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KYNDWR CLUB NOTES.

THE exploration of the Peak Cavern, or the Devil's Hole, at Castleton, was carried out, as announced, on 1st March. Several important discoveries were made, for which the chief credit must be awarded to Mr. J. W. Puttrell, who, with the able assistance of Mr. Robert McCrum and Mr. G. F. R. Freeman, made full preliminary investigations, so that the work was practically marked out in detail for the Kyndwrites. The explorers left Peak Hotel on Saturday, the 1st, at 5 p.m., and returned between the hours of one and two on Sunday morning. The first operation was to work out a passage, which Puttrell had discovered in Cave Dale, giving access to the "Choir" or "Orchestra." Puttrell was tied on to a 130 feet rope, but, as a matter of fact, was able to climb most of the way down the nearly vertical chimney or enclosed gully, which in places was only a foot wide. This is the first and only point of communication with the outside world that has yet been discovered, other than the cave mouth.

Martel, in his exploration in the nineties, marks down on his chart an aven or shaft in the roof of the vestibule. Puttrell suspected this shaft would lead to some galleries, probably existing above the roof, and, on investigation, found a stalactitic chamber at a height of 60 feet. We now ascended by ladders into this chamber, and climbed 20 feet further, but were unable to squeeze through the only apparent exit. The stalactites in this chamber make by far the finest and the largest display yet found in Peak Cavern.

At a late hour, the exploring party went through the whole extent of the known caves to the "Victoria Hall," a narrow cavern, immensely high, the top of which is said to be connected with the outer air somewhere 600 feet above. A

balloon was sent up, and was lost to sight behind a corner in the walls, and some 200 feet above the floor, but returned in 15 minutes with the spirits burnt out. Rockets were fired into the cavity with little result. Mr. Bamforth, with a powerful limelight, illuminated the enormous rift overhead, and photographs were taken.

Now began the most interesting stage of the work. At the bottom of the "Victoria Hall," on Martel's chart, an opening is marked "siphon," leading no one knew whither. Through this "siphon" we were now called upon to make a passage, a skiff being in readiness. The passage was a wet one, but not difficult. Instead of a siphon we found two cavernous tunnels, with a wider cave between, both nearly full of water. We got the boat safely through the first tunnel, two men embarking at a time, and lying flat on their backs to avoid contact with the roof, which, however, scraped their noses. The boat could not be forced to the end of the second tunnel, and every man had to wade through mud and water for the last few yards. Beyond this, the cave extended in a general horizontal direction for nearly two hundred yards, with one branch; then we came apparently to the end of everything. In the branching passage a large swallow was discovered, and Freeman was let down into it on the rope, finding deep water, but no visible outlet, at a depth of 30 feet. Curious testimony to the presence of man at some forgotten period, was discovered in this part of the cavern. The first object was a wooden sled, apparently used for carrying ore; the second was a yard or two of rough wall or embankment, built up in courses of rude stones, as if by miners. No record has been discovered of any mining operations, nor of any previous visit to this part of the cave. All has been forgotten.

Dr. Jameson obtained some specimens of living organisms in the cave, which may prove interesting, and certainly show marked peculiarities, as compared with those inhabiting the Speedwell Cavern.

Altogether, there was more variety of interest than in any of the previous cave explorations undertaken by the Club,

the mixture of scansorial and aquatic methods causing much diversion. Some of the climbs can be characterised only as "mud climbs," and, as a sporting variety, are not to be recommended. Several men undressed for the final operations, but whether they came off better, thus accoutred, than those who plunged in with clothes on, is a doubtful point.

