



This extract from a Climbers' Club Journal contains only articles/photographs where the copyright now belongs to the Climbers' Club.

It is provided in electronic form for your personal use and cannot be used for commercial profit without seeking permission from the Climbers' Club.

© Copyright 2010

NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE.

On 1st January five Geneva Tourists—A. Chouet, A. Hirschi, E. Ferrand, A. Clerc, and A. Lenormand—started from the village of Leytron at 10.15 a.m. to ascend to the Rambert Hut (7,500 feet). They were accompanied by Placide Arragoni, a porter of Leytron, who had assisted in the construction of the hut, and who was consequently well acquainted with the ascent. The mountaineers had sufficient provisions for several days, but appear not to have been suitably equipped for a winter ascent. The weather was cloudy, and owing to the unfavourable condition of the snow progress was very slow. When near the Saille Hut, Arragoni suggested the desirability of returning to Leytron, and upon the tourists declining to accept his advice, he at once disclaimed in writing any further responsibility for the expedition. At about 10.0 p.m., when about 450 feet below the Rambert Hut, Lenormand, who was leading, fell down in the snow and told his companions that one of his feet was frozen and he could proceed no farther. After an ineffectual attempt to restore feeling to the limb, the others decided to continue the ascent, so, leaving one of their number with Lenormand, they proceeded to the hut, which was reached at 10.30. Arragoni then went down and fetched up the tourist who had remained behind, and subsequently made another journey for the purpose of taking covering and provisions to the unfortunate Lenormand, who, they decided, would have to pass the night in the open. A snow storm had been in progress for some hours, and at midnight, when Arragoni regained the hut, the wind was so violent that they feared the roof of their shelter would be blown away.

Next morning the porter expressed his intention of going down to the valley for help. This was opposed by the tourists, but finding he was determined they allowed him to have his own way, and eventually Clerc resolved to accompany him. When they reached Lenormand they found him none the worse for his exposure, but still unable to move. He told them he was all right, and could wait until assistance arrived; this, as had been arranged, was signalled by means of a horn to his companions in the hut. Chouet, Hirschi and Ferrand say that during the next two days they made several attempts to reach their comrade, but were unable to do so on account of the wind.

On the 4th January, when the storm abated sufficiently for them to make the descent, they found no trace of Lenormand, who was completely buried under deep snow. Arragoni, as soon as he arrived at Leytron, organised rescue parties, but no ascent could be made until it was too late to render any assistance to the unfortunate man.

Our authority for the above is the "Alpina," the journal of the Swiss Alpine Club. Comment and criticism on the conduct of Lenormand's companions are, we think, quite unnecessary.

* * * *

A correspondent sends particulars of two caves which he thinks may prove useful to any member finding himself in the neighbourhood of Geneva during bad weather. One is the Grotte des trois Feés. It is situated east by south of Archamp, on the south-west side of the buttress at the north-east end of the main scree slope of Mount Piton. The entrance is behind a block leaning against the rock and lodged on a ledge about eight feet above the top of the screes. The other, name unknown, is west by south of Collonge, on Mount Saleve. There is a depression in the face of the rock, the face being of a lighter colour here than the general tone of the mountain. The entrance is at the bottom of this depression, and is best approached from the west until just below the level of the entrance.

Either of the above gives a good day's underground climbing, and takes eight to ten hours. Old clothes are advisable, and plenty of candles necessary. Details of these caves were some time ago unobtainable either in Geneva or in the villages.

* * * *

The following is a copy of a recent entry in the Wastdale Head Book (page 174) :—

"Kern Knotts crack (see page 150) was ascended by Miss Nicholls on 21st April, 1899. She climbed up to the niche without help; then I followed and joined her there. She determined to try getting up by herself, so she went up to the second jammed stone without assistance, but was then too tired to proceed, and came back to the niche. After resting, she made a second attempt, taking a shoulder from me, and then went on to the top. I then descended from the niche and went round to the chimney, which I ascended, and I joined her at the big boulder. I may mention that Miss Nicholls has once before been up the crack (last year), but on that occasion she did not lead.—O.E."

A correspondent suggests that this seems to show the applicability to Lakeland rocks of Mummery's oft quoted observation, "Every mountain appears to pass through several stages. At first it is inaccessible, then it is the most difficult climb in the Alps, and finally it becomes an easy day for a lady." But we cannot agree with this. Miss Nicholls is a rock gymnast of unusual ability, who has made many ascents that few of either sex would consider "easy." Kern Knotts crack is a climb of most forbidding appearance. The face of rock in which it is is practically smooth and unbroken and almost vertical, consequently at times (more particularly between the niche and the second jammed stone, where the crack is so narrow that the climber's body is outside) it is rather nerve destructive—to people who have nerves. Messrs. C. W. Patchell, E. V. Mather, and John Simpson, who watched the first ascent, which was achieved by one of the best-known of our Cumberland climbers on April 23rd, 1896, described it in the *Wastdale Head Book* as a marvellous exhibition of strength and skill. We may mention that upon this occasion the climber, not having the certain knowledge that the route was a practicable one, wisely took the precaution of having a rope lowered from the great block at the top of the Chimney, but this was simply as a safeguard and not in any way used to assist the climber.

* * * *

A contributor is preparing a paper on *Lake District Guide Books* from a mountaineering point of view. In order that it may be made as comprehensive as possible, we shall be glad if all members who can give any information on the subject will communicate with the Editor. In Mr. Frederick Hutt's *Index* we can only find one mentioned—"Mountain Ascents in Westmoreland and Cumberland," by J. Barrow, 1886—but there must have been many published before that date.

* * * *

Mr. Hutt's *Index*, or rather *Catalogue of Mountaineering Literature*, is an exceedingly useful and interesting publication. It is constantly under revision, and the last copy we have received contains a list of 408 volumes all devoted to mountaineering. It will be sent free of charge to any member who will take the trouble to apply to Mr. Frederick Hutt, Bookseller, Clement's Inn Passage, Strand, W.C.

*The Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL,**6th March, 1899.*

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Gotch (page 71), raises the question of the appropriateness of the word "crazy," as applied to the Crib Goch Pinnacle. It seems to me—looking at it from an etymological point of view—a very happy name.

Crazy (in early modern English also *crazie*, *crasie*, or *crasig*) is derived from *craze*, together with the suffix *y*. The latter is a common suffix used to form adjectives from nouns and verbs (as in hilly, icy, rocky, rainy, stony, wary, etc.). *Craze*, noun, is from *craze*, verb; the latter (in early modern English also *crase*) was in middle English, *crasen*, from the Swedish *krasa* (crackle or break). The French word *écraser* is derived from the same root.

The original meaning of *craze*, verb, is to break, shatter, crack, flaw, e.g., Milton, *Paradise Lost*, XII., 210:

"God looking forth will trouble all His host,
And craze their chariot wheels."

And Lily, *Euphnes, Anatomy of Wit*, p. 58:

"The glasse once *crased*, will with the least clappe be cracked."

The meaning "weak of body or intellect" (given by Mr. Gotch) is a later derived one.

Yours very faithfully,

"OLD ETYMOLOGY."