

## A NIGHT ASCENT OF SNOWDON.

OUR party of seven had spent a glorious July afternoon at Bettws-y-Coed, and, when driving back late in the evening to our inn at Pen-y-pass, we decided to ascend Snowdon that night, in the hope of seeing the sun rise. Having dined late, that is, after 10 p.m., we rested awhile, and at 1 a.m. started our journey. One lady rode on pony-back, with a boy as nominal guide, and the rest of us walked. We needed no "guide", as I knew the mountain well, but the boy was to bring back the pony, and as he was in training as a guide, it was thought that he might get a useful lesson. The route we followed, the famous Capel Curig one, is by far the finest one on the mountain, and is the one of which Mr. Fleming gave a somewhat alarmist account in the January, 1894, number of the Journal. It enters the great Cwm Dyli, the finest cwm, or corrie, of the mountain, and gets well into the heart of the mountain before much of ascent is made. Passing the lochlet of Teyrn, the track reaches Llyn Llydaw, of which so fine a picture was given in connection with Mr. Fleming's paper. An embankment crosses this lake near its northern end, and during a dry season it is possible to cross the lake on a line of stones on this. Should the stones be submerged, the lake can be waded or rounded; either end is practicable. The crossing of the lake in the intense quiet and half-light of the early morning was very impressive. I reached the lake a little ahead of my party, and had the full effect of the loveliness and absolute stillness.

Beyond Llydaw the track rises somewhat, and reaches the inner corrie. In this lies the smaller lake Glaslyn, from the west of which shoots up the great precipice of Clogwyn-y-Garnedd. This is, perhaps, the finest mountain view around Snowdon, and one great feature of it is that it can be so easily reached. A vehicle can be driven to the margin of the lake. From this point the path is rougher and

steeper, following the famous zig-zags, of which so much has been made by timid tourists. As a matter of sober fact, the track is absolutely safe, free from all difficulty, and quite well marked, and no one at all able to walk uphill need hesitate to go by that route. When we ascended it in the dim morning twilight, with clouds gathering on the peaks and crags, our boy could not keep the track, so I led the way up. We reached the summit shortly after 4 a.m., but saw no sunrise. A wonderful procession of clouds, forming in the wind that blew up from Cardigan Bay, occupied our attention for more than an hour. It was interesting to see the cloud develop in the air as soon as it struck the cold mountain surface; it was as though every jutting crag smoked cloud.

Broad daylight having arrived, and our poor bodies being numbed with cold, we dismissed our boy with the horse and its lady rider, and the remaining six of us started the descent to Beddgelert. On this route is another much-talked-of "dangerous" place, the Bwlch-y-Maen, which Mr. Fleming describes as "razor-like in sharpness". I had heard various accounts of this from different visitors, and we looked forward with much interest to seeing it. When I halted and announced "Ladies and gentlemen, this is the spot", my companions laughed incredulously. We were on a ridge which, for a few yards, was as narrow as nine feet; on either side the descent was very steep, though not precipitous; and, except during a heavy cross wind, there was nothing to suggest the idea of danger. Anyway, we crossed it with dancing, so little did we feel of fear, and I may say that one of the ladies had not been on any mountain before that holiday. Now, if Mr. Fleming wishes to harrow up the souls of his fellow Cairngormers with a "razor-like" ridge, let him try to describe adequately the ridge between Crib-y-Ddysgyl and Crib Coch. At its worst this is some nine *inches* wide, consists of rotten, splintered rock, and is, I think, unwalkable; add to that, that on the north side is a sheer drop of some hundreds of feet, and on the south a very steep slope, and then it is permissible to dilate on difficulty and danger.

But, of course, none but skilled mountaineers should go to such places.

Snowdon has its lengthening death-roll resulting from such adventures, but the only case of death of an ordinary tourist that I know of occurred in the grazing lands to the south of the mountain, where a visitor, who had lost his way in a mist, died of exhaustion almost within sight of a coaching road. The lesson to be learned from that sad fact is to carry on every expedition an abundant lunch, a good map, and a compass.

Well, to conclude our journey. We reached the Beddgelert road all right, and followed it in pouring rain past the Pitt's Head Rock to the Lewellyn Hotel. Here, in a fireless coffee room, we breakfasted off inferior chops, and when our vehicle arrived drove along the beautiful Nant Gwynant, still in rain, to our own inn.



THE CRAGS, COIRE AN SPUT DHEIRG, BEN MUICH DHUI.