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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE MEETS AT WASTDALE AND PEN-Y-GWRYD.

THE glorious summer of 1898 has passed away, and the first meets of the Climbers' Club are now but pleasant memories to those who gathered together at the well-known centres of Wastdale and Pen-y-Gwryd. From either place come reports of new ascents, but the old climbs still retain their popularity, and the majority of climbers appear to prefer trying some well-known gully or face to striking out new routes for themselves.

That this should be the case among the Cumbrian hills is scarcely surprising; indeed, there, where every chasm has received a name, and every needle and pillar is, figuratively speaking, dotted with routes, it is difficult for anyone who is not an expert to make a first ascent. Many of our finest rock-climbers have devoted themselves to the district for years, and anything that has successfully resisted their constant attention may be reckoned extremely severe. But it is not so in Wales. The Cambrian hills have not undergone the systematic examination that has been accorded to their English rivals, and even on Snowdon itself there are numerous gullies about which little or nothing is known. A striking instance of this is Clogwyn dur Arddhu, the magnificent precipice along the top of which the pony track from the Snowdon Ranger Railway Station zig-zags up towards Y-Wyddfa. If this precipice were situated within easy walking distance of Wastdale Head, it would probably have a literature of its own; even the chimneys that lead from the upper part of the Eastern Gully to the summit of the great central buttress would have been numbered or named; but as it is, it suffers from an ill-deserved neglect, and is comparatively unknown. In Mr. Haskett Smith's excellent little volume on "Climbing in Wales," Clogwyn dur Arddhu is mentioned only as the scene of an accident that there befell an unlucky tourist who had mistaken his way, and slipped and was killed while attempting to scale in the dark crags that require the greatest care even in daylight. And as it is with Clogwyn dur Arddhu, so it is also on many other Welsh precipices. Not that it by any means follows that the absence of a written description implies an unattempted climb. The frequenters of Pen-y-Gwryd have a strange aversion to putting their experiences into writing. Many of them resolutely decline to make even the shortest

entry in the special book provided at the inn for the purpose; and although persistent inquiries will sometimes result in a verbal description being given, all efforts to obtain a detailed account are usually futile.

The gathering at Wastdale Head, although fairly good, was not quite so large a one as had been expected. Among those present were: Messrs. T. Brushfield, G. D. Barton, C. W. Barton, H. W. Blunt, A. W. Davey, J. H. Davey, A. W. Lambert, J. W. Robinson, and C. H. Thompson. The weather was favourable for climbing, and a lot of good work was done.

On September 10th, Messrs. H. W. Blunt, J. H. Doncaster, and J. W. Robinson made an ascent of the west wall of Deep Ghyll to the north of the Great (Blake's) Chimney. This is a new ascent. The start was made from the Deep Ghyll traverse at a point some 20 yards beyond the top of the right-hand escape from the top pitch in Deep Ghyll. A deeply recessed vertical chimney of about 40 feet is followed by a couple of rock steps (some 15 feet) to a ledge. Some ten yards along this an apparently easy traverse was neglected in favour of a slightly overhanging corner. On surmounting and rounding this the climb continued to the left up rock shelves, and still left past a detached slab (which from Deep Ghyll seems to be a rock post) to the foot of a rather undercut inclined pinnacle. When the top of this was reached, a rock shelf led to a small recess, from which the climb could be finished direct up the *arête*, or by a traverse to the left to and along the edge of Blake's Chimney. Both finishes were taken. The west wall had hitherto been climbed only by the Great Chimney, and by an open route rather nearer the head of Deep Ghyll.

Another good climb was that of Greta Ghyll, by Mr. C. H. Thompson with Messrs. W. H. Fowler and J. Grahame, on September 23rd, after a short spell of wet weather. The lower falls were all easily passed on the right. The real difficulties began near the head of the ghyll, at a cave pitch which was rendered unpleasant by the stream flowing over it, and still more so by a shower bath from a height of some hundred feet on the right-hand wall. This pitch was climbed by working out on the left from the cave. A few yards further led to a couple of pitches which were the feature of the climb. The first of these, some 15 feet high, led to an inclined shelf which affords a resting-place for three or four people, but no shelter from falling stones. It was gained by the cleft on the right. From this cleft the shelf soon became a vertical chimney, and ended in a small cave some 65 feet above, egress from which was obtained on the right-hand wall. The 70 feet from the shelf to the finish had to be climbed throughout by the leader unassisted. The difficulty of these

itches was much increased by the flow of water, occasional looseness of holds, and also by loose stones of considerable size on the top of the cave. As a piece of rock scenery this ghyll is magnificent, quite of the same type as that of Piers Ghyll, but under the conditions found by this party it scarcely sounds an attractive climb.

Of course, there were many other climbs, but they do not appear to require any special comment. Deep Ghyll, Moss Ghyll, The Pike's Crag Gullies, and Kern Knotts Chimney, all received a full share of attention.

It was Pen-y-Gwryd that the greater number of our members chose for their rendezvous. In the early days of August they began to gather, and for many weeks reinforcements were constantly arriving. Indeed, it was not until September was just drawing to a close that the numbers began to diminish. Those who were present included Messrs. C. A. O. Baumgartner, G. B. Bryant, J. N. Burrows, W. E. Corlett, J. R. Dakyns, E. C. Daniel, J. B. Farmer, T. S. Halliday, F. Marples, C. M. Mathews, J. Moore, J. Morland, W. Piffe-Brown, W. H. Price, C. Sayle, F. C. Squance, M. K. Smith, J. M. A. Thomson, R. Williams, and T. Williams.

Merely to state that the weather was good would give an inadequate impression of the way the first meet of the club was favoured by the elements, those pitiless enemies that usually contest with the climber each inch of the Welsh mountains. Some were there who have spent a long series of summers at the foot of Snowdon; one, indeed, who can even reckon back to those far-off days when the inn lacked the historic interest that now forms one of the bonds of union between those who frequent it; but not one could unhesitatingly make a comparison unfavourable to 1898, as, except for two short spells of heavy rain, the whole period of the meet was an unbroken succession of sunny days.

With such weather it followed that there was a considerable amount of work done. The Tryfan gullies afforded some interesting days' climbing, as they could at last be done "clean" in another sense than the one usually applied to the word by those who ascend them, while Clogwyn-y-Person, the gullies up Esgairfelen, and the north faces of Lliwedd and of Crib Goch—climbs that very few years ago were rarely attempted, but that now have become almost hackneyed—each attracted several parties.

The gullies that run from the summit ridge of Snowdon into Pant-y-Llwhfa were carefully and thoroughly explored by Messrs. M. K. Smith, J. M. A. Thomson, R. Williams, and T. Williams. Seven in all were climbed, and it seems extremely probable that at least two of these had never before been ascended. As each contains

several pitches (some very severe), space will not permit of their being detailed now, but the whole seven may very likely be made the subject of a separate article in a later number.

On September 28th a party of two examined the gullies at the extreme base of the northern *arête* of Crib-Goch. A few hundred feet above Pont-y-Cromlech, almost immediately opposite the Tower on the side of Glyder Fawr, this *arête* ends in a nose that in general appearance is not unlike the base of Clogwyn-y-Person, although upon close acquaintance the rock proves to be of a very different character. The resemblance is further increased by there being on each side of the nose a well-marked gully, and by these gullies uniting at the top. From the loose rocks and *débris*, and from the entire absence of nail marks even at the lower pitches, it was inferred that neither of these gullies had been climbed. The conditions under which they were examined were decidedly unfavourable, one of the few wet days of the season having been chosen for the purpose, and consequently neither was ascended. They become somewhat steep towards the top, but on a fine day would probably offer good climbing without being extremely difficult.
