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CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,

Pardon the garrulity of an old man in venturing a few comments on your admirable journal. It was, sir, always customary in my young days to say 'admirable' on these occasions, and I hope you will allow me "*stare super antiquas vias.*" I remember Mr. Thackeray to have dwelt on the discomforts of an editor's lot, and if a single word (itself ambiguous) may give pleasure, why should it be withheld? I need hardly add, sir, that in your case it is appropriate. But my present purpose concerns itself more particularly with your December number, and if I touch first on the paper dealing with the sad accident on the Dent Blanche it is not in any spirit of cavil or to cast my old-world stone at that eminent votary of the New Mountaineering who lost his life there (for the evidence seems to me to acquit Mr. Owen Glynne Jones of rashness), but merely to ask what precisely is meant by the description of the rope (see foot of p. 82) "as burst rather than as broken." My impression has always been that "burst" differed very little from "break," except that with "burst" there is generally a notion of explosion from within, or, if the breakage occur from outside influence, the behaviour of the contents of the broken vessel is a matter on which the mind is solicitous.

You will no doubt remind me that Sly was called to account by the hostess for "the glasses he had burst," where no notion of explosion from within obtains, and I fear I

cannot take shelter under a plea that the mind of Sly was solicitous for the contents, since we may rest assured that any contents had been safely disposed of before Sly burst the glasses. By the way, had not he a legitimate grievance against a hostess who offered him glass to drink from? for Falstaff's commendation "Glasses, glasses is the only drinking" suffers much from the fact that the tankards he makes light of were to be pawned to supply his needs.

Scott, in his "Legend of Montrose," tells of many fat burgesses who broke their wind in the flight from Tippermuir, and makes a point of quoting his "authority for a fact so singular:—*A great many burgesses were killed—many were bursten in the flight and died without stroke.* Baillie's *Letters*, Vol. II., p. 92." But of many miscreants from the days of Judas onward it has been said that they burst asunder in the midst, and no very clear idea of what actually occurred is conveyed. We get in any case little help as to our burst rope.

There is a quotation which must certainly appear in your Journal in this connexion, for was it not written in the Book of Pen-y-gwryd, in the verses contributed by Charles Kingsley, Tom Taylor and Tom Hughes? One of the Toms writes:—

"But my poor name-sake's breeches
 You never see the like,
 He burst 'em all so shameful
 A-crossing of a dyke,
 But Mrs. Owen mended 'em
 As careful as a mother,
 With flannel of three colours—
 'She hadn't got no other.'"

I quote, alas! from memory of the original, which no honest eye has seen these 40 years.

What shall be said, Sir, of the paper wherein Mr. Leslie Stephen is referred to as "chief among the mad votaries of climbing." It is some years certainly since Mr. Stephen's charming papers appeared, and many things that were at that time accounted mad have since been freely done: but I had

no idea that the wheel had come full circle and the sober men of 30 years ago were accounted as the madmen of to-day. And indeed I would ask whether a *mad votary of climbing* be not a contradiction in terms? We must not blame light-hearted youth for its ready jest and even its too easy pun, and I am the more charitable that I did the author an injustice, for having never heard of parties carrying rum in the Alps I feared it was intended to lead up—but I ask pardon, Sir, for the nefarious thought.

May I say how heartily I have welcomed the poetry you have given us, and with what pleasure I have recognized the high level of merit that has been maintained? Not many verses devoted to sport have been written which have equalled Mr. Godley's "Ode on a very distant prospect." A poem framed in a facetious mould—that deals with mountaineering boots, with eating mule and marmot, with corpulence and gout, and yet is never trivial and never far from seriousness, but keeps firmly the *arête* whence we know not at each moment whether we shall fall a-laughing or let fall a tear, is worthy of all praise. I naturally recall the line—

"Though the hand of time be heavy; though your
ancient comrades fail"

and I like the generous amplitude of meaning that lurks in the word "fail." Are those ancient comrades too busy for the mountains? are they married? or otherwise estranged? or is the failure the less sad one of breaking health? but I would plead that the tasks set for all ancient comrades may be not above their strength: may allow us to rejoice in Borrowdale or Moel Wnion, or even that "land of brown heath and shaggy wood" that stretches northwards from the Spaniards Road at Hampstead. And at length when the days of our pilgrimage are ended and we walk indeed through the Valley may we, like the original Pilgrim, find the Delectable Mountains beyond.

Your obedient

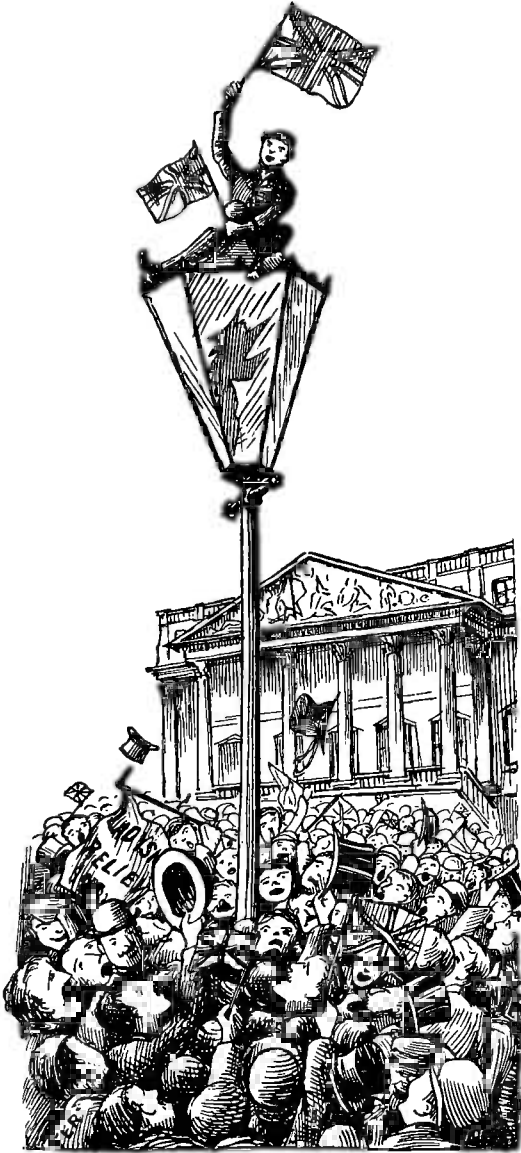
16th April, 1900.

SENEC.

To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.
A NEW CLIMB.

SIR,

It has long been a source of grief to climbers living in the south that there are no climbs within easy distance of London. I should like to call the attention of the members of the Climbers' Club to the fact that a problem of considerable merit has recently been discovered in the city itself, and was climbed for the first time on March 1st, by a gentleman whose name I have been unable to learn, though I was an admiring witness of his ascent, and able to obtain a sketch of the finish. I trust if this gentleman is a member of



the Club, he will not allow his modesty to keep us in ignorance of the fact, and that he will excuse my having, somewhat presumptuously, taken upon myself to describe his climb. The new climb is situated in front of the Mansion House, and cannot well be overlooked when approaching either by Cheapside or Queen Victoria Street. It is within five minutes of at least six railway stations, and is sure to be popular.

The problem was attacked on March 1st by a party of two, the second man starting when the leader had reached the summit. No rope was used. The leader swarmed up the lower part of the climb, and, standing on tip-toe on the hold immediately under the overhanging boulder, was just able to grasp the knob on the summit, and skilfully drew himself up over the overhanging portion, till he was able to seat himself on the top—a remarkably neat performance when the unreliable nature of the rock and the scarcity of holds is considered.

He was greeted with enthusiastic cheers from the spectators, the neighbourhood being rather crowded on that occasion. The second man was unable to pass the overhanging boulder, and, having put his head through the climb, and sent down a quantity of loose material, he wisely gave up the attempt.

Future climbers should endeavour to avoid certain rather obtrusive hand-holds which they will find at the base of the climb.

Yours truly,

F. E. R.

To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

LONDON, *30th March, 1900.*

DEAR SIR,

I am exceedingly pleased to see the announcement of the Committee's intention to carry out the suggestion made by C. S. in his letter to the Journal of February, 1899, and that consequently those of our members who frequent the Wastwater and Pen-y-Gwryd Hotels will in future have

barometers, books, maps, boot-irons and other climbers' requisites placed at their disposal.

I sincerely hope that the Committee's efforts in this direction will meet with such appreciation that they will be induced to continue the good work they have commenced, and fit other climbing centres in a similar manner.

Surely a convenient Hotel can be found in the Cader Idris district and appointed as an efficient headquarters. Cader seems to be greatly neglected, although those of us who have visited that neighbourhood can vouch for the excellence of the climbing to be obtained there.

I would also suggest Sligachan Inn as a centre for the Committee's consideration, were I not afraid that any action in that direction might excite the Scottish Mountaineering Club into hostility.

Yours truly,

ONE OF THE RANK AND FILE.

To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

NOTTINGHAM, 20th March, 1900.

SIR,

From conversation with the late Harry Owen I understood that the Pig Track was the one leading to Bwlch Moch—Pigs' Gap—as pointed out by Mr. Dakyns in the December number of the Journal. It seems to me, however, that what is wanted is the origin of the term Bwlch Moch. I have made some enquiries, but have not been able to obtain a thoroughly satisfactory answer. At Christmas I was told that formerly a number of pigs were kept in Cwm Dyli, near Llyn Llydaw, and that, to reach the Pass of Llanberis, they were driven through Bwlch Moch. On the face of it this seems feasible, but the question comes—Is it true?

Yours truly,

E. R. KIDSON.