

THE EASTBOURNE GAZETTE
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(page 5)

CLIFF CLIMBING.

CHANGES AT BEACHY HEAD.

**EASY ACCESS TO ETHELDREDA'S
PINNACLE CUT OFF.**

(TO THE EDITOR.)

Sir,—Last week I re-visited Beachy Head, on whose cliffs I spent so many weeks nearly 20 years ago. At that time I was strongly opposed to any interference with people who chose to wander about the face. The situation is, however, completely altered. That portion of the large grassy slope which I have marked in the accompanying photograph has fallen, leaving a narrow and unsafe ledge which is itself liable to fall at any moment, overhanging the sheer cliff of the rottenest dust that is to be found anywhere. The path leading to this from the top of the cliff is well-worn, and has obviously been used by many people. It is, therefore, quite natural for anyone to stroll down this path, finding himself in imminent danger. It has been converted into an oubliette, much more artistically than was ever done by any Baron of the Middle Ages!

Almost similar remarks apply to the "Easy Way," as it used to be called, farther along to the East. There is a well worn path leading from just below the Coastguard Station, through a cleft called The Notch, which leads to grassy slopes, which have flourished exceedingly in the last 20 years and have become far more slippery: while at the bottom of these slopes the action of the weather has left an extremely steep and rotten cliff of some 20 feet in height—a cliff so steep that it took me the best part of an hour to cut steps up it last Thursday. An inexperienced person might easily try to descend the face, find himself at the top of this little cliff, and kill himself through trying to scramble down.

I think that notice-boards should be erected stating that the circumstance that what used to be safe has now become dan-

gerous through a landslip, instead of the usual vague and foolish warning of which no sensible person ever takes notice.

It will interest climbers to know that the landslide referred to at the beginning of this letter has cut off the old easy access to Etheldreda's Pinnacle. The only practical way of reaching it at present known is to descend Crowley's Climb on the East side of the Devil's Chimney and so to the foot. But the landslide itself has very much altered the character of the cliff immediately below Etheldreda's Pinnacle.

I think that a properly equipped party could easily reach the foot of the Pinnacle from the beach. I got to within 60 or 70 feet of it the other day, but was unable to finish the climb owing to the illness of my companion. It will be remembered that previously it had been thought impossible to reach the Pinnacle from below.

I notice, however, that in one respect the cliff remains unchanged. The universe in general and the Alpine Club in particular have not attempted to repeat my ascent of the Devil's Chimney.—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

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