in exposed positions whilst the route was puzzled out. An examination of our hands showed the inevitable effects of climbing on gabbro; splintered nails, thin and sore finger tips, and gory knuckles. There were about two hundred feet, I think, of arête to climb before we were off the serious climbing. Good belays were found within the range of our rope and we progressed slowly upwards. One of the pitches started from a narrow ledge, up a short wall and around a corner on the right to a slab which was climbed for some distance to a good stance with belay. The full length of the pitch might have been fifty feet. Its chief difficulty lay in rounding the corner and gaining a comfortable position on the slab. Good fingers were essential for this movement—the painful prick of hard pressed gabbro lingers in the memory. I sat at the top of the pitch in great mental comfort beside the small but adequate belay. Miss Knowlton began to climb and I automatically took up the slack whilst congratulating myself on the success of our efforts and watching the evening light on the rocks around the head of the corrie. My reverie was interrupted by the appearance of Miss Knowlton on the corner of the slab. I had a glimpse of her apparently standing on the slab—and then she came off. For one moment, I saw her floating over the corrie below before she disappeared from view and swung some distance back around the corner. When safe on the ledge again, she assured me that she was not the least bit hurt and requested me to hold the rope tight. In a few moments she

appeared with the inevitable smile—but much broader—hand-over-hand up the rope and feet on the rock. The rest of the climbing on the arête was of that delightful type composed of steep rock with many capacious holds, some of which during our previous climb we had likened unto door-knobs. This sustained our interest in the rock right up to the moment when we stepped, happy and contented, across a narrow ridge to the main hillside. Exactly five hours previously we had left a lone supporter enthusiastically clicking a camera in the rain below.

Our outstanding days are not always those on which we tip-toe about warm severes in rubber shoes, but oftener those days when the hills ally themselves to the wind and rain and cold to defeat our aims. On such occasions, we find out our real stock of courage, patience and strength—the hills ask for our very best and get it. Others may do the climb more easily and quickly, and keep to the right course; but none will enjoy it more, or feel more satisfied than we did when at midnight Mrs. Chisholm welcomed us with the best of all rewards—a good dinner.

It was quite natural that on the way southwards and homewards the sun should shine in a cloudless sky—but his appearance was greeted with a smile that bordered on derision.

LAKELAND MEMORIES

BY H. G. WILLINK.

"Neither indeed is there any hill or hillocke which doth not contain in it some most sweete memory of worthie matters." (1611)

This is only a rambling paper by a convinced lover of home hills in general and of Lakeland in particular. There is not much scrambling in it. It is indeed only "small beer."

The pages of this Journal are, however, already full of adventurous records. The dear old hills have quite enough dotted lines, and letters of the alphabet, on their rugged faces now-a-days; and readers of Charles Pilkington's classic article in the *Badminton Mountaineering Volume* on Hill-climbing in the British Isles will find all that active young athletes can require.

So there still may be room for happy recollections of Lakeland, and for expression of affection undiminished by acquaintance with greater mountains. There is, or should be, no question of comparative attractiveness. Mrs. Malaprop was quite right. My own experience confirms this. Before I had seen mountains of any sort, my father took me to the Alps in 1866; we went again in 1868, and 1869; and it was not until 1871 that I first saw a British hill, when I fell in love with Cader Idris at sight and Snowdonia too. Repeated visits have only fed the flame. The charm of novelty has been transmuted into the charm of familiarity. We rambled and scrambled and wandered, my brother and I, sometimes together and sometimes alone in all sorts of weather and places, with a special predilection for gullies. And never did the glorious memories of Switzerland mar the enjoyment of Wales.

My first visit to the English Lakes was in 1872 and the same thing happened. In this case the contrast was even sharper. For I had just had a rather extensive walking tour, with two undergraduate friends, in the Alps. And although we had done no serious climbing, we had, on our thirty toes, tramped from Linz on the Danube, over hill and dale through the Austrian Tyrol, to Villach, ending the tour (after divagations by road and

sea to Gratz, Trieste, Pola and Venice) with a three or four days' walk between Innsbruck and the Lake of Constance. We got home on 30 July, and on 5 August, I was at Windermere with my brother.

Our first peak was Gummer's How! Knapsacks on backs, we straggled carelessly for ten or eleven delightful days about Lakeland. We looked for the darkest shadings in the Ordnance map, and just went for those parts, very casual, very unintelligent, and not very daring, but finding our own way regardless of paths, and eschewing roads as much as possible. Of course we bagged the highest tops, High Street, Helvellyn, Skiddaw, Scawfell Pike, Langdale Pikes, etc. I remember walking right round Wastwater, by myself, one afternoon, my brother's feet being sore—we were always getting sore feet, but I had brought a seasoned pair of feet from abroad. I found the screes discomfortable. We had lots of "bad" weather, cloudy and very wet. But we had learnt to use map and compass and it was all in the day's work. Indeed no one ought to have any serious trouble from mist in Great Britain or Ireland, under the worst circumstances. (Scotland was the most trying for, in 1873, we had only Black's atrocious maps). We lost *time* often enough, but ourselves never. Not like the unfortunate wight at Buttermere, scathingly described in my Journal of Monday, 12th August, 1872, as follows:—"Man in hotel had passed Sunday night on the hills between Buttermere and Wastwater; idiot had started late in afternoon, without map, compass or guide, and alone, in bad weather, to walk over the double pass (Black Sail and Scarf Gap) to Wastwater; never having been there before, and being a slow walker; and, as it proved, an ass. For on losing his way (which soon happened), instead of at once making tracks down the first stream he came to, which would have been sure to take him *somewhere*, he wasted precious light in wandering about in the mist looking for a *path*, which he would probably not have recognised if he had found it, as paths and streams are just alike on a bad day in the hills. So he spent his night stumbling about over rocks and stones and did not return to the hotel (at Buttermere) till 5-0 a.m., with his face cut and bruised terribly. Serve him right!" It seems unkind to quote these words, but I name no name (nor do I know it). And such

a man cannot have kept himself alive for fifty-six years, so he will not read this !

We did not like Wastwater (Huntsman's Inn) much ; for they did not dry our clothes and never called us in the morning ; so we could not get off till 7-15 ! Incredible as in these days it may seem, we used to aim at being called at 5-30. And we lived plain, even if we did not think high. Our daily bill used to average about 10/- each, *tout compris*, beer and all. I see from my notes that one of the lowest was 11/3 for the pair of us. This was at the Greyhound at Shap * and my note adds " excellent chops,"—we did not starve ourselves.

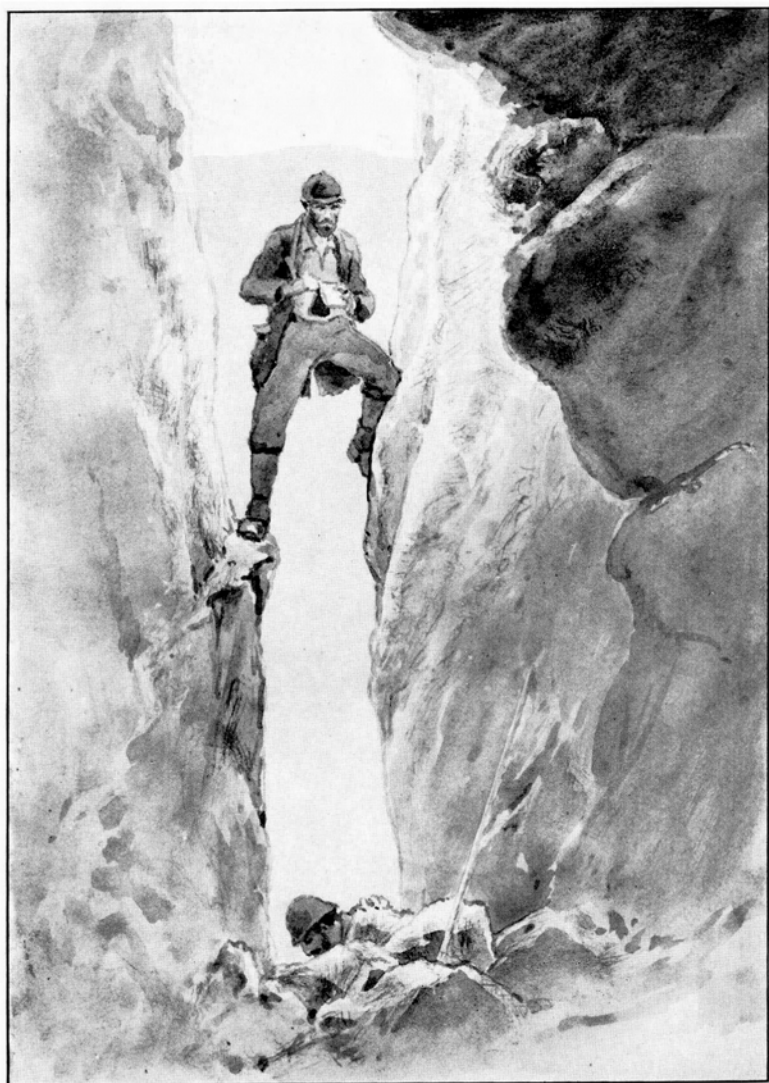
So much for 1872. My next visit was in 1873. In the interim, I had been in the Coolins, the Pyrenees (in winter), and Switzerland (twice), and had climbed big peaks, and been carried down on the Finsteraarhorn by a young avalanche, and other delights. Yet the old spell was not broken and the Lake Hills had not lost their charm. Indeed it always seems to me that, as between them and Snowdonia and Scotland and Ireland, the particular district one happens to be in is the best of the lot.

This time we did some better scrambling. Most of it was unidentifiable and only just what happened to come in our way. But we never dreamt of a rope, and in those days there was little climbing literature to cause emulation.

Two of our party of four found and " did " Mickleore—I believe it was what is now known as Broad Stand. And we all four got up the Pillar Rock. Indeed I went up three times, on one of which I found a second way down alone. It appears from the extensive modern records that we must have made the ascent by the Slab, and then round the Notch, finishing up the top part of the Great Chimney, and my descent must have been by the Old West. It does not matter. Our first ascent was on 9th August, 1877, and the two others on the 16th.

We had some trouble in finding the Rock at all. We had crossed Scarf Gap in clouds and rain and went down Ennerdale till we judged we were about the right spot, though we

*NOTE.—How did we get to Shap of all places ? Well, we had spread our maps out on the floor at Windermere and saw some dark shading near Shap ! So we shut them up and plodded off there. It turned out that, in the mounting, a square containing Wastwater had been transposed with a bit near Shap, and we had been too harum-scarum to notice it.



From a drawing by

H. G. Willink

PILLAR ROCK : THE GREAT CHIMNEY.

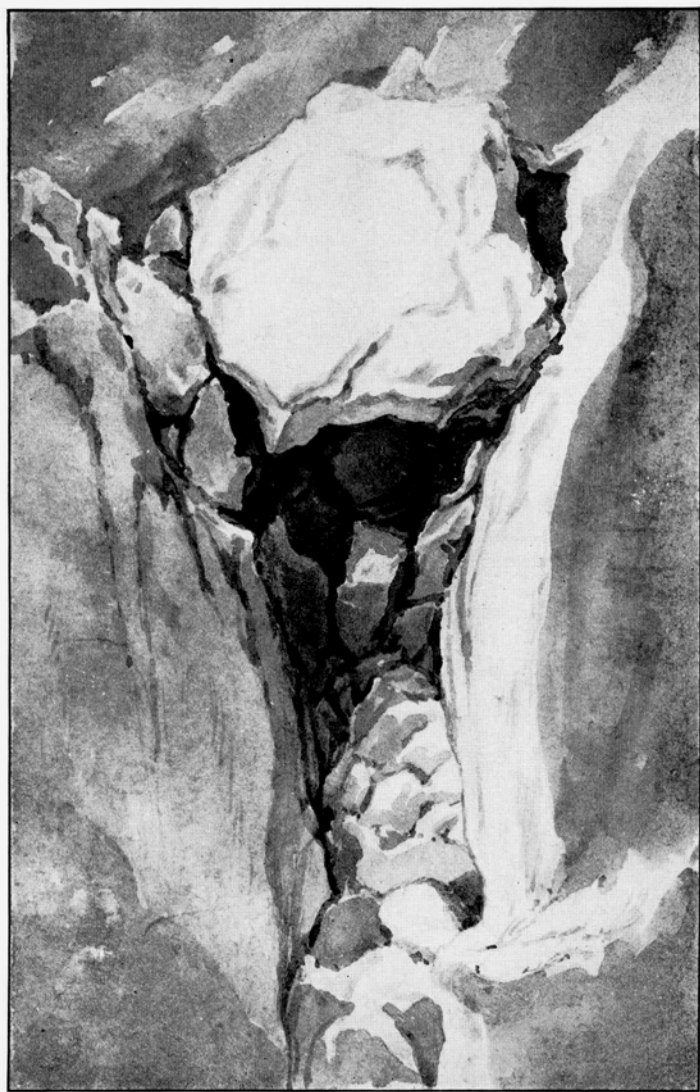
could see nothing. We then turned up a "guess gully," described in my diary as "goodish." But I nearly killed my cousin, Edmund Wingfield, just as we emerged at the upper end. . . . I can still see his calm spectacled face, light against the dark chasm below, as the sizeable brick-shaped stone that I had clumsily set loose, whizzed past his head. It was a dreadful moment. Soon we found ourselves on the top of Pillar, but still we saw no "Rock," only clouds and rain. My cousin, always active, went prospecting about, and after a time we heard his joyful "yoicks." Sure enough there the Rock was, looming through the mist, apparently quite easy, as we cantered down to . . . Fisgah, tantalizing spot! No go! So we dropped away down to our right and hit off a way, as I have said. It certainly had a slab or two in it. The top part of the Great Chimney puzzled us for some time, as we could not see what handhold there was just beyond our highest reach. However, Gerald Clark, afterwards my brother-in-law, about six-foot-three, found a grip, and the rest was easy. It is odd how a bit which seems so difficult at first becomes simple when it is known. A week later my brother and I went up that same way again without hesitation, and then it was that I discovered the Old West route. Leaving him sitting on the top I quietly went down to the N.E., working round and up again westerly, and so round by Slab, Notch and Chimney, to his surprise. And what a sunset it was that evening.

My next visit (again immediately after a good climbing tour in Switzerland) was in 1879. A very short visit, but with some good rambles. One of them, a two-day stretch, nearly was my last. For at the end of a longish walk, alone, in wind and rain and mist, I was tempted to finish down the face of Blake Rigg, above Blea Tarn (a small bit of cliff), and got rather spread-eagled. The face was all rather slithery and wet and an effort to reach up failed. I slipped down, my knapsack pulling me outwards, luckily, however, I just stopped above a deepish drop. For the one instant I had thought I was done for. An ignominious end, it seemed! But getting steady again I got my pack off and, managing to lodge it a little above me, I was able, thus lightened, to do the trick. A useful warning.

In 1888, we rented Wray Cottage, on Windermere, from

July to October, and a golden time we had. Not only on the hills with relations and friends and alone, but sketching and boating, on lake and shore. My landlord, E. P. Rawnsley, had kindly left us his two boats. One, a sturdy roomy tub, safe in any weather, but very heavy to pull or scull; the other, a light double-sculling outriggered gig, which he entrusted to me as a brother O.E. wet bob. So we could take our choice according to the day's weather. And we hardly knew which was better, the fair or the foul; the dogged pull, usually to Lowood or Ambleside for domestic requirements, often in the teeth of the wind, with spray coming over—or the delicious smooth glide of the long sharp-nosed craft in which we could on still days cover considerable distances with ease. Wray Cottage is well placed for views. With very slight change of standpoint we could feast our eyes upon the wonderful succession of hills, from Red Screes on the right through Fairfield and the Langdales, Scawfell and Bowfell to Wetherlam and The Old Man.

We were also fortunate in being off any main road. Even in 1888, the peace of the hill-country was not undisturbed. In favourite regions traversed by coach roads, the dust and crowds and scurry were often disagreeable. In 1928, the incessant stream of motors must be worse still. The subject is too thorny to be dwelt upon here at any length. We hill-lovers can keep off the roads if we choose, and out of the way of motors, at most times. But we were quite happy before they came. And if it were not for the benefits which they assuredly do bring to poor folk and sick folk, and for the advantages attending the proper use of them by *bona fide* public workers—such as police, local authorities, medical men, etc.—what hill-lover would not willingly forego all mechanical means of locomotion within the charmed zone? The mere motorist may be *in* Paradise, but is not *of* it. The very rapidity and ease of transport dull the due sense of proportion and, while enabling one to see more square miles of beauty in a given time, make the whole area seem small, and the succession of lovely sights gives no time for individual impressions to leave more than a fleeting mark. The days and weeks slipped away only too fast, with constant varieties of light and colour, sunshine, rain and cloud, till the first snow came (a glorious sight), and we had to go. We ended with a nursery



From a drawing by

H. G. Willink, 16 8/77

PILLAR ROCK : THE GREAT CHIMNEY (looking in).

fortnight, for "bracing," at Seascale, where the sunsets over the sea were magnificent. We excursed once to Westwater, and also to St. Bees and Whitehaven; and I got up Black Combe from which the panorama must be very fine. But my luck failed me, and the sky and everything were dim with brown haze.

A few days at Patterdale in January, 1894, gave me, and my dear old friend, the late G. R. Jebb, a disagreeable surprise. We had been in British hills in winter often before, and Alps too. And we thought we knew something about them. But we found that sloping ground saturated with wet, then frozen hard as iron, and lightly dusted over with powdery snow, might be distinctly queer going, even at gentle angles. Boot nails get no hold. Ice axes are no use. And if there are "drops" to go over—let alone precipices—at the foot of such slopes, well, really Nature is hardly playing fair. And I don't like to say what we failed to do! Of course, the same sort of conditions may occur wherever there are hills, humidity, and sufficient frost. To various degrees they certainly can be met with in suitable regions in the Alps before the sun has gained power, *experto crede*. All I say is that it is humiliating to be beaten by Helvellyn!

Many times since then have I been in Lakeland, generally with my boys, with whom some of the happiest days were spent; and often with my cousin, Alfred Willink, of Burneside; but always getting into the hills whenever possible.

The last occasion was at Easter, 1926, when (aged 75) I walked with a family party from and to Buttermere, *via* Scale Force, right along the ridge of Red Pike, High Stile, and High Crag in lovely weather. These "gigantic peaks" were undoubtedly loftier and more precipitous than they used to be, as well as further apart, but they still yielded to treatment, slowly and steadily applied. Yet the joy of hurling oneself down steep slopes of rough ground is gone. Such raptures have faded away and are ill replaced by the stiffly cautious movements of advancing age.

Nevertheless, hardly a visit fails to leave some "sweet memories." The resources of Lakeland seem to be inexhaustible. As the ability to climb and roam at will diminishes, the loss seems

to be compensated by delights and interests of a less strenuous kind. If a 12-hour grind of crags has become too stiff for stiffening septuagenarian muscles, these same muscles may still (by the help of a naughty motor) be up to an afternoon walk along the hippopotamus backs of the rounded ranges between Sedbergh and Low Borrow Bridge, getting back to dinner at Burnside. A day on the edge of the Fells, at a sheep-dog trial, does not compare badly with some more vigorous gymnastic efforts. And there are no sore feet after a certain age!

So to conclude, all is well that ends well. After all, it is no small thing to have known intimately and loved, in youth and strength, the rocks and fells of our fatherland. Long may they remain unspoilt.

ROSENLAUI

By C. F. HOLLAND.

On arriving at Meiringen the first object to meet the roving eye of the alighting climber is an arresting ridge of lofty peaks, about 9,000 feet in height, composed of pure rock, and uncontaminated by the presence of those unpleasant natural phenomena known as ice and snow.

The ascent past the Reichenbach Fall may lead to interesting speculation as to whether Sherlock Holmes may not have been an early and pioneering climber on these peaks, the Engelhörner, and one of no mean ability, since we are told that he proceeded for several hours over the mountains in the darkness and these are the only mountains available for such a performance. We found it difficult enough to proceed over them with the advantages of light, heat, and ideal conditions generally; to do so by night would be a nightmare. Once on the level again after surmounting the abrupt ascent past the Fall, probably by Funicular, the walk up to Rosenloui is quite beautiful, with the graceful summit of the Wetterhorn the most prominent object in view. The situation of the hotel is ideal, just below the great crags of the Klein Wellhorn, and facing the precipitous wall of the Engelhörner, a wall two miles or more in length and over a mile high. For those who like a quiet and comfortable existence, Rosenloui can hardly be bettered, for though by day tourists of all nationalities abound, by night they have departed and peace reigns.

Low though the Engelhörner are compared with the big mountains, any expedition to the top of any of their numerous peaks involves the climber in exertion equal to that of the ascent of a great peak from a hut, the average vertical ascent being about 5,000 feet. Moreover, the various routes are mostly unsuitable for any but really good weather, since what is snow on the Oberland giants will be rain here, and rain is a vastly more disconcerting affair than snow on cliffs of such magnitude. Indeed when one of the frequent thunderstorms

burst, the great wall opposite was a truly magnificent spectacle, covered, in less than ten minutes of the start of the storm, with waterfalls, some of them awe-inspiring in their volume. None of the little innocent trickles that adorn the Lake District on rainy days, but roaring avalanches of water that would sweep to destruction anyone unable to get out of their way. The alarming thing about them was the amazing speed with which they increased in size, the obvious difficulty of calculation as to where one would be safe, and the urgent necessity of rapid movement to reach safety should one be caught in such a deluge. Particularly dangerous spots are apparent, as the rocks are smooth from the floods of the past, but consequently so difficult where the angle is at all high as to render the speed essential excessively dangerous. It does not call for a very great strain on the imagination to picture a party caught by a cloudburst—and these are fairly common—descending the couloir on the Kingspitze. There is here about 100 feet of quite difficult climbing under the best conditions, ending in a traverse which is for 15 feet as near severe as makes no difference.

Should a party decide to rush the descent to avoid a night on the rocks, and if the first man to descend should come off on the traverse, it is quite likely, in fact, probable, that he will be hanging in the main stream of the fall and quite unable to move in any direction; in which case the result is best left to the imagination.

One feels rather like the fat boy in *Pickwick*, with this hair-raising, flesh-creeping picture, but mistakes are so very easy to make, especially when a quick decision has to be taken, and once made are occasionally so impossible to retrieve. It would be quite simple for a strong guideless party, well used to Dolomite climbs under wet conditions, to land itself in real danger through inability to gauge the difference between the behaviour of heavy rain on these mountains and on the average Dolomite. Guideless expeditions in the Engelhörner are probably rather dangerous affairs, unless at least one member of the party is possessed of real mountaineering capacity and knowledge, the party of course having no previous experience of the peculiar characteristics of the Engelhörner. We were not handicapped, though invariably guideless, in this particular, for Bradley is a regular

encyclopædia of knowledge ; every hold is an old friend, every route with every possible variation is known with meticulous accuracy, the weather whispers her secrets in his ear, and even the guides come to him for information. Climbing alone in the Dolomites, Speaker and I got ourselves not infrequently into the most horrid predicaments, but with Bradley in the party, such things are impossible. Assuredly he is universally regarded as the presiding genius of the Engelhörner, and I really believe that at least one of the shattered portions of the ridge, attributed locally to the effects of lightning, is the result, if the truth were known, of the imprecations he once hurled at a party who stoned him.

After some four years with practically no climbing, I felt like a rather incompetent and nervous novice, but with Speaker and Bradley to look after me, I was gentled over the most appalling places, though not even towards the end of the holiday did I feel myself capable of leading any of the harder courses. Speaking from this standpoint, and not from that of the experienced mountaineer to whom abseiling is a commonplace, I must confess that I found the latter, to me hitherto unknown in practice, extremely trying and quite alarming, and that I never got used to it or surveyed the prospect of it with equanimity ; dangling on a rope on the face of an apparently illimitable cliff invariably aroused sensations of insecurity and mental discomfort to which the knowledge of an additional rope as a safeguard brought no alleviation. Enough, however, of personal idiosyncracies and incapacity, and to the matter in hand, namely, to give a succinct and, if possible, veracious account of our various ascents.

The first of these was that of the Klein Wellhorn, the easiest of them, but a very good start for the new comer, as it provides a vast amount of scrambling varied with climbing of very moderate difficulty and several passages of the type that seem difficult when out of practice ; also the last three hundred feet are quite sensational, largely up an arête that seemed to me at least 10,000 feet above the glacier below. There is, however, a sheer drop of some 1,500 feet in cold fact, and over this section I became a sort of human limpet. The descent proved slightly harder, and one arrived back at the hotel with the feeling that

a very satisfactory and arduous day justified the consumption of much beer.

After a day's rest, the next objective was the Kingspitze, a long and tiring expedition of considerably greater difficulty than the former ascent but, in my recollection, there lingers only one passage of arresting difficulty and that was the descent of the water-worn couloir that was pictured as being so dangerous in the event of a storm. Here rubbers were definitely very much more comfortable than scarpetti. The rock is amazingly polished and the descent by a corner is quite hard for some way, the final traverse to reach the broken rocks on the far side of the couloir being markedly harder; for some 15 feet one was in spirit on the Pinnacle Face again. To me this passage seemed severe, but Speaker did a Flat Charleston across it with ease, celerity, and considerable grace. I may say that Bradley agrees with my estimate of this pitch.

After the off-day so essential with these long expeditions, we proceeded to the hut at the end of the Ochsental, and did the traverse of the Simelistock, the finest single peak expedition in the district, one of singular charm which has left a memory with me as fragrant as that of any other in my gallery. Much of the detail of this climb escapes me, but the salient points have left an indelible impression. The Simelistock stands out, an isolated and abrupt cone, in a fashion different from that of the other peaks, and one approaches it in a state of pleasurable anticipation which is more than satisfied by the character of the climbing met with in its conquest; I say conquest advisedly, for this peak does not yield easily, either by this, or by the other route by which subsequently we attained its romantic summit. Details of a series of pitches are apt to be too reminiscent of the guide-book, the beauty of a climb being submerged beneath a flood of sordid statistics, but a strongly impressionistic picture is left in my mind, possibly inaccurate in detail, but not, I think, overdrawn to the extent of becoming entirely divorced from reality. Once again, in spirit, I am standing close to the grey pinnacle, soaring nearly vertically into the blue sky, and a flying buttress lies between me and its cliffs, intimidating and vertiginous. The figure of the leader crawling cautiously up it and over an exposed and apparently overhanging corner on the

hanging than I had expected. Some 20 feet of steep slabs have to be climbed before reaching it, and the stance thus reached gives the sensation of being on a high ladder, the depths on either side are now most conspicuous, with overhanging eaves stretching above one to an incalculable height. To ascend direct is impossible, but after sidling to the right for 10 feet, with the hands clinging to vast but invisible holds and the body hanging out at an alarming angle, the wall assumes a less drastic inclination and upward progress can be started, but some feet higher one is again hanging out and a traverse to the left is indicated. At the earliest opportunity a step upward is made and the upper slope of the wall comes into view. Here one is on the salient of a bulge with the centre of gravity much too far out for comfort and tired muscles crying aloud the necessity for quick action. An arm stretched out at full length to the right preserves the precarious balance, while the left reaches up to a high hold whose attainment had previously seemed impossible ; a last despairing heave and the bulge is below one ; the hardest pitch of the climb is conquered.

There is, it is true, much still to be done ; a long abseil down 60 feet of smooth slabs, a long traverse on steep and unsafe rock across the next peak, and 2,000 feet of scrambling and climbing down before the Ochsental and safety is reached, but once the Gertrudespitze is underfoot the climb may be considered done ; as magnificent a climb as any that can be found has become a memory. And so to the hut, and back eventually to the valley in a dream, the dream that is only to be enjoyed by those who have at last accomplished a task that needed an effort quite out of the ordinary and, at times, apparently beyond their capacity. At such a time the stroll home through the friendly pine woods after so many hours on the stark crags assumes a romantic character, and the sordid cares of every-day life are very far away indeed.

Of the last expedition Speaker and I made, the ascent of the Froschkopf, much might be written. It is, I think, the most dangerous climb I know, for it entails a vast amount of hard climbing on rock of a most unstable variety. A harsh look is enough to cause an extensive rock-fall but, in fairness, one must say that it is reasonably safe for a small party, two at most, if

used to the handling of rotten rock. The threat of storm sent us scurrying valleywards at top speed, and very considerable anxiety was our portion until we had passed the last danger spot.

This last climb was by no means an anti-climax and in some ways was the most memorable of all, with its peculiar difficulties and the marvellous views it afforded, for of all the peaks of the Engelhörner, it is the best in this respect.

And so another magnificent climbing holiday came to a regretted end. For me it was the renewal of an old experience and I relived the old days when with blind unquestioning obedience, I followed Herford and Sansom, often thoroughly frightened, but always secure in the knowledge of the infallibility of my companions and the certainty that they would see me safely through whatever dangers and difficulties were to be met. The debt of gratitude I owe to Speaker and Bradley is as great as that I owe to the former; it cannot be expressed in words; but I tender them my very sincere thanks.

ADDENDA MONTANA

By H. G. KNIGHT.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good ; and I think I can say that the circumstances which altered my plans for Easter and sent me to Wasdale were directly responsible for my being in at the death of several new climbs, with H. M. Kelly in charge. It all started very quietly ; in fact, if I had realised that this quiet, unassuming looking man was such a desperado, I might possibly have rushed off to camp in Scotland, or again I might not. The first climb fell to our lot in a most matter-of-fact, everyday kind of way, but was none the less pleasing for that.

I was bound for the Napes one day to take a party, which included a novice, up a few things, nothing being said about anything difficult. To my delight, Kelly and Mrs. Eden-Smith decided to come too, thus diminishing my responsibility and also opening up visions of all sorts of exciting things not included in the original programme. The long string first meandered up Eagle's Nest W. chimney and down the Arrowhead, but then Kelly changed into top and put his foot down and, with Mrs. Eden-Smith in the middle to check any impatience at the lack of speed on the leader's part, our diminished party went up Abbey and down Ling.

While in Ling, Kelly's attention was drawn to the exciting looking rib between our climb and the W. chimney, and he was further intrigued by my pointing out a ledge half way down, at least an inch wide. Straightway he abandoned the normal course of following the lower reaches of Ling and traversed out on a series of tiny excrescences near the bottom of the rib. It certainly looked exciting from my stance at the piton in Ling and his further movements upwards more exciting still. However, the exploration did not last long and once again we found ourselves on "terra cotta" at the foot. Followed Eagle's Nest direct and, after a descent of the West chimney, Kelly moved over to our rib with a look of determination.

From the perfectly revolting stance and belay at the foot of the rib proper, he reached the same point as in the previous

inspection, and then traversed into Ling. When he called on me to follow I found my long reach of inestimable service, being able to dispense completely with some of the doubtful movements he had had to make. Seeing this, and perhaps hoping that I could reach the top from where we were, Kelly came out with the horrible suggestion—"Continue and lead the thing." Of the rest of that ascent my recollections are vague. Doubtless the sordid details are written in the hotel log-book. I remember standing on nothing to make a series of stretches, all of them several inches longer than my reach, to ledges of the "one-sixteenth of an inch" order which we are said to use as holds; of Kelly saying: "Splendid, carry on. Can't you reach that roughness two feet higher?"; of Mrs. Eden-Smith watching apparently thousands of feet below; of a fairly large ledge which allowed me to traverse to the piton in Ling and sob. I suppose it wasn't as bad as that, but it certainly was thin and steep. Kelly followed to the piton, making a fascinating "monkey on a stick" movement on the edge of the rib. The continuation above the piton has two very hard movements, but one is reassured by the rock having a more broken appearance, and if the wretched leader were assailed by "wind-up" he could get off the face on either side. In fact Kelly tried to make me come back and do it again, for at one point I used a hold appertaining to Ling!

Such was the first of our new climbs, a mere bagatelle in height but a very pleasant and difficult way up Eagle's Nest if the severities of the Direct Route become insufficient for the "rubber expert." "Long John" is Kelly's name for the climb, not mine, and he seemed to think I ought to be rechristened to suit.

That night, in the hotel, Kelly suggested a visit to Pillar to look at a thing he had had his eye on for a while on the right wall of Walker's. Next day, in spite of being caught by a violent thunderstorm on Looking-Stead, we went to the foot of the Rock for a preliminary investigation.

The Grooved Wall certainly appeared a desperate place with a slimy looking overhang 150 feet above the scree. This first exploration, in boots, did not amount to much, beyond discovering the best route up to the foot of the groove proper and the way to get into the groove. It also showed that the overhang 30 feet away did not belie its appearance as seen from the bottom.

As a result we were content with going up North-East and getting a good view from above of the whole of the proposed climb. Very stiff it looked, the angle being nearly twice that of the groove on North East, and great tufts of grass were scattered here and there throughout its length. The direct finish above the junction with North-East looked pretty well impossible.

On the way back, Kelly said that it might be as well to go down the groove on a rope and clear some of the grass away before trying it again, but we both decided that it wanted dry conditions. He also talked of a girdle traverse of Kern Knotts and agreed to come up and try with me if there was any chance of crossing the wall to Kern Knotts Crack. He left that evening to wait for fine weather—and once more “no sound was to be heard in the valley save that of the breeding buzzards.”

A day or so later, the third desperate character, Standing, turned up, and once again a quiet exterior gave no hint of the man of blood and iron within. Being by himself, I got him to join me in an attempt on C. gully on the Screes (in ice), and this procured for him the later pleasure of holding a rope whilst I managed to cross the wall from Kern Knotts Buttress to the Crack. A telephone message to Kelly informed him of the fact and next evening, which was fine, found him *in situ* again. We began with a day's training on Scafell. The rock having the appearance of dryness and actually being very wet at all vital points, Kelly thought that it would do his second string good to lead some of the exceptionally severes, an ambitious programme being carried out “without a hitch.” This last phrase does not mean that no belays were used!

Next day a party of six, not forgetting Peter, my pedigree plum-pudding dog, who had been an interested spectator of all our doings, set out for the Grooved Wall, equipped with a club axe, much determination, and a plan of action carefully worked out by the manager. Briefly, the horrible idea was this; the support party and climbing party were to combine and clatter up North-East whence the former could do Slab and Notch, Sodom, or anything they felt like. As an alternative, they were to be allowed to watch the moles at work—from a safe distance. The moles, or climbing party, were to descend the groove one at a time with the axe, cleaning out all grass, loose rock, etc. Most important, holds, if any, were to be located for

the pull up the overhang. It fell to my lot to make the first plunge and, with careful instructions about holding tight, "Miserable Starkey" backed over the top and so down to the first grass ledge and to work on its dislodgement. My overlooking the fact that I was standing on it resulted in a sudden suspension on the rope when the grass, cut off at its base, made a rapid descent to join the afforestation scheme in Ennerdale.

All was well, however, for a sound chock was discovered, and so the work continued. Each in turn descended the groove, and one and all found something to make a song about. This we all agreed on though—a club axe is *not* a handy instrument in constricted quarters. In the last descent the overhang was reached, but the miserable pendulum was in such a state after descending the whole length of the groove that little was done to clear the poor holds on its summit. Kelly was assured they were there though—under six inches of earth.

After all this hard work the party was in a state of absolute exhaustion, but Kelly decreed that an attempt should be made—after a prolonged rest. A large flake had previously been discovered half-way up the overhang which, if sound, would serve both as a belay and an essential hold. Both Kelly and I had several shots at getting up, but a shoulder is of no assistance there and tired muscles made it inadvisable to press matters too far so, after abseiling into Walker's, we joined the rest of the party, more determined than ever on conquest.

Next day was again gloriously hot, but having decided to give Pillar a chance to recover from our excavations, the whole party toiled up the Styce to Kern Knotts. Operations began by the party of three crossing the wall to the Crack by my previously explored route. This took a long time, owing largely to the demands of the photographers "to stay still and stand well away from the rock." An adjournment for lunch and lime-juice followed, after which the serious business was to start. The party adjourned to the top of the Cat-Walk. The photographers took up suitable positions and number one got off the mark. It certainly is a devil to come down and no one envied Kelly his job as last man. The West chimney was a pleasant relaxation and descending Central Face just the opposite.

I have said it was hot, haven't I? No sooner had the party foregathered on the big ledge in the chimney than we all felt

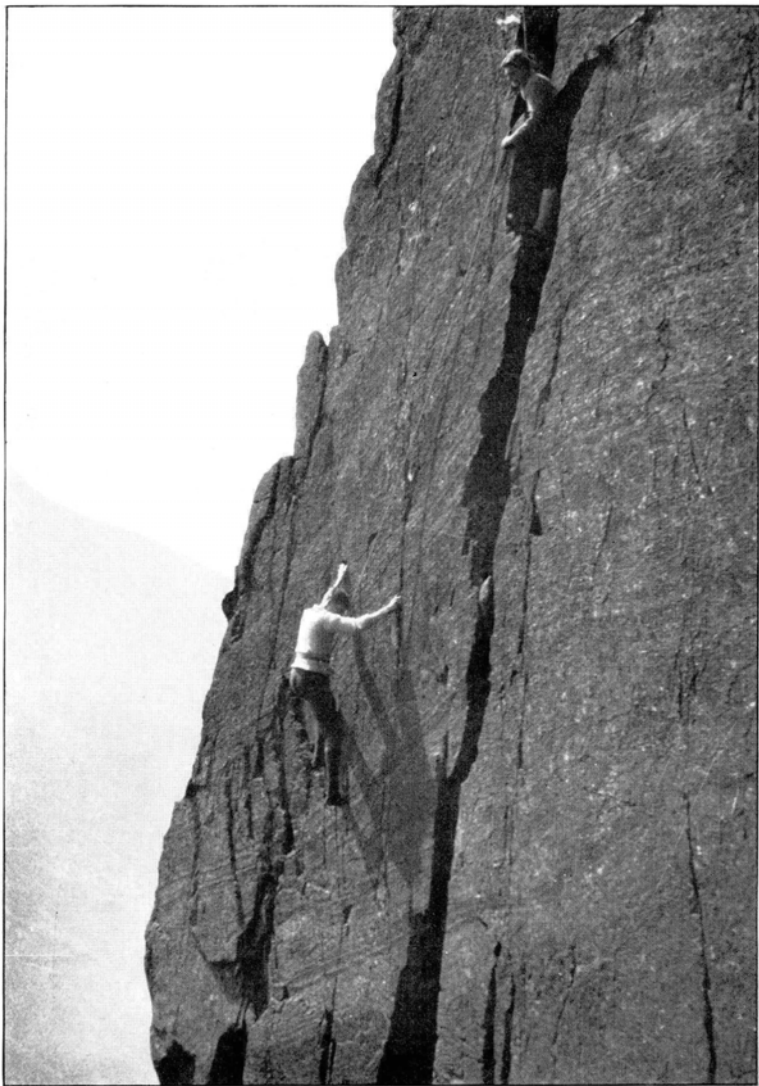


Photo by

**"CROSSING THE BAR."
KERN KNOTT'S CHAIN.**

B. Eden-Smith.

the urge for lime-juice simultaneously—Kelly, as a reward for hard work faithfully accomplished, myself as a fortifier in perils to come, and Standring just because he was thirsty. It was felt to be cheating to fetch it, so one of our audience brought it up in a sack. A most unselfish act on such a day, and it speaks highly for the moral qualities of everyone concerned that there was any left to bring up.

The swing on to the Buttress was made successfully, thus bringing us to the last obstacle, crossing the Great Wall. Here the proceedings were livened up by the narrow escape from death of one of our faithful photographers. Laden with ropes and cameras, he had made a slower passage round the foot of the buttress than the climbers and was directly beneath when the leader decided to remove a loose block which was in the way. Fortunately he looked to see if any one had strayed into the danger zone and managed to support it as it went. The sight of the laggard flying for cover with rope twining round every limb was well worth seeing. The wall and the crossing to the Innominate went very nicely, however, and three satisfied climbers wended up the slab to the top.

Of course in this girdle very little fresh rock is touched, but, combining as it does the hardest parts of practically all the hardest climbs on Kern Knotts together with the crossing of a most sensational and severe wall, it makes a fine expedition. As usual, naming the climb was almost as hard as the climb itself, and for want of a better, "The Chain" was put forward, discussed and finally passed.

As a result of our success on Kern Knotts we readily agreed with Kelly's suggestion to try the Grooved Wall again. In preparation, we manufactured, with the aid of a saw, a more suitable entrenching tool than our axe and cut several short lengths of rope, though I'm sure no one had any idea what use could be made of them. Next day was, as usual for that fortnight, fine and warm and we made a preposterously early start, 9.15 at the latest. Kelly's brain had once more been busy in working out the method of procedure and he suggested that Standring, having the easiest job in the ascent—if it came off, should be the one to descend the groove and try and make the overhang fit for a decent man to have anything to do with. I agreed that it was a great idea, and a more thorough sweeping out of a climb

it would be impossible to imagine. For two-and-a-half hours he laboured, cleaning and testing every hold. A splendid belay was dug out 60 feet above the overhang and a few imaginary holds were discovered at the top of the *mauvais pas* itself. He continued right down to the Pinnacle, where he unroped and patiently awaited the slackers from above. Unfortunately their arrival at the foot of North-East coincided with that of Mrs. Eden-Smith and satellite and Mr. and Mrs. Heap. As a result, when Standing at last saw his partners again, they were eating lunch on Green Ledge quite oblivious to his presence or absence. How it came about that his sandwiches weren't given to the dog, I don't know.

After lunch we got under way, whilst everyone else spread themselves comfortably in the sun. Good time was made to the overhang and, with Standing well anchored on the Pinnacle, Kelly and his understudy got busy. I was tied firmly to the flake in such a way that if it came off under Kelly's weight he wouldn't be alone in his fall, and one of the lengths of rope was made into a loop and hung from its tip. I must say at this point that, though the flake looks preposterously unsound, no amount of pulling or twisting had made it even vibrate. Kelly now made a determined attack on the overhang and, with loud applause from everyone except himself, his back-view disappeared into the groove. Rope ran out pretty steadily till, safeguarded by a thread in the crack, he was able to rest for a few minutes. In the following section, before the big belay was reached, one of his rubbers was half pulled off in the crack. One of those helpful little touches which make a leader feel so secure.

The climbing on the whole of this section of 60 feet is both severe and strenuous, and we were relieved to hear that it had gone fairly well. The loop of rope certainly simplified the overhang considerably, though I was so occupied trying to stand in it whilst it swayed about that I forgot to use the top of the flake itself. Above the belay, the climbing is still very hard but nothing to compare with some of the difficulties in the lower section.

Fifty feet above the belay, we came to the junction with the North-East groove, the unexplored top pitch of our climb looking very steep and forbidding. This final groove is about

50 feet high and approaches the vertical at the top. Kelly started up but came to a point 10 feet above the belay where he just could not reach what might, or might not, be a hold. Not wishing to waste more time surveying with a rope, the elongated second was called on who, having assured him that it was a hold, carried on to the top. The holds on this section are very far apart and small, but for the most part are incut to a slight extent. The grass ledges at the top make a very unpleasant landing and have to be ascended for quite 20 feet to reach a belay.

Cairns having been erected, Cæsar disbanded his soldiers that they might procure food from the villagers. In other words, we hit out for the eat dump in the valley.

As the next day was our last, we decided to pay a short visit to Kern Knotts, if fine, and see how "the Chain" reversed, Kelly going first and having to lead up the bits he had been last down. We were all agreed that the original route is the harder for, though technically it is harder to descend and swing off Kern Knotts buttress than to descend the Cat Walk or Central Face, the real severity is of much shorter duration. The Great Wall appears to be about the same standard whichever way it is crossed.

As this reversal did not take a great time, Kelly suggested going round by the Napes and seeing if a long reach was of any use in trying to get up the Needle direct from the gap. After careful inspection from the foot with a magnifying glass, and two or three failures, the lower difficulties were overcome and a long arm grabbed the flake fifteen feet up and all was over bar the cheering. In this first ascent, Kelly was brought to the shoulder before I finished the top of the Obverse, but despising myself for such cowardice I managed it again in one run-out. As regards difficulty, I think the few feet from the first foothold to the flake twelve feet higher was the hardest problem we were on, but it was only twelve feet and, even at the highest point of the severe section, one is quite near the gap and soft landing.

That evening, well satisfied with weather, the new discoveries, and ourselves, we wended our way quietly down the valley in two cars, and if the tourists wondered why the dog was barking the whole time—what did they know of the new climbs written up in the hotel log-book?

THE PICOS DE EUROPA

BY WM. T. ELMSLIE.

Members of the Fell and Rock Club who desire to find a climbers' paradise could hardly do better than spend a summer holiday in the Picos. Not only is the scenery gloriously beautiful but the mountains will delight the heart of the most fastidious rock-climber; whilst first ascents and new routes abound on every hand. Nor is this region beyond the reach of British climbers with limited holidays and limited purses; for it can be reached from London in two or, at most, three days.

We discovered this most delightful group of mountains in the "Times Atlas"; for having decided to visit the Spanish Peninsula during the summer holidays of 1927, we looked to see what mountains there were in addition to the Pyrenees and the Sierra Nevada. We liked the name of the Picos de Europa; and the brief notices of them which we were able to find in such English publications as "Baedeker," the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and "A.J." 3, encouraged the hope that they might prove interesting. A fortunate series of chances brought to our knowledge a recent account of the group in French by the Comte de Saint-Saud and a publication of the Spanish Alpine Club, a few years older. Although both volumes were out of print, we were able to secure copies of them and also of the maps published by De Saint-Saud, and obtainable from Barrère in Paris....

We reached the seaside station of Unquera one afternoon in July, and obtained seats on the roof of a motor 'bus which ran to a village called Panes. Here it was necessary to decide upon our further plans, for there is a division of roads. One road leads to the south through the gorge of La Hermida to the valley of the Liébana, whence the eastern and southern sections of the Picos may be approached; the other leads up the valley of the Cares to Arenas, whence the northern and western parts of the group may be visited. We decided on the latter course, and spent that evening at the Hotel de los Picos de Europa at Arenas de Cabrales.

Our packs next morning were of exceptional weight, as it was necessary to carry with us food for three or four days. A shop in the village supplied all our provisions, which included fifteen fried trout, five boiled chickens and large quantities of cooked ham, veal, and other delicacies. . . . The road to Puente Poncebos, where there is a large electric works, is passable by cars ; but beyond that point we had only a footpath to follow. In the bottom of the valley flowed the river Cares, its transparently blue waters crossed every mile or two by a picturesque high ivy-clad bridge ; the sides of the valley consisted of precipitous and impassable limestone crags. Here and there one would see a tiny village perched high up on some apparently quite inaccessible ledge on the mountain side.

When we reached the rude stone huts of Upper Bulnes, we presented a letter of introduction with which we had been supplied, addressed to Celesto Mier. The whole population of the village assembled to attempt to read the letter ; and when at length this feat was accomplished, the gentleman in question promised to accompany us to the refuge hut of Camburero of which he possessed the key. This hut, situated at a height of four or five thousand feet, is the only one of its kind in the Picos and has recently been built by one of the shop-keepers of Cabrales.

Rain coming on, our guide took with him an enormous umbrella and, although in parts it was necessary to use both hands in order to follow the short cut to the Canal (or Ghyll) of Camburero, the countryman never ceased to keep it over his head.

That evening I was sitting on a rock outside the hut, listening to the echoing of the songs of some goatherds whom I could not see for the mist, when the clouds suddenly cleared ; above my head I saw an enormous rock obelisk, of apparently stupendous height, and knew it for the Naranjo de Bulnes. Calling to Manley and West, the other members of the party, to come and look at it, I pointed it out to them ; there was a moment of silence, broken at length by the solitary exclamation "*Christmas !!!*" A more astonishing mountain it has seldom been my lot to see ; it rises sheer from the surrounding summits a thousand feet or more, with smooth repellent sides that at the same time challenge and defy the climber.

We were up betimes next morning, with the intention of ascending the Torre de Cerredo (2,642 metres), the highest summit in the whole group. We found our way, with some difficulty, up a long gully, which took us close beneath the foot of the Naranjo and afforded us an opportunity of studying a side of that mountain which was clearly absolutely unclimbable. Above this point, the unsatisfactory nature of our map made itself apparent. We wasted an hour or more in an attempt to reach the Collada de Arenizas Alta by a ridge which eventually led off in a totally different direction and, having retraced our steps and ascended a long snow slope to what appeared to be the col, discovered that we had reached the C. de A. Baja ("low") in error. Before us was a deep valley surrounded by magnificent rock peaks, amongst which was conspicuous at the head the Torre de Llambrion, flanked by two small glaciers.

In spite of the lateness of the hour, we traversed on very steep but good snow to the high col, whence we could see the Cerredo across a deep *hoyo* or circular depression, like a dry lake-bed. It took us two hours to make our way round this depression, up a long tongue of steep snow, and finally up a shallow rock gully of "moderate" difficulty, to the summit of the mountain, which we reached at 6 p.m., ten hours after leaving the hut.

The summit of the Cerredo is a narrow ridge, 50 yards long. On all sides the crags fall sheer for many hundreds of feet; and our route is *the only known way of reaching the top!* A strong party should have no difficulty in adding at least one other route on the east face and probably ascents by the south ridge and the west face. The view in all directions was superb, and the rocky summits stood out from a sea of mist that lay at an average height of 6,000 feet. Away to the east rose the attractive looking summits and ridges of the Lechugales and the Vieja, the weird and wonderful pinnacles and crags of the central massif surrounded us on all sides, and to the west, across the deep valley of the Cares, rose some most alluring mountains, chief amongst which was the Torre Santa, a lonely spike which De Saint-Saud considers to be at least as difficult of ascent as the Naranjo.

It was long after dark when we reached the hut again that night, even though our descent was expedited by some delightful and long glissades on the numerous tongues of snow which lay on the higher parts of the mountains. Indeed, if it had not been for "George" (as we affectionately called our friend Mier), who came out from the hut and shouted through the darkness and the mist, it is doubtful whether we should have reached shelter at all.

The Naranjo was the objective of the next day's climb. We knew that it had been twice ascended, and that the route on both occasions was by the great slabs of the N.E. face and a long chimney which led to the summit. On the second occasion the descent was by a series of chimneys on the S.E., but the climber, Gustav Schulze, had declared an ascent by this route to be impossible; he had been forced to use an *abseil* at several points. Subsequently we learned that a party, which included a lady, had actually ascended by the S.E. route; but of this we were at the time unaware.

Having reached as high a point as possible on scree and easy rock, without seeing any place where we could conveniently attack the great slabs, which in many places actually overhung, we put on the rope and our rubbers and attempted to cross the slabs to a platform several hundred feet away and a short distance above us. From this platform we hoped to be able to attain the foot of the final chimneys. Taking first of all Schulze's route, I climbed directly upwards till advance was barred by an overhang. Manley joined me and I attempted to proceed; but his stance was extremely unsatisfactory and there was no possibility of his being able to hold me in case of a slip. The next few steps were obviously extremely risky and what lay above them it was difficult to judge; we therefore decided unanimously to come down and to try Pedro Pidal's route directly across the slabs, in a more or less horizontal direction.

Once again I ran out the whole length of the rope without finding a single hold or belay of any kind. The steep smooth rock just afforded enough friction hold for the feet and hands, but one had no reserve of friction to withstand any kind of strain. Attempts in several directions always produced the same results and once more we decided that we should not be

justified in launching the whole party simultaneously upon those treacherous slopes. There were naturally no signs of previous parties, and we wondered whether we had really chosen the best point for an attack; so we resolved to retire to some distance, whence we could survey the whole face of the mountain. Unhappily at that precise moment the clouds enveloped us and continued around us till late in the afternoon. It was nearly sunset when we were again able to inspect our mountain. The N.E. face showed no more likely point of attack than that at which we had assaulted it; and that route looked no more promising from a distance than from near at hand. The S.E. side, however, which now we saw for the first time, did seem to us to hold out some hopes; but it was too late to make its closer acquaintance, and we were unable to devote another day to the mountain.

The Naranjo is not, like the Inaccessible Pinnacle in Skye, a mere projection on the summit of another mountain. It is in itself a mountain of very considerable proportions. The best comparison that I can make with it is the Winklerturm in the Dolomites, if that peak be imagined much increased in size, and standing quite alone.

It will be, perhaps, some explanation of our failure, to remark, at this point, that Schulze's summing-up of the climb is that it is similar to climbing in the Dolomites so far as the dangers of steep rock are concerned; but that, in view of the extraordinarily smooth condition of the rock, it is far more risky.

Our next objective was the Torre Santa, also known as the Peña Santa de Cañ; and as we were informed that the village of Cañ could not be reached direct over the mountains, owing to the nature of the ground, we had to descend *via* Bulnes to the river Cares. Our provisions were now considerably reduced and the meat harboured vermin; but we hoped that at Cañ we should be able to purchase all that we required. Accordingly, shortly after midday, we commenced the six miles through the gorge of the Cares, with light sacks and high hopes.

It is said that the people of Cañ never die in their beds; they fall from the path which connects their village with civilisation! Needless to say, we assumed that this was somewhat of an overstatement; and even when a party of villagers met us

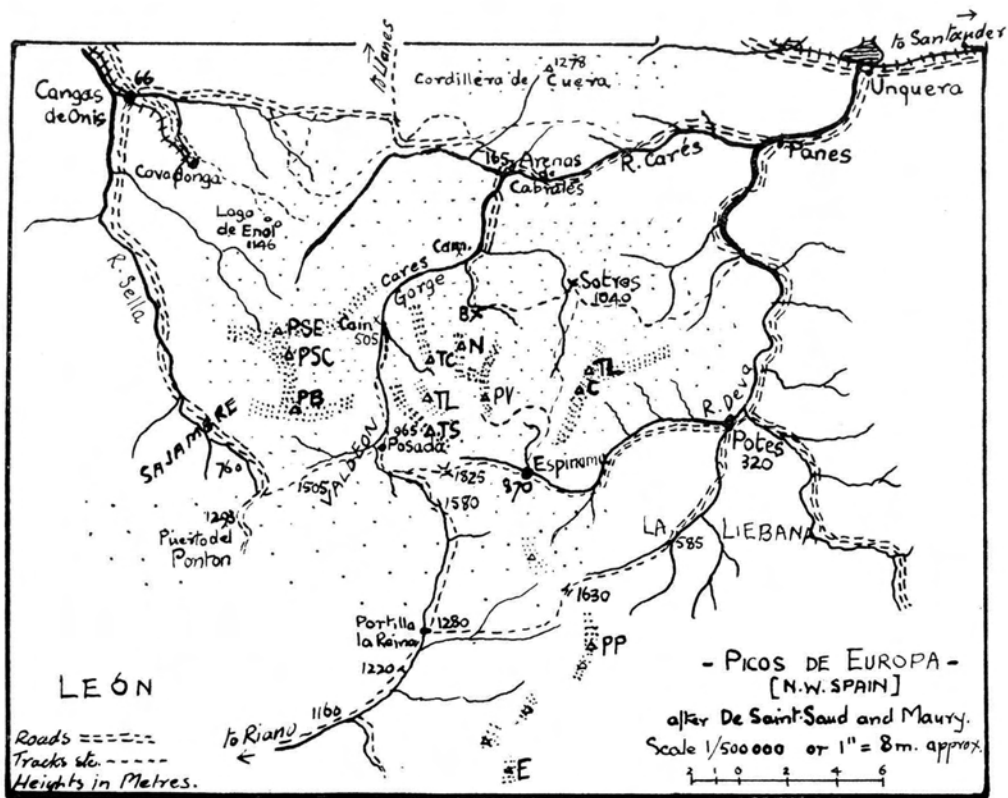
and expressed their doubts as to whether we should be able to reach Cain, we remained convinced that the difficulties and dangers of the path were exaggerated. The villagers indeed pointed to one of their number, whom their spokesman called "this fat woman," and said that she had made the journey, so that possibly we also might be able to do so; but it has been a real puzzle to us ever since how the fat woman could possibly have accomplished it!

The gorge itself being at first impassable, our path took us at least a thousand feet up the hillside and then led down once more to the water's edge. From this point we scrambled on over boulders, under tree trunks, through caverns, up and down for an hour or two, when again the path took an upward turn and once more we rose quite a thousand feet. Along the side of the gorge there ran a water conduit leading to the electric works down the valley; for the most part this ran through tunnels, but occasionally it ran along the open hillside, with a narrow concrete wall, which sometimes carried our path, protecting the outside of the channel. In many places the path was but a narrow track running across the face of a crag, where the use of the hands was advisable, if not absolutely necessary; sometimes we had steep ascents or descents on smooth slabs of rock, where a slip would certainly have proved fatal. Three times at least we rose to a great height above the bottom of the valley; as many times we dropped again to the stream. Once we walked in the stream bed under huge overhanging walls that almost joined far over our heads. On another occasion our track ended under an overhang where the conduit came out for a space of a few yards from its subterranean course. Here it was necessary, with lantern lit, to crawl on our bellies for two or three hundred yards through one of the tunnels, on planks laid across the swiftly flowing stream, till we came out into daylight again on the side of the hill. For two hours we had not passed a single place where it would have been possible to lie down for the night, without a risk of rolling down the crags; and as we had already been engaged in the gorge on a continuous series of "Jack's Rakes" and "Rake's Progresses," for seven hours, evening was drawing in. The gorge seemed to continue endlessly, when to our amazement we met a man. "How far

is it to Cain?" we asked. "Five minutes," he replied. I am afraid that we refused to believe him; but he led us into a long tunnel, constructed for the use of the electric works, and brought us out on the other side of a great barrier of mountains into a green, crag-encircled little valley. In a few minutes we were amongst the red-roofed houses, with their blue wooden balconies and white walls decorated with frescoes of flowers, that constitute the village of Cain.

The village contains one house that possesses beds. It is the property of Señora Maria, who promised us the use of her double bed and of a single bed in a cupboard in the same room. She gave us fried sausages to eat. They were tough, strongly-spiced and black, with yellow and red streaky substances in them; and they were kept in a jar in what looked like motor grease. We ate what we could of them, and several visitors who came in to look at us were given the scraps which we left upon our plates. The kitchen table was hinged up against the wall above our heads; we sat down on a bench against the wall and the table was lowered over our heads, coming to rest at the right level in front of us. In spite of the liveliness of the surroundings, we contrived to spend a good night, with the liberal aid of some tins of insect powder

Difficulties arose in the morning over the question of payment. We had no small money and the good lady had very little change. She did not want to get a bad name by accepting more money from us than she should have; things were thus at a deadlock. She declared that no one in the village had any money, but when I suggested the priest (I had seen a half-buried little church amongst the maize fields), she brightened up and together we made our way to his abode. We found him in his sitting-room, a mud-floored apartment, with two shelves on which were some broken cups, some pans, a tin of sardines and a book. The rest of the furniture consisted of a wooden bench, on which Señora Maria and I took our places, and an extremely home-made wooden arm chair. Like the good lady, he spoke dialect, and conversation was difficult, in spite of the utmost affability on both sides. At length it was agreed that we might succeed better if Latin were spoken. His Latin, however, was spoken with a pronunciation which made it to me worse than "Double-



Sketch Map by

Gordon Manley.

Abbreviations :

Places × : B=Bulnes, 900m. Cam.=Camarmeña, 500m.

Mountains Δ

- TC, Torre de Cerredo, 2,642m.
TL, Torre de Llambrión, 2,639m.
TS, Torre de Salinas, 2,475m.
N, Naranjo de Bulnes, 2,516m.
PV, Peña Vieja, 2,615m.
PP, Peña Prieta, 2,533m.
PSE, Peña Santa de Enol, 2,479m.
PSC, Peña Santa de Castilla, 2,585m. (Torre Santa)
PB, Peña Bermej a, 2,391m.
TL, Tabla de Lechugales, 2,445m.
C, Cortes, 2,373m.
E, Espigüete, 2,453m.
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effect upon the sheep, and it became obvious that if it were to be rescued either guile or main force must be employed. We decided on a combination. X.H.E. threw down an end of rope, and I tied on and climbed up to the ledge where I was belayed to a spike of rock. X.H.E. then advanced round the corner with the firm intention of grappling the sheep before it had time to get panic-stricken, I, meanwhile, playing him like a salmon from my belay. Unfortunately, the sheep observed him too soon and showed with painful plainness that it was prepared to hurl itself over the abyss rather than submit to his embraces. X.H.E. retired, and we held a consultation. He then climbed up to a good stance, some 20 feet above, whence he could command both the sheep's grazing grounds and so direct operations—the idea being to frighten the animal back to the original ledge and so, if possible, into my arms. I stayed where I was, guarding the ledge, and felt a lively sympathy for Horatius after Spurius Lartius and Herminius had both "darted back." It was very cold, the north-easter blew pitilessly, my rubber-shod feet were drenched by the slushy grass. Moreover, only the previous day had I assisted a sheep out of a ditch in the water-meadows by Coniston Lake, and I had some idea of the weight attained by the portly and middle-aged. I thought it at least doubtful whether I should be able to hold the animal if I engaged it in a death struggle on that narrow ledge. My feet would slide on the wet greasy ground, and sheep and I go shooting over the edge to perdition. My perdition would have ended as a matter of fact in time on the brink owing to the fortunate tether of my belay—I had seen to that—but the sheep would have gone somersaulting away down to the little terrace below. X.H.E. now began to tickle up the animal with pebbles. It came trotting round the corner again. Cowardly, instead of making a dive for it, I attempted to lasso it. Whereupon, it trotted back. Another little shower of stones dribbled down in front of its nose and turned it once more. I failed again with the lasso. By this time the rescuers were both getting bored. Desperate measures were decided on. A more vicious stone shower sent the animal, panic-stricken, charging past me for the broken chimney by which we had ascended. I grabbed and held a great chunk of wool. For a second the sheep was quiet; then it

began to struggle. Its hind legs disappeared over the brink of the ledge. I heaved and prayed for the sticking quality of rubber. There was a tense beat of time and the hind legs were restored to *terra-firma*. The sheep, we afterwards found out, had been banting for at least a week on that ledge. Frugality had frustrated its macabre desire for destruction. Had it weighed another stone, it would certainly have gone the way of other mockers at salvation.

Feverishly, I swathed loose rope round its middle and then X.H.E. climbed down and we tied it up safely and lowered it on to the terrace below. Scarcely had its four feet touched turf then it began to nibble greedily. It was not really an ascetic. We descended, untied it and shooed it a little further down. Then, entirely against our advice, the ungrateful brute insisted on traversing along the broken rock and grass into the barren bed of Easter gully. It would not have surprised us had we heard a week later that another party had rescued it from the bandstand.

As for the rubbers, they had passed without comment.

THE CRACK

BY G. GRAHAM MACPHER

*An inaccessible crack—The most difficult climb
in the Lake District—An easy day for an
undergraduate.*

Somebody has recently stated that the major crags are now apparently becoming almost worked out. Possibly Gimmer is not regarded as one of the major crags, but it must be remembered that in addition to the slab of rock on which the "Gimmer alphabet" is to be found, there are the crags on the western side. These are about 300 feet high, and should provide material for the most abandoned seekers of new routes. Already this year (1928), three new climbs have been made here, each with some points of interest.

"The Crack" is mentioned in connection with the Hiatus Route in the Great Langdale Guide, page 19, where it is stated: "This crack is about 120 feet in length, vertical, rope-climbed, but still unled." "The Crack" is indicated on the right of the picture facing page 18 of the guide, where it is marked as a mere branch of the Hiatus, and part of it appears in the next illustration of Gimmer Crag.

Now, a remark like that almost amounts to a throwing-down of the gauntlet, and probably many people have wondered if this crack would be climbed. From much talking, a reputation for supposed inaccessibility was built up which earned for it the simple but distinctive name of "The Crack."

The curious investigators implied by the words "rope-climbed, but still unled" had descended with a rope held from above and had experienced much difficulty in regaining their starting-point. G. S. Bower had gone down past the overhang and some distance lower than a turfy ledge, now known as the Bower, and found the ascent both difficult and strenuous. His opinion of "The Crack" was not such as to encourage future explorers, or raise any hopes of ultimate success. Some turf



Photo by

THE CRACK.
(First picture.)

G. G. Macphree.

which had hampered his movements has since been removed, and so the climb is now easier. G. Basterfield had previously inspected the route and with characteristic caution had remarked that it might be led some day.

* * *

Apart from speculative inspections from a distance, of merely academic interest, no further notice seems to have been taken until, in April, 1928, A. B. Reynolds, out for blood, definitely aspired to its conquest. Having encountered a kindred spirit in the shape of H. G. Knight, a start was made on 21st April, 1928. The reason for this direct assault, without a preliminary trial on a rope held from above (a permissible precaution, in view of the reputed difficulty of the climb!), appears to be a chance remark that surely nobody would do such a thing. This shows the danger of saying anything that could possibly be construed into a challenge, implied or otherwise

In order to provide a distinct route, the climb was started a few yards lower than the Hiatus at the foot of a conspicuous crack, at present rather grassy at the commencement. A.B.R. led up this for 60 feet to a small stance with belay on the left wall. Here H.G.K. took the lead, length of reach being of considerable help on the "exhilarating traverse to the arête on the left," followed by the ascent of a groove to a good stance and belay. A.B.R. resumed the lead and was gradually forced still further to the left until unable to avoid contact with the Hiatus route, of which about 15 feet of the third pitch were climbed. Upward progress was continued until it was possible to traverse back to the right and reach the crack proper, as shown in the guide-book illustration. The climb thus uses two cracks not quite in alignment, joined by a zigzag traverse. A belay was found some 15 feet below the Bower. Just above the belay, there was a curious slab of rock leaning sideways in the crack, and just visible in the illustration. This was found helpful in surmounting a young overhang to reach the Bower, but had to be treated with the greatest care, stepping delicately on its edge, to avoid dislodging it. Both climbers paused for reflection on the Bower.

Meanwhile, a photographer in the shape of R. C. Abbott had joined the party and, from a commanding position on the

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ridge opposite, was able to follow the proceedings. Emboldened by his presence, it was considered justifiable to proceed with the climb, although the hour was late. No belay could be found on the Bower, and A.B.R. proceeded to examine the continuation of the Crack. The *mauvais pas* or *bonne bouche*, depending on how one regards it, consists of an overhang about 25 feet above the Bower. It seemed risky to attempt this with the second man unbelayed at the Bower, but after great trouble, a thread belay was arranged below the overhang. The efforts of the leader up to this point had reduced his energy, if not his enthusiasm, so it was decided, partly to save time, that H.G.K. should climb up to and past him at the belay and attempt the overhang. This would not "go," and the second returned to the Bower.

"The official photographer was here appointed to the position of honorary rescuer" to the party and made speed round to the top of the crags. Meanwhile H. G. K. sat comfortably on the ledge and A. B. R. stood on either foot, turn about, wedged in the corner. During the 45 minutes or so required by the rescuer, they admired the sun set over Rossett Ghyll and saw the moon appear. Possibly they "thought almost with shuddering, how awful it must be for men to pass the night in such remote, eternal and appalling solitude," but perhaps modern rock-climbers lack the imagination of their counterparts of eighty years ago. However, help was at hand, and a rope let down from above was used to complete the ascent. Such moral support, of course, invalidated the climb as a first ascent; such is the rigour of the game.

It may be mentioned that at the top of the second pitch, H. G. K. laid the foundation of a story which will probably haunt him till the end of his days, by his discovery of a pigeon's egg on a rock pedestal. Rumours of oval remains at the foot of several other climbs, and the indubitable discovery of *two* pigeon's eggs in the hotel at Wasdalehead may not be without some significance. Mere mention of pigeon's eggs at the climbers' Mecca even yet causes no small stir.

The week-end following this attempt, H. G. K. did not get over to Langdale from Wasdale, and soon after had to go south, so he relinquished his right to be present on the first ascent.



Photo by

THE CRACK.
(Second picture.)

G. G. Macphee.

On 5th May, 1928, I was delayed *en route* and only reached Langdale about four p.m. While snatching a hasty tea, I read a note which requested my presence on the west side of Gimmer and which added "please bring your Alpine line, if you have it." The meaning of this ominous message was obvious. After I had joined A.B.R. and Abbatt above the large boulder which shelters the drinking-pool, reconstructed by Gilbert Wilson the day Hiatus was first led, no time was lost in roping up. The photographer was supplied with two or three cameras and instructions how to use them, further orders as to where and when being left till after the climbers had started. This time A.B.R. led throughout, and the advice offered in the climbing-book account of the previous attempt was adhered to, *i.e.*, "Boots may be kept in a rucksack, which should be left at the foot of the climb."

The first picture shows the second man at the top of the first 60-foot pitch, while the leader has crossed the traverse, here foreshortened, and is moving up the groove to a pedestal belay. It was near here that the pigeon's egg was observed, still *in situ*. At the top of the second pitch, some time was taken up in attempting to cross the smooth slabs above by means of a slanting crack. This is seen in the first picture at the top left-hand corner and again in the second picture 15 feet below the second man, between him and the pedestal. The earth has recently been partly removed during a strenuous evening, and later on this route may be led, but on this occasion it was impossible. A descent of a few feet was made to the left to join the third pitch of the Hiatus route, which was climbed for 15 feet to its top and relinquished for a belay 15 feet higher. The fourth pitch of "The Crack" ascends 15 feet from here to another belay. In the second picture, G. G. M. is seen at this belay, while A.B.R. is climbing up the fifth pitch to traverse back after a few feet into the upper crack, where a belay exists on the left wall. This is really the easiest part of the climb as the holds are conveniently placed.

The sixth pitch is longer, and from this point the leader went up to the thread belay near the overhang and, after passing his climbing rope through loops of spare rope placed on this belay, returned to the Bower. The third and last picture shows

the leader half way up between the Bower and the overhang, while the second man is seen at the lower belay. As before, both climbers foregathered on the Bower, and consumed oranges and mint cake to nerve them for the impending struggle. Further instructions were shouted to the photographer, and then G. G. M. went up to the belay beneath the overhang, and made himself as comfortable as the inadequate one-footed stance would permit. Then A.B.R. climbed up to and past him, to do battle with the overhang. It was a warm day and the book of words says "the second was inadequately protected from falling perspiration." The leader faced left, and used what G.B. had christened "dominoes"—a name which accurately describes the minute holds available inside the crack itself. "Well, anyway, 'The Crack' has been led," said the leader, as he paused for breath above the overhang, before pushing on some 30 feet further to a ledge, with belay, on the right, where a rest could be taken. The second soon followed, also facing left, and it is reported that in the still air he was clearly audible at a distance of 75 yards breathing steadily through the nose. It is certain that showers of lichen dust and moss filled his eyes, and rendered the ascent even more difficult than it actually was. This disadvantage of climbing in dry weather might be countered by the second wearing goggles, but fine weather is so rare in these parts, that moisture is more likely to interfere with the climbers' upward progress. Even after five weeks' drought, this portion was damp, so it would appear to be, like Engineer's Chimney, nearly always wet.

From the ledge on the right it is possible to reach the summit of the crags by a mere tourist route, but the conscientious leader stepped back into "The Crack" to complete the remaining 20 feet and make a consistent finish to a climb remarkable for its steepness and the uniform standard of difficulty throughout.

* * *

It was thought only fair to allow other parties an opportunity of making the second ascent, so in spite of my desire to revisit the climb to correct first impressions, "The Crack" was left alone all summer. After a spell of dry weather, we were again in Langdale on 30th September, 1928, in ideal climatic conditions, and felt that a decent interval had now elapsed for letting anybody

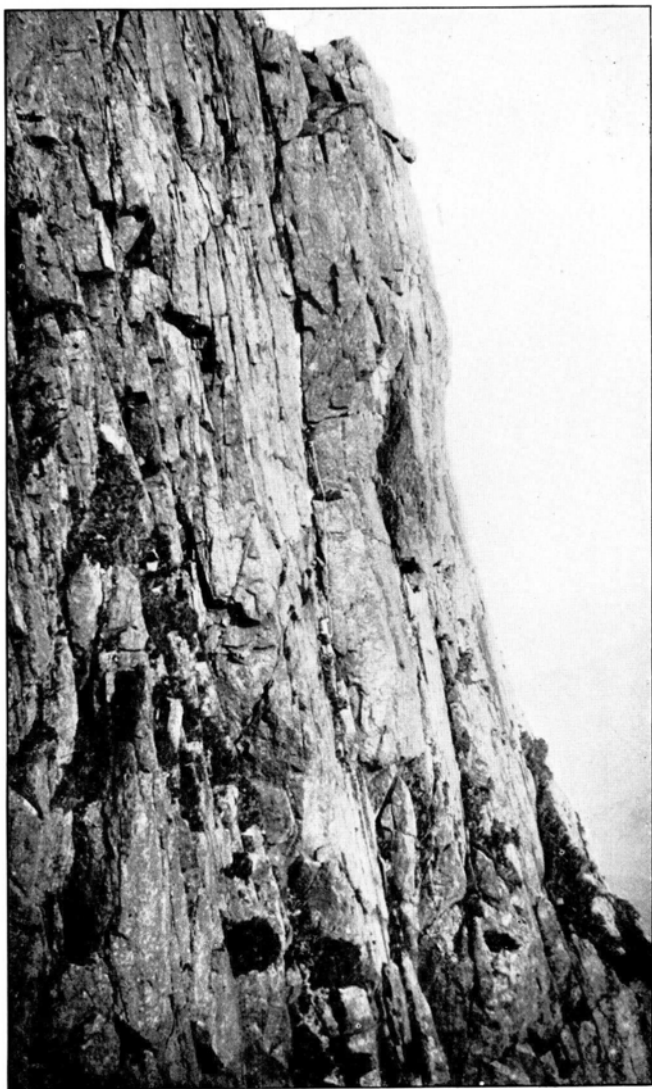


Photo by

THE CRACK.
(Third picture.)

G. G. Macphie.

else repeat the climb. Moreover, our one and only G.S.B. was home on one of his rare visits from the land of freedom and Fascismo, and had to be re-introduced to our hills, so a party composed of A.B.R. and G.S.B. and G.G.M., started on "The Crack." The reward of previous vespertine horticultural activities was that G.G.M. found it possible to lead the traverse on the slab with the slanting crack mentioned previously, thus completely avoiding contact with the Hiatus route so that the third pitch of "The Crack" is now quite distinct and separate. On this and the preceding traverse, the severity varies inversely as the length of the climber's reach, and very tall people seem to find little difficulty with them. The difficult overhang above the Bower was found to be much less strenuous if climbed facing right, instead of as on the first ascent, and both A.B.R. and G.S.B. agreed with this. Taking things easily, the climb was completed comfortably in two hours by a party of three.

"The Crack" had so far enjoyed for four months some of the youthful glamour of a new "severe," but now this is lost and gone for ever. Two unknown (to us) climbers had just completed a composite climb in the neighbourhood of Joas and Ash Tree Slabs and, having observed us in "The Crack," asked if it was "any good." On being assured that it might be worth even their attention, they proceeded to go up the climb, and I must confess that as interested parties, we were rude enough to sit and watch part of their ascent. Our advice, more freely asked as height was gained, must have saved them both time and trouble, but it was interesting to see the nonchalance with which they treated problems which had given us food for thought. The curious slab of rock leaning in the crack below the Bower now lies embedded in the turf at the foot of the climb, having bounced only once in its downward career.

* * *

It must be understood that in this expedition no artificial aids were used—a practice becoming deplorably prevalent even in our homeland climbs. No loops of rope were previously placed at strategic points for use as handholds, stirrups, or possibly worse. Not a step was cut, not a piton was driven in, not even an artificial chockstone was inserted in "The Crack."

CAMPING IN THE CORSICAN HIGHLANDS

BY H. V. HUGHES.

My annual problem of where to go for the yearly holiday was solved very early in 1927 by the Camping Club of Great Britain announcing a trip to Corsica in the early summer ; once I had read Renwick's " Corsica " my fate was sealed, and an endeavour to coerce C. J. Ward to join me was unnecessary ; he was already so enthusiastic that my propaganda was wasted. We left London on the 28th of May, and on the way out were lucky enough to find five members of the Gritstone Club in the crowd ; we threw in our lot with them, sinking our own peripatetic views for their creed of the " centrist." The 16-hour voyage from Marseilles was delightful ; two deck-chairs and a " flea-bag " make a splendid place for repose on a warm Mediterranean night, and I awoke only just in time to see the dark shape of Corsica loom up as the first signs of grey light appeared in the East. I shall not soon forget that dawn—the silhouette of the great mountain backbone gradually giving place to defined cloud-capped peaks as the sun rose above the mass.

The railway journey from Ajaccio to Corte was interesting and amusing ; the narrow-gauge track climbs about 700 metres in 30 kilometres and takes three hours, by numerous tunnels, cuttings and sweeping short-radius curves which would shock an English railway engineer. After the long ride through flat and sun-baked Provence, it was good to see dashing streams, real mountains with gleaming snowfields, and we rushed from one window to the other admiring crags that " out-gimmed " Gimmer, pinnacles to which Crib Coch would never dare to aspire, and gullies that made one's back ache merely to look at. A long halt at each station, simply to get up steam, and finally a triumphant whistle in the summit tunnel heralded a headlong dash down the other side of the range to Corte, the ancient capital of the island, and still dominated by the citadel-crowned rock, towering above what has been described as the most picturesque and insanitary town in Europe.

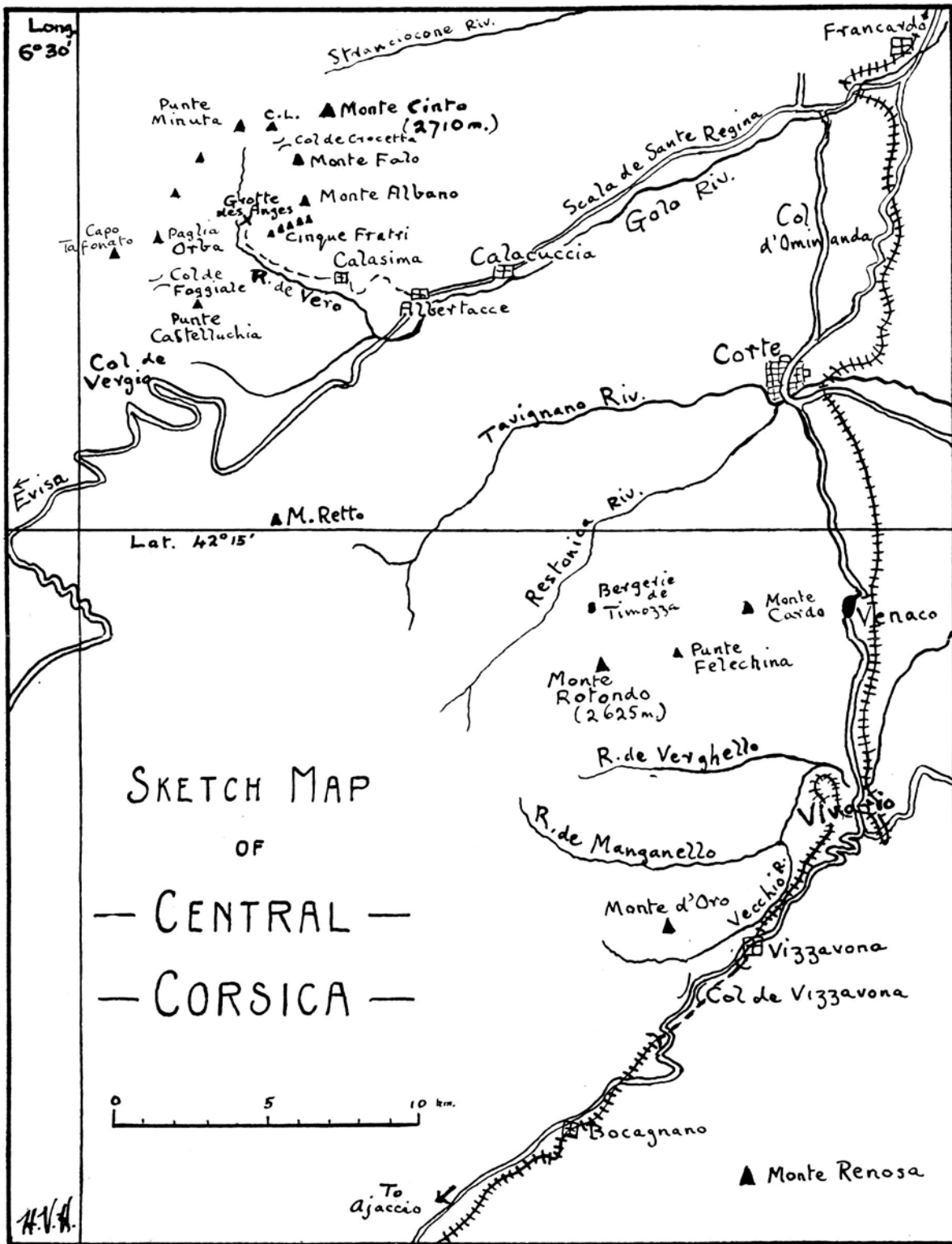
Here we left the rest of the party. A car-load of baggage having been despatched to Calacuccia, the commissariat department got busy, two bakeries were cleared, and the *epicière* had the time of her life when seven of us debated which end of a side of bacon was the more economical; eventually we took her word that the bony end was "*Bon pour potage*," and it is satisfactory to reflect that I made some good "stock" from the remnants as prophesied. The bill was a further cause for excitement, but finally we got all the food, seven climbers and two chauffeurs into two cars—a tight squeeze, and with much gesticulation and sounding of horns the party set off.

The drivers had evidently decided we were a bright lot of lads, for they were highly amused and amusing; our fellow, one Zaccarelli, informed us he had served in the French M.T., sang us songs about *les Angléterres*, handed cigarettes round and fraternised generally. On the Col d'Ominanda, we feared for our lives when he accelerated over a section placarded *Passage Dangereux*; luckily I was on the near side so I did not see the yawning gap where there had been a "washout." On blind corners Z. would lean over negligently to see he had no punctures and then turn to us and grin; after a halt for some Cap Corse at a way-side *auberge*, his driving became inspired.

The Scala de Santa Regina is a magnificent gorge, but I enjoyed it much better on the return journey at about a quarter the speed. It was fascinating to watch the enormous tree trunks being drawn down to the railway by big mule teams, the almost uncanny skill with which the men manoeuvred them round the hairpin bends, the tail of the tree often swinging far out over the precipice.

We were up betimes next day. At 6-0 a.m., a most imposing cavalcade of two muleteers, three mules, one moke and seven weirdly-garbed or ungarbed mountaineers set out from Calacuccia for our four-hour trek to the Vero Valley. The mule track, like its kind elsewhere, was unkind to climbing-booted feet, the mules true to *their* kind performed the usual tricks by trying to roll on the packs to dislodge them and, as one member of the party found to his cost when he stopped a straight to the jaw, kicking at anything human that came near enough.

At last we arrived at our H.Q., the Grotte des Anges, a splendid natural shelter amongst a group of enormous boulders,



the usual base for climbers in this the finest part of the Corsican mountain country. The muleteer's statement that it would hold over a hundred men was somewhat exaggerated, but with the annexes it would easily hold a dozen men with stores; all idea of living in tents was abandoned—living in caves is no novelty to Gristone men. Once the muleteers were paid off and finally persuaded that their company could be dispensed with, stores were unpacked, berths allotted and Grotte life began. The hewers of wood hewed, the drawers of water drewed, the anglers angled, and the rest of the party dug for worms, a laborious proceeding. An excellent trout supper, the first of many, was the result and, since nothing over half-an-ounce was put back, the streams for a mile around were getting very depleted at the end of our stay; over two hundred fish succumbed to two rods and a sapling.

Next morning, after a few minutes' fine rain, the only shower for three weeks, we set off for the Cinque Fratri, a fine pinnacled ridge which we had much admired as we had rounded its base on the previous day. It is similar to but on a larger scale than the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean. Two or three of the gaps can only be descended direct by very long "abseils," but the turning movements gave good climbing on sound rock in each case; we finished the day by a neat little climb to the summit of Monte Albano, and during the descent made our first acquaintance with the curse of Corsica, the delightfully-scented *maquis*—shrubbery only a few feet high, but almost impossible to force one's way through. Nothing that any climber has ever written about *maquis* can possibly be an exaggeration.

Dominating the Val de Vero on its western side is Paglia Orba, the finest peak in Corsica, and, fired with enthusiasm by Finch's graphic description of the first ascent of its eastern face, we felt that this was the expedition most worth attempting. Dawn next morning saw us away up the valley to the snow gullies below the great red face with its gigantic overhangs; each chose his own line of ascent to the actual base of operations and, emerging from a long chimney of the "Slingsby" type, I had the satisfaction of watching Wade and Ward glueing themselves on to a very steep, smooth, green-tinted buttress far below. After a rather "thin" traverse they joined me, nothing could

be seen of the others, but rumblings and crashes told of their struggles in some obscure gully, probably a first ascent.

With Wade leading, the three of us roped up and returned again to the chimney up which we continued until forced out to the left up a Gimmer-like wall, then back to the chimney for two more pitches; the climbing was continuously very difficult, although in each case we chose the line of least resistance, often the only line. Finally, we arrived at a cluster of wedged blocks high on the face and, after lunch, decided that, as the only possible line of advance was a long hand traverse with an edge like rotten cheese leading round a corner to a smooth vertical groove, we must be off the route. Deeming the traverse unjustifiable, reluctantly we returned the way we had come. On the steep wall we had the usual performance to retrieve a doubled rope and then hastened down a long steep buttress, where the holds were occasionally not loose, back to the snow slopes and the rough granite screes. It was disappointing to have missed the summit, but it had been a first-rate climb.

The next objective was Monte Cinto, highest of all Corsican peaks, and before tackling it we had a luxurious day of fishing, bathing and all the other things one does on "off" days in a country where "off" day is not synonymous with "wet" day. That evening our numbers were augmented by three German climbers; one, however, turned out to be an Austrian.

We got a very easy line of ascent and bagged Monte Falo, a jolly little peak with splendid views on all sides, on our way to the Col de Crocetta. Thence a long ridge, alternately scree, snow and rock pinnacles, led to the summit of Monte Cinto, which is disfigured by a hideous trigonometrical station and a "refuge." During the lunch halt it occurred to us that it was Whit-Sunday, so to celebrate it we decided to feed at the inn at Calasima as a welcome change from camp grub and a saver of labour withal. Afterwards, we agreed that the decision was justified by the route down the snow-seamed southern face to the Val d'Ecro and thence over intervening ridges and foot-hills to the village, but the feed as a feed was a failure. The Continental Sunday has not spread to the upland valleys of Corsica; we did not seem welcome, and half-raw ham and pre-war biscuits were distinctly below the level of a Grotte supper. We

called for cheese and it entered at the "double," smelling and tasting of ammonia—*Broccio* is a beautiful cheese, but *Caccio* is an acquired taste and an abomination. Great interest was aroused in the village and we ate before a delighted crowd of bergers, *poilus* on leave and others; the village belles paraded for our inspection, though ostensibly to buy pennyworths, or their Corsican equivalent, of sweets and pins, while the boys played a game of "tip and run" with the biscuits, until the ringleader retired on the boot-toe of *madame's* son, and a fine boot it was! We returned to the Grotto for supper.

Ward and I were ensnared by the great unclimbed 4-5th gully of the Cinque Fratri, but unfortunately we had judged the size of the lower rocks by British standards and by mid-day were still far below it, though going strong; an introductory gully of mild aspect, apparently composed of little chockstone pitches, was found on closer inspection to have an initial pitch about equal in size to the first pitch of Deep Ghyll; we retired! On the homeward way it was amusing to watch the sheep being driven down, each flock following an almost invisible track across the lower rocks and showing up as black streaks on the light-grey crags.

The last joint expedition was to Capo Tafonato, a fine rocky ridge of such extreme thinness that over 400 feet below the summit is an enormous hole about 100 feet long and 40 feet high, piercing the heart of the mountain; a complicated, but comparatively easy route traverses the east face past the hole, rounds the north ridge, crosses the western face and, after a good chimney pitch, passes the south ridge to ascend the summit pinnacle by its eastern side; progression is thus in a spiral. The route from the Vero commences with a long grind over very rough country to the Col de Foggiale and crosses a shoulder of Paglia Orba to the Col de Trou. Here a sharp rock ridge abuts against Capo Tafonato below the "Hole," and from this point we followed the directions given. On the return journey four of us ascended the western face of Paglia Orba, and the seemingly impossible was found to "go" without the use of the rope, such was the extraordinary roughness of the red volcanic "breccia" (?). The descent was by the "easy way," but, owing to a failure to hit the exact route described by a member of the

party, we had to descend a wall by difficult chimneys on our way to the Col de Foggiale ; this was the only time we were troubled by mist during the holiday.

Next day, the unfortunates who had only a fortnight's holiday left us, and Wood, Wade and I traversed the Western Capo Larghia. The way to our peak led past the primitive Bergerie de Ballone and, after crossing the Vero, up steep snow and smooth slabs to the col between Punta Minuta and Capo Larghia. Wood proved a source of innocent merriment to the rest of the party, for he fell through a snow bridge into the stream beneath ; it is not always necessary to follow in the footsteps of your leader and the Skipper seemed to think it unfair that we should not get wet too. The peak provided a first-class rock-climb. From the ridge, a gully led straight to the summit and, sometimes on the chockstones in its bed, sometimes on its loose walls we progressed rapidly, but the final pitch, a steep and very difficult slab with a long run-out, occupied our attention for some time. On the way up a piton was collected and now reposes, a treasured souvenir, in the G.C. Museum, Bradford. From the summit, the view was perhaps the most extensive of any we had, the Maritime Alps and the Côte d'Azur standing out clearly to the north ; it was plain that a direct passage of the gap to the east peak was impossible, and we made the descent by the south buttress—very steep but well supplied with hand-holds—to the smooth slabs below. We had to descend so far that an ascent of the second tower would hardly have justified us in calling our route a traverse of the mountain, so we meandered across the flank of Monte Falò, passing on the way a tiny cairn supporting a diminutive wooden cross, a reminder of the once prevalent Corsican custom of taking the law into one's own hands, *Vendetta*, happily, now extinct under modern French government.

One more lazy day, if walking and climbing up and down mountain stream-beds can be so called, and I bade farewell to Wood and Wade as they left the Grotte to trek over the Col de Vergio to the West Coast and Ajaccio. Thus abandoned, I traversed Punta Minuta, one of the fine peaks crowning the head of the valley ; the ascent by the west ridge presented no difficulties save that of route-finding ; and the descent of a long chimney on the south buttress would have been pleasanter in

the absence of a Bergen rucksack. Though admirably suited for getting a heavy load to one's base, the framework of these sacks is a nuisance on rocks and it appears well worth while to take a small, light rucksack in addition, in order to carry food and oddments on the climbs.

In the afternoon, I cleared up the Grotte and, after eating as much as possible of the fragments of food remaining, walked down to Calacuccia. I have since regretted that I did not stay another day and bag Punte Castellucchia, the only important peak in the Val de Vero that none of us had ascended although its Naples-like eastern face looked so inviting.

Sunday saw me moving on to fresh ground, by *diligence* to Corte and, after laying in fresh stores, by train to Vivario. In the afternoon, like a fool, I slogged up a hot and dusty mule track in the Val de Verghello and by tea-time I felt "all in," but a bathe and a meal worked wonders and I started up a long ridge which according to the map was not rocky. Alas for vain hopes, every few hundred feet there was an outcrop of about 50 feet of steep rock resembling a limestone scarp, and it was the exception to be able to turn them. When darkness came, I was still far from my objective, the lowest snow patches of the Punte Felechine and, though I struggled on by moonlight, I was finally stopped by *maquis*, forced to eat a dry supper and sleep on a stony ledge which imitated an unrolled macadam road with great success. The summit was attained next morning after a struggle, and duly celebrated with several brews of soup and tea. Luckily, the almost level ridge to Pietra Niella was easy going over snow, scree and diminutive outcrops of rock and, by the time I reached the eastern ridge of Monte Rotondo, I was feeling much fitter; the ridge proved very fine and time-absorbing owing to the time spent in climbing or traversing the bizarre pinnacles, often involving descents of chimneys or gullies to the snow below before they could be turned. Only a few feet below the summit is the Refuge Heilbronner and the final tower, with its ugly iron structure on top, has had a plank fitted for the benefit of climbers who are not super men. Originally, I had intended traversing la Moniccia and descending by the Lac de Melo, but so much time had been lost that I was forced to find a way down the crags and hurry over the long snow slope to the Lac de Rotondo

(wrongly given on the French 1 : 100,000 map as Lac d'Orlando), and follow the track to the Bergerie de Timozzo and the Restonica valley. Again I was benighted, but the gîte was a bit more comfortable and I had taken the precaution to fill my water bottle. I was rewarded by the most wonderful dawn I have ever seen and, on my way down the valley had breakfast with the rear-guard of the Camping Club before entering Corte to entrain for Vizzavona.

Following a lazy afternoon in the beautiful woods above the station, I crossed the Col de Vizzavona, had a look at the old fort, and dropped down to the Bergerie de Trottella at the head of the Val de Vecchia intent on bagging Monte d'Ora next morning. Hereabouts I met our German friends returning from this peak; they had found the usual route so easy that I determined next day to try the S.W. arête, probably as yet unclimbed. I had a splendid day, with probably more good rock-climbing than I had ever previously done in one day, but, after trying one route after another, I was finally repulsed completely and absolutely, and left only with a modification of the easy way as a line to the top if I wished to avoid another night on the rocks—and without food and "fleabag" this time. How I longed for two of the men who had gone home and 100 feet of the best!

That night I slept at the top of the Col de Vizzavona and for the only time during my stay in Corsica had good, soft turf to lie on. This was the last peak. I turned my face to home and leisurely descended to Vizzavona: in the little station there I was informed that in Birmingham, the L.M.S. Hotel is the Queen's Hotel. Strange that in such a place I should be reminded of this well-known fact concerning my native city!

The homeward way was a diminuendo, finishing with a four mile night walk with full kit only a few hours before I was due to start once more at the appointed task. Camping and climbing in Corsica were relegated to the Land of Happy Memories.

* * *

Mountaineers who wish for good rock climbs and interesting peaks in guaranteed A.I. weather, and *who* does not, cannot go wrong if they summer in Corsica. The natives are very friendly and, though they never climb themselves, take a traditional

pride in their mountains, which makes them anxious to talk to anyone who has ascended the well-known peaks. The commissariat troubles of the earlier explorers are now removed, all reasonable requirements can be obtained in the towns and even the village stores are often surprisingly well stocked; cars, both public and private, are plentiful and cheap.

Most of the best peaks are rather too far from civilised dwellings to be climbed out and home in the day, unless the party is camping or sleeping out; in such a climate even the latter is no hardship. Bergeries are much discredited as sleeping places, but the only one I visited was scrupulously clean, and the milking methods were much more hygienic than those of the average English farmstead.

The general height of the most interesting summits is from 8,000 to 9,000 feet. The rock is in all cases volcanic and on the main faces is very sound; when otherwise there is usually no deception about it. Contrary to what we had been led to expect from books, we had little trouble with mist; only twice, and then late in the afternoon, did light mists gather on the tops, and it was not sufficiently dense to cause loss of time. Of tracks, apart from those leading to the *bergeries*, there are practically none, often considerable skill is needed to get an easy line over the very rough country, and surveying the hillsides from neighbouring peaks in order to dodge the patches of *maquis* is time well spent; boots must be of the best if nails are to fulfil their allotted task for many days on the crystalline granite.

Wild life in the higher parts of the island is very scanty; we saw nothing of the *mouflon*, a wild sheep, or of any other wild mammal, though sheep and goats were almost everywhere. Lizards and Salamanders abounded, fish seem to be restricted to trout in the mountain streams and eels in the lower reaches. We saw very few birds save choughs and on several occasions eagles—both golden and the sea species. The many kinds of flowers even in early June were already past their best, or even gone to seed, and evidently bloom as the snows leave the ground, soon after Easter.

Altogether it seems to me that Corsica is the ideal place for climbers who desire to taste in mild form, and in a short time at little expense, the joys of exploration and independence which so many of the climbing grounds now fail to provide.

AN INNOCENT AT WINDERMERE

Last year I was invited to the Dinner as a guest, but my host failed to materialise and I was a stranger in the strangest of strange lands. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has stated that of all creatures ungainly and forlorn, a Huzzar without a horse is the most pathetic. I do not think Sir Arthur Conan Doyle can have ever been invited to a Fell and Rock Dinner by an absentee host. However, everybody was most kind. Brigadier-Gen. Bruce refused my offer to surrender in his favour my place in the bathroom queue on the Sunday morning. I do not know many Brigadier-Generals and my opportunities for meeting them on equal terms are few. (The Brigadier-General was clad in frugal shirt and breeches and, having forgotten his braces, was constrained to keep his hands in his pockets; I was tastefully attired in pink pyjamas and a mudstained weather-proof). Several of the Hydro staff saw us thus hobnobbing in friendly fashion; it was a great moment in my life.

Then there was my room-fellow—a stranger, of course. But barely had we made each other's acquaintance when he seized upon my boots—my wonderful boots which, in the quiet hours for months past, I had secretly fondled, dreaming of conquests to come—exclaiming: "Jove! but what ghastly things. You *will* skate about." A lovable fellow. Without his friendly warning into what horrible doom might not my serene confidence in those ferocious and never-before-seen nails have led me.

That memorable Sunday on Gimmer. Surely its incidents are painted in colours that will but become more mellow and golden with the passing of years. Though friendless and a stranger, I was yet taken into the bosom or, to be more exact, tied on to the tail, of a party—after being sternly commanded to shed my apparently generally discredited boots ere I set presumptuous foot upon the hallowed crag. Of the climbing, particularly of one decidedly "thin" traverse where my timid

"But please won't I swing about awfully if I *should* tumble off here?" was replied to by a curt "Not very much—the rock's too rough. Come along"; of the poor ragged tramp, bootless, shoeless, and even his stockings footless, whom I met in a place called the Crow's Nest; and of the heated and most impolite debate between a certain lady and a certain gentleman as to who should lead A Route (Northern Variation Start); how shall I tell of these? The Editor, mindful of possible libel actions, would certainly stop me if I so attempted.

This year beheld me the proud wearer of The Badge and the owner of a guest—a mere novice of contemptible ignorance. We arrived on the Friday night. "No, I don't see my friend Brigadier-General Bruce anywhere so far." I remarked casually to Guest, "Perhaps he will turn up later. In fact I don't seem to know any of these people; probably they are only new members."

The following morning, armed to the teeth, we sallied forth; pledged to give battle to the Great Gully on Pavey Ark. A 'bus took us to Ambleside but, arrived there, we learned with dismay there was no 'bus before 12-30 p.m. to take us up Langdale; the 'bus company it seemed had run out of 'buses. And to crown our discomfiture we found that the only return 'bus which would get us back for the Dinner left Langdale at 3-30 p.m. This was serious. To spend the day lounging in full war paint around Ambleside was unthinkable so, having drawn our entire bank overdrafts before leaving home and being, therefore, very strong financially, we decided to hire a taxi. We hired; hire-purchase it seemed to us when we came to pay the fare at Dungeon Ghyll. Then we started for Pavey.

There was some slight mischance at the start. We circled round and round quite a lot of farmyards, or else round and round one farmyard quite a lot of times, before finally disentangling ourselves from the New Hotel, but after a somewhat silent and uncompanionable hour or so brought up at the foot of Great Gully. We roped up. Guest, I noticed, was rather free and easy in his ideas of roping up; his notion of a waist loop being something out of which he could step by merely letting go of the rope so that it slid down to his ankles. I reduced his

loop by a yard or two and spoke to him pretty stiffly about it ; it is unpleasant to have one's ballast so insecurely attached and is apt to make a nasty mess on the rocks. Water was pouring down the Gully into Stickle Tarn. Guest started to come up. Water ceased to pour down into Stickle Tarn. Guest was clad in very plus-fours, his jacket had rather plus sleeves. Guest raised clutching hands high above his head, his sleeves gaped and cupped invitingly at the wrists, the knee-bands of his plus-fours held stoutly. Guest can be a chatty little fellow on occasion. This was an occasion.

We did not climb the Great Gully that day. Time pressed, the water, after the fashion of water, was wet, the upper section looked to me altogether too formidable for a decidedly weakly party of rapidly cooling enthusiasm. We descended in leisurely fashion, down on to the screes, and then towards the water's edge. We would amble slowly down, admire the grandeur of nature, revel in the soothing balm of the hills, and just get our 'bus comfortably at Dungeon Ghyll. Then I remembered that the winter season 'bus service terminated at Chapel Stile, not Dungeon Ghyll. The difference between doing the Pavey-Dungeon Ghyll trip in less than an hour and the Pavey-Chapel Stile journey in the same time is, or was in my case, a large and flourishing blister on each foot. I do not recollect expending much admiration on the grandeur of nature ; and in place of the soothing balm of the hills I later in the evening applied large dollops of boracic ointment to my feet. However, we did catch the 'bus at Chapel Stile and with time to spare. A lady, wearing The Badge, also entered the 'bus. We held light conversation *en route* for Windermere. Oh yes ! she had done the Great Gully several times. It was usually wet. Yes, a jolly little scramble. The Brant and Slape quite good, what ? Luckily I had swotted up the Red Book of Langdale for months previously and knew all the words.

Darkness had fallen when we reached Windermere. The lady rose from her seat and alighted. Quickly grabbing our kit we also scrambled down. The 'bus rumbled away beyond our ken, the lady disappeared up a side road. Too late we realised she was either not quartered at the Hydro or had some other call to make. The Hydro was yet afar. We had to walk.

The Dinner was for me somewhat marred. Owing to some misunderstanding, through there being another member of the same name as myself present, Guest and I were placed at different tables. I caught a glimpse of Guest talking to the head waiter, but being of a gentle and unsuspecting nature attached no sinister significance to the sight. I had ordered a bottle of rather nice Burgundy for the occasion to share with Guest. Guest sat at the table where the bottle was placed.

W.

WHITE FELL TOPS AT NEW YEAR

BY MICHAEL WILSON*

After three days in which skating, climbing and dining at Buttermere played prominent parts, the saner half of our little party at Grange departed in the evening, leaving two of us with no plans for our remaining day. The ice had become unfit for skating, and the rocks unpleasant for climbing, and on a sudden impulse we determined to make the round of the three highest peaks. To this end we borrowed an alarm clock from a neighbouring farm and, setting it for an uncomfortable hour, went early to bed.

The interval between leaving bed and leaving the doorstep was longer than is usual in an Alpine hut and it was nearly half past six when we started up the valley, carrying nothing outside our few pockets. Borrowdale can be astonishingly dark and I have never felt more completely dependent on the light of a lantern than on this occasion. Even at this cold hour we had the world not quite to ourselves, for we were soon overtaken by roadmenders cycling to their work. Before we reached Seathwaite, we were able to put out our lantern, and soon the tops of the low soft clouds began to reflect the cold grey light of the dawn. The ice on the steep path above Stockley Bridge demanded careful progress, since we carried no axes. A few glimpses into the pink upper atmosphere informed us of sunrise, and the day promised to be a misty one as far as the fell tops were concerned.

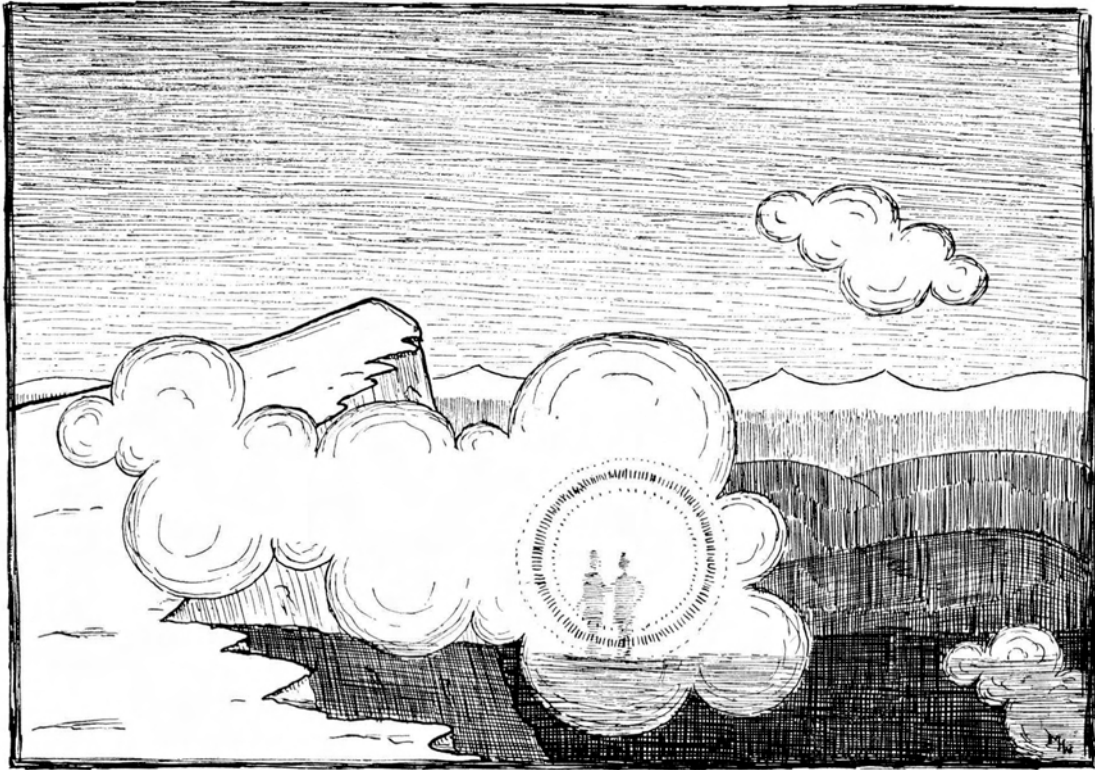
From Sty Head we took the corridor route to the final col leading to the summit of the Pike. This col was covered with hard snow and, on the windward side, every projecting rock and pebble was coated with a rounded layer of transparent ice, giving the impression that the ground was paved with marbles of clear glass. That this gave more pleasure to the eye than to the feet will readily be believed. The icing on the

*Jan. 3, 1928. P. D. Thomas and M. H. Wilson. Grange, 6-25 a.m.; Sty Head, 8-30 a.m.; Scafell Pike, 9-40-45 a.m.; Erk Hause, 10-30 a.m.; Stake Pass, 11-15 a.m.; Wythburn, 1-10-1-45 p.m.; Helvellyn, 3-15 p.m.; Thirlaport, 4-10-4-40 p.m.; Keswick, 6-10-6-25 p.m.; Skidduw, 8-30 p.m.; Keswick, 9-55-11-0 p.m.; Grange, 12-10 a.m.

summit cairn looked worthy of the festivities of the previous week, but since we were lacking both time and warmth, our admiration was but brief. From here to Esk Hause, the icy ground made our progress rather slow, but softer snow and improved visibility enabled us to gain time from Esk Hause to the Stake Pass.

The journey from the Stake over to Thirlmere must be tiresome at all times, but to-day the crust of the snow was just not strong enough to bear our weight, and ten yards or so was again the limit of our vision. Moreover, the upper part of Wyth Burn is a very boggy hanging valley with small pretence of paths; and in the lower and steeper part, which ever side of the valley one takes, the better track invariably appears on the other. We reached the inn at Wythburn towards the end of the seventh hour of our walk, and were not encouraged by the reflection that this was only the first of the three sections of our journey.

After a short halt for food we started up Helvellyn, by the orthodox route, and were soon in the mist and snow again, with but little idea of the reward awaiting us above the clouds. On the summit ridge we found ourselves once more upon a hard crystal flooring, but this time it was illuminated from the west by the brilliant orange of a setting sun and from the east by the soft turquoise of a clear evening sky; a striking example of the way in which Nature balances her colours. From the summit a remarkable panorama was to be seen. Eastwards the cold snow-covered backs of High Raise and High Street merged downwards into the soft purple grey of the valley below us, while near at hand a passing cloud gave us shadows of ourselves, clearly defined, and each with his own private halo in the form of a small circular rainbow. True, we appeared to share a common halo, but after all who has ever seen any but his own individual rainbow? Turning round, we saw the sun having his last battle with the seething vapours below, which, after a brief defeat, were so soon to swallow him up again. Above this sea of cloud, the forms of Bowfell and Scafell Pike were clearly silhouetted, while Skiddaw and Saddleback guarded the north with a cold and uninviting majesty. One last look out over Striding Edge showed the advancing belt of night more



“OUR OWN PRIVATE RAINBOW.”

clearly defined than I have ever seen it in this country and reminded us that the dusk waits for no one, not even its most reverent admirers. We turned and plunged down at a run into the misty gloom of the valley.

When a sharp frost descends upon smooth damp roads, treachery lies in wait for those who walk in nailed boots, and accordingly we found the walk to Keswick not the least dangerous portion of our journey. The Skiddaw Hotel gave us hot coffee and took an order for a late supper and was surprised to learn that the mountain from which it takes its name was to be visited by night, in spite of its white covering. By this time the sky was almost clear and a brilliant moon made a lantern unnecessary.

The woods and fields were soon beneath us and we began to experience the perils of black ice when encountered suddenly in the dark. The wind and the freezing ground combined to produce a cold against which our few clothes gave us small protection and consequently we dared not halt, although by this time our pace was appreciably slackening.

The summit of Skiddaw is of a somewhat retiring nature and, in the snowy moonlight, we fell victims more than once to the deception of which such summits make common practice. Our halt at the cairn would be reckoned in seconds and we were soon facing Keswick and Derwentwater once more.

Across the dark lake the covered lights of Grange were clearly distinguishable while, immediately below us, a few points of light apparently floating upon a sea of white mist served to indicate the existence of Keswick and Portinscale. The summit we had recently left was now encircled by clouds of malicious intent and we were not sorry to have turned our backs upon it.

Thoughts of meat, wine and a fire helped us materially in our descent and, in our realisation of these, we forgot how rapidly the human limbs lose their flexibility in such conditions.

At 11 o'clock, we tacked uncertainly through the streets of Keswick and it was not until we had accomplished a mile that our motion could properly be described as walking.

We reached our starting point in our eighteenth hour, thus completing a day which will be memorable for no mere peak-bagging, but for a further acquaintance with familiar mountains in that whiteness which is of all their garments the most noble.

ANOTHER TRINITY

By JOHN COULTON.

A mere idea—a half-formed project—an outside suggestion—a definite proposal—an accomplished fact.

The idea came first a few years ago, how, when, or why, I cannot say, possibly after doing "the Four Passes" or "the Tour of the Tops" round Wasdale Head or some such similar walk; it may be after Cain and Hadfield's three highest points in the United Kingdom or after doing the Three Peak walk in Yorkshire with Harry Williamson and six other sweating, sunburnt Ramblers, but anyway, it came—the vague idea of doing the Three Pinnacles of the Lake District in a day, the three points which require some knowledge of the rock-climber's craft to accomplish, and which at the same time are sufficiently far apart to demand somewhat of a fell-walker's stamina for their traverse. And so the idea was born, to lie dormant for many, many moons whilst yet I was tending sheep on that bleak, boulder-strewn fell stretching up from "Reynus" bottom to Hell Ghyll Pike.

At odd times, during pauses whilst waiting for the sheep to come in, my glances would stray to the west, to the dark crags on Scafell, and each time would come back the idea with the project to do it—sometime—always, however, deferred until a better opportunity offered.

Then took place the coming-of-age dinner of the Club to which I was haled or hauled (or whatever it was) by our ever-energetic "Gibby" and, whilst sitting there, listening to the speeches, toying with a cigar instead of my old black briar full of "twist," I suddenly waked to the fact that Scott was talking nonsense—through his hat in very sooth—of course, he always does that, but still this was the rankest pessimism, the unimaginative outlook of a Flatlander (I seem to sense a protest from our Editor)—he doubted, he gravely doubted whether there were anything left to be done by club members, to commemorate even in a small way our President's year of office.

Thus, the outside suggestion, which was duly transformed into a definite proposal to Miss Murray, whom I invited to accompany me on an attempt to do the Three Pinnacles in a day. The lady was charmed with the idea, and in fact so persistently reminded me of it that, for very shame, I was finally compelled to throw off my natural sloth and promise that it should be carried out, if still possible to one so far advanced in the "sere and yellow."

And so we come to the accomplished fact on May 14th, 1928.

I had by this time left my abode at the head of the Duddon valley, and my wife and I were enjoying Miss Murray's hospitality, partly at Under Crag in Seathwaite and partly at Dale Head, at which latter spot our hostess had decided to instal herself as a daleswoman.

The final decision, as is usual in cases of long-discussed projects, was taken quite hastily, two days before, and we arranged to sleep at Dale Head preparatory to our start and return to Under Crag, where Mrs. Coulton would repair to make ready our evening meal at whatever time we returned.

The morning came, somewhat chill be it said at 3-30 a.m., but bright and clear, and, breakfast consumed, we hoisted rucksack on back and set off about half-past four.

It was daylight by now, but there was that peculiar feeling about the air and the light which one can get at no other time of the day. Being up and out at dawn gives one such an extraordinarily "good" feeling that it is always a mystery why we modern civilised folk are so extremely loath to leave our beds. We crossed the Duddon over the stepping stones, then through Black Hall farmyard and straight forward for Mosedale up the (to me) well remembered track where every stone and well-nigh every bracken comes to my mind's eye as I write. There are even two thistles near a patch of bog close by the head of the dale, a most rare sight. And so to Mosedale Head, whence possibly one of the finest views in all Lakeland is obtained, particularly when Upper Eskdale lies shoe-top deep in snow. But this morning, a passing remark suffices; we are on a plain "foot-slogging" expedition and have only just commenced. From Mosedale Head to Lingcove Beck was a matter of a few

minutes, and we crossed it dryshod without even troubling to select our crossing. A previous occasion came vividly to my mind when I had waded it waist deep with a rope to hold on to for safety. From Lingcove Beck to the "Gert Moss" was passed almost in silence, save for my pointing out Lang Crag Borran, where I had once watched two fox cubs at play in the early morning. Over "T' Gert Moss" and the Upper Esk, and we found ourselves at the foot of the long "slack" leading up to Mickledore at about six o'clock. We had kept the pace fairly slow, having regard to what was in front of us, but avoided any frequent stops and so we quietly mounted up to Mickledore from the foot in about an hour.

Here we rested a short while and then I decided to save time and energy by going up Mickledore Chimney, which for some reason or other I had not till then climbed. My notion of saving was mistaken, as I soon found out, so went out of the Chimney by the right hand exit, below the top pitch, and in a short time we were on the top of our first Pinnacle. A brief look round, and then a rapid descent *via* Broad Stand to Mickledore again. By this time it was nine o'clock and we felt in need of sandwiches and a drink. In my capacity of cicerone, I immediately conducted my companion to the spring on the path to the Pike, assuring her that not even in the driest summer could it fail. Alas! even that was dry this morning and I felt cheated, abominably cheated! Even now, I think some childish person has been tampering with that spring, not knowing what it means to drouthy souls who have used it for years. However, near Piers Ghyll we found a sample of the main production of Lakeland, which sated our needs of the moment.

A steady walk along what I believe is called the Corridor Traverse of Great End brought us to the top of Styhead Pass, and a few minutes later we paused to look at Kern Knotts. My suggestion that the straight line to the Needle went up the Crack was greeted with merited scorn, and so we took the now well-beaten "trod" across Gable breast to our second Pinnacle. Once more my local lore was at fault, for the mossy rock about half-way along the track from which a few drops of moisture usually exude was, adopting a simile often used by an individual of considerable local fame—"as dry as a wooden god."

Skirting the Needle's base, we ascended to the ledge between the rock and the omonymous ridge (the adjective is derived from the Italian and whether it exists or not in English, I trust our Editor will allow it to remain in the hope that some of my readers may have to refer to a dictionary and then guess its meaning, as was my experience). Here we tried pitifully to eat very dry sandwiches with "not a drop to drink" like, but unlike the ancient mariner, in that there was "water, water nowhere." My companion essayed manfully to masticate her portion, but gave up the attempt in despair, so we doffed our climbing boots and donned our rubbers (How are the mighty fallen!) and (still more fallen) dodged the West Crack and climbed to the platform by the Lingmell.

Miss Murray had, on a previous occasion, been as far as the platform, but had failed to negotiate the top block, so I carefully explained the method of procedure, told her to watch my movements, to look after the rope and (to put her thoroughly at ease) not to be frightened if I came off, after which I went up. My second then started up, but failed at first to get on to the mantle-shelf. It being against all my principles in rock-climbing to give any assistance, beyond the moral support of the rope, I was beginning to doubt whether she would accomplish the climb, when a memory came to my mind, the memory of Ormiston Chant, with one of his "necklaces" of ladies.

In as near an imitation of T.C.O.C.'s dulcet tones as my vocal chords could produce, I gave her instructions inch by inch (or was it second by second?)

"Do you feel quite comfortable? Now get your right hand into the crack at the far corner of the mantleshelf. Have you got it? Yes? You will find a small foothold on the outside wall at just the right height. Yes, I know it is small, but it is quite satisfactory. Yes, I've got you all right. Now raise yourself on both arms letting your body go over the drop. Yes, I know it is rather sensational, but it is really much the safest way of doing it. It is, I assure you. Now get one knee on the shelf." Right, now the other one. Are you kneeling on the shelf? Are you quite comfortable? No, I know there is nothing to hold on to. You do not require it. All you want is balance. Now embrace the rock with both arms and raise

yourself slowly until you can get one foot on. Now the other one. Splendid, you are up now—or very nearly. Edge yourself carefully along the ledge which you can feel with your toes until you come to the corner. Now I can see you. Get on to that knobby bit, and one more step and you are up."

Thus Miss Murray arrived on the top, and ejaculated the following breathless, but should be historic remark:—"Well! I'm up; I don't care if I *fall off* to get down."

I pause here to observe that I have referred the above description of the ascent of the Needle to Miss Murray, who writes that, if she is to be credited with needing all these instructions, the next time she climbs it she intends to have them instead of "very grudging replies to her most polite and humble enquiries as to suitable holds."

By now it was high noon, a suitable hour, but quite time to be moving, so we wasted no time in lighting fires, or shaving, or playing cards, or any of the other diversions associated with the top of the Needle, but went down as quickly as possible omitting, however, to use a stop watch (G.B. please pardon) and, resuming once more our boots, made tracks for Beck Head across the gigantic mass of scree which adorns that end of Gable.

My memories of another walk with Wilton decided me against a horizontal traverse to Black Sail, and so we went nearly over the top of Kirk Fell and down by the wire fence, whence we followed the ordinary high level route to Pillar.

No water in the Great Doup! A veritable calamity!

Our throats were positively cindery and, writing for myself, this lack of drinking water was seriously sapping my energy. I confess, frankly, it was a very weary body which led the way to Jordan Gap and up the old Slabbery Notch. Once on the top, however, with the knowledge that the Three Pinnacles were done, I felt myself grow fresh again, and let myself burst forth into song and yodel for the benefit of my old friends, the Herdwicks.

We left the Pillar at fourish, and made as nearly as possible a bee-line for Wasdale Head, where we arrived just before six o'clock, consumed a large tea, and then started back to the Duddon Valley, *via* Burnmoor and Grass Guards. A quart of nut-brown at the Woolpack put the necessary new life into me

to enable us to reach Grass Guards in nearly record time (just over the hour).

It was a matter for congratulation that our speed at this stage of the journey was a good deal faster than at any other part of the day seeing that it was getting dusk and, as many of you know, the track thereabouts is very sketchy and much easier to follow by daylight than by darkness. By 10-45 p.m. we arrived at Under Crag, where Mrs. Coulton was awaiting us with a good fire, a meal, and drink, DRINK, DRINK !

I cannot conclude without a word of praise for my partner as, not only did she accomplish what must be nearly a record walk for a lady in this district, but was so little exhausted by it that on the following morning she set off early (!) to Dale Head, three miles away, to superintend and cook for some men who were making the place habitable. As for me, I, like Mary, chose the better part. I was lazy.

SIKHIM

A Walk to the Southern Ice-feet of Kangchenjanga

BY W. ALLSUP.

Naturally, since arriving in India in late 1924, I had looked forward to visiting the Himalaya. In 1925-6-7, I had the sad satisfaction of lending axes, kit and notes to parties I was unable to accompany. In April 1927, G. R. Speaker and I had a hurried eight days' walk along the Dak Bungalow Route of the Nepal-Sikhim Border and the eastward spurs. This afforded sublime views from about 12,000 feet of several hundred miles of snow mountains, from far west of Everest and Makalu, round through Kangchenjanga to the Tibetan and Bhutan Border. To turn back when half-way to Kangchenjanga was very bitter.

In April 1928, I succeeded in obtaining leave sanction, by telegram, a few hours before my train left Calcutta for Siliguri, the junction of the broad gauge with the narrow gauge Darjiling-Himalayan Railway. From Siliguri it is far preferable and, unless one has to pay for a whole car oneself, cheaper to motor up the wonderful 50 miles of road to Darjiling.

To follow the description I will try to give, Sikhim may be regarded as the shape of a leaf of the Journal. Kangchenjanga, 28,146 feet, is 45 miles as the crow flies from Darjiling, but about 80 miles marching. To reach the nearest ice-foot takes about seven days. The left hand edge of the leaf is the Nepal-Sikhim Boundary Ridge. This ridge runs northwards through the Kang La (Snow Pass) Peaks, Little Kabru, Kabru, the southern and northern Ridges of Kangchenjanga, and then joins the main Himalaya to the north at the junction of the Nepal, Sikhim and Tibet Boundaries. The Kangchenjanga massif is thus well towards the top left hand or N.W. corner of the leaf, its west flank altogether in Nepal, its east flank in Sikhim. Its great west and east Ridges are similarly in Nepal and Sikhim respectively. One derivation of Kangchenjanga is Kanj-chen-dzo-nga, *i.e.*,



Sketch Map by

W. Allsup

Snow-great-treasure five, or the great snow peak of the five treasures.

There are several ways to the snows, but each lands one near a yak hut called Dzungri (Jongri), at about 13,000 feet, on a long spur sloping down from Kabru and separating the glaciers falling from the west and east sides of the Kabru group.

Leaving Darjiling one can :—(a) Take the Nepal Ridge route through the bungalows of Tonglu, Sandakphu and Phalut, thence either proceeding by camps along the Ridge till forced N.E. to the Rathong near Jongri, or dropping to the bungalows of Dentam and Pemionchi from a few miles N. of Phalut at the Chiabanjan col. (b) Follow the Rathong valley route by either bank to Pemionchi. The E. bank route *via* the bungalows of Namchi and Kewzing is somewhat easier than the opposite W. bank route *via* the Chakung and Rinchinpong bungalows.

The ridge route rises at once to 10,000, and shortly to 12,000. The valley routes never rise above 8,000. The ridge route shows Nepal and Everest. It is of course more exposed. The valley routes join short of Pemionchi and thence one camps at Yoksun—the last village, then one camps twice in the hill forests between Yoksun and Jongri and reaches Jongri after a stiff pull the seventh day.

I reached Darjiling a day before T. H. Somervell, and with the assistance of Houlding, the Forest Engineer, had all ready by the time T.H.S. arrived. Houlding kindly put us both up and stored our plains gear. We decided to take the Namchi or East Rathong route as there is a jolly forest bungalow only a couple of hours' drop below Darjiling at Badamtam, and so we were able to get away the evening of T.H.S.'s arrival. The drop that night also lessened the work of dropping to and rising out of the tropical heat of the Rungit valley, which is under 1,000 feet. The valley routes entail this for one's first day.

We had a jolly three days' march to Pemionchi (the sublime perfect lotus); the greater part of the way giving views on one or the other hand to the Rathong and the Nepal side or to the Tecsta and Tibetan side of Sikkim. There are a good many thousand feet of ascent and descent. Ours not being an Everest Expedition, T.H.S. had to discard a pair of dress shoes that somehow he found he was carrying! Luckily we passed a village

post office. After the first day, I quite understood the Pilley-Richards' enthusiasm for the view from Namchi Bungalow!

We had a light Whymper for the two of us, two Mummerys and a slightly larger tent for the 10 men of our regular party. Below Pemionchi we bought 221 men-days' rice rations, but had trouble in obtaining local porters to transport it to Yoksun, and only made an hour's downward march beyond Pemionchi the next day. We then had to halt to get fresh men. Pemionchi has a glorious view of the snows, but we had not this consolation as it was thick weather all day. In May the afternoons are generally wet. From Pemionchi to Yoksun is a long march with a lot of ups and downs and a final big pull up. We energised ourselves by tiffin and a wonderful bathe in the fine gorge of the Rathong, where the torrent carried away my only thin shirt.

Yoksun is a scattered village perched on the top of a spur, with good views from the rim of the basin up and down the Rathong. The Kazi or Headman sometimes puts up visitors, but we had heard rumours of livestock and preferred our tent. We visited the Kazi, however, and the whole family returned the call, dressed in their best. They brought eggs, fruit and chang. We returned the courtesy with cigarettes, bully, soup and sweets for the children. Chang is a potent brew of fermented millet or barley. It is taken through a bamboo from a tall bamboo vessel through a hole in the lid. Hot water is added as it is consumed. T.H.S. took to it as an old friend. I was insufficiently educated! Later that evening there came a young Lama from the Dubdi Monastery higher up on the hillside, and our men asked us to pay a few annas (pence) for a Pujah (service) for safety and fine weather. We agreed. The young man came back later in his red robe and tall peaked red cap with his "bell, book and candle." The scene, with the head porter crouching by holding a glacier lantern, was quite picturesque, combined with the tinkling of the bell and the droning of the prayers.

Next morning the men obviously wished to let us go in front in order that they might have a parting draught of chang so, as the march to the only available camp site was only five miles, we humoured them. Only five miles, but strenuous ones. The track was a narrow one built out in places from the hillside,

climbing in and out of ravines, in dense forest throughout, with steep ground on the right and a steep fall to the Rathong a couple of thousand feet below. Across the valley, a mile or so away, the densely wooded hillside rose up some six or seven thousand feet into the clouds. We were able to have our before tiffin bathe in a lovely waterfall pool. A few feet below the pool and path, the stream fell over steep slabs into the forest below. It was here that White, in the '80s, lost a porter in crossing the flooded stream. Shortly afterwards, we camped about 2 p.m. in drizzle near a rock called Nibi, on the only few square yards of fairly level and clear ground we had seen since leaving Yoksun. It was annoying to stop so soon but there was no other camp site with water for several miles, in fact until our next day's camp.

As soon as rain comes in these woods, leeches appear and seize onto oneself or one's axe as one marches along. It is essential to keep the tent clear of them. The bite is not felt. This makes constant watchfulness necessary.

Next day was a repetition of the previous one, varied by a drop to a fine gorge where the Praig Chu has to be crossed by a native cantilever bridge. One hour after the bathe and mid-day feed, we arrived at the next camp site, about 8,000 feet, on the Jongri Spur, the only clear space with water handy. Leeches and midges abounded and a constant camp fire smoke was necessary for any protection. This camp is called Bakim.

The following day we made a toilsome ascent of some 5,000 feet up Mon Lepcha to the uplands of Jongri. At first the path was among dense dwarf bamboo. As we rose, we came to occasional small clearings with backward views to the foothills and the spurs of Nursing, 19,000 feet to the east. Higher up, bamboos gave way to giant conifers, and they in turn to rhododendron trees—rhododendrons in Sikkim are of any size from a bush to a big tree—contorted into the wildest shapes. At about 12,000 feet, we got into a sleet storm and mist and felt the altitude a little. We arrived at Jongri yak hut about 3 p.m. and hurriedly pitched our tent and changed into heavy clothes. The herdsman was away, but a number of yaks were grazing about. The hut is quite commodious, and has an annexe with sleeping boards. Everyone preferred the main room, which has two hearths. Porters only use tents if nothing else is available.

Towards sunset, the air cleared and we saw Pandim, 22,000 feet, and Jubonu to the east across the Praig Chu, and the Nepal Ridge mountains to the west across the Rathong Chu.

Whilst here and at higher camps our men maintained a small puja fire to the spirits. This is very holy ground and the Lamas of Pemionchi and Dubdi send a party every year to offer worship. Chortens—an altar-like erection—and mendongs—prayer walls which the devout pass always to the right hand—abound here and higher up in the valleys.

Next morning we were astir early for the view of the peaks already mentioned and of Kangchenjanga and Kabru from various view points in the neighbourhood. The area is somewhat like the Riffel; one has to wander about to see everything. At close quarters the feeling of heavenly aloofness that one obtains from more distant points is less marked. What impresses is the scale and the fact that practically everything is virgin, and apparently likely to remain so. There is a fairly obvious way up Kabru and Jubonu. Graham is supposed to have ascended both, and most people who have seen those mountains believe him. Rubensen and Aas got practically to the summit ridge of Kabru. The others are still untrdden.

After breakfast we set off with four selected porters, four days' food and the Whymper and a porter's tent for the Alukthang Glacier. Our plan was to pick the best view point we could hope to reach in three days there and back for a good view of the Talung Glacier and the south face of Kangchenjanga's east ridge that rises beyond that glacier. The view point had to be reached in good time the next morning before the clouds came down, and so we desired to pitch the first camp as high up the Alukthang Glacier as we could, consistent with not too much portorage of firewood, and with water supply. The way lies N.E., gently at first and then drops steeply through rhododendron woods to the upper Praig Chu under the western flank of Jubonu. This flank has fine glaciers and the skyline is sharp and serrated. From the Praig Chu a picture postcard view of the peak of Pandim is obtained directly over the bed of the stream, framed with pines. Crossing the stream, the faint track toils through rhododendron thickets, through and along the stream beds and old moraines falling from Jubonu and debouches on to a home-like

moor with large blocks scattered about. The whole of the west side of the valley is shut in by miles of high cliffs of dark rock which hide the snows behind. The main stream hugs this bank.

Unluckily, the usual clouds enwrapped us and we saw nothing of the upper valley and the marvellous sheer 5,000 foot rock precipice on the S.W. flank of Pandim. This is so sheer that no snow lies on it. The top thousand feet are crowned by the summit ice cap with a tumbled ice fall to the right. From here the left edge of the cliff seems to form a grand arête about 7,000 feet in height. After picking up firewood we passed the Richards-Pilley 1927 camp site, and tackled the moraines of the glacier. About 4 p.m. we camped by the side of a small lake east of the ice of the Alukthang Glacier. After tea, the sky cleared and we could see our surroundings. We were under the big cliff of Pandim with tumbled ice falls to our right. The edge of the cliff to the left bounded a steep ice slope which, about 3,000 feet above its visible foot, narrowed to a ghastly-looking couloir crowned by the summit ice 2,000 feet above. To the left again the west flank of the North Ridge ran off for a couple of miles in steep, grooved, ice-plastered rocks, gradually dropping to the Guicha La, about 16,300 ft. Facing round, one looked through a gap in the lower crags to the top of Forked Peak, 20,000 ft., steep rock and ice. To the right was the minor ridge running N.E. from the Dome. This ridge consisted of some dozen summits, 19,000-20,000 feet and ran to an obvious col at the head of the valley in front of what would have been Kangchenjanga but for the mist which still lingered really high up. Of these dozen tops some were icy horns, others domes, others Dru-like needles. All stream with ice falls, and are virgin and unnamed. Later, as the moon, full that night, rose over Pandim, the beauty was indescribable. Kangchenjanga was clear by then, and it and the ice to the west glittered like silver, whilst behind us the west face of Pandim was cold and ghastly-looking in the shadow, with the summit ice gleaming in the light. Our camp was about 14,600 ft. and we were wearing practically everything we had with us. Sleep was more or less broken, and from the blankets we could see the ice opposite with the moon casting shadows of the spurs over it.

To enjoy ourselves we should have had several days easy going to acclimatise ourselves to the height. As it was, going uphill was a labour and toil, and the thought of trying any of the hills around a horrible one. The state of mind can hardly be realised if not experienced. We salved our consciences by deciding that our side was inaccessible anyway, and that we had come out to see two sides of Kangchenjanga primarily. We heard a few avalanches, but far fewer than we expected and saw none. The scale was probably too great unless by chance looking at the exact spot at the time.

Next morning we prepared breakfast at 4 a.m. on the spirit cookers, forced our feet into frozen boots and set off with one young porter, ascending the stream bed falling into our tarn and mounting the moraine above it. Personally, in half an hour I was carrying all my heavy clothing, a great nuisance. Shortly after sunrise, we were in the dry bed of a higher lake, between Pandim and the main glacier. From here, the face of Kangchenjanga was magnificent, rising about 10,000 feet over the col in front. I stopped to photo whilst T.H.S. pushed on. An added feature of the view was the North Peak of Jubonu, from here an apparently incredibly steep ice slope. It is really the not too steep end of a long ridge. To the left, one saw into the icefalls coming down from the nameless peaks. It was a case of each taking what he thought was the quickest route to the col before the mist came down. A fine long moraine led up to the final small snow slopes leading to the col. A beautiful icefall was close on the left. Unluckily, as the col was approached the mists gathered over the Talung Glacier beyond the col and hid the splendid south face of Kangchenjanga and the south side of the east ridge that we had come to see. This ridge rises in a few miles from about 20,000 feet to the south summit (about 28,000 feet), and so we should, had the weather been kinder, have had a face about 13,000 feet at its greatest height full in front of us a couple of miles away. The col was reached by the Richards-Pilley party in 1927. On the far (north) side it dropped by easy snow to the upper Talung Glacier. To the left front, a steep hanging glacier lay on bare slabs. The left wall of the col was black rock rising to the higher snow of the most northerly peak of the minor unnamed ridge already men-

days with bad nights, due to an attack of dysentery. Our beautiful ham had not been included in our Guicha La trip; now I had to consume oxo and biscuits whilst the dietic authority gorged on the delicacy brought on this second trip, and speculated whether it was a bacillus or an amoeba that had taken a fancy to me.

Our plan for next day was to take all four men as high as suitable ground permitted, leave them to pitch camp with our Whympers and then to return to the lower camp, leaving two days' food with the tent and returning for the tent and gear the morning after. At 4 a.m., we all set off. As we topped a moraine about 7 a.m., we had a good view of the head of the valley with the Kang La at its head. To the left were weirdly contorted and unbelievably slender arêtes and towers, to the right a fine-looking snow peak rose above the large terminal moraine of a glacier falling into the upper valley from the north. This puzzled us, as the map only shows one glacier coming in on this side from the east flank of the Nepal Ridge from which we were still some miles away. About 8 a.m. we found a fine camp site and, whilst I stopped to try some food, T. H. S. pushed on for the Kang La. I followed soon afterwards. About 11, when the clouds as usual had settled down, I had only reached the far end of the screes falling to the glacier from the crags of the fine-looking peak that is north of the Kang La. As we hoped to get this peak next day I decided I would save myself for it and returned to camp. T.H.S. would then be about on the top of the pass. It sleeted before I gained camp, and T.H.S. returned, very disgusted with the pass, as I was solacing myself on hot water. He only obtained a short view down the Nepal side of the pass, the hills to the north blocking any view to the N.W. We spent a very chilly day in our bags, as it sleeted all the time. Towards dusk it cleared for a time, and we managed to light the damp wood and cook a dinner of sorts. Our camp was about 15,800 ft.

Next morning, before dawn, I felt worse than ever, so as the clouds were for once down early, we decided we would visit the glacier above which we had seen the snow peak the morning before. The thousand feet or so to the top of the terminal moraine was only accomplished by me by the pull of the unknown that lay ahead. Arrived there, T.H.S. went off

to the true right bank, myself towards a beautiful ice fall that fell into the main glacier half right from a higher glacier. The clouds, unfortunately, obstinately hung about a thousand feet above the glacier, but the previous day's view told us that the fall was right of the snow peak. Left of where we knew was the peak the glacier was bounded by steep rocks with snow gullies running up into the mist. The peak was later found to be that marked on some maps as Kang Peak. It is also known as Koktang, and is on the main Boundary Ridge, south of the col that is south of Little Kabru and which was crossed by Raeburn and Crawford eight years ago. It is not the Kang Peak adjacent to the Kang La. (N.B.—Kang means snow).

I imagined all this time that T.H.S. was sketching or something. Not a bit of it. He was ascending the wall of rocks to the left. He could see me, but I could not see him. I returned to camp, having good fun on the steep hard snow between the moraine and the rocks, and found the men just arrived. T.H.S. shortly after appeared west of where we expected, having crossed the ridge, a good climb he said. He confirmed that there were two glaciers where the map only showed one as, in crossing the ridge, he had looked down on the mapped one to the west. So we felt our day had had some interest even if we had missed our peak and had had no view of Jannu and the S.W. side of the range. We despatched the men back with the gear, and made a leisurely descent after them, photographing and T.H.S. painting. Sleet and rain later accompanied us to camp, but we had a delightful sunny hour towards evening. T.H.S. returned aloft and retrieved a cherished pipe—the chief source of consumption of the expedition's matches, by the way.

Next morning, whilst I made up for arrears of sleep, T.H.S. ascended the north side of our valley, and had what he says was the most magnificent mountain view he has ever had, *viz.*, Kabru, 24,000 feet, seen across the upper Rathong. He also reported that from his view point it would be easy to make a camp near the ice of a beautiful glacier breast, out of which rises a fine minor rock peak and its satellites. This cluster is shown on the maps, but has no name. It is probably about 19,000 ft., with about 1,500 ft. of rock above the highest ice. The icefall, seen the previous day, falls westwards from this ice

breast, and separates it from the Koktang Peak. Later in the morning, as we slanted up the south side of the upper Churing Chu to the rendezvous camp, we raised these peaks and Kabru beyond, a most beautiful sight. If we had suspected such a jolly ice field and peak from the maps we would have visited it. As it was, we marched under it in the thick weather on our way to the Kang La, in which valley, as it turned out, we were not able to have any extensive view save from a peak. Arrived at the top of the rise to the rendezvous camp, we diverged left to the tops of a little peak that reminded us of the Fells. From it, at about 15,500 feet, we looked down about 6,000 feet to the wooded depths of the Rathong. Arrived at camp, I was allowed to fill the aching void with rice. A beautiful sunny afternoon was spent lazing about the plateau. The place has a wonderful view; north to Kabru and Kangchenjanga, southwards and eastwards to the Darjiling foothills and the Teesta Gap and the Bhutan hills. On the west it is shut in by slaty-looking hills, about 17-18,000 feet, no doubt all virgin and seemingly a couple of hours' walk away, judging by home standards of speed. Our plan was to skirt S.E. of these hills for two days, drop to a valley and rise up again to about 15,200 feet, and so gain the Nepal Ridge—along which a couple of marches would bring us to the pony track at Chiabandan and bungalows.

Man proposes, but hill weather disposes. About six o'clock it was obvious we were in for a more than ordinary storm. Enormous clouds boiled up from the plains and enveloped Darjiling. Driving up through Sikhim, at first they kept to the valley, but eventually towering cumulus clouds piled up east of the Teesta and west over and behind the Nepal Ridge, the setting sun turning them all colours. As dusk approached vivid lightning was visible, whilst away to the north the snows stood out serenely against a star-sprinkled sky of the most lovely blue. We hurried through dinner and took lashings of cocoa into the tent and made all fast. A heavy snowfall commenced, and we wondered what the morning would bring. This night, however, with the snow and the closed tent was our most comfortable one at any height.

In the morning it was evident we could not manage the heavy snow on the ridge if the weather continued bad, as it had every sign of doing. We therefore reluctantly decided

to return *via* Jongri as quickly as possible, and reach the ridge further south. We wondered how the snow would be under the lee of the hill of the day before. Bar a few amusing tumbles of the laden porters it went well enough, and we were at Jongri by early afternoon.

The following day, we hurriedly descended towards Yoksun, camping in pouring rain—after a delicious bathe in the Praig Chu at the same pool as on the ascent—at the camp near Nibi used on the way up. Next day we halted at the local pub in Yoksun for tiffin and to dry our clothes, of course sampling the house's brew of chang. The people of the house produced cards and chits from previous visitors going back many years. The young lama who had conducted the fair weather pujah on the way up appeared, and was the butt of many jokes about the efficacy of his service. In the rain we dropped to the Rathong, and ascended and dropped over the Tingling Ridge to a camp in the paddy field of the local tea house.

The next day, we contoured a good many nullahs well up on the north side of the Ringbi Chu, crossed the Chu by a fine cane bridge, bathed, fed and ascended about 3,000 feet to a saddle west of Tsangachelling Monastery, where we made tea. It would have been far easier to have faced at once the drop to and ascent from the Ringbi Chu on the direct way to Pemionchi and then turned west along the ridge past Tsangachelling (the place of secret spells), but we wished to see the side valley. In the afternoon light it was really a beautiful sight, with the changing colours and shadows on the dense woods in its upper reaches running into the clouds below the 15,000 foot tops that we should have crossed had we not been snowed off the Border Ridge.

From the saddle we were now on, a most beautiful track contours down to Dentam Bungalow, 4,500 feet. The bungalow is wisely but aggravatingly set on a knoll, about 400 feet above the river in the valley bottom, which has to be crossed. The stream is called the Kulhait. Few miles anywhere could be more beautiful than this path. So Speaker and I thought the year before when ascending it.

The path is on the south side of the long ridge, and so the view misses the snows and nothing much over 12,000 feet is in

sight. This is not a drawback, as there is thus nothing to take one's eyes off the nearer objects. The nearest parallel, on a small scale, would be a slanting descent into Borrowdale from Dale Head to Seathwaite. For the Derwent substitute the Kulhait foaming 3,000 feet below at the foot of a not too wooded hillside. The path is set at intervals with chortens, mendongs and prayer flags, for this is holy ground. Farmhouses with coloured mud-plastered walls and more primitive bamboo huts border the road and cling to little cultivated plots on the hillside.

Small streams tumble down ravines and run across the path and in several cases form jolly aerial waterfalls below, which are seen as the track rounds a further spur. To this add a wonderful evening with the Nepal Ridge ahead, capped with heavy cloud with the setting sun shining underneath and lighting up the lower hills to the south and east, perfect condition, and the thought of a square meal at a table followed by a mattress. What more could one wish, except that the holiday were only starting instead of drawing to a close.

In the morning, we had a hot pull out of the river level, followed by several easy miles up the park-like upper valley with the torrent near-by on the right. At noon we bathed at the pool which Speaker and I the year before spent so much time in damming for a dip. After food, we tackled the steep 3,000 rise to the Chiabanjian Gap (Hooker's Islumbo Pass) in the Nepal Ridge. Last year, Speaker and I followed a breakneck short cut down, and were glad we were descending. This time, we went up by the pony track without a halt, much relieved to be getting higher once more. We were just in time to scramble into a tent before a heavy storm broke. Later in the night the three coolie tents were blown down and the wind, getting under the windward side of the Whympier at times, partially turned me over on to T.H.S., so we packed that side of the tent with the sacks and gear. We were off early in hopes of a good view of Everest, Gaurisanker and Makalu over Nepal from the top of Singalilla a few miles on our way. We only obtained a few peeps as the mists were well down before we could reach the top. The summit is crowned with numerous cairns, each decked with many prayer flags. Twice now have I missed the

view from here. It must be wonderful, finer even than from Sandakphu. We hurried on and passed the Phalut bungalow at mid-day, as we had a whole normal day's march to do during the afternoon to reach Sandakphu. After the midday halt, we had continuous lightning and hailstones as big as peas for several miles. Nearing Sandakphu, the air cleared and we saw Kabru, Kangchenjanga and Pandim. Next morning we had no dawn view. When clear, as it was for Speaker and me the previous year, it is worth coming to India to see; only two days' march from Darjiling and yet how few people see it. Most are content to say they have seen Everest from Tiger Hill. All they see are three tips, the two summits of Everest and the tip of Makalu. They then generally adjourn (for whiskies) to a conveniently near-by hotel. From Sandakphu, which is about 12,000 feet, you see an arc of the horizon from west to east, all snow mountains with the hilly Nepal country to the west, and the equally hilly Sikkim to the right. Snow mountains lead the eye to Everest. Immediately right of it, and somewhat dwarfing it by its greater nearness and its grand shape, is Makalu—the world's fourth highest—then a drop in the main Himalaya till the western outliers of the Kangchenjanga group lead the eye to Jannu. Jannu is a wonderful mountain with its scooped-out glacier combs dominated by the fine rocky head of the peak. Then comes the snow saddle of Kabru, of incredible purity, at an apparently impossible height until one realises that the mysterious "something" far above it is the summit rocks and ice of Kangchenjanga itself. To the right of it are the easterly outlying peaks with the high snows of Chomiono and Kangchenjau far behind. Finally, completing the semi-circle, come the Tibetan Border Range and the higher Tibetan and Bhutan peaks beyond. The gradations in colour from the valleys below to the highest snows must be seen to be realised. One does not perhaps get the sense of size that one does from the hills nearer Darjiling—where from Observatory Hill one sees 27,000 feet rise of earth from the river at one's feet—but, from Sandakphu, one gets the sense of a world of incredibly aloof mountains. If one has poked about their bases for a few weeks one realises the scale the more. The state of mind of our forebears in viewing the Alps can be understood. What one sees is something

far more than a climbing ground or even a view; it is indescribable.

Next day was an easy day's stage to Tonglu, the last bungalow. A fresh-faced youth greeted us on the verandah. G. W. Wood-Johnson had come out to meet us, provisioned with bread, meat, two bottles of whisky and six beers by the thoughtful Shebbeare who had been heard to prophesy that we should be down to our last sardine. As a matter of fact, the rations had worked out about right, so whilst W. J. sustained himself on our biscuits and jam that had acquired merit by their pilgrimage, we feasted on his good things and three of the beers, retaining the others to solace ourselves on our return to the horrors of civilised life next morning.

NOTES

The Deputy Commissioner, Darjiling, should be notified if more than two weeks is required in Independent Sikkim as the Political Officer's sanction has to be obtained from the Residency at Gantok. For a shorter stay, the D.C.'s pass only is required. One passes one's word not to go into Nepal, Thibet or Bhutan.

E. O. Shebbeare, Forest Conservator, and J. W. Houlding, Forest Engineer, are always most helpful with assistance in obtaining porters and have a dump of Ex-Everest and Mountain Club gear for use by suitable people. Now that there is a Club we hope to increase these facilities so that the enthusiasm of any budding hillman is not quenched by the difficulty and cost of obtaining such things as axes and tents. G. W. Wood-Johnson is also in the neighbourhood and will do all he can. Early advice is desirable as any of them may be away in the Jungle.

For kit. Up to about 12,000 feet one requires shorts and shirt with a light coat or cape for cold or wet. The best way to keep cool is to wear the shirt outside the shorts. Higher up, ordinary Alpine kit is sufficient for ordinary altitudes. Light yet windproof stuff is far the best with plenty of light cardigans for sack and camp. Too many socks can hardly be taken. For really high work, of course, special gear is required. It pays to have eiderdown bags even for ordinary camps. Woollen gear is heavy and bulky. Spirit cookers are only needed above portorage distance of scrub, though very handy as a luxury below. Maps are only a guide above trodden glaciers such as the Alukthang glacier.

We found the 23 days' holiday very cheap—say, Rupees, 300 each for everything, barring train fares. As the food was hardly more expensive than one's daily food out here, the net cost was about Rupees, 200; say, £15 per head. We had, of course, our climbing gear and the use of tents.

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

By T. R. BURNETT.

Seeing that the great meet of October, 1927, is so fully recorded in the last volume of the Journal, these notes may fairly date from the close of that epoch-making event. Even before the sing-song in the hotel lounge was over, members started to disperse and, for once in a way one Vice-president (L.W.S.) had some work to do in taking over the duties of M.C. That a Club Meet—and particularly the memorable “21st”—should be curtailed in consequence of professional claims only goes to emphasise the existing lack of proportion of things in this world.

With the aid of a map, compass, clinometer and Bradshaw, the Ex-Vice-president (C.F.H.) decided that the best way southwards from Windermere to London was northwards, by lile-Car—I mean Carlisle. In spite of the fact that the hydro is a hydro, his mind was full of strange notions that night and, before reaching Penrith, he had formed the fixed belief that in the basket beside him in the back seat was a live ferret. That idea has possessed his mind ever since, and he will allude to it on the slightest provocation.

November and Langdale were all that November and Langdale should be—rocks in condition for climbing, and tops heralding the coming winter with a sprinkling of snow. Very present, however, were tragic memories of the last Langdale Meet, when Cain took his leave of us and of the hills he loved.

December is the month of dinners, and those of us who had the honour of representing the Club at the bean-feasts of the kindred clubs did our best to maintain the traditions committed to our care. Almost the first words I heard at the “Rucksack do,” were “welcome to the second best climbers’ dinner in the world.” The following day at Laddow Rocks was interesting, if moist and dirty. After climbing, we were the victims of a mean trick played by Bower. He led us for miles over trackless, treacherous bog, and through dense rain, and mist, only to announce that HE was almost home, and that WE had better

find our way back, if possible, before darkness overtook us. We wait *am Tag*.

The London Section Dinner is unique. To start with, the Hotel Cecil without glad-rags is, to say the least, original. But by dress, anecdote, jest and other means, the mountain atmosphere is created even between the Strand and the Thames, and the whole company becomes inspired with it. Even the staid waiters are compelled to unbend, though it is difficult to say whether their attitude is one of pity or of admiration. The following Sunday walk was as well engineered as the dinner itself, and both events demonstrated the keenness and efficiency which characterise the Club's southern offspring. Why should not similar sections be developed at other centres? I can assure the members that they have reason to be proud of the honour which is shown to their club at these gatherings of other brotherhoods of the hills.

The New Year at Buttermere was better than ever, for the weather was of the best. While the Pillar attracted its usual complement of faithful visitors, the majority preferred high level walking over spotless snows and frozen tarns. Skates should be as much a part of one's winter equipment as ice axes, and those of us who spent a day on the perfect ice at Bleaberry Tarn will not soon forget it.

While I will not discuss here the question as to whether the motor is an advantage or not, I will, with confidence, assert that at Grasmere, in February, the ayes had it. On the Saturday, it brought many a snow-clad peak within range, while on the Sunday, it furnished an unprecedented spectacle, *viz.*, 27 Rockyfellers, setting out by motor 'bus over Dunmail to "climb the steep brow of the mighty Helvellyn"! The plan was to ascend from Thirlspot and follow the ridge back to H.Q. And what a snow-stodge it was! Even the hardened Alpinists of the party admitted that it was as fatiguing as many a big Swiss excursion, and the way in which some of the ill-equipped ladies of the party stuck it out was marvellous. It was unfortunate that mist and depth of snow prevented the location of a certain recently erected disfigurement, which would otherwise have been demolished.

The dialect play was up to standard, and was largely patronised. Attendance at this has become an annual fixture, and it is



Photo by

F. & R. C. C. START ON A FELL WALK.
(Grasmere, Feb. 1928.)

G. Sang.



AND MANY MORE WHICH
I HAVE NOT TIME
TO DRAW.
(543 IN ALL)

THAT 'MUNRO' FEELING.
3,000 IS MY FIGURE.

PLEASE MAY I JOIN THE CLUB?

A.P.

proposed in future to arrange for the Club members to have a block of seats reserved for them.

The Coniston Meets of March and June were, perhaps, less noteworthy than usual. Is it that Coniston has lost popularity since it let us down over the 1926 dinner, or is it merely that the weather scared us? No centre is more often honoured by unofficial visits of the Barrow fraternity, nor has any played a more important part in the development of the Club.

The Easter Meet at Wasdale is, perhaps, the most traditional of our gatherings. One at least of its traditions has been broken by the installation of electric light in the hotel. It is true that one can now read in comfort, yet one misses the time-honoured experience of watching the phantom forms of half-clad humanity seeking lost socks in the clothes heap on the dark landing. The Pillar was, as usual, the popular resort, and it was an interesting study in facial expression to bring six climbers in quick succession over the "Nose."

Yes! Given fine weather, the Borrowdale Meet is the best of all, and this year it surpassed itself. The atmosphere—even at the top of the Sty—was that of a Turkish bath—unique in the experience of the oldest visitor to the district. Tents and caravans were more in evidence than ever before, and the field below the bathing pool earned the title of Hyde Park Corner. One camping outfit from Hull commanded special attention. The tent was equipped with real beds, real chairs, real tables, real chest of drawers, and a complete kitchen. All these were stowed and towed in an ingenious trailer, constructed by the owners. Attraction between them and the Club was mutual, and they applied for membership before leaving. Amongst other distinguished members who attended was Byrne of Munro fame—newly joined. (For the benefit of the uninitiated, it may be explained that a Munro is a Scottish peak of 3,000 or more feet in height.) His appearance caused a mild sensation of which, no doubt, he was proud.

Good sport was enjoyed by all, and Sergeant's Crag Gully received special attention. No less than thirteen made its ascent on Monday and lay out to dry in the glorious sunshine on the heather at the top, before descending to disport themselves in the Langstrath bathing pool—the choicest in the world!

Outside the farm in the evening, the new song-book was inaugurated with due ceremony. Darwin Leighton sang his (the first) club song; the President gave Hirst's latest and Boothroyd, after receiving and acknowledging the members' thanks for providing the book, rendered his favourite "John Peel." But from the truly musical point of view, the honours were with Pryor for his delightful chanties, which we hope to hear often in the future.

Like many others, I missed the August Meet on account of an important engagement in Switzerland, but I am sure that on Bank Holiday the thoughts of many of us turned from Alpine snows to Wasdale Rocks.

And that reminds me to say, that members should sport their badges when abroad, as well as when at home. Mine was the means of my getting into touch with quite a number of kindred spirits, and I was impressed to find the honour in which our club is held by climbers far distant from our district.

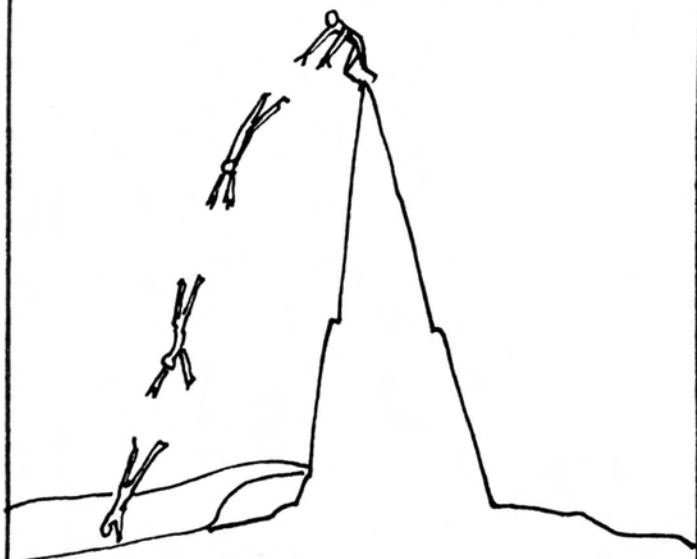
The Eskdale gathering was simply ideal! Blazing sunshine each day. Relief from the excessive heat was obtained in two opposite directions, *viz.*, up into the heights and down into the bathing pools, and both resorts were heavily patronised. Only the most energetic made long excursions, while scrambling on Harter, and a fell tea party, were amongst the popular pursuits. Why don't more of us carry cookers and enjoy the cup that cheers without the necessity of descending to the valley when we fain would remain aloft? My endeavour, made a few years ago, to form an "early breakfast" section of the club was a hopeless failure, but perhaps a "fell-side tea league" would have more success!

And so we come round to Windermere again, and as it is not my job to describe that great "do," I will confine myself to a few minor points. The journey over Kirkstone on Friday night in dense mist was sufficient to try the nerve of the most seasoned driver, while the runaway char-a-banc on the same pass on Saturday afternoon afforded a thrill which, fortunately, did not culminate in disaster. Many parties visited Langdale for walking and climbing on Sunday and several remarked that they had never been more thoroughly drenched in their lives, so the unlimited hot baths were particularly welcome. The pessimists in

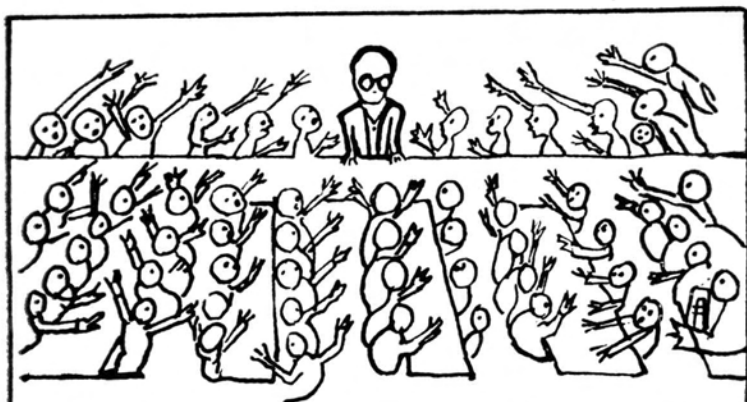
ANNUAL CLUB DINNER. 1928.
GUEST OF HONOUR - M^r HUGH WALPOLE.



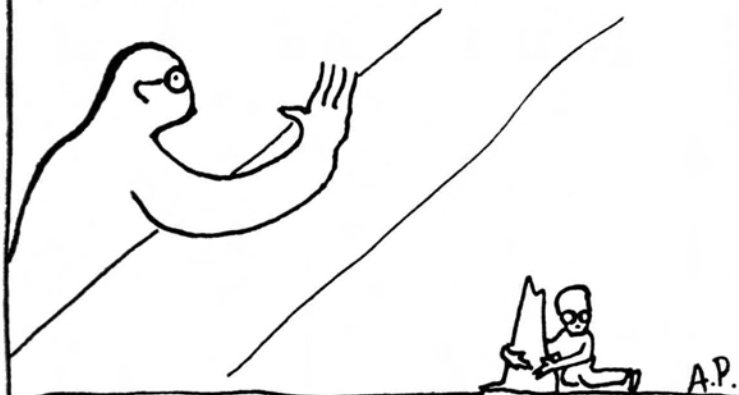
IN "THE CATHEDRAL" M^r WALPOLE DESCRIBES
POLCHESTER, SITUATED IN A FLAT & HILL-LESS
COUNTRY, SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND.



LATER, IN THE SAME BOOK, HE TELLS US OF
" A PIECE OF ROCK WHICH IS STILL SHOWN
TO INNOCENT VISITORS AS THE PLACE
WHENCE SOME OF HIS (THE BISHOP'S)
ENEMIES, IN FULL ARMOUR, WERE FLUNG
DOWN, MANY THOUSAND FEET,
TO THE WATERS OF THE POL." (PAGE 53.)
[CHAP: 3]



WE DEMAND TO KNOW, WHERE
IS THIS ROCK? IT IS THE
VERY ROCK WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING
FOR ALL OUR CLUB LIVES!



BUT M^r WALPOLE BASELY SHELTERS
HIMSELF BEHIND THE THEORY OF AUTHOR'S
LICENCE - "DO WE NOT ALL KNOW,"
HE SAYS, "THAT TO FALL ONLY A VERY
FEW FEET FEELS LIKE FALLING
AT LEAST MANY THOUSAND FEET?"

IN MEMORIAM

GEORGE SEATREE (Original Member)

“Ye buik larned wise gentry that’s seen many countries
 May preach and palaver and brag as ye will,
 O’ mountains, lakes, valleys, woods, watters and meadows,
 But canny suld Cumberland caps them aw still.”

The happiest hours of our pioneer veteran were those spent on Lakeland Hills; few of our members could go back so far and recount such experiences of climbing and fell walking as he could. Born at Penrith in 1850, his early years gave him many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the fells. One of his proudest achievements was the first ascent of Scawfell by the north or Penrith Climb in September, 1874; he told how they looked with astonishment and awe at Scawfell Pinnacle, and how impressed they were with the peep down into the depths of Deep Ghyll. Yet twelve years later he proudly stood on the summit of the Pinnacle with John W. Robinson and W. P. Haskett-Smith. His thrilling accounts of days with John Robinson and others, as printed in the early numbers of our Journal and in his little book *Lakeland Memories*, are worth reading. Along with those two trojans, Scantlebury and Grayson, he did a great deal of spade work in establishing the Club on good sound lines and, in 1909, became one of our most popular Presidents. He was ever ready to encourage new members with a kindly helping hand. At the festive board he was always prepared with a Cumberland dialect story and never tired of singing “John Peel.” He endeared himself to all of us because of his good fellowship, his warm heartedness and his zeal for the good of our Club.

During his long residence in Liverpool, he drew a warm circle of friends around him; he was a very ardent member and faithful President of The Wayfarers’ Club. He took a great interest in the Cumberland and Westmorland Society and often entertained them with lantern lectures on Lakeland climbing, along with humorous songs and stories.

As we leave the valley and wander into the sweet silence of the higher hills let us ponder awhile and remember these noble pioneers who have left us such a heritage of rich memories, memories that shall live on unsullied through many a summer's sun and many a winter's snow; happy are they who seek that glorious comradeship of the dear old Lakeland Hills. D.L.



GEORGE SEATREE.

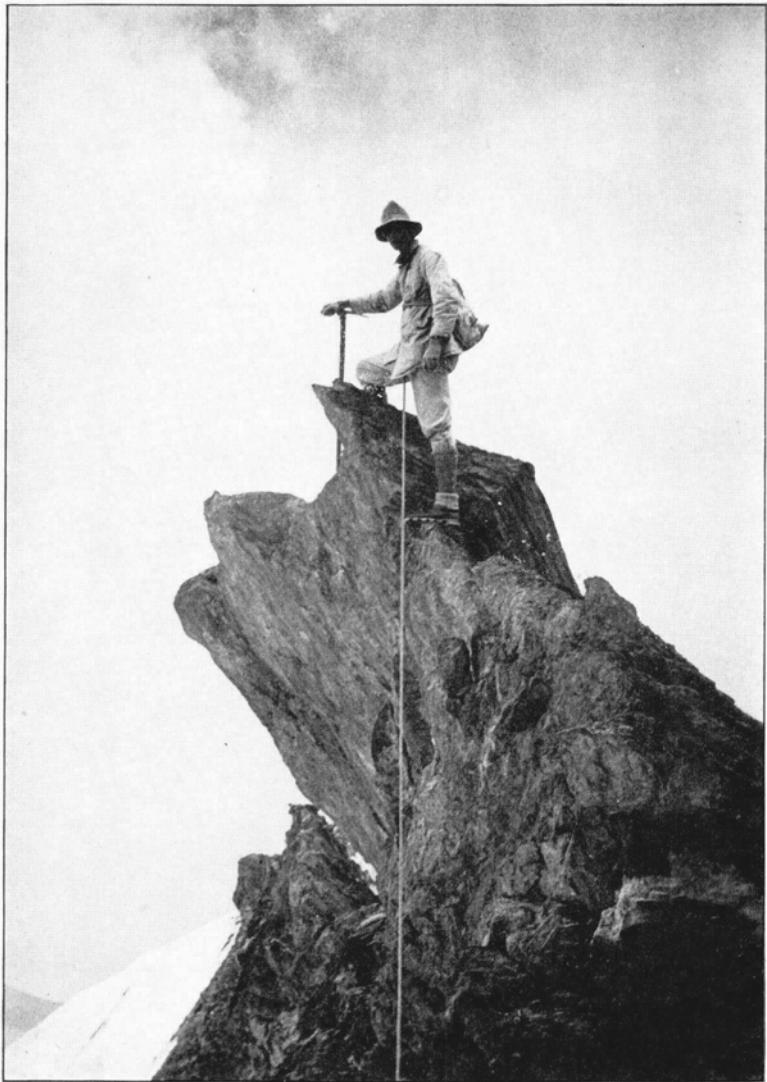


Photo by

R. S. T. CHORLEY : *Hon. Editor, 1918-1927.*
(Gendarme on the Unterbachhorn, Belaip)

T. R. Burnett

EDITOR'S NOTES

This year has been rich in new climbing achievement, thanks largely to a fresh outburst of energy on the part of H. M. Kelly, who has been responsible for events on both Pillar and the Napes. A B. Reynolds has also been doing things, most notably the famous Crack on Gimmer.

Congratulations to Eustace Thomas on writing off the last of his 4,000 metre Alpines; and to Mrs. Pilley-Richards and her husband on their first ascent (led by Joseph Georges of Evolena) of the North Arête of the Dent Blanche—last to fall of the great Alpine Ridges.

Happily, there is no call in the Journal this year for a special article on the subject of accidents. It is true that there have been two fatal accidents in the District during the past year, but only one can be described as a rock-climbing fatality. Dr. A. J. Walker was killed in May, while climbing Dollywaggon Pike Gully alone. At the inquest, it was stated that the body was found with a rope tied to the waist, and it was suggested that the rope must have become in some way entangled with Dr. Walker's legs during climbing, and so pulled him off. This is not very easy to understand; possibly, the dangling rope may have caught and so upset the climber's balance—in any event, exactly how this accident occurred must be a matter of mere surmise, as there were no witnesses.

The second fatal accident was to an Ambleside student, Miss Agnes Hughes, who was scrambling with two friends on Hanging Knotts, Great Langdale. Apparently, she slipped on to a sort of grass terrace as she was starting to scramble up some rock, failed to recover balance, and fell again some little distance. Her head hit against a rock, fatally fracturing the skull.

Since the issue of the last Journal, the Club has lost one of its oldest friends, our ex-President George Seatree. It is good to think that he was with us last year at the 21st Birthday Celebrations, and subsequently contributed his quota of Club Reminiscences to the Journal.

Mr. W. N. Tribe, also a contributor to the last number, has since died too, thus breaking another of the few links left with the pioneer generation of cragsmen.

And during the year, the Club has lost two of its most trusted hostesses, Miss Edmondson, the senior hostess at Buttermere, and Mrs. Harris, of Parkgate, Coniston. Miss Edmondson had been ailing for a long while, and it is some years since she actually helped to run a New Year Meet, but it was pleasant to know of her presence in the background, and we offer our most sincere sympathy to her family. Barrow will miss Mrs. Harris more than a little—and not only Barrow. In the next number, we hope to be able to give Mrs. Harris' memory a worthier niche in our annals than this brief reference. It should be noted by members that Parkgate is no longer open for visitors.

It is fitting also, to refer here to the rather tragic death of Mr. C. E. Montague, the novelist and essayist. He was never, perhaps, a great "executant" climber, but as a writer on climbing subjects, he was sometimes great. His genius for making a story "go," his sinewy prose, his vivid feeling for the beauty and essential worthiness of living, and the sense that a reader got of the winning personality behind it all, made the best of his mountaineering essays and tales a sheer delight. One need only recall *Hanging Garden Gully*,—and what rich humour was there too! Sad that the last of his mountain stories should show only the defects of his qualities.

A few weeks before his death, we mustered the impudence to write and ask Montague for a story of his Lakeland memories. Here is his reply :—

DEAR MADAM,

I only wish I could, for I have read every single number of the Fell and Rock Club's Journal with unflagging delight and, only a week or two ago, I was getting the old pleasure again from your capital number of 1927. But I am dreadfully in arrears with all sorts of work that I have rashly undertaken to do. I write very slowly, and for the last 14 years I have done no climbing in this country and very little elsewhere. So I am afraid I must not hope to be able to accept your very kind invitation to contribute to the number for this year. I am really very sorry.

Believe me, Yours very truly,

C. E. MONTAGUE.

Mr. J. E. B. Wright, the Keswick guide, has written us with regard to the fatal accident to Dr. Walker on Dolly Waggon Pike. He found the body, and was present at the inquest, where he had to answer a number of questions put to him by the coroner. Somewhat rashly, he embarked on replies involving unnecessary rock-climbing technicalities and matters of pure rock-climbing opinion—with the result that the newspaper reporters misunderstood what he said. He is reported to have said, for instance, that “one-sixteenth-of-an-inch is supposed to be quite a good foothold for a rock-climb”; and that “when we have found people doing it (climbing alone) at other places, they have been censured for it by the English Fell and Rock Climbing Club.” The absurdity of the first remark, taken without any qualification or explanation, would no doubt have been merely regarded as the best climbing joke of the year had the newspapers not given the impression that Mr. Wright was speaking with an authoritative voice. The second remark, involving as it did the Club officially, and being entirely without warrant in fact, was naturally a more serious matter. Altogether, a good deal of indignant feeling was, we think, quite rightly aroused. Mr. Wright now writes to tell us that what he actually did say was:

“Some footholds are two inches, some one inch, others a quarter, and a sixteenth, and on some climbs in certain parts of a pitch, there are no footholds, and plimsolls are used to obtain a grip.”

Rock-climbers will probably now understand what Mr. Wright was driving at. It is scarcely to be wondered at that newspaper reporters, who have probably never seen a rock-climb in their lives, were somewhat bewildered.

With regard to the other statement, Mr. Wright in fact said that he had seen an article by a prominent member of the Fell and Rock Club deprecating solitary rock-climbing. He also says that in condemning solitary climbing, he was particular in trying to make it clear that he could only speak officially on behalf of “the guides.”

As Mr. Wright has been naturally sharply criticised in the Club with regard to these matters, it is fair that he should have the publicity of the *Journal* for his explanation. It is

perhaps too much to expect that newspaper men will ever learn to report mountaineering questions correctly. No doubt, Mr. Wright has now learnt like the rest of us, that the less said about rock-climbing when the Press is present, the better!

We have, also, a long communication from Mr. Wright in regard to remarks of ours in the Editor's Notes for last year. Mr. Wright was distressed by a phrase about American advertising, and he "objects to the insinuation that the guides profiteer in their professional and rock-climbing engagements." If there were such an insinuation, though we do not think that the remarks in question really insinuate anything so extreme, we unhesitatingly withdraw it. Mr. Wright gives some details as to how he arrives at his charges, which take into account transport and overhead costs; and he makes out a reasonable case for them on economic grounds. He points out, too, the very onerous nature of his own work as leader—"some weigh nine stone, some weigh thirteen stone." When all is said and done, however, as we wrote last year, five guineas per day does make "rock-climbing a sport for plutocrats, instead of what it essentially is, the most democratic of all recreations." We, who have had the good fortune to inherit a tradition of Lakeland climbing, so totally alien in its genesis and ideals, have naturally felt alarmed at the introduction into Cumberland and Westmorland of Alpine finance and Trans-Atlantic propaganda. Now that we know Mr. Wright better, we are ready to admit that our alarm is perhaps exaggerated. In any case, in these times, most parties cannot afford five guineas for the pleasure of being hauled up the North Climb or the New West. We see no reason why we should not heartily wish Mr. Wright "More power to his elbow," with the thirteen stoners who can! He has, moreover, most generously agreed not to take his parties on to crags likely to be frequented by the Club during particular meets. The rocks are still safe for democracy!

On Whit-Monday, a meeting was held on Friar's Crag, to protest against solitary rock-climbing and scrambling. The meeting was organised by Mr. J. E. B. Wright, and was approved publicly by two ex-Presidents of the Club, one of whom attended and spoke.

It has given rise to a good deal of discussion and criticism, especially as the Club was indirectly mixed up with it. In so far as the meeting was a protest against inexperienced persons going alone, no one could possibly quarrel with its object, however much he might dislike Hyde Park methods applied to climbing. But such a meeting obviously could not take place without involving the larger general issue of whether or not solitary climbing is justifiable. On this issue, there have always been two opposing opinions; and climbers have naturally resented being lectured in public on a practice which has never been finally pronounced as illegitimate. Indeed, most climbers do go alone at some time or another, and certainly some of the greatest have done so. Those who do know that they find then a precious quality in the hills, shy and elusive, which companionship frightens away. The question as to whether it is justifiable to seek this particular pleasure will always be a controversial one. Everyone has a right to push his or her own climbing opinions. We have no desire to advocate mountaineering Mussolinism. Nevertheless we agree wholeheartedly with the criticism that a public meeting is not a seemly occasion for climbers to argue their domestic controversies.

There has been some comment on the valuable series of maps included in Baddeley's *Through Guide*, recently reviewed in the Journal. It is unfortunate that the publishers have not been able to see their way to bring these more up-to-date, though, doubtless, it is an expensive business. The scarping in particular often leaves much to be desired.

The well-known firm of Bartholomew are responsible for the maps, and we should have expected a firm with their reputation to have put the matter right, especially as the work involved would be useful in connection with their own series of maps. We understand, however, from Mr. Benson, who is, of course, only responsible for the letterpress, that various suggestions put forward by him have not been favourably received. This is a great pity, as no one has a more accurate knowledge of Lakeland topography.

"A dangerous member" (see p. 87 of the 1925 Journal) has

been at work amongst us once more. The "professional services of Wilton" can no longer decently "be invoked to make the Club unfit for Eros to dwell in." We understand that he is to be married shortly. And even G. S. Bower—who will believe our report?—has turned Benedict. "Not now for him the clash of the Napes cutlery, the sweep of the Pinnacle slabs, the grim paraphernalia of Walker's, or the exceptionally exciting exercise of the Eliminates." We refer Bower to Hamlet, Act III, Scene 4, line 204.

Edna Yates and Lindley Henshaw provide an inter-Club marriage; and Nea Barnard gives the Club another link with the Groupe de Haute Montagne, by marrying M. Jean A. Morin. We hope that M. Morin's two somewhat sad experiences of Lakeland weather will not prevent him completing his F. and R. membership qualification!

Congratulations and good luck to them all.

The thanks of the Club are due to P. D. Boothroyd for his most generous gift of Song Books, and to A. B. Cowburn for the store of ice-axes for the use of members.

We should apologise to T. H. G. Parker for an error in naming his photograph facing page 385 of the 1927 Journal. Instead of Monte Sirente read Monte Corno.

In the interests of climbing history, a criticism has been made of G. G. Macphee's use of noms de guerre (to which there was no key), in his article on the Aiguille Blanche de Pétéret last year. It is therefore, perhaps, as well to record that the leader was Mr. F. Smythe.

Since going to press we hear of a further attack by the Manchester Corporation on Lake District charms. The latest proposal is to demolish the old Nag's Head at Wythburn. The tenant, we understand, goes out on March 31st. Sufficient details are not to hand for a considered comment. The scheme may be necessary—or again it may not. In either event, Manchester members might well go into the matter before March 31st and find out what is happening and why, and whether something might not be done to save the old inn.

CLIMBS, OLD AND NEW

From the Club Books and Elsewhere

By H. S. GROSS.

New climbs on Pillar, Napes, Kern Knotts and Gimmer during the year show that the possibilities of the major crags are not yet exhausted. In addition, in spite of a summer which, in the Lake District at any rate, was anything but fine, the year has been notable for the amount of climbing done on ascents of great difficulty. "Long may it continue."

PILLAR ROCK : First ascent 28/4/28. H.M.K., H.G.K. Grooved Wall. and W.G.S. H.G.K. led the last groove.

300 feet. Very severe and strenuous.

Lies on the right wall of Walker's Gully (looking up). Cairn. The actual climbing starts about 40 feet up the grass. Cairn.

30 feet. High grassy ledges lead up to a very wide chimney.

30 feet. The chimney, in two sections, has a great flake for one of its sides, not obvious until at the top.

30 feet. Some feet above the top of the flake, a sloping grass ledge lies at the foot of the First Groove. The groove is climbed, and a grass ledge on the right at the top is attained.

60 feet. An overhang precedes the *long groove*.

The crux of the climb is to effect a lodgment in the latter. (A doubtful spike with a loop used as a stirrup was used by the first party, but on the second ascent a belay was arranged below the overhang in the crack, and by this means the leader entirely dispensed with the doubtful flake, and the stirrup). Desperate climbing up the groove leads to a fine belay.

60 feet. The groove continues, steeply at first, but assumes a more moderate angle and ends at the belay of the sixth pitch of the North-east climb.

70 feet. The final groove, above the belay, is rather intimidating in aspect. After 35 feet, it ends, and several unpleasant ledges have to be climbed before a reasonable stance is found. Shortly after this a rock gateway opens on to scree just above Walker's Gully.

Grooved Wall. Second ascent 25/5/28. A.B.R., G.G.M.
Route II. Second ascent 25/5/28. A.B.R., G.G.M.

SHAMROCK : First ascent 28/5/28. H.G.K., W.G.S.,
Harlequin W.E.S. Starts just to the west of a large
Chimneys. overhanging bulge at the base of the
 Shamrock and runs to the Shamrock Traverse, crossing Sham-
 rock Gully *en route*. The chimneys form one continuous fault
 from the top of the crag to the bottom. Very difficult.

10 feet chimney (or 15 foot rib).

15 feet. Steep grass. Belay.

30 feet. Steep grass and rock to foot of deep chimney.

50 feet. Narrow and strenuous chimney with awkward
 landing on grass ledges.

50 feet. Grass and easy rock to series of pitches climbed
 facing right.

15 feet. Shallow chimney.

10 feet. Chockstone pitch.

40 feet. Very deep chimney with jammed stone. (Last
 three pitches can be avoided by a rib on the right. Start severe,
 easier higher up).

15 feet. Steep crack.

30 feet. Grass to Route II.

10 feet. Descent to Gully.

45 feet. Steep and easy rock in continuation of fault.

20 feet. Parallel grooves with awkward step to left at top.

30 feet. Scrambling up bed of Gully.

10 feet. Chockstone pitch to foot of big cave.

20 feet. Cave is climbed behind jammed stones. (Easier
 crack outside).

40 feet. Steep scoop with awkward exit on to sloping boulder.

50 feet. Easy rock to Shamrock traverse.

GREAT GABLE : **The Napes.** First ascent, 11/4/28. H.G.K.,
Long John. H.M.K.
(Eagle's Nest Ridge.) "Comparable with Botterill's Slab—but
 steeper."

The climb is on the steep narrow wall dividing the Eagle's
 Nest ordinary chimney and Ling's Chimney, and starts at a

bollard at the foot of the alternative 20 foot crack of Ling's Chimney. The crack was followed to reach a stance in Ling's. The wall was tackled, and soon the leader was forced to the left ; some feet higher a traverse on good holds was made to the piton in Ling's Chimney. The leader then climbed the centre of the wall, but a shorter man would probably have to climb on the left for a few feet before working into the centre again.

Long John. Second ascent, 17/4/28. H.G.K., W.G.S. and E.H.T. Parker (non-member).

On this occasion the face of the Pinnacle at the top of Ling's Chimney was climbed, but an attempt to climb the wall up above proved to be unfeasible.

NAPES Direct obverse route from the Gap. First
NEEDLE. ascent, H.G.K., H.M.K., W.G.S., 29/4/28.
Second ascent, H.G.K., F.G.H., 29/4/28.

KERN KNOTTS : First traverse, 27/4/28. H.G.K., W.G.S.,
H.M.K.

Chain Climb. The traverse commenced with a descent of the " Cat Walk " and Flakes, of the Flake Climb (West Face). Traversed to the foot of the West Chimney proper, and ascended it to the large ledges above. Thence continuing underneath the overhangs of the upper part of the Central Climb (South Face), which was descended to the Pinnacle, and from there to the top of the first pitch of the Chimney. The obvious way was taken by the " Nick " on to K.K. Buttress, and up to the Juniper Ledge. The buttress was then traversed at a slightly lower level to another smaller Juniper ledge, where there are two pinnacles (lower one doubtful). Descending the edge of the buttress below the doubtful pinnacle the face of the great wall was crossed to the Crack at a point about three feet above the Niche. Ten feet higher some small ledges were used to cross into Innominate at the grassy niche, and from there the crack was ascended.

The climb is a study in small holds, and has some severe and exposed sections. Fortunately at some points there are adequate and reassuring belays.

Kern Kotts This climb was accomplished in the reverse
Chain. 29/4/28. direction by H.M.K., W.G.S., and H.G.K.,

BOAT HOWE First ascent, 28/5/28. H.S.G., G.B. and
CRAGS : B. Tyson (non-member).

Breakwater Slabs. The climb commences at the extreme
Grooved Arête. right hand corner of the slabs, and goes
 direct up the grooves to the top right-hand edge of the rock.
 An "individual" climb, no belays. Severe.

GREEN GABLE : First ascent, 9/10/25. F.G.

Aaron. The climb runs up the middle of the
 slabby face of the conspicuous ridge on whose arête lies Eta.
 The first pitch is semi-detached, and the start is indicated by
 the right-hand cairn of the three in this congested area.

For about 12 feet the route goes up the face. Then a stride
 is taken to a big foothold on the left edge, and the arête followed
 direct to the top, 35 feet. This pitch was found to be rather stiff.
 A grassy terrace is now reached, and the main face rises above.
 The next pitch starts easily, slightly to the left, and bears back
 to the middle of the face. Climbing of no particular difficulty
 culminates in the attainment of an interesting mantleshelf.
 40 feet. (It would seem that this section and the corresponding
 pitch on Eta must be close together. The latter, however,
 keeps close to the arête).

For the next pitch, continue up the middle of the face by way
 of a shallow groove or scoop. 20 feet. A scramble leads to a
 ledge on the crest of the buttress. Here a mild pull up is followed
 by easy rock. 40 feet. Done in rubbers.

North Face. First ascent, 9/10/25. F.G. Done in
 rubbers. The corresponding face of the most northerly buttress
 (Theta follows the arête).

Starts from the left-hand cairn of the three. A small, square
 buttress is climbed. No difficulty is met till the finish, which
 is delicate. 25 feet. Across a grassy terrace the main face
 continues, and the start is indicated by a cairn in a corner.
 It does *not* follow a subsidiary face on the left. After a fairly
 difficult first move, the route goes straight up over a small
 overhang. A few feet above is a stance. 50 feet.

Continue up the slab, which becomes rather mossy, and finish up a corner formed by a curious projecting rib. This square corner is conspicuous from below. 50 feet. (N.B.—The last two pitches should be done in one run out).

Green Gable. The note by G.W. on page 430 of the last journal, *re* cairns on this crag, has evoked a note by G.G.M.

“This note *re* the cairns gives one the impression that these cairns on the climbs existed previously. This is not so. The only existing cairn ‘referred to in the accounts,’ was at the top of Eta, an old cairn, and not made by F.G. The other old one is not alluded to in the published account, but was also at the top of a chimney, while F.G.’s were both face climbs, and cairned at the bottom only.”

The two climbs by F.G., referred to, are described above.

Alpha. Second ascent, first descent.

Beta. First complete ascent, direct past overhang on top pitch.

Delta. First ascent and descent.

This short climb runs up the edge of the rib a few feet north of Gamma, and has a small overhang at the foot. The holds are small, but sufficient. The climb is steep and exposed, but only 30 feet long.

Aaron. Second ascent.

North Wall. Second ascent.

Eta. Second ascent. First descent.

Epsilon. Second ascent. First descent.

(First complete ascent past overhang at foot).

Epsilon Chimney. First ascent.

The chimney immediately to the north of Epsilon. Two pitches of 40 feet each, then broken rock up to an overhang,

20 feet, and scrambling to the top. G.G.M., and Miss K.W., 12/5/28.

SCAWFELL : A.B.R. writes as follows, 26/5/28 :—

Central Buttress. "Re Central Buttress. Flake Crack.

"For a party of three climbers, the following is thought to be an improved method :—

"No. 1 led to the chockstone with two ropes, and was held over the stone while he tied on with the spare. The first rope was untied and threaded through loops which were placed on the rope with which No. 1 was tied to the stone. No. 2 then tied on to the threaded rope, the other end of which was held by No. 3, who was belayed on the oval. No. 1 then had both hands free to assist the upward progress of No. 2, who led past him to the top of the crack."

Central Buttress. G.G.M. writes, 30/5/28 :—

"On the eastern slab of the 'V' ledge, a P.F. type spike of rock was found. If the second sits well below, and the third holds the Alpine line *in situ*, this provides an adequate safeguard for the long runout required by the leader from the stance."

Moss Ghyll Grooves. 30/5/28, first descent. G.G.M. (last man), L.H.P., H.G.K.

Central Route, Deep Ghyll slabs. 30/5/28, second ascent. H.G.K. and G.G.M.

Direct Route to Moss Ledge. 6/8/28, second ascent. F.G., G.M.W.

Black Crag, Diagonal Route. 6/8/28, first ascent. F.G., G.M.W.

The climb is steep, interesting and severe, though the holds are mostly good.

The climb starts just to the left of a projecting buttress of rock, nearly midway between Sinister Ridge and Dexter Slabs.

The first pitch runs up a face of dark rock at an obvious point, towards the left, from a grass ledge above the cairn. The route then bears to the right to a resting place, thence

slightly to the left, and up to a belay on the right of a big hyacinth-filled corner. 75 feet.

Go into the corner, cross on to a flake, and lower into another corner beyond. Then move straight out on to the rib on the left, and climb up for 40 or 50 feet till an obvious traverse is seen crossing a slab on the left. The slab is ascended from the left end of the traverse for a few feet to a thread belay round a block embedded in the grass. 90 feet.

Traverse again to the left, and up to some blocks on the skyline. Belay 25 feet.

A short ascent, followed by another traverse, brings the party to a grass terrace under steep rock. Belay 30 feet.

Grass ledges lead to the left to a shallow slabby gully. Ascend the corner of the gully a few feet and take a diagonal ledge on the left. This lands one on the last pitch of Sinister Ridge. 70 feet.

The advent of rain stopped further exploration, and the Ridge was followed to the top. 50 feet.

The Three Pinnacles "Recommended as a qualification for the F. and R.C. Club."

Depart Dale Head in Duddon Dale, 4-25 a.m.

Scawfell Pinnacle (up Mickledore Ch. down Broad Stand), 8-15 a.m. Top of Needle (up Lingmell Crack, down West Crack), 12-0 noon. Pillar Rock (Slab and Notch), 3-35 p.m. Wasdale Head, a. 5-50 p.m., d, 6-40 p.m. Under Crag, Seathwaite, 10-45 p.m.

"No attempt made at speed record, as is evident." J.C. and Miss H.M.M. 14/5/28.

BUTTERMERE : 4/5/28.

Robinson. First ascent, J. Summermatter, and A.R.T.

Goat Crag. The Gully is reached by following the East Gully. The beck behind Hassness for quite half a mile. In the course of doing this, one or two amusing little pitches are encountered. Afterwards the beck divides into three branches. The western and central have already been climbed and described. The east branch begins with a series of slabs. The

first is about 40 feet, easy at first, but a little devoid of holds later on. The second likewise begins easily, and is perhaps of the same height. It has, however, a slightly overhanging top. To overcome this, it is necessary to climb up on to a grassy step on the right, and continue to use grass and rocks on the right, till the overhang is surmounted. It is awkward to step back into the smooth bed of the gully, and use must still be made of rocks on the right for the hands. Afterwards, progress is made up smooth but not difficult slabs for some way. Then a pitch 30 feet in height, quite vertical and streaming with water, barred the way, and an easy route was made up heather and rocks on the left. The gully was then re-entered, and a 60-foot pitch climbed on the right by excellent holds. But for the short severe section at the top of the second pitch, the climb is an excellent one. Unfortunately it would be regarded as unjustifiable by many, on account of the passage necessitating the use of grass holds! Dry weather is, of course, essential.

CONISTON : On renewing acquaintance with this climb, **Doe Crag.** it was thought that the third pitch, leading up to the "Raven's Nest" belay, was slightly easier, having been gardened somewhat. Care is needed, rounding the corner from the belay, to tackle the "Rochers Perchés" pitch. The blocks on the "R.P." pitch itself were intentionally used with some vigour, and appear to be firm. This is the only portion of the climb on which there is doubtful rock, and at *no* point is it ever necessary to use vegetation as a hold. H.S.G.

The small knob of rock used for the abseil from "A" Buttress, on the Girdle Traverse, is now rather improved, though by no means a bollard. H.S.G.

LANGDALE : First attempted ascent (?), 21/4/28. A.B.R. and H.G.K.

The Crack. On this occasion a rope from above was requisitioned for the last 50 feet of the climb.

Hiatus Route. Second ascent, 22/4/28. H.G.K., A.B.R. and G.G.M.

The Crack. First ascent, 5/5/28. A.B.R. and G.G.M.

The climb starts a few feet to the right of the "Hiatus" over turf ledges to the crack proper, which was climbed to a small rock platform with an excellent belay on the left wall.

From here a traverse was made to the arête on the left, and easier rocks were climbed to insecure grass ledges below the "big blocks."

(On the second ascent, after much gardening, it was found possible to continue straight up from this point, but on the first ascent, a downward traverse was made to the "Hiatus," which was followed for a few feet to some large blocks directly above). From here, steep rocks were climbed to a small rock platform with a belay "suitable for a ship's hawser." The leader then continued for 20 feet before traversing into the crack a few feet below the "conspicuous loose stone which lies across the crack." (This stone, which was thought to be essential for surmounting the severe 15-foot pitch above, is now unfortunately down the Gully!)

The 15-foot pitch gives on to a grass ledge, "The Bower." A spare rope was passed up to the leader, who climbed the crack for 20 feet to a "stance" just below the overhang. Here loops of line were passed over the small chockstone and, after passing his rope through the loop, the leader descended to the "Bower."

The second then took up his position immediately below the thread, facing right on a "one foot" stance. The leader then climbed past him and succeeded in surmounting the overhang. (NOTE.—On the second ascent it was found better to face right on this section). Severe climbing for 30 feet leads to a traverse to the right along a horizontal crack to a wide grass ledge. Tourists may scramble up from the ledge. Climbers traverse back to the crack to finish the final 20 feet.

Classification: "Unpleasantly severe."

BOWFELL Second ascent, H.S.G., L.H.P., G.B.,
BUTTRESS : 6/5/28.
Right Hand Wall.

Borstal 6/5/28. First ascent, A.B.R., G.G.M.,
Buttress : R. C. Abbatt (non-member).

The climb is on the crag of the "Oxford and Cambridge Climb."

The climb starts in a square corner about 60 feet to the left of the Cambridge Climb. A broad arrow indicates the direction of an upward traverse to the right, which is followed as far as a well-marked scoop. After traversing back to the left, and then again to the right, it is possible to enter the scoop. Twenty feet higher, an overhang bars the way, and a traverse is made across a slab to the right, above which a good belay is found. This pitch is severe and interesting, the runout being about 70 feet. But, when the leader gazes round for fresh pitches to conquer, he finds that the crag has disappeared. If he perseveres in following the broad arrows which mark the route, these will take him over a series of short pitches, of moderate interest, to the top of the crag.

GIMMER CRAG: 13/5/28. First ascent, H.S.G., G.B. and Asterisk Route. B. Tyson (non-member).

This new climb lies to the left of the Ash Tree Slabs, and starts level with the top of the big chockstone in the scree gully.

Fifteen feet of broken wall lead to a grassy ledge with a small cairn and a belay. From here move to the right for six feet on good holds, and then up and to the left slightly, to a good grass ledge with a pointed belay seven feet above it. From here the route is upwards and slightly to the right on a bilberry-tufted crack. Stance with belay seven feet above. Thence straight up for about 30 feet to a small rock ledge. From the left of the ledge, one goes straight up the wall above, landing just to the right of a small ash tree. The last few feet from the ledge are very severe and exposed, and should not be attempted if the rock is at all damp. This pitch can be avoided by traversing round the arête on the right. Rubbers advised.

Joas Route. First ascent G.G.M. and A.B.R.

This climb is on the west side of Gimmer, between "Ash Tree Slabs" and "Asterisk." The start is 30 feet to the left of the cairn marking the A.T.S., from the top of a grassy bank, and follows the crest more or less.

(1) Starting from the bank, a slanting crack was followed

up and to the right, for 20 feet. Continuing up to the left, and then to the right, a small stance was reached 35 feet from the start, at the foot of a smooth overhanging slab. Two belays were found.

(2) Moving to the left a good incut ledge was used as a handhold, till an awkward movement up to the left brought better holds within reach. In 15 feet a ledge was attained. From here the slabs on the left were climbed for another 15-20 feet to a large ledge which is also part of A.T.S. route.

No suitable belay was found, but by climbing 15 feet up the latter route, a good spike was reached. (This encroachment on another climb was justified by the complete safety ensured).

(3) From the left of this shelf the climb went up a slab on the left, to the left of a corner, on diminishing holds, then good holds till, in 40 feet, a thread belay under a large block was reached.

(4) A traverse of 10 feet across grooves to the left was made to the crest of the arête, which was climbed until the last portion was turned, and the slabs on the right were climbed by means of thin cracks. The top was reached in 50 feet, a spike belay on rocks 30 feet across the turf was used for this pitch.

Total length about 150-160 feet. Rubbers advised.

The following is the key to the initials used :—

H. M. Kelly	G. Basterfield
H. G. Knight	F. Graham
W. G. Standring	Miss K. Ward
A. B. Reynolds	G. M. Wellburn
G. G. Macphee	J. Coulton
W. Eden-Smith	Miss H. M. Murray
F. G. Heap	A. R. Thomson
H. S. Gross	L. H. Pollitt

LONDON SECTION

LIST OF OFFICERS :

President : Dr. C. F. Hadfield.

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer : G. R. Speaker.

Members of Committee :

W. P. Haakett-Smith.	J. B. Wilton.
J. W. Brown.	R. S. T. Chorley.
H. F. Huntley.	R. H. Hewson.
Miss D. Thompson.	G. C. L. Pirkis.

The activities of the London Section were greatly favoured by the excellent weather conditions which obtained practically throughout the year. The leaders, in all cases, managed to conduct their walks through some of the most charming environs of London, in spite of the unceasing encroachment of suburban London and the surrounding country, which renders footpath rambling more and more difficult of achievement. The attendances throughout were good. The following is a list of the walks :—

- Sunday, November 13th, 1927—Led by R. H. Hewson. Fifteen members attended. On a sunny day over hard, frozen ground, from Hatfield via Essenden, Little Berkhamstead, Bayford, back to Hatfield (by banks of River Lea).
- Sunday, December 11th, 1927—Dinner walk, led by G. Anderson. (A dull, cold and windy day.) Forty members (country and friends) attended. A circular walk from Virginia Water through the Great Windsor Forest, via Sunningdale, back to Virginia Water.
- Sunday, January 22nd, 1928—Led by G. C. L. Pirkis. A round walk from Redhill via Nutfield, Tilburstowe, Leigh Place, Tandridge, Rook's Nest, Quarry Farm, Gravelley Hill, Brewer Street and back to Redhill. A distance of about 16 miles.
- Sunday, February 19th, 1928—Led by A. F. Godwin. From Tring, via Ivinghoe Hills and Dunstable Downs, to Luton. An excellent walk over the Downs on a cloudless day at which 14 members attended.
- Sunday, March 18th, 1928—Led by G. R. Speaker. From Farnham via Frensham Ponds, Devils Jumps, Hyde Farm, and the Devil's Punch Bowl to Haslemere. Favoured by perfect weather. Eleven members attended.
- Sunday, April 22nd, 1928—Led by Gervase Smith. A circular walk from Stevenage, returning to Stevenage for tea.

- Sunday, May 13th, 1928—Led by Dr. C. F. Hadfield. From Westerham through Squerries Park, Toys Hill, Goathurst Common, River Hill to Sevenoaks. Although the day was cloudy and cool, the walk leading through beautiful country rising up to 800 feet and including beech and hornbeam woods as well as the fine grounds of Wanstead Manor, was greatly enjoyed by the 13 members who attended.
- Saturday, June 2nd, 1928—A midnight walk was led by F. M. Coventry from Dorking over the Downs via Peaslake to Gomshall, on a perfect moonlight night, which terminated with an excellent breakfast at the Hurtwood Inn, Peaslake. Four other members attended.
- Sunday, June 24th, 1928—Led by A. F. Godwin. A walk of nearly 16 miles from Hitchin through Priory Park, Offley Holes, Pinnacle Hill, Lilley Hoo, Deacon Hill, to Hitchin. An excellent walk on a perfect warm and sunny day over the northern spurs of the Chilterns. Fourteen members attended.
- Sunday, September 16th, 1928—Led by Miss Dorothy Thompson. An excellent walk through the Beechwoods from West Wycombe, Wheeler End, Pheasant's Hill, back through Hambledon to Henley, at which 21 members attended.
- Sunday, October 28th, 1928—Led by Mrs. Morin. A loop walk from Tonbridge Wells including the Harrison Rocks and High Rocks; sandstone rock faces which give short face and crack climb of considerable technical difficulty and much strenuousness—a new departure for the London Section.

The Ninth Annual Dinner was held on Saturday, November 24th, at the Hotel Cecil, W. P. Haskett-Smith being in the chair. The guests of honour were the Rt. Hon. H. P. MacMillan, K.C., and Dr. Dale, F.R.S. There were a number of other guests and a good muster of members, though not so many northerners as we could have wished. Burnett, however, nobly rushed down from "far Dumfries" to be with us and brought with him something of the atmosphere of the Fells.

The Dinner walk next day was led by R. S. T. Chorley, from Amersham back to Amersham by way of Cole Hill, Sere Green, Chalfout. Thirty-six members and friends sat down to tea.
