



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

REVIEWS.

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTOR. By J. I. PIGG, F.R.M.S.,
F.R.P.S.

DURING the war in South Africa a general noted for his forcefulness of expression came across a well-known correspondent and thus cheerily accosted him: "Well, Ananias, I see you have brought a camera with you to give an air of verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unattractive lie." To which the unabashed correspondent replied: "Yes, general, and had I known that you were coming along I should most certainly have brought a phonograph also."

Now, the climber must often have felt the need of photographic aid, not, we will hope, for *precisely* the reason above-mentioned, but as a help to lift his story out of those realms of unveracity where tales of the dog and the fish reign supreme. But from the purely artistic and topographical standpoint the camera is of incalculable value to the climber. Probably no class of scenery pays the photographer so well for his trouble as the mountains. The breadth of landscape, the ever-varying effects of cloud, light, and shade, and the diversity of form, make continuous demands on his skill, and, above all, the associations connected with every arête, gully or glacier sweeten the tedium of the dark room and keep green throughout all the working months of the year the memories of friends and incident with which every climbing holiday is so abundantly stored.

The novice seeking instruction, or the more proficient in search of new methods, will find the work under discussion admirably adapted to their several necessities. The opening chapter gives a short but interesting historical survey of the discovery and rise of photography which will make entertaining

reading even for those who do not intend to practice the art. In the chapter dealing with apparatus and plates, etc., a useful innovation is made in attempting to give the reader some idea of the cost of outfit. After the first parts of the book dealing with the rudiments as required by the tyro, are chapters giving an extended account of the various developers, followed by articles dealing with enlarging, lantern slides, photo-micrography, stereoscopic photography, process and collotype work, X-ray, colour, and pinhole photography. This latter process has the merit of requiring only cheap apparatus, and, owing to the fact that it renders perspective with great correctness is deserving of greater attention at the hands of mountain photographers. The last chapter is devoted to a more scientific disquisition on the optics of photography, and at the end of the book are tables for the conversion of the English system of weights and measures into a metric system, and *vice versa*. It would be a great improvement in future editions if the formulae were quoted in the two systems side by side. It is now possible to obtain in London weights and measures on the metric system quite cheaply, and in view of the present agitation for the abolishment of our present cumbrous system, it would be of great educational value. All photographers who make up their solutions on the metric system bear testimony to its convenience in manipulation.

The author sometimes lacks "insistence." He should remember, for instance, that the photographic novice (during his novitiate) is subjected to many distractions, and is apt not to realise the vital value of the advice "wash thoroughly." The point should be driven in upon him "ad nauseum," especially when dealing with such somewhat subsidiary processes as intensification. It would be as well also to point out the chemical differences between substances with somewhat similar names, as potassium ferro and ferri cyanide, mercurous and mercuric chloride.

The book has ten full page process blocks, on art paper, from negatives by the author, and the body of the work is well provided with good illustrations of apparatus, but on page 35

there is a weird thing labelled dark room lamp, which is strangely reminiscent of those pigs that, in our childhood days, we used to delight to draw with our eyes shut.

Up-to-date photographers will notice two curious omissions, no mention is made of glass vignetting shades or of pulp slabs for glazing prints.

Considering its two hundred and twenty pages of clearly-printed matter, the book makes a very good shilling's worth.

W. P. M.

MOORS, CRAGS AND CAVES OF THE HIGH PEAK AND NEIGHBOURHOOD. By ERNEST A. BAKER. (John Heywood, Manchester.)

PROBABLY there was no part of the country for which a guide was more wanted than for Derbyshire. The deep, narrow valleys and the rather featureless uplands see little of each other, and are almost equally deluding to the stranger. Even those who have acquired a general working acquaintance with the country, are apt to discover, from time to time, strange and unsuspected gaps in their knowledge, as the present reviewer has more than once had reason to know. The good things—and from the climber's point of view there *are* good things in the peak country—have a singular trick of lurking coily in holes and corners, so that the stalwart and impetuous climber strides swiftly, and perhaps scornfully, past something but a few yards away, which needs only to be seen to be warmly approved. It must be admitted that the climbs are small, and a small climb looks still smaller when the climber has measured many miles in his endeavours to reach it. Indeed, one party of hardened mountaineers, whose sense of proportion had been terribly blunted by expeditions among big ranges, declared that, in Derbyshire, for every twenty feet of climbing they were made to do twenty miles of walking.

This is perhaps an over-statement, but Mr. Baker himself has to admit that his pet climbs "hardly ever exceed a hundred feet in height." Of the material of which the best climbs are composed, he very justly says—"the merits of gritstone are well known equally to millers and to climbers. It is solid and firm as the soundest granite, and inferior only to the gabbro of Skye as an instrument of torture, if you happen to get your hand between the rope and the rock." Once, after a day's climb with Mr. Baker, my hands struck me as looking rather cut about, and I had the curiosity to count up the number of places where blood had been drawn from the backs between knuckles and wrist. One hand showed 96 of such places, and the other 121. It is true that nearly all were pinpricks, so small that only tiny red beads formed on them, but each hand had about half a dozen very respectable gashes as well. This great roughness allows of climbing methods which would be out of the question on almost any other kind of rock. You can take liberties which ordinary rock would resent, and for this reason gritstone is not good practice for a beginner. Just as Mummery claimed for chalk, that its difficulty and treachery were likely to make a careful climber, so we may say of easy rocks like gritstone and dolomite that they tend to make men careless. Cases are not unknown where a climber has got into difficulties, and called his comrades to his assistance, declaring that he is on the point of falling, and can only hold on for a few seconds. They rush to catch him, and, when ready, tell him to let go and drop, and he then discovers that the rock, like the celebrated Tartar, refuses to part company, and simply will not allow him to fall. But what might harm the novice will not corrupt the principles of the seasoned climber, to whom the first taste of gritstone-climbing will bring instruction and much entertainment. For his benefit, Mr. Baker has, with some reluctance, prepared a list of climbs, graduated according to difficulty. We agree with him that these lists are not desirable. They tend to concentrate upon a few climbs, placed toward the end of the list, the attention which ought to be spread over the whole. Such lists encourage "cramming." If no lists were

given, men would do more of the climbs, and so gain a more liberal education. But Mr. Baker, keen climber as he is, has many other sources of enjoyment on the hills, and knows how to let his readers share in them. Take this description of Kinder Scout. "A long dark edge stretches east, crowned at intervals with oddly-shaped stacks and towers of swarthy grit. As I skirted the crags, ness after ness jutted out from the long, mountainous escarpment into the golden haze that shut out the world; and in the deep bays and coves between late fields of snow gleamed in the shadow and glistened in the sun. The russet hues and ruddy gold of the grass patches covered the fell side with warm colour, and when Nab Brow loomed dimly through the haze, seemed to stain the very air and the sunshine. Never did the Witch's Pool look more visionary—a patch of flashing blue, ethereal as a patch of sky. Then the black gorge of the Downfall opened beneath me, but the fall itself was shrunk to a jet of pellucid water, flinging prismatic tints on the crags that enfold it." Colour is here in almost Turneresque profusion. Stanage Edge is described in a more sober key. "Rifted and shaken by ancient frosts, with mighty blocks flung down the slopes, and mighty scars remaining to shew whence they were torn, this grand old bulwark still rises straight and solid as if it would endure the storms and frosts of untold centuries to come. It is built of the hardest grit that weathers slowly, presenting sharp edges instead of rounded, crumbly bosses; its huge rectangular masses look a wall built by Titans." In another place an uncommon snow-effect is happily hit off. "Never even in the mountains had we beheld such marvellous effects of snow and sunlight. A casual gust would send up a pillar of eddy white that caught the light splendidly before falling far over the fields. The hills and horizons were marked out in lines of living light, ribbons of light that whirled in perpetual motion, and were really whirling ribbons of snow lifted by the wind, and shot through and through with sunbeams. And then there were places where the sky's intense blue waned into grey and white, and the pure slopes of snow melted away ever so gently into a pure opaline

haze, so that no eye could tell the boundary of earth and heaven. But who shall describe the indescribable? That day was one of the ineffable days of creation, such as we only experience once now and again throughout the years, though its memory will often lure us away to the snowy moorlands on days when sober people are snuggling round the fire." Some of the less poetical passages are enlivened by touches of humour, and we get a charmingly crisp *genre* picture of climbers coming off a wintry moor to an inn where "each was admitted only after the courteous landlord had raked him fore and aft with a brushwood besom, and chopped the icicles off his whiskers with a huge pocket knife."

A good quarter of the book breaks new ground—or rather underground—which is beyond or beneath our ordinary ken. Both the subterranean and the open-air adventures are copiously illustrated, and the book will doubtless interest a very wide circle of readers. We congratulate the author on a very thorough piece of work.

W. P. H. S.



Photograph removed awaiting Copyright permission

THE PINNACLE OF CHOIRE ARDHOIRE.
From a photograph by Harold Raeburn.

