wall. With regard to Penhall's route up the western face. This is altogether inferior both in scenery and in point of safety. Penhall's route has apparently never been repeated. Messrs. Lammer and Lorria, it is true, made what Mr. Whymper calls a 'mad attempt' to ascend the Matterhorn by this route in 1887,* with results that were nearly fatally disastrous. They are said to have reached a point 'not very far from the top,' but I think could not have been less than 1,000 ft. below it. Their principal mistake appears to have been in not traversing to Mummery's route on the arête, when the ascent appeared impossible, instead of retreating down the western face in the afternoon. Any one who has lain on the Tiefenmatten face of the lower part of the ridge, and seen and heard the stones fall from the western face of the peak, would take good care not to expose himself to the risk of being caught there in the afternoon hours.

Herr Lorria's comment on the adventure seems to me a very just one. 'The lesson,' he says, 'to be learnt from our accident is not, "Always take guides," but rather, "Never try the Penhall route on the Matterhorn" except after a long series of fine hot days, for otherwise the western wall of the mountain is the most fearful mouse trap of the Alps.' †

The Alps.

By A. D. GODLEY.

(Read before the Alpine Club, February 5, 1907.)

CANDID friends have taken me to task for the too ambitious title of this paper. Who, they have asked me, am I, that I should lecture the Alpine Club on the Alps? and I need hardly say that the same question has occurred to myself. I can only plead my attitude of mind at the moment when the title was demanded of me. This address was not at that time actually written; and having before my mind the case of the essayist who was described as 'singularly unfettered by a given subject,' I feared that I might fall into his error if a too narrowly specified theme tempted me to stray outside it. Hence I chose a heading which at least allows a minimum of possibility of wandering from the point.

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xiii. p. 399.

† I wish to take the opportunity of thanking various friends, Messrs. Greenwood, Clark, Wilson, Priestman, Nettleton, and H. Walker, who either lent the negatives or allowed me the use of their slides.

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But in spite of its high-sounding description the part which this paper plays is really very humble. Everyone, I suppose, knows by experience the temper in which one eats that meal which reason pronounces to be necessary, yet cannot deny to be indigestible—the two o'clock A.M. breakfast. You come to it in darkness and secrecy, like a burglar. You eat it—at least until a few weeks' climbing has developed a kind of bestial appetite—not with desire, but as a man might pack a portmanteau; you eat with your loins girded, like the Israelites; with the consciousness, like them, that you are going on a long journey, and that before the Promised Land is reached you must stumble for an hour at least over boulder-strewn alps and familiar paths which the darkness has turned into a difficult and dangerous traverse. Yet you know that if you can weather the horrid meal and the succeeding perils, there is a place, high up on the moraine, where you will rest and see the sun mount over the eastern peaks; where you will feel that the worst is over and the best lies before you; and that there you will eat your second breakfast in tranquility and gladness of heart. This Paper is the first breakfast; Ruwenzori will be the second. I do not mean to imply that there will be the usual interval of two hours and a half.

I suppose the first and obvious thought of everyone when he is asked to read a paper before this Club (whether as a *lever de rideau* or otherwise) must be, that it is the proudest day of his life. The next and perhaps equally obvious reflection for myself personally was, that somehow or other the paper must be constructed; that after a number of years chequered by a great variety of hill-climbing expeditions there must be ample material; and the final conclusion of the whole matter seemed to be, that however enthralling the subjective interest of one's own personal experiences, their objective value to an audience was absolutely nil; and that, in short, I had nothing to say. I communicated this fact to the Secretary. He, with a promptitude obviously born of experience, replied by return of post that the less I said the better. He did not put it precisely in that form. He spoke of mountains regarded from some other point of view than that of the mere (I am pretty sure he said 'mere') climber or the commonplace explorer. This troubled me a little. From what other point of view can you regard a mountain? I cannot geologise; to photograph I am—incompetent. At one time I did think of reading a paper entitled 'Mountains which I Have Not Climbed or Explored,' and

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of hiring a set of slides illustrative of the Himalayas, the Caucasus, and the Breithorn. But eventually I thought I grasped the true inwardness of what the Secretary had said.

I appear, then, as a member of that class of perhaps not altogether respectable persons who ascend hills merely for pleasure. They have no particular principles, except the general maxim that it is better to be at the top of a hill than the bottom. They are not centrists nor excentrists; if they cannot have a peak, they will take a pass; if they cannot have a pass, they will be content with a glacier. Their object is to acquire such skill as will enable them to walk on steep places without danger to themselves and others. They are smatterers and general readers in an age of specialism; they are wedded to no dogmatic formulæ, but are simple, undenominational (may one say?) Cowper-Temple alpinists.

These are then mere Hedonists; and yet there is something to be said even for them. Their pursuit of pleasure is perhaps the less disreputable because they are in a sense martyrs. There are few to praise them. Within the circle of this Club they are regarded as lacking in seriousness and fixity of purpose, and that higher altruism which prompts to the increasing of knowledge by the ascent of untrodden peaks; mere voluptuaries, votaries of selfish pleasure. Outside, they are exposed to obloquy and detraction. To the public in general, which does not love mountains—except as a background to some scene of rational amusement—hill-climbing is either too difficult or too easy. Once it was too difficult, and Alpinists were condemned as bad citizens for their suicidal tendencies. Now, in general, the pendulum has swung the other way: it is too easy; with a vague consciousness of mountain railways—a distant recollection of *Tartarin sur les Alpes*—a hazy reminiscence of expressions perhaps used in the heat of the moment by members of this Club—with all this mass of imperfectly assimilated suggestion simmering in his mind, the uninterested outside critic is apt to conclude that mountaineering is a pastime where the facilities are too many and too obvious, and the need for personal exertion reduced to a minimum; and that on the whole a man who respects the dignity of human nature ought to be playing golf. Perhaps that is true. We are quite conscious of these variously unsympathetic attitudes; yet we persist in our vicious courses—being, as I said, mere voluptuaries, given over to self-indulgence and the gratification of appetite. And here the philosopher is confronted by what he must acknowledge to be a strange paradox. If we,

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being otherwise for the most part persons of moderate respectability, and not more obviously mad than other people, continue in these unremunerative pursuits merely for the sake of pleasure, and proclaim that our climbing days have been among the best days of our lives, we ought to be able at least to define that pleasure in an intelligible way.

It is every man's duty to attempt to arrive at truth. That is not easy in matters connected with mountains. Speaking (if one may say so) as an augur to augurs, one may confess that inaccurate statements have from time to time been made, and even printed. I have even heard mendacity and self-glorification described as part of the necessary equipment of a true Alpinist. Nevertheless, truth must be investigated. Now, if we are to take the aggregate of outside public opinion —if not 'quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,' yet what is held by most men at most times and in most places—we shall find that it speaks with no uncertain voice. I remember to have heard Mr. Edmund Gosse make an excellent speech when responding for the guests at the winter dinner of the Club. I shall always recollect his opening sentence, which claimed to interpret the real if unconfessed sentiments of the Alpine Club itself: 'I dislike,' he said, 'a mountain as much as any of you.' Mountains have only to be known to be disliked: and the Club, knowing them best, must dislike them most! A friend of my own, very highly placed in the University of Oxford, told me once that for him mountaineering held but two pleasurable moments—when you arrive at the top, and when you arrive (of course, voluntarily) at the bottom: nor did it appear that the sensual delights of the vanquished peak or the regained hotel were in themselves, for my friend, sufficient to balance the extreme agony incidental to the phases of existence preceding these two crises of achievement. Here, then, you have Literature and the Universities (for once) in agreement.

Any person of a candid and philosophic mind, not a mountaineer, must arrive at a like conclusion. The philosopher would say: Your expedition is made up of a series of acts which are either painful or unnatural or unnecessary or unremunerative, or (more commonly) all these at once. You get up at two in the morning—a thing horrible to imagine. Dragged or impelled by peasants of great strength and ferocious aspect, you ascend steep and slippery heights which no one will praise you for surmounting, while no sensible person would pity you if you fell. You eat and drink for the most part things from which at other times you would rightly

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recoil. Chicago supplies your viands, and the very name of your so-called wine proves it (if proof were needed) the legitimate successor of that vinegar with which Hannibal, the first Alpinist, is fabled to have split the rocks. You are exposed to excessive cold and excessive heat; to the botanist who delays your advance by searching for probably non-existent vegetables, and the photographer who nails you like Prometheus to the rock. Can a succession of incidents, in themselves painful, compose an aggregate of pleasure? Apparently, it can.

If I may be autobiographical for a moment, I should like to describe to the Club my initiation into its pastimes a good many years ago. Hills, at that time, held no special attractions for me. I had no friends at that time who knew or cared anything about the Alps. From reading the usual kind of conventional descriptions of mountain ascents I supposed that the climbers' choice lay invariably between the side of an overhanging precipice and the bottom of a fathomless crevasse. I recollected the perilous rock-and-glacier work which (according to Sir Walter Scott) menaces the incautious traveller on the route from Bâle to Lucerne. Altogether I do not suppose that a more crassly ignorant amateur than I was ever walked in a pair of improperly nailed boots. However, having been somehow imported into Switzerland, as I heard people talking about the so-called pastime of climbing, I thought I would demonstrate the futility of the thing *ambulando*. I therefore took to myself professionals and an alpenstock like 'the mast of some tall amiral'—the possession of an axe then implied some pretensions to being what is called an 'expert'—and thus equipped I set out to walk over the Adler pass from Zermatt to Mattmark. This seemed to be a good test, as Baedeker said it was wild and hazardous. We scaled those dizzy precipices; or rather, we walked and waded over leagues of very bad snow, which was naturally much more embarrassing to me than to the rest of the party. It was a misty day, and we saw no view. When we got to Mattmark my face felt a little hot after some eight hours of exposure to fresh snow, and I cooled it with very cold water (lanoline was not invented then). Over the agonies which my complexion endured some hours afterwards I can only draw a veil—and I remember wishing that I had drawn that veil before I started. Looking back on the cold details of that expedition, I can find nothing in it that a properly constituted mind could call enjoyable; yet I know very well that I seemed to myself to have discovered an entirely new

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and unmixed pleasure, and to have merely wasted all the years which I had spent outside Switzerland. I am almost ashamed to say how little I have changed my mind since then.

One cannot say what the pleasure is. It defies analysis into its agreeable or disagreeable parts. It appears to be independent of external accidents (the word is used in the logical sense); it exists on the Diablerets, which is as nearly flat as a mountain can be; it exists on the west face of the Pillar rock, which is not flat at all. Novelty is all very well. But however delightful to vanquish some rock pinnacle ('noch nicht gemacht')—and possibly to find that your new peak is crowned by an old bottle, which you try to persuade yourself has been dropped by a passing balloon:—however fascinating to climb a gulley, 'equal to new,' where the stones, accumulated by ages of justifiable neglect, only to fall on your devoted head, make you occasionally feel that you could be content with that gulley in a slightly more used condition; whatever the charms of new ascents, it is not on these that the grovelling Hedonists for whom I speak primarily rely. As Aristotle might say, they do not need novelty, like an amulet. They recognise that if newness has its delights, so has familiarity; and, as I am professionally bound to think first of instruction, I ought to say that nothing is more educative from a climbing point of view than to make the same ascent under different conditions.

It may be urged that persons who approach the Alps in this casual and amateurish, and what I may call Bank Holiday, spirit are liable to be accused of forming an undesirable link between this Club and the ordinary tourist—in fact, of being ordinary tourists themselves. Now, no one can have studied the recent literature of Alpine adventure without realising that it is a very serious thing to be called a tourist. While the writer of an article in the 'Journal' is almost invariably a hero—or at least *the* hero of the piece—the tourist, should he unfortunately appear, almost always takes the *rôle* of the villain.

And the worst of it is that it is so fatally easy to become one. The affliction may come upon a man quite suddenly; it is in a sense an accident of time and place. You may be successful in your profession and respected by your friends—so long as you keep below the snow-line; cross it and you may be at once described as *hostis humani generis;* in a moment you may find that you are one of a class of persons who are generally obese: who belong by preference to some

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alien nationality: in front of whom the rope is unduly taut as they ascend, and unduly slack as they descend; who regard the practised mountaineer with peculiar animosity, and take every opportunity of dislodging portions of the hill-side on to his head: for whose sake mountains are draped with ropes and honeycombed by railways—while the true climber is driven far afield, before their locust-like advance, into distant and hotel-less solitudes.

Yet the harmfulness even of a tourist may be exaggerated.

After all, the crowds of persons only qualified for climbing by the possession of an ice-axe, who have certainly made some parts of the Alps less delightful in the past twelve or fifteen years, are not necessarily so baneful as we are sometimes given to understand—even granting the impossibility of their moral redemption. Natural gregariousness, which is perhaps the real differentia of the tourist, herds him into a few centres where he can dine off many courses and all the expeditions have sign-posts. But these are after all only a small part of the Alps. Fourteen years ago it was the singular good fortune of myself and a friend to find ourselves on five fine August days the sole visitors of five so-called first-class peaks. Allowing that now that would be a very unusual experience indeed—allowing the number of 'hardest climbs in the Alps' which are now 'an easy day for a lady'—granting that on fine mornings a queue has, I am told, to be formed from the door of the Matterhorn hut, and that every peak at Arolla, from the Petite Dent de Veisivi to the Aiguilles Rouges, is crowned by its own particular picnic—surely those are desperate counsellors who would have us retire (as does a recent and very eloquent writer in the 'Journal') to Parnassus or Olympus or Ida. We are not really crowded out of the Alps. Not to go far afield, it cannot be said the district between the Grimsel and the Gothard is over-populated. There is quite good climbing there, nor is the climber's initiative hampered or atrophied by the excessive skill of local guides. And any one who goes even to the Aiguilles of Mont Blanc with the 'Climber's Guide' (a work which I mention for the sake of honour) will see at once that topography has not said its last word.

Why not accept the facts in an optimistic spirit, and acknowledge the potential perfectibility even of tourists? Many a man begins as a member of that class, yet afterwards lives quite respectably. Perhaps, among those who in later years have acquired quite enough knowledge to lead up (let

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us say) the Galenstock, more than would care to confess it have begun by going up the Matterhorn because it was the right thing to do. Even such are men and brothers. This Club is based after all on the desires that are shared by ourselves with the humblest tripper who crawls on all fours across the slab of the easy route up the Pillar—the desire for the high air and the sun shining on the peaks and the sense of something accomplished. In the 'concentration camps' above described, much is being done for the moral, as well as the physical, elevation of the sojourner. When he ascends mountains, even those very boulders which he dislodges on to the head of the innocent mountaineer may be the 'stepping-stones' of his tourist nature whereby he climbs 'to higher things.' Even when he only makes what I have heard a guide describe—in reference to the chief seats at feasts gradually attained by length of stay in hotels—as 'la grande ascension de la table d'hôte'—even then he may be imbibing that enthusiasm for mountains, that *animus ascendendi* which is the sign of the true mountaineer; which will, one hopes, still send some Englishmen to the Alps when climbing as a fashion has passed into the limbo of forgotten pastimes. And here I seem to be getting near the subject which the secretary may have had in mind when he spoke of the Alps regarded from an unprofessional point of view; but I have also got to the end of this unnecessary paper. I apologise for the length of the expedition.

The Bifertenstock and its Neighbours.

By A. L. MUMM.

(Read before the Alpine Club, March 5, 1907.)

THOUGH the idea of writing this paper did not occur to me till much later, it had its first origin in a proposal of mine, made about five years ago, to my friend Mr. Charles Cannan that we should celebrate the twenty-first anniversary of our first season together in the Alps by spending a few weeks there in the following summer. He replied by inviting me to suggest a district, not too far away, to which we had neither of us been before, where we should get some not too formidable climbing and be unlikely to meet any of our fellow-countrymen. After some deliberation I fixed on the Linth Thal as the nearest place which seemed likely to satisfy the prescribed conditions, and there accordingly we

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