

THE SCOTTISH  
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB  
JOURNAL.

EDITED BY  
WILLIAM DOUGLAS.



VOL. X.

EDINBURGH:  
THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.

1909.

Geography  
Grant  
1-19-28  
16080

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*May 1907.*

AN TEALLACH.

*G. T. Glover.*

THE SCOTTISH  
Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. X.

JANUARY 1908.

No. 55.

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AN TEALLACH AND BEINN DEARG MHOR.

BY W. N. LING.

THE sight of the snow-clad spires of An Teallach, glittering gloriously in the morning sun, as we sped from Inchnadaph to the shores of Loch Lurgain at Easter 1907, crystallised into action a long felt desire, born of a fairy-like view we had of the peaks as we returned from Suilven the previous year, to visit this region, and six weeks later G. T. Glover and myself were *en route* for the delectable land.

As no S.M.C. excursion is apparently complete without a motor nowadays, I will not apologise for stating that the Garve Hotel now possesses a motor car, and this we had ordered to meet us at Garve Station. When we arrived, there stood a chauffeur, and without question we gave him our bags and followed him to the car. We were just about to start when two strangers approached and politely inquired whether this was our car. Surprised, we answered "Yes," and that we were about to start for Dundonnell, whereupon the chauffeur said that *his* destination was Gruinard, and after further explanations we discovered that we had nearly committed that crime so common in the United States—a car robbery. The road was being repaired some eight miles out, and on the other side of the break was our car, to which we were to be conveyed by the



horsed vehicle, which we now perceived standing outside the station. It was a subject for mirth, but whether it would have proved so to those left behind, if we had got away, is open to doubt.

We had a good run, and before long our peaks came into sight. We stopped to admire the fine gorge and falls of Measach, and then went on to the hospitable and comfortable inn at Dundonnell. The brilliant gold of the gorse, contrasted with the delicate green of the larches, delighted our eyes as we walked to the house of the head gillie, who willingly gave us permission to enter the forest.

Next morning, 18th May, we started at nine, and followed the deer path from the post office up to a corral, then branched off to our left (east) over rough ground, and continued along the side of the hill. To the north we could see heavy showers clearing and recurring, but to us the heavens were kind.

An hour and three-quarters' easy going from the hotel brought us to the stream, which issues from the Ghlas Thuill Glen, and from the point where we crossed we were much impressed by the fine buttress we saw. We observed an eagle and a pair of buzzards.

Continuing, we crossed the shoulder of the hill, and at 11.30 we sat down by Toll an Lochain for our second breakfast. The dark waters of the loch, reflecting the shadow of the frowning buttresses above them, made an impressive picture.

At noon we roped up, and, starting from the water's edge, commenced to climb the buttress of Corrag Bhuidhe. The first bit was steep, wet, holdless rocks, and required care. A short chimney brought us to some ledges, where we traversed to an overhanging leaf of rock, over which we climbed into another chimney leading to easy grass slopes. We could have avoided some of the difficulties, but we wanted to keep as direct a line as possible. From the grass rose steep rocks, and these we attacked, but the angle and dip were all wrong, and we traversed to easier ground on our left. Then up steep grass and steeper rocks to the top of the buttress, four o'clock, and along the ridge to the top of Corrag Bhuidhe.

What a prospect we had! Near at hand Beinn Dearg Mhor with its great buttresses, farther over lay the Maiden and the Kinlochewe peaks, on to the Cuillins, clear cut, and the graceful outline of Skye. Thence the eye travelled round to the Grey Castle of Suilven.

We climbed along the shattered crest of the ridge past the awesome precipice of Lord Berkeley's Seat to Sgurr Fiona. The westering sun had turned the sea to molten gold, and across this the soft, blue outline of the Western Isles made a picture which we shall not readily forget. We were loth to leave such a beautiful scene, but time was flying, so on we went to the bealach, and up the slope to Bidein Ghlas Thuill, 5.45. Then down the ridge to the next bealach, where a scree gully let us down into the glen. A faintly marked sheep track along the side of the hill kept the line for us, and near this track we found a ptarmigan's nest with six eggs. From the mouth of the glen we joined our track of the morning, reached the corral at 7.30 and the hotel at 8, ready for the excellent dinner which Mrs Urquhart had provided for us.

Then, at peace with all mankind, we strolled out to watch the reflection of the golden sky on the loch gradually fade as the sky itself paled to primrose, and the twinkling stars bade us seek repose.

Next day we visited the Corryhallie Falls, and walked up the road leading to the ferry to Ullapool with fine views of the two lochs.

#### BEINN DEARG MHOR.

Leaving at 7.45 the following morning, we walked along the road for three miles, then took the cart track running south-west up Glen Chaorachain through pleasant woods to the bealach, 1,250 feet. From this point our peak stood up finely with its buttresses. We descended to Achneigie in Strath na Sheallag, 10.25, and followed the track to Shenavall, then across the boggy ground at the head of the loch to the finely named dwellings, Larachantivore (which was set to a Tyrolean air), and up steep slopes of scree, grass, and heather to the corrie of Beinn Dearg,

1,230 feet, where we lunched from 12 to 12.30. We scrambled up to the foot of the central buttress, 1,900 feet, and put on the rope at one o'clock. The face of the buttress was apparently impossible, so we tackled a fine gully up the centre of the buttress. The rock was not good and sloped the wrong way, but we climbed up some 450 feet to a chimney, blocked by a big chockstone. The slighter member of the party might have been able to crawl through the small aperture, but it was not large enough for the more massive member, and the rock above was very slabby and uninviting, so after trying in vain to get out on to the buttress, we descended to the foot of the gully again, three o'clock. We then climbed the central gully by ledges, scree, and snow, one pitch being made possible by the height of the snow, which enabled us to reach the necessary handhold. Higher up the rock was better, the snow was hard and, near the top, steep, so we took to the ledges and emerged at the top of the gully quite near the large cairn on the top of the mountain, 4.5.

The view was again indescribably beautiful, the Cuillins and the Western Isles rising from the soft blue haze of ocean, while landwards, the harder lines of the peaks were no less striking. Forty minutes we spent in refreshment for soul and body, then we ran along the top of the butresses, and down grass slopes and scree to a curious gash in the earth where the rocks had been riven asunder, probably by an earthquake. A steep drop by ledges on the face of the cliff, which would not be easy to find in mist, let us down into Glen na Muice, where we crossed the boggy ground to the path by the burn, six o'clock. Twenty minutes more and we rejoined our track of the morning at Larachantivore. Across the bog to Shenavall, and on to Achneigie, 6.55.

The weather was splendid, sunny but cool, and this eased the 1,000 foot rise to the bealach. We regained the road at 8.40, and in the cool of the evening we reeled off the remaining three miles to Dundonnell, 9.25, well satisfied with our fourteen hours' work, and with a holiday delightful in every respect.

From a climbing point of view, the rocks in the district are not altogether satisfactory. On the whole Beinn Dearg



May 1907.

LARACHANTIVORE AND BEINN DEARG MHOR.

G. T. Glover.



buttresses look more promising than any on Teallach, but the distance of the former is against it unless the irrepresible motor can be taken some distance up from Gruinard. But to the lover of fine scenery and gorgeous colouring, a visit to Little Loch Broom cannot be too highly recommended, the more so as at Dundonnell he will find as comfortable an inn, and as kindly a hospitality as anywhere in the Highlands.

## A CAIRNGORM CLIMB.

## THE SHELTER STONE CRAG, LOCH AVON.

THE majestic, slow-heaving Cairngorms lend themselves more readily to the purposes of the hill walker than to those of the mountaineer who loves the rocks. Their great, wide-stretching plateaux are very different from the aiguilles, narrow rock ridges, and steep faces of Skye. Yet, in their deep recesses and far-reaching glens, circling the lonely hollows where sleep the dark waters of their alpine tarns, are many fine masses of steep, bare rock. Such a mass is the Shelter Stone Crag at the head of remote Loch Avon.

I had seen, and admired, this crag from the southern slopes of Cairngorm, a number of years ago. It is indeed, however, to slightly alter the Campbells' slogan, "a far cry to Loch Avon," and it was not until June 1907 that an opportunity came of examining it at close quarters. In June 1906 my friend the Hon. Librarian was established with his *Lares* and *Penates* at Kingussie. From there we had made an all-night expedition to Corrie Arder, and had got the hottest and finest day of the month for our lengthy journey.

This year Goggs was again at Kingussie, the weather was of the most wretched character, but mindful, perhaps, of the results of last year, he asked me again to come north for a climb, and at the same time to bring with me a small selection of better weather.

The 15th of June at Kingussie was not promising. A howling gale blew from the west, and though no rain fell on the low ground, sky and mountains were covered with a uniform dull grey pall of racing cloud masses. We nevertheless resolved to brave the omens, and to start on our planned expedition to the head of Loch Avon.

Now, from Kingussie to the Shelter Stone Crag is a distance of over twenty miles. As it was necessary for me to catch the south-going train from Kingussie at 5.16 on the following evening, it was evidently essential that a nearer base of operations, or a super-alpine start, should

be adopted. Goggs, with his usual sublime disregard for distance, and confidence in his sleeping powers—born of his success last June, prone on the rugged cobblestones of an empty hay barn—voted for the Shelter Stone itself. With vivid recollections of miserable nights spent—by others—in that damp and dismal hole, and considering my inability to sleep out, even on rock ledges 11,000 feet above sea-level in the Alps, I vetoed that vote. The “noes” had it, such is the power of “passive resistance.”

An eleven-year-old impression remained in my brain, of a bothy at the foot of the Larig. Goggs, luckily, had been that way the previous week, and found it open. We resolved to make it our halting place for a few hours of twilight, and to make our real starting point our comfortable home base of Kingussie; the cycle would make easy the part of our journey extending to the bothy and back.

At 7 P.M. we left Kingussie, and, swept along by the wind, sailed away to Aviemore with great ease. In the birch woods near Kincaig we observed in passing, four or five of these curious and somewhat local birds, miscalled goatsuckers. They can be recognised at once when sitting on a branch, by their almost always perching *along* instead of *across* it. At Coylum Bridge we left the road and took to the forest track that leads to the cross roads near Loch an Eilean, and to the Larig Ghru. Though requiring careful steering in places, very little was unrideable. Only where the road was laid corduroy fashion, *i.e.*, rough pine logs laid transversely over boggy parts, were we forced to dismount. We gained our halting place for the night at 8.40. The collection of heather to form a couch, the gathering of wood, and the drawing of water, kept us busy for a while. At 10, we turned in on our “downy”—a trifle spiky—couch, for the “dim,” as they call the midsummer twilight hours in Shetland.

The wind had gradually sunk to rest with the declining sun, and during the night it was calm. At 1.30 I roused, and, opening the door, looked out upon the forest night. Already the north-eastern horizon was flushing with the rapidly deepening rose of the high northern dawn. Due north appeared a clear space, widening even as I gazed.



"Le bon vent du nord," so welcome in the Alps, had arisen, and was rapidly driving the black pall of cloud southwards before it. The air contained more than a touch of frost, and I turned in with a shiver of body, but with a light heart, to fearlessly prophesy a perfect day. Soon, effectually roused by the increasing daylight, we, like the stag in the "Lady of the Lake," sprang from our heathery couch in haste, and after rousing the fire, and making a good breakfast, left at 2.40 for Loch Avon's cliffs. We kept the Larig track, at first through the pine woods, then mounting steadily by the right bank of the Allt na Leirg Gruamaich, till we reached the slope leading up to the first summit of the Creag na Leacainn (lurcher's crag) at 3.45. An easy, if somewhat rough walk, placed us on the first top, 3,365 feet, in less than an hour, and a few minutes along the ridge and we gained the second, and highest top, 3,448 feet, at 4.45.

This top is rocky, and hangs very steeply over the Larig Pass. A splendid view was gained from it, of the whole length of that remarkable, trough-like depression, as well as of the still corniced ridges, and the snowfields of Braeriach opposite. The summits were by now nearly all clear. Only on Cairngorm, and on the last few hundred feet of the slopes of Cairn Lochan, 3,983 feet, lingered the mist clouds. The north wind was cold; the pools here covered with a film of new ice, and our halt was not prolonged.

A short descent over rough boulders, then the slow slopes of Cairn Lochan were breasted, and swinging round the west shoulder of this summit, we entered that desolate country, where the remote feeder of the Avon, the Allt Feith Buidhe, has its source in the little tarn called Lochan Buidhe. The lochan lies almost on the edge of the steep slopes falling down into the Larig above the Pools of Dee.

The scenery is strikingly reminiscent of the high Fjelde of Norway. Widespreading snowfields stretched away on all sides. The surface of this névé was so hard that the weight made no impression, and but for sharp bootnails, it would have been difficult to keep one's footing on the marble-like surface. The névé, filling the hollows, terminated in miniature glacier snouts, from below whose steep snow cliffs gushed many a rushing rivulet of snow water. Farther



*A. W. Russell.*

HEAD OF LOCH AVON AND SHELTER STONE CRAG.

*11th June 1906.*



east, where the undulating swells of the upper plateaux drop down steeply to the head of Loch Avon, the resemblance to a glacier was even more close. Where a steeper rock juts from the slope, it is crowned by a vertical wall of hard névé, and numerous cracks and crevasses seam the steeply sloping snow.

The bird life of these desolate Arctic-like regions is naturally very scanty. The ptarmigan is the prevalent and characteristic bird, while the dotterel and the snow bunting are met with in very limited numbers. The flora is of characteristic Arctic type, and like the fauna, very scanty.

We reached the top of the Shelter Stone Crag at six, getting one fairly good standing glissade, and crossing with some difficulty a "glacier" torrent, Garbh Uisge, coming down from the slopes of Ben Muich Dhui. As will be observed in the illustration facing page 8, this crag is split into two portions by a large gully. At this date the gully was about two-thirds filled with snow. The north-western portion, though a hundred feet or so lower, is a better defined and, on the whole, steeper mass of rock. We therefore resolved to first try the descent of this, and then to have a look at the whole mass from the foot.

Starting down the face to the left of the big gully, we had a pleasant steep scramble, of fifty-five minutes, to the foot. Somewhat ill-defined at first, the climb lower develops into a definite arête. Its right forms the wall bounding the big gully on the left, and it is cut off from the rocks on its left by a fine steep chimney or gully. The lower part of the climb occasionally develops portions of a mildly difficult kind, and at one place some delay was caused by the rottenness of the rock. The big gully may contain pitches if clear of snow, but I expect this condition will not often occur, and in snow of any kind, should present no difficulty to any one with an ice-axe.

Lunch, and water, was now the order of the day, and we accordingly descended steep scree gradually increasing in size to large boulders. Then, amid a chaos of similar blocks, we arrived at the huge mass known as the "Shelter Stone." Except by its superior size, it is not readily to be distin-

guished from its fellows, and the exact spot would not be easy to find, were it not for a faint track that leads through the labyrinth toward it. Not that failure to find it would be any great loss, as its interior is comfortless and damp in the extreme. The space under the boulder is of fair extent, and most of the wind is excluded by drystone (dry is here only used in a strictly technical sense) walls, but it is dark and gloomy, and clammy with damp. The mud floor simply oozes with it. A mackintosh sheet, and a sackful of straw, would, no doubt mitigate these drawbacks somewhat.

After inspection of this delectable residence, we adjourned to the small stream that issues from among the great blocks close at hand. Lunch over, 7.30 A.M.—“Lunch, at the *break* of day, possibly sweetest”—selecting a corner sheltered from the keen northern breeze, and full in the blaze of the comfortable sun, we were soon, at least I was, in the land of dreams. An hour or so slipped away in that delicious state of half dreaming, half waking, absorbing the mental pictures of the scenery passed through in the morning, and breathing deep of the glorious, pure mountain air. At length, a sense of something yet unaccomplished brought us again to our feet.

Viewed from below, the Shelter Stone rock loses none of its steep, uncompromising appearance. The big snow gully has the usual deceptive, almost vertical, look. To the right of this gully looking up, and to the right of the route down which we had come, is a well-defined very steep rib. It is bounded on its right by a slabby gully, well shown in shadow on the photo accompanying this paper. This rib we thought should give a capital climb, if the lower portion proved possible.

At 9.15 we roped up at the foot of the rock. The start, and indeed the lower two-thirds of the climb, is extremely steep. No clinometer angles were taken, but from a height of about 300 feet a moderate outward leap would have, *apparently*, been enough to land one on the scree at the foot, without touching anything on the way. The total height is approximately 600 feet. The rock is good, but the holds apt to be obscured by moss and earth, adhering in places at angles approaching the vertical. After



*A. H. Russell*

CRAGS ABOVE LOCH AVON FROM THE FEITH BUIDHE.

*3rd July 1907.*



ascending about sixty feet, the direct route became so steep and slabby that it was thought better to make a slight traverse to the left, almost into the gully cutting us off from the "Snow Couloir Ridge." A very neat little chimney, with overhanging ledge at the bottom, and somewhat difficult and exposed exit at the top, then allowed of the arête being regained. Then followed forty feet of slabby rockwork, which Goggs wishes me to label as dangerous. Possibly that label is no libel. Certainly it is no place for the exhibition of the chamois-like agility mountaineers are credited with displaying. Rather is it a place for a combination of the walk of a certain character who was said to "walk delicately," and the adhesive crawl of a remarkably sluggish lizard. An easier portion, still very steep, followed. We then made another traverse to left for a short distance, and regained the arête by a short overhanging chimney. Above this came some more steep ledges, and two "balance corners," one of a somewhat "mantelshelf" order. We then entered a steep grass gully on left, and ascending it for sixty to seventy feet, got out to right, and regained the arête. It is from here that the most impressive views of the climb and the surrounding scenery are obtained; the drop to the screes about 400 feet below, appearing almost vertical, and the view embracing the surrounding rock walls, the loch, the summits of Cairngorm and Cairn Lochan, and far down the glen to the north-east. This place forms a short, nearly level, shoulder, marking the place where the north gully ends. Above this, the climb becomes much less steep, and though the scrambling was by no means over, no further difficulties were met with to the summit.

We gained the top at 10.55, and again sat down, after the usual cairn building, for third breakfast, second lunch, or first dinner, whichever one chooses to call it.

Goggs, the insatiable league devourer, now coolly proposed that we take a little stroll over to Cairngorm, or failing that to Muich Dhui. I, however, pointed out that I had to be in Edinburgh that night, and that we were, even now, a long way from Kingussie. He, somewhat reluctantly, agreed to be satisfied with the fairly good day we had already had.



We accordingly took the back track at 11.30, straight over the screes, boulders, "glacier" streams, and widespread snowfields of the western plateau, to the Lochan Buidhe (12.5). From here, we descended the steep grass and scree slopes by the march burn, to the Larig Pass (12.30), and gained the path a few hundred yards on the Dee side of the watershed. The walk down the Larig was a pleasant one, if a trifle long, and after another halt of fifteen minutes for one of our many, if small, meals, we gained the bothy, and our waiting steel steeds at 2.20. Fifteen minutes for tidying up and packing, and we mounted for the ride home.

Coylum Bridge and the road was gained in less than half an hour, but from Aviemore a stiff, contrary wind, a change from north to south-west having taken place, made that beautiful ride rather a grind.

We reached Kingussie, however, at 4.30, in ample time to allow me a bath and a meal before catching the 5.16 for Edinburgh.

## A SKYE HIGHWAY.

BY WILL. C. SMITH.

IT may interest some of the aged and infirm members of the Club, an increasing class to which I myself belong, to have the impressions of a charming walk which my daughter and I took on 25th September last over one of the best known public highways through the central ridge of the Cuillin Hills, Bealach na Glai Moire. Resolved to have a leisurely day for the enjoyment of the hill scenery, we started from Sligachan at 6.45, taking with us young Archie Mackenzie, not that we contemplated any climbing, but because the weather was still uncertain, and we did not wish to run any risk of missing the road down to Coruisk. Archie, who camped out with Mr Harker for three summers, seems to be very familiar with the hills.

It was a pleasant cool morning with heavy dark clouds upon the higher tops, and we made the Bealach a' Mhaim by 8.20. To my mind the falls and pools, the rocks and the rowan trees of the Allt Dearg look best in the freshness of these early hours. Keeping a fairly good level, although descending somewhat, we now skirted the north side of Coire na Creiche, passing below the mouth of the Coir' a' Mhadaidh, and approaching the base of Sgurr na Fheadain, which we reached at 8.40. A steepish ascent over heather, grass, and stones, led us past the foot of the well-known Waterpipe, and then turning to the left and surmounting some easy slabs we found ourselves about 9.30 in the Tairneilear Corrie and at the foot of a stone shoot or steep narrow scree. Truly a magnificent corrie, especially on such a morning when Thuilm and Mhadaidh were still clothed in impenetrable blackness, while the broad moors beyond Glen Brittle lay in brilliant sunshine with brown and green and yellow colour.

We now put our shoulder to the shoot, which is certainly steep enough, but one gets useful pulls upon the rocks to the right. Emerging from the shoot we passed to the right or south along the ridge and about eleven stood

on the bealach itself, gazing down on Coruisk and beyond it a mysterious expanse of pale green sea lying under white clouds and stretching far beyond Strathaird.

I do not enter on the interesting controversy as to the proper naming of Coir' a' Mhadaidh and Tairneilear. It is confusing to the modern mind that the Fox's Corrie should not only be farther from the Fox's Hill than the Thunderer, but should also be divided from that hill by a ridge of such definite and individual character as Fheadain and Bidein. Probably, the difficulty may be solved by the historical method as applied by Mr Harker, who suggests that the whole basin of Coire na Creiche, including the two upper basins, may have been the original Fox's Corrie, dominated, as it is mainly, by the big Fox's Hill, which may itself have included more hill at that time. The only objection to this is the sentimental one that it assigns a certain inferiority of status, and modern origin, to what I regard as one of the most beautiful and attractive summits in the whole Cuillin range, Bidein Druim nan Ramh. So we thought that morning, as we stood on the bealach and the clouds to the north immediately lifted and the turrets of Bidein stood out against a blue sky. Nor am I able to discuss the relative merits of the two routes to this bealach, viz., by Coir' a' Mhadaidh and by the Tairneilear. The "Thunder-throated" is certainly the finer of the two corries.

All I know is that, contrary to the advice in Douglas' Guide and Harker's Notes, we descended to Coruisk by the scree to the south, and found it very easy going. But what a descent was that! What a revelation! The day developed into one of perfect purity, and one after another all the glorious peaks and passes to the south appeared; the many-headed Mhadaidh, the imposing mass of Ghreadaidh, the twin tops of Alasdair and Thearlaich, the fine point of Sgurr Coir' an Lochain, the noble outline of the Dubhs, while below Coruisk and the sea brightened and sparkled. With a fine sense of dramatic effect the weather left Dearg for the end. From time to time great masses of white vapour, illuminated, but not pierced by the sun, rose from this mountain. To use the often-quoted

words of Ruskin, it stood "like a great natural altar with the clouds resting on it, as the smoke of a continual sacrifice." But at last the veil was rent, and we saw that proud crest which so long defied the frivolous foot of man—that Inaccessible which has become accessible, let us hope only to devout pilgrims.

The way down to Coruisk was not without incident. We surprised a big old stag not a hundred yards above us on the northern slope. He sent off seven or eight followers trotting round to some recess of the Druim nan Ramh. He himself lay down behind a black rock, above which we could see his horns and a bit of his brown coat. He watched us for several minutes, until our descending into the burn for lunch satisfied him that we were harmless lunatics, and he then disappeared after his friends. Soon after we heard a mighty croaking of ravens and saw a young eagle circling round, uttering his unmusical whistle or shriek. In the opinion of the learned Archie some dead hind was lying there, and the question was which birds should have the best meal.

The soft level of the Coruisk meadow was welcome after the scree, and we proceeded under a broiling sun down the north-east bank of the loch, not forgetting to shed a pious tear over the still surviving fragments of the Douglas-Rennie Camp of 1897. What induced Sir Walter Scott to write of Coruisk?—

"Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,  
Nor aught of vegetative power,  
The weary eye may ken."

I thought of this verse while struggling desperately through a thicket of hazel trees, which seemed to be largely inhabited by strawberry plants and rabbits. On reaching the mouth of the Riabhach burn our party separated into its component parts for a considerable time, and I enjoyed the luxury of a quiet swim in the cool waters of the loch, an operation which materially assisted the ascent to the cairns at Druimhain.

I need not say anything about the rest of the route, except that, as we wished to go slowly and luxuriate in

the lovely evening light, the gallant Archie ran down the glen in a time which beats Mr Harker's table by about 50 per cent. and sent ponies up three miles to meet us, so that we escaped from the moor to the bridge shortly after 7 P.M. But were I to be "banished for ever from Skye," I could not desire a finer impression of it than we received as we crossed Druimhain, and saw on the one hand the beautiful curves of Sgurr nan Gillean with all its array of pinnacles, and gendarmes and teeth pencilled against the light, and on the other the ever wonderful Blaven with its hundred streams, glowing in the radiance from the west. Then in front the rose-colour gradually faded from the granite hills beyond the glen, and we descended to the prosaic realities of the Sligachan road and dinner.

## SOME MECHANICS OF THE ROPE AND AXE.

BY GILBERT THOMSON.

IT is universally agreed that mountaineering is a sport which in the interests of safety must be taken seriously, and that it is the duty of every mountaineer to make himself as proficient as possible. This proficiency should include both theory and practice, for not only is the ordinary work likely to be done better if we know clearly the "why" as well as the "how," but emergencies out of the common routine will be much more effectively met.

The mechanical problems connected with mountaineering are limitless, and the following notes do not profess to do more than discuss one or two outstanding problems, not usually treated very fully in books, in connection with the rope and axe; and to give reasons, which will not necessarily be universally accepted, for what appears to the writer to be sound practice in various contingencies.

Apart from "moral support," which is outside the present subject, the rope may be used in three ways—to raise a weight, to retain it in position, and to stop it when falling; the weight being usually the body of the climber. There are thus three main problems, each with endless gradations, of which only the more serious need be considered.

In the first problem, the most serious case is when the weight to be raised is dangling over an edge, or in a crevasse. "Lay an axe along the edge, so as to form a pulley on which the rope may run, and then haul," may be taken as the orthodox advice. It would be excellent advice, if the power were a donkey engine, the rope a stout hawser, and the weight an inanimate object. It is not so good in ordinary circumstances. The available power is severely limited, an immense proportion is lost in friction, and the weight (if it is brought up at all) is jammed in a helpless and most uncomfortable fashion against the upper edge. It is conceivable that the rope may not stand

the strain, although with a good rope and a party of ordinary size, the lifting power is the more likely to fail.

Unless the man to be raised is quite disabled, the following modification of Mummery's "double rope" method is usually practicable, and if so is much more satisfactory than the method above described. This plan, which does not seem to be so well known as it might be, is described by O. G. Jones ("Rock Climbing in the English Lake District," p. 265) as being used by Robinson to hoist the third man on the Pillar Rock. It is quite as applicable to ice work. A rope end with a stirrup loop is lowered (the man at the other end may untie to provide this), and the man who is dangling gets one or both feet into the loop. The rope is drawn taut, and he is immediately in a position of comparative comfort. Then by alternately bending and straightening his legs, his weight is transferred from one rope to the other; the weighted rope is belayed or held, while the unweighted rope is hauled up, and so on till the top is reached. As it is always the loaded rope which is held, and the unloaded one which is pulled up, friction becomes a help instead of a hindrance, and the stirrup rope merely provides, as it were, a succession of footholds, up which the man comes in a natural way, by the use of his legs, and right end up. The writer has seen both methods in operation, and is not anxious to see the former tried again. "It is better, and less painful, to negotiate a man back to the surface than to drag him" (Badminton "Mountaineering," p. 183). The possession of a spare rope still further simplifies the latter method, and might enable even one man, unassisted, to get another out of a crevasse, but the margin of safety would be very narrow. The method would be quite inapplicable were the weight a disabled or unconscious man, and could scarcely be regarded as justifying a party of two, even with the rope carried double, in undertaking an expedition where the necessity for a rescue was at all probable. Mummery's advocacy of such a party was limited to cases in which he insisted that it should be highly improbable.

The mechanical comparison is this:—In the first case, the

maximum power required is the useful effect *plus* friction. This power would be produced by the united strength of several men, and might easily mean a total pull of five or six hundredweight. In the second case, the maximum power required is to pull in the slack rope. In the first case, the maximum tension on the rope is between the edge and the nearest hauler, and is the same as the maximum power, and as it would probably be applied in a "heave ho" fashion by a succession of jerks, the risk of breaking the rope is not negligible. A jerky succession of pulls of five or six hundredweight is far too much for even first class rope, the breaking strength of which when new is only about a ton. In the second case, the maximum tension is below the edge, and is practically the weight of the man.

In the second problem—to retain a weight in position—any climber, other than the topmost, may be taken as an example. It is the business of the man above him to hold the rope in such a way that if he slips he is at once held. A really good hitch, over a sound rock or an axe well secured, makes this easy so long as the slack is scrupulously taken in, but without this precaution, the problem ceases to be the second, and becomes the third. While every one recognises the value of a good hitch, the help of even a small contact with something secure is not so generally recognised. A man straddling over the top of a chimney, holding in his hands the rope which goes straight to the next man's waist, may think that he is in an excellent position. So he is, so far as he personally is concerned, but he is by no means well placed for sustaining a weight. If he had the rope bent over the rock, even to a comparatively small extent, his power would be much increased. The weight of a man on a rope is a horrible drag, physically and mentally, and could not long be supported without some help, that of friction being usually the handiest.

The instructive letter by Mr J. H. Bell (*S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. IV., p. 347), based on experiments on ropes and falling weights, made by himself and Mr E. W. Green, dealt with the third problem very fully and clearly, and showed how readily its solution might become impossible. The



safety of the rope is entirely illusory in the case of a clear fall from any height. The falling body has acquired energy of motion, due to gravitation having acted on it through a certain space. To stop the motion, a pull in an upward direction must be applied with equal power through the same space, or, if the space is smaller, the power must be proportionally greater. This is in addition to the pull which is required merely to support the weight. If, therefore, a man has fallen ten feet, he could be stopped in the distance of another ten feet, if an upward pull equal to his weight were applied throughout that distance, in addition to the pull required to counteract his weight. If he had to be stopped in, say, one foot, the pull would be such as few ropes and fewer ribs would stand. A case is related in the *Journal* (Vol. III., p. 44) where a quarryman met his death in this way by the crushing in of his ribs, and the writer of that note (the initials are those of the late Mr William Brown) emphasises the point under consideration. In mountaineering, fortunately, a clear fall is uncommon, and the best chance if the topmost man slipped would be that he himself should do his utmost to retard his descent, and that the backer up should, if possible, allow the rope, with a strain on, to run some distance over the hitch. The stretch of the rope prevents in any case an absolutely sudden stoppage, and while this elasticity would be hopelessly insufficient in the case of a clear fall from any height, it is an important element of safety in the case of a "slither." An application of the same principle is to be seen in modern railway termini, where long hydraulic buffers, spreading the stopping power over a greater space, have replaced the old form. Of course, a second man who saw his leader sliding down towards him would, if possible, draw back the slack of the rope through the hitch, so that the retarding power would come into play promptly.

The axe has been evolved as the most effective means of enabling the climber to keep himself in secure contact with the ice. There is at best but little friction between ice and iron-clad boots, and the primary use of the axe is so to shape the ice that the pressure comes on its surface at nearly right angles, so that a small co-efficient of friction

may prevent slipping—in other words, to cut steps. This operation has been fully discussed by numerous writers, and like the various methods of supplementing or increasing friction, such as spikes and crampons, need not be considered here. But the axe has other uses besides step-cutting.

The older members of the Club have, no doubt, a clear recollection of the great "Pick *versus* Spike" controversy, but its chief features may be recalled. It originated in Mr Naismith's article on "Snowcraft in Scotland" (*Journal*, Vol. II., p. 157), in which the opinion was expressed that on a slope of "unmitigated ice" (in which the pick could only get a slight hold), it might be better to have the spike of the axe rather than the pick in contact with the ice. This opinion was vigorously challenged by a well-known Alpine climber, the late Mr J. H. Gibson (Vol. II., p. 322), and Mr Naismith, in a humorously apologetic reply, asked that, in view of the authorities quoted against him, the objectionable passage might be regarded as withdrawn, hinting at the same time that his own opinion remained as before. In his recent article on "Scottish Snow" (Vol. VIII., p. 285), Mr Raeburn expresses entire concurrence with Mr Naismith.

The mechanics of the question are interesting, and in their main features not complicated. The problem is simply to move along an ice-slope (so steep that to stand on its surface is impossible) by means of a series of notches each with an almost level floor. The ideal method is to move as one does on a road, with the weight supported vertically by these steps. Few people can do this with confidence, hence the need for the axe as a lateral support. If the spike is in contact with the ice, it is perfect as a "strut" or prop—to prevent falling toward the ice, but obviously useless as a "tie"—to prevent falling outward. If, on the other hand, the pick is used, the axe becomes of some service as a tie, because some grip can be got with the pick; while it becomes less effective as a strut, because the push is through a bent instead of a straight bar, and it might twist round in the hand. Which condition is the more desirable? It need scarcely be added that if either push or

pull is severe, there is something wrong: any tendency to sway should be at once corrected by an almost infinitesimal force.

There are mountaineers whose balance is so good that it matters little which end is used, the lateral support is altogether formal, and they are safe whichever way they may choose to hold the axe. At the other end of the scale, there is a class for whom the spike is at first sight the more useful, because they are too timid to do anything but crouch in to the slope, and, therefore, will not fall outward. The first class is numerically small; the other is indulging in a dangerous habit, and should be encouraged to pass into an intermediate class, which at least aims at uprightness, and for which therefore there might be a tendency to fall either way. To meet this the pick is obviously required, and it appears to the writer that it should be recommended to all except the very limited number in the first class—of whom we all know that the above-named advocates of the spike are outstanding examples.

It seems strange that the use of the spike should be advocated to induce upright walking. As a mere question of mechanics, one would suppose that nothing would be more likely to induce "crouching-in" than the knowledge that one could check a tendency to that side, but not to the other. The skater on the outside edge, to whom reference has been made, is in a very different position. He balances far from the vertical by virtue of his rapid motion, and the so-called "centrifugal force." A velocity sufficient to develop this to an appreciable extent is not usually attained on a *slope* of ice, and the climber, therefore, has to balance on the vertical, or as near it as possible. The skater, too, learns largely from his *failure* to balance. On most ice slopes the penalty for such failure would be more than a bump, and the opportunities for learning might cease.

A question of similar form, though quite different in principle, comes up in Mr Raeburn's article. In a sitting glissade, is it desirable to brake with the spike of the axe or with its head? The value of the heels for braking is unquestioned, but a brake which acts by ripping up the snow surface in advance of the body raises an unpleasant

smother, and does not conduce to easy steering. Most glissaders would probably prefer to use the axe when control, and not stopping, was required, and as a mere matter of comfort there is a good deal to be said for the method which Mr Raeburn rightly condemns—holding the axe by the lower end, and braking with the blade or pick. As against the probability of emergency, there are many glissades on which the most likely “emergency” is to find the driving power insufficient, and on such slopes the axe might be held across the body, the steering being done by a touch of the elbows. It might almost be said that a sitting glissade on a slope where any other emergency is probable “verges on the *justifiable*.”

When the axe is used as a brake, its purpose is to establish cohesion between the body of the slider and the surface on which he is sliding. If failure occurs, it is by the axe failing to grip the surface, or the slider failing to hold the axe. Either might be disastrous, but the latter is more certainly so, subsequent control being very hopeless when the axe is lost. The axe head gives a grip so much better than the spike, either for the hand or the snow, that it is at the spike end that the hold is most likely to be lost. The axe remains with the snow or the holder, whichever has its head. The argument in favour of braking with the spike might quite well be based on the well-known rule in mechanical design of making the weakest point that at which failure will do least damage.

It appears to the present writer, however, that the conditions in a sitting glissade (voluntary or involuntary) vary so much that no rule can be generally applicable. The emergencies may be of different kinds, and may call sometimes for a quick change of hold. In one case in his own experience, the emergency took the form of getting suddenly on to a harder surface, over which the spike skimmed gaily and helplessly, until a stop was effected by turning the axe and using the pick. In similar circumstances he has seen Mr Naismith pull up by using the pick, after failing to do so with the spike. If, on the other hand, the emergency took the form of sudden increase of steepness, the quickest stop would probably be made by using

the spike as Mr Raeburn suggests. There is little doubt that any attempt to make an emergency stop by catching the surface with the blade while the hold was at the other end, and at the full stretch of the arms, would simply result in the loss of the axe. It would be as bad as the attempt to check a fall by a rigidly held rope. But if the grip is taken well forward so that there is a long give on the arms, and if it is either such as will be dragged along, or can be instantly released and renewed farther down, then a grip may be got with the pick or blade where the spike would completely fail. On a surface of moderate hardness an effective brake might be got by holding the shaft in one hand and one end of the head in the other, and pressing the other end of the head more or less firmly into the snow. In any case some nerve on the part of the climber is implied, and the "personal equation" still further complicates the problem. It is not so much the way in which the axe is held, as the readiness and resource shown by its holder, that will make an emergency stop possible; and experiments on different methods would not only provide useful information, but would tend to produce these important qualities.

In a pure question of snowcraft or icecraft the writer would not venture to differ from either of the above-named authorities, from one of whom, indeed, he has learned practically all he knows of Scottish mountaineering. But in these questions there is more than that, and the following incident, in which he played a humble part as assistant, is not without its moral:—

Once upon a time a party came up to a snow cornice, and resolved to tunnel through. A was an experienced mountaineer, B was well up in navvy work. A and C started to tunnel, B and D sat under some poor shelter, watched, shivered, and criticised. The two busy axes nibbled out the snow in spoonfuls, but the tunnel had made considerable progress, when B's disgust at this method of working, combined with the cold, led him to hustle D out to drive with him an opposition tunnel. In a few minutes its mouth was marked by four deep grooves, and in a few more minutes, a cubic yard (more or less) of

snow had been prized out, and went thundering down the slope. Another and another chunk followed, and when A and C got their heads out of their tunnel, B and D were sitting at the top. There are few applications of science that the mountaineer may not, with advantage, lay under contribution.

When the pictures of glissading, which illustrate the paper on Scottish Snow, were taken, some experiments on stopping were also made. One result may be quoted. After acquiring the utmost pace that the slope could give on a sitting glissade, it was found easy to stop by braking in about six feet. The slide was repeated, and the stop made by a rope hitched round an axe, just as one might, after an actual slip, be stopped by a companion. One trial of this was more than enough for each. The stop, which was easy and pleasant when spread over six feet, was exceedingly unpleasant, and involved possibilities of, at least, minor injury, when made in, perhaps, a foot. And the pace was a mere trifle compared to what would be acquired even in a short fall.

Since the foregoing was written two books have appeared which refer more or less to the matters above considered. "The Climber's Pocket Book" (West), dealing specifically with rock climbing, and chiefly with accidents and first aid, gives interesting and useful illustrations of the use of the rope. The "stirrup rope" is described and illustrated, and the warning is given that "it will be found almost impossible for one man above to manipulate both the ropes." While it is possible that on good snow and with the aid of an axe it would be easier than in such rock work as the author has in view (the illustrations show a climb up the wing wall of a bridge), the warning should not be ignored by snow climbers. In the "Complete Mountaineer" (Abraham) a briefer reference is made to the stirrup rope, and reference is made to several of the mechanical problems which are considered in this paper. The advice there given as to stopping on a snow slide might with advantage be compared with the suggestions made here.

# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## ISLE OF RUM.

(DIVISION VI. GROUP II.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 56'$  to  $57^{\circ} 23'$  N.; Lon.  $6^{\circ} 14'$  to  $6^{\circ} 27\frac{1}{2}'$  W.  
Ordnance Survey (one-inch map), Sheet 60. Bartholomew's  
Reduced Ordnance Survey (half-inch), Sheet 14.

The island of Rum measures nearly nine miles from north to south, and eight and a half from east to west, and is the largest of the group which makes up the parish of Small Isles, Inverness-shire. On the broadest view, it divides into a northern moorland tract, scarcely rising to 1,000 feet altitude, and a southern mountain tract, of which the highest summit, Askival, is 2,659 feet above sea-level. The former division is composed essentially of Torridon sandstone, and the latter mainly of a very interesting group of plutonic igneous rocks of Tertiary age. The geological map (sheet 60) is now being prepared for publication, and the memoir to accompany it, "The Geology of the Small Isles of Inverness-shire," is in the press.

The island, the property of Sir George Bullough, is practically all deer-forest and grouse-moor, and cannot be visited without permission. The mail-steamers from Oban call twice a week on the outward, and twice on the homeward voyage, but there is no accommodation on the island except by special arrangement. Loch Scresort (on the east coast, with Kinloch Castle at its head) makes a good harbour, often used by yachts; and, with favourable winds, a landing can be effected at other points on the coast—Guirdil, Papadil, Dibidil, &c. A driving road runs up Kinloch Glen, and then divides into two branches, one

leading north to Kilmory, and the other south to Harris. From Kinloch, too, a footpath runs along the eastern base of the mountains to Dibidil and Papadil in the south of the island.

What attraction Rum possesses for the climber, resides in the south-eastern part of the island. Here occur the highest peaks, which, despite their modest elevations, present the bold relief of true mountains. The climbing literature seems to be limited to three notices in this *Journal*, as follows :—

1. "Winter Ascents.—No. III. The Rum Mountains," by Hugh T. Munro, Vol. I., No. 6, pp. 259-264 ; 1891.
2. "The Island of Rum," by John B. Pettigrew, Vol. III., No. 7, pp. 278-283 ; 1895.
3. "Askival and Allival, Island of Rum," by H. Raeburn, Vol. IV., No. 23, pp. 301, 302 ; 1897.

Probably these articles, though not exhaustive, touch on most of the features of interest, but it would be well to have a fuller report from a climber better qualified than the present writer. Some account of Rum from the naturalist's point of view is found in "A Vertebrate Fauna of Argyll and the Inner Hebrides," by J. A. Harvie-Brown and Thomas E. Buckley, 1892.

The principal peaks will be noticed in order, generally, from north to south, which is the order in which they would be taken by any one starting from Kinloch. It may be remarked that most of them bear distinctively Norse names. On the earliest map of the Ordnance Survey they appear disguised in a would-be Gaelic dress, Askival, for instance, figuring as Aisgemheall, but this was subsequently abandoned. On the latest edition of the map we find Haskival, with other changes for which no reason is apparent. We shall maintain here the generally accepted forms of the names.

*Barkeval* (1,924 feet).—Ascending Coire Durbh, the valley which opens immediately behind Kinloch Castle, the pedestrian finds himself on the Barkeval Pass (1,550 feet) leading to the head of Glen Harris. On the right (west) is Barkeval, and on the left, Allival. The former is easily ascended from the pass, and its northern side also presents no difficulty. The southern face is more precipitous, and might provide



some climbing, the holds being perfect. Barkeval forms part of an area of peridotite, the most considerable development of this rock in Britain; and its great toughness and hardness, coupled with the extremely rough surface of the rusty-looking slopes, makes this perhaps the best rock in the world for climbing.

*Allival* (2,365 feet).—This peak and its neighbour, Askival, are the best known of the Rùm mountains, being familiar as distant objects to every traveller on the west coast. The rocks here still form part of the peridotite mass; but with the rusty brown rock there alternate gently-inclined, sheet-like masses of a paler, more felspathic type, which make strong escarpments, and the slopes have in consequence a remarkable appearance of bedding. From the summit of Allival a ridge runs out north-west to Barkeval, and another south to Askival. These ridges, especially the former, afford an easy scramble to the top, and the northern face is almost equally easy. Indeed, this mountain presents no difficulty from any side. It looks west down Glen Harris, and east into Coire nan Grundd with its tarn and moraine. To the south rises Askival, connected with Allival by a col, and distant about three-quarters of a mile.

The descent from Allival to the col is only about 300 feet. This point is easily reached from the Barkeval Pass by skirting the slope of the mountain. For variety, the return to Kinloch may be made by Coire nan Grundd and the Dibidil foot-path.

*Askival* (2,659 feet).—This is the finest, as well as the highest, of the Rùm mountains. Besides the ridge to the north, connecting with Allival, one runs out west to Trallval, and another south-south-east to Beinn nan Stac. There is also a short ridge running eastward, on which side the steep wall of the mountain is flanked by a broad platform at about 1,600 feet elevation. Either from the col towards Trallval, at the head of Glen Dibidil, or from that towards Beinn nan Stac, Askival may be easily climbed by traversing obliquely up the south-west face, and finishing with a scramble up a scree-gully on that side. This is the only easy approach, the narrow summit-ridge

being precipitous in every other direction. In clear weather the top commands a comprehensive outlook over Rum and the neighbouring isles, with distant views of the mountains of the mainland and of the Cuillins in the north.

Some climbs on Askival are recorded in the articles already cited. The north ridge, starting from the col between this mountain and Allival, affords about 600 feet of climbing. It is at first an extremely narrow arête, and is then interrupted by a precipitous buttress, the "gendarme" of Munro, which is, in fact, part of a wall encircling the mountain. This can be turned, according to Raeburn, by a gully on the left (east), doubtless the same gully which Pettigrew had previously used in descending by this ridge. Munro, in his earlier ascent, took to the east face, which "though steep—real climbing—presented no particular difficulty."

The west ridge of Askival offers a climb of about 1,000 feet, easy except for the steep summit-escarpment, which can be avoided by traversing to the right. The south ridge is steeper; but Raeburn records that he descended it for about 300 feet from the top, meeting with no difficulties. He also states that Bell and Brown descended the east arête of the mountain, having to leave it for a time to avoid a small perpendicular drop.

*Beinn nan Stac* (about 1,850 feet).—This hill stands about three-quarters of a mile south-south-east of Askival, with the southerly ridge of which it connects, while on the other side it slopes sharply away to the sea. Its west face, overlooking Glen Dibidil, is steep, but is not likely to afford much climbing; and the rocks (much-disturbed Torridonian strata) are not so sound as those which build the higher peaks.

The col between this hill and Askival is, perhaps, 1,650 feet. The best way from here to Kinloch is over the platform already mentioned, on the east side of Askival, and down by Coire nan Grundd.

*Trallval* (about 1,800 feet).—Trallval is situated one mile west of Askival, with a connecting ridge, over which a pass, Bealach an Oir (1,550 feet), leads from Glen Harris to Glen Dibidil. This hill, like Barkeval, has

an east to west extension, and it consists of the same tough peridotite, with rough, rusty-brown surface. It may be ascended without difficulty from the pass just mentioned, the rather steep summit being approached from its north side. The ascent from Glen Harris also presents no difficulty. The south face is in part steeper, and might afford some climbing.

*Ashval* (2,552 feet).—The continuous ridge of Ashval and Sgùrr nan Gillean, a mile long, rises on the west side of Glen Dibidil, which divides it from Askival and Beinn nan Stac. Ashval is about one mile south-west of Askival, and half a mile south of Trallval. The pass, Bealach an Fhuirain, which divides it from the last-named peak, and leads from the head of Glen Dibidil to Fiadh-innis, is about 1,730 feet in altitude. This point may be reached in two hours from Kinloch by the Barkeval Pass and Bealach an Oir, skirting the heads of Glen Harris and Glen Dibidil without descending more than is necessary.

Ashval is easily climbed either from the north or from the west by choosing a suitable route. Both Munro and Pettigrew have recorded their experiences of the north ridge. Immediately above Bealach an Fhuirain it is impossibly precipitous, but this part can be avoided by taking a scree and a gully on the right (west). The rest presents no difficulty, unless the climber is scrupulous to follow the crest-line of the ridge; but it is an uninteresting scramble, and, as Pettigrew remarks, the rock is, in places, very rotten. It should be noted that Ashval and Sgùrr nan Gillean differ in geological constitution from the other mountains. The summit ridge is a thick sheet of quartzfelsite, sometimes rather shattered and decayed, while the flanks consist of brecciated Torridon Sandstone and other rocks, all inferior to peridotite from the climber's point of view. The east face of Ashval is steep and broken, in places perilous for the reason just indicated, but generally without interest.

From the highest point (only surpassed in Rum by Askival) a broad, smooth ridge, often grassy, leads in a generally southward direction to Sgùrr nan Gillean. At about a quarter of a mile from the summit of Ashval, a

spur runs out to the left (east) towards Glen Dibidil, enclosing a corrie.

*Sgùrr nan Gillean* (2,503 feet).—About half a mile south of Ashval the broad ridge, after dipping to about 2,250 feet, rises to an unnamed summit at about 2,475 feet. There is no pronounced peak, and we may perhaps regard it as merely the north-west shoulder of *Sgùrr nan Gillean*. From here a ridge named *Leac a' Chaisteil* runs out somewhat north of west to *Ruinsival*, a distance of one and a half mile. On the east side of the main ridge is a corrie, bounded on the north by the spur already mentioned, and on the south by *Sgùrr nan Gillean*. This, locally called *Stony Corrie*, is presumably the place into which Munro wandered in the mist, as described in his account. Its walls are everywhere steep, and on the south side precipitous.

There is very little dip in the ridge between the nameless peak and the summit of *Sgùrr nan Gillean*. Here the ground falls away to north or north-east into the corrie just mentioned. To south and south-west are easy slopes; and, though the east face is steep, it possesses nothing to attract the climber.

*Ruinsival* (about 1,650 feet).—The ridge *Leac a' Chaisteil*, which has been mentioned as extending westward from the ridge of Ashval and *Sgùrr nan Gillean*, makes the southern boundary of *Fiadh-innis*, called also the *Sandy Corrie*. It sinks gradually to below 1,500 feet, and then rises again to terminate in *Ruinsival*. This hill, composed of peridotite, has a bold front to the north, and the west slope is also a steep one, though ascended without difficulty.

In conclusion, it will be sufficient to mention briefly the other noteworthy hills of Rum, which are situated in the western part of the island. The most considerable of these is *Orval* (1,869 feet), the highest point of an area of granite which occupies this part of Rum. It is connected eastward with a somewhat lower hill, *Beinn a' Bhàrr-shaibh*, the col between constituting the head of *Glen Duibhal*, which runs south to *Harris*. Westward, *Orval* extends to another summit named *Sròn an t-Saighdeir* (the soldier's nose), 1,706 feet, the northern face of this ridge making a curved

rampart which encloses the head of Glen Guirdil. The eastern part of this rampart, *i.e.*, the northerly spur of Orval itself, presents a bold range of precipitous crags, and is made by a mass of hard, metamorphosed basalt. Elsewhere this group has the rounded, boulder-strewn surface so often found in a granite country.

North of the spur just mentioned, and divided from it by a pass, is a more shapely hill, Fionn-Chrò (about 1,550 feet). This is built by sheets of a very peculiar dark rock, which also makes the summit of Creag nan Stardean, one and a half mile farther west. The latter, better known as Bloodstone Hill (1,273 feet), falls away precipitously to the sea on the north-west side, and is steep also on the north-east towards Guirdil. To the south it slopes gently, and it is approached on this side by a good track, which comes over the pass south of Fionn-Chrò. This tract was originally made for working the bloodstone, which occurs as a band on the north face of the hill, a little below the summit.

A. H.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

GENERAL MEETING.

THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Central Station Hotel, Glasgow, on the evening of Friday, 6th December 1907, with the President, Mr John Rennie, in the chair.

The minutes of the Eighteenth Annual General Meeting were read and approved.

The HON. TREASURER, Mr Nelson, submitted his statement for the past year, showing a balance in favour of the Club of £196. 11s. 1d. The income of the Club had been £127. 9s. 11d., and the expenditure £139. 4s. 10d. (of which £66. 15s. 5d. went to the *Journal*, £16. 12s. 1d. to the Club room, £22. 17s. 9d. to additions to Library and Lantern Slide Collection and cost of Library Catalogue, &c., £8. 5s. 6d. to the Club Reception, £2 subscription to Scottish Rights of Way Society, the balance, £22. 14s. 1d. being for sundry expenses). Besides the above account, the Treasurer submitted that of the Commutation Fund, showing that fifty members were now on the roll, and that there was a balance of £287. 15s. 8d. at its credit. The funds of the Club thus being at 31st October 1907, £484. 6s. 9d., of which £357. 14s. 6d. is invested in four per cent. South Australian Government Stock. The accounts were approved.

The HON. SECRETARY, Dr Inglis Clark, reported that nine new members had been elected to the Club, viz. :— Edward Backhouse, John Burns, George Ednie, William Fraser, Hugh Smith Ingram, John Francis Johns, Henry Kellas, Henry Irving Pinches, and Alfred David Smith, and that the membership of the Club was now 173. At the beginning of the year the membership of the Club had been 168, of whom one had died and three had resigned.

The HON. LIBRARIAN, Mr Goggs, reported that a catalogue of the books in the Club's Library had been prepared, and a copy sent to each member in October.

He hoped that this would have the result of making the Library better known to and more used by the members of the Club. As regards the collection of slides, Mr Goggs reported that four typewritten copies of the slide catalogue had been made. Members could, therefore, now make their selection of slides with the catalogue in front of them. The Librarian requested that negatives of suitable photographs should be sent him, from which slides could be made for the Club collection at the Club's expense.

THE OFFICE-BEARERS, with the exception of those retiring, were re-elected.

Mr GILBERT THOMSON was elected President in room of Mr John Rennie, whose term of office had expired.

Mr GODFREY SOLLY was elected Vice-President in room of Mr James Drummond, whose term of office had expired.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD HILL and Mr JAMES A. PARKER were elected Members of Committee in room of Messrs Garden and Russell, who retired by rotation.

It was decided to hold the New Year's Meet at Fort-William, and the Easter one at Tyndrum and Braemar.

#### NINETEENTH ANNUAL DINNER.

AT the close of the General Meeting, the Annual Dinner was held in the same hotel, with the President, Mr John Rennie, in the chair. The members present numbered fifty-two, and the guests thirty-two.

The toasts proposed were :—

The King - - - - The President.

The Imperial Forces - - - - The President.

*Reply*—Colonel A. M'Innes Shaw.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club - The President.

Our Playgrounds - - - - H. Raeburn.

*Reply*—Lord Provost of Glasgow.

The Alpine Club and Kindred Societies J. Grove.

*Reply*—Charles Pilkington, A.C., and Lewis

Moore (Yorkshire Ramblers' Club).

Our Guests - - - - Wm. C. Smith, K.C.

*Reply*—Sir John Ure Primrose, Bart.

Immediately before the toast of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, Mr William Douglas was, in view of his approaching marriage, presented by the President, on behalf of the Club, with a silver tea service, which had been subscribed for by practically all the members. For the benefit of those who were unable to be at the Dinner, the President's remarks and Mr Douglas' reply are given below :—

The PRESIDENT—Mr William Douglas and gentlemen, among all the many accidents and incidents that happen in the mountaineering world, that which occasions this interlude must surely be classed among the pleasant ones. Mountaineers are liable to accidents that may happen to them among the rocky fastnesses of the hills, in pursuit of their calling as hillmen, and also to accidents that may happen to them as men in the cosy recesses of a balcony, and it is among the latter class that the accident which makes this pause in the usual routine of our Dinner must be put. It is an accident that the Club has been long and anxiously looking forward to, for it gives the members an opportunity of expressing their indebtedness and thanks to the Honorary Editor of their *Journal* in a more tangible and lasting way than the formal passing of votes of thanks at recurring yearly meetings. To imagine the Scottish Mountaineering Club without its *Journal* is to imagine a vain thing—a thing too slim and fatuous for the mind of man to grasp, and it is to the Editor of that *Journal*, which bulks so largely in our Club life, that we would do honour to-night. To give praise to the *Journal* just now is not my object, living as we do in its reflected glory. On this occasion I wish to offer the Editor our thanks for what he has done for us as a Club, and to assure him that his long-continued and heavy labours are recognised and appreciated by his fellow-members. And therefore, Mr William Douglas, I have been asked to present to you for your acceptance this silver tea service, subscribed for by a unanimous vote of your fellow-members and given to you as a token of their high esteem, and at the same time to wish you, in their name, all manner of good luck and happiness in your married life.



Mr WILLIAM DOUGLAS in replying said: Mr Rennie, and gentlemen, I am so deeply touched by this expression of your goodwill towards me that I have no words in which to tell what I feel. Really, boys, it is awfully good of you to mark my happiness in this delightful way, and I need hardly say that I shall ever guard this gift of yours as one of my most treasured possessions. Gentlemen, although my love for the hills of Scotland dates back to many years before this Club was formed, yet I have learned to love them more and to understand them better while roaming among them in your company. In fact, this Club has become a part of my life in a way I little dreamed of when I joined it some eighteen years ago. If ever I have done anything for the Club, it has been already repaid me more than a hundredfold in the pleasure it has given me and in the friendships I have made among its members, and I little expected that I would ever be honoured as you have honoured me to-night. Gentlemen, for your good wishes to me and my future wife and for this most acceptable gift I have to thank you from the bottom of my heart.

#### RECEPTION.

Previous to the Meeting, the Club held a reception at the Athenæum, George Square, Glasgow, which was attended by a large gathering of members and their friends. Mr Gilbert Thomson showed a number of the newest Club Slides, and Dr Inglis Clark, besides exhibiting some of his own extremely artistic Scottish views, showed several illustrating the sport of skiing in the Tyrol.

F. S. G.

CLUB-ROOM AND LIBRARY.

IN accordance with the wishes of the members of the Club, as expressed at the 1906 General Meeting, a catalogue of the books in the Club's Library has been prepared and printed, and a copy was sent each member last October.

Four typewritten copies of the catalogue of the collection of lantern slides owned by the Club have also been made. A copy of this slide catalogue can now be borrowed by any member, who will thus be enabled to select suitable slides for any lecture or address he may be wishing to give.

It is hoped that members will not be slow to take full advantage of the wealth contained within the four walls of the Club-Room.

The thanks of the Club are recorded to the respective donors of the following additions to the Library, &c.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Anderson (Joseph). Scotland in Early Christian Times. 1881. 2 vols. - -	Wm. Douglas.
Anderson (Joseph). Scotland in Pagan Times. 1883 and 1886. 2 vols. - -	"
Mitchell (Sir Arthur). The Past in the Present. 1880 - - - - -	"
Jackson (Rev. James). A Series of Letters written by the Rev. Jas. Jackson describing his Octogenarian Climbing Exploits in Cumberland. 1874-1878. (Reprinted from <i>Penrith Observer</i> , November and December 1906) - -	W. Inglis Clark.
Freshfield (Douglas W.) The Exploration of the Caucasus. 1902. 2 vols. -	Purchased.
Maclagan (Miss Christian). The Hill Forts, Stone Circles, &c., of Ancient Scotland. 1875 - - - - -	"
Harker (Alfred). The Overthrust Torridonian Rocks of Rum. Ex <i>Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society</i> , May 1903 - - - - -	A. Harker.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Harker (Alfred). The Geological Structure of the Sgurr of Eigg. Ex <i>Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society</i> , February 1906 - - - - -	A. Harker.
The Traveller's Guide through Scotland, 3rd edition. 1806 - - - - -	Purchased.
Pleasure Tours in Scotland. 4th edition. 1827 - - - - -	"
The Economical Tourist. Scotland. 1838, Edinburgh - - - - -	"
Cary's New Itinerary. 11th edition. London	"
Breadalbane (Marchioness of). The High Tops of Black Mount. 1907 - - -	"
Maxwell (Sir Herbert). Scottish Land Names: their Origin and Meaning. 1894 - - - - -	"
Christison (David). Early Fortifications in Scotland, Motes, Camps, and Forts. 1898 - - - - -	"
Mackinlay (James M.) Folklore of Scottish Lochs and Springs. 1893 - - -	"
Guthrie (E. J.) Old Scottish Customs, Local and General. 1885 - - -	"
Mackenzie (W. C.) Short History of the Scottish Highlands and Isles. 1906 -	"
Miller (Hugh). The Old Red Sandstone; or, New Walks in an Old Field. 1906 -	"
Thomson (James). Recollections of a Speyside Parish Fifty Years Ago, and Miscellaneous Poems. 1887 - - -	"
Macmillan (Hugh, D.D.) Rothiemurchus. 1907 - - - - -	"
Forsyth (Rev. W., M.A., D.D.) In the Shadow of Cairngorm: Chronicles of the United Parishes of Abernethy and Kincardine. 1900 - - - - -	"
Stephen (Sir Leslie). The Playground of Europe. 1899 - - - - -	"
The Mountain Club Annual. Cape Town. Six numbers - - - - -	G. F. Travers-Jackson.

All the above books appear in the Library Catalogue.

The following books were received after the Catalogue went to press, and are consequently NOT included in the Library Catalogue.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
The Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club. No. 1. 1907 - - - -	Fell and Rock Climbing Club.
The Canadian Alpine Journal. Vol. I., No. 1. 1907 - - - -	Mrs Douie Urquhart.
Zincke (Rev. F. Barham). A Walk in the Grisons, being a Third Month in Switzerland. 1875 - - - -	D. Sime.
Shepard (J. S.) Over the Dovrefjelds [Norway]. 1873 - - - -	"
Despine (Baron). Practical Guide to the Baths of Aix in Savoy. 1870 - -	"
Excursions d'Avignon, &c. Par L. M***. 1874 - - - -	"
Memoirs of the Geological Survey. The Geological Structure of the North-West Highlands of Scotland. Edited by Sir Archibald Geikie. 1907 - - -	Purchased.
Fitz Gerald (C. A.) The Highest Andes. 1899 - - - -	"
Muston (Rev. Dr Alexis). The Israel of the Alps : a History of the Persecutions of the Waldenses. 2nd Edition, illustrated. 1853 - - - -	Adam Smail.
Worsfold (Rev. J. N., M.A.) The Vaudois of Piedmont. 1873 - - - -	"
Gilly (Rev. Wm. Stephen, M.A.) Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piedmont, in the year 1823, and Researches among the Vaudois or Waldenses. 2nd Edition. 1825 - -	"
Anglo-American Magazine, August 1901, containing, <i>inter alia</i> , "Nature in the Alps." T. Johnston Evans - - -	"
Views Afoot ; or, Europe seen with Knapsack and Staff. Bayard Taylor. 1871. [Contains Notes of a Visit to Scotland in 1844] - - - -	"
Alpine Club. Rules and List of Members. 1886 - - - -	"

	By whom presented (when not purchased)-
Ball's Alpine Guide. New Edition :-	
Hints and Notes, Practical and Scientific, for Travellers in the Alps.	
1899 - - - - -	Purchased.
Vol. I. The Western Alps. 1898 -	"
Vol. II. The Central Alps. Part I.	
1907 - - - - -	"

#### LANTERN SLIDES.

Fawn, a Few Days Old - - - - -	A. W. Russell.
Ptarmigan: Example of Protective Colouring	"
Glen Brittle - - - - -	F. Greig.
Ben Nevis, &c. (12) - - - - -	H. MacRobert.
Ben Lui, &c. (6) - - - - -	E. B. Robertson.
Skye, &c. (22) - - - - -	Prof. Norman Collie.

#### ALPINE CLUB JUBILEE.

THE Scottish Mountaineering Club were honoured by an invitation to send an official representative to the Jubilee Dinner of the Alpine Club at Lincoln's Inn Hall, London, on Tuesday, 17th December 1907.

Our President, Mr Gilbert Thomson, attended the Dinner in that capacity, and a large number of S.M.C. men, some of whom came from as far north as Aberdeen, were also present as members of the Alpine Club.

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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*The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions. These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.*

### S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1907.

MESSRS BARRIE and GROVE were at Grindelwald, Belalp, and Chamonix for a fortnight in August. They ascended the Wetterhorn (Grove only), crossed the Monchjoch to Belalp, climbed the Hohstock, and were forced by a breakdown in the weather to give up at *le petit plateau* the ascent of Mont Blanc.

Messrs Burns, Macalister, MacRobert, and J. C. Thomson seem to have tried to solve a problem in permutations and combinations, as will be seen from the following attempt to record their doings.

Messrs BURNS and MACALISTER spent three weeks in the Pennines in August. From Arolla, with Messrs Arthur and M'Dougall (non-members), they traversed the Petite Dent de Veisivi and Mont Collon. Joined by J. C. Thomson, the party traversed the Aiguilles Rouges, and spent a short day on the Rochers Noirs, returning by the icefall. MacRobert then arrived, and the four members traversed Mont Blanc de Seilon. MacRobert and Thomson now followed in the footsteps of their friends, and traversed Petite Dent de Veisivi and Mont Collon. Macalister visited the Bertol Cabane, hoping to ascend the Dent Blanche, but the weather proving unpropitious, he crossed the Col d'Hérens to Zermatt, where he rejoined Burns. From Zermatt they traversed the Matterhorn to Breuil, and returned next day by the Theodule Pass, ascending the Breithorn on the way. They afterwards crossed the Alphubeljoch to Saas-Fée, and Burns proceeded homeward from Stalden. MacRobert and Thomson in their turn crossed the Cols Bertol and d'Hérens to the Schwarzee, and the former ascended the Matterhorn; then Macalister joined the two, and the three had a very wet, guideless climb up the Matterhorn Couloir of the Riffelhorn. Macalister afterwards visited the Oberland, meeting Messrs Grove and Barrie at Bel Alp, but the weather breaking and a visit to the Concordia hut proving unfruitful, he tramped to Grindelwald *via* Gletsch, the Grimsel, Meiringen, and the Great Scheidegg, whence he returned home.

Dr COLIN CAMPBELL was in Switzerland in August, and did the following climbs :—

1. The Lecki Pass from Gletsch to Airolo.
2. Airolo to Tosa Falls by the San Giacomo Pass.
3. Tosa Falls to Binn by the Hohsand Pass.
4. The Südlenzspitze from the Mischabel hut by the north-east arête, thence to the Nadelhorn by the ridge, and back to the Mischabel hut. Time, eleven and three-quarter hours, including halts.
5. From the Hôtel Weissmies to the Fletschhorn (traversing it from the north arête to the Fletschjoch), and up the Laquinhorn by north-east arête and down to Hôtel by the great west rock buttress, in ten and a quarter hours, including halts.

Dr, Mrs, Miss, and Mr C. INGLIS CLARK made a unique and highly successful motor-mountaineering visit to the Eastern Alps. Shipping their motor, a 15 H.P. Humber, from Leith to Rotterdam, the outward route comprised Cologne, Wiesbaden, Heidelberg, Stuttgart, and Ulm. The Tyrol was entered at Reutte, and the Fern Pass crossed to the Upper Inn valley. The Stelvio Pass was ascended by motor, and a guideless ascent of the Ortler failed through indisposition. Descending by Meran to Bozen, the southern range of the Dolomites was crossed to Predazzo, and the Fassa Valley explored, the motor reaching the summits of the Pordoi and Costalunga Passes. San Martino was reached by the Rolle Pass, and a week spent in mountain ascents. The Cimon della Pala was traversed from north to south. The ascent of the Campanile di Roda and traverse of Cima di Roda from Pravi-tale hut formed, with the subsequent crossing of the (at that time) difficult Passo di Ball, an attractive expedition. The Sass Maor was also ascended. The party divided, half going by motor to Venice, and returning over the Croce Pass to Cadore and the Auronza Valley. The others crossed on foot the Cereda Pass and made their way by Forcella di Lago to Cortina. From Schluderbach, the Kleine Zinne and Durrenstein were ascended. Crossing the Brenner to Innsbruck the Karwendel Valley was explored, but, owing to bad weather, no climbing was attempted. The fine peaks of the Hinteranthal were sampled, and the Speckarspitz ascended by a direct and interesting route from the Haller Anger Haus. The climbing part of the holiday ended with a guideless ascent of the Zugspitz, the highest point in Germany. The homeward route was by Nurnberg, Frankfort, Cologne, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam. The motor crossed eighteen high passes, and gave no trouble during the entire trip.

Mr GARDEN, Mr DOUGLAS, and four friends of the Alpine Club were in Norway in August, when they were favoured with such inclement weather as to put all the rock-climbs of the Horungtinder out of the question. They, however, crossed the Riings Skar from Vetti to Turtegrö, and ascended to Dyrhougstinder twice. They also

crossed the Justedalsbræ from Fjærland to Aamot *via* the Fonsdal, and returned to Fjærland *via* Skei, Lunde, and the Lunde Skar. The whole party were delighted with Norway, and Turtegrö will ever remain in the memory of one, if not in the minds of all, as the most charming spot in the whole world. One of the party, however, had to rush home to the English Lakes to get a little climbing before the season closed. Some of his deeds of valour are chronicled in song, as printed on p. 46.

Mr S. A. GILLON was in Norway in July, and used the only two available days at his disposal to climb Store Troldtind and Store Vengetind, both from Aandsalues in Romsdalen. Matthias Soggemon, who is now over sixty years of age, was guide, and a very competent one at that, as well as a delightful companion. There was more snow than usual in the Romsdal district this year, but neither mountain presented any serious difficulty except a short pitch from the final col on the Troldtind up to the summit ridge. There was thick mist on the Troldtind, but from the Vengetind a superb view of Mjøltnir was unfolded.

Any one thinking of visiting Lofoten might well consider the claims of Narvik as an additional climbing centre. The huge "Bræ" Frostisen is said to offer many fine mountaineering expeditions. A perfect paradise for salvationists seems to be supplied by Abisko on Torneträsk in Sweden. There is an admirable "Turisthotel" and splendid air, as testified to by the vigour of the insects.

Messrs T. E. GOODEVE and H. WALKER were in the Alps in August. Like most other climbers this year their plans were frequently upset by the very unsettled weather.

Starting from Zermatt they crossed the Alphubeljoch to Saas-Fée, from which place the following ascents were made, viz. :—Laquinhorn, Weissmies, Portjengrat.

It was intended to return to Zermatt by the Südlenszspitz, Nadelhorn route, but owing to the rocks being badly glazed with ice, the Sudlenz had to be left out and Randa was reached by the Nadelhorn, Snec-Nadelhorn, and Hochberghorn. A very high wind was experienced, and all the party suffered more or less from the excessive cold. From Zermatt the Trifhorn was ascended, and the party were caught in the bad storm of the 15th August when on their way to the gîte for the Dent Blanche, and were forced to return to Zermatt.

Goodeve then returned to England, and Walker spent a week in the Oberland huts, but continuous bad weather and fresh snow effectually prevented any further climbing.

Mr R. P. HOPE sends the following account of his doings :—

I was climbing this year as usual with Mr W. T. Kirkpatrick, with-out guides, and we did Gross Spannort and crossed next day into the



Meienthal. Owing to bad weather we trained, &c., to Göschenenalp and crossed Winterlucke to Tiefengletsch, and by Nägelis Grätli to Grimsel. Went to Finsteraarhorn hut and traversed Finsteraarhorn by south-east arête and down to Hugsattel. Next day it snowed, and the following day we crossed Agassizjoch to Schwarzegg hut, having trouble in coming down from the Finsteraarjoch owing to a snowstorm, which caused us to descend to Grindelwald, as I was suffering from inflamed eyes. We had carried provisions over from the Finsteraar hut, and "cached" them under a rock. Three days later we went up again and did the Schreckhorn by ordinary way. It was excessively hot at the hut, though fine, and, knowing a storm would follow, we did not care to risk any more difficult route. The storm caught us on the top, but passed off in a couple of hours and never caused much delay. It came on again just after we got to the Baregg, and was very bad all night. We then went to Chamonix and did the Grand Dru at the second attempt, being stopped the first day by a snowstorm on the ledge where the pendulum rope hangs. We did Les Courtes in a leisurely way, and got caught by a short storm on the summit ridge, and another very bad one on the Mer de Glace in the dark, and did not get in till 11 P.M. All rock climbs were now impossible for some days, so we concluded with the Aiguille d'Argentière on a perfect day, though bad condition. Later, I joined Larden, Legh Powell, and Brushfield, and Larden and I did the Tour Noir from Ferret.

Messrs LING and RAEBURN had a delightful holiday, if a somewhat stormy one, in Dauphiné, the Graians, and on Mont Blanc in July and August. After three days' bad weather in the Promontoire hut on the Meije, and a little exploratory climbing, they were forced, by lack of provisions, to cross the Brèche to La Grave, four hours from the hut, 28th July.

An attempt was then made to traverse the Meije the reverse way to that usually followed, but after a night on a rock shelf on the Bec de l'Homme, the climbers found themselves, at 3.30 A.M. next morning, at the height of 1,200 feet below the Pic Central, in a furious blizzard. They were forced to retreat, and did the 7,000 feet to La Grave in two and a quarter hours. Giving up Dauphiné, the party crossed the Col de Galibier to St Michel de Maurienne, and took rail to Modane. From Modane they drove up the Arc Valley to Bonneval and crossed, with a fast porter, the Col d'Isère over to Val d'Isère.

From Val d'Isère the whole arête, 3 miles, of the Dome de la Sache (11,840 feet), Mont Pourri (12,430 feet), was traversed, cold wind and quite homelike mist on the Sache, but fine weather later and splendid views, especially of the south side of Mont Blanc from Pourri. This is believed to be the first *descent* by north-east ridge; it makes a very good climb.

Leaving Val d'Isère at 12.35 A.M. on 5th August for Italy, they

went *via* the summit of the Tsanteleina (11,830 feet), along the frontier, over the peaks of the Cime de Quart Dessus (11,400 feet), Pointe de Bazel (11,305 feet), Pointe de Calabre, and tried the traverse of the Rocca Bassagne. The south arête of this peak proving very rotten and also overhanging, a return was made over the summit again to the Col de Calabre, descent to head of Isère Valley up to and through Col de Galise, and a long walk down the wild and striking Orco Valley to Ceresole—9 P.M., twenty and a half hours, and over 10,000 feet of climbing. After two days of bad weather at Ceresole, the southern face of Gran Paradiso was climbed from a boulder, which had served as a night shelter in the upper part of the Noaschetta Glen. On the summit they were caught by a severe thunderstorm, and Raeburn received a rather heavy, Ling a slighter, stroke of lightning. A quick descent was made by the easy way to the Emmanuel hut.

Crossing next day from the Val Savaranche to Val de Rhêmes by the Col de l'Entrelor, the whole party, a young porter, Elisée Dayné, making a third, were again struck by lightning—only a slight shock, however. From the Curé's house at Notre Dame de Rhêmes they made the traverse of the Bec de l'Invergnan (11,838 feet) by east ridge (second ascent by this route, first amateur), descending to the Val Grisanche through splendid larch forests to a farm house, "Maison Charles Busson," below L'Eglise. Next morning a charming walk down this lovely valley, and the morning motor from Aosta to Courmayeur, was caught at Liverogne.

Ascending to the Sella hut on the Rocher du Mont Blanc, the pair crossed Mont Blanc on the 15th August. The severe storm of that date caught them on the summit, and a descent was made to Chamonix in four and a quarter hours by the ordinary route, in spite of dense mist and driving snow. A visit to the Bossons Glacier finished the holiday.

Dr T. G. LONGSTAFF, with Major the Hon. C. G. BRUCE and A. L. MUMM, did a three months' trip in the Garhwal Himalaya. A difficult pass of over 19,000 feet was made from the Bagini Glacier into the Rishi Valley. Trisul (23,406 feet) was ascended. The glaciers round Kamet were explored, a height of over 19,000 feet being reached. In August and September the Doctor explored the Sukeram basin, while the rest of the party went to Kashmir.

Messrs EUAN B. ROBERTSON and P. J. H. UNNA carried out the following Swiss programme during the month of August:—

Aiguille du Tour from Cabane d'Orny, returning by Fenêtre de Saleinaz to the Saleinaz Cabane. (Guideless.)

Aiguille d'Argentière, traversed from Saleinaz Cabane, and returning over the Col de Chardonnet.

Grand Clocher de Planeureuse, from Saleinaz Cabane. (Guideless.)

Col de Sonadon, from Valsorey hut to Chanrion.  
 Col de la Reusse d'Arolla, from Chanrion to Prarayé.  
 Col de Valpelline, from Prarayé to Zermatt.

At Zermatt Mr Unna found that he had in some way sustained an internal strain, and Mr Robertson perforce proceeded alone to Ried, and after climbing the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn went to the Concordia hut over the Lötschenlücke. From here the Jungfrau and the Finsteraarhorn were done. Bad weather then set in and prevented any further ascents.

Mr and Mrs A. W. RUSSELL spent some ten days at Champex in September, and climbed the Aiguille du Tour. The weather was very broken.

Mr GODFREY A. SOLLY was at Arolla and Zinal, and made a few guideless climbs which included Mount Collon, Petite Dent de Veisivi (traversed), the Grand Cornier, and the Col du Grand Cornier.

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LINES WRITTEN IN DEPRESSION NEAR ROSTHWAITE.

(Air—"Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching.")

WHEN I climb upon the rocks  
 I suffer horrid shocks  
 As up gully, crag, or chimney I am led.  
 I scabble and I tussle  
 Though I haven't any muscle  
 And am sadly inefficient in the head.

*Chorus.*

Haul ! haul ! haul ! my feet are slipping !  
 My handholds all are loose and wet.  
 Oh, keep me very tight  
 For my balance isn't right,  
 I've eternity below me, don't forget !

On the Pillar Rock sublime,  
 In essaying the North climb,  
 I found the Stomach Traverse very tight,  
 And when I reached the Nose,  
 To add unto my woes,  
 Fell and dangled on the rope and got a fright.

Haul ! haul ! haul ! &c.

On the Eagle's Nest Arête,  
I got in such a state,  
That to use the stirrup rope I was compelled.  
But I could not get the knack,  
So was hauled up like a sack ;  
And my knuckles on the rocks contused and swelled.

Haul ! haul ! haul ! &c.

When we went with Haskett Smith  
My climbing was a myth,  
For he always pulled me up upon the rope.  
But I fear I didn't grumble,  
For without it I should tumble,  
And 'twas better than to sit below and mope.

Haul ! haul ! haul ! &c.

In a gully on Great End  
My foothold did descend,  
And I descended with it down the pitch,  
Green with fear and moss and mud  
And the sight of Haskett's blood,  
Whose hands had drawn up sharp against the hitch.

Haul ! haul ! haul ! &c.

Even in my bed, asleep,  
About the rocks I creep,  
With my nightclothes whirling wildly in the gale,  
With the rope around my neck  
And my nerves a perfect wreck  
And loose boulders falling down on me like hail.

Haul ! haul ! haul ! &c.

S. S.

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DEAR MR EDITOR,—It is becoming almost a habit with me to inform you of the doings of Sassenachs north of the Border, at least "this is the third time of asking" on your part for such an account, but I may yet remind you that "marriage is a serious business."

The last occasion was when I was taken motoring to Scotland, and the holiday just concluded was of the same nature, with one more passenger, Edward Backhouse, and the same driver W. A. Mounsey, in the same car.

As the road travelling was perhaps the most important feature, I may say a word or two about that first. We left Sunderland in rain from the south-east which pursued us all the way to Kinlochewe *via* Achnasheen.

We returned to the same point on the railway and went down to

Strome Ferry, which we crossed comfortably, and then to Kyle of Lochalsh where the ferry boat planks are the best seen anywhere. There was no difficulty with the road from Kyleakin as far as the head of Loch Ainort; there we found shore gravel forming the bottom as well as the top dressing of the roadway, and several small streams crossing it had to be bumped through. A little farther and we came to a hill known as Druim na Cleoch, where speed was reduced to a minimum of about one mile an hour owing to the same kind of road metal. Had not two young natives of Sconser come up in the nick of time we might have had to leave the car on the roadside for the night and return with help in the morning. It was the hardest climb we made in our mountaineering holiday.

From Sligachan we went to Glen Brittle twice. The road after Drynoch is "no very chancy" for a motor car, being narrow, and loose stones (representing repairs) are apt to be sharp, the twisting ruts make steering uneasy and the steep rise on a turf-bottomed road just past "the elbow" turn crossing a stream, was on the first occasion rather tough. The several plank bridges looked new and stood our 17 cwt. all right. The one at "the elbow" might be difficult for a long car to pass and a heavy one might drop through the bridge close to Glen Brittle House, but that's at the *end* of the journey and one would be *there* right enough.

To go over to this glen by car takes about an hour and is a great saving of time and strength, and I suppose gives four hours more in the day for whatever climbs may be in prospect.

We also visited the Quirang, passing the new houses put up by the Congested Districts Board—a term which sounds somewhat ironical to folk from our part of the country when viewing the wide wastes of Skye. That day the car was constantly interfering with the proper mustering of Lovat's Scouts, and on meeting a small company under command, the engine had to be stopped and restarted, of course, in a heavy shower of rain.

We returned from the Quirang to Carbost, and went round by Dunvegan to Drynoch and so back to Sligachan, making eighty-seven miles. The geology of the island was interestingly evident in the different kinds of rock used for road metal in the various districts.

On the return journey to Sunderland we crossed the ferry again at Kyleakin, then from Ardelve to Totaig (under sail) so as once more to see the beauty of Glen Shiel. It was a disappointment, for which we were not unprepared, to find Shiel Inn closed, and from what we heard there, it is likely to remain so, in the interests of the extending deer forests. The Totaig slipway is very uncomfortable for landing, if not impossible at low water; we were there not five minutes too soon. The charge was 12s. At Kyleakin and Strome we paid 10s., and at Ballachulish 1s. per cwt.

We got to Kingshouse that same evening, in wild weather, the road up Glencoe being firmer than when the coaches are running. The next morning was as hopelessly wet as it can be at Kingshouse,

and we fled southwards after lunch as far as Lanark. A sharp look-out was kept for Ben Lomond as we ran down the side of the loch, but nothing could be seen. This was the second time I had been disappointed, but as both days happen to have been Sundays I conclude that the good man keeps the house on that day, and feel rebuked accordingly.

Our last day was the only really fine one, and we reached Sunderland again with the sun shining. The total mileage was 940—to a foot! In spite of the wet and mud (“clarts” they were called at Kinlochewe) we kept up to speed limit on the good roads and on the bad averaged rather less than fifteen miles to the hour.

The weather, as every one knows to their cost, during the early part of June was “simply dreadful,” and the constant rain spoiled a great many of our brave intentions.

Suffice it to say that in 18½ days we enjoyed not more than 36 hours of sun, and on no occasion during that time could the luminary be accused of shining regardless of expense. I suppose that in addition to the 940 miles of road we must have walked far enough to make a total of 1,000 miles to Skye and back, and that the above allowance of sunshine can only be described as niggardly in the extreme.

Turning to the mountaineering part of our tour, our record of climbing days is nine.

From Kinlochewe we ascended Slioch in clouds; repeated the climb with variations, near the Ben Mhudaith waterfall described by Mr Glover; and Ben Eighe by the eastern or left-hand one of the three buttresses at Coire Mhic Fhearchair, supposed to be new. For the latter the car was very useful in taking us as far as the stable near Grudie Bridge at the beginning of the excellent path up the glen.

From Sligachan we ascended Sgurr nan Gillean by the Pinnacles, went over the west ridge to the Bhasteir Rock and Tooth, and descended by Naismith's climb on the latter. On another day we visited the Tooth to inspect the cave routes, but they were too wet to be inviting, so an adjournment was made to the Forked Chimney on Sgurr nan Gillean; the climb to the top by the left-hand section makes a thoroughly satisfying excursion even in dripping conditions.

From Glen Brittle on the first day we had the Cioch a' Sgumain suggested to us, but on arrival at the foot of the Bealach a' Ghrunnda we were met by rain and enveloped in cloud by the time our lunch was finished. The traverse into the gully which lies to the north-west of the Cioch requires to be taken fairly well up the bealach. Owing to insufficient directions we were unable to hit off the traverse out of this gully for the ascent of the Cioch, but on our second visit we saw that the line of ledges by which the gully is entered, is continued on the opposite wall and forms a good ledge immediately under a steep slab of rock. The ascent is made up a crack in this slab to a “knife edge” at the top joining the Cioch to the main mass of the mountain.

Under the weather conditions we did not grudge missing this climb,

and exercised ourselves by continuing up the gully to the top and finding plenty of interest, passing the obstacles on the left side looking up. On the ridge we met the full force of the wind and rain, so hurried to the cairn of Sron na Ciche and then down to Glen Brittle by the easiest route.

Our second day at the glen had less of promise than the first, for then we actually started in sunshine. Once more, however, rain became a nuisance at the foot of the Sgumain cliffs, and we contented ourselves by going up the Bealach a' Ghrunnda on to Sgumain and thence to Alasdair, finding the ridge very loose in parts. We went on to measure the short side of the Dubh Gap and conclude it is not much if anything more than 25 feet—quite enough of such steep rock in wet weather.

We traversed Tearlach to the col below the Mhic Coinnich crags, and then voted we had had enough of the rough elements, and descended on to the Stone Shoot to Coire Labain. A peculiarity about the foot of these screes was noticed that they have rolled down far beyond the angle of possible rest, and that they can be trodden down upon rather than crunched through in the usual way.

On both days we returned to Glen Brittle to be hailed by Mr Colin Phillip, who very kindly invited us to take some hot tea on board before our wet ride back to Sligachan. Owing to this preventive measure the car and driver behaved very well, and we live to bless the tenant of the House.

Our last day in Skye had as good a promise as any, and in fact there was sunshine all morning and until 2 P.M., and it did not rain till half-past three, at which time two of the party were turned off the ascent of Bidein Druim nan Ramh from the ridge after passing the Gap.

These, Mr Editor, are the chief points of any interest in our tour, except, perhaps, that mention may be made of our only two views. The first from Sgurr nan Gillean revealed Ben Nevis and the parting glimpse of him reflecting the evening sun from his shining snowfields was very striking. The other view we had at Quirang, looking across to the mainland, which was fairly clear and geographically interesting.

*July 1907.*

G. BENNETT GIBBS.

**EASTER 1907.**—In these expeditions the writer was accompanied by Dr Johns and Dr Pinches.

*First Day.*—Strathcarron to Torridon over Sgurr Ruadh (3,141 feet). The day was remarkable for the violent hailstorms.

*Second Day.*—Spidean nan Clach, Sgurr Ban, and Sgurr an Fhir Duibhe of Ben Eighe. Ridge very icy. Descended towards Kinlochewe and spent much time in coming down a steep ice slope. Reached the hotel at 11 P.M. after about ten hours on the rope.

*Third Day.*—Failed to ascend Liathach on account of the large amount of very soft snow piled at a steep angle at the foot of the rocks. It was very impracticable to climb the practicable rocks within a few feet, but next the 1

sible to get on to them. Moreover, the slopes below were covered with avalanche debris, and scored with their tracks.

*Fourth Day.*—Easy and pleasant. Ascended the top of Ben Eìghe nearest to Kinlochewe. A good shooting path was used at the beginning and end of the day, whilst higher up, steep hard snow and a good cornice lent sufficient variety. Some good glissades were obtained.

*Fifth Day.*—Fionn Bheinn from Achnasheen.

*Sixth Day.*—The many tops of Ben Wyvis from Garve, repeating at least four of them in order to give additional accuracy to observations on the heights of their summits and cols. This matter will form the material for a separate note.

*Seventh Day.*—From Inchrory in Glen Avon over the many tops of the stony waste of Ben Avon, thence over the four summits of Ben a Bhuird, including the "lighthouse-like" one of Stob an t' Sluichd, down into Glen Dubh, thence over a low pass to Glen Derry and Lui Beg.

*Eighth Day.*—The circuit of Glen Lui, including Cairngorm of Derry, Ben Muichdhuì, and Carn a Mhaim.

*Ninth Day.*—The western summits of the Lochnagar plateau, including Broad Cairn, Cairn Bannoch, and Cairn an t' Sagairt. My energetic companion, Dr Pinches, took in also Crow Craigies, Creag Leachdach, Cairn of Gowal, top of Dubh Loch, Fafernie, and Cairn an t' Sagairt Beag. EDRED M. CORNER.

SGURR NA SGINE.—This mountain is separated from the Saddle by a pass, Bealach Coire Mhàlagain, about 2,275 feet high. The mountain has two distinct tops, the most eastern being the highest, 3,098 feet. The second summit is separated from the first by a dip of more than 150 feet, and our aneroids made it 3,050 feet high. A mile to the north-east of Sgurr na Sgine is a little summit, Fraochag, which is indicated in the map with a 3,000 foot contour. Our aneroids, set on Sgurr na Sgine, gave the height at 3,010 feet. From the top a northern ridge slopes steeply but pleasantly into Glen Shiel.

EDRED M. CORNER.

THE SADDLE.—As this hill deserves to be known much more widely than it is, the following note may be of value. It is a fine hill in shape, in ridges, and in cliff. The heights given are from two aneroids which were checked at every point of which the Ordnance Survey had given the height. Dr Irving Pinches (non-member) and I were at Shiel on Loch Duich in July 1906, and climbed the Saddle one Sunday. The finest cliffs on the mountain face Coire Uaine and Sgurr na Creige and Sgurr Leac nan Each. As seen from the opposite ridge one gully outrivalled all the others. It was estimated as between 1,000 and 1,200 feet in height. Even in July its lower part was filled with snow. Its upper opening is within a few yards



of the summit of the mountain. Half a mile east of the summit (3,317 feet) is a fine rocky top on a narrow ridge, Sgurr na Forcan. It can be ascended directly from the ridge by about 50 feet of steep rocky and mossy climbing. The easier way is to descend a few feet on the southern slope and go up an easy gully which narrows to a chimney, from which exit is obtained through a cleft on to an easy grass slope which is followed by a few rocks of the "what you like to make it" order when the top is gained. There is no cairn, so we built a small one. Mr Robertson in the Guide Book gives the height as 3,100 feet approximately (VIII. p. 258). Our aneroids, set on the summit of the Saddle, made it 3,050. EDRED M. CORNER.

**BEN WYVIS.**—Whilst stopping at Garve in March 1907 with Drs Johns and Pinches (non-members), we ascended and surveyed the many tops of Ben Wyvis. It is a large range which should be divided into two mountains, Ben Wyvis, or Glas Leathad Mor, and Glas Leathad Beag, which are joined by an intermediate top, Tom a Choinnich, which is separated from either by a pass. To elucidate this, we traversed all the tops and passes, repeating the ascents of four tops and three passes, and correcting our aneroids (two) at every point whose height was given in the Ordnance map. We drove four miles or so up Strath Garve, and ascended An Cabar (3,106 feet) by its steep shoulder. From here to the summit of Ben Wyvis is a gentle mossy ridge about a mile and a quarter in length, which descends only about 100 feet lower than An Cabar. The summit of Ben Wyvis is 3,429 feet high. We next visited An Socach, 3,295 feet high, half a mile east of the summit, and separated from it by a drop of about 100 feet. The aneroids were carefully corrected again, and the col between Ben Wyvis and Tom a Choinnich gained, the height of which we made 2,880 feet, the instruments being again checked on the summit of Tom a Choinnich (3,134 feet). The height of the col between Tom a Choinnich and Glas Leathad Beag we made as the result of four estimates, 2,660 feet. The north-eastern mountain of the Wyvis range is Glas Leathad Beag, consisting of three tops, separated by two cols. The Ordnance Survey gives the height of one, the most eastern, Feachdach, as 3,018 feet, which was used to correct the aneroids. Glas Leathad Beag we made 3,027 feet, that of the col to the east of it we made 2,930 feet, that of the top of Coire an Lochain we made 3,077 feet, that of the col to the east of it, 2,954 feet, whilst the Ordnance height of Feachdach, the most easterly top, is 3,018 feet. The new heights given were the mean of four aneroid observations. The results can be written in tabular form, when they are more easily appreciated.

An Cabar, 3,106 feet, O.S.

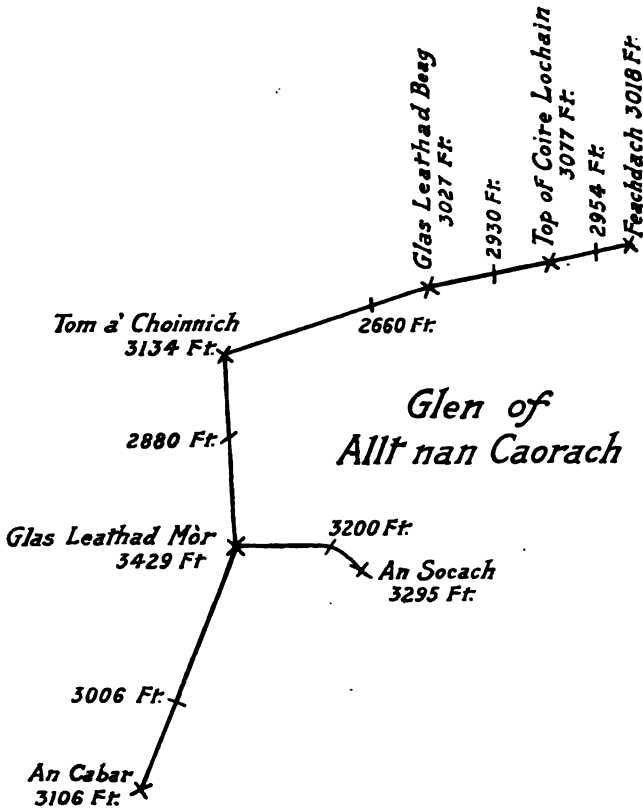
Col, 3,006 feet.

Ben Wyvis (Glas Leathad Mor), 3,429 feet, O.S.

Col, 3,200 feet.

An Socach, 3295 feet, O.S.

This group forms the south-western mountain, Glas Leathad Mor, of the Ben Wyvis range. It is connected by a ridge, whose summit is Tom a Choinnich, with the north-eastern mountain of the range, Glas Leathad Beag. The heights of the intermediate ridge are—



Col between Tom a Choinnich and Glas Leathad Mor, 2,880 feet.

Tom a Choinnich, 3,134 feet, O.S.

Col between Tom a Choinnich and Glas Leathad Beag, 2,660 feet.

The heights of the mountain of Glas Leathad Beag are—

Glas Leathad Beag, 3,027 feet.

Col between Glas Leathad Beag and the top of Coire an Lochain, 2,930 feet.

Top of Coire an Lochain, 3,077 feet.

Col between the top of Coire an Lochain and Feachdach, 2,954 feet.

Feachdach, 3,018 feet, O.S.

It is thus obvious that the *range* of Ben Wyvis can be with advantage divided into two *mountains*, Glas Leathad Mor, and Glas Leathad Beag, each of which possesses three *tops*, and are separated from each other by the glen of Allt nan Caorach. As the connecting ridge curves round the head of the glen it rises to an intermediate top, Tom a Choinnich.

As the crow flies, the distance between the highest points of the two mountain masses is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles, the heights of which are 3,429 and 3,077 feet respectively.

The composite ranges of Liathach, Ben Eighe, and An Teallach, could be subdivided in a similar manner, as has been done, for instance, in the case of the Fannichs, the Mamore Forest, the Cairngorms, or the Cuillins.

EDRED M. CORNER.

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MOORFOOTS.—To the routes set out by Mr Douglas (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IX., pp. 282, 283), the following might be added. The times given are those of Messrs Russell and Goggs on the 2nd November 1907 (no snow).

Innerleithen Station, 8.30 A.M.

Kirnie Law (1,541), Priesthope Hill (1,802), Glede Knowe (1,936), Windlestraw Law (2,161, the highest summit in the Moorfoots), Cadon Head, Eastside Heights (1,944), Road (about 1,200), a few yards north of the col between Glentress Water and Dewar Burn, including half-hour halt, 1.8 P.M.

Blackhope Scar (2,136), 2.16 P.M.

Bowbeat Hill (2,049), Dundreich (2,040), Portmore Loch, Scarcerig, Leadburn Station, including half-hour halt, 5 P.M.

F. S. G.

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THE ROSE RIDGE OF SGORAN DUBH.—C. W. Walker, H. Walker, and a friend ascended this ridge on 7th April. The rocks were in splendid condition, and the ridge afforded excellent sport. Both the slabby pitches were found to be very unstable, especially the bottom one, and considerable care was necessary to avoid wiping out the third man.

A heavy snowstorm developed towards the finish of the climb, and all agreed that it was well that Sgoran Dubh offered other and easier routes of descent. Morrison's cairns were found and rebuilt.

H. W.

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“ARTHUR SEAT: Written at the top of the hill, in a fine June morning.”—Having recently had occasion to hunt up some old refer-

ences in the *Aberdeen Journal*, I dropped across the appended verses in the issue of 19th September 1819, page 4, col. 5.—ROBERT MURDOCH-LAWRANCE, Aberdeen.

“ Majestic mountain ! How I love to tread  
Thy upland winding path with lingering pace ;  
And, wandering lonely, reach thy rugged head,  
To gaze on Nature’s joy-inspiring face !  
Drink in with eye and ear the countless charms  
Which thy wide prospect to the wanderer yields ;  
Proud castled cliffs, towns, villages, and farms,  
Woods, waters, vistas, vales, and verdant fields.  
And, while I gaze with rapture on the scene,  
Oft turns my eye to where yon structure \* stands,  
Now grey with age—where erst fair Scotia’s queen  
In splendour swayed the sceptre of these lands.  
I muse how Time to one resemblance brings  
The cottage, *palace*—all terrestrial things !

G.

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\* Palace of Holyrood House.”

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

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"THE COMPLETE MOUNTAINEER." By Geo. D. Abraham. Methuen & Co. 15s. net. Demy 8vo, pp. xv., 493, 75 full-page illustrations.

A bold title, for which the publishers, and not the author, are responsible. The somewhat presumptuous adjective may perhaps be traceable to the influence of that well-known classic, "The Compleat Angler." The author makes an ambitious attempt to cover a great deal of ground in less than 500 pages. This in itself is not rare, but in our opinion Mr Abraham may be considered to have not only attempted, but to have successfully accomplished the task he set himself.

Books on mountaineering have multiplied in the last few years, and it is now somewhat difficult to produce a book which is both fresh and interesting to the climber. The author has done this. There is not a dull chapter in the twenty-eight which the volume contains. The arrangement of the book is admirable, its style excellent, its illustrations, as will be anticipated, first rate, and its advice both to the climber and the would-be climber sound and comprehensive.

The book is divided into three parts :—Part I., a brief history and the technicalities of the sport, 125 pages ; Part II., climbing at home, 140 pages ; Part III., mountaineering abroad, 200 pages.

Chapter II. of Part I. gives us a rapid survey of the latest achievements of mountaineers all over the world. Then follow seven chapters which together make up an epitomised Badminton brought down to date.

Part II. gives a number of interesting particulars with regard to climbs and climbing in the English Lake District, Wales, and Scotland. Two chapters comprising over fifty pages are devoted to Scotland. Chapter XV., "Climbing in Scotland," deals with the Glencoe and Ben Nevis districts in some detail. Sgoran Dubh, Coire Arder, Lochnagar, and the Cobbler are also mentioned. The author seems to have been disappointed with the Cobbler, a feeling which we do not think will be shared by the majority of the members of our Club. Chapter XVI. is devoted to "The Coolin, Skye," with which the author seems as well acquainted as any Scotsman. On page 258, however, it is stated that the southern "steep end of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich" is "one of the few unclimbed places on the main ridge." Has the author overlooked the direct ascent by Mr King up the chimney which now bears his name?

Mr Abraham refers to the S.M.C. in cordial terms, and makes some sensible remarks on the delicate matter of climbers and deer forests. There are a few mistakes in place-names, *e.g.*, Tarbert, page

239, should be Tarbet, but this is excusable, and, taken on the whole, the author may be heartily congratulated on the accuracy attained in the printing of the multitudinous proper names appearing in his book. This may seem a small matter to some, but it is a proof that the author has done his work carefully and well.

Part III. gives an account of Mr Abraham's personal experiences in the Swiss, Italian, French, and Austrian Alps, and the author's statement in the preface that his has been "a somewhat strenuous climbing career" is borne out by facts.

We recommend our members to buy the book for themselves. All will enjoy its perusal, and those most who best know the districts described.

F. S. G.

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"THE CLIMBER'S POCKET BOOK: ROCK CLIMBING ACCIDENTS, WITH HINTS ON FIRST AID TO THE INJURED." By Lionel F. West. The Scientific Publishing Company, Manchester. Price 2s. 6d.

The mountaineer's craft increases in complexity, and this is one of the things he has got to learn, or at least give some attention to.

Within a compass of seventy odd pages the author treats of slinging and transporting injured or unconscious persons by various methods which should be familiar to the hillman; gives a list of requisites; a short description of common and probable accidents and ailments; fractures and dislocations, their signs and treatment; bandaging; short chapters on anatomy and physiology, equipment, and mountaineering "don'ts," followed by some remarks on ropes, knots, and strains by Mr F. Payne.

The first part of the book, that dealing with slinging and transport of the injured by improvised appliances such as the rope ladder, is the most valuable from a climber's point of view.

The bandaging follows the ordinary routine of first aid books, except in treatment of collar bone fracture, figures 29 and 30, where the sling passes over both collar bones, instead of avoiding pressure on the broken bone, as is usual.

The chapter on holds and belays will probably surprise most climbers. The time, one minute, that an average man can hold his mate swinging clear on a rope will probably strike him as ridiculously understated, but let him try the experiment. Untrained muscles and a thin rope account for much. Let him also try this experiment, where he again is sure to overrate his capacities—how far he can climb up an unknotted one-and-a-half inch rope, hanging clear and not fixed below when dressed in climbing attire.

These two examples point the moral we would drive home. The climber may read handbooks like this as long and as often as he likes, but what he really ought to do is to practise knots, bandaging, improvising splints, and means of transport till he can do all these things as a conjurer does tricks.

J. R.

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. X.

MAY 1908.

No. 56.

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## AN UNRECORDED FRAGMENT OF HERODOTUS.

SOME little time ago the greatest interest was aroused in scientific circles in the dominion of New Zealand over the discovery, by an archæological commission, of some charred leaves of papyrus in a very ancient Maori oven then in process of exhumation amongst the sand-hills of Puketeraki. Along with the papyrus were found broken and incinerated bones of the extinct Moa, as well as remains of undoubtedly human origin. On being submitted to Dr MacSpleuchan, Professor of Dead Languages in the University of Kaukapakapa, that great New Zealand authority gave it as his opinion that the papyri, which were deciphered with great difficulty, belonged to a hitherto unknown book of the works of Herodotus. Incredible as it may seem, of this there now appears little room for doubt. How and whence it reached New Zealand is a question still greatly exercising the scientific world. Many theories have been put forward, whereof the most probable and generally accepted is that in bygone ages the papyrus was brought to the country by some cultured traveller; very likely by way of the submerged continent which many geographers suppose to have at one time connected New Zealand with Asia. In those days, no doubt, as has been the case up to comparatively recent times, the Moriori and Maori inhabitants of New Zealand were cannibals; and it is extremely likely that having captured the unfortunate stranger they ate him, using his private papyri and other—to them useless—contents of his portmanteau to kindle the fire over which he materialised as “long pig.”

The Father of History's visit to what we now know as Scotland has hitherto been unrecorded and unknown, and from his opening sentences it would appear that the subjoined fragment is not all he has written on the subject. Dr MacSpleuchan's literal translation throws a new and fascinating light on the mode of life of our ancestors in their Stone Age at the close of the Glacial Period; and members of the S.M.C. w



no doubt rejoice to learn that the cult of the mountains, for so long a distinguishing national characteristic, was firmly established in "Hyperborea" 2,300 years ago.

From the geographical details given it seems probable that the mountain ascended by Herodotus under guidance of the priests was Ben Cruachan.

56. Now, as already narrated, the country of the Hyperboreans is excessively rugged and mountainous, covered with vast forests and huge morasses. For much part of the year it lies under snow, and in winter the sun shineth not at all. It is inhabited by tribes of barbarians always at war the one with the other. There are many savage beasts—wolves, and foxes, bears, deer, wild oxen and swine. The waters, too, harbour sea dogs and other ferocious animals.

57. Now, of the Hyperboreans themselves it had been said unto me that they had no manners, and that their customs were bestial—in this respect resembling the Scythians. But of my own observations amongst them I record the following:—They are large and hairy men like unto the Satyrs. For the most part they are of swarthy complexion, but many amongst them are of a fulvous and ruddy colour. They care naught for trading and commerce, but are warriors, hunters, and fishers; and their weapons are bows and arrows, with spears, clubs, and axes of stone. All work is done by the women. The richer amongst them protect themselves from the cold with the skins of animals, but the poorer thickly cover their bodies with paint and clay of divers colours arranged in stripes and designs. This they call in their language "Tartan." Whence also is the saying that it is impossible to remove the greaves of a Hyperborean, he having none of them.

58. Their food for the most part consists of boiled grain, which they call "Parritch." Out of grain, too, they make a wine, strong and fiery, in colour like to water. It is called by them "Wisge"; and those who partake of it at first begin to dance and sing, but presently are rendered quarrelsome, and afterwards drunken and speechless. They indulge in athletic games, and esteem music and dancing;

producing sounds like to the howling of wolves from an instrument made from the inflated skins of animals whence the wind escapeth through hollow sticks.

59. The Hyperboreans know not the Olympian gods, but on the other hand worship the spirits and demons of the mountains, who, because they plague men with snows and tempests and thunders, are held in much awe and reverence. Wherefore the mountains and waste places are held sacred and in much regard amongst them, being in themselves the temples of their divinities. And, after the manner of the Persians, companies of the priests and wise men frequently ascend the mountains, building piles of stone thereon, and offering sacrifice. And the more difficult the ascending of the mountain, the more meritorious the action. No man may become a priest until he hath ascended divers mountains. And every three years they choose unto them a high priest, he amongst the priests whose ascents of the mountains are the most meritorious. The priests have tablets and a language of their own, not understood of the common people, bearing upon the features of the mountains and the ascending thereof.

60. Once in a year, during the winter solstice, all the priests repair unto one of the chief cities of the land, and there they hold them a solemn feast. And the high priest presides thereat, sitting in a great seat at the head of the council. And after they have partaken of meat and of drink, they dance sacred dances, and chant the sacred song of the mountains. And from that feast it is not considered fitting that any man should depart upon his own feet—they are carried thence by those who minister unto them. And on the following day it is their custom to drink of bitter waters and to bind their heads in wetted skins. Now these things were told me by the priests themselves.

61. Amongst the Hyperboreans, minstrels and the makers of tales are much honoured; and the matter of these, transmitted for the most part by word of mouth, hath achieved no small fame throughout their own and surrounding countries. Because of this, there come to Hyperborea many curious and idle persons from far-off lands. Of such travellers some bear bows and arrows for

the capture of birds and beasts ; other some travel in ships and chariots that they may behold the mountains, the lakes, and the castles sung of by the scribes and minstrels. Yet others, bearing in their hands long slender sticks, beat upon the waters, and so capture fishes. Which having done, they loudly proclaim their exploits, and do magnify the size of the prey taken by them. And some there are who place upon the ground a small sphere, and smiting it mightily with a crooked stick, drive it afar off, and pursue it with outcries. Now these are called "Goffers," which is a form of madness.

62. And it came to pass that after travelling for many days I came to the city of Hoban, in the western parts of Hyperborea towards the sea. The king of those parts is called Mokalumore. Many and great buildings are set throughout the city for the lodgment of travellers, because many such come to this place ; it being a city famed beyond others in the songs and legends of the minstrels and the tale makers. And whereas in other lands that I have visited such travellers are held in honour by the people, who minister to their wants because of love of them, in Hyperborea and especially in Hoban it is not so. For both in the houses of lodgment and in the market places the travellers are subjected to indignity, and in many and crafty ways are despoiled of their gold and silver. For it hath been said of the Hyperboreans that whilst they keep the festivals of their gods they keep likewise all other things whereof they can obtain possession. But of all travellers those who are regarded most by the Hyperboreans are such as come from the uttermost parts beyond the western sea, of a strange tribe called the Yangkees. These bring with them much gold from the mines of their own country ; valuing it not at all, but scattering it lavishly, for it is a saying with them, "What is the difference so long as ye be happy?"

63. In Hoban I learned many and strange things ; nor could I believe all of them ; for what will not some people relate unto a traveller in search of information ? The Hyperboreans believe that all mankind is descended from apes. Whereof the first man, by reason of superior wisdom,

sought to become king over all the apes; to that end cutting off his tail and making him a garment of leaves. But the apes would have none of him, and would indeed have slain him, had he not fled out of Ethiopia and come by running and swimming to the land that is now Hyperborea. And being arrived there, because it is the farthest of all lands, he considered himself safe from the pursuit of the apes, and abode there, where he took to wife a she-demon of the mountains. Now his descendants peopled the earth. The name of this man was Joktamson, whence there is a saying of the Hyperboreans, "We are all of us the children of Joktamson."

64. Now there is a tradition of the Hyperboreans of an exceeding great flood that in bygone ages covered all the land and destroyed the people thereof. And the coming of the flood was in this wise. A day's journey to the north of Hoban there is a high mountain by the side of a river of salt water. And on this mountain is a well of sweet water. But those whose duty it was to guard this well having forgotten one night to cover it, it overflowed very greatly. And at the same time came the rain sent of the gods, descending by day and by night continuously. And the people and the king of that land, becoming alarmed, took counsel together. Now the name of the king was Noe, or Makno, a mighty mariner, a builder of ships, and a pirate. Then said he, "Let us launch forth upon the waters that we may be saved, because this matter becometh serious." So he put forth his great ship, and took therein his family; Longshon and Fingal, his sons; Ossian, the bard, his grandson; and Phairshon, the son of Phairshon, who had married his daughter.

65. And for sustenance they took with them many living beasts and birds of that country; for said Noe, "If the voyage is prolonged we may eat them; but if on the other hand we reach lands where such are unknown, men will buy them from us at a great price, or peradventure will pay us drachmas that they may behold them." And this was the beginning of commercial speculation, for which the Hyperboreans ever since are notorious. Now, his ship being arrived at Hoban, he spake unto the King Mokalumore,

the ancestor, it is said, of the present king, "Come up with me into my ship, thou and thy family, else will ye be destroyed utterly in the rains and the flood." But Mokalumore made answer in his pride, "Think ye that I fear for a summer shower? When the time is fitting I shall put forth in mine own ship."

66. Wherefore Noe sailed away. And some say that his ship was overset by a great serpent, and all on board perished; but others say that alone of all mankind he and his people were preserved in the flood, and that when the waters subsided he returned to his own country. And in order that it might not again overwhelm the land, his son, Longshon, took counsel and builded a great house around the well on the mountain, and led the waters thereof into the winepresses unto the making of wisge, for which the demand is without limit. But some there are who consider this last state of the affair worse than the first. But these are not of the Hyperboreans. Howsoever, the well and the house are there unto this day; and there, too, are the descendants of Longshon making the wisge.

67. Now when Noe departed in his ship, Mokalumore, becoming affrighted, collected his family and launched forth in his own ship, leaving only his mother-in-law, who perished. But whether he really was saved, as is alleged by some; or whether it availed him not and he perished, no man can say with certainty. And there hath long been war between the people of the land of Noe and those who say they are descended from Mokalumore, the latter coveting the lands and the wisge of the former. But others of the Hyperboreans say that the tribes of Mokalumore are full of pride and craftiness and guile, and that their tongues and their hands are against all men. But of the flood itself it is true that unto this day shells and the bones of fishes are found by the priests high upon the mountains; and it is impossible that they should have been brought thither otherwise than by the waters.

68. Amongst other things did they tell me of a great mountain of many peaks one hundred stadia from the city. It is a hunting ground of the king, having on the one side of it a lake of salt water, and on the other a lake of fresh

water. And on each is a strong castle of the king. Some say it is the greatest mountain in the land of the King Mokalumore; others say it is the highest mountain in the earth. But this last, being contrary to what I knew, I could nowise believe. Others say its height is so great that it never loses the light of the sun; but most of the people say, "What matters it?" Few men but the hardiest of the priests had climbed unto the top thereof; for the forests are full of raging wild beasts; and great perils there are in the snows and the rocks high above the forests. There too, it is said, dwells the war-god of the Hyperboreans, drinking wisge out of the skulls of men, and hurling destruction upon the regions below.

69. Being desirous, therefore, of visiting this mountain, I sought permission of the king, who would have dissuaded me, pointing out the many dangers; but being obdurate I fled from the city in the night, and arrived at the foot of the mountain on the side of the lake of fresh water. Here I found an encampment of the priests, and after giving the watchword, which in the Greek tongue signifieth "Absolutely perpendicular," I was admitted. And we did pour libations of wisge in token of friendliness. With the priests I prevailed upon two of their number that they should take me with them to the summit of the mountain. Now the names of these men were Takadram, the son of Bungfoo, and Hootawamon, the son of Kawkanny. They were men of great strength and courage; wearing on their feet mighty buskins of hide, having set therein the strong teeth of swine, in order that they might the better grip the inequalities of the mountains.

70. On the following morning we set forth with the sun, and in due time passed through the perils of the forests and reached unto the middle parts of the mountain. Here would I have chosen the easiest way, but the priests said, "Not so! by the cracks in the rocks and the cliffs thereof lies the way." And when I, being in fear, would have gone back as I had come, they scoffed at me; and binding me with a great thong, after the manner of the Helvetii, they drew me onwards. And ever after, when being sore distressed, I said unto them, "Let us go down," they made

answer, "Nay, on the other hand, we must go up." After many hours we drew nigh to the summit of the mountain ; and being arrived there the priests set about the sacrifice. For looking forth to the north and the south and the east and the west, they builded a small pile of stones, and had regard to the sun and the clouds, and the steepness of the way, and the order of the snow, that such things might be recorded in the sacred tablets. Then having poured a libation, we uplifted our voices and all sang joyfully. They told me that the name of the mountain was Ben ; but all the mountains in the land are called Ben in the tongue of the Hyperboreans ; only some of them are greater than the others. But it seemed to me that from the summit I looked over great part of the earth, from the western sea for thousands of stadia in all other directions.

71. When that we had rested ourselves, and restored our bodies with parritch, we were again bound with thongs and came down the mountain one behind the other with great caution. With the priests I returned to the city. And it came to pass that, being exceedingly exhausted and bruised with the toils of the journey, I did keep mine bed for the space of three days. At the end of that time, learning that a ship of the Phœnicians was about to sail for the southern sea, I sought the chief amongst the mariners, and having arranged with him for a great sum of drachmas, I departed from the land of the Hyperboreans unto mine own city of Halicarnassus.

THE EASTERN BUTTRESS OF COIRE MHIC  
FHEARCHAIR.

BY EDWARD BACKHOUSE.

THE hamlet of Kinlochewe is known to the S.M.C. as the scene of two Easter Meets. It lies near the head of Loch Maree, within easy distance of Ben Eighe, a mountain mass which shuts in the lake from the south and south-east. The mountain has been described in several issues of the *Journal*. To the climber its only notable feature is a coire at the western end, formed by two lofty spurs, Ruadh-stac Mor and Sàil Mhor, which rise steeply throughout, and at their junction precipitously in the form of a cliff, cleft by deep gullies into three main buttresses of rock. Thus a climbers' paradise is formed. But the inclemency of two Scottish Easters has so hindered the adventurous spirits of the Club, that much of the cliff still remains unexplored. Indeed, as far as the records reveal, it had only once been climbed before the summer of 1907, and that from top to bottom.

On a morning of early June 1907, when the sun shone after days of cloud and rain, G. B. Gibbs, W. A. Mounsey, and I set out by motor from the inn at Kinlochewe for Grudie Bridge and Coire Mhic Fhearchair. The narrow door of the stable forbidding entry, we left the car by the roadside, and set our faces southward up Glen Grudie, with the twin summits of Ben Eighe in front. In August, anathema to the mountaineer, deer-preserving may be no small blessing in June; and so it is in Glen Grudie, where a first-rate keeper's path leads half-way to the coire. Higher up a stretch of hummocky ground is succeeded by steep slopes of grass, till the coire comes full into view.

From Grudie Bridge to the side of the lochan took two hours and a half without pressing. As we lunched, we examined the buttresses, already old friends through the photographs which have appeared in the *Journal*. There were guesses at the exact point in the central buttress which foiled Professor Collie's party in their attempted ascent, although next day the awkward corner was suc-



cessfully turned on their descent. The left or eastern buttress attracted us, as it had in the photograph; for it seemed to rise at an easier angle than its comrades, and was, we believed, virgin ground.

Across the full length of the cliff runs a ledge, in parts of considerable width, which marks the division between the dull red of Torridon sandstone and the grey rock above. In attacking the eastern buttress the first problem was to reach this ledge, at its highest point perhaps 150 feet above the foot of the cliff. An easy solution might probably be found by skirting to the eastern end, where the slope of strata brings the grey rock down to the foot of the cliff, eliminating the sandstone. A sporting route in late summer would be to force the gully between the eastern and central buttresses. We rejected both methods; the latter because snow and a goodly waterfall were in occupation. Gibbs, who led throughout the climb, inspected the bottom pitch of the gully; but he quickly decided against it, and we found a practicable route from ledge to ledge of the sandstone. Lack of holds in the rounded rock drove us farther to the left with each step of the ladder, so that we reached the dividing ledge not far from the south-east corner of the buttress. A direct ascent from this point was out of the question, for the holds were all the wrong way. The grassy ledge on which we stood provided a comfortable pathway back to the gully, save at one point, where a constant trickle of water had made a gap which needed careful crossing.

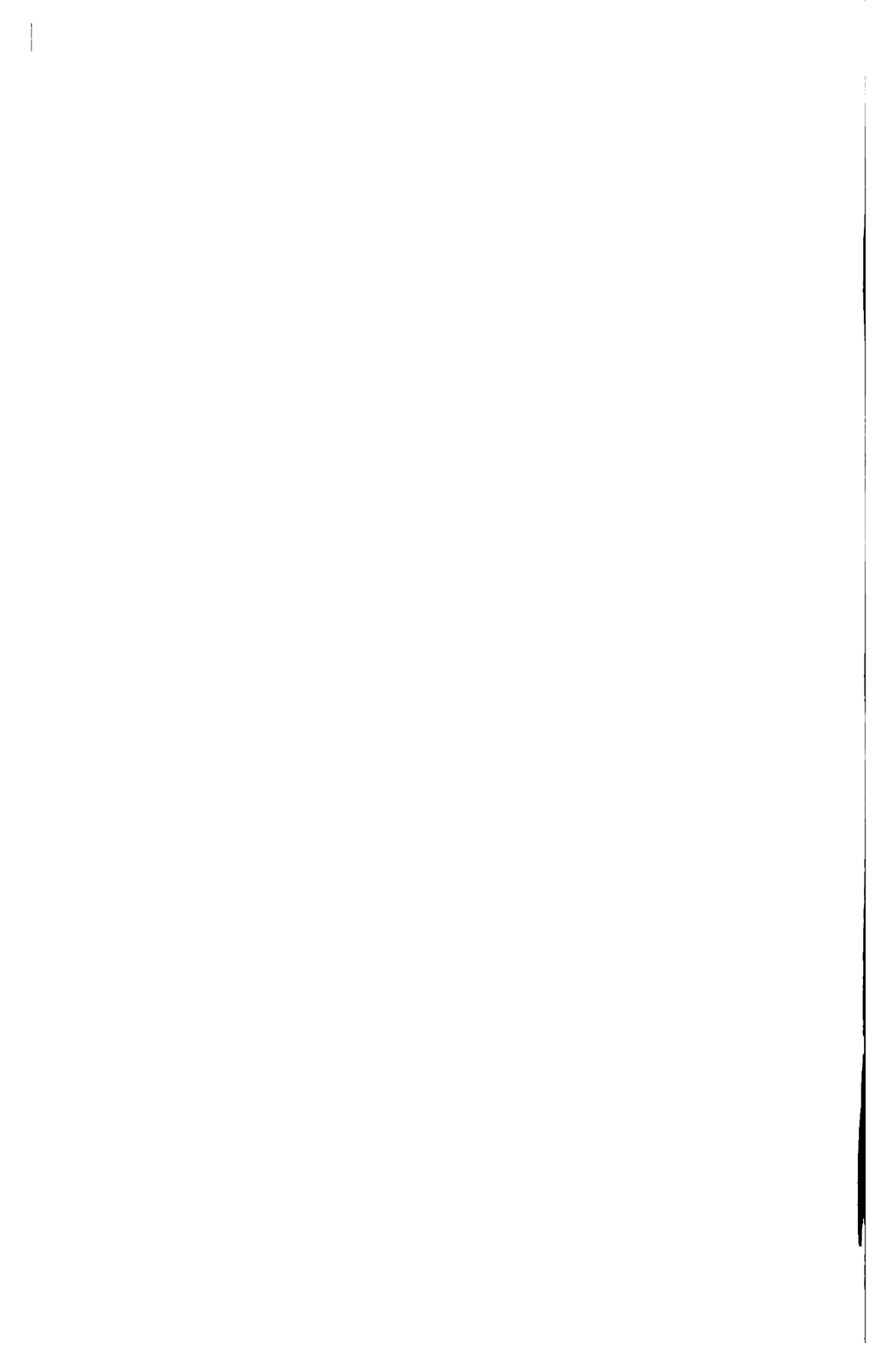
At the gully end of the ledge the climb, as we took it, may be said to begin. We stood 150 feet above the scree of the coire; below, the rounded steps of the sandstone; above, the steep grey wall, its broken face abounding in narrow ledges, half-formed chimneys, crannies and corners; but nowhere presenting an obvious route. To some successor we left the happy task of discovering a way straight up the corner of the buttress. For pioneers it was wisdom, so our leader decreed, to take the path of least resistance, which was for the present to drop a few feet on to a bank of snow, and so into the bed of the gully, which at this point narrowed into a chimney some 50 feet high. It



*June 1907.*

*W. A. Mounsey.*

COIRE MHIC FHEARCHAIR.  
(THE BUTTRESS FROM THE WEST.)



was delightful climbing; the sides often close enough to keep us out of the water, which flowed in considerable volume. The actual bed of the gully was of trap, white as marble. Towards the top of the chimney the holds were not more than sufficient. A slope of scree ended in steep snow, and it in turn reached up to a cave pitch of unpromising appearance. We had no axe, and agreed that the snow was better left alone; besides we opportunely recalled the fact that we had set out to climb the eastern buttress, not the gully.

It was easy to step on to a ledge on the buttress corner, whence a short traverse brought in view a practicable route for some feet above us. Here at last we tasted the delight of the good grey rock beneath foot and hand. None better, we all agreed, had been our fortune in all Scotland or beyond. The climb that followed cannot be described in detail, and may never be repeated in every step. Every leader will find his own route from ledge to ledge. There is nowhere extreme difficulty, or the need for great exertion, but the steepness of the face lends interest and necessitates care. Repeated choice of the easiest obvious way led us after a while to the middle point of a comfortable ledge some three or four feet wide, where we lightened a rucksack of part of its contents, and, with our backs to the wall, watched the clouds flying before a rising south-east wind, ourselves in warmth and shelter. From its eyrie in the crag above us, an eagle swept majestically northwards, indignant perhaps that man should storm his immemorial fastnesses.

The ledge on which we sat runs unbroken across the buttress face, ending to the east in perpendicular precipices above and below. But at the other extremity it gives access to a stairway, which brought us back once more to the uncompromising eastern corner, at a point where a tooth of rock, half detached from the cliff, varies the contour. The buttress is conical, and had here narrowed to such an extent, that a traverse from one side to the other was of small account. We were now nearing our goal, and allowed ourselves the fun of scrambling in turn to the top of the tooth, whence a stone, pushed outwards, dropped for five seconds before striking a ledge. From this tooth there

appeared to be a straight climb up the buttress corner, sensational and not too safe for the first man. We left it to form a variation for some future party, and ourselves found, a little to the right, an open chimney, which gave us perhaps the stiffest climbing of the day. For the second time rucksacks were sent upon the rope, and backs were brought into play. Then the angle eased, and a little pleasant scrambling brought us to the top and the wind's cold greeting. It had taken us three hours and a half from the coire, but this time might be much reduced. A few flakes of snow were falling and clouds were drifting over the tops, but we could not leave without walking on to the central buttress. Mounsey took several photographs, and Gibbs drew the outline of our buttress. As far as we could judge, it is the least steep of the three, and gives a climb of 850 feet from the scree level.

We hit upon a happy route down to the coire: westward over a minor buttress where hands were in frequent use, and thus to the neck which connects the cliff with Sàil Mhor. Here we struck a deer-track leading right down to the stream side. It was a model descent, with fine views of the crags all the way. A hurried meal in the cold wind prepared us for a fast walk back to Grudie Bridge, with threatening clouds blowing up from the east. Striding down the path, we turned a corner almost into the middle of a group of red deer. They bounded away over the stones, and when they thought themselves out of sight, lay still. As we passed their hiding-place, two sentinel ears showed over a boulder only a dozen yards from the path.

Arrived at the roadside we soon had the car under way, and the six miles of road were vanishing under our wheels. The spirit of the storm seemed to have entered the engine; for we flew round the blindest of corners on the narrow road, while the gale lashed Loch Maree to fury and flecked the black waters with foam. Ben Slioch and his neighbours, and the driving clouds above, were all shades of indigo and purple. The morning's peaceful radiance had given place to the battle and stress of the storm; but the rain held off, and it was not till we were under shelter that "the windows of heaven were opened."

## A NOCTURNAL MEET.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

THE very title suggests many questions. Where, and when, and who? The answers may be equally laconic—Ben Nevis, 29th December 1907, and all the members there present. Surely never such a Meet has been held before, and long may it be ere such another takes place. For it was the quickening of human sympathy that made the members, tired from their long journey, cast sleep to the winds, and either issue into the black night ere the clock struck twelve, or while away the weary "sma' hours" till four o'clock gave signal for a departure for Ben Nevis. How we started as approaching steps on the gravel outside raised a short-lived hope that our three had returned safe and sound. But their steps passed on and receded into the distance, while, with hateful chill, the conviction was driven in, that there, somewhere on the icy flanks of Ben Nevis, three of our comrades were battling for very life, or, might it even be— But no! hope springs eternal, and it was to succour and bring back in safety that the first party, Morrison, Sang, and another, their rucksacks bulky and bulging, with bandages, wraps, restoratives, tempting food, and spare ropes for all emergencies, left the Alexandra at 11.30 P.M. It was familiar ground, and even the dark night yielded sufficient light to make the aid of our lanterns unnecessary. The well-known pony track, coated with ice, at times gave but scanty foot-hold, and the giants of Mamore with sheeted heads beckoned faintly to us from afar. But the heart that is eager to help has little room for romance at such a time, and with strenuous stride the Lochan was passed and the upper slopes breasted. Morrison, provided with electric flash light, had improvised a trumpet from a wine bottle, the bottom of which had been knocked out, and with unrivalled skill, now and then awoke the echoes with such a blast as must have stirred the mountain spirits. Far away along the dark slopes of Carn Dearg,

above the Lochan, there sparkled a light. Could it be the lost three? With elusive scintillations it seemed to move, and, answering, the search-light flashed across the rocky debris, while Sang, in vain, endeavoured to rival Morrison on the glass trumpet. No answering call, and gradually the will-of-the-wisp seemed to locate itself somewhere about Gairloch. On, on, till at last the plateau is reached. What a ghostly scene, light clouds float here and there, baffling the eye as it strove to margin out the edges of the great precipices. At 4 A.M. we stood at the top of No. 3 Gully, and moving along to the Comb, gave forth a series of blasts to the Tower Ridge, which, only visible to the eye of faith, might hold our friends. No response, no answering light. Were they on the far side, or on Carn Dearg face? To solve this, the plateau was hurriedly traversed, while Morrison, with lantern lowered to the snow, scanned every crystal for the welcome sign. We were nearing the top of the Tower Ridge, when "What's this—a footprint—and leading from the cornice?" Hurrah! ten feet farther, other prints—a second man—the mark of special nailed boots—the recognition of C. I. C.'s footprints. Where is the third? Twenty feet farther they are found, and we hurry back along the converging tracks till we look over the edge of the ghostly cornice, where the grooves in the snow tell of the rope and the escape of our friends from the dangers down below. Words fail to express the emotion of relief when we realise that our fears can now be laughed at; and we can return certain that the wanderers are home. We shake hands, and, each in turn, securely roped, dangle the lantern over the hideous gulf to assure ourselves that man had really climbed where even angels would fear to tread. But! where were they now? How had we missed them? Morrison, like an eager hound, tracked the footsteps, and while the others in vain endeavoured to light the second lantern with half-frozen fingers, disappeared down the slope in hot pursuit. The others followed in darkness in the direction of the fleet-footed lantern-bearer. It was soon apparent that they had descended on the rocky face towards Glen Nevis, for right in front we looked upon the shapely peak of Carn Dearg, in the direction of Polldubh. Believing

the lost ones to be at least in safety, our duty obviously was to intercept the other rescue parties, and to send them on the track of the fugitives. Reascending to the ordinary route, we were greeted by a brilliant flare, which we located as near the Lochan, but which, later, we found to have been lighted by Ling, near Fort-William. Hurriedly descending we were mystified on reaching the Lochan to find no trace of the others. After a lengthy rest, on continuing our descent about 7 A.M., we met the various parties—Raeburn, Bell, Harry Walker, Ling, and other good fellows—and sent them after the lost sheep, which they in due course found, as narrated in another part of the *Journal*.

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## THIRTY HOURS ON BEN NEVIS.

BY CHARLES INGLIS CLARK.

MACINTYRE, Goodeve, and I found ourselves the sole occupants of the Alexandra Hotel on Friday evening, 27th December, being the first arrivals of the Club at the New Year Meet. Macintyre had been up to the Allt a Mhuilinn that day prospecting, and reported the rocks in bad condition, being plastered with snow. The weather being fairly good and settled, it was planned to make an early start and attempt something difficult next day on the "Ben." Leaving Fort William at 6.45 on Saturday morning in the best of spirits, we felt that we had the exclusive use of Ben Nevis. This was due to the absence of the Hon. Secretary and other *habitues* of the Ben, who might forbid an attempt at anything difficult under the prevailing conditions. It was an exhilarating morning, the keen frosty air causing a most delightful sensation on the face, especially refreshing after so many months of town life.



At the first blush of daylight, Stob Ban proudly pushed its snowy summit through its nightcap of mist, and saluted us in welcome after many years' absence. Good time was made up the footpath and round to the Lurching Stone, which we reached at nine o'clock. Both Goodeve and I, although not having had a climb since August, felt extremely fit after a good season's dances and other energetic amusements. At the Lurching Stone, after the customary second breakfast, votes were taken regarding what was to be attacked that day. It was decided to make for the Tower Ridge, as not one of us had climbed it, and all were desirous of doing so. To our eyes, the Tower Ridge did not seem to carry so much snow as the North-East Buttress, but I afterwards learnt that the latter was in better condition. We believed that we could find the ledge to avoid the Tower, should we be in difficulties, but, as the sequel will show, we failed when the necessity arose.

These reasons may partly neutralise the reader's idea that we were all absolutely mad, when we started on the climb without any of the party having previous knowledge of the Ridge.

Whilst we were cutting steps up the steep snow slope which leads to the bottom of the couloir between Douglas' Boulder and the Ridge proper, an amusing incident occurred. Goodeve and I had been having a rather heated discussion on the relative advantages of his woollen helmet and a leather motor cap which I wore. I was just proclaiming that its chief advantage lay in the fact that it never blew off, when a fierce blast of wind tore it from my head, and whirled it high up in the air. We gave up all hope of ever seeing it again and climbed up the slope. Five minutes later Goodeve gave a shout, and I saw a black object swirling round his head, and supposed it to be a buzzard or some other bird. He then struck and apparently killed it with his ice-axe. To my great surprise he handed back my truant motor cap. A halt was now made to put on warm clothes and gloves, and rope up. Although we had both an 80 and a 60-foot rope, we stupidly put on the latter, which is rather cramped for a party of three. The cold afterwards was so intense that we did not change the rope during

the whole climb, and in consequence much valuable time was lost owing to being constantly hindered by a short rope.

About ten o'clock the party started the climb in earnest. Goodeve led up the gully between the western side of the Tower Ridge and Douglas' Boulder. I followed second, and Macintyre brought up the rear, and this order was always maintained. As the snow was hard and icy, this meant that our leader was continuously cutting steps for thirteen hours, with no relief whatever. I have heard of people swinging Indian clubs for twelve hours at a stretch, but in my opinion, they should take a back place after this feat of endurance. The Gap between the Ridge and the "Boulder" was reached without serious difficulty, but soon afterwards we were confronted with an almost vertical face of rock above us, shaped somewhat like a mantelpiece. Owing to all the holds being glazed with ice, and having to be cut out, a long time was taken in attempting to force a way up the centre and at both sides. This proved unsuccessful at first, and from the last point reached, Goodeve was lowered down to the right (west); he then made his way along a narrow ledge. After disappearing round the corner, he was stopped by an icy chimney about 30 feet high. A long time was spent cutting steps up the face of this, but, as the second man had no first-class hitch, and there being a big drop below, it was decided to be too unsafe to persevere.

A return was now made to the mantelpiece mentioned before, and after the leader made use of my cranium as a foothold, he managed it in the centre, traversing up to the right by a narrow sloping ledge. There was then a very sensational corner where one could only get foothold on a small ledge which was slippery with ice. While standing on this, the body had to be swung out and round the corner. So far we had all enjoyed the climb immensely, as it was of a first-class order, our only anxiety being regarding time, mid-day being now past. A narrow arête was cut up to the foot of the Little Tower. This arête, which is fairly wide in summer, was not more than two feet broad, owing to the action of the wind on the snow. It was a highly sensational passage, as there was a drop of several hundred feet on one side, and violent gusts of wind threatened to blow one over.

Being now confronted with the Little Tower, we had a consultation how best to surmount it. Macintyre thought that the route led up on the eastern side, while Goodeve and I imagined that the west was the only possible way. As the "ayes" had it (unfortunately as it turned out), we decided to try it on the right. I let Goodeve out on the rope round a narrow ledge on the right, and he reported that it might "go." After some considerable difficulty, a way was forced up a narrow chimney which had a long slab in it. A tiny crack in this afforded a small finger-grip, which was the only available handhold. Without this, the pitch would have been impossible. Once again, I had ample time to gauge the leader's weight accurately, and it seemed to me that the Club song might well have an additional verse appropriate for such occasions. The refrain, "Oh, my big hobnailers!" would bring back the joyous memories of crushed-in shoulder blades and aching cranium, "upon the mountain side." *N.B.*—Club poets please take note.

At last, after much cutting of steps, and after great care had been taken, the foot of the Tower was reached by a snow arête. We were dismayed to find that darkness was rapidly setting in, it being now about four o'clock. Another consultation was held, and in consideration of the late hour, we decided to avoid the Tower if possible, and to make the straightest possible line for that dinner waiting us at 7.30 P.M., at the Alexandra. Easy as it is to suggest such a course of proceeding, we found it a most difficult one to carry out. We had a hazy impression that an easy ledge ran round the west side, enabling one to reach the Gap, without climbing the Tower itself. Certainly, when we looked to the east, there seemed no feasible ledge, as all the rocks were plastered with ice. Acting on this impression and seeing a way which looked possible in the dim twilight, we went along a snowy platform on the western side of the Tower, and encountered occasional rocky pitches which had to be avoided. As we progressed, our route became more difficult. Often much valuable time was wasted owing to our becoming landed in cul-de-sacs which from a distance looked feasible in the

semi-darkness. A slight haze also complicated matters, causing extraordinary optical illusions. One might see perhaps a snowy ledge offering tempting foothold. On cautiously stretching out the ice-axe to test its strength, one found a yawning chasm, the patch of snow being in reality, hundreds of feet below. After a couple of hours of this groping in the darkness, we imagined that at last we were secure. Stretching far below, there seemed to be a splendid snow gully to descend, which we could follow with our eyes about half way down to the Coire na Ciste. The first few hundred feet were easily descended, the end men of the rope alternately anchoring and glissading down. Presently, however, the slope became steeper and steeper, until at last we were cautiously cutting steps down very steep snow. Our hopes were doomed to disappointment as an almost perpendicular icefall was encountered. We lowered Macintyre down this for twelve feet, and there he found a small standing space of about three feet. I then went down, cutting large steps for the last man. As this pitch was slightly overhanging at the centre, the problem was, how the last man was to get down. Macintyre and I anchored securely, so that in the event of a slip, Goodeve would not fall very far. He descended with great care, and safely arrived at our platform. Twenty feet lower, we encountered a terrible-looking icefall which was absolutely impossible, having a tremendous overhang. We now realised that we were in the Tower Gap Chimney, and that this icefall was the waterfall described on page 205, Vol. VII. of the *Journal*, in the account of the original ascent by Glover and Clark.

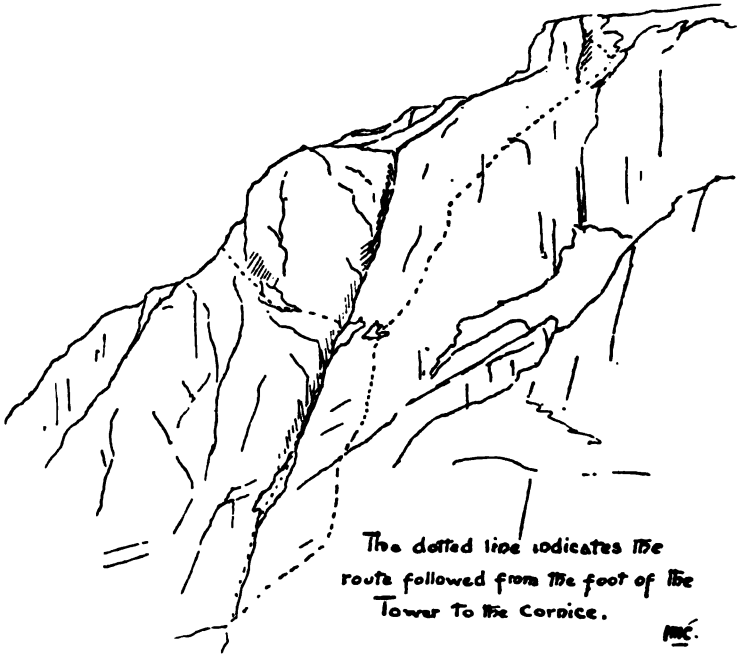
In this predicament, we had nothing for it but to climb up to the Ridge once again.

To do this, we ascended the steep rocks on our right hand side of the Tower Gap Chimney, keeping practically parallel to it. This part of our route is not shown in the sketch, being lower down in the chimney.

The going was not so fast as earlier in the day, the party being fairly exhausted. After many difficult pitches, icy chimneys, and what not, we arrived about eight o'clock at the same level which we had left with buoyant spirits

several hours previous, but this time on the opposite side of the Chimney.

Hitherto, a moderate amount of light had been obtained from the stars, but owing to intervening clouds, we could now see nothing clearly. We then traversed along the west side of the Tower Ridge, keeping under the vertical rocks, and above the icefalls which are found on that side, steering for a snowy ledge which appeared to be the only way by which we could progress. We took some food



here, being the second meal that day, as we had never found any suitable place for food. As it was, we had to rope to our ice-axes dug in the snow, to prevent ourselves from slipping.

In the far distance, the lights of Banavie and Corpach twinkled mockingly at us, looking so near, but alas! so far. I experienced a most curious optical illusion, when first I saw the cornice at the summit of the Ben. To my tired eyes, it seemed to be about a rope's length above Goodeve,

with an easy snow slope leading up to it. Accordingly, I shouted to him to bring me up on the rope to where he stood, so that I could be of assistance with a back to surmount the cornice. Much to my surprise, although we climbed steadily for half-an-hour, we never came any nearer. In reality, it was still far above our heads with much more formidable objects to traverse than easy snow slopes. Owing to the darkness, I have no very clear recollections of what difficulties we encountered, except one or two pitches which can never be blotted out of one's memory. At one place, after cutting up an exceptionally steep slope, we were faced by a rocky pitch which was impossible. So steep was this slope, that one looked almost vertically down on the head of the man below. There was a ridge of icy rock on our right hand side, and this had to be traversed. For the first three feet there were some fairly good holds, but after that a distance of about ten feet had to be done practically by friction alone. The rock was deeply undercut at the level of the feet, and one had to take a tremendous stride on to a slippery surface. Holding on with the left hand, the leader had to lean over and cut steps with the right, and then pull himself slowly across by means of a very small finger-grip. We all took a sigh of relief when the party got safely across. An absolutely new route was now made to the cornice at the summit. In daylight, and with plenty of time, one might not have attempted it, but in our case, we either had to go on or else be frozen to death. A rib of rock rose above us, perhaps twenty feet in height and nearly perpendicular. As the ice slope here was almost vertical, it would have been impossible to have made progress, but for the friendly help of this finger of rock. Just in the corner, between it and the ice, there was a little hard snow, and by means of this, the leader was able to worm his way up to a small ice arête, which connected the top of the rock and the ice slope. When it came to my turn, I found the snow practically all kicked away, and I could not have managed the pitch but for the friendly assistance of the rope. As my frantic struggles had effectually removed every trace of snow for the last man to get foothold on, there was nothing for it but to lift

him bodily by the rope. Goodeve and I sat stridelegs on the ice-arête before mentioned, and at a shout from below, with all the speed our tired muscles would allow, brought Macintyre up, struggling and kicking like a fish (if I may be permitted the simile). Half-an-hour of step-cutting up a terribly steep ice-slope brought us to the cornice.

At 4 A.M., on Sunday morning, the Secretary's rescue party lowered a lantern over the cornice at the place we cut up, and reported that it did not touch the slope below for an almost incredible distance. So steep was it, that they would not have believed it possible for any party to have climbed it in safety, but for our tell-tale footsteps, and the groove made by the rope on the edge of the cornice.

When I stood vertically in my steps on the slope leading up to the cornice, my face was only a few inches from the ice, so that this gives an unexaggerated idea of its steepness. Happily, the cornice proved not very difficult, and soon after midnight we were all merrily shaking hands at the top of the Tower Ridge. I can honestly say, that during the whole climb, not a single slip of the foot was made by any of the party, owing to the excessive care which we all exercised. On account of the hard state of the snow, it always took a considerable time to get the ice-axe driven right up to the head, and as there were always two of the party thus hitched, this may partly account for the long time taken. We were fortunate as regards weather conditions, as there was not a very high wind, and as we usually were free from mist. As it was, the cold was terrible, both Goodeve and Macintyre receiving frost-bites on their hands and fingers, so that slightly more cold would have spelled disaster to us. In every way we congratulated ourselves as being exceptionally lucky in getting off as we did. Our only anxiety now was for the other members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, who would have grave doubts of our safety, and who might be organising search parties at the Alexandra. Owing to the Observatory being closed, we were unable to send a message to Fort William to relieve their anxious minds. As a strong gale was blowing on the plateau, we were unable to get a light to take compass readings, and in consequence, after some wandering in the mist, we de-

scended the wrong side of the mountain, having lost sight of the posts which mark the footpath. After cautiously descending for a considerable distance, we found ourselves on very treacherous snow, where steps had to be cut for many hundred feet. We had hopes, however, that we would strike the path, as we did not then know how far we were out in our bearings. On descending a very treacherous pitch, Macintyre slipped his foot, and this gave the rope a pull. My ice-axe did not hold, and I also slid out of my steps. Goodeve's hitch stood our combined jerk for a second, and then gave, being unable to stand the strain of two men. At the next instant, both Macintyre and I managed to stop ourselves, but not without previously causing Goodeve to slide down the snow. Unfortunately he struck his head against a rock and received a bad cut. Owing to his exceptionally strong constitution, after a few minutes, he was the most active member of the party.

It was now about 4 A.M. on Sunday morning, and the party being thoroughly tired out, very slow progress was made. Presently, as light increased, we recognised Scur à Mhaim directly opposite us, and then knew which direction to take. Tracks were made for the col between Carn Dearg (above Polldubh) and the western side of Ben Nevis. Whilst resting here about nine o'clock on Sunday morning we saw an active figure bounding down to us at a very rapid pace. From his speed, we surmised it could be none other than Raeburn, and a few minutes later he was heartily shaking hands all round, acting the kind Samaritan with sandwiches and other dainties. He told us that he was in one of the many search parties which had been scouring Ben Nevis practically all night. Under his kind and able guidance, we were piloted through the difficult and narrow gorge which leads down into Glen Nevis, and after an easy walk we reached Fort William about one o'clock on Sunday afternoon.

I take this opportunity to cordially thank, in the name of the party, all those members who so willingly sacrificed their own arrangements, and gave up their sleep to searching the Ben.



# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## THE ISLAND OF ARRAN.

*Ar = high, Inn = island.*

(DIVISION VI. GROUP III.)

THE "granite peaks of Arran" lie in latitude  $55^{\circ} 36'$  to  $55^{\circ} 40' N.$ , and longitude  $5^{\circ} 8'$  to  $5^{\circ} 21' W.$  Magnetic variation,  $18^{\circ} 27' W.$  (1908). Annual decrease, 6'. Ordnance Survey Maps, six-inch scale, Sheets 225, 226, 237, 238, 243, 244, one-inch scale, Sheets 13 and 21; also a special one-inch sheet of the island alone combining Nos. 13 and 21. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Maps, Nos. 3 and 7.

The island of Arran, comprising some 160 square miles, is situated in the Firth of Clyde, and is quite the dominating feature of that estuary, world-famed for its beauty. From north to south, the island measures 20 miles; from east to west, 9 miles; while its circuit by road is  $55\frac{1}{4}$  miles. The granite peaks, which have made the island famous among climbers, are grouped together in the north, while to the south are extensive heather-clad moors and sheep-runs. Notwithstanding its proximity to the great industrial centre of Scotland, Arran has not so far been overrun by the cheap tripper, or tourist as the mountaineer loves to phrase it. For this boon, lovers of solitude and rustic simplicity have to thank the Dukes of Hamilton, in whose family the island has been for some generations. By curtailing the erection of all buildings, and especially of cheap villas, the accommodation for visitors has been kept distinctly



*H. Douglas.*

GLEN SANNOX.

*Aug. 1894.*

*Engelmann*



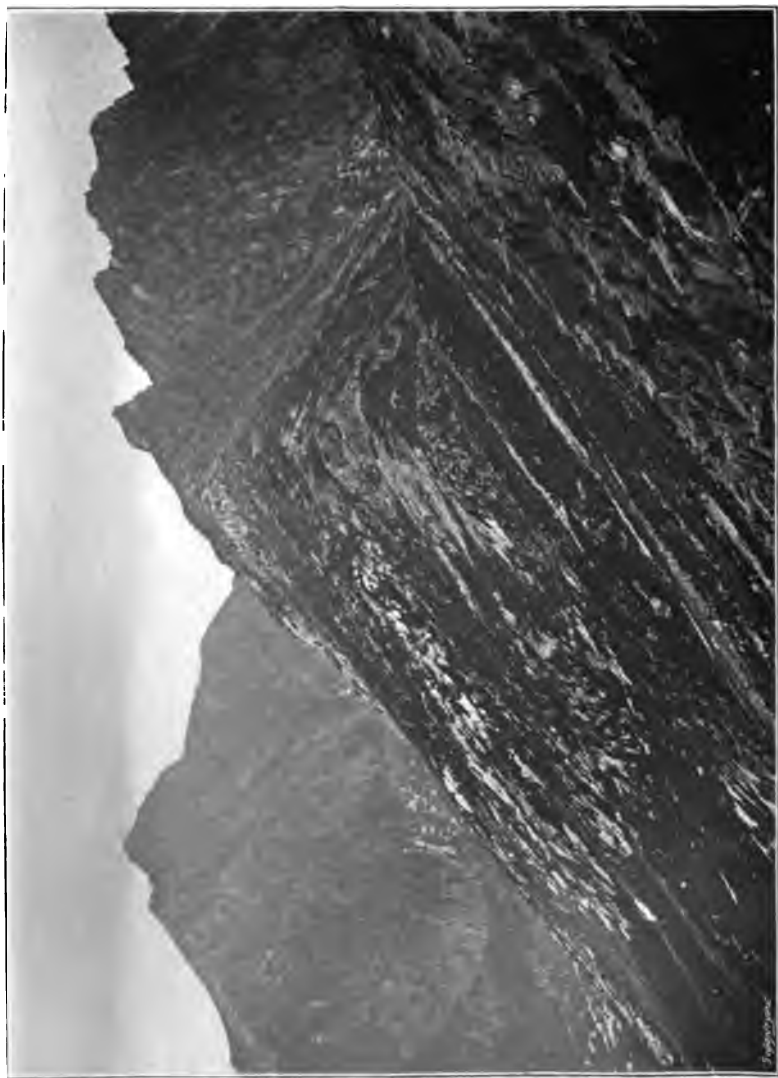
limited, and thus the *blasés habitués* of Dunoon and Rothesay have not been wooed from their painted pierrots and illuminated gardens. These restrictions apply more to the northern half of the island, the haunt of the climber, the artist, the geologist, and the botanist; and here we find even within call of the main road, those scenes of lonely grandeur so dear to the mountain lover. Absolute freedom of access to the hills has hitherto been granted at all seasons, and one is happy to think that this privilege has never been abused. The praises of Arran have been sung by great and small, but none can be more gratifying to its admirers than the following judicial statement from the pen of such a competent critic as Sheriff Alex. Nicolson:—

“Arran I would call on the whole the most delightful (of Scottish islands); more enjoyable even than Skye, partly because smaller, though scarcely less wild, but chiefly because of the better condition of its inhabitants.”—*Good Words*, 1875.

The bonny wee cottages which nestle round the shores at Corrie and Sannox, their gardens crowded with fuchsias and hanging with honeysuckle, impart that air of prosperity which is so sadly lacking in many districts of the north-west Highlands. Their simple background of gnarled hazels and silver-barked rowans serves to show up in exaggerated grandeur and sterility the great peaks which frown above them. It is this vivid contrast of sylvan beauty and rugged tor which has induced so many comparisons between the Arran hills and the Coolin, and has given to the former that romance of inaccessibility and difficulty which a closer acquaintance shows them not to possess. Indeed, with the exception of the actual summits of A' Chir and Ceum na Caillich, a pedestrian “could walk hands in pocket” to the top of any of the Arran hills. To those who know Skye this is sufficient to dispel any fears of a rival in the south. But what of it? The grey hills of Arran have a charm of their own, alike to the artist and the climber. Though age may wither them, yet custom cannot “stale their infinite variety.” Seen from the west on a summer evening, the graceful peaks and serrated ridges glow in the rays of the setting sun. But when storm-clouds gather over the Great Comb, and the

keen nor'-wester whistles down Glen Rosa, all mountain detail is merged in majestic purple, throwing into vivid contrast the yellow sands of Brodick Bay and the sunlit slopes of Corriegills beyond.

It is during the summer and autumn months that Arran is seen to best advantage. In spring, although the whin and broom lend brilliance to the lower slopes, the island is somewhat deficient in colour, while the rocks are cold and the gullies rushing with water. Snow does not lie to any extent on these hills, and although surpassingly lovely under their winter coating, the soft sea breezes soon lick up the silvery mantle, leaving the hills grey and depressing. Here one rarely finds the dazzling snow-field or the delicate cornice so conspicuous on our Highland Bens, and although the diligent seeker on Cir Mhor may have Mummery's satisfaction of "beating the long gullies of black ice into submission"—or otherwise—the snow enthusiast will find no scope for his craft. Arran is essentially a place for summer climbing, and the devotee who wanders alone along the ridges or basks in *dolce far niente* on the gravelly bank of some crystal pool will never weary as the white mists float round the grey tors, and the fitful sunlight explores the hidden beauties of some dark corrie. The best scenic effects will be found, I think, in autumn, although in February 1902 a curious effect was witnessed by Mr Raeburn's party in Glen Sannox. "The air below was clear as crystal, but a few hundred feet up hung like a roof the solid-looking mass of grey mist extending from bank to bank. In this deep hollow was caught and concentrated, as it were, the light that poured in through the gap where the glen opened eastward to the sea. Under this deep-toned light the grass and heather took on a most vivid dark green, and the patches of dull burnt heath shone resplendent in rich purple." I have witnessed a similar phenomenon in September from the Castles-Cir Mhor col, but instead of a grey mist, a warm sunlit haze hung high over the glen, which was brilliantly flooded with a cold green light from the sea. Almost more striking was a cloud effect seen from the Mullach Buidhe ridge, also in autumn. A strong north-west wind was urging in tumultuous con-



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CIR MHOR AND CEUM NA CAILLICH.

W. Douglas.



fusion dense snow-white clouds over the ridges from Glen Iorsa. These billowy masses sweeping round and over Cir Mhor swirled deep into the glens, then rushing up the containing walls vanished in the strong rays of the mid-day sun, leaving the whole startling prospect clear to the spectator.

It is this wonderful variety and, at the same time, compactness, which constitutes the chief fascination of Arran. The sea is there, all around and ever-present, with its vistas of loch and mountain. Fields of corn, meagre, perhaps, but resplendent with poppies and marigolds, fringe the shores; above them are the multi-coloured moors, dotted here and there with birchen copse and graceful rowan; and then the silent grey hills boulder strewn and seamed by rocky water-courses.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Numerous books dealing with the different phases of Arran have been published, and for a very complete list of these the reader is referred to the article by Mr Goggs in Vol. VIII., pp. 38, 39. The following are the more important references which have appeared from time to time in this *Journal*:—

- “The Glen Sannox Hills,” by T. Fraser S. Campbell, Vol. I., pp. 31-36.
- “Cir Mhor from Glen Sannox,” by W. W. Naismith, Vol. II., pp. 17-24.
- “A’ Chir,” by T. Fraser S. Campbell, Vol. II., pp. 75-81.
- “The Granite Peaks of Arran,” by W. Douglas, Vol. III., pp. 195-211.
- “Cir Mhor,” by Gilbert Thomson, Vol. III., pp. 212-217.
- “A Day on Cir Mhor,” by W. Inglis Clark, Vol. V. pp. 29-36.
- “Ben Nuis Chimney,” by L. J. Oppenheimer, Vol. VII., pp. 1-9.
- “Arran,” by F. S. Goggs, Vol. VIII., pp. 12-40.



“Thirty-eighth Meet of the Club: New Year, 1907,”  
Vol. IX., pp. 252-254.

In addition there are many shorter articles and notes of special climbs.

#### ETYMOLOGY.

In Mr Goggs' article above referred to will be found an admirable selection of the various meanings which have been assigned by authorities to the place-names of Arran. The extraordinary divergence of opinion as to some of the derivations is almost alarming. Thus we have seven to select from in the case of the word “Arran,” ranging from that quoted at the beginning of this article to “Gaelic ‘Ara’ (genitive, ‘Aran’), a kidney, which exactly gives Arran's shape.” The Rev. J. B. Johnston's “Place-Names of Scotland” contains interesting information on this subject.

#### GEOLOGY.

Arran may “be regarded as a geological epitome of the world.” Bryce in his “Arran and other Clyde Islands” says: “The number of rock-formations, sedimentary and plutonic, which are found within this limited space is truly remarkable, perhaps unparalleled in any tract of like extent on the surface of the globe; while the varied phenomena which they present in their mutual contacts and general relations to one another are of the highest import in theoretical geology.”

The “highland line” passes through the island from Blackwaterfoot to Brodick following roughly the line of the String Road. To the north of this road are the typical rocks of the Highlands with Alpine plants, while to the south are the sandstones and volcanic overflows of the southern parts of Scotland. Round the coast may be traced the remains of raised sea-beaches, one 25 feet above the present level, along which at many parts runs the shore road; another, 75 feet above the present level; others, less distinct, can be traced at even higher altitudes.

The great mountain mass of the north is composed of a granite nucleus which has been thrust up through beds

of slate and sandstone. These two strata lie around it tilted at an angle, and are quite apparent at many points, the slate, of course, being next to the granite. Through the central granite masses run numerous whin dykes, and where these have eroded we find the great chimneys and gullies which are such prominent features of the A' Chir Ridge. Contrary to popular belief, there is little evidence of volcanic craters in the great corries so common in these hills, their present forms being due partly to water denudation, and in a lesser degree to glacial action. Evidences of the Ice-Age are not so apparent to the climber here as among the Coolin, but moraine heaps are common, and stranded granite boulders of great size are found as far south as King's Cross, and smaller ones beyond. The large boulders around Corrie may have come down simply by the action of gravitation, although the delicate poise of the Rocking Stone near Sannox would seem to indicate evidences of ice traction.

In Vol. IV. of the *Journal*, Sir Archibald Geikie makes special reference to the weathering of granite from a climbing aspect, and the photograph of the summit of the Castles reproduced here illustrates his remarks.

#### FLORA.

Owing to its peculiar geological formation and soils Arran provides a rich field for the botanist, although some of the commoner Alpine plants are absent. A list of some of the rare phenogamous plants found in Arran, with localities, appears in Landsborough's "Arran," 1851, p. 464.

#### FAUNA.

The Eagle appears to have deserted Arran, although evidences of an eyrie on A' Chir were reported some years ago. Ravens and Kestrel hawks are common, and Ptarmigan have been seen in winter. During the summer months the rarer sea-birds shun the busy shores, but in winter the Shag, Cormorant, Guillemot, and Heron are to be seen. There is, by the way, a popular superstition that "when the Herons are gone the Dukes of Hamilton will be gone too."

The latter have gone, but the spectral Heron still keeps his lonely watch by the quiet shores. The Red Deer are plentiful among the hills, many being of almost record weight. Mountain hares I have never seen or heard of in Arran, but Rabbits appear to flourish almost to the very summits of the hills.

Arran is the happy hunting ground of the entomologist. Gorgeous and swift-flying Red Admirals, Fritillaries, and Painted Ladies are common among the butterflies, and, vieing with them in speed and beauty are the great Emperor and Oak Eggar moths. The Convolvulus Hawk moth, which measures some five inches across, has also been taken here.

1            2            3 4            5 6            7 8 9



THE ARRAN HILLS FROM THE EAST.

1. Ben Nuis. 2. Goatfell. 3. North Goatfell. 4. Mullach Buidhe. 5. Cioch na h'Oighe  
6. Cir Mhor. 7. Ceum na Caillich. 8. Caisteal Abhail. 9. Suidhe Fhearghas.

#### TOPOGRAPHY.

The mountains of Arran fall roughly into three groups: (1) the Western Hills, from Beinn Bharrain to Meall nan Damh; (2) the Central Ridge, from Ben Nuis to Suidhe Fhearghas; and (3) the Goatfell Group in the east. Between 1 and 2 are Glens Iorsa and Easan Biorach, while between 2 and 3 are the well-known Glens Rosa and Sannox. The following are the summits and cols in the three divisions, going from south to north in each case.

Division 1.

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Beinn Bharrain (2,345).      | Beinn Bhreac north top (2,305). |
| Mullach Buidhe (2,368).      | Col (1,350).                    |
| Bealach an Fharaidh (1,800). | Meall nan Damh (1870).          |
| Beinn Bhreac (2,333).        |                                 |

Division 2.

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Ben Nuis (2,597).                           | Col (1,933).              |
| Col (2,344).                                | Cir Mhor (2,618).         |
| Ben Tarsuinn (2,706).                       | Col (2,046).              |
| Bealach an Fhir Bogha (2,250).              | Caisteal Abhail (2,817).  |
| (Ben a' Chliabhain (2,217) on<br>the east). | Col (2,150?)              |
| Col (2,106).                                | Ceum na Caillich (2,300). |
| A' Chir (2,335).                            | Col (1,850).              |
|   | Suidhe Fhearghas (2156).  |

Division 3.

- |                         |                                   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Goatfell (2,866).       | Mullach Buidhe (2,688).           |
| Col (2,487).            | (Am Binnein (2,172) on the east.) |
| North Goatfell (2,684). | Cioch na h'Oighe (2,168).         |
| Col (2,472).            |                                   |

The Saddle (1,413 feet) connects Divisions 2 and 3, and lies between North Goatfell and Cir Mhor. The connecting ridges between 1 and 2 are not well defined, but the lowest point is about 1,100 feet, near Loch Tanna. From the above it will be seen that pride of place falls to Goatfell, followed closely by Caisteal Abhail, then Tarsuinn, Mullach Buidhe, North Goatfell, Cir Mhor, and Nuis. Following Mr Douglas, the name North Goatfell has been assigned to the 2,684 feet top on the Goatfell ridge. The name Mullach Buidhe (yellow mallet-headed hill) obviously falls to the summit (2,688 feet), from which the Cioch na h'Oighe and Am Binnein ridges run north-east and east respectively.

CENTRES.

Brodick and Corrie are the two places most conveniently situated for climbers, and both are within easy reach of Glasgow and Edinburgh. Brodick is the fashionable watering-place of Arran, has the larger hotel and more

accommodation for visitors, but Corrie is nearer the hills, and the hotel will be found more comfortable than that at Brodick.

The following table shows the approximate times required to reach the various hills from these two centres:—

	Brodick P.O.	Corrie Hotel.
Goatfell summit - -	2½ hours	2 hours
Ben Nuis summit - -	3 "	4 "
Cir Mhor " - -	3½ "	2½ "
Caisteal Abhail summit - -	4½ "	3½ "
Saddle - -	2½ "	1½ "
Coire Daingean (for A' Chir)	2½ "	3½ "
Cir Mhor (foot of N.E. face) -	3½ "	2 "
A' Chir (by ridge) - -	4 "	4 "
Cioch na h'Oighe cliffs - -	2 "	0½ "
Brodick P.O. - -	—	1¼ "

#### RIDGE WALKS.

The Arran hills are specially adapted for ridge wandering, being just sufficiently broken up to provide that novelty and change of scene which renders this form of climbing so fascinating. The pedestrian may pass from peak to peak over fine mossy turf or along well-worn sheep-tracks, here winding round great tors of weathered granite, there scrambling between boulders, but never meeting any serious obstacle to his progress. The going for the most part is so easy that the energetic climber can, in a long summer day, traverse all the main tops of Divisions 2 and 3, although this involves some 8,000 feet of climbing.

#### THE EASTERN OR GOATFELL GROUP.

GOATFELL (Gaoth Bhein=the hill of the wind, 2,866 feet).—The ascent of Goatfell is the "correct thing" among summer visitors to Brodick. The route is well defined, first by finger posts and then by the winding path across the moor on to the Meall Breac shoulder and so to the summit. The view from this, the highest point of the island, is hard to rival, and from no mountain in Scotland can be seen such wonderful diversity of scenery. The marvellous panorama

of Highland Bens, sunlit seas, and western isles, has been described time and again, and, says Sheriff Nicolson, "there cannot be many finer sights to be seen from any hill-top on this side of Mount Aksbeck." He continues thus:—

"The near view is not less remarkable. The two chief features of it that impress one in succession are, first the 'terrible congregation of jagged mountain ridges and fantastic peaks' right opposite and very near you, with their shelving precipices and dark clefts and wild melancholy scours. The next thing, and a pleasant sight, is the long sweep of Glen Rosa, so symmetrical, so green, so deep, and yet so near."

With regard to the near view, Goatfell has many rivals in the island, Cir Mhor and Caisteal Abhail providing wonderful glimpses of lonely corrie and rugged peak, but from Ben Tarsuinn, I think, is seen the finest grouping of the Arran hills.

To return to the summit of Goatfell, the climber has here a choice of routes. The descent may be made on any side, the only difficulty will be met with on the western slopes in the shape of cyclopean walls of granite scarred by several gullies. A pleasant change in the usual Brodick route is to go straight down the south ridge, this descent saving some time as the going is good. The descent into Glen Rosa is steep, but all slabs can be avoided by keeping slightly to the left. The route to North Goatfell along the ridge called Stacach affords good scrambling, if the castellated tors be conscientiously taken, but sheep tracks lead along both sides of these. A descent on either side is here practicable. To reach the Saddle, one should go right over North Goatfell and then follow down the narrow wind-swept ridge towards Cir Mhor. Otherwise, the main ridge may be continued over Mullach Buidhe east to Am Binnein and down to Corrie, or north-east along the narrow ridge to Cioch na h'Oighe and so down to Sannox. This latter route combined with the ascent of Goatfell makes a most enjoyable short day from Brodick.

CIOCH NA H'OIGHE (the maiden's breast, 2,168 feet).—The Cioch na h'Oighe ridge is very narrow, and affords some scrambling. The cliffs of the well-known Punch Bowl are on the south side, while steep scree slopes and enormous

slabs lead on the north side into Glen Sannox. The descent of the Cioch directly towards Sannox has not yet been done, all parties having hitherto been forced round towards the Glen Sannox slopes. The scene of the famous Arran murder of 1889, when Rose, a young Englishman, was killed, is supposed to be the col between Mullach Buidhe and North Goatfell, as his body was found at the foot of the cliffs in Coire nam Fuaran.

The ridge from Mullach Buidhe to Am Binnein presents no features worthy of notice, with the possible exception of some fine cyclopean walls.

#### THE CENTRAL RIDGE.

The traverse of this ridge from Ben Nuis to Suidhe Fhearghas affords one of the finest mountain walks in Scotland, and has been referred to more than once in this *Journal*. Starting from Brodick the main road is kept as far as the Parish Church, about one and a half miles. The large monolith of sandstone on the roadside near the Schoolhouse is one of many to be found on the island. It is called "Stronach," which signifies the "giant hero's pillar stone," and to descend from the sublime, it is easily climbed. From this part of the road fine vistas are had of the distant peaks, specially in late autumn, when the leaves are falling. The entrance to Glen Rosa is by the lane which leads past the Auld Kirk, and a fair track leads right up into the glen.

Just before reaching a large grass-covered terminal moraine, a very conspicuous pinnacle of rock is seen on the sky-line to the right, near where a small range of cliffs fringe the Glen Shant hills. For some years this had proved a subject of speculation and distant examination, until one day last autumn, a really hopelessly bad morning was devoted to it. The result of a fatiguing climb up the heather slopes is seen in the accompanying sketch. Whether the game is worth the candle may be left to the individual judgment! Suffice it to say that there is no easy way up, one route being by the central chimney (40 feet), and the other by the arête, just round the corner on the left (18 feet). Continuing up the glen past the moraine







CIR MHOR.  
SHOWING PINNACLE RIDGE ON LEFT AND START OF BELLI'S GROOVE

*117-1, Monsey.*

heaps, the Garbh Allt, which comes roaring down on the left, is reached in about an hour from the Post Office. The best route to Nuis is up the left bank of this torrent, and then across the moor to the south-east shoulder of the Ben and so to the summit.



THE GLEN SHANT PINNACLE.

**BEN NUIS** (the face mountain, 2,597 feet).—Having attained this, the first peak of the ridge, the climber may congratulate himself on having got over the hardest part of the day's excursion. If he will, the rest of the day may be spent among the "high places." The splendid precipice, 500 feet high (see p. 100), which flanks the hill on the east, is the chief object of interest. On the west side, some two hundred yards from the top, is an isolated tor of rock in the shelter of which two hardy S.M.C. men once spent an uneasy night. Skirting the precipices, the route to Ben Tarsuinn, the next peak, lies over gentle slopes of grass and moss in a north-easterly direction, and in half an hour the top is reached.

**BEN TARSUINN** (the transverse mountain, 2,706 feet).—

As already stated, this peak affords the finest views of the Arran hills. Due east we have the "massive form of Goatfell rising in great sheets of polished rock," and the serrated ridge leading to Cioch na h'Oighe. To the north the savage rocks of the A' Chir ridge, and the unclimbable slabs of the Rosa Pinnacle, are set off to advantage by the fine sweeping lines of Caisteal Abhail and Ceum na Caillich. A remarkable contrast is afforded by the view to the west. Here we have the long desolate valley of the Iorsa, with its lonely tarns bounded by the peaceful-looking hills of the Western Group. The precipices of Ben Nuis, in the south, complete a most comprehensive and striking panorama of these glorious hills.

A descent of a few minutes brings the climber to the Bealach an Fhir Bogha (pass of the bowmen), which leads from Glen Iorsa into Coire a' Bhradain. Between this bealach and the col, the Ben a' Chliabhain (*pron.* Cleven) ridge comes in on the right from Glen Rosa. The enormous flat slabs which compose a great part of this narrow wall-like ridge make a traverse of it something akin to a walk along a flagstone pavement.

From the col (2,106 feet), the A' Chir ridge runs north, but omitting this, the finest scramble in the island, in the meantime (see p. 102), the route lies low down on the Iorsa side. Skirting the great overlapping slabs which present a most formidable appearance from below, the ridge is again gained at the A' Chir-Cir Mhor col (1,933 feet).

CIR MHOR (the great comb, 2,618 feet).—From here to the top of the Great Comb is merely a steep walk, and the ease with which the summit is gained affords a delightful surprise to the ardent "Salvationist," who has hitherto only viewed this fine peak from other aspects. On the right hand, just short of the summit, is the Rosa Pinnacle (see p. 107), with the finest rock scenery in Arran. The top of Cir Mhor is a narrow ridge a few yards long, and from it lovely views are obtained of Glen Rosa and Glen Sannox. The great want in the otherwise fine panorama is the absence of Cir Mhor itself. Steep grass and heather, with scree slopes, lead down to the Saddle, the ascent from which can be made easily in an hour.





*H. MacRobert.*

THE SUMMIT TOP OF CAISTEAL ABHAIL.

Partly retracing our steps, and then turning north, the Cir Mhor-Castles col (2,046 feet) is reached, and the long pull up to the latter peak tackled. The fine springs of ice-cold water, which are marked by a cairn some 300 feet short of the summit, provide an excellent luncheon place. The view from here, moreover, of the sharp peak and dark crags of Cir Mhor is the most impressive in the island.

CAISTEAL ABHAIL (the stronghold of the ptarmigan, 2,817 feet) is the second highest point in Arran. The summit is extensive, with four ridges leading from it. This fact makes it a most confusing top in dense mist, and the desired ridge is not always attained, as witness the exploits of several parties during the New Year Meet of 1907. The great rock tors which form the summits are not easily distinguished from each other, and their position in a sort of semicircle does not help matters. The central tor is the highest, and is built of rectangular blocks with a dip to the south. The figures in the photograph show the massive nature of these tors. A nice little climb may be had here, but an easy way will be found on the east side. A long ridge runs in a north-west direction to Loch na Davie, and forms the approach from Loch Ranza. A much shorter and steeper ridge runs north into North Glen Sannox, while the third and most important runs east, dividing the North and South Sannox Glens. Following the latter ridge for three-quarters of a mile, the descent to the Carlin's Leap is reached. Here it is advisable in bad weather to keep to the actual summit of the ridge, or difficulty will be found in reaching the col, and a very unpleasant hour spent creeping snail-like over the slippery slabs which drop into the misty depths of Glen Sannox. A good echo is obtained from the rocky peak across the gap, and this sometimes proves useful in locating the col in misty weather.

CEUM NA CAILLICH (the witch's step, or carlin's leap, 2,300 feet).—The little saddle, which is only about 15 feet across, having been reached, the wanderer finds himself confronted by a great tower of granite boulders piled one on the top of the other in so-called "wool-pack" formation. On either side gullies lead down to the glens, that to the north being quite easy, while the one to the

south into Glen Sannox, although steeper with some rock pitches and jammed boulders, presents no great difficulty.

Bryce in his "Arran" (p. 160), makes the following note:—

"We find it to be merely a whin dike, worn down to this great depth below the containing walls of granite. The rock is a dark-coloured, fine-grained greenstone of loose texture; it exhibits the concentric spheroidal structure so often alluded to as characteristic of common whinstone."

Hemmed in by the steep walls of the cleft, the outlook is somewhat limited, although comprising very fine views of Cir Mhor and the Goatfell ridges. The immediate surroundings, however, are weirdly impressive, and when the wind comes howling through the cleft, and the mists are swirling round the rocky bastions, the real significance of the name "Carlin's Leap" is forced upon us, and in fancy we see again the dreaded warlocks, and hear their shrieks of unearthly laughter as they race through on the wings of the storm.

From the col to the peak of the Carlin's Leap is about 150 feet, and there are two routes up, for notes on which see page 107. Those who wish to avoid this little climb may descend some thirty feet on the North Sannox side, and then traverse round ledges of mixed rock and turf, and approach the summit from the east. The ridge from the Carlin's Leap to the summit of Suidhe Fhearghas is nearly a mile, and affords a most delightful walk with glorious views of the commerce-laden firth.

SUIDHE FHEARGHAS (seat of Fergus, 2,156 feet).—This is the last summit in the Central Range, and is a conspicuous and graceful object from the Sannox shores. Here, like King Fergus of old, the weary climber may rest a while ere stumbling down the steep heathery slopes to the glen.

"Oh, it is pleasant with a heart at ease,  
Just after sunset or by moonlight skies,  
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,  
Or let the easily persuaded eyes  
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould  
Of a friend's fancy."

Thus the long day among the ridges and hill-tops draws to a close, and as we make our way through the birch woods and down the narrow lane past the old churchyard the mystic twilight of the north creeps in, shrouding the glen in gloom, while high above, the fading lights of the western sky throw into bold outline the proud crest of Cir Mhor.

### THE WESTERN HILLS.

Of the many climbers who visit Arran every year, but few extend their explorations so far afield as the round-topped hills of the western range. This is, of course, due to the fact that the more rugged and fascinating peaks of the Central and Goatfell groups lie in the path of the would-be explorer. Hence, although there may be many who set out from Brodick or Corrie with high hopes and honest intentions, there are but few who survive the heat of the day and the seductive charms of Cir Mhor or A' Chir and attain unto their far distant goal. The best plan is to spend a night at Loch Ranza, where there is a good hotel, and the next day the range can be traversed to Brodick. The best route is by Catacol ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles) to Meall nan Damh (1,870 feet), and thence along the ridge, traversing the tops of Beinn Bhreac (spotted hill, 2,333 feet) to the north top of Beinn Bharrain (barren mountain, 2,368 feet), the culminating point of the ridge. This summit is dignified by a separate name, Mullach Buidhe,\* in the 6-inch map, but in the 1-inch map the whole hill is named Beinn Bharrain. The south top (2,345 feet) is about half a mile to the south-west. From here it is four miles to Dougrie Lodge on the coast road, and another twelve to Brodick; but if this be considered too much, a north-west course might be taken to Pirnmill (two miles), from which it is only seven miles by road to Loch Ranza. There are no inns at Pirnmill or Catacol.

The path in Glen Catacol is on the right bank of the stream. About one and a half miles up the glen on the east

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\* Not to be confused with its bigger namesake in the Goatfell group.



side is Creag nah Iolair (the eagle's crag), which has been referred to as possessing some climbing problems. Half-way between Meall nan Damh and Beinn Bhreac, on the west, lies Coirein Lochain, which Ramsay, in his "Geology of the Island of Arran," states to be "by far the most picturesque of all the lochs of Arran."

If the pedestrian has returned to Loch Ranza, Brodick might be reached the following day by going up Glen Easan Biorach to Loch na Davie, and thence by the long ridge to Caisteal Abhail over the Cir Mhor-A' Chir col, and down Glen Rosa. Loch na Davie possesses the interesting distinction of having two outlets, one discharging north to Loch Ranza, and the other south down Glen Iorsa. The loch itself, however, is little more than a very wet marsh, and this probably accounts for the phenomenon.

Another interesting route, although hardly a climbing one, is by the Cock of Arran and the seashore to Sannox passing the Picture Cave, near the Cock Farm, and the Fallen Rocks.

The direct route to the western hills from Brodick is described by Mr Goggs as follows:—"From Brodick up Glen Rosa, over the col between Cir Mhor and A' Chir; then descend into Garbh-choire Dubh to about the 1,250 contour and strike north-west along the flank of the north-west ridge of the Castles, keeping about the same altitude, leave Loch na Davie a little to the north, turn south-west round Beinn Bhreac (1,881 feet),\* and along the southern slopes of Beinn Tarsuinn (1,819 feet),\* still keeping the 1,250 contour, and in due time the north end of Loch Tanna is reached. A rough path will be found from near Loch na Davie for nearly two miles."

From Loch Tanna, which is about one mile long and 1,065 feet above sea-level, the Bealach an Fharaidh (1,800 feet), between Beinns Bhreac and Bharrain, is easily reached. "From Corrie the above route can be struck by going up Glen Sannox and Coire na h'Uaimh."

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\* These are common mountain names in the island, there being four Beinn Tarsuinns and three Beinn Bhreacs.

### THE GLENS.

One of the most popular excursions among the Arran hills is from Brodick to Corrie *via* Glens Rosa and Sannox. In Glen Rosa the path keeps close to the right bank of the stream until well up towards the Saddle (1,413 feet), when it crosses to the left side. The Saddle itself is about six and a half miles from Brodick, and will take not less than two and a half hours of good walking. The view from here is most impressive.

To descend into Glen Sannox it is usual to go towards Cir Mhor until a trap dyke gully is seen on the right. This is the easiest route. The path in this glen is on the left bank, and the route from the Saddle joins it where an isolated boulder topped with heather stands on the edge of the burn. From the Saddle to the main road at Sannox is about three miles, and Corrie Hotel should be gained in one and a half hours.

### HOLY ISLAND.

This is the finest view-point in the south of the island, although only 1,030 feet in height. It is situated in Lamlash Bay, about half a mile from King's Cross Point. The ascent in twenty minutes, stimulated by a swim across the narrow channel, affords a pleasant morning's recreation. The summit is cone-shaped, and not unlike Arthur's Seat. To the west the slope falls steeply in a series of porphyry and claystone bluffs; to the east, screes and heather reach down at a very high angle to the sea. These slopes are the haunt of numerous wild goats, which roam at will over the precarious scree, sending many a block bounding into the sea.

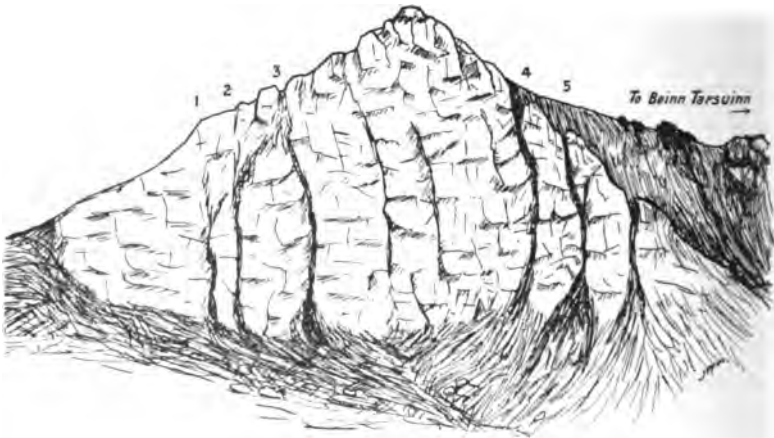
Holy Island is so called as the reputed abode of St Molios, an Irish bishop, who flourished during the sixth century. His cave with a beautiful spring of water is situated on the west shore.

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### ROCK CLIMBS.

Rock climbing among the Arran hills is of a most distinctive character, and quite unlike that met with else-

where in Scotland, except among the Cairngorms. "Cyclopean walls," "boiler plates," "wool-packs," these are some of the common terms used to denote—or vilify—the peculiar granite precipices and rock faces which confront the climber, and so often shatter that self-respect gained among steeper but easier rocks elsewhere. The coarse granite weathers evenly, and presents everywhere rounded holds and straight regular chimneys. The weathering is most rapid along the divisional planes, and gives rise to numerous ledges and vertical cracks, along and up which the climber proceeds with a more or less serpentine motion. Claspings gigantic holds with outstretched arms, squirming round and over



THE BEN NUIS PRECIPICE.

1, 2, and 4. Easy Gullies. 3. Ben Nuis Chimney. 5. Green and Boyd's Gully.

impossible corners, shuffling up great slabs set on edge, here defying gravitation with legs jammed securely, there spread-eagled helplessly, every square inch of cuticle and Harris tweed plastered to the gritty slab—truly, the rock enthusiast among these grey peaks gets his full mead of exercise. As has already been said many times in this *Journal*, the Arran climbs "are not what they seem." Some prove to be little better than steep walks, while others, just as simple in appearance, have defied all attempts to make them "go."

THE BEN NUIS PRECIPICE.—This consists of some 500

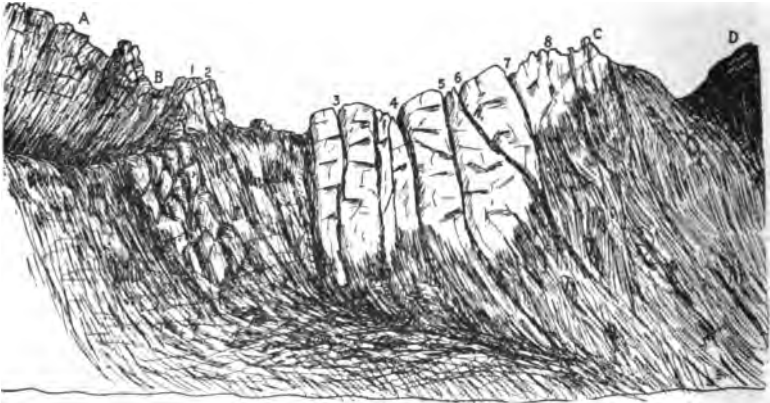
feet of slabs, intersected by numerous grass ledges and cracks. No face climbs have been recorded on it, although various attempts have been made. The gullies have, however, succumbed to the attacks of the S.M.C.

The first ascent was made in July 1895, by Messrs Green and Boyd, by means of the gully (No. 5) which leads to the small ridge running north-east from the summit. Before gaining this ridge, however, they traversed to the left, and having surmounted a 40-foot chimney and "climbed obliquely up grass ledges and easy rocks . . . they stepped off the face on to the very summit of the mountain." Dr Inglis Clark and Mr Raeburn repeated this climb some years later, and also ascended gullies 1 and 2. These are not very satisfying climbs, but the rock scenery in No. 5 is very fine, specially under winter conditions.

In August 1901, Messrs Baker, Puttrel, and Oppenheimer ascended the prominent curved chimney which has since become notorious as the "Ben Nuis Chimney" (No 3), thanks to the latter's very vivid account of the climb in Vol. VII. The climbers appear to have met with great difficulty, and their performance does not appear to have been repeated.

**BEN TARSUINN.**—There are no records of any climbs on the Tarsuinn ridge from Coire a' Bhradain or Ealta Coire, although some of minor importance seem to have been done. Where the northern bluffs overlook Coire Daingean, however, there are two fine chimneys (1 and 2). No. 1 does not appear to have been climbed without a rope from above. Mr Bennett Gibbs in Vol. VII., p. 50, refers to it as "the straightest, and, I think, longest direct climb I saw anywhere." A rough calculation, based on a 60-foot rope, made the vertical height to be about 120 feet. It is very narrow, and extends fully 20 feet into the cliff. The exits at the top are very small, and not at all obvious to a party seeking the chimney from above. Some 20 yards to the west is No. 2 Chimney. This is very prominent and deep-cut at the top, but below it fritters out to a face crack. Several parties have explored this chimney from above, but although the descent of the last 15 feet might be made, the ascent appears to be impossible.

Hitherto there has been some confusion as to the locality of these chimneys, it having been reported that they were on Ben a' Chliabhain. The cliffs on Chliabhain, however, are not of much account, although Mr Maclay has recorded a short scramble on them, and Mr Newbigging reports "the ascent of 120-foot prominent, interesting, chock-stoned chimney."



COIRE DAINGEAN AND A' CHIR RIDGE FROM THE EAST.

A. Ben Tarsuinn. B. Bealach an Fhir Bogha. C. A' Chir. D. Cir Mhor.

**A' CHIR RIDGE.**—The traverse of the Comb is the most enjoyable scramble in the island. The rock scenery throughout is grand, and impresses one chiefly with a sense of massive strength. Here there is not that scene of ruin and decay which is so conspicuous a feature of Aonach Eagach and the Coolin ridges; instead, we have a succession of square, solid towers and massive walls of unbroken granite.

From Brodick the best route to the south end of the ridge is by Glen Rosa and Coire Daingean. In making the return journey, it is quicker to go down Coire a' Bhra-dain and the Garbh Allt. To reach the north end of A' Chir from Corrie the way lies up Glen Sannox, and round the west slopes of Cir Mhor.

From the south end of the ridge to the summit the route admits of variation. The Iorsa side is composed

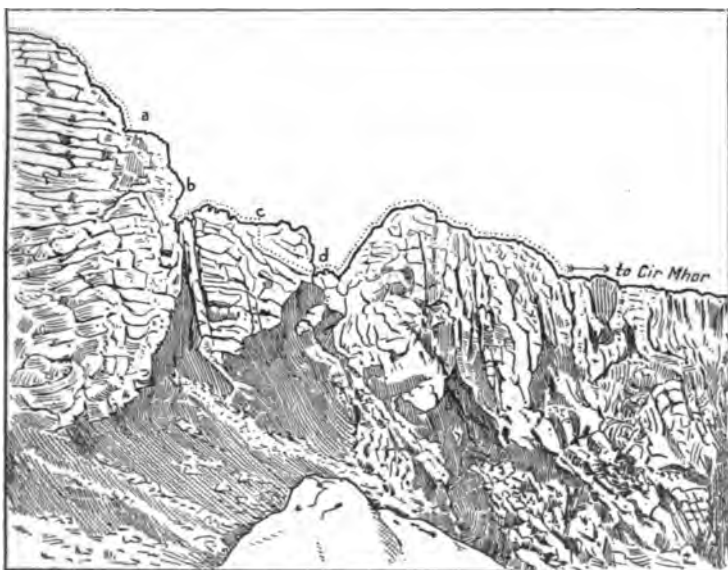


THE A'CHIR RIDGE.

*J. S. Napier.*



for the most part of great flat slabs, but a scree gully near the summit intersects them, and gives easy access from the west. On the east side the ridge falls steeply into Coire Daingean, and the granite walls are cleft by several gullies and chimneys formed by the weathering of whin dykes. No mention is made in the *Journal* of any climbs here, but gullies marked 4 and 6 are easy, although the rocks are somewhat rotten. No. 3, if possible, should give a splendid climb. It is not quite continuous, but it appears possible to traverse out of the lower half into the upper. A good scramble can be had up some rock pitches and through a cave at point marked 8.



THE "MAUVAIS PAS" ON THE A' CHIR RIDGE.

The summit boulder can be climbed three ways by means of conveniently placed blocks. The easiest route to the top of A' Chir is up the steep slopes from Coire Buidhe.

The northern half of the ridge is the more interesting, and contains many choice variations for those who care to seek them. The diagram shows the most difficult bit, and



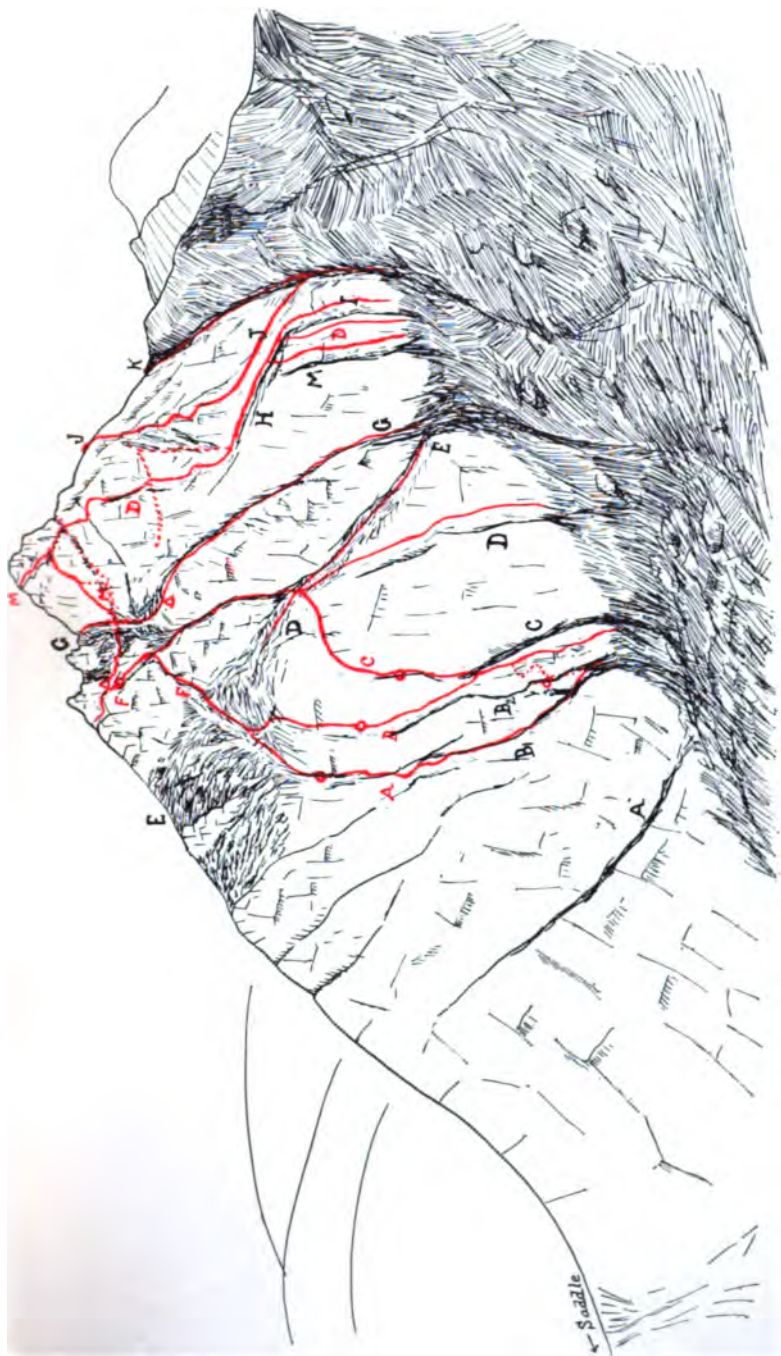
the usual method of circumventing it. At *c* a 15-foot rock wall leads to a grass ledge, which is followed to *d*. This *mauvais pas* is locally held to be impassable, and any assertion to the contrary is met with a sceptical smile. The direct descent to *d* has not yet been done, although the presence of a piton recalls the fact that an unorthodox descent was made in the early days of the Club. Most parties still spend some time here trying to "straighten out the ridge." At the head of the gully leading down to Coire Buidhe from *b* there is another piton which greatly facilitates an otherwise steep and slippery descent.

From *d* the crest of the ridge should be kept if a good climb involving a sensational traverse round a difficult corner is wanted. The photograph shows part of this arête, but owing to the camera being tilted the angle is very much diminished.

THE CIR MHOR CRAGS.—These are on the north-east face of the Great Comb overlooking the head of Glen Sannox. From the summit to the foot of the lowest slabs is about 1,200 feet, but the lower portion has not been climbed, all the routes starting farther up to the right. Here is to be found the finest rock-climbing in the island, gullies and ridges, caves and pinnacles, of all degrees of difficulty. The accompanying diagram of this face shows the routes of the principal climbs which have been made.

It will be noticed that a broad patch of grass and screes divides the cliffs into two sections. Routes converging on this can of course be joined up almost indefinitely. Climbers coming up from Brodick can get on to the grass patch from the Saddle Ridge, and so avoid the descent into and tedious climb out of Glen Sannox. The following *resumé* gives the climbing history of this face:—

A start was made in October 1891, when Messrs Gilbert Thomson and Naismith ascended the Stone Shoot Ridge (*g*). In 1893 these two pioneers returned to the attack, and this time the Western Stone Shoot (*κ*) was their victim. "A regular siege of the Arran hills was instituted" in August 1894, and the results were duly chronicled in Vol. III. in the two articles, "The Granite Peaks of Arran," by Mr Douglas, and "Cir Mhor," by Mr



**CIR MHOR N.E. FACE.**

- A - Unclimbed Gully.
- B1 - Partly climbed.
- B2 - Partly climbed.
- C - Pinnacle Route.
- D - Trap Dyke Climb.
- EE - Easy route.

- GG - Stone Shoot Ridge.
- H - Upper Shelf.
- J - Miclay's Chimney.
- JJ - Pinnacle Route.
- K - Western Stone Shoot.
- M - Shelf Gully.

- A - Messrs. Goggs & Bennett Gibbs.
- B - Mr Bell's Party.
- G - Mr Morrison's Party.
- D - Mr Bell's Party.
- F - Cave Route.
- M - Bell's Groove Route.

- O - Cave.
- Δ - Cairn.
- — — — — Principal Routes.
- ..... Other Routes.



Gilbert Thomson. From the latter article it may be seen that gullies A, B, and C were attempted unsuccessfully. Gully D was climbed by Mr Naismith and Dr Douglas (non-member) as far as the grass patch, from which point they climbed up by what is now known as the Cave Route (F). A day or so later the Cave was reached by the Easy Route (E). The Upper Shelf (H) was reached by Messrs Maclay, Douglas, and Naismith, by means of a difficult chimney (Maclay's Chimney, I). The Pinnacle Ridge (J) was climbed by Messrs Maclay and Naismith, starting from the Western Stone Shoot. They also connected this ridge with the Upper Shelf.

In September 1894, Messrs J. H. Bell and Green gained the summit by climbing up directly from the Stone Shoot. This route involves the ascent of Bell's Groove, and is described by Mr Bell as follows:—"In the lower part it is not difficult, but fairly steep, and the rocks very rotten, as they are throughout the 'Stone Shoot' climb. The gully seems to end in a long and difficult chimney, but after getting up a few feet we got out of the chimney to the right, and circled round a big boulder ~~by~~ easy grass. A few feet more of easy rocks then brought us to a broad grass platform about 50 feet immediately below the summit. . . . The obvious way up the rocks at the back of the shelf is by a groove which runs up for 30 feet or so, and slightly across the face to the left. One arm and one leg can be got into this groove, so that there is no fear of falling out; but the rocks are steep and the climbing entirely by friction, so that there is 30 feet of very hard work. . . . From the top of the groove a few feet of rock and a grass ledge led to the summit." This is a very interesting little climb, but care is necessary in the gully. To reach the groove from the top go down about 10 feet to a narrow grass ledge sloping down to the left; this leads to the boulder at the head of the groove.

The next climb of importance was made in July 1895 by Messrs Bell, Boyd, Green, and R. G. Napier. They ascended the rib between B and C gullies, over rather dangerous slabs. Some 200 feet up they "entered a steep gully of rather rotten and treacherous grass—the upper con-

tinuation of B gully apparently—between steep walls. It terminated in a collection of huge blocks, through a hole in which the party crawled and found themselves in a small room or cave about 12 feet high. Leaving a cairn there, Bell, standing on Green's shoulders, managed to climb to a hole in the roof, the only exit, and then hauled up his companions." They had now reached the grass patch, and continued to the summit by Bell's Groove. This is the longest and most direct climb to the summit, and has been followed, with some variations, by many parties. In 1897 Dr Clark and Mr Raeburn climbed the first part by the right hand branch of B gully (B 2); in 1903 Messrs Goggs and Bennett Gibbs appear to have reached the grass patch by means of sundry ledges, cracks, and caves to the left of B 1 gully; in 1904 Mr W. A. Morrison's party ascended the B-C rib to the upper part of C gully; from the head of this they traversed slabs to the right, and ascended to the Cave Route by the prominent Cave Gully.

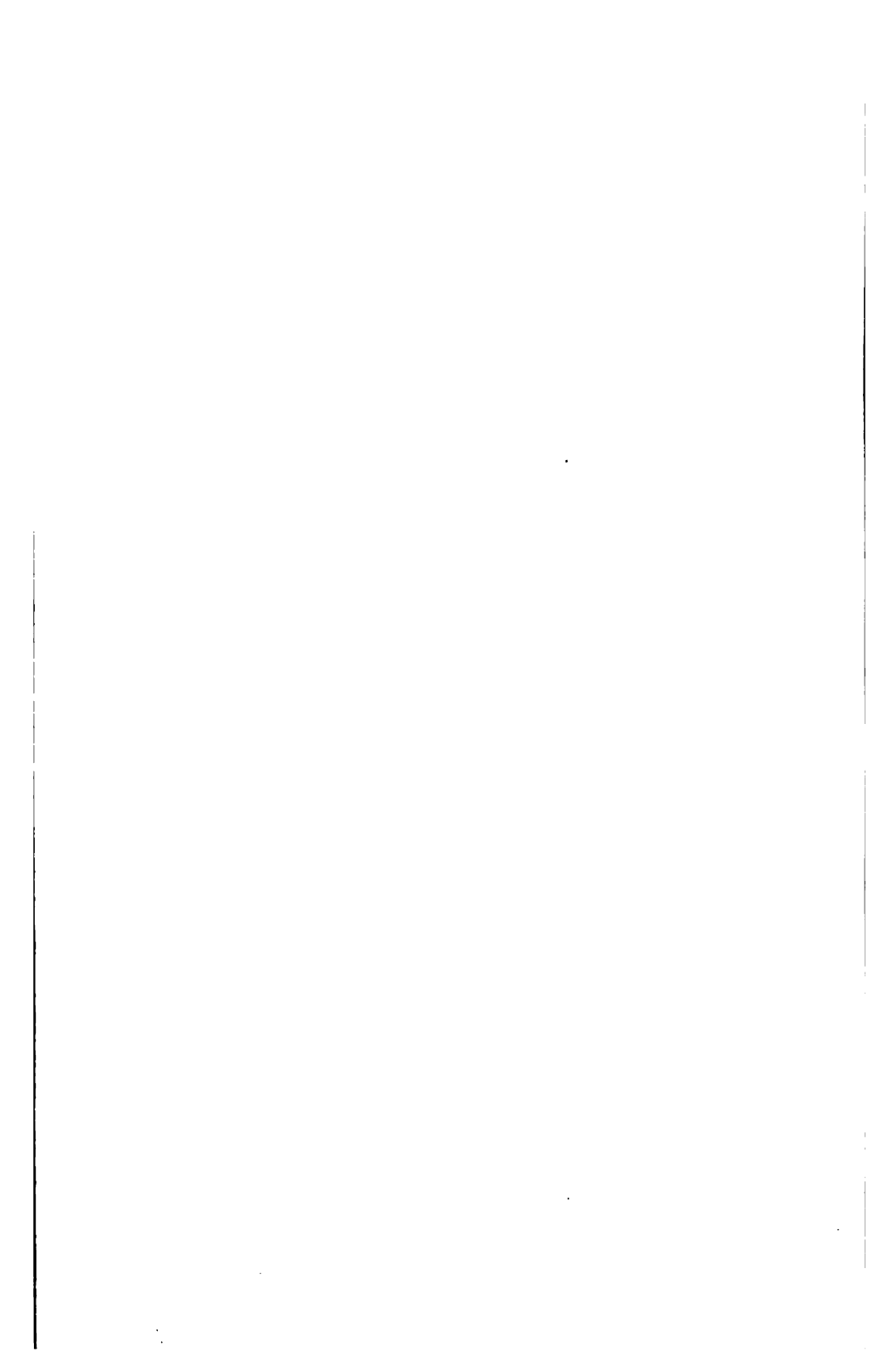
In 1896 Messrs Naismith and Haskett-Smith traversed the upper portion of the face from the head of the Stone Shoot Ridge by means of the prominent grass ledge just below the Groove Route, and gained the sky-line west of the summit. From the Pinnacle Ridge much scrambling in "curious places—including a round tunnel worn through the solid rock and a fantastic cleft"—brought them eventually to the Upper Shelf, from which they descended by gully M in preference to Maclay's Chimney. In November of the same year Messrs Bell, R. G. Napier, and Hillhouse ascended by the rib between these two gullies to the Shelf. "From there they struck upwards by a series of chimneys and strange corridors in the rock in a direction pointing slightly to the left of the summit. This route led up to the platform about 50 feet below the summit, and the climb was finished by Bell's Groove." This is perhaps the best climb on the mountain.

It will be noticed that the routes from the foot of B and C gullies are not actually gully climbs, the gullies only being used occasionally. Gully A has been explored from below and above, but a slabby pitch remains to be overcome ;



CIR MHOR AND GOAT FELL.—FROM SPRING ON CAINTEAL ABHAIL.

*E. M. Corner.*



C gully does not appear to have been seriously attempted except in its upper part, which was climbed by Mr Morrison's party. It should be remembered that snow and ice are prevalent here until April, and many routes such as Bell's Groove are rendered very difficult if not impossible; the Cave Route might, for instance, be quite choked with snow.

Most climbing parties on Cir Mhor pay a visit to the great bastion of granite blocks known as the Rosa Pinnacle. This is situated on the south face just below the summit. There is an easy way up by grass ledges, but the most obvious route is up a 20-foot chimney formed by two big boulders. Much shuffling and scraping lands the climber on the square top. On all sides but this the pinnacle seems quite inaccessible, although several assaults have been carried out with the vigour habitual to the S.M.C. Dr Clark has a short note in Vol. V., p. 143, of an attempt to reach the top from low down on the west side. The big gully which runs down here into Fionn Choire was investigated by Messrs Raeburn and Clark in September 1897. The top part is interesting, but lower down they were stopped by a "steep slope covered with green slime."

**THE WITCH'S STEP.**—It is usual to approach this from the Castles. The descent to the col is, as already stated, from the crest of the ridge. It was here, while endeavouring to descend on the North Sannox side that the writer was initiated into the mysteries and pains of the "Oromaniacal Quest." Along with a school friend he made the first and only recorded descent of a fine chimney, by incontinently sliding down it, luckily without much damage. Recently in a very dense mist an attempt was made to reach the gap on the south side. This time more orthodox but less successful methods were adopted, and more than an hour spent among rotten rocks and slippery slabs, before the ridge was regained and the correct and usually obvious route hit off.

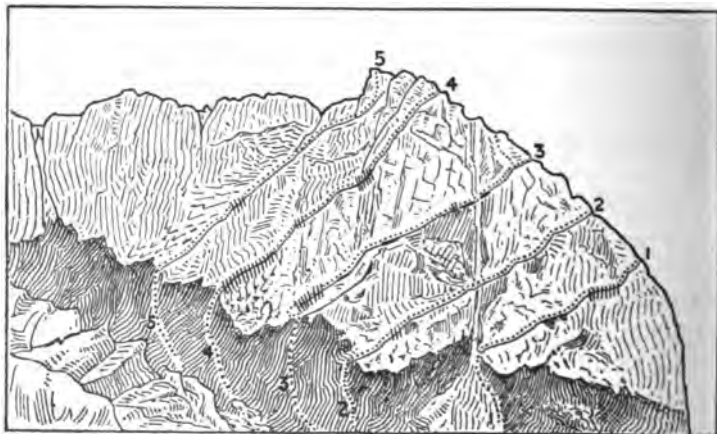
The east face of the gap has at least two routes up it. The popular way leads up a diagonal chimney to the left, then across a sloping slab. This latter is the only difficulty in the climb, especially in wet weather or when iced. Under summer conditions a rope is a luxury. From here to the



final chimney is simple, but the ascent of the two summit boulders is not so easy as it looks.

The alternative route starts with a grass ledge to the right of the col, and leads up by a series of narrow chimneys and cracks to the final boulders. This climb affords great sport, but the easier way can be gained at more than one point by traversing to the left. As already stated the gully on the south into Glen Sannox is not difficult. The angle is easy, and there are always plenty of holds. The peak itself is a most shapely one and looks very beautiful when draped with snow and ice.

**CIOCH NA H'OIGHE CLIFFS.**— These rise up to a height of some 800 feet above the Devil's Punch Bowl



CIOCH NA H'OIGHE CLIFFS.

Showing the five ledges. // // // // // denotes difficult part.

(Coire na Ciche), and extend for about half a mile, gradually decreasing in height until the gully at the head of the corrie is reached. The rocks are luxuriantly clothed with heather and lichen, and are usually slimy and wet.

The face is intersected by five ledges, which run diagonally up to the right, and it is along these that the climbs are to be had. They were all climbed in the summer of 1894, and fully described in Mr Douglas's article in Vol. III. "In estimating the order of difficulty of these ledges they



*H. MacRobert.*

THE WITCH'S STEP.



may probably be arranged thus : No. 2, No. 5, No. 3, No. 1, No. 4—No. 2 being the easiest, and No. 4 the most difficult." They do not afford good climbing, as for the great part they are just walks, and for the rest nasty traverses. The situations and views are, however, splendid.

Probably the best climb here is that accomplished in July 1896 by Messrs Haskett-Smith and Naismith. They climbed up "smooth but not very steep rocks, from near the foot of No. 3 ledge, and struck ledge 4 fully a third of its height up." Leaving No. 4 higher up, a "short climb on some good rocks" brought them out near the summit of the Cioch.

The arête from the top of ledge 1 to the summit is simple, but the portion below that point, although absurdly easy looking, has not yet "gone."

The little pinnacle of rotten granite in the gully at the head of the corrie is usually ascended by parties passing that way.

MAOL DONN (1,208 feet).—This is the square-topped hill overlooking the road between Brodick and Corrie. It has a range of low sandstone cliffs facing the White Water Burn, on which are some chimneys. A pleasant afternoon can be spent here, but the climbs are not of much account.

BOULDERS.—A word must be said here as to the famous Corrie Boulders. They are four in number, and all lie close to the shore road. Many a strenuous half-hour has been spent on their steep faces by climbing parties *en route* for bigger game, but they are primarily for amusement on an off day.

Clach Mhor (the great rock), the largest, 15 feet high, and weighing 620 tons, is situated just to the south of the White Water Burn, about 100 yards from the road. There is only one route to the top, three of its sides being quite inaccessible. The climb is not difficult, and admits of some variation.

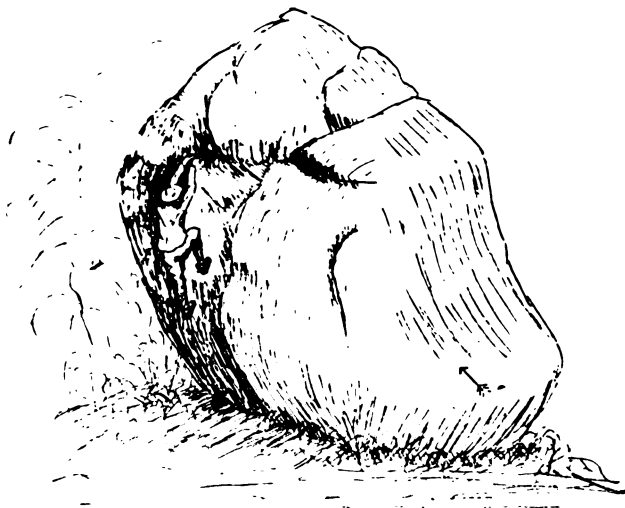
Clach an Fhionn (the hero's stone, probably Bruce), commonly called the Elephant Rock, from its undoubted resemblance to that animal, lies on the shore side of the road about 400 yards north of the schoolhouse. It is flanked by a smaller satellite, and the best climb is up between the two, and so by a small crack to the summit.

Clach a' Chait (the cat stone) is much the finest, and stands just on the roadside three-quarters of a mile north



THE BRUCE STONE.

of Corrie. There is no "tourist" route here, but the climb on the west side is probably the easiest. From the road



THE CAT STONE FROM THE ROAD.

there are two routes. The left-hand one involves some muscular effort, and is not recommended after a day on the

hills. The one on the Sannox side is much trickier, there being practically no holds. This "Furggenrat" has not yet been climbed without some extraneous aid, such as an ice-axe for a take-off.

The Rocking Stone is about quarter of a mile nearer Sannox. It is undercut on all sides, and rests on a base of pudding-stone. Headrick says of this boulder :—

"It is hardly credible that this stone could have rolled into its present position by accident. Its resting on a pivot and having its edge propped by a small block of granite, seem to indicate that it was placed there by design."

A writer in the *Journal* was sceptical enough to suggest that the stone was so called on the "*lucus a non lucendo* principle." It can, however, be moved slightly if the force be properly applied. The route to the top is on the road side, and strong fingers are needed to negotiate the seven feet of perpendicular rock. There is another rocking stone in Coire a' Bhradain, quite as big but much easier to rock. It is a very conspicuous object poised on a granite base on the left bank of the stream.

H. MACROBERT.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

FORTIETH MEET OF THE CLUB, NEW YEAR 1908.

FORT WILLIAM.

*Members Present.*—President Gilbert Thomson, J. H. Bell, J. W. Burns, C. Inglis Clark, Dr W. Inglis Clark, G. Ednie, W. Fraser, S. A. Gillon, F. S. Goggs, T. E. Goodeve, P. A. Hillhouse, W. N. Ling, W. G. Macalister, J. H. A. M'Intyre, H. MacRobert, W. A. Morrison, H. T. Munro, W. W. Naismith, W. Nelson, H. Raeburn, J. Rennie, Rev. A. E. Robertson, A. W. Russell, G. Sang, J. C. Thomson, Harry Walker, R. E. Workman.

*Guests.*—D. S. Arthur, J. Craig, W. H. M'Dougall, A. S. Macharg, W. P. Scott, J. Young.

ON Friday evening, 27th December 1907, three members—Clark, jun., Goodeve, and M'Intyre—sat around the fire in the smoking-room of the Alexandra, and talked over the possibilities of the morrow. M'Intyre, who had visited that day the Allt a' Mhuilinn and the main corrie, reported that to all appearance the lower rocks were practically free from snow, and that the upper rocks were enveloped in mist. The literature of the Club with reference to the North-East Buttress and the Tower Ridge was carefully read and the maps studied. Nothing definite was decided upon, but an early start was arranged. "Call at 5.30, breakfast at 6," was the order given to the boots.

All three were punctual at breakfast on Saturday morning, and they left the hotel at 6.45 A.M. The "Lunching-stone" was reached in first-class time, and in good weather, but the uppermost rocks were still in mist. Here Goodeve and Clark, while they rested, discussed what might be done; an attack on the Tower Ridge was deemed feasible, and with this intention a start was made. M'Intyre, who had a distinct recollection of reading somewhere in the *Journal* of the kindly and persuasive method taken to elevate the luggage at the end of a rope on the Douglas Boulder, informed the other two members of the party at the time of putting on the rope that he wished to be treated as luggage labelled *with great care*. Goodeve, who undertook the leadership, placed Clark second man

and the Light-weight third. An ascent over some awkward rocks and up a gully filled with very hard snow enabled the party to gain the ridge at a col just above the Douglas Boulder. This col was reached about 10 A.M., and the barometer carried by the last man recorded an altitude of 3,400 feet. On a ledge a little higher than the col, and somewhat sheltered from the strong gusts of wind which at intervals struck the ridge from its north-western side, the party lunched.

After a short ascent Goodeve, who apparently was not satisfied with the difficulty of the climb, thought he would like to try a variation. With this object in view he descended until he was about 10 feet below the level of the last man, the second man was lowered to the level of the leader, and finally the third man was told to come down. The leader now traversed away to the right, when at the full stretch of the rope he stood upon a narrow ledge close against a vertical wall of rock plastered with frozen water, and the upper edge of which came just about level with his eyes. In this delightfully open space Goodeve exhibited his power of graceful balance, while he hacked with vigorous swings of his axe at the ice, but all to little purpose. Meanwhile the second man and the third man, each of whom had the rope securely hitched, occasionally tramped their feet and clapped their hands, not by any means as encouragement to the leader, but simply to put heat into these extremities. At last, disgusted with the variation, he retraced his steps, apologised for the delay and reascended. When the leader had again reached the place from which he descended, he, in order to make this easy ledge still more easy, obtained a back from the second man and proceeded; the second man stood on the luggage, notwithstanding that it was labelled *with great care*, and the luggage, after directing the second man to lead the rope behind a crack in the rock and behind some slabs, hoisted itself.

Eventually, after much step cutting by the leader in extremely hard snow, and occasional anchoring of the whole party during the more severe gusts of wind, the base of the Tower was reached. The so-called easy ledge to the left



did not appeal to Goodeve, as seen by him, to be sufficiently difficult for the party. The leader accordingly worked round by the right to the north-western corner of the Tower, from whence the various routes up and traverses around were surveyed. It was agreed upon by all to force none of these routes, they were much too difficult.

By this time darkness had set in. Fortunately the intensity of the darkness was not sufficient at this time, or at any time during the night, to prevent the party from seeing a considerable distance ahead. The leader was here heard to remark, "This looks like defeat, Charlie." The third man thought a good deal, but offered no comment.

A descent was begun towards Coire na Ciste, down the snow gully which comes from the Gap. Every precaution had to be taken against the possibility of a slip, the snow was so extremely hard, and patches of ice were not uncommon. When the party had descended 350 feet or more, M'Intyre, who then happened to be the lowest, announced that a vertical wall of rock lay immediately below. After a survey of this by all, it was finally decided to reascend, but bearing towards the west. Step-cutting had again to be resorted to, and the precaution of having two men securely anchored while the third man is moving was continued. The base of the grand range of cliffs which forms the summit of the Tower Ridge was safely attained. A short traverse westward brought the party to a small cave where they, though the hour was somewhat late, dined.

This repast over, the party turned their "grim set" faces towards the west, advanced over a bluff, and turned into another gully. This gully presented some "hard nuts" to crack in the form of awkward corners and one very difficult iced passage, and, to crown all, after these had been negotiated further progress seemed barred. The leader looked baffled, but only for a moment, for his eagle eye had almost at once detected a chimney a short distance above. This chimney was speedily ascended and the whole party seated astride on a narrow snow arête which resembled somewhat the depression between the humps of a camel. From this point the cornice, about 25 feet higher and 45 feet distant, was discernible through

the mist which still shrouded the summit plateau of the mountain. There was not any real cornice. The leader, with just the semblance of help from the second man, did, in a comparatively short interval of time, gain the summit of the ridge. The second man quickly surmounted the difficulty. The difficulty consisted of the usual short but almost vertical slope of snow which was in this case about 4 feet in height. The luggage showed great form in the ascent of this almost vertical portion. It expended practically no energy in the process, and beat the other two hollow in point of time. This was attributable to the fact that two joyous young men were at the persuasive end of the rope, and to the instructions written on the label being wholly ignored—a circumstance quite to be expected when it is kept in mind that the leader is a railway man. The luggage is of the opinion that, if it had been subjected to a persuasive effort of five hundredweights, as suggested in the article written by the President, acting through the above vertical distance of 4 feet, it would have acquired a velocity of ascent sufficient to have enabled it to descend like a veritable Nemesis upon the heads of the two young men.

The hour of arrival on the summit of the ridge is not known, but the party are agreed that it was some time after midnight. All three shook hands, each one fully realised the brilliance of the experience, and each felt truly grateful that the ascent had been carried out without mishap. The defeat which Goodeve thought he had received at the Tower was converted, by hard work and anxious leading, into a memorable victory. The party proceeded to the main plateau, still in mist, and arrived without difficulty at one of the guide cairns. Here Goodeve handed over the leadership to one of the others. M'Intyre, who was at the other end of the rope, set out in a westerly direction, along a line almost at right angles to the line of route from summit of ridge, in the hope of reaching the next guide cairn. The other two repeatedly shouted, "Keep back from the cornice!" and M'Intyre, in deference to these shouts, swerved far too much towards the left. The result was that the party descended unwittingly into the corrie which lies to the immediate east of the lower Carn Dearg, in the

belief that they were on their way down towards the Lochan.

It was in this corrie that the only mishap occurred. M'Intyre, who was last man, had successfully negotiated an almost vertical pitch of about 4 or 5 feet, nastily iced, and was just in the act of placing his right foot at the same level as those of the other men when he accidentally slipped. This event incidentally caused Goodeve to knock his head rather severely against a rock. With the dawn came enlightenment to the party. They saw the error of their ways and made straightway for the col on the southern Carn Dearg. The three, for all their trying experiences, were still going strong, and had just reached the col when the search party under Raeburn sighted them. Raeburn left his party, took the three lost men, now found, in charge, and guided them down the water-course and on to the hotel. The hotel was reached at 1.15 P.M. on Sunday. The hostess, Miss Robertson, and the members then present in the hotel attended to the various needs of the three with unremitting care and kindness.

On Saturday Dr Clark and Walker visited the Allt a' Mhuilinn and the corrie; Ednie, Workman, and Craig ascended Meall an t-Suidhe. At midnight Dr Clark headed a search party to the summit of the Ben, and at 4 A.M. on the following day all the members and guests then in the hotel were roused, and they set out as search parties. Two members who formed one search party were so inebriated with the importance of their commission that they could not see the advantages to be gained in making use of the stone bridge which spans the River Nevis. In this abnormal frame of mind they meandered along the Glen Nevis road a considerable distance, and, with chivalrous air, forded the river. The coldness of the water restored their mental equilibrium. Workman, Craig, and Young ascended Coire Leas to the arête, then to the summit of Ben Nevis, and descended by the path.

On Monday, Ling, Raeburn, and Walker climbed the Castle; Workman, Craig, and Young ascended No. 3 Gully and Carn Dearg; Bell and Morrison cycled to Kinlochailort; Dr Clark and C. Inglis Clark photographed; and

Ednie and Gillon "bagged" Sgor a' Mhaim, Stob Ban, and Mullach nan Coirean. Fraser and Sang walked up Glen Nevis.

On Tuesday Raeburn climbed the north face of the Castle Ridge alone; Workman, Craig, and Young ascended Glen Nevis to Steall and "bagged" Am Bodach and Sgor a' Mhaim; Hillhouse and Macharg ascended the Ben by the path, traversed the arête and Carn Mòr Dearg; Ednie, M'Intyre, Morrison, Rennie, and Robertson reached the summit of the Ben by the path. Russell, on his way to Fort William, left the morning train, climbed Stob Choire an Easain Mhoir, walked down to Spean Bridge, and joined there the evening train for Fort William; Burns and Scott alighted from the morning train at Corroul and walked through Glen Nevis to the hotel. Bell, Ling, and Walker had an "off day," which involved a walk to Ardgour and back, twenty-six miles. Fraser and Gillon "bagged" Mallaig. *Note.*—Gillon travelled there and back by train.

On Wednesday, 1st January 1908, Bell, Ling, Raeburn, and Walker ascended Garbh-bheinn by the ridge, traversed the mountain, and descended by its north-east buttress. The Castle Ridge was climbed by J. C. Thomson, Robertson, Arthur, and Russell. The round of Carn Mòr Dearg, the arête, and Ben Nevis was accomplished by Ednie, Naismith, Nelson, and G. Thomson. Naismith on the way down from Carn Dearg, not feeling content with the amount of work done, wheedled Ednie away in order that the two might complete the outing with a descent of the Castle Ridge. On the way there they met the party led by J. C. Thomson, and learned from them that a party was struggling with the difficulties of the upper part of the Castle. Ednie and Naismith remained at the summit of the Castle to give help if required. By this time it was dark. The party referred to was led by MacRobert, and consisted of MacRobert, M'Dougall, Morrison, and Macalister. They fought their own way to the summit. Then all the six descended together. Ben Nevis was ascended by Munro, Rennie, Burns, Scott, and Goggs, in three parties. Workman, Craig, and Young visited Mallaig. Hillhouse and M'Intyre strolled up Glen Nevis to Steall. On the way

Hillhouse gave a marvellous exhibition of balancing while traversing an arête only 9 inches broad and of considerable length. M'Intyre selected a very much safer route.

On Thursday eighteen of the members and guests then resident in the hotel joined the morning train. Six of these—Goggs, Hillhouse, Macalister, Munro, Russell, and J. C. Thomson—alighted from this train at Tulloch, the remainder proceeded on to Glasgow. Goggs, Macalister, Munro, and J. C. Thomson walked over Stob Coire Sgrìodain, crags above Glac Bhan, Meall Garbh, Cnoc Dearg (all very fine view points), and returned to Tulloch Station. They arrived at the station about 5.10 P.M. Hillhouse and Russell walked over Cnoc Dearg on their way to Corrou, where they joined the afternoon train for Glasgow. Workman, Craig, and Young left the hotel at 9.15 A.M., climbed the Castle Ridge from the foot, and then ascended Carn Dearg. They reached the hotel at 4 P.M. MacRobert, Arthur, and M'Dougall walked up the Allt a' Mhuilinn *via* the Banavie path to the Carn Mor Dearg arête, arrived there at 3 P.M., walked over Ben Nevis, and reached the hotel at 6.30 P.M.

On Friday, Goggs, Macalister, and MacRobert left the hotel at 6.20 A.M., walked to Steall, then over An Gearanach, An Garbhanach, to Stob Coire a' Chairn, which they reached at 11.45 A.M. Leaving at 12.10 P.M., they descended nearly to Loch Leven, and passing Lochs Eilde, Mor, and Beag, joined the usual route to Corrou, arriving there in time for the 4.40 P.M. Glasgow train.

The weather during the Meet was continuously clear and fine, although the summits of the higher tops were occasionally in mist. The rocks of the summit of the Ben and the Observatory buildings were covered with very large fog crystals. The bogs were fairly well frozen, which made "tramping o'er the heather" possible without wetting the feet. The all-night party even arrived at the hotel with dry feet and dry clothes, and they were specially favoured by the weather-clerk with a temperate night and no wind. All parties reported the snow as exceptionally hard, which considerably increased the labour and the amount of step-cutting. Altogether the Meet was a grand success.

Some of the members present offered an opinion which might profitably be enlarged to the following :—

It is a courtesy due from every party to their fellow-members to make sure before leaving the hotel, either that some one connected with the hotel, or that some of their fellow-members, then resident, are conversant with their intentions for the day.

J. H. A. M'I.

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THE FORTY-FIRST MEET OF THE CLUB,  
EASTER 1908.

THIS was held at Braemar and Tyndrum, but owing to the lateness of Easter this year, there was not time to receive full particulars before going to press. We hope to publish these with the September Number.

LIBRARY.

The following volumes have been added since the issue of the last number of the *Journal*:—

	By whom presented (when not purchased). Purchased.
Glasgow, The Picture of. 1812 - - -	
Goodall (Walter). An Introduction to the History and Antiquities of Scotland. 1773 - - - - -	"
[Black (William)]. Mr Pisistratus Brown, M.P., in the Highlands. 1873 - -	"
Sinclair (Catherine). Scotland and the Scotch ; or, The Western Circuit. Part I. 1841 - - - - -	"
Logan (James). The Scottish Gaël ; or, Celtic Manners as Preserved among the Highlanders. 5th American Edition. 1850 - - - - -	"
Eyre-Todd (George). Sketch-Book of the North. 1903 - - - - -	"
Colquhoun (John):—	
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## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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*The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions. These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.*

### S.M.C. ABROAD.

MESSRS NETTLETON and NAISMITH spent a fortnight at Montana in the end of January and beginning of February. On the whole, the weather was bright and sunny, and the various winter sports were much enjoyed. The quantities of fresh, incoherent snow on the high peaks made serious climbing impossible, but a few expeditions were accomplished, mostly on Ski, *e.g.*, la Zaat twice, Col de Pochet, Wildstrubel Club Hut over the Col Thiery. On this last expedition bad weather came on during the night, making an ascent of the Wildstrubel Peak hopeless, and next morning a retreat was effected with the help of the compass, across the level Plaine Morte Glacier in a tremendous snowstorm.

Mr and Mrs DOUGLAS spent ten days at Framnaes, on the Vossevangen-Gudvangen road, Norway, at the end of January. This place is not generally known to Scots people as a Ski-ing resort, although many from Bergen come to it for the sport. The weather was very kind to them during their stay there, and the sun shone with a full blaze from a blue sky frequently, while the condition of the snow was often of the best. The scenery is beautiful, the hillsides admirably adapted for Ski-ing, and the hotel comfortable.

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CROWBERRY RIDGE, BUCHAILLE ETIVE, *April 1907*.—I have been pressed to write a description of our climb on this delightful ridge, because our party, R. S. Adamson, E. R. Beard, and myself, made (I have been told) some slight variations of the usual route. The straightness of a ridge, provided of course it be as near the overhanging as a ridge can be, seems to be the one thing needful for its excellence, and our variations, we think, have helped to make this fine climb more direct. Do not exclaim at the time we took to reach the summit cairn—seven hours; we simply loafed up that climb and then mostly backwards! The day was glorious, a perfect April day with bright



sun and passing clouds, so that under such seductive conditions our pace can be excused. Any one who has been on the north-east face of Stob Dearg on such a day, knows how the view of the Moor of Rannoch acts as a most effective brake for any energetic party. We followed the usual route up to the famous little platform from which Abraham's difficult traverse starts. By referring to page 305 of Vol. VIII. of the *S.M.C.J.*, the diagram illustrating Mr Maclay's article shows this ledge marked C. More than an hour was spent here in drinking in the view, photographing, and inspecting Abraham's traverse. The leader was let out here for as far as he cared to go, and that was not very far. One does not require to go far round that corner before the danger of one's position becomes evident. The place is without doubt beyond the abilities of most, and any attempt at trying to make it go must be fraught with the greatest risk. Mr Maclay, in the article to which I have referred, makes mention of a possible climb up from the right hand end of the platform C, direct to the ledge leading to the upper platform D. This, it seems, is the way we took. The first few feet before the ledge are steep, but the rocks are sure and rough; after this the ledge is soon reached. It is in the middle of this ledge where the difficulty is. The wall above the ledge begins to slope out above you, and ere long the "bulge" in the middle is extremely objectionable. Unless this is negotiated on the knees, one would find great difficulty in keeping one's balance. It was an awkward corner, but gave great sport in turning, as most of the work was done by the hands. The ledge at the other end stops rather abruptly, and a drop of five or six feet takes you down to the shallow gully below. Of course the leader is out of sight of the others all this time, and when they peep round at the corner, he is treated to a fine study in facial expression as he sits in his safe anchorage above. The last man afforded great amusement here, as he came clattering along for all the world like an ironmongery shop, laden with three ice-axes and a camera. Such is the luck of the last man on the rope. His language on reaching the corner was sublime, especially when he discovered our mirth, and when we by way of encouragement told him he strongly resembled Alphonse Daudet's robust and courageous Tartarin. The route was continued straight up this shallow gully, which was filled with soft snow, for about sixty feet. A diagonal traverse out to the left, over slabby, but firm rough rock, brought us out on the ledge D, which is the top of Abraham's traverse. Our route from here to the foot of the Tower is not easy to describe, but we discovered next day from Mr Raeburn, who descended the ridge, coming across our tracks, that we were off the usual route and more to the right. As far as can be remembered, no serious difficulty was met with after platform D, although the rocks at places were steep. The Crowberry gully viewed from below the Tower looked very difficult, and at this side of the gully the wall must be undercut, as the ridge seems to be suspended over the gully. The ridge was followed to the top of the Tower, and this was descended by the chimney to

the narrow snow col below. Steps were kicked in the snow from here to the cairn, where a magnificent sunset was waiting for us. We were all of the opinion that this was one of the best climbs we had done. The day was perfect, and so was the ridge.

F. GREIG.

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GARBHVEIN OF ARDGOUR — DESCENT OF NORTH-EAST BUTTRESS.—A visit to Garbhvein is not without reach from Fort-William even at New Year, but it is necessary to both start and return in the dark.

A party of four Club members, Messrs Bell, Ling, Raeburn, and H. Walker, took the 6 A.M. boat from Fort-William to Ardgour on 1st January 1908. They had cycles, and with an easterly breeze behind them, the ride in the early dawn to Inversanda promised to be an easy and pleasant one. Unfortunately the steeds were all hirelings, and the inevitable breakdown occurred. The wheel of one machine proved to be so "free" that the cranks spun round with charming facility, but unluckily, usually forgot to bring the wheel along with them. Occasionally they would remember for a few minutes, and then dropped all responsibility as before. The split boulder just above the Iubhair bridge was, consequently, not reached till 8.30.

Leaving cycles here, the party walked up Glen Coire an Iubhair. This time the right bank of the stream was tried; the going is bad, and on the whole, the slight track on the left bank is better.

Reaching the point where the little burn from the Garbhvein Corrie joins the main stream, the party ascended towards the central ridge to view the north-east face of the mountain, and then traversed to their left to below the great gully bounding the south ridge on its left. Messrs Bell and Walker then crossed below the ridge, climbed the opposite slope, and then returned to the split boulder for the unselfish purpose of helping each other with the jibbing cycle.

Ling and Raeburn went up to the foot of gully, and stopped for lunch at 10.15.

The first pitch of gully was, directly, impossible, on left wall just possible, but all iced. The pitch above looked a hundred feet high, and was one mass of ice from top to bottom. Above this is a huge overhanging black pitch, which also looked impossible. Little time was therefore wasted here, and the ascent of the ridge gave a most delightful climb. The bottom part of this is not too easy at any time, and now the narrow little grass ledges on the very steep and slabby rocks were powdered with icy snow, and too hard to be penetrated by an ice-axe. The top rocks were covered with fog crystals, but of small size. Most delightful sunny weather and quite warm on the ridge. An eagle was surprised on the summit cairn, the ridge landing the climbers within twenty-five yards of this. The eagle was apparently waiting for a mountain hare, which from the tracks in the snow

appeared to be *inside* the cairn, to venture out. The top was reached at 1.30, left at 1.45.

The whole ridge of the mountain was then followed, and descent made by the fine north-east buttress. This is steep, and near the foot so slabby, that direct descent appeared impossible, and to save a long ascent it was found necessary to "abseil" off into a gully cutting into the right wall.

The foot of the corrie was reached at 3.25, the cycles at 4.15, and the Alexandra at 6.30, *via* Ardgour, the ferry, and the Ballachulish road.

Weather most splendid all day, and view very fine to north-west. Nevis cloud-capped most of the day. H. R.

MEALL NAM PEITHIREAN (FANNICH).—Three-quarters of a mile south by east of Sgurr Mor, the highest point of the Fannich hills, is a headland marked by a 3,000 foot contour by the Ordnance Survey, the actual altitude not being given. When seen from the Ullapool road from the bridge about half a mile south of Loch Droma, the summit of Meall nam Peithirean forms a well-marked top. In company with Dr Johns and Dr Pinches its height was carefully checked, the aneroids being corrected upon the summits of Sgurr Mor (3,637 feet) and on Meall an Rairigidh (3,109 feet).

The height of the col between Sgurr Mor and Meall nam Peithirean was	- - - -	3,047 feet.
The height of Meall nam Peithirean was	- - - -	3,140 "
The height of the col between Meall nam Peithirean and Meall an Rairigidh was	- - - -	2,763 "

In following the ridge south from the summit of Sgurr Mor, it is very easy to follow the line of the precipices on its east and arrive on Ben Liath Mhor Fannich. This way is much more obvious in the mist than is the broad snow slope which leads to Meall nam Peithirean. There are three places in the Fannichs where climbers are liable to go astray in the mist :—

1. South of Sgurr Mor, the obvious way leading off the main ridge to Ben Liath Mhor Fannich.
2. North of Carn na Criche, where the obvious ridge leads to Sgurr nan Clach Geala, and not to Meall a' Chrasgaidh, the actual northern end of the range.
3. East of the summit between A' Chaillach and Sgurr Breac, where the obvious ridge leads downward to Loch a Bhraoin and not to Sgurr Breac.

EDRED M. CORNER.

MEALL GORM (FANNICH).—In this imperfectly surveyed district Dr Johns, Dr Pinches, and myself made some explorations and observations in March 1908. Three compensated aneroids were used which were corrected at every point, the true height of which was given by

the Ordnance Survey. Two-thirds of a mile east-south-east of Meall nan Rairigidh is a summit marked with a 3,000 foot contour line, the actual altitude not being given. Correcting our aneroids upon An Coileachan (3,015 feet) and Meall an Rairigidh (3,109 feet), we made the height of—

1. The col between An Coileachan and Meall Gorm, 2,600 feet.
2. The summit of Meall Gorm, 3,030 feet.

EDRED M. CORNER.

**BEN LIATH MHOR FANNICH.**—This hill was climbed by Dr Johns, Dr Pinches, and myself in March 1908, with severe labour. There was a tremendous south-west wind which blew one out of the snow steps, and all attempts to dodge the wind were frustrated by finding deep, new snow blown by eddies of the wind in the lee of every shelter. Cold, wet, and numb, we reached the cairn, staying there just long enough to read the aneroids, which we corrected to the Ordnance Survey heights on leaving the road and on Ben Liath Beg Fannich on our return journey. The height of this hill has been stated by Mr H. T. Munro as probably 3,200 in 1893, and as probably about 3,400 in 1906. We found the height to be 3,250 feet.

EDRED M. CORNER.

**THE TRACKS ROUND STRATHCARRON.**—In the early years of the Club Strathcarron was warmly recommended as a climbing centre by Mr Hinxman and Mr H. T. Munro. As tracks are very useful at the beginning and end of a day, being only despised by the very young, a note on such as lead to the principal hills in the vicinity may prove useful. They may be divided into four sections:—

1. The tracks in the Coulags glen. The main track begins on the west side of the burn allowing easy access to the heathery and more uninteresting sides of Sgurr Ruadh and Fuar Tholl on the west. About two miles up the glen it crosses the burn by a bridge and passes a newly erected keeper's house. Just before it reaches Loch Coire Fionnaraich it branches to the east, which path leads up on the *north* of an unnamed hill to the col south-east of Meall a Chinn Dearg. By crossing the col, the corrie between An Ruadh Stac and Meall Chinn Dearg is most easily reached. Some of the best looking rocks in the neighbourhood are in this corrie. I would recommend this route to the corrie, as there is no track in the glen *south* of the unnamed hill, with the Allt nan Ceapairean. After reaching Loch Coire Fionnaraich the track continues over the pass at the head of the glen, between Sgurr Ruadh and Meall a Chinn Dearg, to Torridon.

2. **THE ACHNASHELLACH TRACKS.**—It is not easy to find these tracks from the road, as the only way is to walk through Achnashellach Lodge. From the station it is easier. Follow the line west and in a few yards a gate on the north side indicates the track, or a branch of it may be gained by walking to the railway bridge over the river,

where the path may be picked up on the right hand side (the east) of the burn. By crossing a bridge low down, a track on the west of the burn is gained which will enable climbers to reach the fine, rocky corrie which gives Fuar Tholl its name. Continuing the path up the east bank of the burn, in a mile or so it branches, one going to Contin over the col south of Ben Liath Beg and the other continuing up the glen to its head, the col between Sgurr Ruadh and Ben Liath Mhor.

3. South of the Skye-Dingwall railway is a track which starts at the back of Strathcarron Station. It may be followed until it divides; where one branch goes steeply up the west side of a burn, and the other keeps at a lower level up Glen Udale. By following the *latter* branch, passing Loch an Laoigh, it is possible to get on such far-removed hills as Bidein a Choire Sheasgaich and Lurg Mhor. Do not make the mistake of taking the *former*, the steeper and right hand branch. It merely leads to Loch nan Craobh.

4. TRACKS IN STRATHCARRON.—The main road runs along the north of the strath far removed from the river. At Coulags is a good track leaving the main road and going down the east bank of the Coulags river. It looks like a short cut to the hotel which will save a weary half-mile. But after going about half a mile it should cross the river. The bridge, however, has been broken and never repaired. If this mistake is made continue down a track by the river to the railway and follow that. To avoid this mistake, at the same time avoiding the main road and using the track by the river, follow down the west side of the Coulags river until a woodyard is reached. The track leaves the yard on the extreme right and joins the road close to the hotel.

EDRED M. CORNER.

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SHELTER-STONE CRAG, LOCH AVON.—The gullies on either side of the buttress climbed June 1907 (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. X., p. 6), were climbed by Mr Stewart's party in 1904 (see *Cairngorm Club Journal*, vol. iv., p. 365). This party called the big gully Castle Gates Gully, and the one on the north-west side Pinnacle Gully.

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#### SOME MECHANICS OF THE ROPE AND AXE.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—I have been greatly interested in Mr Gilbert Thomson's paper on the "Mechanics of the Rope and Axe."

With the mechanical conclusions of that paper I have no quarrel; indeed, if I had I should not, as a loyal S.M.C. man, and simple A.B. of our Scottish "snow" craft, venture to write even a comment on what our skipper has to say.

What I do write, then, must be taken as in explanation and elucidation of several points in my paper, "Scottish Snow," referred to by Mr Thomson, which, from a desire to be brief and terse, I perhaps did not make sufficiently clear.

(a.) *The use of the ice-axe in glissading.*—My emphasis on the habitual use of the spike was due to my endeavour to “play for safety.”

I think all mountaineers will agree with me that we *must not* lose our ice-axe in any glissade where danger can possibly emerge.

To confine our glissading to places where no danger can occur is, to take a sailing simile, never to sail an open boat in water over four feet in depth. This, of course, is neither practicable nor desirable. In open boat sailing an expert may think he knows (he sometimes finds himself fatally mistaken) when it is safe to fasten the sheet. That does not make it less certain that as a rule it should not be fastened, and a novice certainly should take no chances.

Glissading was indulged in many years before ice-axes were invented, and neither the blade nor pick is necessary on any kind of glissade, though, on the inferior species of glissade, the sitting, either may be occasionally convenient.\*

The safe position on a steep, hard snow-slope is standing upright, because that is the position in which we can exert the greatest friction by means of our nails and the sharp edges of the iron-shod boots. A sitting glissade is only used when the angle is too low and the snow too soft to make a standing one possible.

If the slope suddenly steepens and hardens we wish to assume the safe position as quickly and easily as possible. This cannot be done *without serious risk of losing the axe*, if we have been using the pick as a brake and are going at any pace.

The fault of the pick-brake is, of course, its suddenness of application on meeting, say, a rock under the snow, a buried lump of ice, or *névé*, or even harder snow. The hooked shape of the pick renders it admirably adapted as an anchor, but for that very reason very ill adapted as a brake, an essential feature of which must be graduation in application.

The spike, on the contrary, if the axe be properly held can be regulated with the greatest nicety. A pressure, from a few ounces to that of the greater part of the weight of the body, can be brought to bear on its point, and as quickly released by raising the body on the straightened lower arm, stiffening the legs, and rising on the heels, and again sinking down on the surface of the snow. The lower hand grasps the shaft, *palm downwards*, not far above the spike, while the upper hand grasps the axe just under the head. Of course, if the axe is held in a wrong manner, *i.e.*, under the armpit, then nearly all purchase is lost, and the brake becomes very inefficient.

This manner of glissading may be paralleled with the attitude of

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\* “Narrative of a Tour in the Alps in 1800,” *Alpine Journal* (vol. vii., p. 431). “The method of accomplishing this, a difficult task to unaccustomed persons, is to stand firmly upright, leaning rather backward on your long pike, to which you entirely trust, and with whose assistance you retard, accelerate, and sometimes even at will put an entire stop to your progress. But this is a feat of which all are not alike capable.”

most ski-ing beginners, who attempt to brake with a stick held between the legs, a futile and dangerous method.

(6.) With regard to the spike *v.* pick question in crossing an ice-slope, the case put was, of course, largely a theoretical one. We so seldom find ourselves confronted with a problem of "unmitigated" ice, but Naismith's principle in dealing with it was, I think, the thoroughly right and sound one.

Mr Thomson writes scientifically of "ties" and "struts," and if dealing with balks of timber and steel girders I have no doubt he is perfectly right. Unfortunately human nature is weak, and "moral" effects cannot be eliminated from the use of ice-axe or rope.

As Mr Thomson says, the ideal and the safe way to cross such a piece of ice, in steps, is absolutely upright, as one would walk on a flat road. As a matter of fact no one, not even the so-called expert, will do so. All will lean in towards the slope, more or less. They cannot, indeed, very well do otherwise, if the steps are properly cut, *i.e.*, sloping inwards. The result is, that to keep as near the correct—upright—attitude as possible, we require not the pull of a "tie," but the thrust of a "strut." Practically treating the problem, what should be done entirely depends upon the angle of the "unmitigated" ice. At an angle of 60 degrees or upwards handholds would, of course, be cut, and the upright attitude frankly abandoned. At low angles the additional safety afforded by such a shaky "tie" as a pick point in a shallow cut is so problematical, and the risk of causing a slip by its treacherous offer of help so great that, personally, I should unhesitatingly adopt the method recommended by Naismith, and advise its adoption by all.

The principle is really the same as that illustrated in text-books of mountaineering as regards traverses on grass or screes.\*

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\* In a review in the *Alpine Journal* (vol. xii., p. 473) of Dr Zigmond's book, "Die Gefahren der Alpen," signed C. D., is a criticism of an illustration which, though a little long, I may perhaps be allowed to quote. I came across it since writing this letter. "One [picture] facing page 120 is apparently intended to show the right manner of cutting steps up and across a steep snow slope [and ice], and the proper attitude of mountaineers when so engaged. We confess that at first sight we thought it was intended to indicate exactly the reverse. The leader is represented with ice-axe poised in mid-air, high above his head. The second figure crouches with knees bent leaning towards the slope, and not standing upright in his steps, and further, presumably to give additional security in case of a slip, he has driven the pick of his axe into the snow on a level with his head. In case of a slip occurring his feet would be infallibly jerked out from the step on which he stands, and he would have to support the weight of a falling companion solely by the precarious grasp of his axe. If the snow were soft he should be drawn with the *stick* driven vertically deep into the snow. If the snow were too hard to

I am afraid that I was not quite clear in the use of the outside edge simile. It was not the kind of outside edge Mr Thomson refers to, in which a position far out of the perpendicular is maintained by speed alone, that I thought of, but the outside edge employed in large and combined figures.

This is so little on the edge as to be nearly on the flat. The skater is almost upright, and is balanced so that he can instantly alter his position to the flat or inside edge at will. I am glad to see that Mr Thomson, in his remarks on hitches, emphasises the fact that the "moral" support of the rope, so far as the leader is concerned, is not practically worth very much. Though it may sound paradoxical, yet it is really safer for the leader to have too much rope than too little, for in the former case the second man has more in hand to run over the hitch and to take off the abruptness of a check in case of a fall. The second man should never, if possible, allow the leader to take out *all* the rope.

With regard to one man letting down, holding, or hoisting another, all climbers know by experience what a very easy business the first two are, and how difficult, almost impossible in many cases, the last. A method Mr Thomson does not mention, which gives a single man, given good foothold, lifting power more than equal to two men pulling in the ordinary way, is to pass the rope round the back over the hips with the strain arranged parallel with the line of the thighs. The lifting is then done by bending and straightening the legs. This is the way the "klimmers" for eggs on the Buckton and Bempton cliffs in Yorkshire work their rope.—I am, &c.,

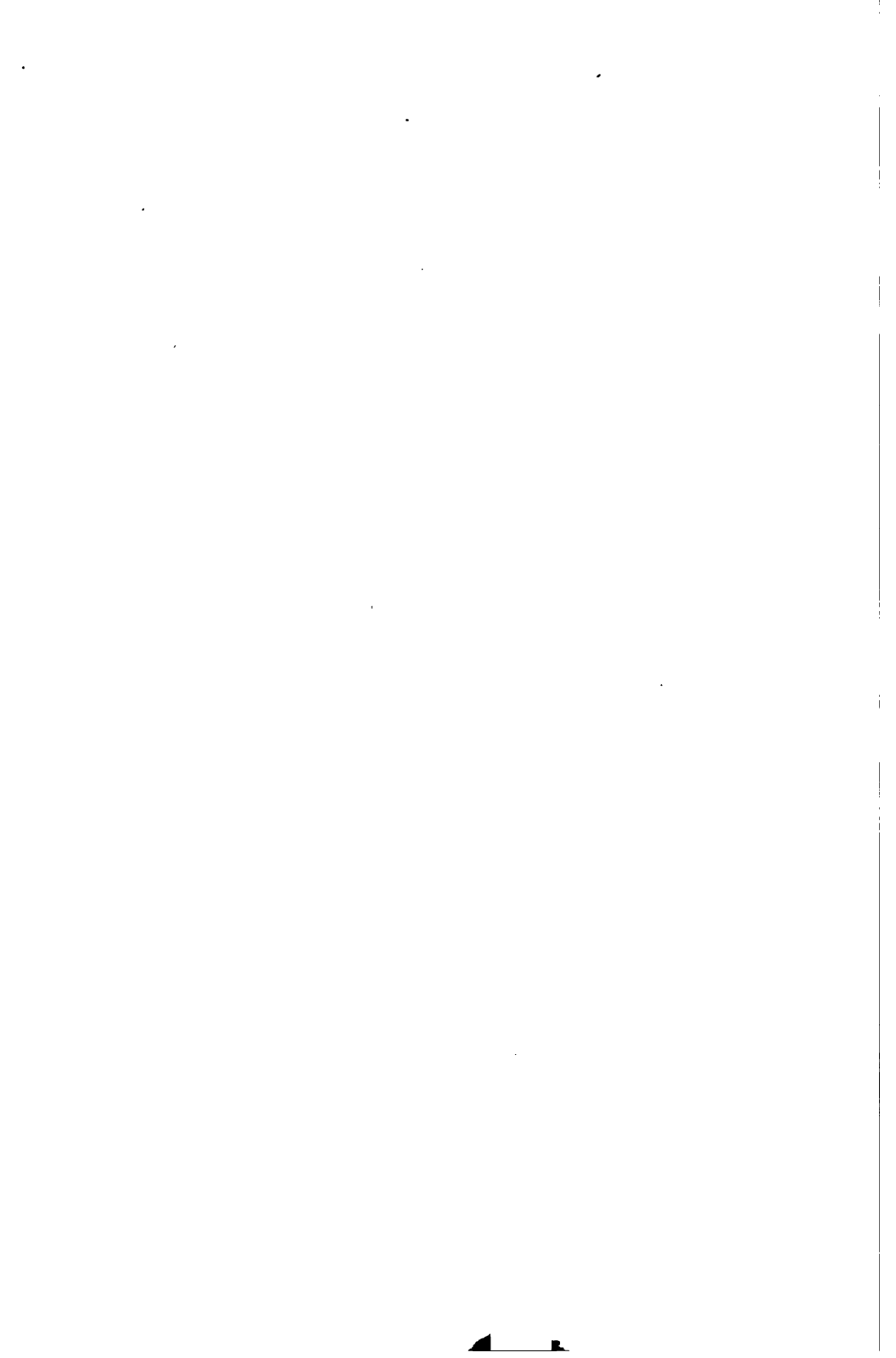
HAROLD RÆBURN.

admit of this being done, he should be represented as standing upright with the axe held horizontally with the *spike* in the snow level with his waist, and the arms straight and rigid, thus converting himself with a species of tripod, and extending his base of support."

This, I think, expresses the *principle* of Naismith's position, and it certainly does express mine.

There is a quaint and amusing description of first attempts at glissading and braking in Freshfield's book, "Round Kangchenjunga," p. 328, taken from the narrative of Babu Sarat Chandra Das: "I girded up my clothes, and holding the edges of the lower part of my robe, slipped along. Instantly I was carried down and hurled to a depth of more than a hundred feet below. There I brought myself up by fixing my elbows into the snow like a brake, at the same time lifting my hinder part a little. Ugyen followed me in the furrow I had made, and would have dashed on me with his whole weight, had I not taken the precaution of turning myself to one side of the track. . . . In the third slide we met with slippery ice, rather than snow crystals, and consequently got pains in the back caused by friction on the hard substance."





# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. X.

SEPTEMBER 1908.

No. 57.

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## THE CUILLINS IN A WEEK.

BY J. A. PARKER.

WHEN Mr Goggs wrote to me in June of last year suggesting a week in Skye, I had considerable doubts as to the wisdom of "taking him on," as he said in his letter that he would like to do as much as possible in the week, and, as he was doubtless fresh from reading "The Knees of the Gods," there was, with the long summer days, really no limit to what he might attempt. I therefore gently put him off with, I think, the suggestion that in June the weather in Skye was "usually unsettled." This is always a safe remark to make with regard to the weather in Skye at any time, and it had the desired effect. As a matter of fact the weather was not unsettled, for it rained steadily the whole of June, July, and August, and even in September was still raining. No. 54 of the *Journal* then appeared and put such a different complexion on matters that I at once wrote to Goggs and suggested that we might now take our week. I did not tell him that the days would be much shorter, and likewise the expeditions, but I had this fact fully in view. And so at the end of the wettest summer that this country has experienced for many years, I persuaded him to go, and also Nelson, who was to keep him moving when I wanted an off day, and *vice versa*.

The campaign was opened on Thursday, the 19th September, when Wm. C. Smith, Miss Smith, A. E. Robertson, and myself made an attack on Sgurr Alasdair

from Corrie Lagan. The attack, because it never got any further than this, was made under cover of a dense sea fog; and the modest plan was that the Smiths were to climb the Great Stone Shoot while Robertson and I were to reach the summit by the north ridge. Most elaborate arrangements were devised for meeting at the cairn, how long the one party was to wait for the other, &c., the Smiths being specially enjoined that if they arrived there first they were not on any account to attempt to come down the north ridge to meet us. Robertson and I, having the bigger climb on, pushed on ahead and in due time found the Loch, struck a compass course for the foot of the north ridge, and for the next two hours struggled with the scree slopes in the vain attempt to find even the Great Stone Shoot, because in the thick mist and pouring rain our high-flown plans had now resolved themselves into a humble attempt to find the Stone Shoot so as not to let the Smiths reach the top by means of it before us. Smith, however, early realised the hopelessness of the day and in his wisdom never left the side of the Loch; and just calmly waited there enjoying the view, of three boulders, till he knew it would be time to return. When he thought it was time to return, he shouted and was answered by a distant hail from us as he thought from the top of Sgumain. "Ah! they have got up Sgumain," he said, and waited a little longer, when presently a shout came from the top of Alasdair—or could it be Tearlach? The next time there was no doubt, and our shout evidently came direct from the top of Mhic Coinnich. "They are doing the round of the Corrie," he thought, so he shouted back to encourage us, and when the last shout came, unmistakably from the top of Dearg, he threw away the end of his third cigar and came to meet us as we descended from the slopes of that mountain. We had performed the herculean feat of circling the Corrie in the time it had taken him to smoke three cigars. It was not till many days afterwards that we told him that we had never been higher than about 400 feet above the level of the Loch.

This day having been a failure, Robertson and I determined that as the next day was still misty we would

try something simpler, and we therefore initiated Miss Smith into the mysteries of the Pinnacle Ridge, after an arduous climb up which we found Mr Smith reposing on the summit with a sixty-foot rope tied to him which he assured us had been only used for "moral support" on the Tourist Route; but which we suspected had been used for tractive purposes by Archie Mackenzie, who had accompanied him. On the following day the Smiths and I climbed Bruach na Frithe, also in thick mist, and were rewarded not with the celebrated view, but merely with a very third-rate Brocken spectre.

Goggs and Nelson arrived that evening, and notwithstanding the fact that the next day was Sunday, they promptly opened the "week" by climbing Sgurr nan Gillean from the east and down by the west ridge. The Smiths were away off to Loch Coruisk to see more of the Cuillins, but the weather was still bad and they saw, if anything, less. On Monday morning Goggs, Nelson, and I set off early and walked to Glen Brittle, reaching the Campbells' house at half-past nine, wet through; but with the whole day in front of us in which to dry our clothes and learn the mysteries of lighting, and keeping alight, a peat fire. Towards afternoon the rain ceased and we went up to Corrie Ghrunnda in dense mist, found the Loch much to Goggs' delight, and found our way out of the labyrinth of the Corrie much to mine.

Tuesday was a very thick day, but it gave us the opportunity of redressing the failure of Thursday, which we did by climbing Alasdair by the Stone Shoot in thick mist and pouring rain. Goggs then wanted to bag Tearlach, &c. &c., but did not manage to secure a majority vote and had therefore to be content with the descent of the Shoot, which was just as well because no person can properly appreciate the Shoot unless they have descended it as well as climbed it, preferably on the same day. On the way home from the Corrie he, however, did the Italian as well as the Swiss side of the "Matterhorn Boulder" and was satisfied. It was this evening that Goggs and Nelson began to lose heart even in spite of the excellent dinner that Miss Campbell had given us, and

they openly upbraided me about the weather. Had they not now been in Skye for three days, had had nothing but sea fog all the time, and had never seen the top of a peak unless when they stood on it. Where was my boasted fine weather in September? In defence I could only quote *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IX., p. 299, lines 24 to 28, and tell them to have patience. It would come in time if they would only wait.

Wednesday morning did, however, look better, and we determined to climb Banachdich by the easiest way or at least by a way in which we could not lose ourselves, or the peak, if the mist did not clear off. For time was flying and we had to get the peaks raked in. We went up by the Coir an Eich, and reached the top in a light mist which just lingered long enough to show us a Brocken spectre, then melted into thin air and instantly revealed to Goggs and Nelson the sublime meaning of the lines I had quoted the previous evening. They were more than satisfied provided the fine weather lasted the remainder of the holiday, which it did. From Banachdich we went along the ridge to Dearn, climbed the Inaccessible from east to west, and then on down the screes to Beallach Coire Lagan and along the ridge to the top of Mhic Coinnich. The latter we descended by retracing our steps for a short distance from the top and then going down the west face for about eighty feet, when we struck the terrace leading to the Mhic Coinnich-Tearlach col. It was now too late to climb Tearlach, and we therefore went down the gully to Coire Lagan and so back to Brittle. When at the top of Mhic Coinnich we saw a sheep high up on the west precipice of the mountain on a grass ledge from which it apparently could neither get up nor down, about fifty feet from the ridge. We could do nothing for it, but on our return told the shepherds of its predicament. We thought that they would at once, late though it was, start off with a search party; but they treated the matter very philosophically, and said, "It will come down with the snow." Poor sheep!

The next day we climbed Sgurr Sgumain, Dubh na Dabheinn, Dubh Mor, and nan Eag; a round with which

even the Librarian seemed satisfied, though doubtless he would have liked to have worked off the Gap and Tearlach, but these we said would keep for another time, as he must really leave something for his next visit. We had now pretty well worked off the south end of the ridge, and as our week was getting well advanced we decided that on the morrow, Friday, we would leave our comfortable quarters at Glen Brittle and do a perfectly herculean day if possible on our return to Sligachan. We were, therefore, up well before daylight on Friday, and in spite of packing up all our things to be posted back to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen respectively, such are the modern resources of Glen Brittle, managed to get away well before eight o'clock—our latest start so far, as one feature of the week had been the number of successful early starts that we had made. We made for Banachdich again as being the quickest way on to the ridge, and from it followed the ridge over Sgurr Thormaid and Ghreadaidh to An Dorus, at which point Nelson left us as he evidently thought that the screes of Coire Ghreadaidh and the slopes of Thuilm would be less fatiguing than the rest of the ridge. I am not sure if his experiment was an entire success. Goggs and I continued over the tops of Mhadaidh, a most delightful climb, and on the top of the north peak Goggs succumbed to the influence of good Skye weather, which says a good deal for the latter, and in this way. The summit is a delightful moss-clad ridge, and on arriving there about three in the afternoon the problem which presented itself was whether it were better to continue the pace along the ridge over Bidein and Bruach na Frithe, the top of which we would be well clear of by nightfall, or if we should simply rest for an hour on the summit enjoying the magnificent view and then find our way home by Tairneilear Corrie. Goggs' decision to give up the remainder of the ridge for the enjoyment of the view is, I think, the finest compliment that has ever been paid to fine weather in Skye. We rested an hour, had a delightful walk down the corrie, and were home at the hotel about seven.

Saturday was a doubtful day or at least we made it one,

and rested in view of a big day on Blaven on Sunday. The latter day did not, however, appear much better, and when we started from the hotel about seven we could barely see across the road for fog. This, however, proved to be only a ground mist which evaporated as we were climbing the lower slopes of Lonely Corrie, after which the weather was again perfect. We climbed up to the north end of the Clach Glas ridge and along this by the route which is so well known and which is unmistakable even in mist. Between Clach Glas and Blaven there is, however, a great gulf fixed, which has in mist proved the death trap of many a long planned out expedition from the one peak to the other, and which will, I am certain, in spite of the most carefully written description of the route, prove the end of many more unless the way is marked with red paint, which, I fervently hope, will never be done. The following notes may, however, enable a climber if not at least to complete the traverse, to make further progress along it in dense mist than most people have managed. Personally I have never seen the ridge in thick mist; as a matter of fact I have never even been near it, as the only try that I made, from the Blaven end, came to an inglorious end on a promontory somewhere on the north face of Blaven, over which Gilbert Thomson and I craned our necks, threw stones into the boiling mist, and made conflicting calculations as to the height of the "drop." Dr Clark has, however, with the aid of some notes that I supplied him with several years ago, been more successful, and working from the summit of Clach Glas actually managed to stick to the ridge about half way to Blaven and then found a new and somewhat risky route down into Lonely Corrie; while on a later occasion he tried from Blaven and with fuller and more minute instructions only succeeded in reaching the same goal—Lonely Corrie—by a difficult descent of a snow-filled gully on the north face of Blaven. The last recorded attempt is that of Mr Corner. The magnetic force which seemed to draw Clark into Lonely Corrie failed, however, in his case, and his party was repelled into Glen Slapin where they did not get clear of the mist until they were within about 1,000 feet of sea-

level and had placed the whole mountain between them and Glen Sligachan. Nothing but red paint will, I think, do it, but the venturesome may try their luck with the aid of the following notes which have been carefully revised on the ground :—

If the climber has reached the north end of the Clach Glas ridge in thick mist he should not experience much difficulty in gaining the summit of the peak, as he has only to stick to the ridge, passing difficulties on the west side, till he comes to it, and it is unmistakable. The final climb up the tower being done from a stone shoot by climbing up a sloping gully to the right and then straight up the roof of the tower to the left by a delightful climb up steep firm rocks with not more than sufficient holds. From the summit the climber's difficulties begin, as he must follow the crest of the ridge towards Blaven, and the tendency of the dip of the rocks is constantly to divert him to the Lonely Corrie side where he would speedily get into inextricable difficulties. When the ridge becomes difficult he should always pass the troublesome bit by the east side and then regain the ridge as soon as possible. The ridge is a pretty long one, and there are some false cols before the real one is reached. This may be recognised by the pinnacle before it having been climbed from a little col by means of a sloping ledge to the left, and by its consisting of a rounded grass ridge of considerable length. From the col there is an easy descent to Lonely Corrie. To climb Blaven from the col turn the first rise, which is really a pinnacle, by easy ground to the left and then back to the little saddle behind the pinnacle. On the other side of this saddle there is a fifteen-foot rock wall with poor grassy holds at the top. Climb this wall and bear across the screes above it to the right past the foot of the first chimney, which is filled with huge jammed stones, to the next, which is a stone shoot, and climb the latter. At its head cross to the left and climb the next gully, a steep one with smooth sides and some jammed stones, which is about sixty feet high and gives a nice climb. On emerging from this, which is done on the right-hand side, cross the large blocks of stone in front into a large stone shoot, a climb



of about fifty feet up, which places one on the easy slopes of Blaven above the north face at a height of approximately 2,600 feet. There is a cairn at the head of large stone shoot. A party doing the climb from Blaven should not have much trouble in finding the cairn at the head of the stone shoot by careful working with an aneroid. Descend the stone shoot for fifty feet and then find the head of the upper chimney by crossing the large stones on the right-hand side of the shoot, and then reverse the route as described above. The difficulties on the Clach Glas ridge between the summit and the north end are always passed on the west side, this being just the opposite rule to what is done on the south part of the ridge.

As we had perfect weather and one of the party knew the route, we experienced no difficulty and soon passed the ridge and reached the north summit of Blaven. We descended the west face by the great gully immediately north of the south summit and duly reached Sligachan about seven o'clock. I returned home the next day, and I believe that Nelson and Goggs had a final day on Bhasteir and Bruach na Frithe, thus finishing off the whole of the Cuillins with the exception of Bidein and Tearlach.

MORVEN: AN APPRECIATION.

BY A. ROBERTSON WILSON.

I SUPPOSE that with all of us, for one reason or another, some mountain holds a place apart and is specially dear to memory. The soul of the Ultramontane warms within him when he thinks of the rocky ridges of Skye or the buttresses of Coire Mhic Fhearchair, but even to him, as to his Salvationist brother, some hill of tamer aspect may be dearer, and the thought of it warms the heart as no other has the power to do.

To me the Aberdeenshire Morven is the hill of hills, though its grey crown barely rises 2,900 feet, and though it has not secured a niche in the temple of fame erected by Munro. What matters that to me? It is still the "Great Hill," as it was in the days when first named Mhor Bheinn by the early dwellers in Cromar. Well did they so name it, for it is the most easterly outpost of the great mountain range which culminates in Ben Macdhui, and with its neighbours to the south of the Dee, Mount Keen and Lochnagar, it is conspicuous from a few miles out of Aberdeen, whilst amongst the horseshoe of hills which surrounds the sheltered Howe of Cromar, it is *facile princeps* the Mhor Bheinn, or Morven of our more phonetically spelling age, which has shortened and strangely disguised the Gaelic names of farm and hill throughout the countryside. There is nothing exactly grand in the aspect of Morven, but its lines curve gracefully from the summit over Culblean and give a simple grandeur and air of repose which, on a still evening, or yet more in the pearly twilight of a northern midsummer night, impress more than many a more rugged scene.

From my earliest childhood I had looked at Morven, and wondered at it, and speculated what might be the nature of the object on the top, which I heard called "the cairn," but not till I was ten years old did I essay the tremendous feat of an ascent. Then, with a kindred spirit of the same ripe experience, I started off gaily one after-

noon and reached a scrap of rock not a quarter of a mile from the top, when a puff of mist, which for a moment surrounded us, gave us such a scare that that climb came to an untimely end, and I tasted for the first time the delirious joy of a rush down hill. A few weeks later, along with my father, himself a lover of the hills from boyhood, I got my first glimpse of that world of the hill-tops which lies so near and yet is so far removed in spirit from the world of everyday life. That day made me a climber, doubtless of the Salvationist order, yet one who does not care to see a peak and not get there somehow.

From Cromar the best ascent is made by an old track which winds round the face from behind the farm Balhennie, which is best approached by the road running to the south of the United Free Church of Braes of Cromar. This old track leads gently upwards by an easy gradient high above the steep little gully of the Coinlach Burn, and where thirst begins to be tantalised by the ripple of the burn far below, the path leads to a spring rising from a patch of moss of the most vivid green. This track used to be employed, I was told, for bringing down peat from the moss of the Roar, which lies on the broad back of Culblean, the southern spur of Morven; but I believe it took its origin in the days when the cattle were sent up here for summer pasturage, and when the shielings were occupied, of which the crumbled remains can yet be traced near where the track ends. These lie sheltered near the burn-side, just where the first steep slope of the hill ends, and round them greener turf shows trace of rude attempts at cultivation. In just such situations lie the Saeter huts so well known to every climber amongst the Norwegian Fjeld, and in similar places I have seen them in other spots in Scotland.

As one wanders up this track the view gradually widens to the east, bringing out the long ranges of the Mounth, the Hill of Fare, Corrennie Forest, and Bennachie, but not till one crests the slope behind does the grand bulk of Lochnagar come into view, and all the ranges to the west. This upper part of the hill gives easy going over grass and masses of blaeberry bushes contrasting strongly with the dark heather of the lower slopes; higher still are great

patches of "Averens," the cloudberry, each plant in early summer crested with its delicate white flower, and in autumn with its refreshing yellow fruit. About 100 feet below the top on the south side a little spring flows clear and strong into a well, roughly formed of stones, and then loses itself in a field of mosses, whose greens are so vivid and yet so various that they baffle description.

At last the cairn is reached, a large, rugged heap of stones, hollowed into a rude shelter on one side, and piled on a mass of stones, which suggests an earlier cairn of ancient days. What more likely than that this first great mountain on the north of the Dee should have been chosen for the site of some memorial by that vanished race which built its huts by Loch Kinord below, and made its underground dwellings and stone circles on the slopes of Cromar. On a clear day the extent and interest of the view is striking, from the sea south of Aberdeen to the distant blue hills of Sutherland and Caithness, and from Mormond Hill, near Fraserburgh, to the hills near the head of Glen Tilt. Immediately below one to the south lies the mass of Culblean, the historical hill of the district; it was covered in old days by a forest and was the site of two bloody battles, one between Malcolm Canmore and the Danes and one between the supporters of David II. and the followers of Baliol. In later years this forest became infested by a robber band, largely consisting of the proscribed Macgregors, who seem to have had a wide range in the district, and to have selected their habitat according to the weather, for an old saying is attributed to them, "Cushnie for cauld, Culblean for heat, and Clashanreach for heather." At last, in a double sense, Culblean was made too hot for them, for the forest was burned to clear them out, after they had raided the country when every one was convivial at the wedding of one John Tam, a deed commemorated in the old fragments:—

"Culblean was burn'd and Cromar harriet,  
And dowie's the day John Tam was marriat,"

and

"Fie, fie, cuddyman, whaur hae ye been?  
The fire'll be at yer horse's heels ere ye'll win ower Culblean."

Across the Dee is the line of the Mounth, or great range dividing the valley of the Dee from the Vale of Angus. We see it from Cairn Mon Earn, Kerloch, and Clach-na-Ben, with its wart-like outcrops of granite, past Mount Battock and the Hill of Cat, to the Braid Cairn, Mount Keen, and Lochnagar, or the White Mounth. A mighty range, crossed by various passes, the routes of which can be well seen. The Cairn o' Mounth beyond Clach-na-Ben, the Fir Mounth, crossed by Edward I. on his invasion of Scotland, the pass called simply the Mounth over the shoulder of Mount Keen, and the Capel Mounth from Loch Muick to Glen Clova—all of them in recent times associated with tales of smugglers fetching on dark nights and misty mornings rolls of lace and silk on their ponies from the east coast, tales which I fear please the countryside most when they recount how the unpopular gauger was tricked. Loch Muick lies dark beyond the green peaks of the Coyles of Muick, near Ballater, but I fear imagination alone saw the dark lochan below the snow-seamed precipice of Lochnagar. Beyond Lochnagar lie hill beyond hill, which I shall not attempt to specify, but which yielded two pleasant hours of argument with the aid of a map, a compass, and an S.M.C. companion on a hot June day in 1905. North of the gash of the Dee valley, where can be seen the lower wooded craigs near Balmoral, lie the huge masses of Ben a Bourd, snow-flecked into late summer, and Ben Avon with its hummocks of rock. Possibly the very summit of Ben Macdhui may be seen, but with certainty Cairngorm and the line of precipices falling to Loch Avon, and beyond Cairngorm Ben Bynack. Between Ben Avon and Morven lies the bleak upper valley of the Gairn, and the Brown Cow Hill between Gairn and Don, farther to the north-west one gets a glimpse of the old road from Cockbridge to Tomintoul, as it crests its steep ascent. To the north the foreground is wild and desolate, rounded hills of moderate elevation and featureless contour, save where the peak of Ben Rinnes and the Buck of Cabrach rise above the general level. Far beyond on a clear day can be seen the blue waving outline of that world of hills of which Morven in Caithness is the northern outpost. To

the east of the Cabrach lies the Tap-o-Noth, famous for its vitrified fort, and farther still Bennachie, famed in song, "Oh wad I were where Gadie rins, at the back of Bennachie," less widely known for its interesting hill fort, and away beyond near the eastern sea the long, low mass of Mormond, the seaman's landmark near Fraserburgh. Away to the south of it, down the Dee valley, a dim cloud of smoke shows the site of Aberdeen. It is striking how little is seen of the two rivers, Dee and Don, between which Morven is one of the highest points. Nothing can be seen save a glimpse of the Dee below Pananich, famed of old for its mineral well, said to have been drunk by the youthful Byron, and again below Dinnet, and a yet more transient peep of the Don near Inverernan.

But I must hold my hand. A description of a view is tame, a catalogue of what lives in the writer's brain, of memories of rolling mountains dappled with cloud shadows and streaked with silvery snow fading away, hills beyond hills, to a blue distance which rests the eye tired with the detail of nearer objects, and over all the ever-changing glory of our Scottish cloudscape. All things, however attractive, must come to a close, and routes for return must be considered. Morven presents neither cliffs, gullies, nor arêtes, and any slope may be attacked with equanimity, the sake of variety alone suggests a different way. One can come down by the Rashy Burn to the Burn of Tullich, and thence by the old kirk of Tullich to Ballater, or by the burn near the Culblean granite quarries, or an even finer route is to come down to the west by the shooting lodge of Morven and the road to Glen Gairn, which is reached at the Roman Catholic chapel, and thence by a road skirting river, birch-clad slopes, and heathery braes to Bridge of Gairn and Ballater, a splendid finish to an equally splendid day on the hills.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

FORTY-FIRST MEET OF THE CLUB—EASTER 1908.

## BRAEMAR.

*Members present.*—Gilbert Thomson, J. Burns, Dr W. Inglis Clark, Prof. J. N. Collie, Geo. Duncan, W. Garden, G. T. Glover, F. S. Goggs, T. E. Goodeve, J. S. Greig, W. L. Howie, J. G. Inglis, H. Kellas, W. N. Ling, T. Meares, H. T. Munro, J. H. A. M'Intyre, D. MacKenzie, Dr J. Macmillan, J. A. Parker, C. B. Phillip, H. Raeburn, J. Rennie, E. B. Robertson, J. Rose, T. H. B. Rorie, A. W. Russell, G. A. Solly, F. C. Squance, P. J. H. Unna, C. Walker, H. Walker, J. J. Waugh, Dr A. R. Wilson, H. Woolley, and R. W. Worsdell.

*Guests.*—H. Alexander, Dr M. B. Burton, G. L. Collins, Prof. J. D. Cormack, Capt. S. H. Cowan, H. C. Comber, A. J. C. Fyfe, S. P. Gordon, A. F. Holmborg, G. E. Howard, Dr J. R. Levack, J. B. Miller, W. A. Reid, H. M. D. Watson, and H. B. Widdows.

THE Easter Meet of 1908, at Braemar, will surely be long remembered as one of the record meets of the Club, if not for what was established in the climbing record, at any rate in numbers. Never since the foundation of the Club has there been such a gathering of mountaineers—in all fifty-one. Of these there were thirty-six members of the Club, and fifteen guests, and no less than twenty members of the Alpine Club, including Mr Hermann Woolley, its President.

The Meet days extended from Friday, 17th, to Tuesday, 21st April. As early as the 13th, however, Munro had established himself at Derry Lodge. From there he started off early on the 14th, climbing Beinn Bhreac, Beinn a' Chaoruinn, and finally ending a long day by doing all the tops of Beinn Mheadoin. Starting again from Derry on the 16th he laboriously toiled over the great snow-field on the south slopes of Carn à Mhaim, crossed the Dee by a snow bridge, and walked up Glen Geusachan till he passed the well-defined slabs on the north face of Beinn Bhrotain, when he struck up to the north-east top, and from there *via* the east top to the main summit. He then ascended Monadh Mor, Sgor-an-Lochan-Uaine, Cairn Toul, finishing



*W. Lamond Hewitt.*

**GLEN DERRY NEAR CORRIE ETCHACHAN.**

*20th April 1938.*





off with the Devil's Point, and thence back to Derry *via* Glen Geusachan—twelve and a half hours' continuous going. He reports that the snow was excessively heavy and the sun very strong—more so than he had ever felt it in Scotland so early in the season—and that in consequence snow-spectacles were an absolute necessity.

Collie, Cormack, and Phillip, too, found their way to Braemar by stages. They first visited the Spital of Glen-shee, from which Glas Thulachan and Beinn Gulabin were climbed, and the hills on the west side of Glen Lochy. Collie also climbed the pinnacle of Creag-na-Dallaige on Carn Bhinnein by the north-west face. The party then adjourned to Banchory on Lower Deeside, where they climbed Clach-na-Ben, a well-known summit near Glen Dye, and also Mount Shade. They then went direct to Braemar, and from there on the 15th they went up the Alt Connie from Inverey and climbed Carn Bhac and the Geal Charn.

On the 16th Cowan and Robertson drove from Braemar to Derry, and then climbed the Devil's Point. They found the snow very soft and the going consequently heavy. The line of ascent was by the south-east corner, over slabs at first, then a steep vegetable climb, and finally ending with a well-defined arête.

On the 16th Goggs and Russell, taking morning train from Edinburgh to Blair Atholl, walked to Bruar Lodge, climbed Beinn Dearg, Carn an Fhithleir, and An Sgarsoch, spending the night at Mrs Grant's cottage in Glen Geldie.

Collins and Solly climbed Morrone on the afternoon of the 16th, and had an excellent view.

*Friday, 17th April.*—The usual flood of Easter holiday-makers played havoc with the railway traffic, and so the trains from the south arrived in Aberdeen in several portions, and at all hours of Good Friday morning. Thus it was that, although the indefatigable Secretary had, as is his wont, spared no pains to make the most exhaustive arrangements for the comfort of those who had travelled from the south, yet he, along with Glover, Squance, Unna, and Worsdell, arrived in Aberdeen too late to join the 8.5 A.M. for Ballater, to which a breakfast saloon had been specially

attached by the G.N.S.R. Co. for the convenience of members and their guests, with the very unfortunate result that they had to lose a complete climbing day, and travel by the 10.10 A.M. instead. But if Clark had no practical—shall we say gastronomical—satisfaction from his complete arrangements, there were others more fortunate than he and his four ill-starred companions, for no less than eighteen members and guests travelled in the saloon, and no higher commendation of the fare there provided need be given than this, that those eighteen fortunates made the entire commissariat disappear which had been provided for twenty-five, a feat which, we are credibly informed, worked out at about four eggs per head!

Good Friday morning dawned dull and grey in Aberdeen, but as the party journeyed up the Dee valley the clouds scattered, and, Banchory reached, the sun shone in a cloudless sky. On arrival at Ballater the party immediately started off in two brakes for Altnaguibhsaich and the Glassalt, with the exception of Mackenzie and Widdows, who motored direct to Braemar.

At Altnaguibhsaich the party divided, Duncan, Garden, Goodeve, Ling, M'Intyre, Raeburn, Rose, Watson, and Waugh taking the Lochnagar path; and Alexander, Fyfe, Kellas, Levack, Macmillan, Reid, and Thomson proceeding to Glassalt.

The Lochnagar party split again. Goodeve, Ling, and Raeburn attempted the Douglas-Gibson gully, but were driven back by the sudden thaw and consequent avalanching in the gully. They eventually ascended by the north ridge of the Black Spout, while Duncan's party ascended by the ordinary route, and reached Braemar by the Garrawalt Falls.

The Glassalt party crossed Broad Cairn and Cairn Bannoch, descending to Loch Callater and so on—some on foot and others driving—to Braemar; but Alexander and Kellas, leaving the others at the west end of Loch Muick, and skirting the south-west side of the Dubh Loch, attempted a direct ascent of the Broad Cairn from that direction, but eventually abandoned it within a short distance of the top, and, descending again, got up to the west of the cliffs, reaching the summit about an hour later

than their companions. They then climbed Cairn Taggart, and also reached Braemar *via* Loch Callater on foot.

Collins, Collie, Cormack, Rennie, Rorie, Solly, and Woolley drove to the Garrawalt Falls from Braemar, then climbed Lochnagar, and, crossing the shoulder of Cairn Taggart, they drove back to Braemar from Loch Callater. This party met Duncan's party at the Cac Carn Beag of Lochnagar, and, after exchanging greetings and remarking that "tha' hull was awfae thranged the day," they passed on.

Mackenzie, Squance, Unna, Widdows, and Worsdell walked up Morrone Hill from Braemar in the afternoon.

Russell and Goggs traversed Carn Cloichmhuilinn, Beinn Bhrotain, Monadh Mor, and the Devil's Point to Derry.

*Saturday, 18th April.*—Goggs, Munro, and Russell started early from Derry Lodge, and crossed into Glen Quoich, which they ascended in the teeth of a blizzard. Russell went by himself down to Braemar *via* the Gleann-an-t-Slugain, while Goggs and Munro climbed Carn Eas, one of the south tops of Ben Avon, then Creag na Dala More, another of Ben Avon's many tops, and then down to Braemar also by the Slugain.

Burns and Burton came from Blair Atholl to Braemar by Glen Tilt, crossing the summit of Beinn Iutharn Mhor and down Glen Ey to Inverey.

Collie, Cormack, Phillip, and Woolley walked to Loch Kander.

Clark, Greig, and the two Walkers (C. Walker leading) attempted to climb Carn-an-Turc straight from Loch Kander but failed. They then climbed a steep gully with a very sporting ice-corner, and came out at the summit just to the right of the main top, Clark having led up this gully.

Fyfe, Howie, Mackenzie, Rennie, Rose, and Waugh drove to Derry Lodge. They walked up Glen Derry nearly to Loch Etchachan. Here the party divided, Fyfe and Waugh climbing Cairn Gorm of Derry, and so back along the ridge to Derry, the others going on as far as Loch Etchachan and back to Derry.

But the principal rendezvous of the day was Beinn a' Bhuird.

Garden, Goodeve, Ling, Raeburn, and Watson climbed

Beinn a' Bhuid *via* the Inverchandlich Ferry and the Slugain, by the north arête above the Dubh Lochan, and then descended again to the Lochan by a steep snow slope to the left of the arête, by which they had ascended. They then went up a snow-rake, running through rocks on the south side of the Lochan, and on to the south top, and back to Braemar *via* the Slugain.

Kellas, M'Intyre, Bruce-Miller, Parker, and Thomson climbed the steep snow slope immediately to the left of the arête climbed by Raeburn's party, reaching the ridge immediately above the steep part climbed by that party, then along the ridge and over a pinnacle on to the north plateau, along the head of Coire-an-Lochain, passing the top of the snow-rake climbed by Raeburn's party, then on to the south top, and returned to Braemar by Glen Quoich.

Levack and Reid also climbed Beinn a' Bhuid by the Slugain and the ridge above the path reached after crossing the Quoich, finally making the south top, returning by Glen Quoich to Braemar.

Alexander and Duncan made the ascent, too, by the Slugain and the Devil's Punch-Bowl, and back by Quoich Valley.

Collins, Glover, Solly, Squance, Unna, Worsdell, and Widdows drove to Loch Callater, and from there Squance, Unna, and Widdows visited Lochnagar and the Dubh Loch, and the others climbed Cairn Bannoch.

Mr and Mrs Rorie and Holmborg climbed Morrone and Carn-na-Drochaide, returning by Glen Clunie.

Gordon, Howard, and Macmillan motored to Derry, and walked up Glen Quoich in search of an eagle's nest, which was found.

Cowan and Robertson drove down to Braemar from Derry.

A goodly company sat down to dinner in the Fife Arms Hotel, in all forty-eight, including Mr John Michie, M.V.O., H.M. Factor on the Balmoral Estates, who, along with the Invercauld and Fife factors, had been asked to dine with the Club as the guests of the evening. It was to be regretted that engagements prevented the other two factors being present, but in Mr Michie the Club had a genial



*H. Gærdem.*

**BRAERIACH.**

*14th June 1908.*



guest and a ready speaker, who extended to the visitors that hearty welcome, on behalf of the King and the other proprietors, which was only substantiated by the fact that the Club had received full permission to visit all the mountains upon these estates during the Meet. After dinner some interesting photographs of mountain and other scenery were exhibited in the hall of the hotel, Dr Levack having made the necessary arrangements for obtaining the use of a lantern. Clark's and Howie's photographs were, as usual, much admired.

*Sunday, 19th April.*—Burns and Burton, in dense mist and snow blizzard, attempted Beinn a' Bhuid, climbing to a height of some 3,000 feet on the "Sneck" between it and Ben Avon.

Mr and Mrs Rorie, along with C. Walker, motored up the Spital Road to Carn Aosda, which they climbed in alternate sunshine and driving snow, some 300 feet of step-cutting giving additional interest to the climb.

Collie, Cormack, and Phillip walked to the Linn of Dee.

Clark, Miller, and Parker drove to Derry, and walked up Glen Lui Beg for several miles, but finally abandoned the ascent of Ben Macdhuì on account of the raging gale and snowstorm, returning to Derry Lodge, where Clark stayed the night, Miller and Parker walking back to Braemar.

Cowan, Robertson, Russell, Unna, and Wilson drove to Garrawalt Falls, Russell and Wilson climbing Lochnagar from the Sandy Loch, the others attempting a rock-buttress on the cliffs to the south of Loch-an-Eoin, but they were driven back on account of the violence of the snow blizzard. They next attempted a broad easy couloir by the side of the buttress, involving a good deal of step cutting, but another blizzard drove them down this couloir also. They subsequently met Russell and Wilson again, who, after climbing Lochnagar, had crossed over the White Mounth and round the shoulder of Cairn Taggart, and they all drove back together from Loch Callater to Braemar.

Comber, Greig, Macmillan, and Waugh climbed Cairn Taggart from Loch Callater, Greig and Macmillan return-



ing by the same route, the other two by the Ballochbuie Forest.

Ling and Raeburn walked to Derry Lodge by the Slugain and Glen Quoich.

Garden, Goodeve, Reid, and Widdows drove to Derry Lodge. Levack, who had gone on in an earlier trap, joined Reid, and they along with Donald Fraser, the Derry-keeper, walked into the Lairg opposite to the Devil's Point, took photographs, and returned to Derry.

Fyfe joined Garden, Goodeve, and Widdows, and they started off for Cairn Toul, picking up Alexander and Kellas about a mile off Corrour Bothy. Alexander, Fyfe, and Widdows, after going on a little beyond the bothy, returned, Garden, Goodeve, and Kellas ascending Cairn Toul by the right-hand arête of the Soldier's Corrie in the height of a tremendous gale and snow blizzard, and descending, after considerable hesitation as to direction, into the top of Glen Geusachan, and so back to Derry and Braemar, which was reached about 8 P.M. They remarked an enormous snow avalanche which had fallen from the rocks to the west of the Devil's Point—an unusual phenomenon in this country, some of the blocks, half ice, half snow, being several tons weight, and having carried everything before them.

Greig, Howard, Macmillan, and Waugh went to the head of Glen Callater, climbed Cairn Taggart, Howard and Waugh returning by Ballochbuie, while Greig and Macmillan came back the same way.

*Monday, 20th April.*—Burns and Burton returned from Braemar to Edinburgh by Glen Geldie and Kingussie. After crossing the Eidart they kept up to the summit ridge, which they followed out to Sgoran-Dubh, then down to Feshie Bridge.

Collie, Cormack, Phillip, and Woolley walked through Ballochbuie woods and Glen Beg into Glen Callater.

Collins, Cowan, Robertson, and Solly climbed the rock-buttress at Loch-an-Eoin which had defeated Cowan and Robertson on the 19th, and which they said would probably be quite a simple summer climb.

Goggs, Russell, and Watson drove to Clunie Lodge,



14th June 1908.

BRAERIACH FROM CAIRNTOUL.

W. Garden.



crossed Socach Mor, An-Socach, Beinn Iutharn Beag, Beinn Iutharn Mor, and Carn-an-Righ to the Tilt, at Falls of Tarf, and thence down Glen Tilt to Blair Atholl, where they caught the same train that Burns and Burton caught at Kingussie, and so reached Edinburgh along with them that evening.

Alexander, Goodeve, and Parker drove to Loch Callater and attempted the gully in Corrie Kander which was climbed by Clark's party on the 18th. Half way up the couloir, which had a well-defined track in it of falling stones, the party was nearly struck by a large stone which fell from the top of the cliff above the gully, so the climb was forthwith abandoned on account of the danger from falling stones, and a descent was made to the bottom of the corrie from where Goodeve and Parker made an ascent out of the corrie by a steep snow-rake, afterwards visiting the head of the couloir and returning to Braemar in time to catch the afternoon motor to Ballater. Alexander returned by himself by Glen Callater.

Clark, the two Walkers, Ling, and Raeburn started off together from Derry Lodge, where they had spent the night, Clark and the Walkers climbing Cairn Toul where they found the snow in perfect condition, and a good deal of it upon the west side; while Ling and Raeburn, after hard snow-cutting—soft snow on hard snow—requiring considerable caution, got up a gully leading from the little upper corrie to exact top of Braeriach, then round the Garbh Corrie and over Angel's Peak and Cairn Toul and back to Derry, the snow getting extremely soft with the advance of the afternoon.

Garden, Howie, Levack, and Reid drove to Loch Callater. Howie photographed in Corrie Kander; while the others followed up the snow-rake, at the head of the corrie, by which Goodeve and Parker had just ascended, and so on to the summits of Carn-an-Turc and Carn-na-Glasha; the views from both these tops being perfectly gorgeous in all directions.

M'Intyre, Mackenzie, and Unna drove to Derry, Mackenzie walking up as far as the Garbh Corrie, and the other two ascending Cairn Toul, and returning over the Devil's Point.

Widdows climbed Ben Avon and Carn Eas by himself. Macmillan and Rennie visited Mar Lodge, and reached Aberdeen by the afternoon motor.

Glover and Worsdell walked into Glen Geusachan from Derry Lodge.

*Tuesday, 21st April.*—Howie and Meares walked up to Sandy Loch by the Garrawalt.

Collins and Solly went to Derry Lodge in the afternoon.

Inglis and Squance again made an expedition to Garrawalt Falls, and photographed.

#### EXPEDITIONS AFTER THE MEET.

*Wednesday, 22nd April.*—Collins and Solly started at noon from Derry Lodge, and reached the summit plateau of Ben Macdhu, but, on account of mist and sleet, they were unable to find the summit cairn.

Howie and Meares walked up the Slugain, a little beyond the Lodge, where they joined Collie, who had come round from Glen Quoich, and all returned by the Slugain.

Inglis and Squance cycled to Linn of Dee.

*Thursday, 23rd April.*—Howie and Meares drove to Derry Lodge, where they joined Collins and Solly, and started off with the intention of ascending the Devil's Point. The weather, however, became so very bad that they only reached the Upper Bothy.

Collie and Phillip climbed Cairn Gorm of Derry from Derry Lodge.

The cold was intense at Braemar during the night, no less than twenty-two degrees of frost, and at Balmoral as many as twenty-eight degrees were registered.

*Friday, 24th April.*—Howie and Meares walked to the Lion's Face and Achallater.

Collie, Collins, Phillip, and Solly left Braemar.

*Saturday, 25th April.*—Howie and Meares climbed Morrone in the morning, and went to Ballater in the afternoon, where they were joined by Parker from Aberdeen.

*Sunday, 26th April.*—Howie and Parker climbed Lochnagar from the Glassalt Shiel in wretched weather.

This was the final ascent, and event, of the Meet.





*Easter 1908.*

THE SUMMIT OF BEN LUI.

*Rev. A. E. Robertson.*

No notes on the Braemar Meet would be complete without adding a hearty vote of thanks to Mr Macdonald, of the Fife Arms, and his good lady, who spared no possible efforts to make their guests most comfortable in every way, and who were ever waiting to greet the weary climber at the door with a cheery welcome. W. G.

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TYNDRUM.

The alternative Meet was held at the Royal Hotel, Tyndrum, the following being present :—

*Members.*—J. W. Burns, Lieut.-Col. Farquhar, H. S. Ingram, W. G. Macalister, H. MacRobert, W. A. Morrison, W. W. Naismith, A. E. Robertson, A. D. Smith, and R. E. Workman.

*Guests.*—R. A. Brown, F. Burns, E. Gunn, W. Malcolm, W. H. M'Dougall, J. Young, and G. Young.

On Friday, 17th, W. W. Naismith, who had arrived the night before, spent a long day on Creag Mhor and Ben Heasgarnich. Ingram and Smith came up by the early train from Edinburgh, and ascended Ben More from Crianlarich, the former returning home thereafter. At dinner that night there were present—Naismith, Smith, MacRobert, A. E. Robertson, Farquhar, Brown, M'Dougall, and Gunn.

The morning train on Saturday brought a large addition to the party, most of whom continued their journey to Taynuilt, being joined by MacRobert, Brown, and M'Dougall. From Taynuilt the party ascended Stob Dearg of Cruachan and the main top, and then split into two sections, one, consisting of Workman, MacRobert, F. Burns, M'Dougall, J. Young, G. Young, Brown, and Anderson, traversing the remaining tops, and coming down on Loch Awe Hotel by the quarries, while the other, comprising J. W. Burns, Macalister, and Malcolm, reached the same refuge *via* Meall Cuanail and the road. Taynuilt was left about 8.30 and Loch Awe Hotel reached about 4.15 P.M. Some of the party had quite a good snow and ice climb on the Taynuilt Peak.



Ben Lui was not neglected, all the rest of the Meet—Naismith, Robertson, Smith, Morrison, Farquhar, and Gunn—ascending by a route a little to the north of the central gully. Above the cornice they found a large party of the Manchester Rucksack Club (including the Secretary) waiting to greet them.

On Sunday, Workman, Morrison, MacRobert, Brown, and the two Youngs drove and cycled to Inveroran, which was reached about 11.30. Thereafter they ascended Stob Ghabhar by the lower and upper couloirs. The snow was in good condition, steps having to be cut throughout. At the foot of the upper couloir, Workman, MacRobert, and G. Young advanced to the attack while the other three dug an enormous cave in which they sheltered from the bitter wind and snow showers for about two hours. Workman had a most laborious time cutting up the ice pitch, but eventually the whole party were safely over it. The first three reached the summit by the rocks to the right, while the rest continued up the gully, encountering *en route* faint traces of previous steps (probably Raeburn's party). Tyn-drum was regained about 9.30 P.M.

Another party, consisting of J. W. and F. Burns, Macalister, M'Dougall, and Malcolm, ascended Ben Lui by the corrie, M'Dougall and F. Burns returning over Bens Oss and Duchray.

On Monday, Workman, MacRobert, and the two Youngs ascended the maze of steps in the Ben Lui Corrie, and, nearing the summit, were subjected to a rapid fire from that keen photographer, A. E. Robertson, who had already ascended by the Fox's Couloir. A rapid descent was made, and four o'clock saw the whole party round the tea-table. Macalister, Malcolm, F. Burns, and Farquhar had already gone south, the first three for the Cruach Ardran gullies and the latter for Ben More.

The evening trains accounted for all that was left of a most successful Meet. Splendid views were obtained throughout, and although the snow was most unsuitable for glissading it was otherwise in perfect condition.

H. M.



*Arr. J. E. Robertson.*

**LOOKING NORTH FROM BEN LUL.**

*Easter Day.*



## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

The following are the additions to the Library and Slide Collection since May last :—

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Holding (T. H.). The Camper's Handbook -	J. J. Waugh.
Macnair (Peter, F.R.S.E., F.G.S.). The Geology and Scenery of the Grampians and the Valley of Strathmore. 2 vols. 1908 - - -	Purchased.
Abraham (Geo. D.). The Complete Mountaineer. 1907 - - - - -	"
Abraham (Ashley P.). Rock-Climbing in Skye. 1908 - - - - -	"
Currie (Ronald, M.D.). The Place-Names of Arran. 1908 - - - - -	"
Cochrane (Robert). Pentland Walks. 1908 -	"
Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club, Transactions of the. 1875-1899. 5 vols. -	"
Scottish Loch Scenery. Illustrated in a series of coloured plates. 1882 - - - - -	"
Green (Rev. Samuel G., D.D.). Scottish Pictures drawn with Pen and Pencil - - - - -	"
Sights and Scenes in Scotland. 225 Illustrations (photographic reproductions); black and white. 4 vols. Cassell & Co. - - - -	"
Lawson (John Parker, M.A.). Scotland Delineated. Illustrated with numerous coloured lithographs. 1847 <i>circa</i> - - - - -	"
Coolidge (W. A. B., M.A.). The Alps in Nature and History. 1908 - - - - -	"

## LANTERN SLIDES.

Snow Avalanche on Lochnagar - - - -	Dr Levack.
Maps of Glencoe, Ben Nevis, and the Cuillin Districts - - - - -	G. Duncan.
Views from Cairntoul, &c. - - - - -	W. Garden.

# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## THE ORKNEY ISLANDS.

### (DIVISION VI. GROUP IV.)

Lat. 59° ; W. Lon. 3°. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 117-122. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 28.

Although encircled by the halo of romance, and thronging with memories of a vanished past, when the old seakings navigated their storm-swept seas, these islands rise only to a moderate altitude, and in a climber's guide a brief notice, and that of a single island, will probably suffice.

Hoy is the only island of the group possessing hills above 1,000 feet in height. The Mainland of Orkney merely rises to 735 feet in Milldoe, and the island of Rousay to 821 feet in Blotchie Fiold. The other islands are still lower, though many of them in places have tremendous sea-cliffs of old red sandstone.

To reach the island of Hoy one must cross the Sound of Hoy from Stromness in an open boat. The tide in the Sound runs like a mill-race, and if any west wind is blowing there may be a nasty sea ; and Bessie Millie who used to help out her subsistence by selling favourable winds must surely now be dead, for Sir Walter Scott found her "withered and dried up like a mummy."

To climb the Ward Hill and Cuilags and visit leisurely the Dwarfie Stone, the Old Man of Hoy, and the neighbouring sea-cliffs—the objects of greatest interest in Hoy—will occupy most of a long summer day. The following would be a good route. Sailing past Graemsay with its

two lighthouses, you will land at Quoys Bay, where your boatmen will wait for you. Ascending the Quoys Burn for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles in a southerly direction, and passing a standing stone and a tumulus, you will come to the curious Dwarfie Stone, celebrated in "The Pirate," an isolated block of grey sandstone containing an artificial chamber, resembling in some ways "the cabin of a small coasting steamer," whose origin can only be conjectured. The stone lies in a valley near the foot of some low sandstone cliffs called the "Dwarfie Hamars." The name "H. Miller," neatly chiselled on the wall of the excavation, is a reminiscence of a great geologist who once took shelter from a shower of rain in this lonely place, as told in his "Rambles of a Geologist."

Three miles south-west of the Dwarfie Stone is the lovely Bay of Rackwick which is well worth visiting. It is the only break for several miles in this iron-bound coast; but there is no anchorage here, for the bay is constantly swept by Atlantic rollers, which keep the shingle in endless motion. From Rackwick a three-mile walk along the cliffs (or two miles north-west across the moor) will bring you opposite the Old Man of Hoy, an inaccessible sandstone needle or stack rising from the shore to a height of 450 feet. Proceeding northwards, the sea-cliffs continue to increase in height. Skirting their edge you will pass the Sow, a headland of about 1,000 feet, and by-and-by (two miles from the Old Man) you will gain the summit of the loftiest vertical cliff in the British Islands (with the exception of one in Foula). This stupendous precipice, "St John's Head," towers no less than 1,141 feet above the waves that dash noiselessly against its base, for at this elevation the "soogh" of the wind among the crags and the cries of the sea-birds are sufficient to drown the roar of the breakers. Most people experience a wild delight in perching themselves on the brink of a profound abyss, and the mountaineer both by predilection and training is no doubt peculiarly susceptible to such pleasurable emotions. At St John's Head they can be enjoyed to the full, for here you may, if you like, lie prone on the flat sandstone, with your head projecting over nearly a quarter of a mile

of perpendicular drop. Yonder is a large steamer. Though she must be a mile off we have from here a bird's-eye view of her deck! The power of the wind is here abundantly shown in the large slabs of rock lying about, which have evidently been quarried from their beds on the edge of the cliffs without human hands, and tossed inland to a distance of several yards.

Reluctantly leaving this grand cape, another mile takes you to the Kame of Hoy, a headland of 950 feet, near which there is said to be a wonderful echo. From there it is an easy walk to the top of Cuilags, 1,420 feet, but from that hill to the top of the Ward Hill involves a descent of over 1,000 feet, as there is a deep valley between. The Ward Hill, 1,565 feet, is the highest of the Orkneys. The name of course means "watch hill." There are many Wards besides that of Hoy, *e.g.*, Ward of Caithness, Eday, Fair Isle, Sumburgh, Bressay, Whalsey, Fetlar, Unst, and several others in the Shetlands. When danger approached, beacon fires would doubtless burn bravely on all these heights, "each answering each," and so the news would be carried, if not with the speed of the telegraph, at any rate more rapidly than letters conveyed by mail steamers to-day.

The north side of the Ward Hill is steep, and there, according to old tradition, a great carbuncle used to shine; but although it "gleamed ruddy" from afar, it always became invisible to the daring climber who tried to reach it. On the other side of the hill are two corries, called the Red Glen and the Nowt Bield (*a sheltered place for cattle*).

The summit commands a magnificent prospect of the whole group of the Orcades, with their quaint Norse names; also of the north coast of Scotland from Duncansbay Head to Cape Wrath, and if the air is exquisitely clear, as the writer had it, you will see, far away to the north-east, that little gem of the wild northern seas, which well deserves its name—the Fair Isle. Though only three miles long, that charming islet enjoys the possession of a sheet of the Ordnance Survey Map "all to itself."

W. W. N.

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## THE SHETLANDS.

## (DIVISION VI. GROUP V.)

Lat. 60°; W. Lon. 1°. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 124-131. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 29.

Hjaltland, to give it its old Norse name, forms a group of islands, the last remnants of British land to the north, lying between Scotland, Norway, and Iceland.

The most northerly island, Unst, is less than 200 miles from the nearest islands of the Norwegian Skaergård on the east, and is almost as far (about 180 miles) from the nearest point of the Scottish mainland.

Though much more hilly and barren than Orkney, all the Shetland hills are low, smoothly sloping, and grassy or boggy, and are entirely devoid of interest from a climbing point of view. The highest point is situated in the north part of Mainland. It is called Röness Hill, and attains at the "Ward" a height of 1,475 feet. Though thus tame and uninteresting in its inland scenery, Shetland possesses perhaps the finest and most striking variety of magnificent coast cliffs to be found in the whole of the British Islands. Indeed the western cliff of the island of Foula at the "Kame," is generally considered to be the highest sea-cliff on the coasts of Britain or Ireland. This cliff attains a height of 1,220 feet, the summit of the island reaching 1,375 feet. There is a widespread ignorance with regard to the size and extent of the Shetland Islands, due most probably to the usual practice of inserting the island in one corner of our maps, and on a reduced scale.

In reality the islands are of considerable extent. From the great headland of Fitful on the south to Point of Fethaland on the north, the main island extends for a distance of about 60 miles, and though greatly cut up by voes and bays the total area of the islands amounts to about a quarter of a million acres. A mere statement of length and breadth, however, conveys little information with



regard to the frequently extraordinary configuration of the Shetland coasts.

To take one instance, a walk round the coasts of the small island of "Papa Stour" (*the large island of the priest*—Norse), only two miles across, will be found to give a good many hours' hard going up and down.

The great variety of geological formations throughout the islands is readily studied at the innumerable cliff sections exposed. The vertical or overhanging precipice of the Noup of Noss, 592 feet in height, is composed principally of sandstones. On the north-west of Mainland at the mouth of Röness Voe the cliffs are formed of a coarse friable red granite, while the extraordinary serrated reefs and knife-edged pinnacles of the west coast of Yell owe their origin to the weathering of tilted masses of mica schist.

Many of the stacks, skerries, and rugged headlands are huge blocks of basalt or porphyry, and their sharp-angled ledges form suitable nesting ground for innumerable sea-birds. All the climbing hitherto done in the Shetlands has been for the purpose of obtaining the sea-fowl, their young, or eggs, and there are innumerable stories of adventures and escapes of the natives while engaged in this quest. It is related, indeed, that a crushingly contemptuous expression in a dispute used to be, "*Your gutcher (grandfather) died like a cow in the house; mine died like a man on the banks*" (banks might mean either the fishing, or sea-cliffs—all cliffs are called banks in Shetland).

However it may have been in the past, the modern Shetlander now knows little of climbing. The Wild Birds' Protection Act has put an end to fowling, and eggng has also been largely given up for less precarious employments. In a few localities one or two good climbers may still be found. In climbing, the men do not use a rope, and the feet are only clad in thick worsted socks. Boots in the outlying parts of Shetland are little worn, the footgear consisting of raw cowhide shoes called "rivlins." When a climb is to be done the rivlins are slipped off and all fingers and toes utilised if necessary.

Many years ago there used to be a curious rope bridge

connecting the flat top of a rock stack called the "Holm of Noss," with the neighbouring cliffs of Noss. This was known as the "Cradle of Noss," and there is an amusing account of its crossing by the genial "Christopher North" in Wilson's "Voyage." He must have been a good and daring climber who first made the ascent of the "Holm" from the sea, and fixed the stakes by which the rope bridge was afterwards secured. Tradition relates that in returning by the way he went this unknown adventurer fell into the sea and was drowned.

In climbing some of the sea stacks often the chief difficulty is effecting a landing. Seldom even in the calmest weather does the great Atlantic swell permit of this, and it is an exciting time watching one's opportunity to jump on to a ledge, while the six rowers of the light Norway skiff, the "Sixern," bend, ready to pull off before the subsiding roller lands their boat on the rocks. A moderate rise and fall in a calm often amounts to eight or ten feet. An account of the ascent of one of these stacks, of considerable local reputation as a climb, was published by the present writer in the *Zoologist* for April 1891.

H. R.

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## THE OUTER HEBRIDES.

### (DIVISION VI. GROUP VI.)

Lat. 56° 46' to 58° 6'; W. Lon. 6° 39' to 7° 40'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 58, 69, 79, 89, 98, and 99. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheets 18 and 23.

The chain extends from Barra Head to the Butt of Lewis, about 130 miles. These delightful islands have probably never been explored by any climber in search of rock scrambles, and as none of them rise to 3,000 feet, "peak-baggers" will not feel greatly tempted to cross the tempestuous Minch. At the same time, it is by no means impossible that among the numerous "Vals" which crowd

the desolate region comprising the Forest of Harris and the southern parts of Lewis there may be one or two virgin summits. Moreover, when we remember that the general character of the district in question is a rocky and stony waste, with little vegetation to cover its nakedness, it seems probable that many a sporting rock face might be found, if we could only manage to get there!

A camping-out expedition in the early summer, starting from Tarbert-Harris, could explore the place thoroughly in a week.

Apart from their hills, some of the islands present majestic sea-cliffs to the Atlantic, but no information is available about their climbing capabilities.

Geologically, the Outer Hebrides are extremely interesting, being composed throughout of the oldest rocks in the British Islands—Lewisian or Archæan Gneiss—usually of a coarsely crystalline texture.

We shall here content ourselves with a very rapid survey of the chain, beginning at its southern extremity.

*Berneray* rises to 626 feet at Barra Head, on the brink of which superb headland stands a lighthouse whose white "occulting" light is visible 33 miles, when it is not hidden by fogs. Fogs, however, seem to be more prevalent here than at any other lighthouse in Scotland. On this island there are two duns, an old graveyard, a chalybeate well, and the ruins of a chapel.

*Mingulay*.—Its culminating point is Carnan (891 feet). The whole of the west side of this island is guarded by the most formidable line of sheer precipices, rising to 753 feet at Biulacraig, near which there is a natural arch.

*Pabbay's* highest point is 560 feet.

*Sandray's* highest point is 678 feet.

*Watersay's* highest point is 625 feet.

*Barra* is eight miles long and possesses Heaval (1,260 feet), and a number of lower "vals."

*Eriskay* rises to 609 feet.

*South Uist*.—Unlike the smaller islands to the south, its west coast is low, and is fringed with vast stretches of sand. Its loftiest hills are Beinn Mhor (2,034 feet), three miles north of Loch Eynort, and Hecla (1,988 feet), situated two miles

north-east of the former, and about three miles from Skipport, where steamers call. Both of these hills appear to be precipitous on their west sides. Ben More is also precipitous on the north-east face over Hellisdale. They are very conspicuous from the Coolins in clear weather. On the east coast, two miles from Ben Mhor, lies "the Prince's Cave," which gave shelter to Prince Charlie before he crossed over to Skye.

*Benbecula's* highest point is only 409 feet in Rueval. There are several stone circles in the neighbourhood. This island is joined to its two neighbours at low water; the passage between it and South Uist—the "South Ford"—being three-quarters of a mile long, and the "North Ford," between Benbecula and North Uist, being nearly four miles from inn to inn.

*North Uist* has more than a dozen vals, the highest being Eaval (1,138 feet). This hill is so surrounded by lochs of all sorts—salt water, brackish, and fresh—as to be hardly accessible to any but amphibious animals. If any reader doubts this statement, let him look at the O.S. Map for himself.

*Pabbay* in the Sound of Harris rises to 644 feet.

*St Kilda.*—As the Sound of Harris is the usual point of departure for St Kilda (some 40 miles distant), we may here refer the reader to the paper by Mr Heathcote in Vol. VI., pp. 146-151.

*Lewis and Harris.*—As already stated, a large part of this island is mountainous, though the numerous summits are of no very great elevation. The highest and probably the most interesting are on the Harris side of the "march," and within a reasonable distance of Tarbert-Harris. The loftiest point of the Outer Hebrides is Clisham (2,622 feet), about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Tarbert as the crow flies; and in case the climber should complain that he is not a crow, we may further explain that the map does not show any obstacles to a straight course being followed. A good easy ascent of Clisham is to take the Stornoway road to the Maaruig River and ascend north-west by west to Clisham, crossing Ant Isean to the Mulla-fo-dheas of Langa. The hill is very rough and stony, and affords magnificent views.

Two miles west of Clisham is Uisnaval More (2,392 feet), and another mile north-west of that, Strone Scourst, beside the small Loch Scourst, and three miles north of West Loch Tarbert. Two sides at least of the Strone are girt with considerable precipices. Other peaks are Tirga More (2,227 feet), Oreval (2,165 feet), and Ullaval (2,153 feet), all west of Strone Scourst; Beinn Dhubh (1,654 feet), south of West Loch Tarbert; Beinn Mhor (1,874 feet), east of Loch Seaforth in the wild Park Forest; and Mealisval (1,885 feet), situated near the Atlantic coast of Lewis.

Among other smaller islands, satellites of Lewis and Harris, are Taransay (875 feet), Scarp (1,011 feet), Scalpay (341 feet), Flannan Islands (282 feet), and North Rona (350 feet).  
W. W. N.

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## EIGG.

### (DIVISION VI. GROUP VII.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 52'$  to  $56^{\circ} 56'$ ; W. Lon.  $6^{\circ} 7'$  to  $6^{\circ} 12'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 60 and 61. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 14.

The island of Eigg is one of the smaller of the Inner Hebrides. It is the second in size of the group of four—Muck, Eigg, Rum, and Canna—which extend in a chain between the most westerly projection of the Scottish mainland, Ardnamurchan, on the south and the large island of Skye on the north. From Arisaig Point, the nearest part of the mainland, it lies seven miles due west. Rum lies five miles off to the north-west, and on the north-north-east, the long south promontory of Skye, the Point of Sleat, approaches Eigg to within eight miles.

Eigg is most easily reached by steamer, sailing from Oban and calling at the island once or twice a week, but another route, possibly even quicker and taking the traveller through some of the finest mountain scenery in Scotland, is by the West Highland Railway to Fort William and on to Arisaig, from whence a boat may be hired for the journey

over to Eigg. There is a small inn on Eigg which offers comfortable accommodation to visitors.

Though Eigg is a comparatively small island, measuring only some five miles by four, and cannot boast of mountains like the Cuillins of Skye, yet it possesses in the great ridge of pitchstone porphyry, the Sgurr, which forms its highest point, an object of great interest from a geological point of view, and a striking and impressive piece of rock scenery however looked at. Viewed from the east the Sgurr assumes the appearance of an enormous tower of perpendicular rock perched on the very summit of the island. From the south, however, it is seen to be a great ridge or rampart "planted like the copestone of a dyke on the ridge of a hill"; like a copestone, also, it in many places actually overhangs the wall below so that it is possible in places to walk right underneath the suspended pitchstone columns in a kind of gallery or covered way. The north-west extremity of the Sgurr ridge plunges down to the sea in a fine precipice. The height of this end, Bidein Boidheach, is 550 feet. We are not aware that either gable of the Sgurr has ever been climbed, or indeed if it is possible they can be climbed, but no difficulty will be found in gaining the summit at many places intermediate along the north side with little more exertion than that involved in a rough walk.\* The summit of the Sgurr is crowned by a rude fortification indicating the purpose to which it was put by the inhabitants in long past ages. No doubt it often proved a rock of refuge, and the wretched people of Eigg were ill-advised the day they resolved to trust to the concealment of the fatal "Cave of Francis" (Namh Fhraing) on the shores below, and were all smoked to death by the M'Leods of Skye.

From the summit of the Sgurr (1,289 feet) one of the finest panoramic views of the western isles and coasts of Scotland lies spread out before the eye. The splendid cone-shaped summits of the mountains of Rum are, from their proximity, most prominent; past Rum directly to the

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\* [Prof. Norman Collie climbed the rock a short distance west of the south side of extreme point.—ED.]

north, the jagged range of the Cuillins cuts the horizon. Looking towards the mainland a perfect maze of Bens, separated by far penetrating and winding fjords, make almost another archipelago of rugged islands such as crowd the southern view, while far out to the west the long low line of the barrier reef of the Outer Hebrides serves somewhat to break the force of the great Atlantic surges.

The general shape of Eigg has been well described by Hugh Miller as "resembling in outline two wedges placed point to point on a board," the central depression running across the island from the usual landing place at Castle Island to the flat and cultivated shores of the Bay of Laig with its famous sounding sands. The south-west wedge sweeps up in basaltic terraces to the Sgurr while the north-east slopes somewhat more gradually, its edges bounded by a rapidly heightening line of precipices on either hand. This formation, somewhat resembling the "craig and tail" formation of the volcanic hills of Mid-Scotland, is fairly common among the sea-girt isles of Scotland, good examples being Handa, Sutherland, and Noss in Shetland.

In Shetland the highest part of such an island is called a "Noup."

In the islands mentioned the cliffs fall down directly into the sea, but in Eigg the magnificent range of precipices that circle this north-east portion, and extend almost unbroken for nearly six miles, are entirely inland, varying in height from 100 to about 400 feet. They crown a steep talus of similar altitude, which rises from a rough hummocky strip, usually presenting to the sea small broken cliffs of 30 or 40 feet.

The width of this strip does not usually exceed a hundred yards or so, but on the north side facing Rum, the cliffs, here, with their talus nearly 1,000 feet in height, recede fully half a mile from the shore in a wide semicircle above the large crofting township of Cleadale.

There is said to be only one or two places, in this long range of six miles of cliff, where it is possible to make the ascent, but doubtless a close investigation would reveal a few more routes. The rock is for the most part basaltic, but in places beds of a soft white sandstone occur giving

the cliff a curious banded appearance. Where the softer strata have weathered away exceedingly steep and crumbly grassy slopes occur. These slopes are often of a remarkably vivid green, caused by the presence of large numbers of that curious semi-nocturnal seabird, the Manx shearwater, or, as it is called in Eigg, *fachach*, which burrows in these grass slopes, and hatches its single large white egg therein. The white-tailed eagle used also to have its eyry on these cliffs, but has not been a resident in the island for over half a century.

For accounts of Eigg, its geology, natural history, &c., we may refer the reader to the following works:—Macculloch's "Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland" (1820); Wilson's "Voyage Round the Coasts of Scotland" (1842); Hugh Miller's "Cruise of the Betsy" (1870); and Professor Heddle's paper in Harvie-Brown and Buckley's "Vertebrate Fauna of Argyle and the Inner Hebrides," 1892. The latest account of the geological structure of the Sgurr is by Mr A. Harker, and is contained in the *Quarterly Journal, Geological Society*, vol. lxii, 1906.

H. R.

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BEN MORE (MULL) (3,169 feet).

(DIVISION VI. GROUP VIII.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 25'$ ; W. Lon.  $6^{\circ} 2'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 44. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 10.

All the mountains over 3,000 feet in Scotland are situated on the mainland, with the exception of the Cuillins in the island of Skye, and Ben More in the island of Mull. Ben More is a very beautiful and a very prominent peak, and by reason of its isolated situation is always a distinctive feature in any west coast view. The mountain is composed of basalt, but its cliffs and ridges, so far as they exist, are very loose and rotten, and no climbs as yet have been recorded on them.



It is best ascended from Salen where there is a good hotel. Proceed by the road to the north-east end of Loch na Keal, and thence along its south shore to a point opposite the islet of Eorsa about six miles from Salen. Leaving the road the route lies up steepish slopes to a rocky excrescence called An Gearna (1,848 feet).

Hereabouts the final peak of the mountain comes into view, and the way is quite easy and plain in a south-east direction to the summit.

The view is exquisite; the depth, extent, and contrast of seascape and landscape being specially fine. To the north are the jagged summits of the Cuillins, a little to the left of which are the peaks of Rum. Due west, Staffa with its columnar cliffs is seen, while farther away the strangely shaped Treshnish Isles are dotted over the sea. Southward are the Paps of Jura, while eastward on the mainland the twin peaks of Cruachan with Ben Lui to the south of them are the prominent features.

The descent may be made south-east to the head of Loch Scridain, where there is a small inn at Kinloch. This inn is twelve miles from Bunessan, by good road, and about thirteen from Salen by a pass (1,088 feet) over into Glen Clachaig, where there is a rough cart road.

A shorter descent from the summit may be made to the head of this pass by the ridge running east-north-east over A' Chioch, but this is much rougher and more difficult.

An alternative way of ascending the mountain would be from Knock, up Glen Clachaig, to the summit of the aforesaid pass (1,088 feet), and thence *via* A' Chioch and the east-north-east ridge, descending towards Loch na Keal. This is much the more sporting route.

A. E. R.

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## JURA.

(DIVISION VI. GROUP IX.)

Lat. 55° 53' 54"; W. Lon. 5° 59' to 6° 2'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 28. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 6.

As every one knows, Jura is one of the wildest and most barren islands of Scotland. The whole island is a deer forest, and that, coupled with the fact that it is almost unapproachable in winter owing to the stormy seas that surround it, would point to the early summer as the best time for a visit.

The mountain climber will probably confine his attentions to the group of striking peaks in the southern part of the island known as the Paps of Jura. There are three important peaks, but from most directions two only are visible at the same time. Their names are Beinn a' Chaolais, 2,407 feet (*hill of the sound or kyle*), Beinn an Oir, 2,571 feet (*hill of gold*), and Beinn Siantaidh, 2,477 feet (*holy or consecrated hill*).

Beinn an Oir is about a mile from either of the others, Beinn a' Chaolais bearing south-west, and Beinn Siantaidh east, so that if joined together they would form a scalene triangle, with its obtuse angle opening to the south-east and enclosing a valley in which lies the Loch ant' Siob. The col between Beinn a' Chaolais and Beinn an Oir is only some 1,100 feet above the sea, and that between the latter and Beinn Siantaidh about 1,450 feet. To climb all three peaks would be a very good day's work, and would involve about 5,000 feet of ascent.

The best way to approach these hills is, perhaps, from Port Askaig in Islay, where there is a fair hotel and the steamers call regularly. Thence you ferry to Feolin across the Sound of Islay—half a mile of water running like a river at certain periods of the tide. From Feolin the nearest pap, Beinn a' Chaolais, lies north-east, about four miles away, but the intervening country is so rough that the distance will seem more than that before you get there. Another route is by way of Keills, near the foot of Loch Swin and reached from Crinan by a charming road. This way involves ferrying across six miles of the Sound of Jura in an open sailing boat to Laag, where one can get accommodation. From Laag the hills are six or seven miles distant 'cross country. There is also an inn at Craighouse, in Small Isles Bay, where steamers sometimes call, and five miles from the hills.

The Paps of Jura are composed of a fine-grained quartzite, which breaks up by the action of the weather into small angular fragments, and covers the steep sides of the mountains with long slopes of greyish-white scree. But few cliffs are found on their "smooth" sides, and these chiefly face Loch ant' Siob. The climber will, however, have some grand muscular exercise, if not actual rock-work, for scree seems to lie on these hills at a steeper angle than anywhere else, and most of it is loose and rolls under the foot of the mountaineer, who is toiling upwards, in the most heartbreaking manner. Fortunately he can often dodge the loose slopes of detritus by following the strips of steep heather which are scattered here and there.

The tops of all these peaks are crowned with large cairns. Unlike its neighbours, Beinn an Oir has a long ridge (running north) by which the gentle tourist may ascend or descend by a reasonable gradient. Along part of this ridge the Ordnance surveyors seem to have laid a causeway. This hill was climbed early in last century by Macculloch, who gives some interesting details of his expedition.

The prospect from the summit of any of the Paps is extensive, as might be expected from their isolated position. It embraces the north coast of Ireland, a wide stretch of the Atlantic, and a large portion of the Hebrides, to say nothing of the adjacent island of Great Britain. See Mr Watt's Notes in Vol. III., pp. 164-166.

W. W. N.

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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*The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions. These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.*

OSSIAN'S CAVE, EAST BUTTRESS.—A climb which we think will be of interest was made by A. C. M'Laren and myself on 9th June 1908, up the left retaining wall of Ossian's Cave. A deeply cut chimney starts a few yards to the east of the pitch leading up to the cave, and leads upwards for about 150 feet, after which its character changes, and its shallow continuation runs up to the top of the buttress. The climb is up this chimney practically the whole way. The deeply cut portion offers fine climbing with back and knee. At the top of this portion we made a short traverse out on to the buttress and worked up this close to the chimney for about 20 feet, until we reached a large sloping grass ledge. From here the leader stepped to the left into the chimney again, and took out 80 feet of rope before calling on me to follow. This pitch is very steep, but the holds are just sufficient.

The next difficulty is a chimney about 30 feet high, overhanging at the top, and this took us some time to negotiate. Eventually we tied our rope to a large spike of rock in the bed of the chimney and I climbed up to a niche just under the overhang in order to steady the leader over the next few feet. He needed no help, however, and once clear of the overhang made rapid progress. Above this the climbing gradually became easier until the top of the buttress was reached. There appeared to be a variety of routes to the top of the crags from here, and another quarter of an hour took us to the summit of Aonach Dubh.

L. G. SHADBOLT.

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ARRAN.—On Saturday, 20th June, Messrs H. MacRobert and W. A. Morrison made an attempt on Gully No. 3 on A'Chir ridge (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. X., p. 102). They left Corrie at 3 P.M., and reached the foot of the gully in three hours. The lower part is divided by a rib of rotten granite into two gullies. Being unable to ascend first pitch in left branch, they traversed the granite rib into the right

branch. This is very steep grass at first, but soon leads into a succession of caves which were ascended by back and knee work. From last cave escape was made out to the right and up a crack to a little grass platform. A projecting boulder barred entrance to the upper part of the main gully, which is very deep cut. The continuation of the crack, however, gave access to a steep patch of heather, from which they could look over 20 feet of A.P. rock into the bed of the gully on their left. There being no hitches the attempt on the gully was abandoned, and the summit of the ridge gained by a narrow chimney or crack intersected by a succession of ledges. The climbing was almost entirely by friction—and the second man's shoulders—and gave great fun the whole way. So far as could be seen the route admitted of no variation, the climb being entirely dependent on the continuation of the crack. The top was gained at 8.30 on a perfect evening, and after a long rest Corrie was reached at midnight.

H. MACROBERT.

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GLEN TILT PER CYCLE.—In the end of last May I had a short holiday at Braemar, and finished up by cycling through Glen Tilt to Blair Atholl. The total distance is a trifle under thirty miles, of which at least a third must be walked. The road is good to the Linn of Dee, and although bad thereafter it may be cycled almost all the way to Bynack Sheiling. From here to Forest Lodge, nine miles off, it is necessary to walk practically every yard. The path is well marked, but the surface is very rough, and there are none of those smooth grassy stretches that so often make riding possible in the glens. In Glen Tilt itself the path is nearly the whole way along a fairly steep slope, the track is narrow, and the pedal and ankle-bone come into contact more frequently than is pleasant. As regards streams, the Bedford Memorial Bridge crosses the Tarf, the only one of any size; there are two other smaller streams which can be easily negotiated, at least in dry weather, although they might give some trouble in a wet season. After Forest Lodge the road past Marble Lodge is very good, but the rise by the Falls of Fender is the disagreeable feature of the ride, although if application were made beforehand permission might be obtained to follow the direct private driving road to Blair. The Glen is well worth doing, even with the encumbrance of a cycle; the Falls of Tarf are very fine, and the Cairngorms and Ben-y-Gloe are seen from new view-points. The time was just over seven hours, including half an hour for lunch at the Falls, and a number of shorter stoppages. The time from Bynack Sheiling to Forest Lodge, including halts, was four hours. Except at the burns no carrying of the cycle is necessary.

ALEX. FRASER.

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SOLAR HALO AND MOCK SUNS.—On Thursday, 16th April, during the Easter Meet at Braemar, I was walking in the parish of Coldstone, some thirty miles from Braemar, when at 5.50 P.M. I observed a striking halo round the sun, which was dipping towards the north-west shoulder of Morven. There was a shining ring of faintly prismatic colour round the sun with a radius of, I should think, about  $20^{\circ}$ . At  $0^{\circ}$ ,  $90^{\circ}$ , and  $180^{\circ}$  there were bright shining spots with a bright horizontal ray shining outwards from each, that at  $180^{\circ}$  being the brightest. The ring being broken at its lower edge by the hills, I could not see if there were a similar spot at  $270^{\circ}$ . The sky was clear, save for some low tufty clouds below the right edge of the halo, moving from the north-west (though the wind below was from the east), and for some cirro-stratus clouds to the south. The next day the weather broke, and the cold stormy weather began which characterised the Meet. This halo with its mock suns was observed, according to letters in the *Scotsman*, in Shetland, St Andrews, and Perth. I could not hear of any other member of the Club having observed it, though A. W. Russell heard the keeper at Glen Geldie speak of it. I believe this phenomenon is of rare occurrence in Scotland, and I thought my observations at the time of our Easter Meet worthy of record in the *Journal*.

A. ROBERTSON WILSON.

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THE LADIES' SCOTTISH CLIMBING CLUB.—The Victorian Era has seen the rise of many things, and the lot of man, collectively, has improved beyond conception. Sport in its many aspects has advanced with rapid stride, and woman, making up the leeway of centuries, has jostled to the front to take her place alongside man in the many active pursuits so long considered to be alone suited for the masculine persuasion. But, though women had shared in the joys of mountaineering with their husbands, brothers, or guides, it has been left to the present gracious reign to find lady climbers banding themselves into Clubs with the same aims as those of the various male Climbing Clubs. Last year the Ladies' Alpine Club came into existence, and now the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club has not only been formed, but has carried out several highly successful meets. Perhaps a few lines may be spared to me to tell of its inception, organisation, and aims. In its origin it has been so much bound up in its relation to the S.M.C., that I imagine my fellow-members will wish to know more about it, and to wish it a successful career. During the month of April, the daughter of our former President, Mr W. C. Smith, was spending a short holiday with my wife and daughter at Killin, the special object of which was to carry out climbing expeditions in the neighbourhood. Some were accomplished guideless, others in company with members of the S.M.C. The idea of a Ladies' Climbing Club had often been mooted

before, and this now soon became an accomplished fact, the actual date of its birth being 18th April. The first officials were—President, Mrs Inglis Clark ; Hon. Treasurer, Miss Lucy Smith ; Hon. Librarian, Miss Ruth Raeburn ; Hon. Secretary, Miss Inglis Clark ; and after the model of the S.M.C., a Committee consisting of Mrs Douie Urquhart, Mrs Wm. Douglas, and three officials—President, Hon. Treasurer, and Hon. Secretary, was formed.

As has been stated, the Club has not been idle. Under the active influence of the Hon. Secretary a meet was held at Arrochar, when the Cobbler, Crois, and Narnain, by easy and difficult routes, were surmounted by the ladies, seven in number ; nor were they merely fair-weather sportswomen, for rumour tells that the whole party returned to Arrochar in the highest spirits, but soaked with rain.

The rules of the Club are avowedly based on those of the S.M.C., and are therefore perfect, even though the Committee seem to have been able to decide on them more rapidly than the S.M.C. succeeded in doing a couple of years ago. The Club possesses an Alpine Rope, already handselled on the Cobbler and the Craggs, a Compass, and a Club Album for mountain photographs ; and in every way possesses that vitality and enthusiasm which one would expect from its promoters. It numbers fourteen members, and provisionally the qualification form requires the ascent of four mountains of at least 3,000 feet, as well as two rock climbs, and two snow climbs. It is hoped that members of the S.M.C. will bear the Club in mind, and induce others to write to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Inglis Clark, 29 Lauder Road, Edinburgh, for information. In one respect the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club has gone one step in advance of our own. At the conclusion of the rules are found the following wise precepts, which might not even be found unworthy of adoption by ourselves :—

The spirit of rivalry should never enter into mountaineering expeditions.

Always climb deliberately, slowly, and carefully ; a slip, even when harmless, is something to be ashamed of.

Remember above all that *each member* has the reputation of the Club to make and to uphold, and that even the slightest mishap would immediately bring the Club into disrepute.

There will be walks on the Pentlands, once a month, throughout the year.

W. INGLIS CLARK.

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

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“ROCK-CLIMBING IN SKYE.” By Ashley P. Abraham. London : Longmans, Green, & Co. 21s. net.

This is a most important contribution to Scottish climbing literature, and it will be welcomed by the whole climbing fraternity. S.M.C. members will feel no jealousy of Mr Ashley Abraham for his genuine admiration and love for the Coolin : on the contrary we are grateful to him for the unstinted praise he bestows on the scenery and surroundings of Skye, and on its excellence as a playground. The author has the faculty of lucid and vigorous writing; and the perusal of his work has been thoroughly enjoyed. Some of the descriptions of rock climbs—the Cioch direct ascent for example—are abundantly exciting, and will be apt to cause the reader to wedge himself across his arm-chair while he gropes about for a good hitch.

The book before us contains the first record, so far as we know, of several difficult expeditions, *e.g.*, Slanting Gully of Sgurr Mhadaidh, Inaccessible Pinnacle by south crack, Third Pinnacle from Bhasteir Corrie, and the Sgumain Cioch by various routes. The author's generous recognition of his friend, Mr Harland's plucky leading in some of these stiff climbs, is pleasant to read, and leaves one with the impression of a cheery party who worked well together and backed up one another loyally.

Mr Abraham's graduated list of Skye climbs corresponds closely with the classification in our own Climbers' Guide (Vol. IX.). A climb that has gone only once, namely, the gully between the Third and Fourth Pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gillean, is designedly omitted; but a time may perhaps come when some one will scale that short wet pitch in the line of the gully itself. The discovery of one or two handholds would do it.

Owing apparently to the rough surface of the paper which has been used, the illustrations are just a trifle disappointing. The success of the snow views in “The Complete Mountaineer,” by Mr George Abraham, had led us to look for great things in this volume. Moreover, Messrs Abraham's Skye photographs are so perfect in definition that we were not prepared for the haziness shown in some of the



reproductions. Many of the rock views are, however, first rate, and the diagrams of routes are admirable, as is also the map.

John Mackenzie's numerous friends will be glad to have a good portrait and appreciative notice of a worthy man and agreeable companion.

If one were in a critical mood, doubtless a few defects and omissions could be found in the book. The wall of Blaven can be climbed from the gap behind the Pinnacle, although the description on p. 296 seems almost to imply the contrary. Speaking from memory after twelve years the route starts opposite the place where the Pinnacle is most easily climbed from, and goes up a slab set at about 45° without obvious holds.\* The way to Blaven from Sligachan does not lie *down* the glen (p. 285), and "Nae, nae, sir" (p. 9) hardly sounds like the expression of a Skye man. "Still and all," as they say in the West Highlands, any flaws that have been detected are trifling, and we are happy in being able to congratulate Mr Abraham unreservedly on producing such an excellent book.

W. W. N.

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"THE GEOLOGY AND SCENERY OF THE GRAMPIANS AND THE VALLEY OF STRATHMORE." By Peter Macnair. James MacLehose & Sons, Glasgow. 2 vols. 21s. net.

No climber can fail to be struck with the complexity of the problem presented by the geology of our Highland hills, and we naturally welcome a book which may help us to better understand their structure.

Hitherto the most instructive book on the subject to the general reader has been Sir Archibald Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland," and this, coupled with his more recently published geological map of Scotland, has been a means of information to many who are not geologists. It is, however, some time now since Geikie's book appeared, and, with the progress of survey and discussion which have since taken place, there is certainly room for a book dealing with the Grampians, especially as their problems have proved so obscure as hitherto to puzzle our ablest geologists. The author of this book has sought to meet this want and to supply a clue by which to unravel "the Secret of the Highlands," as it has been called by Professor Lapworth.

The author has worked at the problem for many years, and as the result of his investigations he furnishes us with a new theory of the

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\* Mr MacRobert, who has been climbing at Sligachan this summer, reports that Mr Abraham's "Deep Chimney" of Sgurr nan Gillean is the same as the S.M.C. "Jammed Block Chimney," climbed in 1898; and that Mr Abraham's "Jammed Block Chimney" is evidently a new climb, farther south.

structure of the Grampians. This theory, which is founded on the researches of Professor Heim, of Zurich, on the Alps, and Professor Lapworth, is to the effect that the rocks of the Grampians show a fan-shaped structure.

As is well known, the Highland formation is sharply divided from the Lowlands by the Great Fault, which extends in a north-east to south-west direction from Stonehaven to the Firth of Clyde, and passes close to Callander, Aberfoyle, and Helensburgh, and in examining the geology of the Highlands, we find that the various strata form bands across the country, having the same north-east and south-west trend, and the Grampians are considered by the author as being marked off on the south by the Great Fault, and on the north by the line of the Great Glen, or, in other words, the Caledonian Canal.

The author considers that a line drawn north-east and south-west through Ben Lawers and the Tarmachans shows the axial line or centre of the folding that has taken place, in other words, that Ben Lawers and the other hills on the line referred to are on the apex of the fan. This, he considers, is shown by the fact that the folding of the rocks of which they are composed is nearly perpendicular, whilst the angle of the folding falls off gradually both to the north and to the south as the folds of a fan fall off to either side. It would appear that the greatest compression has taken place towards the south-west part of the Highlands, and that it gradually decreases as one passes towards the north-east. In other words, a section taken across the Highlands in a north-west direction from a point on the Firth of Clyde, say Dunoon, shows a much greater compression than a section taken along a north-west line from, say, Blairgowrie. On the Firth of Clyde the folding becomes reversed, and the author believes that we have here the remnant of another fan which extended to the south across the midland valley of Scotland, the main body of which is now concealed owing to the great down-throw by which the overlying rocks were preserved in that valley.

The theory which we have attempted to state constitutes the backbone of the book, and the author adduces a great mass of evidence in support of it. It is not for a non-geologist to pronounce any decided opinion upon it, but, though by no means free from difficulties, there seems to be a great deal to be said for it.

The book is, however, by no means confined to this one topic, as the author goes fully into all the principal aspects of the geology of the district dealt with. He gives a historical introduction which might have been fuller, and follows it by a general outline of the problem. He then describes in detail the metamorphic rocks both sedimentary and igneous. Then follows a full statement of his theory of the structure of the Grampians. A chapter dealing with the rocks of the Highland border completes the first volume. The second volume is devoted to the valley of Strathmore, and to various minor groups of rocks which are found in the Grampians and Strathmore, and is on the whole less directly interesting to the climber. The Old

Red Sandstone comes in for a considerable share of attention, then the plutonic rocks and dykes of the Highlands are dealt with, then the volcanic rocks of the Old Red Sandstone which are found to consist principally of the Sidlaw Hills and the Ochils. Then after a chapter on dolerite or trap-dykes we have interesting chapters on the glaciation of the Grampians and Strathmore, and on alluvial and recent deposits, and the author winds up with a somewhat disappointing chapter on the scenery of the Grampians and Strathmore in relation to their geological structure.

The book, it will be seen, contains a mine of information, the result of much patient investigation and a careful study of the literature on the subject. It cannot, however, be described as a very readable book. Whilst it displays a genuine love of the hills and the Highlands it is not marked by much grace of literary style, and is not conspicuously successful in the matter of arrangement, at least in the earlier part. It contains a considerable amount of iteration, whilst it fails to adequately describe many things which the non-geologist will not readily understand. The first chapter, which deals with "the cycle of destruction and reproduction," was quite unnecessary if the book was addressed to geologists, whilst the ordinary reader will find a jumble of names of rocks and foundations which may be more or less familiar to the geologist, but of which the book fails to give a description to enable the general reader to know what he is reading about.

The book, which is well got up, is profusely illustrated with photographs, a good many of which seem to be given merely for pictorial purposes, and it also contains a new geological map of the Grampians on a larger scale and more up to date than Professor Geikie's, and one or two subordinate maps, and a considerable number of diagrams illustrating the author's theory.

On the whole the book is one which cannot be neglected by any one who wishes to study the geological structure of the Grampians, but it is scarcely a book for the general reader.

JAMES MACLAY.

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"GUIDE TO THE WALKS AND CLIMBS AROUND AROLLA." Collected and written by Walter Larden, A.C. London: S. Chick & Co., 48 Wells Street, Oxford Street, W. (Price 2s. 9d. post free, from Dr Brushfield, St Mary's, Scilly Isles, Cornwall.)

This little book has reached us just as we go to press, and we are glad to welcome in this number the results of Mr Larden's work in the Arolla district, which has been so well known for the last few years to the climbing habitués of that district in the MS. volume which he had written out for the hotels there. This is a reprint of the last edition of that guide with additions to date.





*Easter 1907.*

*A. M. Mackay.*

N.W. BUTTRESS OF STACK POLLY.

THE SCOTTISH  
**Mountaineering Club Journal.**

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VOL. X.

JANUARY 1909.

No. 58.

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A CLIMB ON STACK POLLY.

BY G. A. SOLLY.

THE record of the Easter (1907) Meet at Inchnadamp has already appeared in the *Journal*, and the climb described in this paper was briefly mentioned, but perhaps it deserves a longer description. To most of the members the district was new, and one of the allurements held out to induce the Club to go so far was the prospect of new climbs, particularly on Stack Polly. In this we reckoned without our Honorary Secretary, who spent part of his previous summer holiday there. After Dr Inglis Clark has wandered over a district for three weeks with motor and camera, the search for new climbs is harder and descriptions of the scenery unnecessary.

Ignorance as to Stack Polly may be pardoned, for the index to the first eight volumes of the *Journal* does not mention that mountain, nor is it named in "Anderson's Guide to the Highlands," published in 1834. It is named on the map of Black's Guide for 1875, but even there it is not referred to in the text.

As has been stated, it is only the advent of the motor that has placed it within practicable reach of mountaineers during the short days of early spring.

On Monday, 30th March 1907, a party of six left Inchnadamp at 8.10 A.M. in the motor. We had a beautiful drive through Elphin and past Drumrunie Lodge, arriving at the foot of the hill near Loch Lurgain at 9.40. On the

way we had magnificent views of the snow-clad Teallachs. Leaving the car and driver by the roadside, we all ascended the heathery slopes above us. Then, while three made direct for the summit ridge by one of the gullies in the centre of the mountain, Messrs W. N. Ling and G. L. Collins and I turned to the left (westwards). We skirted the fine cliffs, passing under the starting points for the climbs made by Messrs Collie and Inglis Clark (see the illustration in Vol. IX., p. 190), and rounded the western extremity of the mountain. The cliffs on the north-west buttress are tremendously steep. There had been a snow-storm during the previous night, and the rocks were cold and wet in places, although firm and good. I know of no serious attempts to climb them in former days; but Mr C. Pilkington tells me that some years ago he was there and made two or three starts, but after ascending about 15 feet each time found the rocks so steep that he came down. That was in mist, and he had no opportunity of looking out a route as he could not see the upper rocks. We roped at the foot at 10.45, the aneroid showing 1,600 feet. Then came the question of leadership. It was obviously an occasion where if youth were on the prow there would be pleasure at the helm, so Ling as the junior was sent first, I went in the middle, and Collins last. We climbed straight up for some distance on what might be called the principal ridge, but were soon forced by overhanging rocks to turn towards the gully on our left. A narrow ledge, which required care, and with one rather awkward pitch in it, led us some way towards the gully. Just where the ledge became impracticable we were able to traverse back again to our original line above the overhanging rocks. The next obstacle was a leaf of rock which threw one out, but by steadying Ling's foot until he got jammed in, this was surmounted, and it was easy work for the second and third. Then came the most difficult part of the climb. A narrow ledge led to a small platform on the extreme edge overhanging the cliff. Just below the platform was a kind of letter-box where the third man could get his shoulders wedged and be secure. From the platform ran a short shallow chimney which bulged outwards so as to throw the

climber out. Ling cleared out what holds there were, but they were not good. I was able to kneel on the platform, and Ling got on my shoulders, and after some hesitation as to the wisdom of an advance he went ahead. As he struggled up I raised myself so as to help him for as long as possible, first with shoulders and then with hands holding his feet, but of course he had to do the last part alone. From my shoulders he got into the chimney, then hanging by one hand he swung his right foot on to a hold on the edge of the chimney, and grasping some heather pulled himself up to a large platform. He was then quite secure, and with what a novice calls the moral support of the rope we quickly followed. Some very steep but good rocks led to the top of the buttress, where we built a small cairn. The height was about 1,950 feet. It was then 1.15. We soon reached the top, where the other party were waiting for us, and joined us at *table d'hôte*. It had been a most enjoyable climb, but a very difficult one for the leader, who deserves all the credit that attaches to it.

It is difficult to generalise upon the climbing of a district after only one visit, but my first impression is that, except on Stack Polly, few distinct climbs of much difficulty will be found. There are many magnificent ranges of cliffs and steep mountain faces, but the climbs seem for the most part to be either impossible or too easy. A party may go out and get as much climbing as they wish in disconnected pieces on the mountain faces, but probably an easy route could be found a few yards away on either side, and no two parties would be likely to take the same route. One or two gullies on Quinag may perhaps be successfully wooded, as Raeburn's party showed, but the great buttresses on that mountain are perpendicular in places and apparently impracticable. I saw nothing at all comparable to the distinct ridges and gullies of the north side of Ben Nevis.

One other memory of a most enjoyable Meet is perhaps worthy of record. I was lodged in the manse a short distance from the hotel, and one morning about 5.15 I was aroused by a most unusual disturbance amongst the birds. I thought it meant that some beast or bird of prey was



about. I got out of bed and looked out of the window. All the small birds were twittering and chirping and on the move, and innumerable gulls were circling around in every direction screaming their loudest. In two or three minutes I saw three eagles almost in line sailing in the air high up above Loch Assynt. They came from the direction of the foot of the loch, and when nearly opposite to me made a short turn and then went on again and disappeared beyond the head of the loch. It was a magnificent sight, and it is, I believe, unusual to see so many hunting in company. They were evidently looking out for their breakfasts, but the smaller birds did not wish to be present at the meal, and by their screaming induced the eagles to look elsewhere. I went back to bed, and the noise of the birds soon ceased.

THE NORTH BUTTRESS, CARN DEARG OF  
NEVIS.

BY HAROLD RAEBURN.

THE climber who penetrates into the recesses of the Allt a Mhuilinn has first before him the slabby north face of the Castle Ridge.

On rounding the foot of that ridge and looking up to his right (if he can take his eyes off the towering crag of the north-east buttress, towards the head of the valley) he will observe a deep recess. This recess, a hanging corrie carved in the rocky bosom of Carn Dearg, is the starting point of many fine climbs, and in addition there are unsolved problems still awaiting the explorer.

Standing on the scree slope, above the slabs of the corrie lip, and looking up, we have on our right the Castle Ridge. This is the easiest of the Nevis ridges, and the one which "goes" soonest after bad weather in spring. Then comes the North Castle Gully, a walk usually in snow; this, with its fellow the South Castle Gully, has never, to the writer's knowledge, been climbed when free from snow.

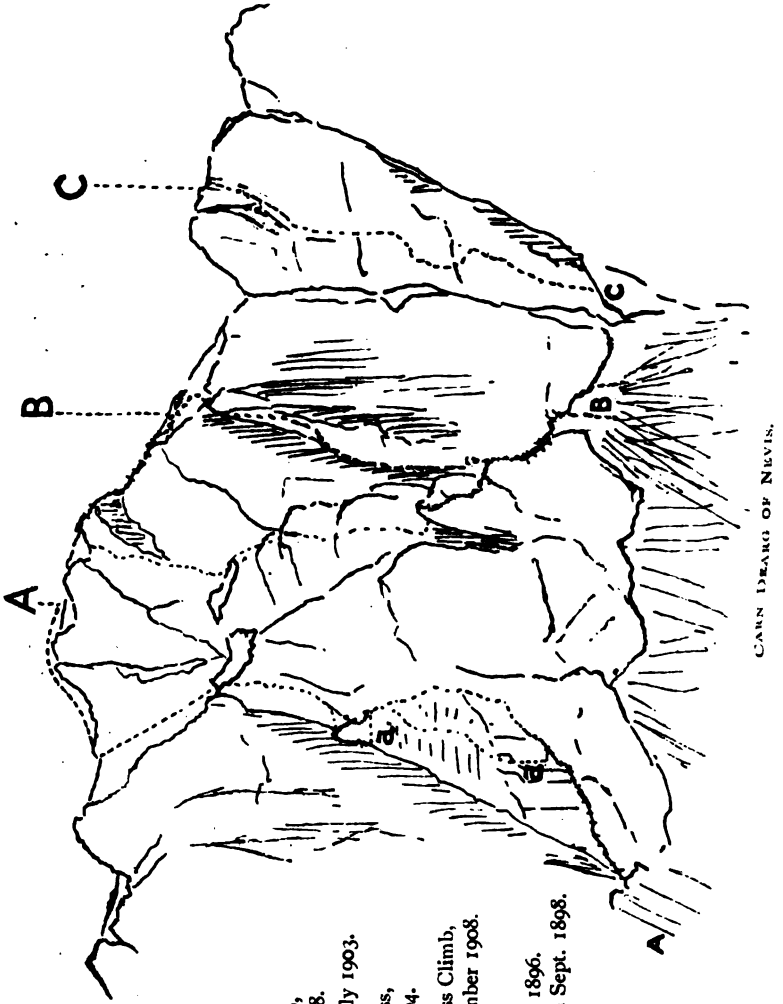
The Castle, with its great battlemented turrets, one bearing a very strong resemblance to the "Beak" of the Cobbler's northern peak, lies straight ahead. On the left a wall of cliffs sweeps round from the overhanging promontory of the Carn Dearg buttress. It forms the north side of Carn Dearg's summit, its upper part bounding the South Castle Gully with uncompromising steepness.

This great cliff has been hitherto seldom visited, probably no doubt, owing to the supposed greater attraction of the longer, if easier, climbs farther up the Allt a Mhuilinn.

The first successful attack on it was apparently that of a party of three, Messrs Bell, Maclay, and Naismith, on 12th July 1898,\* when a way was forced up the slabs of the lower end, thus making what has been called the

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\* *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. V., p. 128.



CARN DEARG OF NEVIS.

- A.—Summit of Carn Dearg.
- B.—North Buttress.
- C.—Castle.
- A A.—Staircase Climb, 12th July 1898.
- a a.—Variation, 6th July 1903.
- B A.—Cousins' Buttress, 11th June 1904.
- B B A.—North Buttress Climb, 28th September 1908.
- C C.—Castle Climb, Winter, April 1896. Summer, 11th Sept. 1898.



*W. Inglis Clark.*

CARN DEARG OF NEVIS.

*June 1902.*



“Staircase” climb of Carn Dearg. This is one of the stiffer climbs of Nevis, and in ice practically impossible.

Passing upwards along the wall, from the Staircase climb, towards the foot of the South Castle Gully, a distinct buttress will be observed, clearly defined by two widish, shallow gullies or water slides. These in their lower portions are considerably ice-worn by the numerous avalanches which pour down them in spring.

This buttress I may be perhaps allowed to call “The Cousins’ Buttress.” It was ascended for the first, and only time hitherto, by Messrs C. and H. Walker of Dundee, on 11th June 1904. It is somewhat shortly and modestly described by a note in the *Journal*.\*

Without an illustration it is rather difficult to follow the Walkers’ route, and I must confess that I had but a vague idea of the exact location of the climb, until comparing notes with H. Walker after our party’s return from the expedition of September 1908. Above this, again, is a fine-looking buttress with a long, steep, black gully or chimney, well shown on the accompanying photograph, cutting deeply into it on the left looking up. To the right of this chimney is an arête, which on *its* right terminates near the top in an enormous smooth slab. This buttress I propose to call the North Buttress of Carn Dearg. It was ascended by the route shown on the dotted outline on 28th September 1908.

Macrobert had arranged to take a party to Fort William this autumn, partly for climbing purposes, but also for the purpose of testing the resisting power to “all Skyey influences” of a new patent tent of his own design and construction.

His party consisted of four; these were divided into two bodies, the advance guard, himself and E. Thomson (non-member), whose “vile bodies” were to be the subject of the tent experiment. The other two, W. G. M’Allister and Arthur (non-member), are “Terrier” officers, and having already had a fair experience of tent life with “back to the land” conditions this summer, preferred the drier and

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\* *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., p. 179.

softer quarters of the Alexandra Hotel. There I found them on my arrival from Edinburgh on the evening of the 26th September.

The united party had that day climbed the Tower Ridge, had a pleasant day and an enjoyable climb.

Next morning we three got off in good time, and joining Macrobert in the corrie, set off for the Observatory Ridge, Thomson preferring a stroll up the screes of Carn Dearg, whence he had a fine view of the Ben.

Roped in two parties, Macrobert led us, at a rattling pace, up this pleasantly varied and interesting climb in 2 hours 40 minutes, and we returned by No. 4 Gully, to find that Thomson, thoughtful man, had put the kettle on, and "we all had tea." I remember, years ago, a fierce discussion arising as to the best way of getting to or from the climbs in the valley of the Mhuilinn. Some of the younger and more active members of the Club maintained that the best route was that over the cut on the east side of Meall an t' Suidhe. The older and more sedate made out that the advantage of the Nevis path, on the west side, far outweighed any air line or crow-riding directness belonging to the other. Still a third route came in for discussion, that which rounds Meall an t' Suidhe completely on the east, and slopes up more gradually, over rather rough ground, to the river bank, a considerable distance below the beginning of the cliffs. I was of the number of those who maintained that, for the upward journey at all events, the path undoubtedly paid best. I was prepared to admit that there might perhaps be some minutes' saving of time on either of the other two routes on the downward trip. I give accordingly our times on this night and the following. Not as records, by any means, but for purposes of comparison. On the 27th M'Allister, Arthur, and I, in light marching order, went from the foot of the Tower Ridge, *via* the cut in Meall an t' Suidhe, in 95 minutes. The following evening the whole party, heavily loaded with tent, &c., took the east side of the Meall, and gained the Alexandra in 100 minutes.

The 28th was our last day; we were bound to catch the 5.5 at Fort William for the south, I had promised

a new climb, and we had arranged that it should be sought for on the North Buttress of Carn Dearg. We therefore had settled that Arthur and I should meet Macrobert in the Hanging Corrie of Carn Dearg as soon after nine as possible, the other two members otherwise occupying themselves as they preferred.

From the deer fence, reached in something under two hours, the Alexandra party only descended a little way. We then tried to cut across the slabs of the lower part of the Castle Ridge. It is doubtful if this route pays, as a short distance before coming to the North Castle Gully, the tempting ledge that leads across the face is cut by an impassable waterfall chimney, and one must either retreat, or, as we preferred, climb the slabs of the Castle Ridge till above the obstacle. (This lower part of the Castle Ridge is not usually climbed; most parties ascend the North Castle Gully till almost level with the lowest rocks of the Castle.)

As we crossed these slabs to the screes below the Castle, behold the accurately timekeeping third man, who had risen with the lark ("The lark now leaves his watery nest"). We, of course, had beaten the early rising bird hopelessly.

We all forgathered at the top of the screes, and about level with the foot of the Castle rocks.

Directly above us rose, at a very considerable angle, a massive and well-defined buttress. This at the time we thought might possibly be the Walkers' but, as explained at the beginning of this article, it is entirely separate. It is cut off from the Walkers' buttress by the upper or farthest west of the two water-slides or avalanche gullies, before referred to. After some refreshment, we made a direct attack on the buttress, but the rocks were very greasy, a fine rain now falling, as well as steep.

The outward sloping ledges were covered with very slightly adherent sheets of moss, and we did not press the frontal assault. We then took to the water-slide, cutting off the buttress on our left. Getting into this was by no means easy, as it was greasy and slabby. The remarkable absence of holds is due, I think, to the friction of the spring avalanches.

Once in, however, the holds soon improved, and we



rapidly mounted about 100 feet. At this height the gully divides; the right runs up in a deep chimney cutting into the wall of our buttress.

We therefore took to this, getting into the chimney over a chock-stone of doubtful stability. We presently came to a very steep pitch, where the rocks were decidedly worn and slabby. In the opinion of the leader this is the least satisfactory part of the climb, at any rate with wet rocks.

In a rope's length (80 feet) or so, the holds improve, and the chimney now cuts very deeply into a black cave, gripping between its jaws a far-out chock-stone. The direct route above this narrowing down to a passageless crack, the leader now attacked the wall on the right. Superb holds allowed of this, slightly overhanging as it was, to be conquered with surprising ease, and the party all collected on the top of the chock-stone. The second man got a good stand, while the leader contoured some rather nasty slabs, and, by a somewhat similar wall to the last, got into another narrow gully, farther to right. This gully, or chimney, is that visible from the foot of the buttress, as a narrow deep crack, cleaving the arête, and may be climbable from the foot.

The angle now became less, and the actual arête easily gained, by ascending the gully wall on the right. Two cairns were built here, one on leaving the gully, and one on the arête of the buttress.

The arête, of easy angle at first, soon narrowed and steepened, and in places is extremely rotten. Great care was necessary, and many large blocks thrown down by last man. One block, over half a ton in weight, as it struck the rock, about 100 feet down, caused a perceptible tremor to shake the whole of the great buttress. As it ascended, the arête became ever steeper and narrower, and at length actually overhanging, and not more than a few feet in thickness. On the right it presented a smooth slab, rushing down almost vertically, "straight as a beggar can spit"—as MacRobert, quoting Kipling, said—for several hundred feet. On the left, a steep drop into a black chimney. There was one small foothold on the slab side

of the arête, and another, very high and badly sloping, for the left foot on the chimney side, but the handholds at first appeared non-existent. The other two men were, however, carefully belayed to blocks lower down, and, with an effort, the *mauvais pas* was passed, and the leader gained security astride a knife-edge on the top of the slab. The others then followed. The arête, now level, then led across to the summit of the buttress, 3 hours and 10 minutes from the foot. The height of this steep part is about 700 feet.

Here the ropes were taken off, and a large cairn built.

As the mist was dense, it was judged quicker to scramble from here over the top of Carn Dearg, and return to the tent *via* No. 4 Gully. This gully was now quite bare of snow, but the screes are moderate!—in parts. A run down this “Hell over Leather” gully as it might well be called, landed us at the tent door, in 15 minutes from the plateau.

*Note on Snow Conditions.*—I have never seen the Nevis corries carry so little snow as on the date, 28th September 1908. It might almost be said that the snow ranked with “Snakes in Iceland,” but there were still, however, a few patches, in the Corrie na Ciste below the “Comb,” and in the upper corrie, along the foot of the north-east buttress. In the great Observatory Gully, not a flake of snow or crystal of ice was left, and the pitch at the summit looked worse without ice than with it. There was no snow anywhere near No. 4 Gully, where, with the Rev. A. E. Robertson, I recollect getting 700 feet of standing glissade in July 1903.

It would be interesting to know if any one was in the corries about the end of the first week in October, after these extraordinary hot days and nights we had this year at that late period. To me, Nevis is much more familiar in snow and ice conditions, and I must confess to a feeling of a something wanting, a gauntness and raggedness of the great crags. There is a flowing grace of line lent to their beauty by the far-flung shining drapery of the snow-fields, that enhances, to my mind, the pleasure of a visit to the north-east face of Ben Nevis in the early summer.

## THE BEN ALDER GROUP.

BY WILLIAM GARDEN.

A CASUAL glance at the Ordnance Sheet will reveal quite a cluster of almost strange "Munros" lying to the north of the more well-known Ben Alder, which, with Ben Alder itself, divides the almost parallel valleys in which Lochs Ericht and Laggan lie embedded. Of some of these "Munros" but little is known, and there is little to know, but of others, and of the massive Ben Alder, a few words may not be inappropriate.

Mr J. A. Parker and I found ourselves at Dalwhinnie on the evening of Saturday, 18th July last. We had learned a lesson since we left Aberdeen that afternoon, a lesson which the fickle Scotch climate will early instil into the most incredulous pupil—never despair of the weather. A barometer that had been falling, a cold north-east wind, and a lashing rain are not usually the forerunners of perfect weather, but so it was in our case. Nothing daunted by all these evil omens we left Aberdeen, and scarcely had we reached Forfar ere the atmospheric disturbance disappeared, and we were launched into sunshine and warmth. The margin of the depression, however, was reached again as we travelled northward from Perth, and at Dalnaspidal and Dalwhinnie the mist hung low and cold, enshrouding hill and valley in its clammy mantle.

Sleepy Dalwhinnie appears to be waking at last to find how long and well it has slept! Since first I knew it two hotels, a school and schoolhouse, a shop, an occasional private house, and—last but not least—a distillery have arisen!

A hurried observation, taken about 5 A.M. on Sunday, showed us that the shroud of the previous evening still enveloped the foot-hills; but, when we started—some two hours later—the grey pall became less dense, and, through its gauzy texture, the deep azure beyond had already begun to penetrate.

As we neared Loch Ericht the sun had begun to dispel

the all-surrounding garment of white, and, dragging it up the hill sides, revealed a wealth of mountain form, of many a distant sunlit corrie, deep blue, save where bespangled with the snow wreath still slow to disappear. The nearer hills, too, had all their thousand shades of russet brown and purple reflected in the silver mirror of the loch, and far away in the western horizon the delicate blue form of Beinn Pharlagain raised himself as if to touch the still paler blue of the vault above him, while at our feet grew an endless variety of grasses, their graceful stems bowed down as if self-conscious of the weight of the rain-drops that encircled them as with priceless jewels. The crisp morning air is loaded with the perfume of the moor, and we stand enthralled at the lonely majesty of the scene. And yet, the hand of man is here, for there the blue column drowsily floats upward from yonder cottar's shieling to join the rising mists, and here lies the cobble at her mooring, scarce lapped by the ripple of the peaceful loch. Naught is discordant in the gorgeous spectacle. Silence reigns, save the muffled gurgle of the stream, as it winds its laborious way through the moorland to join the loch.

Are there some—Scotchmen too—who yearn for more distant scenes, for great deeds to be done on the everlasting snows, for the withal harsh Alpine peak that seems to cut with its jagged ridge the very life-arteries of the heavens? Let such consider lest, in their anxiety for these remoter parts, they forget the existence of scenes such as their native country alone can provide. Will they find in the Alps, from their utmost ends, a scene such as we now behold? Will the inland seas of Norway, with their rugged sides, or the emerald lake of Canada, reflecting its ice-bound crag, afford them more satisfaction, or finer conception of all that is finest in the inanimate of this fair world? I do not hesitate to contradict them. Indeed, I will add that they may find out these stores of pleasure when the sear and yellow leaf rudely precludes them from being partakers of those treasures of scenery of which they have been but the all too ungrateful heirs.

The road from Dalwhinnie to Loch Ericht Lodge, as roads go, is distinctly bad, at least at present, for, though

remetalled recently, they seem to have stopped short there, and nothing has been done to blind the metal. Consequently cycling, or motoring at any rate, is out of the question, and even the pedestrian can ill afford to take his eye off his feet, save to catch an occasional glimpse of the loch, where here and there the young plantation has been expressly cut down for that purpose. But the immediate surroundings absorb the attention, the bright green spruces, set in a background of darker firs, give off their exhilarating fragrance, and the delicate hare-bell by the roadside ventures to emulate in form and stateliness the more gaudy and conspicuous foxglove, as they raise their heads side by side; and the blending of the emerald bracken and the glowing bell-heather add a charm even to the toilsome road.

Presently we leave the lochside, and, gently rising, the road leads to the right behind Loch Ericht Lodge, and soon we find ourselves on the shimmering moor, with the dancing waters of Loch Pattack ahead of us, and the hills, from Beinn Bheoil on the left to Mullah Coire an Iubhair on the right, all now in full view. It should be carefully noted that, after following the road for about a mile from the point where it branches from the lodge approach-road, and just before a large road-gate is reached, an indifferent bridle-path will be found branching to the left. This path is the proper one to take. If the main road through the gate be followed, it will be found to lead too far east, and right up to the shores of Loch Pattack, which is a much more roundabout route. The bridle-path, on the other hand, will be found to gradually ease away to the left or west, keeping well to the south of Loch Pattack, and so saving almost a mile. As we follow up the Culrea Burn, the view of Ben Alder, with the still low eastern sun cutting into and eating out the configuration of its eastern corries, is particularly striking. The photograph, facing this page, will give but a very inadequate idea of what we saw. Viewed from the east, Ben Alder forms a great rampart of high-level plateau, which is the limit of the western prospect, then following round to the north comes the great dip of the Bealach Dubh between Ben Alder and



19th July 1905.

HEN ALDER AND LANCET EDGE.

*W. Garden.*



the lower slopes of the Geal Charn, while, still more to the right, and particularly conspicuous above the gentle slope of Carn Dearg, rises the cone-shaped Lancet Edge, which is really a spur of the Geal Charn itself. But of the east face of Ben Alder more anon.

Meantime we cross the Culrea Burn and follow it closely by a path upon its true left, passing its junction with the stream which flows out of Loch a Bhealaich Beithe, and gradually ascending we reach a small stalker's wooden shelter, which has just been erected at the pathside, at the base of the eastern ridge of the Lancet Edge. Here we had early lunch by the burn. The path leads on beyond this point through the narrow pass between the Lancet Edge and the northern slopes of Ben Alder, and, crossing the pass at the top of the Bealach Dubh, leads down the other side towards Loch Ossian, and then slowly rising again and turning rapidly to the left it follows down the strath between Ben Alder and Beinn Chumhann to Ben Alder Lodge. Throughout the path is an excellent one, and saves what would otherwise be very heavy moorland walking, but we bid it a temporary farewell at the shelter, and make direct for the ridge of the Lancet Edge. The slope begins comparatively gently over short grass and large boulders, which, higher up, give place to smaller stones and schistose out-crops. The ascent steepens, and the saddle narrows to a rocky ridge, the nature of which may be seen from the photograph facing page 194. On the right, we look down on the dark waters of Loch-an-Sgoir, a peaty tarn nestling on the shoulder of the Geal Charn, and fed by the snow patches seen to the right of the photograph. On the left, our eyes light on the deep valley and the path which we have just left. Over that valley the dark northern corries of Ben Alder throw their short dark shadows, and over the plateau of Alder just appears the symmetrical cone of Schiehallion. Farther to the left rise green Ben Vrackie and the Glas Maol. Behind us, to the east, spread the expansive moors round Loch Patack and the eastern half of Loch Ericht, and far beyond Ericht again stretch the mighty masses of the Braeriach-Cairn Toul plateau, while northwards the more



pastoral Monadhliadths, that guard the Spey valley, raise their wavy heads. In all directions hills rise beyond hills. As we near the summit the ridge becomes almost a typical Skye one, and constantly contracts so that a foot may be placed on either side. Under winter conditions the climb would undoubtedly afford the most sporting attractions, and an unroped party can at no time afford to be careless. The summit reached (on which there appears no cairn), the ridge immediately broadens again on the left, while upon the right the rocks still continue, and go to form the rampart, which describes a semicircle on the west of Loch-an-Sgoir. Continuing in a westerly direction we traverse a plateau for half a mile or so, and then ascend gradually the final Geal Charn slope. The summit, which we reached about 12.30, is one of the most singular I have seen. It consists of a vast but shallow depression many acres in extent, in which a huge snow-field evidently deposits itself annually, and a good part of which even now remained. The melting snows apparently irrigate the surrounding ground for a great distance in all directions, with the result that there are the most verdant stretches of pasture all over the summit, unbroken by a single stone, affording the most excellent walking, and supplying abundant feeding-ground for the many deer, which fled before us on every side. From the summit of the Geal Charn the view is at once both expansive and interesting. In addition to what one sees from the lower summit of the Lancet Edge, the view to the north, west, and south is now unbroken. The widespread Craig Meaghaidh raises his shapeless slopes beyond Loch Laggan, only to lose them again in a hopeless maze of lesser mountains. Farther afield, to the north-west, rise innumerable "three thousanders" in western Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, some of them scarce distinguishable from the leaden bank of cloud that appears to be passing over the distant Atlantic far behind them. To the west rise the Easains, slope upon slope, till they seem to culminate in the cloud-swept crest of mighty Nevis himself; and again, to his left, rises the shapely Binnein Mor, while farther to the left, beyond the dreary water-patched Moor of Rannoch, stand out in bold relief the



*10th July 1908.*

LANCET EDGE.

*W. Garden.*



grim Buchailles, guarding jealously the MacDonalds' glen. For the moment they seem to suppress and rudely extinguish the more distant heights of Bidean, Aonach Eagach, and the Pap of Coe. The familiar forms of Clachlet and Bens Starav, Lui, More, and Lawers also stand before us, and we are reminded of Principal Shairp's descriptive lines :—

“ Buchaille Etive's furrowed visage  
To Schiehallion looked sublime,  
O'er a wide and wasted desert  
Old and unreclaimed as time.

“ Mountain-girdled, there Bendoran  
To Schiehallion calls aloud,  
Beckons he to lone Ben Alder,  
He to Nevis, crowned with cloud.”\*

From the summit of the Geal Charn the western ridge narrows somewhat as it descends to the col, then, rising again rapidly, the summit of Aonach Beag is reached. South from Aonach Beag the ridge rapidly falls again to the col, a distance of some five hundred feet—rather more than the dip between Geal Charn and Aonach Beag—and finally ascending to about its original height again, we reach the well-defined summit-cairn of crescent-shaped Beinn Eibhinn, which is the most westerly highest point of this long chain. From the cairn the west end of Loch Ericht with its sandy shore is thrown into full view, and Nevis towers sublimely above his neighbours. The picturesque Loch Ossian and the much broken-up Lochs Laidon and Bà help to give variety to the somewhat colourless wastes of Rannoch. A feature of this view-point seems to be the marked contrast between the flat-rounded mountains of the east coast as compared with those of the rain-washed western peaks, as they now appear to us distinctly separated by the great Rannoch Moor.

Having had a substantial repast as we leisurely enjoyed the view, our attention is now turned to the descent. The route is evident—a bee-line for the col over which we see

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\* “Rannoch Moor,” by Principal Shairp. *Vide* Vol. III., p. 114; Vol. IV., p. 86.

the path left some hours ago, and from the col down the glen to Ben Alder Lodge. A very long and steep descent brings us to the Uisge Labhrach, the sources of which consist of several large and peculiarly black and peaty pools. Another climb of about six hundred feet, and we reach the col, where we strike the path, and we are soon under Mrs M'Cook's hospitable roof, where we find her holding a great reception of fishermen. Some of them told us a piteous tale of how on the previous day, having set sail in a small launch from Dalwhinnie bound on a fishing expedition, a gale had overtaken them in Alder Bay, and they had abandoned their ship; but if their "lines" had not fallen in pleasant places they themselves had apparently been more fortunate, and so we joined the happy throng. Had we, unbidden guests, been told that evening that we had to move on, which I momentarily expected, I fear Ben Alder would have still remained unclimbed, but as the evening went on, and we showed no anxiety to depart, the goodwife at last announced to us that she had arranged to put us up. How she solved the accommodation problem we ventured not to ask, but it reflected no little credit on her menage, for she stowed away in her small shieling that night no less than twelve souls all told. It would be unjust upon our part, however, if we did not record a vote of thanks to one of the anglers, who good-naturedly surrendered his bed in our favour, thereby painfully reducing the free cubic space in that of his companion!

We were perforce early astir next morning, having to catch the 3.35 P.M. for the south from Dalwhinnie. After a refreshing wash in the burn, and breakfast of glorious fresh-caught trout—a meal fit for the gods—we were off. Passing Prince Charlie's Cave—a mere collection of large boulders, among which the heather and bracken grew deep and rank—we followed up the true left of the stream behind the lodge, and shortly after 8 A.M. reached the summit-cairn of Ben Alder too early for a view, for the morning mist still hung everywhere above the three thousand line.

The summit of the Ben is a large, more or less level, plateau, sloping gently away to the west and north-west.

The north-east and south-east sides, however, present quite a different appearance. On these sides, as will be seen from the photo facing page 194, the summit plateau ends in a series of very steep, but well broken-up corries running down on the east side (left of photo) to Loch a Bhealaich Beithe, and on the north side (right of photo) to the Bealach Dubh. From an examination on this and a previous occasion, however, I should be much surprised if a way could not be forced up anywhere all round the corrie. From the photo also may be seen two well-defined buttresses, one running out to the left at a somewhat lower altitude than the summit plateau, and the other (which is seen "face-on" in the photo, and so fore-shortened) running down in steep pitches, which gradually ease off till they lose themselves in the moor. We were under the impression that there was a climb to be found on the first of these buttresses, but upon inspection finding that its descent would have been quite a simple scramble, we abandoned it, and keeping close to the edge of the north corrie, we descended some three hundred feet, when we found ourselves on the top of the second buttress. From this buttress a fine view was obtained on the left of the deep Bealach Dubh and the winding path which we had followed the previous day as far as the wooden shelter, also of Carn Dearg and the Lancet Edge, the summit of the latter appearing "side-on," more like a huge gable of slabby rock than the sharp edge we actually knew it to be. Getting well out upon the buttress and commencing the descent, we found that it consisted of schistose pitches, varying from fifteen to twenty feet in height, intercepted by comparatively narrow ridges from which innumerable rock-couloirs ran down on our left. As we descended the vegetation increased of course, and we found many of the boulders which formed the ridge deeply embedded in a luxuriant growth of crowberry. Some of the schist masses were piled on the top of each other to such an extent that, what with the vegetation and their own unstable condition they had to be negotiated with all the caution and respect which their position demanded. Anywhere on the ridge, however, these piled blocks could be "turned," either by dropping down on one side or the

other, and by degrees we reached the moorland after quite a pleasant and interesting descent. We observed many traces of glacial action as we passed huge sections of rounded schist. Upon one of these polished pedestals we found an enormous boulder, which must have weighed a few tons, but which was so finely balanced that one of us could set the Titanic block a-rocking without effort. Crossing the Culrea Burn at its junction with the Loch a Bhealach Beithe stream, we struck our path of yesterday again, and, after a broiling walk over the moor and road, we reached Dálwhinnie in time for a tub and lunch before catching our train, carrying with us delightful recollections of two perfect days spent on the Ben Alder mountains.

## MIDSUMMER DAYS IN SKYE.

BY FRANCIS GREIG.

“GOING to Skye again for your holidays?” This being the third season in succession to be spent in Glen Brittle, I had to answer the above interrogation over and over again.

The soul of Glen Brittle is its perfect liberty, where one feels free from all the trammels of the city, free to feel and do just as one likes. Only those who have experienced this liberty can appreciate how, like the return of the devout pilgrim to his Mecca, a repeated visit is made season by season.

Often during the previous winter had my comrades and I re-lived the happy summer days spent amongst the Cuillin. It may be they had not all been sunny days, but, rain or sunshine, they were days never to be forgotten, and, when reflecting upon them, a yearning for the mysterious Cuillin, of many associations away in the far Isle of Skye, would rise in one's heart, so that one resolved to go back again next June.

From much anticipation I joined my three friends, P. C. Morris, W. Boyd, and A. Gibson, at Princes Street Station for the night train to Oban. After an uneventful journey, Oban was reached next (Saturday) morning about four o'clock, and after partaking of breakfast, previously ordered at the Imperial Hotel, we joined our steamer, leaving Oban at six o'clock.

From the very start the day was magnificent, and any one who has journeyed to Skye by this route—in good weather—must know the treat we had that day.

Two of our party were making a first visit to Skye, and their eager faces when rounding Ardnamurchan to catch a first glimpse of the peaks of Skye looked as if their hopes had been set on an El Dorado. The two “old hands” were kept busy answering the many questions: “What sharp peak is that?” “Then, what is the name of that corrie again?” “However shall we remember those difficult names!” A closer acquaintance of the



Cuillin afterwards proved the best method of memorising these.

After a glorious sail, Struan was reached at 2.30 P.M., and the fisherman's lugsail, previously chartered, came alongside and took us on another stage of our journey.

An ideal breeze, blowing in the right direction, sent us skimming along up Loch Harport to Carbost, which we reached about four o'clock. The view of the Cuillin from this direction has often been admired, and that afternoon, from our little lugsail, the whole range, starting with the pinnacled Sgurr nan Gillean right along to Banachdich, looked very imposing.

The nine-mile walk over the hill to Glen Brittle, with heavy rucksacks on our backs, was the least enjoyable stage of the journey. Just over the summit of the road we met our friends, S. Cumming and T. Crombie, who had been spending a few days down the glen. Crombie's time was up, and he was making tracks for home *via* Sligachan. Sad at heart was he at meeting us coming to partake of the joys "not half of which had been told," he said, and on which perforce his back was turned. Under the shadows of Coire na Creiche farewells were said, and we watched him go on his journey alone towards the Bealach a Mhaim.

Cumming, who still had several days, formed the fifth of our party, and glad we were of his assistance with the rucksacks, the one containing our tent receiving his special consideration.

The Campbells' house was reached about eight, and after a welcome and repast equal to former times, our attention was turned to pitching our tent. The tent was a home-made one, 5 feet high, 9 feet long, and 8 feet wide, of the Mummery type, the two end poles, each in two sections, made of bamboo. For ground sheets we used our water-proofs, and our camping equipment was made complete with a "Primus" oil stove. Blankets were got at the house, and we wanted for nothing. A good site was obtained on a knoll across the burn which flows in front of the house.

The sixth member of our party, H. C. Boyd, from Inverness, turned up about 10.30 P.M., and we were a merry



*June 1908.*

CHIOCH A' SGUMAIN.

*S. F. M. Cumming.*



crew that night in the little room as we sat discussing plans for the following days. Three slept in the house and three in the tent, the latter having the best of it, as the night was warm.

Sunday began what proved to be a fortnight of glorious sunny weather, with only a day and a half of rain. We had read great things of the Chioch on Sgumain, and, as the weather and conditions were perfect, tracks were made across the moor for the foot of the Sgumain Stone Shoot. The foot of the Chioch was soon reached, and the party divided, three taking it by the Chioch gully, and the other three by the "Slab." Those who took the gully continued up easy ground until the gully forked. As the direct continuation of the gully promised little sport as viewed from below, the left-hand fork was taken, and soon led us through a narrow tunnel (something similar to that at the beginning of the Church Door Buttress of Bidean). The other end took us out on a broken-up broad ledge which runs right across the foot of the famous "Slab." A little above us we descried the other three in the process of climbing the "Slab." From this point we took a straight route for the top of the Chioch, on to the face of which we had traversed.

The way now lay over easy though steep slabs to another but smaller ledge. We had worked round a bit to the right overlooking the Chioch gully, and we tried to force a steep wall of rock that seemed to lead to somewhere. Our efforts, however, were unsuccessful, but in looking about we discovered to our left at the end of the ledge, a steep slab leading down about 20 feet. Its face was scarred with tacket marks, and the question was, had those marks been made in ascending to the point we had left or in descending? We concluded, from the long sweep the scratches took, that they had been made in descending, and a sore business it was getting down that steep slab of the roughest gabbro, the only holds for the hands (there were none for the feet) being inside a narrow vertical crack. We were now at the foot of a short chimney up which we ascended about 15 feet. A hand traverse had to be made out on the left to a flake of gabbro that jutted out and gave a fine hitch. The face of the Chioch now rose in a

forbidding way above us, and after viewing the situation for a little the leader thought a retreat would require to be made. However, as we seemed to be very near the top of the Chioch a final effort was made. After getting into a standing position, his feet on the top of the flake of gabbro, the leader wormed his way upwards over slabs set at a steep angle, which would have been almost impossible on rock other than gabbro. What seemed the easiest method was to sit straddle legs over a kind of arête and climb up this, like climbing along the roof of a house standing on its gable. The 20 or 30 feet of this taxed our energies severely, and the position being tremendously exposed, offered some minutes the most exciting and exhilarating that one could wish for. A slightly overhanging block at the top required great care, and after surmounting this, breathing space was got above, and the other two brought safely up.

In wet weather this portion of the climb would be extremely difficult, as one has to rely so much on friction grips. If the lower part of the direct ascent of the Chioch is after this order, then well does it deserve the classification of "exceptionally severe." Lunch was taken here, and about 30 feet of easy ground brought us out unexpectedly at the cairn.

Our situation here was most refreshing. We were on the top of the Chioch, seemingly suspended in mid-air, with the enormous Slab beneath, sloping down in a noble sweep. It looked impossible to get up that Slab, and we were quite surprised to pick out our three friends working their way up a crack at its upper corner to the highest part of the broad ledge that runs down to the Chioch from the cliff side. After waiting until our photographer had taken them, they were soon beside us at the cairn, where we compared notes. The only real difficulty they had experienced was at this crack at the top, the Slab itself being easy.

Numerous photographs were taken, and after a second lunch we continued off the Chioch, up the knife-edge and along the broad ledge that tops the Slab. This is a most wonderful place, full of interest but not difficult. The eastern gully was soon reached and was quite simple all



June 1908.

SGUR ALASDAIR AND SRON NA CICHE.

A. Gibson, Esq.



the way to the summit of the cliffs, except for one little pitch (not far from the end of the ledge) that demanded a long pull.

A descent was made by two of the party down the Sgumain Stone Shoot, while the others went on to bag Sgumain and Alasdair. The *mauvais pas* on the ridge between the two summits proved quite stiff after our efforts on the Chioch. A nerve-straining descent was made down the Great Stone Shoot, during which we had the novel experience of starting an avalanche of stones. Home was reached at 10 P.M.

That night a storm of wind and rain came down, and next morning the rain was still falling heavily. We did not grumble, as a rest was welcome, and we passed the time in the tent playing bridge and chess. At two o'clock the weather cleared, and the rest of the day was spent fishing the burns.

Tuesday was a fine sunny day, but mist was down on the summits. Sgurr Dearg by way of the Window Tower Buttress was the day's programme. A start was made from the house at the comfortable hour of 11.30 A.M., our usual time of departure, and from this will be gathered the fact that early rising was not one of our strong points. Toiling up the lower slopes of the Cuillin with a broiling sun overhead is a weary business, and right glad were we to get to the foot of our climb.

The Window Tower route up Sgurr Dearg, although it takes a little more time than by the usual way, past the Lochan, is by far the more interesting. One gets a real climb *en route* for the dainty morsel, "The Inaccessible," at the summit. We ascended in two parties, no difficulty being met with all the way, except in making a new variation at the start, up a chimney somewhat to the right of the ordinary route.

Rapid progress was made along the summit ridge, shrouded in cold wet mist, until the Pinnacle was reached. Here we sheltered for a while from the elements. On the uncertain sloping ground here we sat shivering, and eating icy sandwiches. A hurried ascent of the Pinnacle was necessary to restore circulation. Two came up the long



side, the remainder choosing the short sporting side, and, after meeting on the top, all descended by the short side. A quick return was made to more cheerful surroundings, and home was reached at eight o'clock.

Wednesday was another sunny day, and eleven o'clock saw us toiling up the slopes again, this time for the "Gap," *via* the Sgumain Stone Shoot. The temptation for a swim in the cool waters of Loch an' Fhir-bhallaich could not be resisted. Whilst floundering about like so many water nymphs, a large party headed by Rev. A. E. Robertson bound for the "Inaccessible," suddenly hove in sight about 500 feet above. As distance is said to lend enchantment to the view, we were in no hurry to stop their enjoyment or ours.

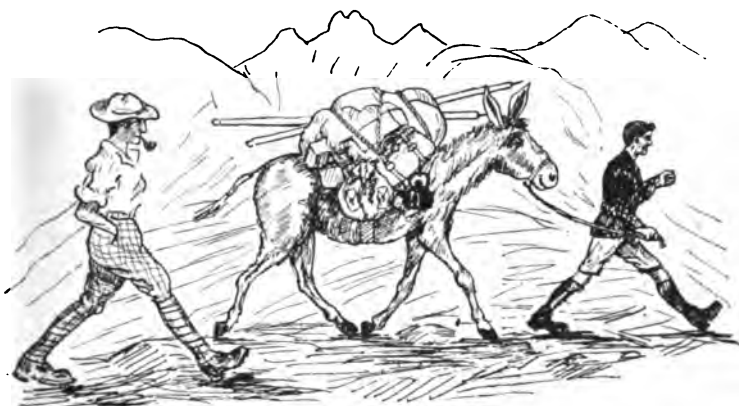
Again we were plagued with mist, which seemed to come from nowhere, and would not blow away. No time was wasted in getting over the Bealach down to Coir' a' Ghrunnda, where we lunched by the side of the stream flowing into the Lochan. On the left side of this stream (looking up) is a large boulder, offering quite an interesting little climb, and on the flat top of it we scratched an arrow pointing to the lowest part of the ridge between Tearlach and Sgurr Dubh. As many parties have failed to find the Gap from this point in mist, this will be found helpful, the boulder itself being easily located, as it is near the Lochan. The "Gap" was safely negotiated, but scarcely enjoyed, as it is not the best of places with wet mist driving past before a strong cold wind. Continuing to the summit of Tearlach, a hasty retreat was made down the Great Stone Shoot, and home reached at seven o'clock.

Thursday was a depressing day of drizzling rain, with mist down to the sea, but we were told this was a sign of settled weather.

Friday was a perfect day, and operations for a camp in Coire na Creiche were set agoing. Tent was struck and packed, blankets laid out, loaves and provisions piled up, and when all the necessaries were grouped together a ponderous and weighty pile they made. Man was never made to carry a load like this, and the question arose, "What about a beast?" On inquiries, we discovered the

only available beast of burden to be an ass, and that he was the property of the shepherd two miles up the glen. "You have just to say he is needed, and he is yours, whatever." Right enough, he was ours for the asking, and when two of our friends brought him up with an Alpine rope round his neck, a more docile, obedient-looking animal could hardly be imagined. Two of the blankets came in handy by containing all the odds and ends, and when tied together were balanced across donkey's back, one on either side.

H. C. Boyd now having to return to Inverness by Portree, Cumming and W. Boyd accompanied him over the tops of Mhadaidh down to Coire na Creiche, where later



"The Ass in Mountaineering"

they joined the others at the tent. Our camping ground was on the banks of the Allt Coir' a' Mhadaidh, just before it joins the Allt a' Mhaim, and above a wonderful gorge. This gorge is well worth a visit, the size and depth of the pot-holes worn in the rock being remarkable. In the bed of the stream is a natural bridge formed by the wall dividing two of the pot-holes having become worn away, the top only remaining.

To return to the donkey, the three who were left to take charge of him had a severe task. Like most of his kind he proved obstinate. All went well till he got opposite his home, where he insisted in attempting to pull his leader

across the river. The leader tried coaxing him, and telling him he had not far to go, and that his load was not so heavy as it looked. But he would not be coaxed, and had to be pulled by the neck. As he would not budge an inch, there was danger of his head being pulled off, but the leader had to give this up, as ominous sounds came now and again from his throat. At the rear the other two found the ends of the tent poles effectual in getting him started, and once on the move we kept him at it. To show his contempt for us, he would grab, in passing, mouthfuls of grass, which he kept munching all the time; and another funny thing he did was to push his upper lip along the surface of the road, evidently to evoke our sympathy. After a rest at the wooden bridge, we got him across the river to the moor, where he started to sink up to the knees. We helped him to bear his load, but the blankets worked loose, and he began tramping them, and ere long the whole load toppled over and lay scattered across the moor. We had had enough donkey by now, and in relays we carried everything ourselves the remaining mile or so. At night we saw the beast, as we thought, securely tethered to a large stone, but this was the last we saw of him. Next morning there was no sign of him; he had broken loose and gone home with one of our 60-foot ropes trailing from his neck!

Saturday was another gorgeous sunny day, and Boyd and Gibson left for a day over the Castles to the Bhasteir, and Cumming, Morris, and the writer set off for the "Slanting Gully" of Mhadaidh. It was one of those oppressively hot enervating days with no life in the air, and when the foot of the gully was reached no one felt inclined for a difficult climb. However, once in the cool of the chimney, for this it really is, our "form" improved. Of this magnificent climb I shall not attempt to supplement what has been so well and faithfully described by an abler pen than mine. Without doubt this is one of the best climbs to be had anywhere, presenting as it does difficult pitches all the way up, which call forth all the skill and strength at one's disposal. At the "Cracks Pitch," the beginning of the second half of the climb, a variation was made to the right, from the cave



*June 1908.*

**OUR CAMP IN COIRE NA CREICHE.**

*A. Gibson, Esq.*



below the difficult overhanging pitch of the left hand crack. We tried to force this pitch, but our leader thought it too risky to jump from a shaky foothold to catch a possible handhold in a mossy chimney. By traversing out to the right and up over steep rocks, access was got to the main gully after negotiating a very awkward corner, round which it was necessary to swing the body at arm's length into a worn-out trap dyke. The large sloping ledge near the top of the climb, that brings one right out on the face of the cliff, was greatly relished, and when we came out near the cairn after having been five hours in the gully we were unanimous in declaring it a most worthy climb.

By the time the second summit of Mhadaidh was reached, the long climb and oppressive atmosphere began to tell on all of us. As we wearily crossed from one top to the other we would have fain spent the rest of the day lying on our backs luxuriating on the stretches of the delightfully soft moss which is so characteristic of the Skye tops. Descending by the Bealach na Glaic Moire, we reached the tent at 9 P.M.

A right royal feast of cold tongue, pears, and cocoa was soon spread out on the grass. If a searcher after happiness and contentment had happened to pass us on his quest at this moment, verily would he have stopped and gone no farther. Perfect happiness was our lot, as we sat outside the tent, satisfied at having accomplished a difficult climb, tired, and our night's rest at hand, hungry, and plenty before us to satisfy the inner man. And what a gorgeous panorama upon which to feast the eyes! All Coire na Creiche was glowing red with the rays of the setting sun. One wondered why the Cuillin were called "black," but look again at the towering cliffs, and the colour had deepened until shade by shade the cliffs had turned a rich purple, but as the last rays tipped the highest top of Mhadaidh and then disappeared, a transformation took place, for now the rocks were an intense black.

Remains of our supper were left out for the two who had not yet made an appearance, then after awaking the echoes of the corrie with our halloos and getting no response, we retired inside the tent at 11.30 P.M. Some

anxious hours were spent until Boyd and Gibson returned at two o'clock next morning. Being new to this part of the ridge, they had spent some time in getting off the top of An Caisteal. Much time had also been spent on the charming views, then all the ridge to the Bhasteir Tooth had been traversed, and at 10 P.M. in uncertain light they climbed the "Tooth" by Naismith's Route. From this point to the summit of the Bhasteir they had some difficulty in finding their way. After successfully reaching the summit, a descent was made to Bealach a' Bhasteir, and a traverse was made below the cliffs of the "Bhasteir" on the north side to the head of Fionn Choire, down which a return was made homewards. There had never been real darkness all the night, and it was possible to move rapidly along the tops and down the broken ground of the corrie without stumbling.

A long lie was enjoyed on Sunday morning, until the heat inside the tent, caused by a hot sun in a clear sky, drove us out one by one. The kettle was set to boil while we indulged in a swim in the pool, then to breakfast, which was to be our last meal before returning down the glen.

Our camp, thanks to the perfect weather, had been a great success, but it would require the pen of a poet to do justice to our feelings, living out there in the peaceful solitudes of that noble coire, with the music of the stream at our feet, and overhead the sharp peaks of Mhadaidh, Bidein, and Bruach na Frithe standing as our sentinels during the night.

Camp was struck at eleven o'clock, and the baggage apportioned among the five of us. A grotesque sight we made on the road down the glen, each with a blanket rolled up under his arm, a rucksack full to overflowing, a tent and poles on this man's back, a kettle or oil stove protruding at the back of some other—we might have been mistaken for gipsies.

A heavy load under a baking sun is never conducive to sweetness of temper, and when the grumbling was at its height some one said, "Look over there," and there across the river was our late friend the donkey, with his ears up, looking at us, and one would have thought laugh-

ing at us, but out of charity we all said his expression must be that of sympathy. A bathe in the pool at the little wooden bridge just made it possible to reach home.

Cumming had now to leave for Edinburgh, *via* Portree, and adieus were said and away he went, leaving another gap in our merry party. The afternoon saw us on the cliffs above the east shore of Loch Brittle. We knew of a little island below the cliffs which at this time of the year should be teeming with young gulls, and ere long a somewhat exciting descent took us down to the water's edge opposite our goal. The tide being in, it was necessary to strip and swim across the short stretch of water that separated us from the island, the top of which was gained after a steep short rock climb. Just a few of the young birds were about, most of the eggs not being yet hatched. The shallow nests held lots of eggs, and great amusement was caused by their live condition, vigorous chirps and squeaks escaping and no birds to be seen! Many of the little chicks getting anxious to see the world had cracked the shell of their eggs, and here and there the points of beaks were seen to protrude. After helping one to kick free of its fetters, we swam across to another part of the cliffs in search of known cormorants' nests. The coarse gabbro proved rather sore on our unshod feet, so that a little distance sufficed. From a small ledge on the face of the cliff two of us gave the others an exhibition of high diving into the clear green water. Two hours had we wandered about in nature's garb with perfect freedom, and the delight of it all made us very reluctant to retrace our steps and swim across to get into our clothes—those shackles of civilisation!

Monday was such a perfect day that we concluded not to waste it in climbing, so it was spent loafing and bathing.

Tuesday was another perfect day, this time too good to spoil in loafing! "Let us try a new climb somewhere," said some one. By now we were in good form, and we chose Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh. There is a fine face of cliff below the summit between the main ridge and the rib that divides Coire a Ghreadaidh in two and facing An Diallaid. We knew of nothing that had been done here, and many



climbs seemed possible. As we mounted the coire, a chimney was sighted leading out to the summit. It stopped short some little distance below and was taken up again to the left. The eye followed this down the cliff in an oblique direction, and a continuance of the chimney could be faintly traced right down to the screes in the corrie. Not until we were almost below the cliff was it ascertained that this gully or chimney really existed, and for this reason we thought a suitable name to give it would be "The Hidden Gully."

There seemed three stages in the climb in the nature of steep chimney pitches, the first one dwindling off into light grey trap rock. The eye followed this to the foot of the next chimney, the top of which seemed to be divided from the foot of the final one by a rake. Subsequently we found this to be the case.

Looking up from the foot of the gully, numerous caves divided by chock-stones could be seen all the way up. One enormous black pitch gave some doubt as to the successful passage of the gully. In two parties, one waiting below to shelter from loose stones, rapid progress was made up 100 feet or so of easy ground. Here we roped up. The next 60 feet of pitches were easy, and brought us to the large cave we had seen from below. A large chock-stone formed the roof of the cave, and the chimney at this point became very narrow. It being impossible to back up and over the chock-stone, a traverse was made out on our left to the edge of the chimney, 20 feet of which brought us over the top of the cave. The leader let out the rope over some short but sharp pitches, till he reached the black chimney which had looked so formidable from below. To our leader the pitch seemed so long and impossible, that he shouted to the man below that he did not think it worth while coming up, and to tell the other two who were following to turn back. However, after coming so far, it was considered only fair that the three of us should have a consultation of war beside the leader. The first 20 feet was a vertical mossy chimney, and one of the heavy men of our party "backed up" to a position below the chock-stone straight overhead.



*June 1908*

**SGURR A' GHREADAIDH—WEST FACE.**

*A. Gibson, Esq.*

**SHOWING HIDDEN GULLY (dotted line).**



After keeping suspended for a considerable time, with his back against one wall and his knees against the other, groping about for holds sufficient to take him over the edge, he became tired, and was advised to come down again. A lighter man was sent up, who discovered up on the right a sharp ledge for the fingers, and which proved sufficient to enable him to pull up well over the edge of the stone, his left elbow giving the necessary help to take him right over the chock-stone. The second man was brought up, who, by the way, had roped himself to the other two. The walls of the chimney now continued vertical for 40 or 50 feet, with a large stone wedged out at the very edge. Meantime an apparently firm hitch on the right of the chimney (coming up) was used to bring up the other two. This was discovered afterwards to be loose, and should be carefully avoided in the future, except for standing upon to tackle the wedge-block above. The chimney could not be forced from behind this stone, there being a large roof to the cave, so the leader "backed up" and out to the top of the stone. He then "backed up" and well out on the edge of the chimney to prevent his coming below the cap-stone, and this with a hard pull was successfully surmounted. This complete pitch, which we estimated 70 or 80 feet, was the crux of the climb, and all the way up was ideal for back and knee work, the walls being just the proper distance apart.

Rapid progress was made over very steep scree, showers of which unavoidably rattled down, until a window was reached. An easy passage was made through this, and all the party brought up.

So far, from the start of the climb, we had taken an hour and a half. While waiting in the cave below, the others had some exciting fun watching the stones brought down by the leader go whizzing through the air, they themselves, of course, being perfectly protected.

A little above this the end of the gully chimney was hopelessly crowned with an enormous cap-stone with a suspended stone wedged 10 feet above the floor of the gully. The leader mounted this, while the photographer got to the back of the cave and exposed a plate upon him.

An exit from the gully was found at the right, along an exposed broad ledge, upon which a cairn was built. The gully was regained after an easy scramble, but by this time we had ascended the first stage of the climb, and the chimney had disappeared. The way continued, for about 100 feet, over broken-up ground, at an easy angle, to the foot of a vertical pitch similar to those already climbed.

After this, scree continued for a bit, and while toiling up here, parched with thirst in this barren wilderness of rock and stones, we were overjoyed to discover a delightful trickle of water dropping from a bed of moss. After lunching here, we continued our way over scree to the foot of a 15-foot chimney, which was easily turned on our left. We next reached a large fallen boulder, with a passage underneath, and a window away at the back. There was no through passage, but the boulder was turned on the outside after a stiff pull. A vertical 20-foot narrow chimney now confronted us, and while the leader painfully squeezed himself sideways up this, the others found and climbed an easy way on their left.

Shortly after this the top of the second stage was reached, and a descent through a window brought us down to the scree slope or rake that ran at right angles across our gully. This last stage of the gully was rather disappointing, the pitches all being short and easy, and the bed filled with tons of loose stones, ready to move down at the slightest touch. For this reason it was necessary to climb in twos and close together. The gully brought us, after four hours' most interesting climbing, right out on the southerly summit, and it was seen to continue on the Coruisk side for some distance, but more in the shape of a weathered-out dyke.

A stone man was built where the climb emerges at the summit. After a short scramble along the ridge to the higher summit, we turned and continued along the ridge towards Thormaid, but before reaching the col, descended by a watercourse to Coire a' Ghreadaidh. Only one pitch, far down, required some care, and was easily descended by the last man using a looped rope and sliding down.

By not keeping all close together, Morris, who was on in

front, received a nasty cut on his brow from a stone dislodged by those behind. After supper the skilled hand of one of our medical friends plying an ordinary needle and gut taken from our fishing tackle, soon made him whole again.

The following day (Wednesday) was another perfect day, and was spent loafing, except that in the afternoon the wonderful Banachdich gorge was explored as far as the waterfall.

Thursday was another of those perfect days, spent mostly bathing and idling in delightful, aimless holiday fashion.

In the evening a brilliant idea struck Morris. "Why not climb Banachdich and see the sunrise?" It seemed reasonable enough, and promised something thrilling, so by 11.30 P.M. we had left the house, and an hour later saw us well up the brow of Sgurr nan Gobhar. The air was most enervating, and the first rest was required at about 12.30 A.M. How weird and strange everything seemed, no life about except the occasional eerie whirr of a snipe. As we sat listening to the distant lapping of the waves down on the shore, nature demanded her right, and sleep soon had us under her sway. We wakened feeling clammy, cold, and ill-tempered, and now it was a case of getting through with the wretched business, or rather nightmare.

The summit of Banachdich never saw a more jaded or stupid lot of climbers than we were as we struggled up one by one with scarcely a push left in us. A cold wind from the east sent us to the lee of the ridge, where we huddled together and shivered in unison waiting for the heralding forth of old Sol.

Suffice it to say that the sun did appear at 3.45 A.M. prompt over a bank of mist on the horizon, but in a very business-like and unassuming way. Why! we had seen far better sunrises from our bedroom windows in the city! Disgusted at ourselves and everything, steps were turned for home—and most of all for sleep. The only consoling feature about the whole affair was that we had accompanied Boyd partly on his way home over to Sligachan *via* Coruisk. We were in a state bordering on collapse as we

tumbled into bed at six o'clock on Friday morning. However, twelve o'clock saw us up, and after a bathe and good breakfast we felt more like ourselves again.

Our holiday was now coming to an end, and in the afternoon we were busy packing rucksacks, and at five o'clock with sad hearts we made our way up the glen over to Carbost.

It would be folly for me to try to describe the gorgeous picture of the Cuillin we had that night as we sailed down Loch Harport. A brilliant golden sunset lit up the whole range a bright red, and banks of mist creeping round the corner below Sgurr nan Gillean caught up the radiance and gradually dissolved into nothingness. It was a grand farewell look at the Cuillin, and will never be forgotten.

Our steamer picked us up at Struan at 1.30 on Saturday morning and conveyed us to Oban and then home.

Such a holiday as we had just concluded might again be equalled but never excelled. We had been fortunate enough to be away during perhaps the most settled fortnight in all the summer. The long hot summer days that we idled along the white sandy beach or spent on the hilltops will live long in our memories, and during the long winter nights be food for many a conversation. Never can be forgotten the delightfully cool light evenings, when after the heat of the day, midges and horse flies having left us at peace, we would wander along the shore, gazing upwards at the heights of Coire Laban. How peaceful and beautiful Alasdair and his neighbours looked with their nightcaps of mist, not a thick repulsive mist, but the kind that comes and goes in thin broken wisps. The sweetly perfumed air, the call of the cuckoo, the constant singing of the lark, the meadows rich in daisies and forget-me-nots, and above all, the mysterious Cuillin, all combine to make Glen Brittle a perfect little paradise. Once having tasted its joys one must go back again.



*July 1908.*

*A. Gilson, Esq.*

THE SUMMIT OF SCURR NA BANACHDICH AT 3.45 A.M.—LOOKING SOUTH.





PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

GENERAL MEETING.

THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the North British Station Hotel, Edinburgh, on the evening of Friday, 4th December 1908, with the President, Mr Gilbert Thomson, in the chair.

The Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual General Meeting were read and approved.

The HON. TREASURER, Mr Nelson, submitted his statement for the past year, showing a balance in favour of the Club of £228. 6s. 2d. The income of the Club had been £129. 10s. 10d., and the expenditure £97. 15s. 9d. (of which £26. 17s. 9d. went to the *Journal*, £17. 0s. 7d. to the Club Room, £22. 1s. 10d. to additions to Library and Lantern Slide Collection, &c., £11. 18s. to the Club Reception, the balance £19. 17s. 7d. being for sundry expenses). Besides the above account, the Treasurer submitted that of the Commutation Fund, showing that 54 members were now on the roll, and that there was a balance of £299. 7s. 10d. at its credit. The funds of the Club thus being, at 31st October 1908, £527. 14s., of which £509. 16s. 9d. is invested in 4 per cent. South Australian Government Stock. The accounts were approved.

The HON. SECRETARY, Dr Inglis Clark, reported that 16 new members had been elected to the Club, viz., Henry Alexander, jun., William Boyd, Robert A. Brown, George L. Collins, Henry C. Comber, George R. Donald, William Galbraith, John Gibson, Henry W. Hoek, Geoffrey E. Howard, John R. Levack, William H. Mc'Dougall, James B. Miller, Walter A. Reid, Henry M. D. Watson, and James R. Young, and that the membership of the Club was now 182. At the beginning of the year the membership of the Club had been 173, of whom 2 had died, 4 had resigned, and 1 retired through default.

The HON. LIBRARIAN, Mr Goggs, reported that 40 volumes had been added to the Library during the year; 60 new slides had been acquired; he also mentioned that

Mr A. W. Russell had kindly consented to look after the slides, and that application for their loan should be made to that gentleman. Both books and slides had been made more use of this year than in any previous year.

The OFFICE-BEARERS, with the exception of those retiring, were re-elected.

Mr HAROLD RÆBURN was elected Vice-President in room of Mr W. W. Naismith, whose term of office had expired.

Mr GOODEVE and Mr MORRISON were elected Members of Committee, in room of Mr Ling and Mr Munro, who retire by rotation.

It was decided to hold the New Year Meet at Killin and Inveroran, and the Easter one at Fort William and Crianlarich.

#### TWENTIETH ANNUAL DINNER.

At the close of the General Meeting the Annual Dinner was held in the same hotel, with the President, Mr Gilbert Thomson, in the chair. The members present numbered 56, and the guests 20.

The toasts were—

The King - - - - The President.

The Imperial Forces - - - The President.

*Reply*—Captain Cowan.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club - The President.

Our Guests - - - S. F. M. Cumming.

*Replies*— { Sir James Ramsay.  
                  { Dr Horne.

Mountaineering - - - F. S. Goggs.

*Reply*—H. Woolley.

#### RECEPTION.

Previous to the Meeting the Club held a Reception at 77 Queen Street, which was attended by a large gathering of members and their friends. Mr Harry Walker showed a number of the Club slides, and Dr Inglis Clark exhibited several showing the latest discoveries in colour photography.

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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*The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions. These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.*

### S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1908.

Mr EDWARD BACKHOUSE spent three weeks in the Eastern Graians in August and September.

1. Punta Lavina—traverse from the Col des Eaux Rouges to Val de Bardonney.
2. The Grivola—from Cogne.
3. Mont Herbetet—by the south ridge, descent by east ridge.
4. The Roccia Viva—from Cogne to the Piantonetto Hut.
5. The Tour du Grand St Pierre—by the west ridge, descent to the Col de Teleccio.
6. The Grivola—by the north-west ridge, descent to Valsavaranche.
7. The Petit and Grand Paradis—the former by the west face, traverse to the Col de Grand Paradis, and the Grand Paradis by the north ridge.

Lui Rey of Cogne acted as guide for the first two climbs, and as porter for the next four, with Gaspard Gérard as guide. Both are careful guides and most pleasant companions.

For the Paradis, which was climbed by a route unknown to all the party, and perhaps in part new, Josef Chabod of Valsavaranche was leading guide, and proved himself a fine mountaineer.

The weather was favourable for the greater part of the time, although wind was often troublesome on the ridges. The climbs may all be recommended, the Grivola by the north-west ridge being hard to beat for variety and continuous interest.

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Dr, Mrs, and Miss INGLIS CLARK visited the Black Forest in February for the purpose of ski-running. Nearly constant snow-storms and high winds made mountain ascents difficult, but among other expeditions were the ascents of the Seebuck, Spiesshorn, Herzogenhorn, and Blössling. In August, in company with C. INGLIS CLARK, they motored through North-east France to the Jura, crossing

the mountain ranges four times. In Switzerland nearly persistent bad weather cut short many intended mountain expeditions. The Maderaner Thal afforded the Grosse Windgälle and the Schwarzenstöckli. In the Engelberg district the Titlis was ascended in proximity to over one hundred nondescript climbers, aged seven years and upwards, the prehistoric spectacle of seventeen on a rope providing food for thought. In the Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen district all high expeditions were abortive save that of the Wetterhorn in a wild snowstorm. All the accomplished climbs were guideless, excepting the Wetterhorn.

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Mr DRUMMOND was at Zermatt early in the season and did a few peaks by the ordinary routes with his family.

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Mr S. A. GILLON was at Fjaerland from 22nd July till the beginning of August. The weather was very unsettled and beyond short excursions only one crossing of the Jostedalsbrae was carried out, viz., with Mikkel Mundal *via* Lundeskaret to Jølstervandet and back *via* Söknesand, Jostefonn, and Mundal.

A tour in the Jotunheim, "a walker's paradise," subsequently took about a week in fine weather. The route was Tyin, Eidsbugaren, Gjendeboden, Spiterstulen, Galdhøpiggen, Memuruboden, Gjendesheim, Bygdin. Magnificent weather showed the views from Galdhøpiggen and Besshö to the best advantage. Later on, Snehätta was climbed from Hjerkin— a thirteen-mile trudge, before climbing begins. Reinheim is a comfortable hut within  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours from the top. The view towards Rondane Jotunheim and the Söndmøre, Romsdal, Nordmøre Alps is magnificent. Högronden in the first-named group offers no difficulty from the north, but the weather was misty and nothing was visible from the top. At the end of August, the plateaux between Upper Saetersdal and the Telemarken-Hardanger road were crossed by the Bykle-Hovden-Bjaaen-Haukelisaeter route. There is very little snow there in August. A fine panorama is to be had from Sesnuten near Bjaeen tourist station, which is the best centre for all wanderings in that district.

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Mr T. E. GOODEVE was in the Chamonix district from 2nd July to 18th July. For the first week of his stay a thunderstorm took place every day, fortunately as a rule not till after mid-day. Notwithstanding the broken weather the following ascents were made. Traverse of Aig. des Grands Charmoz. Ascent of Aig. de Blaitière; this was done in bad condition owing to fresh snow. Traverse of Aig. du Midi ascending from the Glacier Rond and descending to Montanvert. Ascent of Aig. du Moine by the arête. Mr C. W. Walker joined Goodeve at the Plan des Aiguilles on Friday evening the 10th, and on Saturday they made the first ascent and traverse of the Aig. du

Grépon this season. The conditions were not very good in the couloir owing to ice and snow on the rocks. During the following week broken weather much interfered with climbing. Snow fell on the 13th, 14th, and 15th. They went up to the Tête Rousse cabane early on the 14th and were snow-bound till the 16th, when they started for Mont Blanc *via* Aig. du Goûter. The rocks were plastered with snow, and till the summit of the Aig. du Goûter was reached the climbing was difficult. At the Vallot cabane they had to leave the leading guide owing to a sprained knee, and went on with the other guide. The summit plateau was reached, but owing to a dense mist and driving snow the observatory was not found. The route back was found only by aid of a compass as the steps were completely obliterated by the snow. An incident of the climb was the disappearance of the guide over the cornice that overhangs the Grand Plateau, but owing to the watchfulness of Walker, who was second on the rope, he was quickly hauled up. On leaving the Vallot cabane, three porters were found wandering round in a circle calling for assistance as they could not find their way down, and again the compass speedily brought the party on the right track. Goodeve and Walker stayed at the Pierre Pointue, and the next day climbed the Aig. des Petits Charmoz, and Aig. de l'M. guideless, and descended to Montanvert, where bad weather again started that night and snow fell continuously on the mountains the next two days. On the 19th Goodeve left for England, and Walker went to Zermatt and spent a week. Owing to continued bad weather he was not able to do any climbing there.

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Mr N. B. GUNN writes: "The Pigne d'Arolla was my only ascent this year, and I fear it can hardly be called a 'peak.'"

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Messrs W. N. LING and H. RAEBURN had their share of the bad weather too commonly experienced in the Alps in 1908. Their first week, in the Zermatt district, where they arrived on 27th July, was the only time when the weather was at all reliable. After an off-day up the Gornergrat—by rail—they, in company of Messrs W. Brigg and Eric Greenwood, went to the Trift for the Rothhorn. A snow-storm that night caused a day's delay, but on the 30th the four crossed the Rothhorn to Mountet, in under ten hours' going time. Messrs Brigg and Greenwood then went on by themselves over the Col du Grand Cornier, and Messrs Ling and Raeburn devoted a morning to a reconnaissance of the Dent Blanche and a traverse of the Roc Noir. On 2nd August they left Mountet (hotel newly opened), at 1.10 A.M., and traversed the Dent Blanche by the Viereselgrat (east ridge). There is a great deal of rock-climbing, and some cutting in ice, on the lower part of the ridge, and the last half-mile is a narrow arête, at this date crowned by a very sharp, unstable, and double-twisted cornice,

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... of an almost fatal horse accident  
... the Alps last year, had, on  
... matters quietly this year.  
... a good course of some sickness and glacier parties he essayed  
... the Furggen ridge; becoming

emboldened, he, with Mrs Nettleton, tackled the Nord end of Monte Rosa on an appallingly cold day, and wound up by traversing the the Wellenkuppe and the Ober Gabelhorn, both in one day !

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Messrs J. A. PARKER and GILBERT THOMSON spent the early part of September among the Italian Alps, but owing to unsettled weather no very serious climbing was done. From Prarayé, where the first week was spent, the following expeditions were made :—A start for the Château des Dames, reduced by bad weather to a circuit of the Punta del Dragone by the Col du Petit Glacier Bellazà and the Col de Valcournera ; the Lac Mort and Punta Gerlach in an “ off ”-day of thirteen hours ; a similar off-day on the Glacier Za de Zan ; and Mont Bruké *via* the Col de Collon. For this last a local man was employed as porter. The new hotel at Prarayé was found to be very satisfactory. At Courmayeur, which was next visited, two out of the total of two and a half good days were devoted to Mont Dolent (with a guide and porter), the weather and the view being perfect.

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The Rev. A. E. ROBERTSON was at Zermatt for a short fortnight at the end of July and beginning of August, and climbed the Matterhorn and the Rimpfischhorn. The weather was very broken.

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Mr GEORGE SANG, with his wife, started from Innichen and wandered through by the Drei Zinnen to Schludersbach, from there round Cristallo, and through the best of the Dolomite district, avoiding the road and finishing up at Waidbruck, on the western side. He writes : “ As for peaks, our only real ascents were, first, Nuvolau, which we attempted by a weird route of my own devising, but had to beat a hasty retreat and win up by a less exciting gully near the saddle ; second, the traverse of the Fermeda Thurm, a most interesting little rock climb occupying—if one has Joseph Nogler as leader—only three and a half hours from the Regensburger Hütte and back ; and third, the traverse of Sas Rigais, also very interesting, but spoilt from the sportsman’s point of view by a silly series of wire ropes and an idiotic wooden bridge. I cherished in my breast the hope of bagging the Langkofel, but could not get a guide to attempt it so late in the season. The mountain seems to have a most villainous record, and I was assured that it is rarely climbed after the 15th of September because of the snow and falling rocks. We heard the latter pattering down in a most eerie way as we came through Langkofel Joch. The wet weather of August had made the more interesting peaks in no fit condition for the novice in Dolomite climbing. so, at the advice of the guides, we reluctantly forbore.”



Mr G. A. SOLLY was in the Central Alps for about a month in July and August. From Saas Fée he walked up the Allalinhorn, in very soft snow, and had two expeditions on the long and interesting ridge between the Sonnighorn and the Almagelhorn. On the second expedition, with Canon Sloman and Mr R. B. J. Binnie, he traversed the Augstkumen Horn and the Sonnighorn, descending the latter by the north-west ridge to a point where it is possible to get off it into the Steinthalli, and thence to the Furgthali.

With Mr Binnie he then moved to Tiefengletsch to meet Mr J. M. A. Thomson, and crossed the Alpigenlucke in thick mist. At the Goschener Alp the party was joined by Mr G. L. Collins, and crossed to Stein by the Sustenlimmi, climbing the Sustenhorn on the way.

While at Stein the weather was unsettled, but, after one or two small rock climbs, the Steinlemmi was crossed to the Windegg hut, the rocks south of that pass being climbed to a point on which there is a cairn.

On the next day the party returned by the Zwischen Thierbergen, and ascended from the pass the snowy Vorder Thierberg. As it was still early, the party, instead of going by the familiar route to the Thierbergli, forced a passage down the crevassed icefall west of the Thierbergli, and had a most interesting descent.

Mr G. L. COLLINS moved to Rosenlauri and ascended the Dossenhorn, but bad weather prevented more serious climbing.

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THE URALS.—Mr H. Stewart spent the autumns of 1907 and 1908 in the south of the Government of Ufa, and in the course of hunting and fishing expeditions saw a good deal of the Urals in the neighbourhood. The whole length of the chain is about 2,150 versts, the breadth in the north 75 versts, in the south some 200 versts. The mean height is 450-500 m., but there are a few peaks over 1,200 m. Russian geographers divide the chain as follows:—1. The North Ural to the sources of the Pechora. The hills are bare and rich in mineral, but hardly worked yet. For most of the year the higher peaks are covered with snow. 2. The Middle Ural from the sources of the Pechora to the sources of the Ufa. A wild, sparsely inhabited country with picturesque rocky peaks. 3. The Southern Ural. There are a considerable number of high tops. Yaman Tau, 1,646 m., to the east of the town of Ufa, is the highest point in the Urals. The hills are wooded, the valleys rich in minerals, and there are some fine rivers. The chain tails off into the steppe in a still little known country. In the south of the Government of Ufa the hills are for the most part long steepish ridges covered with virgin forests. The hill country belongs largely to the Bashkirs, a Mohammedan people, and the plains are shared by Russians, Tartars, and various Finnish semi-pagan tribes.

Mr J. J. WAUGH visited the Carpathians (Hohe Tatra district) which in early September he found charming for the mountaineer whose tastes are pedestrian rather than adventurous. Climbing, interesting though not difficult; forest, lake, and rock scenery fine, though lacking the contrasts which glacier and snow-field provide.

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S.M.C. IN SKYE IN 1908.

Mr H. MACROBERT was at Sligachan from 6th to 13th June, and had almost continuous wet and stormy weather. The only fine day, 9th June, was spent in company with Messrs H. A. Millington and P. A. Thompson (both A.C.), in traversing the Bhasteir Tooth (Naismith's Route), and Am Basteir to Sgurr nan Gillean. This peak was climbed by the Jammed-Block Chimney (Vol. IX., p. 335), and descended by the west ridge. This deep-cut chimney is the left hand one of four, which all start from one scree platform. The middle two are easier, and have been climbed often, although some confusion has arisen through both being known as the Doctor's Chimney. The farthest to the right is generally conceded to be Nicolson's Chimney. On a fair afternoon Sgurr nan Gillean was climbed (with two tourists) by the snow gully between the fourth Pinnacle and the summit, and descended by the Tourist Route. On the 12th a good ridge scramble was had from the Bealach na Glaic Moire over the three tops of Bidein, An Caisteal, and Bruach na Frithe to Sgurr a' Fionn Choire. Hail, rain, and mists were plentiful on the ridges, but from the lower slopes the Outer Isles could be seen. Acting on Mr W. W. Naismith's advice, an amusing and at places difficult traverse was made up the gorge of the Glamaig Burn. This was found to be a much more sporting recreation for a wet off-day than bouldering.

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Mr H. T. MUNRO spent a few days in June with Mr and Mrs Colin Phillip at Glen Brittle. As John M'Kenzie was engaged at Camasunary and Colin Phillip was not climbing, he was unable to attempt most of the expeditions he had contemplated. On the 17th, however, guided by the Misses Prothero (Munro being the passenger) he climbed Sgurr Mhic Choinnich.

On the 20th, with Miss Cecil Prothero, he crossed all the tops of Sgurr na Banachdich, including the northern summit, now sometimes called Sgurr Thormaid, and then descended into Coire a' Ghreadaidh, and so back to Glen Brittle. The descent into the corrie is a little complicated. There is no defined, recognised route. The whole face of the corrie is climbable, but unless the easiest route is struck, a rope might be required. On this occasion a broad ledge below the summit ridge was followed until well away under the

southern cliffs of Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, where a perfectly easy way down was found.

On the 21st Munro left Sligachan late in the forenoon, and striking up nearly opposite where the track for Loch Coruisk crosses the Druimhain ridge, he climbed Blaven, descending by its easy southern shoulder into Coire Uaigneich and down the Allt na Dunaiche to the head of Loch Slapin and Broadford.

The scenery of the Dunaiche Glen in the waning light of the longest day of the year was excessively beautiful. The burn has a narrow channel. At one place a huge fallen block over a narrow gorge forms a natural bridge which, covered with a luxuriant growth of heather and ferns, with a birch tree in the centre, is most picturesque. The buttresses and gullies of Blaven, in the evening light, appeared magnificent, and would surely repay an ample exploration. This side of the mountain is comparatively little, and deserves to be better known. It is now most easily accessible, for Campbell—late of Sligachan, and now of Campbell's Hotel, Broadford—has two motor cars, and a half-hour's run from Broadford takes one to the head of Loch Slapin, almost at the east base of Blaven.

Except for a little mist just round the actual summit of Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, the weather on all three days was quite perfect and very hot. From the summit of Banachdich, St Kilda could be plainly seen.

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From 18th June to 4th July Glen Brittle suffered invasion by a large party, consisting of H. C. Boyd, F. Greig, Cumming, Dr W. Boyd, T. J. Crombie, P. C. Morris, and Dr A. Gibson. Headquarters were secured at the cottage of Ewen Campbell, shepherd, but owing to the limited accommodation everybody was not there at once. Moreover, the party had the additional shelter of a small tent manufactured by Greig. This was posted on a bluff overlooking the cottage, and answered all requirements perfectly. A heavy gale one night off the south-west provided a good test. Throughout the whole fortnight the weather was delightfully dry, but mist on the tops frequently defied photography.

The climbing programme was well varied, routes which were new to the party alternating with old favourites. The ascents included, among others, Sgurr Alasdair, Sgumain, the Choich (by the Slab, and direct by the face), Tearlach Dubh Gap, Inaccessible Pinnacle (both arêtes), Window Tower Buttress of Sgurr Dearg (three routes), traverse of Mhadaidh, Bidein Druim nan Ramh, The Castles, Slanting Gully of Mhadaidh, Naismith's Climb on the Bhasteir Tooth, and Hidden Gully of Ghreadaidh. In order that the more northerly climbs might be overtaken in comfort, the tent was moved to Corrie na Creiche for two nights. Transport of the baggage was effected with the help (perhaps it would be better to say with the kind permission) of an "old ass," a beast which proved uncommonly stubborn, remind-

ing one forcibly of our old friend Modestine. Members who may hereafter think of employing this animal are warned that it has been known to escape from camp during the night.

Needless to say, in climbs like those of the Chioch and the Slanting Gully of Mhadaidh, the party derived great benefit from a free study beforehand of the "book of our father Abraham." The Slanting Gully is, properly speaking, almost a chimney from start to finish, and is a remarkably fine climb. For those who are not inclined to tackle the left branch of the Cracks Pitch direct, it is well to remember that a way of escape may be found by traversing to the right just below the pitch. The main gully is regained at a point a little higher up.

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Mr G. B. GIBBS, with Mr Kenneth Watson (non-member), were at Sligachan from 20th to 27th June, and Rev. A. E. Robertson from the 22nd to the same date.

The former were over Gillean by the Pinnacles and on to Bhasteir, descending the Tooth by Naismith's Route.

These three, with Mrs Douie Urquhart and Miss Lowson, of the L.S.C.C., and Rory M'Kenzie, traversed Mhadaidh from Tairneilear. Miss Lowson, who had to return home next day, went with Gibbs and Watson on to Bidein. The remaining members of the party (*a*) traversed the Inaccessible from east to west, Mr Urquhart and Miss Cross accompanying them to the top of Sgurr Dearg; (*b*) ascended by Naismith's Route on to Bhasteir Tooth, and attempted to descend by King's, but the leader found himself too thick to get through into the cave; (*c*) ascended the "Forked Chimney" of Sgurr nan Gillean as described by Abraham. The leader was again at fault behind the jammed block where he had passed last year; the lady of the party was a better fit. The "Peeler" on the west ridge was visited on the way down for the instruction of Rory, who, on a previous day, had mistaken another rock higher up the ridge for his lawful guardian, and had much disappointed two ladies desirous of becoming "known to the police." Rory promises to be as good as his uncle John.

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Mr W. W. KING had a glorious time in Skye during August. In company with Dr Inglis, Mr G. R. Inglis, and Mr R. B. Austin, he climbed Sgurr Dubh Mhor, and thence followed the arête towards Sgurr Dubh Beag. Shortly after leaving the top of Sgurr Dubh Mhor at a point where there is a big drop in the ridge a new route was followed. Mr King lowered his companions down a crack or very shallow chimney on to a terrace below, on the Garbh Corrie side, and then hitched the rope over a huge detached block. The first part had plenty of handholds. Then came a steep slab with a crack running down it. At its lower end the slab overhung, and there was an absence of holds. The last man let his hands gradually slip along the crack

in the slab until Dr Inglis was able to "field" him. Below this nasty drop, a series of rock angles forming short chimneys free from difficulty brought the party to the continuation of the main ridge. On their way home they left the head of Loch Coruisk at 8 P.M., and after a weary trudge down the long glen reached Sligachan in time for late dinner at 11.15 P.M. Next day was devoted to fishing. On another day Mr King with Dr Inglis and Miss Inglis engineered a first-rate climb on a Cuillin, which is apt to be jeered at by acrobats, Bruach na Frithe. The route followed a prominent gash in its northern face. To reach this place the party ascended the ridge leading from Bealach a Mhaim to a point where the grass ceases and the angle steepens, and then skirted along screes into the Fionn Corrie, to the bottom of the "gash" or chimney in question. The top of this chimney ends at a subsidiary point on the Bealach a Mhaim ridge of Bruach na Frithe. The first pitch was about forty feet high, and was done with back and foot work, except the upper part of this pitch which is narrower, and so there the left wall was climbed. The next 150 feet were easy. Then an assemblage of chock-stones blocked the chimney and presented a delightful problem. The left wall was practically perpendicular and the other wall overhung. Below the chock-stones for about five feet inwards, the entire width of the six feet dyke which formed the chimney had worn away, but farther in half of the dyke remained standing, and up to the top of that Mr King was able to climb to a point behind and inside the outermost chock-stone. Between the upper part of this stone and the left wall there is a small hole through which the rope was threaded, and the end allowed to hang down outside. Climbing down, he tied on to this rope, and again ascended to his former perch. While Dr Inglis held the other end of the rope, the leader then swung boldly off into space to the outer side of the chock-stone. "Here," as our friend remarks in a letter to Mr Naismith, "the struggle began! I was on the left wall and climbed hand over hand up the rope till I got my left foot on a minute foothold, and also found a tiny handhold for my right hand; then I reached up the rope and twisted it round my left hand and hauled myself up. This manœuvre was repeated I don't exactly know how, till somehow I got my left leg on the sloping outer side of the chock-stone, and the friction lightened the load of twelve stone on my hands and arms. What a weight I seemed to be! For a minute I was dead beat and had to rest. I had now lifted myself as high as the hole through which the rope was threaded. Pulling in the slack, I managed to throw the rope over another jammed block above me. It fortunately held, and with the help of the doubled rope I soon got on to the top of the chock-stones, and found a good hitch." Above this formidable obstacle, the climbing was free from difficulty and the crest of the ridge was soon reached. This tough but interesting scramble ought to raise Bruach na Frithe in the estimation of climbers. It is doubtful, however, if many people will care to follow Mr King's

example in his swing out of the cave, and, more particularly, in his ascent up the rope. Mr King was fortunate in securing a fortnight of unbroken weather. Besides the two climbs described and other minor ones, he had a magnificent day on the Sgumain Chioch, being personally conducted by its discoverer, Professor Collie.

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Mr ALEX. FRASER arrived at Sligachan with Mr J. EDGAR, Edinburgh, on Sunday, 23rd August, the last day of a long spell of fine weather. Mr W. W. King and a friend were there, but left the next day. He writes: "It was wet and stormy practically the whole week, and we had only one day on the hills—Sgurr nan Gillean by Nicolson's Chimney. Mr Edgar left on Friday, 28th, and on Saturday I took Dr Cushnie, London, a round by Bruach na Frithe and Sgurr a Bhasteir.

"Mr H. Alexander, Aberdeen, turned up that evening, and stayed the next week, and we had three climbs together, the traverse of Mhadaidh, Sgurr nan Gillean by the Pinnacles and down the west ridge, and the ordinary route over Bhasteir and Bhasteir Tooth. The weather was much better the second week of my stay, and all three days were good for climbing. In addition, Mr Alexander did Glamaig one afternoon by himself.

"Mr Glover arrived on Saturday the 5th September, and left on Tuesday the 8th; Mr Alexander left on the 6th; Dr Baily, London, arrived on the 7th; I left on the 8th. The weather had completely broken down then, the time of the heavy flooding all over the north. Mr John Mackenzie was at Glen Brittle for the season, and was not available."

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Mr GARDEN was in Skye from 19th to 28th September last, with Dr J. R. LEVACK and WALTER A. REID. He writes: "It's a far cry to Glen Brittle from Portree, and as the boat was late, per usual, we did not reach Miss Campbell's till 12.40 A.M. on Sunday 20th, and only then by leading the horses, and mistaking Glen Brittle House for Miss C.'s humble abode. It *was* a funny journey. Well, it rained and fogged mostly all the time, but on the 20th we got in a gully climb on An Diallyd; the last two pitches were quite stiff and took some 'handling.' On the other days we did (21st) the Sgumain-Alasdair ridge and Tearlach, (22nd) Dubh na Dabheinn, (24th) Dearg and Banachdich traversed, (25th) Gars-bheinn, Sgurr nan Eag, and Sgurr Dubh Mor, (26th) traversed Bruach na Frithe from stone-shoot in Coire Ghreadaidh, but saw nothing. Monday the 28th burst hopelessly, and we fled after attempting the pinnacles in a towering gale and lashing rain. It was disgusting, and since our return it has been summer weather. Oh, such a climate! but we had a jolly time. I'm charmed with the Western Cuillin, and I'm going back first chance I get. I got a most curious photo of the Brocken Spectre

from Alasdair's summit. There we are all three (including the photographer) with the halo round our heads. I don't suppose it has been photographed before. Miss C.'s is a convenient place in dry weather. In wet, it must be admitted, the discomfort outweighs the convenience."

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Messrs RUSSELL and GOGGS spent ten days in Skye at the end of September and the beginning of October. The weather was mixed, but, on the whole, not bad. Most of the peaks and ridges from Garsbheinn to Bruach na Frithe were traversed once or more, except the Dubhs. The best day's work was from Glen Brittle to Sligachan, *via* "the pinnacled ridge," "dividing Coire a' Ghreadaidh into two." Ghreadaidh, Mhadaidh, Bidein, The Castles, Bruach na Frithe, ten hours in all. The Window Buttress of Sgurr Dearg, western gully of Sgumain, Chioch and east gully, and the Inaccessible were climbed. For the benefit of weak parties it may be mentioned that on returning to the east gully from the Chioch and proceeding up the gully, the first pitch encountered can be conquered by threading a rope through a hole and round a jammed stone, using the threaded rope instead of a handhole; above this pitch it is simply a wall to the ridge. The only new climb done was one on An Stac, and that was more of a wriggle than a climb. Looking at An Stac from the north end of Sgurr Mhic Choinnich ridge a crack will be noticed, if the mists permit, running almost from the base to the summit. A closer inspection shows the crack to be a trap dyke of sufficient breadth to allow *some* members of the Club in sideways. Soon after the start, one goes under and over two chock-stones, farther up even thin members will be forced out on to the left (true) wall. The crack gives out a few feet from the summit and is 160 feet long. The return from Garsbheinn to Glen Brittle by the coast, or, to speak more correctly, the top of the cliff (track most of the way), is strongly recommended. For a wet day the waterfall (*Eas Mòr*) on the Allt Coire na Banachdich, quarter of an hour above Glen Brittle House, well deserves a visit; few finer falls in Scotland; best seen from left bank.

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#### S.M.C. NOTES.

THE MAMORE FOREST GROUP.—To the interesting and useful note by Mr Parker, Vol. VII., p. 130, the following details may be added. The delightful ridge walk from west to east may most comfortably be started by taking at the west end of Fort William the rather switch-back driving-road that goes round by Blarmachfoldach School and over the Larig Mor to Kinlochmore. This should be left shortly after it crosses the Allt Coire a' Mhuilinn, and an easy walk takes one to the top of the Meall a' Chaoruinn, marked about 2,750 on the one-inch

Survey. The little Loch an Lunn da Bhra, with its clump of wood, island, farm-house, and few cultivated fields makes a charming foreground to the view of Loch Linnhe on the one hand and Beinn a Bheithir on the other. Chaoruinn is the true west end of the group, and is separated from Mullach nan Coirean by a big red corrie, which, however, contains no buttresses or arêtes worth mentioning. As one proceeds round the ridge, the view of the new Kinlochmore, with its huge factory (employing over 2,000 men at present) and the pipe-track marking the moor to the east, comes with a shock of surprise amid the solitude of the forest. In the beautiful corrie between Coirean and Stob Ban, watered by the Allt a Coire Deirg, there are at least two good arêtes. One, the second to the north of the Coirean Cairn, is in three sections, the lower two being separated by an almost horizontal platform. Above the second it would be necessary to descend to the screes. The shortest routes to the ridge, however, are these:—(1) Ascend Glen Nevis about three miles by the driving-road, then strike up to the col between the Dundbhairdghall and Sgor Chalum, keep your level along the back of Sgor Chalum (*i.e.*, on the west), and ascend the ridge of Coirean from a really fine boulder about the 2,250 line, which commands a perfect picture of the Pass through to Steall with the fine rugged Cumhann in the centre, Nevis, Dearg Mor, and Aonach Beg on the left and Sgor a Mhaim and Stob Ban on the right. A few hundred feet up from this boulder is perhaps the finest spring in the forest. (2) Still better, ascend Glen Nevis to Achriabhach, but instead of taking the ridge, as suggested by Mr Parker, which can hardly be said to be “gently inclined,” proceed up the glen of the Allt Coire nan Feusgan (the Mussel Corry), which separates Stob Ban from Sgor a Mhaim. This route has always been used by active persons crossing from Kinlochmore to Fort William, and indeed may be described as the production northwards (not in a geometrically straight line) of the well-known Devil’s Staircase route from Glencoe. It is necessary to pass through the deer-fence which the proprietor lately erected, and which comes over the ridge to the west of Stob Ban down to Achriabhach, but to this, of course, there is no objection at the proper time. The track goes through a big green meadow above the first wood, then crosses the Mussel Burn, and ascends steeply by well-defined zigzags to a pass (2,500) between Stob Ban and Sgor an Iubhair, descending considerably on the Loch Leven side of the summit of the Larig Mor road, which is well indicated by a house marked Tigh nan Sloc. From a very large experience of similar bye-ways in the Highlands I have the impression that both in storm and in fine clear weather this road, looking straight into the upper corries and north-east cliffs of Stob Ban, is one of the finest things in Scotland. It may be noted that those who have scrambled up the heap of angular quartzites covering the Stob Ban from either side may find a convenient point of descent by the deer-fence descending into an upper corrie on the east of the Allt



a Coire Deirg, and so down by the glen, thus varying the route. The forest paths extend over a great part of Sgor a Mhaim. Finally, although these Mamore hills fall far short of Nevis in height, they command a prospect including most of the main features of the Nevis view. Some things, such as Ben Vorlich, Ben Lomond, &c., drop out, but you can see Jura, Rum, and some points of the Cuillins, though not the continuous ridge observed from Nevis. W. C. S.

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AN SGARSOCH.—On 11th July 1908, I accompanied Munro through Glen Tilt. Dining early at Blair Atholl, we drove to Forest Lodge, arriving there at 7.40 P.M. The threatening afternoon had settled down to a night of persistently heavy rain. By the time we reached the Belford Memorial Bridge (9.40) we were thoroughly well soaked, and the Tarf and Tilt were already in high flood. From the bridge we followed the left side of the Tarf, but kept well on the high ground, about a quarter of a mile from the stream, and took advantage of innumerable sheep tracks when we could strike them in the rapidly increasing darkness. At 11 P.M. we reached the remains of an old shepherd's bothy, where we rigged up a tent with a mackintosh, under which we took our bearings by the aid of compass, map, and matches. From the bothy we bore away in a north-west direction over gently rising moorland. The rain poured harder than ever, and we heard the low growl of the angry Tarf gradually dying away as we left it. As we ascended we got into dense fog, and at 1.5 A.M. we reached the large cairn on the summit of An Sgarsoch with some difficulty, as the summit is very flat and extensive. It was now quite chilly, very dark, and, what was worse, we had been unable to keep our powder dry, and so we could neither read our compasses nor see our maps. We knew the wind was north, so going into its biting teeth, we dropped down by the side of the Allt a' Chaorruinn, and struck the Geldie. Carn an Fhidleir, originally included in the programme, had to be abandoned, which was more regretted by Munro than I, because in consequence it still remains one of the few three-thousanders undone by him. We had hoped to get over the Geldie at the Lodge, but the bridge had either been carried away by the flood or has ceased to exist. At all events, there were traces of a bridge having been there at one time. The result was that we had several miles of bog-trudging on the south side of the stream through which we dared not attempt to force our way on foot, but over which at times we could have cast a stone with ease upon the capital road on the north side. Finally reaching the bridge at the junction of the Tarf with the Bynack at 6.15 A.M., we had a light meal, during which we caught one or two glimpses of Bheinn Bhrotain and Cairn Toul, as they showed themselves occasionally in the rain-clouds now dispersing. We started off again at 6.45, reaching the Linn of Dee at 8.10, and

Braemar at 10.20. From our limited observations of An Sgarsoch we should say that both Carn an Fhidleir and it are probably most uninteresting summits, and are not worth the trouble of ascent.

W. GARDEN.

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BRAEMAR TO BLAIR ATHOLL.—A member has suggested that a record of the following times might be useful. The trip was done by three men on the 20th April 1908. Snow in first-rate condition, weather fine, pace comfortable.

Left Hotel, Fife Arms, Braemar, by trap	- -	5.25 A.M.
Left trap and Clunie Lodge	- -	6.20 A.M.
Socach Mor	- -	7.45 A.M. (Rest 10 minutes.)
Uarn Beag	- -	9.11 A.M. (Rest 25 minutes.)
Uarn Mhor	- -	9.58 A.M. (Rest 15 minutes.)
Carn an Rìgh	- -	11.18 A.M. (Rest 10 minutes.)
Belford Bridge, Glen Tilt	- -	1.3 P.M. (Rest 27 minutes.)
Forest Lodge	- -	2.45 P.M.
Marble Lodge	- -	3.37 P.M. (Rest 15 minutes.)
Blair Atholl Station	- -	5.18 P.M.

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#### LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

LINDERTIS,

23rd November 1908.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—In the excellent account of the Easter Meet at Braemar, it is stated (page 144 of the current volume) that on the 14th April I climbed Beinn Bhreac, Bheinn a' Chaoruinn, "and finally ended a long day by doing all the tops of Beinn Mheadhoin." The tops I actually did climb on this day were Beinn Bhreac (both summits); Bheinn a' Chaoruinn (both summits); all the summits of Beinn Mheadhoin, including Stacan Dubha; tops of cliffs above Loch Avon; Creagan a' Coire Etchachan; and Sgoran Lochan Uaine.

The west top of Beinn Bhreac, I find from Fraser of Derry Lodge, is known as Creag Derry; it is approximately 3,045\* feet, but is a very doubtful "top." Stacan Dubha—so named on the six-inch map—is a nice little top of approximately 3,330\* feet overhanging Loch Avon, half a mile north-west of the south-west, or 3,750, top of Beinn Mheadhoin. The "top of cliffs above Loch Avon" is the 3,673 point of the O.S. map, one and a half miles north-north-east of Ben Macdhui, and is now named Cairn Etchachan. Creagan a' Choire

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\* These heights are from aneroid measurements by myself, and are probably not very far wrong.

Etchachan, to which only a 3,500 contour was given, has now, on the new maps, a height of 3,629 feet. It lies south by east of Loch Etchachan. Sgor an Lochan Uaine is the local name given to a good top lying three-quarters of a mile south-east of Creagan a' Choire Etchachan. Its approximate height is 3,220\* feet. It must not be confused with the higher mountain of the same name immediately to the north of Cairn Toul, which, exceeding 4,000 feet, is one of the highest summits in Scotland. This mountain is often, though most incorrectly, called "the Angel's Peak." It is generally understood that this name was given to it by a prominent member of the Cairngorm Club. The contrast between it and the severe appearance of the (lower) Devil's Point, which lies to the south of Cairn Toul, may well have suggested the name of Angel's Peak for the northern summit. At the same time I hold there can be no justification for altering existing names, especially such as are given on the O.S. maps. On the new edition of the O.S. many alterations have taken place, but these have been made to correct mistakes, and to give effect to existing local names. In the Cuillins many tops were unnamed even locally. Still even here the practice of calling what are merely minor tops of well-known mountains after climbers, however distinguished, must be deprecated.—I am, &c.,

H. T. MUNRO.

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\* This height is from an aneroid measurement by myself, and is probably not very far wrong.

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

—◆—  
**THE HEART OF LAKELAND** : By Lehmann L. Oppenheimer.  
London : Sherratt & Hughes. Price 6s. net.

**Books** on climbing and its joys are fast becoming as plentiful as those written by the followers of Izaak Walton, and whether this is good for the sport itself we hardly like to say.

This latest addition to our Library we welcome for its fresh and breezy accounts of what holidays among the English fells are like, and for the vivid picture it gives of the fun and jollity that characterises a meet of climbers at the popular centre of Wastdale at Easter.

Although apparently a collection of magazine articles which have appeared in Climbing Journals from time to time, it holds well together as one book, and the names of the chapters are :—

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Early Impressions.                  | 6. Scouts and Outposts. |
| 2. Wastdale Head at Easter.            | 7. Days on the Pillar.  |
| 3. Stack Gill.                         | 8. A Memorial Service.  |
| 4. Bowfell Buttress.                   | 9. Haskett's Gully.     |
| 5. Buttermere as a Climbing<br>Centre. | 10. Castles in the Air. |
|  | 11. Anticipations.      |

We are glad to see that the charming valley of Buttermere has had full justice done to it, for it well deserves all that can be said in its praise.

The book reads capitally, and the photographs are exceedingly good.

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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*All communications regarding the Lantern Slides Collection should be made to A. W. RUSSELL, W.S., 23 Castle Street, Edinburgh.*





June 1903.

LOCHINVER.

A. K. Robertson.

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. X.

MAY 1909.

No. 59.

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## SUILVEN.

BY H. MACROBERT.

To sit with scorched hands and midge-bitten face peacefully fishing the mirrored waters of a Highland loch is surely a sorry lot for a would-be climber. But when to this is added the aggravation of a solid week of "windy rain," spent among Coolin ridges, with never a glimpse of the sun, then even Jeremiah himself could hardly complain of lack of good working material.

For days we had watched with growing impatience the very obvious lines left by our casts on the unrippled surfaces of the lochs, as we dutifully tried to realise the delights of a carefully planned fishing holiday, but as the waters dried up, and the sun grew hotter, and the fish more wary, our longings materialised. A mountain must be climbed, if only to evade the midges; and a very fascinating selection there was from which to choose. From Quinag to Ben More Coigach, and sometimes even to the more glorious Teallachs, our wistful glances had wandered, only to be recalled to our sinking flies by the wallowing splash of a hungry trout or the plaintive appeals of Hughie, the gillie. But Suilven was our prime favourite; apart from any personal inclinations in the matter, it would have been quite impossible to leave Lochinver without having climbed at least this striking peak, to say nothing of the more distant Stack Polly. And so it was that at last I set out, with my brother and a friend, Falconer, a dweller in the



East, albeit wise, inasmuch as following his ancient prototypes he came west.

The precipitous west front of the mountain had often formed a topic of conversation with Hughie, who was forced to admit that although the whole face was quite inaccessible it had once been scaled. "Hoo, yess! she wass climbed by the Professor, but the only way up is by the south whateffer." It was useless to urge the exploits of the S.M.C. during the Inchnadamph Meet; the face had only been climbed once, and the feat was not likely to be repeated. This stolid indifference to argument so fired my two companions (both legal lights) that nothing short of an attempt on the steepest portion would content them, and so on that lovely August morning a sixty-foot Alpine rope found its stealthy way into the depths of our rucksack.

The line of least resistance was followed up from the Culag Hotel, and past Glen Canisp Lodge. Here again we found the fame of our first President had preceded us, and eager inquiries were made as to when we might be seen on the rocks, which from here towered majestically over an intervening bluff. The almost implied suggestion of being butchered to make a shooting-party holiday did not in any way appeal to our sporting instincts, and so as the day was hot and the scenery divine, we tarried by the way and ate. When finally we did buckle on the rope and set to work, it was fully an hour after the advertised time of starting.

As is well known, Suilven has been likened to a miniature Matterhorn. From the west, however, it gives one more the impression of an Ailsa Craig planted down on a loch-studded moor. Ramsay's Gully runs up the centre of the west face, bearing slightly to the south. It starts from a large sloping platform of grass and heather, which extends across the face, and is cut off from the lower scree slopes by a belt of almost perpendicular sandstone about sixty feet high. To the north this platform loses itself on the face in sundry ledges, but to the south it circles round and gradually descends to the moor. It was by this southern traverse that the first ascent was made. We elected, however, to climb this first pitch, as in addition to its having a

most inviting display of chimneys, cracks, and ledges, it was thought that its ascent would form a fitting prelude to the more serious work above.

A deeply cut chimney right in line with the gully was tackled first. Soon we were ejected from this on to a small grass recess which led us to the final pitch, eight feet of smooth sandstone topped and overhung in hopeless fashion by heather and loose turf. Being before all things strict salvationists, we retreated and tried elsewhere, with a similar result. Again and again we tried by face, by crack, by chimney, and by ledge, only to be rebuffed by the miserable finish. A fifth route, leading to where a shallow chimney seemed to indicate a weakness in the upper armour, was being attacked in half-hearted way when we became aware that at least part of the audience had outwitted us! A solitary stalker was standing gazing up at us. That was enough; we pushed home the attack, and after much digging for holds, and some shuffling, we sprawled over on to the heathery platform, after an hour's hard work. Here we found our audience awaiting us, he having come round by the south route.

"It's a beautiful day!"

"It was a very fine day, sir; we was getting anxious at not seeing you on the rocks, and (with a chuckle) she was sent up to keep you out of danger." Then looking at my feet, "They will be ferry coot boots for such a climb whateffer!" I assented, and said we proposed going up the gully, which now rose diagonally above us. "Hoo aye, she has often wondered if man could be going up there." I took the hint, "Would you care to tie on and come up with us?"

"She'll be ferry pleased, and A'm thinkin' the rope will be of great asseestance."

So off we set, with "Brown" securely roped as third man. His energy was enormous. Grasping his long stick in one hand, and using the rope as a banister with the other, he struggled and kicked his way up. The rocks and grass were in perfect condition, and consequently as safe as the proverbial house. This being so, our merriment knew no restraint, although the first two were kept inordinately

busy attending to the severe and unwonted calls on the rope. It was to "Brown" a climbing rope, and so of course was used as such. The last man's contortions to keep within the span of rope allowed between him and his neighbour were indeed admirable, but hardly consonant with his dignity as a learned W.S. of Auld Reekie. He had a rough passage until our continued iteration, "Mind the rope behind you, and give the man a help if necessary!" penetrated to a brain almost intoxicated with triumph and excitement.

"I said it very loud and clear,  
I went and shouted in his ear."

The result exceeded our most fanciful imaginings. Keen to make up for past deficiencies, "Brown" now devoted all his spare time and energy to getting the last man up. Reaching down with one strong brown hand, the other firmly clutching the rope above, with mighty jerks he would pluck his luckless victim from hold and stance and rudely hustle him up the pitch. It was a scene full of earnestness and quaint humour. As Falconer remarked afterwards, his only difficulty was in retaining his position when the upward strain ceased! Thus we went up. When after some forty minutes' climbing we gained the easier slopes above, "Brown," wiping his perspiring forehead, remarked reflectively, "A'm thinkin' there will be some of us who would not be here but for the rope." True, it was hardly a case of moral support!

There was still some scrambling to be done ere the summit was reached, and on our way there "Brown" led me round on to the southern slopes to where a patch of "verdant green" just above the precipices betokened water. Had it not been for this welcome little oasis, it would indeed have been "water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink." Stretched at our ease beside the cairn, we feasted our eyes on the watery prospect. On all sides round were innumerable lochs glittering in the blazing sun like pools of mercury on the purple moor, with here and there a strange mountain form breaking the continuity. This was not our old familiar Scotch view of deep glen and rushing torrent; here was no motley array of mountain

peak and chain, ridge upon ridge reaching to the dim distance. Rather was it a low-lying moorland, flat yet pleasing, uniform yet bizarre. We gave it up then as beyond explanation, as I give it up now as beyond description. We climbed down.

*Suilven*, of course, is not really a cone, but rather two cones connected by a ridge with a hump on it. The tourist route to our summit is, as "Brown" explained, up from the south to this connecting ridge, and then by sheep-tracks to the top. This was our line of descent, and soon we were round again under the west face. Here we settled down for afternoon tea—no make-believe, but the real article, piping hot and ever welcome—and drank to the health of our guide "Brown" as the first native to climb the "inaccessible" west face of *Suilven*.

## THE CLIFFS OF STOB COIRE AN LOCHAN.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

THE thoughts of climbers have recently been more and more turned to Skye, where the charms of ridge and face and gully are enhanced by the perfection of rock and the magnificence of land- and seascape. But our mainland still offers virgin climbs to the seeker, and a short account of a visit to Glencoe may perhaps remind our members that their work of exploration is not yet complete in that romantic and historic district. The months have rolled on and the impression has partly faded since on 14th April 1907 Harold Raeburn joined us at Kingshouse to visit the cliffs of Stob Coire an Lochan. Our party consisted of my wife and son, and we had previously more than once, on rounding the corner of the road leading to the Study, stopped, entranced by the shapely peak of Stob Coire an Lochan towering up above the Sisters of Glencoe. Macculloch's great painting of Glencoe limns the scene and excites the imagination as the eye takes in the precipitous flying buttresses and the majestic peak dominating the mountain ranges.

From above the Study, where a solitary shepherd's house is the only sign of human interest, it is worth while to ascend the slopes to the north, for every yard of ascent widens the outlook and deepens the impression. It is then seen that from that point of view the ridges of two of the Three Sisters, Aonach Dubh and Gearr Aonach, naturally merge in the central mountain, the Stob of the Lochan, and that the great precipices which fall to the road or to the solitary loch in the glen are but the terminal faces of ridges which, on their summits, are more or less level.

It had long been a desire to visit the cliffs of Stob Coire an Lochan, and only the fascination of nearer climbs met on the road to them had hitherto prevented us from reaching them. In the clear light of an April day the



*April 1907.*

**STOB COIRE AN LOCHAN FROM HEAD OF GLENCOE.**

*W. Inglis Clark.*



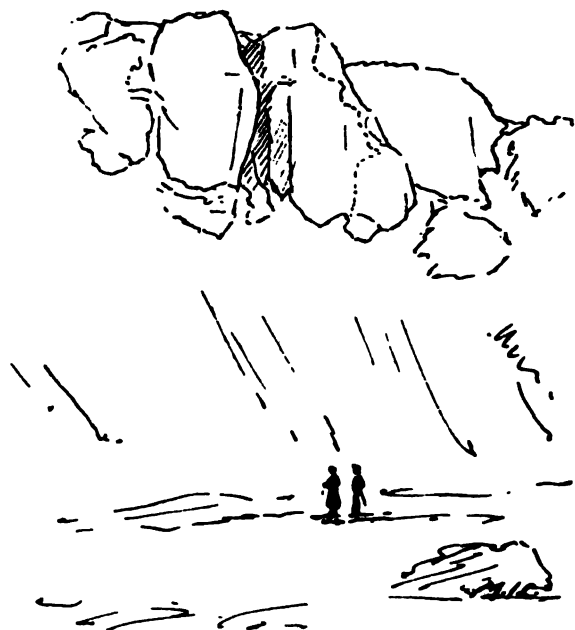
snow fields from which the peak itself rises give a feeling of great height, so that it would be difficult for a visitor fresh from the Alps to gauge the height or distance of our Scottish giant. The excursion to the Coire is one which enchants from start to finish. Descending from the little shieling over heather and rock, the deep cleft and wooded gorge is soon reached, where the infant Coe, lusty in storm and spate, makes its way through a maze of rocks.

There are three routes to the Lochan. The active climber may breast the savage cliff of Gearr Aonach, and by a steep and sporting climb find himself on the level ridge leading right to the Lochan (Vol. VII., p. 104). The walker may reach the same goal by either of the valleys hemming in the Gearr Aonach ridge. We chose the nameless one on its western side, which may be called Gleann Allt Coire nan Lochan, probably the easiest of access, and by its good going soon found ourselves at an appreciable altitude. The lower ground is rocky, but higher up the slopes are smoother and progress rapid. We struck snow where the Gearr Aonach ridge merges into the flattish entrance to the corrie, but I should here explain that the corrie and the lochans in it are not the same as the Coire an Lochan from which the peak is named. This is on the south-west flank of the Stob, and the corrie facing Glencoe does not seem to have a name.

Soon after reaching the snow we eagerly scanned the peak and cliffs in front. The Stob rose a conical peak with rocky armour which showed black against the lacery of ledge and gully, now filled with glittering snow or ice. The lochans, joined by marsh or watercourse, were barely visible except as little tarns where the pressing snow wreaths overhung the banks or underlay the brown water, giving a curious effect of blue and brown. But it was the cliffs we had come to see, and sufficiently formidable they looked. Dividing the cirque from the Stob a convenient broad snow couloir fell from the sky-line, and to the right of this, after a few smaller samples of crag, three well-defined buttresses or divisions of the cliff attracted our attention. All looked formidable, and but for the presence



of Raeburn in our party we might have been content with a general inspection. The central buttress was the most attractive, and, as it projected further into the corrie, it would afford a longer climb. From the sketch, taken from a photograph, it will be seen that the lower part takes a less angle, and with steep sides protrudes well into the corrie. From below it was difficult to see how the tower,



*The Cliffs of Stob Coire an Lochan.*

*The dotted line indicates the route described in this article.*

not far from the summit, was to be surmounted, but a few snow-filled cracks seemed to indicate a way to the left, a promise which was fulfilled later. We found the rocks to steepen as we approached them. The lower nose was unpromising, and we made our way to a recessed corner where the upper cliff rises very steeply above the lower section. This was on the eastern side (left hand looking up). With Raeburn leading we were soon

enjoying the thrilling delights of vertical strata, with, at places, enough of difficulty to make extreme care necessary. The handholds, at times filled with snow, were on the whole satisfactory, and the whole party in due course foregathered on the narrow ridge. Looking across to the next (more westerly) buttress we had a fine picture of vertical basaltic columns resembling somewhat those of Samson's Ribs, Edinburgh, and enabling us clearly to understand the columnar rocks and chimneys which had occupied us for an hour and a half or more.

For a short distance the going was easy, up steep snow, and Raeburn used a little of his superfluous energy in climbing a crazy pinnacle on the ridge, the descent from which was best accomplished by a long jump into the snow. We were now directly below the tower, which did not give any apparent route to the right, and in front presented a formidable face. Any escape must be to the left, and while the party partook of a frugal lunch on a narrow ledge, Raeburn slipped away to prospect. After a prolonged and anxious interval, as he had gone unroped, he returned to say that he had found a way of escape and had reached the summit of the tower. We poor mortals who feel more and more the necessity of a decent handhold, and realise that the calls of gravity tend to be more clamant than even those which draw us to the summit, can only look on such a climber with astonishment if not with envy. I can only speak of my own impressions, but, even after so long an interval I am convinced that the next passage is one which should only be dealt with by a strong party. Turning the corner to the left (looking up) from our lurching spot you look down a considerable depth over the steep face, but attention is immediately concentrated on a little saddle of rock which requires to be crossed to get into the corner between the tower proper and the big block which had partially sheltered us. No doubt this corner with its chimney would give access higher, but even then the tower must be overcome. The holds are excellent, and the climber can thoroughly enjoy the giddy outlook into the corrie far below. The next step requires more care, but might even with familiarity become

simple. It consists of a long stride round a slightly bulging rock, the ledge being but of slender proportions. Fortunately the farther handhold is good, but to one of "bow-window" calibre, the step would be distinctly trying. A few feet along is an exposed chimney, short, and with good holds, which soon leads one up beyond the tower and to the sky-line. The passage from the lurching spot is one of the most enjoyable to be met with in the Glencoe district. In descending, a satisfactory hitch might be got for the rope and the passage to the corner made in safety.

By the time we had reached the sky-line, the sun was descending in a westerly direction, and we turned to the left and going due south over easy snow soon reached the summit of Stob Coire an Lochan. The outlook from this vantage point was exceedingly fine, the distant peaks framed in chasing mists, changing colour in the alternating sunshine and shadow. Returning to the col between the Stob and our buttress, our party glissaded into the corrie and made straight for the ridge of Gearr Aonach. From this high level walk magnificent views of the rocky peaks were obtained, but the fact was soon impressed on us that we must resist the temptation to go to the northern extremity if an easy and certain descent to the valley is desired. We finally struck down a rough, steep gully with fine rock scenery, and reached the eastern glen, Gleann Allt Coire Gabhail, just above the wilderness of fallen rocks which forms so fine a feature in it. Here, if anywhere, is an ideal home for outlaws, for the great blocks afford innumerable caves and even underground passages, to venture into which would require all the resolution of our modern Scotland Yard. To add to the charm, birch trees have perched themselves in picturesque groupings, and the river itself seeks hidden courses in its downward passage. From this point onward to the Coe the scenery would warrant a visit even if no more distant expedition were in view. The ever trusty motor, stabled by the roadside near the Study, was soon reached, and ere long we arrived at Kingshouse Inn.

An amusing example of the way in which "motor accidents" are manufactured for the newspapers, occurred



*W. Inglis Clark.*

FROM SUMMIT OF STOB COIRE AN LOCHAN.

*April 1907.*



during our visit to that inn. We had motored to near the Study in order to explore the Aonach Eagach ridge and had left the car in a stone-breaker's recess. My son, who had to leave Bridge of Orchy by the evening train, had cycled alongside and put his bicycle beside the car. From the hill above we saw two cyclists examine the derelict car and bicycle. When my son, later, reached Kingshouse, he heard how a motor car had been driven furiously down the road, had smashed into a bicycle, injured the driver, been run into the stone-breaker's recess, and the injured people had in all probability been taken down to Ballachulish and were at that moment in the doctor's hands. Whether any were killed or not was a matter of doubt.

The photograph of Stob Coire an Lochan from the head of Glencoe shows very well the relation of this mountain to the Three Sisters of Glencoe. Our route lay up the valley between the right-hand one, Aonach Dubh, and the centre one, Gearr Aonach. The cliffs are well seen on the sky-line, and we returned down the valley between the centre Sister and the left-hand one.

## DRUMOCHTER.

BY F. S. GOGGS.

A FEW of the King's loyal burgesses of Edinburgh and Glasgow have travelled to the outskirts of His Northern Kingdom by trains leaving those two cities in the "wee short hours ayont the twal," a few more know that such trains exist, at any rate in Murray's time-table, but the majority of sensible people know nothing about the matter, and care less. Members of the S.M.C. are, however, quite accustomed to being suddenly awakened out of refreshing slumber or pleasant dreams by the self-assertive, metallic buzzing of an alarm clock, set for 3.30 A.M. They have grown callous to springing out of bed at that unseemly hour, dressing in a half-dazed condition, and having hastily swallowed a glass of milk and snatched up ice-axe and rucksack conveniently put in the hall on the previous night, they plunge into the outer darkness, munching biscuits as they go.

Who does not recall that walk to the station along deserted and half-lit streets, the suspicious stare of the rubber-footed constable, who, equally with the young man and maiden returning from an all-night dance, turns his head to get a good look at the clanking, burdened apparition as it passes a revealing gas lamp?

Who has not felt on these occasions the oppressive and unnatural silence of a large town: the gaunt grey tenements contain hundreds of souls who are within a few feet of you, yet to the eye and ear every one is as dead? At length the station is reached, our friends are joined, the early papers and mails tell of the life that is to be in a few hours, our tickets are punched, and with a few heavy snorts from the locomotive we are off to the North.

Personally I have always considered this 4 A.M. train early enough, but mountaineering has such a capacity for keeping its votaries young that some of the older members are not happy unless a start is made by the 9.45 P.M. train

of the previous evening. On my raising a protest against this last-mentioned arrangement, the President wrote me as follows :—

“ We should neither of us have voted for mountains A, B, C, had we not thought you meant to go by the night ” (*i.e.*, the 9.45 P.M.) “ train.”

Thus it came about that at 3 A.M. on an early day in February in the year of grace 1909, four men answering to the names of Gilbert Thomson, Workman, Morrison, and Goggs, and armed with ice-axes, were seen to get out of a train at the highest station in Scotland—Dalnaspidal. Here we were, a few hours after leaving Edinburgh and Glasgow, in the centre of Scotland, nearly at the summit of the Drumochter Pass, and at about the middle point of Drumalban (Gaelic, *Druim Alban*, the great ridge of Alban), the old name for the then impersonal chain of mountains which extends from south-west to north-east right across Scotland like a spine or backbone. It is hard for us, accustomed as we are to be rapidly conveyed into the wilds by an iron horse running on parallel steel lines, to realise how comparatively recently has this ease of locomotion been attained. The first road through what might be termed the Scottish Khyber Pass was made in 1729 by English and Hanoverian troops, under the orders of that famous road-maker, General Wade. There still stands a large stone on the west side of the road some two miles south of Dalnaspidal, with the figures 1729 carved thereon, marking the place and year of the meeting of the two road-making parties who were working respectively from north and south. This road was maintained by the military authorities till 1814, when Parliamentary Commissioners took it over and improved it considerably : General Wade’s foundations were used, but here and there deviations took place, as, for instance, at Dalnaspidal itself, where for nearly two miles northward Wade’s road runs about two hundred feet higher up the hillside than the modern road. Probably the General wished to give a wide berth to the morass, extending over the nearly level two and a half miles stretch at the summit of the Pass, which must have been a veritable slough of despond to those who



had to use the route before 1729. Not till September 1863, less than half a century ago, did the first train pierce these solitudes. It is only three years more than a century—that is, in 1806—since a regular public coach commenced running twice a week between Inverness and Perth, 115 miles in two days, the night being spent at Pitmain, an inn one mile west of Kingussie. The coach, referred to by Lord Cockburn as “the ark of a vehicle,” was generally moved by three horses, but the stage between Dalwhinnie and Dalnaspidal over the Pass required four. This was considered luxuriously fast travelling, as before the advent of the “ark” a private post-chaise had to be hired by means of which, “if the harness and springs of the vehicle kept together, the travellers were introduced, jaded and weary, on the evening of the eighth day after that on which they had left Inverness, to the High Street or the Grassmarket of Edinburgh.”\* Drumochter (Gaelic, *Druim-uachdar*, the top or highest ridge) is the old name for the high ground extending roughly from the east of Loch Ericht to Edendon Water and Loch an t’ Seilich, at the head of Glen Tromie: its boundaries were never defined, and the name has now become almost restricted to the Pass itself. The reputation of the district was such that prudent persons who were compelled to travel through it took care to make their wills before leaving home.

To return from 1806 to 1909. It was a glorious night: a full moon shone from a clear star-bespangled sky on to the rounded contours of hill, glen, and corrie, slumbering in the peaceful beauty of their snowy winter robes. The soft lunar light gave an almost unearthly effect to the whole scene, especially when associated with the thrilling quiet of the small hours of the day. The snow which lay at first in patches, but soon in an unbroken stretch, glittered in the moonlight so brilliantly that it almost seemed a sacrilege to tread down the sparkling substance with one’s heavy hobnailers; still, it had to be done if our goal, the summit of the moonlit hills, was to be attained. Scrambling over the

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\* Anderson’s Guide, 1842 ed., p. 62.

wire fence bordering the railway line, we marched boldly forward north-west, but finding ourselves on ground well fitted for amphibians (soft alluvial deposits brought down by the burns when in spate), and being very anxious not to spoil the appearance of our boots at this early stage, we gradually slewed round till we were close to Dalnaspidal Lodge, where we struck the road to Loch Garry and crossed the Allt Dubhaig by a substantial bridge. On skirting the Lodge grounds a pack of hounds commenced baying at the moon in hideous chorus, and even when far up the hillside their music was faintly wafted to us on the night air. Our first objective was the hill possessing that most unpoetical of names, "The Sow"; its Gaelic title of Meall an Dobharchain is much more euphonious. The hill rises steeply on all sides but the south, where the slope is easy. Looking back from this southern slope a part of Loch Garry could be seen, though it was difficult to define where the black and white hillside stopped and its watery reprint commenced. Looking forward I suddenly caught sight of a light that seemed to be moving along the ridge, and the thought flashed across me, it must be a shepherd with a lantern, but the next moment I realised that the light was one of nature's suns coming into view over the summit slope.

I might mention here that to botanists the Sow of Atholl is a most interesting and important hill. It is the only place in Scotland on which has been found the *Menziesia* or *Phyllodoce cœrulea*, a species of heather, distinguished by its large blue bells, and abundant in Norway. Dr Hugh Macmillan, who mentions the above fact in his book, "Holidays on High Lands," goes on to say, "To the general naturalist this is one of the most interesting districts in Scotland." "This treeless waste and deserted moorland once formed the site of the great Caledonian Forest."\*

The height of the Sow is not marked on the six-inch map. It is probably about 2,600 feet, or some 1,200 feet above the station. One hour's quiet walk sufficed to land

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\* Second Edition, 1873, pp. 73, 74, 102.

us on the top. Below us the lights at Dalnaspidal showed that civilisation was still near. On the other side of the railway Glas Mheall Mor and the rest of the Gaick Forest hills rose cold and clear in the pale moonlight. To the north we looked down on An Torc or the Boar (of Badenoch), 2,432 feet, one and a quarter miles as the crow flies on the opposite side of Allt Coire Dhomhain, and over the top of which runs the county march of Inverness and Perth. A little to the right of the Boar the Drumochter Pass, mostly in shadow, wound its way through the hills. If the stones of the Pass could only cry out what tales they could unfold. From the earliest times it is probable that this Pass has formed the boundary between two different clans. The boundaries of the counties of Inverness and Perth march here now, and before the formation of counties it formed the dividing line between the ancient districts of Badenoch and Atholl. From its very position there must always have been a considerable amount of coming and going, whether peaceful or warlike, through this central pass. The very name of Dalnaspidal—Gaelic, *Dail-an-spideal*, field or dale of the hospice—points, as Colonel Jas. A. Robertson says, to a hospital or inn having been founded there in remote times by the ancient Celtic earls of that district.

Gazing at the Pass a *zeitgeist* seemed to take possession of me, and in my dream a long procession passed through the bealach below me. [1644.] First of all came James Graham, Earl of Montrose, on his way to the capture of Perth, with his Irishmen and his Highlanders, a man of indomitable courage and resource, whom not even snowdrifts and rocks daunted, and who almost single-handed turned the tide of fortune in favour of his king. In hard pursuit behind him, wasting the country as he goes, comes the much less engaging personality of the Covenanting Marquis of Argyll. [1652.] A brief space and I see encamped near Dalnaspidal a body of Cromwell's Ironsides under General Dean sent by Monck, who practically ruled Scotland for Cromwell, to extinguish the smouldering embers of rebellion in the Highlands. I see them harassed by the men of Atholl and the Camerons

of Lochiel, and anon they march south again without having crossed the summit of the Pass. [1689.] A longer interval and General Hugh Mackay, acting for William and Mary, is seen going north with a mixed body of Dutch and English troops in search of the Jacobite John Graham of Claverhouse, or, to give him his proper title, Viscount Dundee: back again he comes unsuccessful in his search. But soon the hunted follows the hunter, and Dundee, with his 2,000 Highlanders and 500 Irish, pours southwards through the Pass like a torrent. Little did he know that two days later he should die at Killiecrankie in the hour of his success.

[1729.] Again a pause and then a more peaceful scene presents itself. A levelled track can now be traced along the hillside, and I see General Wade in his coach going south. Opposite Loch Garry a party of caterans or cattle lifters are roasting four oxen near a rough tent. The General is invited to partake of lunch, and nothing loth to oblige his strange hosts he stops, and after being entertained for three hours proceeds south in the dusk of the evening.\* Once or twice I see Captain Burt, of "Letters from the North of Scotland" fame, riding to or from his quarters at Inverness.

[26/8/1745.] Another wait in the pageant, then appears King George's general, Sir John Cope, with 1,400 men wearily wending their way with munitions of war and food supplies northward. No sooner have these disappeared when from the north comes Bonnie Prince Charlie with his Highland host, all evidently in high spirits. [16/3/1746.] A short pause and then I see some 400 Atholl men and some 300 Macphersons assembled at Dalnaspidal. Lord George Murray, Prince Charlie's right hand man, addresses them and away they speed south to surprise as many Royalist outposts as they can before morn.† [9/7/1786.] More peaceful travellers now appear, and at length comes that sporting Yorkshireman, Colonel Thornton, the writer of a well-known Tour, who could walk four miles in thirty-

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\* Mitchell's "History of the Highlands," 1900, pp. 582, 583.

† Browne's "History of the Highlands," 1840, vol. iii., pp. 215-218.

two minutes, riding merrily to the north. [1779-1803.] Mrs Grant of Laggan, whose "Letters from the Mountains" have long been classic, also passes once or twice.

This historical pageant passed through my mind in much less time than it takes to read the list, but I make no apology for inserting it, as the interest of any place depends largely on association, and I believe I am correct in thinking that there are very few places in Scotland of more historic interest than the Pass of Drumochter.

And now to resume our tramp from the top of the Sow. To the south-west, where lay our route, a gentle slope seemed to lead into the clouds which had commenced to envelop the tops: a few yards in that direction and in the half light we suddenly found ourselves brought up by a yawning chasm with perpendicular white walls of two or three hundred feet on the farther side. The chasm was the bed of a small burn running into Allt Coire Dhomhain. There was nothing for it but to descend, and very rocky, rough, steep ground it was. We must have come down over four hundred feet before we crossed the wee burn and tackled the hard frozen snow slope in front. Having new nails on my boots only one or two slashes of the ice-axe were required, but one of the party who happened to have well worn and rounded nails, had a different story to tell, when two or three hours later we cross-examined him as to why he was vainly endeavouring to make three long strips of plaster adhere to his cold digits with a very red handkerchief. The night now grew gloomier and colder, a few showers of hail stung our faces, and clouds began to hem us in. A long easy slope landed us on the very flat top of our first Munro, Sgairneach Mor (3,160 feet) at 5.55. Having eaten a couple of jam pieces to keep the cold out, we curved west down gentle snow slopes, and finding it difficult to be sure in the gloom which was the direction of our next ridge, we lit a lantern and referred to map and compass. The col is somewhat indefinite (height about 2,600 feet), and beyond it we saw our ridge, ornamented with a wire fence, the county boundary between Inverness and Perth, running due north. A faint lightening now commenced to show itself in the east, and soon we

saw the red disk of the sun forcing its way upwards through the banks of cloud striving to keep old Sol down, but once he had, as it were, got his hand on the top of the rock, his head followed immediately, and the mist vignettted him in quite a weird fashion. After a short fight Phoebus was temporarily defeated and muffled up again, but not before we had had a glimpse of some great mountain range to the west and south-west (the Ben Alder group). The wide flat summit of Beinn Udlamain (3,306 feet), adorned with a large well-made cairn, was reached at 7.35. In clear weather it must command a fine view of Ben Alder and his numerous progeny. We waited some ten minutes to give the mist a chance of clearing, but it was too cold to wait longer, so following the fence north-east, we descended the gentle snow-covered slope to the col (2,750 feet), and up a corresponding slope to a point where the fence makes a right-angled turn to the south-east (3,167 feet). Proceeding north-north-west from this point for some three hundred yards, the actual summit of Marcaonach (3,185 feet), marked with a small cairn, was reached in one hour from Udlamain.

A meal was now overdue, but the wind was too biting to tempt us to unpack our rucksacks on the summit, so we descended the steep west side till we were out of the blast. The slope was too steep to allow of much rest of the arm-chair order, but we made the best of it, and partook of breakfast on the socialistic principle of helping oneself liberally to any luxury which the other men had. By means of wave transference of thought we sent condolences to our comrades of the S.M.C., who were now just about leaving their houses for the hurly burly, whilst we were on the mountain tops masters of our destiny—at any rate for the day. While perched there the mists began to thin, the clouds gradually rolled back from the east, and Ben y Vrackie, Farragon, and many other hills began to peep out. Packing up, we were glad to be on the move once more, and passing again over the head of Marcaonach, we took a compass course to the west through the thin mist in order to strike the head of Coire Fhàr. A few feet down the mist lifted entirely, below us was our

col (about 2,400 feet), to the north was our next summit, Geal-Chàrn (3,005 feet), and to the west the snowy peaks began to come out grandly. At the head of Coire Fhàr a track comes up on the north side of the burn from the high road just south of Drumochter Lodge, and forms the easiest means of access to either Geal-Chàrn, Marcaonach, or even Udlamain. From our last summit to Geal-Chàrn took us one hour ten minutes easy going, and the day so rapidly improved that when we arrived at that point the sun shone brightly from a clear heaven, and one felt it was indeed good to be alive. Eighteen hundred and fifty feet below us stretched the narrow fifteen mile strip of Loch Ericht, with Ben Alder Lodge and the wooded slopes of Meall Cruaidh on its western bank. Farther down the loch to the south of Beinn Bheoil we are looking at one of the hiding places of Charles Stuart. Due west over Ben Alder Lodge, Loch Pattack gives the eye a welcome relief to the vast moor from which rises Ben Alder and a dozen other grand hills. To the north was the whole range of the Monadhliaths; to the north-west the few houses of Dalwhinnie, our destination, were plainly visible, and beyond them the green Loch Cuaich, and yet beyond, the mighty mass of the Cairngorms.

Geal-Chàrn is a fine view point, and any one who has seen Mr Lamont Howie's panorama of "Ben Alder from the north-east" in the Club Room, taken from the slopes of Meall Cruaidh, will have some idea of the grandeur of our view obtained from a superior vantage ground to that of the photographer, especially if he remember that the Ben Alder group, although undeniably the finest portion, was after all only a section of our panorama. After enjoying the outlook to the full for twenty minutes, we thought it better to move on, as now that the Highland Railway have a double line their trains wait for no man. We left at 10.50, and keeping to the ridge to get the benefit of the exhilarating view as long as possible, we passed over the smaller eminence of Creagan Mor (2,522 feet), and striking the cart track which leads from the north end of the loch we passed under the railway line and reached the main road at Dalwhinnie (Dalchuinn in Old Statistical

Account, (?) *Dail na coinneamh*, Gaelic, dale of the meeting), opposite the Loch Ericht Hotel, at 1.7.

This hotel was originally built by the Government, as was that at Dalnacardoch—dale of the smith's shop—on the south side of the Drumochter Pass in 1774, as a stage inn, out of moneys derived from estates forfeited in connection with the rising of 1745. It was probably on the site of the present hotel, but in a much humbler building, that Sir John Cope, on the 27th of August 1745, held his well-known council of war, at which it was decided to go on to Inverness, and thus the road to Perth, Edinburgh, and the South was left open for Prince Charlie, who passed the night of the 29th of August 1745 at Dalwhinnie. Over a century later the inn again received royalty. Queen Victoria and Prince Consort, travelling *incognito*, put up there on the night of 8th October 1861. The Queen's remarks in her "Journal" on the fare provided for her cannot be considered to be a good advertisement for the inn, at any rate as it was then conducted: they read as follows:—"Unfortunately there was hardly anything to eat, and there was only tea and two miserable, starved, Highland chickens, without any potatoes! No pudding. . . . It was not a nice supper; and the evening was wet."\* The Queen seems to have fared worse than her subjects, for on 20th August 183— the Rev. Townshend, after having stated that he quarrelled with the landlord for "quartering a tobacco-smoking bagman upon us (who, moreover, picked his teeth with the carving-knife)," gives a full menu of his breakfast: "Broiled herring, hot roasted goose, mutton-ham, pork-ham, eggs, honey, currant jelly, marmalade"; † and as far back as 1790 Willis says: "The cheapness of the inns is wonderful. We had to-day for dinner" [at the Dalnacardoch Inn] "fine fresh trout, a shoulder of mutton, two fowls and bacon, hung beef, and salmon salted, vegetables, cheese, and an excellent bottle of port; and the sum total was four shillings and twopence" [for two]. ‡ The Queen was evidently most unfortunate.

\* "Leaves from the Journal," 2nd edit., 1868, p. 226.

† "Townshend's Tour," pp. 251-253.

‡ "Willis' Tour," p. 65.



I think that Dr Macculloch, the well-known geologist, who went through the Pass about 1814, must also have had a bad dinner here. He commences: "Who shall praise Dalwhinnie? No one, surely, but the commissioners who built it, and who desire you to be very thankful that you have a place to put your head in"; and warming up to his subject he proceeds: "It," the Pass and district, "is all a Dalwhinnie, not only to Dalnacardoch, but even to the bridge of Erochie; houseless, treeless, lifeless; wanting in every thing but barrenness and deformity, while there is not even an object so much worse than another, as to attract a moment's attention." . . . "When passed," it leaves "no impressions of time or space."\* Surely nothing but an atrocious dinner could produce condemnation like this. And yet, *pace* Dr Macculloch, the Pass has made a distinct impression on the minds of many travellers. For example, Dr James Johnson (not THE Doctor), who crossed the Pass a year or two before 1834, says, "It has left an impression on my mind, which will not be readily effaced."

"A scene so rude, so wild as this,  
Yet so sublime in barrenness,  
Ne'er did my wandering footsteps press." † ‡

We had no opportunity now to sample the cheer provided by the hotel, so we walked on to the station, and a quarter of an hour afterwards the south-going train steamed in on time. Having obtained our bags, containing spare clothes and provisions, which had been dropped

\* "Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland," 1824, vol. i., pp. 409-411.

† "The Recess," 1834, p. 145.

‡ Other early visitors to Dalwhinnie were:—

20/7/1790.—R. L. Willis and Brodie, see "Willis' Tour."

1787.—Hy. Skrine of Somersetshire, see his "Tour," pp. 145, 146.

1798 or before.—Hon. Mrs Murray Aust of Kensington, see "Beauties of Scotland," 3rd edit., 1810, pp. 226, 227. "Dalwhinnie pleased me."

1/8/1798.—Dr T. Garnett, see his "Tour," pp. 40-42.

Before 1800 Robert Jameson, the mineralogist, see "Mineralogy of the Scottish Isles," vol. ii., pp. 174, 175, ed. 1800.

Lord Cockburn, John Wilson (Christopher North) and his wife, Rev. Thos. Grierson, &c. &c.

at Dalwhinnie by the guard of the early morning train, we converted our compartment into a restaurant car, and a vote for another moonlight expedition was passed with acclamation.

When we reached the summit of the Pass, 1,484 feet, we looked out of the carriage windows and certainly the scene is a wild one, an embodiment of the savage and sterile in nature. The sides of the hills, the tops of which you have to crane your head up to see, were seamed with countless dry watercourses, and covered with stones and dirt brought down by the torrents: the outer coat of verdure in which nature usually clothes herself has been ruthlessly torn off and the hills are revealed washed to the bone. Alluvial fans of varying size are seen at the base of every torrent. Traces of the rubbish mounds and moraines of old glaciers can be seen everywhere: according to Geikie, "the glacier of Loch Garry split upon the summit of the Pass and sent one branch into Glen Garry, the other into Glen Truim. The deep Pass . . . where this division took place, is as wild a scene as can be reached in the Highlands by a turnpike road—certainly by far the highest, and on the whole, the wildest pass through which any railway runs in this country."\* All this is perfectly true and yet there is a grandeur in the desolation, a sense of power and strength, which to many of us in these luxurious and effeminate days is invigorating.

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\* Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland," 1901, pp. 295, 296.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

FORTY-SECOND MEET OF THE CLUB, NEW YEAR, 1909.

## KILLIN.

THE New Year Meets of 1909 will be remembered for the manner in which the weather exhibited itself in the rôle of a quick-change artist. On Tuesday, 29th December, the Killin Hotel proprietor reported a foot of snow on the low ground, and such was the state of railway disorganisation caused by the storm that the possibility was mooted of the members of the S.M.C., endeavouring to keep their tryst, being compelled to hold an involuntary meet somewhere, say, in the neighbourhood of Glen Ogle. When, however, most of those bound for Killin arrived on the 31st, one of the quickest thaws on record was in full progress, and on Saturday, 2nd January, some of the neighbouring tops above the 3,000 feet level had not a speck of white upon them. Though few sensational ascents fall to be recorded, a considerable amount of energy was displayed by all assembled. There were at Killin Hotel twenty-eight all told—twenty-three members and five guests, namely, Bell, Wm. Boyd, W. Inglis Clark, Cumming, Douglas, Drummond, Goodeve, Francis Greig, Grove, Hill, Ling, Macalister, MacRobert, Munro, Naismith, Nelson, Raeburn, A. E. Robertson, A. D. Smith, Gilbert Thomson, C. W. Walker, H. Walker, and Waugh—members; and E. R. Beard, G. K. Edwards, W. Malcolm, Tennant (London), and Austen Thomson—guests.

To Munro fell the honour of being the first member on the scene, who, arriving on the 30th December, found Tennant (non-member) in possession. Goodeve coming in the next morning, the three had a walk up the nearest point of Tarmachan to about the 2,000 feet level, finding the snow rapidly melting. The Thursday evening train brought most of the others, and after dinner plans were discussed for the morrow. Apparently an easy day was

the general feeling, for breakfast for all was ordered for eight o'clock, during the progress of which meal Wm. Boyd and Francis Greig, accompanied by Beard and Edwards (guests), put in an appearance, having travelled from Edinburgh by the 4 A.M. train. Drummond, Naismith, Raeburn, Tennant, and Waugh drove to the watershed above Lochan na Lairige and ski-ed over Tarmachan, about half of the time on grass, back to Killin. Bell and Douglas walked up Craig na Caillich, and Goodeve, Hill, Ling, C. W. Walker, and H. Walker traversed all the four Tarmachan peaks. The President, accompanied by Edwards, Grove, Nelson, and A. D. Smith, ascended Meall nan Tarmachan by the south-east ridge, keeping as much as possible below the sky-line to avoid the very strong westerly wind which was so violent on the top that several members of the Club were during the day blown down. Not long after leaving the Lawers road another party, consisting of Beard, Boyd, Cumming, Greig, MacAlister, MacRobert, Malcolm, and Austen Thomson, were seen ahead contouring round to the east side of Tarmachan above the Glen Lyon road. These, dividing up into three subsidiary parties, climbed by indefinite gullies to the top of Meall nan Tarmachan, then on to the next top (towards the hotel), and down home about 4.30. Cumming and Greig took in also the third top and came home by Craig na Caillich. The latter in their ascent met Gilbert Thomson's party coming down the same gully. The only exciting incident of the day to the President's contingent was in subsequently negotiating the rather deep burn to reach the Glen Lyon road, which was successfully accomplished dry shod with the aid of a friendly log, but, in a praiseworthy effort to restore the improvised bridge for the benefit of future comers, one member involuntarily followed the useful ally to the middle of the stream.

On Saturday Munro left in the morning, but the numbers remained at the same strength, the Rev. A. E. Robertson having arrived to dinner the previous night. Boyd, Ling, and Raeburn drove to Luib, and climbed Stobinian from the north-east corrie with seven members

of the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club by a steep rock gully (iced) with two pitches in it. Edwards, Macalister, Mac-Robert, and Malcolm accompanied the former to Luib and ascended Stobinian in soft snow by a gully in the north-east corrie, reaching the top at 11.40. In the corrie a large hill fox was seen at quite close quarters. Ben More was taken by way of the col and a sitting glissade of 300 feet obtained on the descent to Crianlarich. Bell, Hill, and Douglas went by steamer down Loch Tay and walked back on the south side, while a party of nine, consisting of Drummond, Grove, Naismith, Nelson, Robertson, Smith, Austen Thomson, Gilbert Thomson, and Waugh, took the Glen Lochay road for about four miles and from thence ascended Meall Gheordie. Goodeve, C. W. and H. Walker modestly reported that they had reached the two peaks of An Coirannach in bad weather, saw nothing and did less. Goodeve, Naismith, Nelson, Smith, Gilbert Thomson, and C. W. Walker departed from Killin by the 6.30 P.M. train, and the Hon. Secretary arrived from Crianlarich later in the evening.

On Sunday the Rev. A. E. Robertson officiated in Killin Church, and Grove and Macalister represented the Club in the pews. In the afternoon the three visited Finlarig Castle. This day was one of the finest of the Meet, the mist being only down to about the 3,000 feet level. Beard, Bell, W. Inglis Clark, Cumming, Douglas, Edwards, Greig, Hill, Ling, Malcolm, H. Walker, and Waugh drove in two brakes to the junction of the Glen Lyon and Loch Tay roads *en route* for Bens Ghlas and Lawers. The wind was still strong, but all were sheltered until coming out on the ridge leading to the summit of Ben Ghlas. There were fine mist effects with detached portions floating far below over the loch and illuminated with the sun. The ridge down to the dip and up to the summit of Ben Lawers was then continued in driving mist. The cold, fierce wind made a hasty retreat from the top imperative, and ere long all were down below the mist in comparative shelter. On the descent to Lawers excellent views east were obtained, and there seemed to be quite a lot of snow on the high ground above Pitlochry—the



*E. R. Beard.*

**ON BEN LAWERS.**

*3rd January 1900.*



remains of the recent storm. After a light tea at Lawers the brakes brought all back to Killin about 4 P.M.

Another party, consisting of Boyd, MacRobert, Raeburn, and Austen Thomson, left about 10 A.M. for Craigna Caillich gully. There was a fair waterfall to start with, but after the first plunge was over, things were not so bad. Very little snow was found in the gully, but some ice was encountered in the central pitch. At the nasty, grassy pitch about half-way up a new traverse was made to the right and then back again before the final difficult pitch. The top one is climbed by the left side, gradually working out on to the steep grassy face. The direct ascent was tried with a rope from above and pronounced impossible.

Monday saw a large exodus, the Meet for the majority having come to an end, and a considerable number left by the early train for home. Hill, H. Walker, Bell, and Raeburn took train to Crianlarich, and, while the two former walked back to Killin, Bell and Raeburn ascended Ben More, meeting the Ladies' Climbing Club near the top but finding almost no snow anywhere on the mountain. The Rev. A. E. Robertson and Dr Clark photographed, and Beard paid his respects to Meall Gheordie by visiting the cairn. Only Bell, Hill, and H. Walker were left in the hotel that night. Hill left by the early train in the morning. Bell and Walker travelled up to Glasgow together, and a most enjoyable Meet finally ended on the platform at St Enoch's Station, where they parted.

A. D. S.

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#### INVERORAN.

THE members present at Inveroran were Messrs C. Inglis Clark, W. Inglis Clark, F. S. Goggs, W. A. Morrison, A. W. Russell, G. Sang, R. E. Workman, and J. R. Young; the guests—Messrs E. Buchanan, H. Buchanan, and A. Reid.

*Wednesday, 30th December.*—Goggs, Morrison, Russell, Sang, and Workman reached Bridge of Orchy by the afternoon train in a blizzard. They drove to the hotel



in wind and driving snow, but agreed that there could be no finer start to a New Year Meet. Such enterprising thoughts as Starav on ski perhaps crept into the minds of some despite an ominous forecast of rain by the stationmaster. The forecast, however, proved right, and, long before bed-time, the next day's programme had reached very modest proportions, and all hope of "splendid winter conditions" and ski had to be abandoned.

*Thursday, 31st December.*—To-day breakfast was delayed by a flood in the ground floor of the hotel. This had to be swept out of doors before breakfast and the necessary preparations for a start could be gone through. At 8.30 A.M. the whole party set out for Stob Coire an Albannaich and Meall nan Eun. The going was very heavy on account of deep slushy snow, but glorious views were obtained from the shoulders of the hills through breaking clouds. Meall nan Eun was descended on the north side of a remarkable gorge, whose other wall was formed of a steep slope of smooth and uncompromising slabs. Some difficulty was experienced in finding a suitable ford over the swollen headwaters of the Dochart. The hotel was reached at about 5.30 P.M. The afternoon train brought E. Buchanan, H. Buchanan, Reid, and Young.

*Friday, 1st January.*—To-day E. Buchanan, H. Buchanan, Goggs, Morrison, Russell, and Sang made an early start for Ben Starav and Glas Bheinn Mhor. They reported a very successful day, enjoying very fine distant views, with the imposing ridges of Starav as a foreground. Their time was about ten and a half hours.

Reid, Workman, and Young took boat and rowed down Loch Tulla to the other side of the outlet to the river Orchy. After beaching the boat they climbed Bheinn Achallader by a snow couloir in the northern corrie, and walked round the ridge over Bheinn an Dothaidh, and so to the loch again.

The afternoon train brought C. Inglis Clark and W. Inglis Clark from Crianlarich, with glowing accounts of the doings there of the L.S.C.C.

*Saturday, 2nd January.*—To-day Goggs, Russell, and Sang climbed Stob a Coire Odhar and Stob Ghabhar, and

W. Inglis Clark and Morrison, Stob a Coire Odhar alone, coming down in time to catch the afternoon train south.

E. Buchanan, H. Buchanan, and C. Inglis Clark climbed Stob Ghabhar, descending from near the summit by a gully which gave some interesting rock climbing.

Reid, Workman, and Young climbed the Clachlet, walking by road to a point some distance beyond Ba Bridge. Some good but rather wet glissades were obtained down to the lochan from the 3,602 feet top.

In the evening the party, now reduced to six, had an exciting and athletic game of "Piladex," and concluded with a musical entertainment, provided for the most part by the talented Edinburgh members.

*Sunday, 3rd January.*—To-day E. Buchanan, H. Buchanan, C. Inglis Clark, and Young climbed Bheinn Achallader, taking boat to the foot. They narrowly escaped foundering in the loch, having to put back to search for the plug, which no one had thought about.

Reid and Workman spent the day in the hotel and its neighbourhood "sweetly doing nothing."

The evening was spent in a warm political and sociological discussion on "Women, their Proper Place in Society, their Rights, and their Wrongs." No two members of the party were found to agree, but an informal vote of confidence in the sex, moved by a chivalrous suffragist, was carried *nem. con.*

*Monday, 4th January.*—To-day the whole party had a short day on Ben Toaig and Stob a Coire Odhar, having some very interesting short problems on rocks on the latter hill. After an early return all left by the afternoon train for the South.

It was agreed that, in spite of very discouraging weather, the Meet had been a very enjoyable one:—like all others before it!—The ascents made were, for the most part, of a decidedly "salvationist" character, capital work being done by several members of that section of the Club, and by broad-minded members who admit both dogmas.

The evenings were spent very pleasantly in controversies, mountaineering and otherwise. The most engrossing subject was one which was broached at the dinner table

on the first evening, and which lasted right through the Meet. It was on "Sheep (and other animals), with special reference to the State after Death." There were some interesting dissertations on "braxy," which would appear not to be by any means confined to sheep.

An important point was raised by the news brought by the Secretary from Crianlarich, namely, on the necessity for prompt measures to sustain the position of the S.M.C. as the premier mountaineering club in Scotland, as menaced by the L.S.C.C. It was thought, however, that members were alive to this danger, and that the credit of the Club could safely be left to individual effort.

R. E. W.

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#### FORTY-THIRD MEET OF THE CLUB, EASTER 1909.

This Meet was successfully held at Fort William and Crianlarich from the 8th to the 13th of April, and was largely attended at both places. Perfect weather conditions prevailed during the first three days, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, but afterwards it was not so good.

Full details are not at hand at the time of going to press.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

THE small floor space of the Club Room has been still further encroached on by the purchase of an architect's set of drawers to hold the large six-inch and other maps placed flat. Some of the members of the Club suggest that it is about time that a room was hired to enable them to sit in chairs on the floor, and not in mid-air on tables or cupboards, but it would be a pity to deprive the members of the climbing exercise thus afforded.

The following are the additions to the Library since the last Report:—

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Packe (Charles). A Guide to the Pyrenees. 1862	Purchased.
Vaux (Frederic W.). Rambles in the Pyrenees, and A Visit to San Sebastian. 1838 - -	"
Russell (Count Henry). Pau and the Pyrenees. 1871 - - - - -	"
Paris (T. Clifton, B.A.). Letters from the Pyrenees . . . in 1842. 1843 - - - - -	"
Murray (Hon. James Erskine). A Summer in the Pyrenees. Second Edition. 2 vols. 1843 -	"
Border Lands of Spain and France, with an Account of a Visit to the Republic of Andorre. 1856 - - - - -	"
Spender (Harold). Through the High Pyrenees. 1898 - - - - -	"
Munro (Robert, M.A.). Ancient Scottish Lake- Dwellings or Crannogs. 1882 - - - -	"
Ski Club of Great Britain, Year-Book of the. 1908	W. Inglis Clark.
Oppenheimer (Lehmann J.). The Heart of Lake- land. 1908 - - - - -	The Author.
Benson (C. E.). British Mountaineering. 1909 -	Purchased.
King (Clarence). Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada (California). [Originally published, 1871.] 1903 - - - - -	"
Macdonald (W. Rae, F.S.A. Scot.). Notes on the Heraldry of Elgin and its Neighbourhood. ( <i>Ex Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland</i> , vol. xxxiv.) 1899 - - - -	The Author.
Eyre-Todd (George). Byways of the Scottish Border: a Pedestrian Pilgrimage. 1886 -	Purchased.

By whom presented  
when not purchased.

Bruce (Mary K. Esq.)	Memoir of John Veitch.	1846	Purchased.
Bishop (George's)	Tour through Sutherland and Caithness in 1760, with Introduction and Notes by Daniel William Kemp.	1888	"
Colquhoun (John)	The Moor and the Loch.	Third Edition. 1851	"
Lauder (Sir Thomas Dick, Bart.)	Highland Rambles.	2 vols. 1837	"
Gazetteer of Scotland.	Illustrated with an elegant Map. Dundee.	1802	"
Watt (William)	A History of Aberdeen and Banff.	1800	"
Lees (C. Cameron, LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.)	A History of the County of Inverness (Mainland).	1807	"
Mackay (E. J. Esq.)	A History of Fife and Kin- ross.	1807	"
Boulder Committee of the Royal Society of Edin- burgh.	Tenth Report of the. Illustrated.	1884	"
Geikie (Archibald)	The Geological Origin of the Present Scenery of Scotland. Contained in No. 1, Vol. I., 1868, of the <i>Journal of Travel and Natural History.</i>		"
Reid (William)	Excursions Illustrative of the Geology and Natural History of the Environs of Edinburgh.	1833	"
—	The Geology of Scotland and its Islands. Illustrations and Map.	1842	"
Köhl (J. G.)	Reisen in Schottland. 2 parts in 1 vol.	1814	"
Walker (John, D.D.)	Essays on Natural History and Rural Economy.	1812	"
St John (Charles)	Short Sketches of the Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands.	1872	"
Lyon (George, F.G.S.E.)	Sketch of the Geology of Scotland. With Coloured Maps.	1865	"
Roberts (Sir Randal, Bart.)	Glenmähra; or, The Western Highlands.	1870	"
Somers (Robert)	Letters from the Highlands; or, The Famine of 1847.	1848	"
Rambles in the Highlands and Islands of Scot- land.	Edited and enlarged by "Aliquis."	1883	"
Toddles's Highland Tour.	Illustrated.	1864	"

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
<b>Tobersnoyre: A Rollicking Tour in the Land of the Gael.</b> By Rag, Tag, and Bobtail. Illustrated. 1878 - - - - -	Purchased.
<b>Spindrift from the Hebrides.</b> By Spinnaker. Illustrated. 1881 - - - - -	"
<b>Legends of Strathisla, Inverness-shire, and Strathbogie.</b> 1851 - - - - -	"
<b>Carment (Samuel).</b> Scenes and Legends of Comrie and Upper Strathearn. 1882 - - - - -	"
<b>Dum (P.).</b> Summer at the Lake of Monteith. Second Edition. 1867 - - - - -	"
<b>Peeblesshire and its Historical Ruins, &amp;c.</b> With Map. 1874 - - - - -	"
<b>Peebles and its Neighbourhood, with a Run on Peebles Railway.</b> With Map. 1856 - - - - -	"
<b>Dunkeld, its Straths and Glens.</b> Illustrated. 1865 - - - - -	"
<b>North Berwick, The Geology of.</b> 1872 - - - - -	"
<b>Knox (John).</b> A Tour through the Highlands of Scotland and the Hebride Isles in 1786. 1787 - - - - -	"
<b>Traveller's Guide through Scotland and its Islands—</b>	
Second Edition. 1805 - - - - -	"
Sixth Edition. 2 vols. 1814 - - - - -	"
Eighth Edition. 2 vols. in 1. 1824 - - - - -	"
<b>Scottish Tourist and Itinerary.</b> Sixth Edition. 1836 - - - - -	"
<b>Principal Pleasure Tours in Scotland, An Account of the.</b> 1819 - - - - -	"
<b>Pleasure Tours in Scotland, A Guide to the.</b> 1825 - - - - -	"
<b>Murray (Alexander).</b> Scotland Described: a Series of Topographic Sketches. 1866 - - - - -	"
<b>Taylor and Skinner's Survey of the Roads of Scotland</b> - - - - -	"
<b>Travelling Map of Scotland.</b> John Thomson & Co., Edinburgh. 1832 - - - - -	"
<b>Map of North Britain or Scotland (prior to 1784)-</b>	"
<b>Map, Southern Part of Argyllshire.</b> John Thomson & Co., Edinburgh. 1824 - - - - -	"
<b>Twenty-one County Maps of Scotland.</b> J. Lothian, Edinburgh. 1834-35 - - - - -	"

(Each county is mounted separately on cloth. In the complete set there are thirty-five maps, divided into three divisions—South, Central, North. The maps for each division are put in a morocco pocket case. In the Club set two of the South Division are wanting and all the Central.)

1874.

THE CLUB

increased.

The following gentlemen have been good enough to present slides to the Club:—Messrs Wm. C. Smith (26), A. Parker (7), A. Fraser (8), J. N. Buchanan (1), W. Garden (1), W. Inglis Clark (22), A. E. Robertson (16).

W. W. Naismith.

SLIDES.

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## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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*The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions. These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.*

THE MEIKLE BIN WITH LANTERNS. — Mountaineers commonly enough start in the early morning by lantern light, or get benighted and finish a long day with this artificial aid. But to the writer, at least, it was a new idea to carry through a hill walk with "Excelsiors" from start to finish. On the 18th December the President and I left Milton of Campsie at 5.12 P.M., on a moonless night. The day had been wet and blustery, but the rain had then ceased, and the sky was clearing. Although very dark, we made our way for three-quarters of an hour by the light of the stars. By that time we had surmounted the steep brow of the Campsie Hills, above the farm of Shields, and the ground became rougher, so we lit up. Before long a strong breeze blew out first one candle, and then the other, and we blundered on among the peat bogs for a while in the dark. After banging up against a wire fence without seeing it, we managed to re-light one of the lanterns, and by keeping it sheltered under a waterproof, and by walking close together, we were able to move at a fair speed. Polaris was happily visible, except once when blotted out by a short snow-shower, and as our course was nearly north, it came in very "handy." The top of the Meikle Bin (1,862 feet) was gained in about two hours from Milton. A high wind swept the bare hill-top, and as the temperature was below freezing point, we were glad to button coats and put on gloves.

The terrestrial view was distinctly limited, though the Seven Stars and Orion looked down upon us. A solitary light in the west marked a lonely house on the Crow Road, and another to the eastward shone from a shepherd's cottage beside a tributary of the Carron. To the south-east we saw the sheen of the Kilsyth reservoir, and in the south-south-west the sky reflected a distant gleam of white light above Glasgow. This reflection made it unnecessary to use a compass when returning across the level moor. We lighted both lanterns and succeeded in keeping them burning, and after an hour of pretty rough going, the lights of Kirkintilloch came in sight.



Excepting one or two boggy places, which needed some slight care, our only fear was lest we should be taken for poachers or sheep-stealers! Our times were quite reasonable, and the expedition did not exceed an average daylight journey by more than half an hour.

Both Edinburgh and Glasgow are well supplied with glorious hill walks within reach of a short railway journey, and to those of us who are more or less confined in offices, and whose only weekly afternoon is apt to be taken up with other engagements, the Alpine folding lantern opens up great possibilities. With its help it ought not to be difficult for anybody to enjoy the pleasures of a hill scamper all the year round, if he is so "dispodged." As a rule he isn't!

W. W. N.

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SKI-ING IN THE MONADHLIATHS.—On 27th January the writer with a friend, H. F. W., had an expedition in the Monadhliath Mountains, climbing Sgurr Sgulain (3,015 feet). The whole distance covered on ski was over ten miles. No snow had fallen for more than a week, and in the Spey valley it lay only in patches, but it was continuous above 1,250 feet, except on the west sides of one or two ridges. Even there it was unnecessary to take off our ski, as we usually could follow lanes of snow among the heather; and if we had to slide across a few feet of grass or heather occasionally, what did it matter?

The expedition was much enjoyed, although the snow was crusted and in bad order for ski-ing. In the descent the pace was tremendous, and many unrehearsed pirouettes and somersaults were indulged in. The actual peak was done without ski, as the snow there was too icy to be pleasant.

Will the younger readers who have not yet tried ski-ing, allow an old fogey to urge them to take up a sport which bids fair to become a formidable rival of the axe and rope during the snowy months? Like skating, it takes a day or two to learn to control one's movements, and it is not enjoyed till that initial stage is passed.

W. W. N.

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THE LADIES' SCOTTISH CLIMBING CLUB has been in existence for barely a year, but it nevertheless can take its place in the ranks of active climbing clubs, having held three successful Meets in the Highlands, many Pentland walks, and practice climbs on the Salisbury Crags. The Editor has kindly allowed space in this *Journal* for a short notice of the second and third Meets.

The Second Meet was held at Crianlarich, from 31st December 1908 to 5th January 1909. Members present were:—Mrs Inglis Clark, Misses M. Inglis Clark, I. M'Bride, R. Raeburn, P. K. Ranken,

K. Stuart, and L. M. A. Smith. Guest: Miss H. M. Eckhard, Manchester.

On 1st January the ascent of Cruach Ardran was made by the two central snow gullies on the north face. Dr Inglis Clark and Mr C. Inglis Clark very kindly climbed with the members as teachers—the ladies, however, leading in both parties.

The ladies met Mr Raeburn, Mr Ling, and Dr Boyd on 2nd January at Luib, and from there made the ascent of Stobinian by a snow gully. Three ropes were used and in each case the ladies led their party up the gully, aided by the advice of the members of the S.M.C. who had so kindly arranged the climb. The descent was made to Crianlarich where the gentlemen were entertained to tea.

On 4th January Ben More was climbed from Ben More farm. A very good rock chimney was discovered which afforded the party some difficult climbing—it has been christened “the Water-cave Chimney,” which name amply explains itself!

Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather and the small quantity of snow on the hills, the meet proved thoroughly successful.

The Third Meet was held at Inveroran from 8th to 13th April 1909, and on this occasion the weather conditions were most favourable, the brilliant sunshine and dazzling snow on the hills giving grand Alpine effects. Members present were:—Mrs Inglis Clark, Mrs Douie Urquhart, Misses M. Inglis Clark, D. Gillies, I. M’Bride, R. Raeburn, P. K. Ranken, K. Stuart, and L. M. A. Smith. Guests:—Misses Hood, A. Ranken, and J. F. Smith.

Tempted by the glorious weather, two members took the 4 A.M. train to Crianlarich on 7th April, and made the ascent of Cruach Ardran by the central gully on the north face. The snow was very icy, necessitating four hours’ step-cutting before the summit was reached.

On 8th April a large party of thirteen, consisting of seven ladies and six members of the S.M.C., made three new ascents of Ben Dothaidh by the north corrie, the ladies in each party taking the lead.

By Friday the members were collected at Inveroran, and, in perfect weather, our party made the round of the three Clachlet peaks from Baa-bridge, while another ascended Stob Ghabhar.

Stob Ghabhar was also climbed on 10th April, and Achallader succumbed to the efforts of two parties, by snow gullies, in its northern corrie.

Unfortunately on Sunday and Monday the weather was stormy, and the ascent of Ben Toaig by two members formed the conclusion to a most successful Meet.

M. INGLIS CLARK,  
*Hon. Sec.*

## LETTER TO THE SECRETARY.

11 THE GROVE,  
SUNDERLAND, 20th April 1909.

DEAR MR SECRETARY,—It appears to me that to attempt to write a humorous account of the Easter Meet of the S.M.C. may involve me in some impertinent personalities which may be regarded with anything but pleasure, or a titillation of the diaphragm, *not* to say upheaval—by any one who felt discovered. Where all was so happy why should any one stir up rancour in your family? For yourself I have no fear after the lovely way in which you kept your temper during the dastardly pranks of that *doyen* of Dou aniers—that story alone was almost worth the journey we took.

Imagine to yourself then, that it is an ignorant outsider who has got invited to the Meet, and endeavours to enter into the spirit of the affair, and makes the following observations.

The Meet proper began by a parting; the officials, President, Secretary, and Treasurer going to one hotel with their immediate followers, including my "Little Father" in Scotland, and the rest, for the most part, to another hotel labelled "Garage," the latest arrivals having to be content with a third house of distinguished name suggestive of magnificent thinking.

Some young bucks of the Club had posed also as early worms on the day of assembly, and had appropriately been caught by Fairmaids of the Pentlands on Ben Doe—a dear experience under a cheap sun. Others had proved the truth of the adage, "The longest way round is the shortest way home," for they took a short cut over some Easy 'uns which brought them in even later than the train.

The stranger cannot point to anything positively funny about Good Friday; it was naturally good, even better, perhaps best. Except to those who are enthusiasts, it is a cause of ill-humour to be waked at 5 A.M. by the persuasive kicks of Boots, and the subsequent tramp of hobnailers overhead. Why does a man on the third floor put on his noisy brogues before shaving, and trot about his room above some tired eight o'clocker on the floor below? Well, does he? So every one was awake betimes, and out as soon as possible, intent on gaining an appetite equal to attacking the huge fish promised for dinner by the ex-President—a victim to his own lure after four days' toil in that loch whence man's necessities are sometimes taken. There were other fish seen on the table, but that's another story reminding one of Mr Dooley's mountain "clothed in althitude."

There is a hill near Fort William spelt Nevis, but called Kneevis, because that part of man's anatomy is brought strongly into play either in ascending, descending, or remaining in supplicating attitude at the bottom when despair says, "Fall on us."

This Ben, whose head was buried in snow, and his north face

plastered with fog crystals and frozen waterfalls, was pronounced to be almost bare ; in fact, there had been so little rain in the last month that the Observer was in despair over the pumps by which he empties his rain gauge tanks daily ; these, in default of water, had "got on air," and deranged the records. He was contemplating asking for a supplementary supply from the aluminium works at Kinlochleven to make up his average.

One finds out some queer things. The Editor has a private stone on the chin of the Ben's face, a mere ally-taw, a pill, which is called his "Boulder." He has it stuck at the bottom of the Tower Ridge to keep it from sliding farther down into the corrie. It may not mean much to say wild horses could not have dragged me over this landmark and up the steep above, but the seductions of two of the strongest men of the party prevailed on two of us to make the attempt. To be sure their qualifications as leaders are not disguised in their names. How does water run up-hill? By small channels, crannies, and passages—"catapillary" attraction. So does Ra(r)eburn, and his companion, "Cling"; what other combination could inspire more confidence in a fine weather bird? So we took the pill, hoping for the best, and became rigid afterwards. The air was so still most of the time that my gasps of terror had to be furtively indulged round a corner, lest those in front and above me had too great a strain put upon their abilities and got blown off the rocks. It was a little heartening to find we were the objects of awe and admiration to the rest of the companions gathered on the top of the mountain at a sufficient distance to escape any call to render first aid if needed. When the third man in order on the rope was struck on the head by a piece of ice dislodged by the leader's axe in clearing a way to fame, you could hear the victim's brains rattle—such are the effects of cold and terror. I noticed the same in my own head when a stone big enough to squeeze a lemon settled on my cap and made a red mark inside.

Earliest acquaintance with this ridge was a real Cook's excursion for me, for the estimable individual of that capacity who ministered to the observers on the mountain top, showed me the way down, what time he magnified the dangers of the awful GAPP. The dread was renewed this Good Friday, and as quickly dispelled when the leader made himself into a "looper," and skipped across the rocks in no time, ice being absent, and kicked steps in the snow above till near the top where it would have been perpendicular had it not overhung. This mountain of Nevis is sometimes covered with perpetual snow on the north side, while the south is clothed in herbage which is evergreen when not stones. The crowd had departed in twos and threes, the nearer a possible catastrophe approached to them, and we had the summit to ourselves as old King Sol, declining, painted the snow with royal mourning tints.

The Fisherman and the Big Photographer made a raid on the

Vitriolic Port. It is very old and stands in a green demijohn in Glen Nevis ; the modern distillery of Long John continues in the business still. This liquor was very powerful and could be used as a defence against enemies in more ways than one. The dregs when properly mulled were poured between the stones picked up by the invaded and arranged as a wall, proving a lasting bond. It has been thought that if the component parts of this matrix could be determined, a revival of the famous brand would have a large sale. To this end the B.P. distributed portions of the mixture to two members who wield the pestle with distinction, the hope of presently forming a syndicate gleaming in his eye. Intending investors please note how he gets on.

The Meenister was in evidence on Friday generously carrying some spare legs over the hill in case any one found their normal number insufficient for the task. The folk of the town were relieved to see him leave on Saturday afternoon for his own parish—"far up ta muir among ta heather"—not so those visitors who would gladly have "sat under him."

Beautiful condescension was shown to the party in the Garage by the officials, in many timely visits—one of them blandly deprecating that the *élite* were in his own crib. "We are all *élite*—99.9 per cent. of the whole Club are *élite*," with which the silent member could not disagree.

The perversity of human nature was demonstrated—very noticeable to one whose county is suffering from unemployment—in that certain members set out deliberately to make Aonach Beg, a steady young fellow in a good settled position. Their defence was that they were themselves driven to Steall and could not bear to see any one else respectable. In the same direction others having heard of a possible wedding went to see how would Polldhu. They saw her and considered her figure much overdone! A cold and wet Sunday making their voices thick they could only rush off saying Stob Ban(s) and went near to Kinlochleven in search of the church.

It was Juliet who said "Pairting is such sweet sorrer," and many were the sighs uttered on the station platform o' Monday morning as nearly half the Meet was sent to the South to the sound of the sacbut, halibut, and the groans of condemned soles. The clouds wept copious tears, and the Observer telephoned to break off the proposed business with the new works. This "off" morning was beguiled by the Secretary's instructive lesson on the drawbacks of cleanly living, before he left to sort his car. A curious and unlooked-for duty fell upon the Chief Butler when he found nearly a dozen men on his hands for luncheon!

One of the many delightful arrangements made by the Secretary was a personal affair, whereby he was conducted by the "Hairy Oubit" up the Red Staircase to the gratification of both, especially the leader.

THE ODD .1 PER CENT. NOT *élite*.





Winter snow.

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. X.

SEPTEMBER 1909.

No. 60.

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## COURAGE IN CLIMBING.

BY W. W. NAISMITH.

ARE mountain climbers any braver than other people? They are frequently credited with courage by persons who do not themselves climb, but is the reputation deserved?

I am afraid that the answer must be "no." Indeed, courage is too pretentious a word to apply to any quality called into exercise by the gentle mountaineer, or, at all events, if courage be needed, it is not of a very high order, because, while mountaineering takes a prominent place as a delightful and health-giving recreation, it is obviously not engaged in from the love of country or for the good of one's fellow-men.

The popular idea that climbing involves courage is, no doubt, founded on the equally mistaken notion that the sport is dangerous, and that its devotee takes his life in his hand whenever he goes for a climb—which is, of course, absurd. A few daring climbers, I suppose, run some risks, and have a fair chance of coming to grief, but the average mountaineer probably does not incur more danger to life than the man who goes in heartily for any one of half a dozen other favourite pastimes.

"I hope you have considered this step well, Janet," remarked an old bachelor minister to his servant, who had just announced her approaching nuptials, "for it is a serious thing getting married." "Aye, sir; but ye'll admit it's a far mair serious thing no' to get merrit!" Similarly,



although there is an element of danger in serious climbing, the writer's deliberate opinion is that it is more hazardous *not* to climb! In proportion to the large numbers of climbers living, the loss of life by accident is infinitesimal—probably not one in two hundred. But suppose that we even admit that one out of each hundred men who habitually climb hills shortens his life by forty years, it is surely no exaggeration if on the other side we claim that the practice of mountain-climbing—with all the benefits which accompany it, such as keeping down weight, muscular fitness, a better circulation, larger lung capacity, the incentive to temperate living, &c.—adds on an average five years to each climber's life. A simple calculation then brings out a large balance on the right side:— $99 \times 5 - 40 = 455$  years to the good, or  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years added to each man's expectation of life.

An old writer says that "a man is immortal till his work is done," and if he is ready for the call when it comes, he may just as well perish on a mountain-side as be bowled over by a motor car, or succumb to fatty degeneration of the heart. Moreover, in spite of a petition in the Litany, sudden death by accident would seem, if we judge from the experience of persons who have been knocked unconscious and recovered, to be "the mildest herald" to gently lead us into "the silent land."

The subject of courage is not often referred to in mountaineering literature, except in a jocular sense; possibly because, like other common virtues, such as honesty and truthfulness, its possession is always taken for granted, unless the contrary is proved.

Courage being modest and retiring, does not thrust itself upon the notice of any one, and most people forget all about it until they become aware some day of its temporary absence. Self-consciousness is apt to drive it away.

The writer's only qualification for attempting to deal with the subject is of a negative character, inasmuch as he has often been painfully aware of his lack of the quality we are discussing. But having nearly reached the period of life when one ought to begin to be "afraid of that which is high," I need not be so unwilling as a youngster

to make the admission. I shall therefore leave to some writer, who is better equipped, to deal with the positive side of the question, and content myself with a few rambling observations, relating for the most part to the want of courage.

One has heard of two kinds of brave men on a battlefield. There is the imperturbable type of soldier, plentifully endowed with animal courage, who appears to be impervious to fear. There is also the more highly strung man whose pallid cheek and trembling limbs, while under fire for the first time, prove that he is intensely uncomfortable ; but he, like his more stolid companion, sticks to his post through it all, and ultimately overcomes the weakness. If he objects to have a hole bored through him by bullet or bayonet, he is still more "afraid of being afraid," and perhaps he is quite as likely to win the Victoria Cross as his comrade.

We may assume that all rock and snow climbers possess some capacity for enjoying steep places, but they also may be grouped into those whose nerves never trouble them, and who scarcely know what fear is—a very small class, probably—and those who, although visited occasionally by qualms and tremors, and endowed with a vivid imagination which keeps them alive to all the dangers and risks, deliberately face and overcome these disagreeables, and enjoy themselves keenly in the process. So far as the writer's observation goes, the latter class includes the bulk of men who are really fond of climbing. The stolid men for the most part play golf in the valleys, pile on flesh, and "admire the mountains from below."

To enjoy climbing on steep ground something is certainly needed, whether we call it courage, or pluck, or merely good nerve, or a steady head. Whatever it is, it is assuredly not "moral courage." On the contrary, it takes much moral courage to say "no" when we are tempted to play truant and run off to our beloved hills. Moral courage is also sometimes called for to back up prudence, when the difficulties of a climb are beyond our powers, or when the weather conditions become unfavourable. The writer knew a schoolboy a long time ago, who was as shy as a

girl, and a moral coward if ever there was one, but when it came to tree-climbing he would likely be found a little higher up than any one else, perched on one of the topmost branches, which bent over under his weight.

If what is wanted is not moral courage, neither is it self-possession, for I once knew a gentleman who appeared to be well endowed with that attribute, but who confessed that he became giddy if he stood on a chair! Nor is the desideratum the same as the courage of a public speaker. A friend of mine, who could get up at a moment's notice and address an audience of a thousand people without turning a hair, told me that he had been several times in Switzerland, and that he was quite useless on steep ground, as he had no "head" at all.

It is very doubtful whether any mountaineers could without much practice, stand what bridge-builders, steeple-jacks, and other tradesmen do every day without thinking anything about it.

The following is quoted from an American engineer:—"Experienced bridge-erectors," he writes, "are never dizzy, and need rather to be restrained from acts of unnecessary danger and foolhardiness than to be safeguarded against falls. In the United States walking planks are seldom provided on any false work or span: the men walk on the track-ties or stringer-flanges, struts, and chords, and practically never fall, although they go fearlessly on long, high struts with flanges five inches wide, when the wind blows intermittently so hard that they have to lean far over to balance its pressure, and when the structure is covered with snow and ice."

Some years ago a steeple-jack's experiences were described, by a retired member of the craft, in one of the magazines. He stated that to apprentices learning this trade, the earliest attempts at climbing chimney stalks—by means of a series of short ladders fastened to large nails driven into the brickwork—are always disagreeable, and that the lads are only induced to remain by the prospect of earning high wages. But they soon become accustomed to scale exposed buildings without suffering from vertigo, and this state of immunity lasts for many years. A time comes,

however, according to the narrator, to every steeple-jack **when**, suddenly and without any warning, his nerve deserts him, and this should be taken as a warning to keep nearer *terra firma* in future.

If we cannot compete with such strong-headed workmen, all of us are probably conscious of occasionally doing with ease on a mountain what we could not do in cold blood in a city. Would many mountaineers, I wonder, care to emulate the example of a deceased London clergyman and a distinguished Alpine pioneer, who when the spire of his church needed repairs, went up himself to see how the workmen were getting on? The spectacle of the revered vicar mounting the outside ladders, with his coat tails flying in the morning breeze, must have been a very attractive one to his juvenile parishioners. We can also picture to ourselves the astonishment of the workmen when "Passon" appeared unexpectedly in their midst!

It has been said that "fear is itself more fatal and injurious than the circumstances which evoke it." These are generally to a large extent illusory or unreal, and disappear when doggedly faced. How do climbers comport themselves when facing a difficulty? Some of them become unusually cheerful and loquacious, or take the opportunity to deliver a short discourse on the geology of the district; others become preternaturally silent, or even a trifle irritable. While one climber smokes "like a limekiln," another keeps his pipe in his mouth, but allows it to go out. One man announces the fact that he has a wife and children in his happy home, another may hum a verse of a popular song, while yet another whistles the 121st Psalm to the tune of "French."

If personal allusions are permissible, perhaps three incidents taken from the writer's early Zermatt experiences may help to illustrate his view that what meets men *unexpectedly* in the course of a climb has often an unsteady effect, until they have time to pull themselves together. On the first occasion, I had as a greenhorn engaged Alois Pollinger to take me up the Riffelhorn, anticipating an easy scramble. He unfortunately had no English and I no German, so our conversation was limited.

Somehow or other Pollinger thought I wished to ascend the Horn from the glacier, and accordingly led me round to the back of the peak, where he pointed to an apparently vertical chimney above me, and asked if I would go up there. I saw that there was some mistake, and tried to explain. My guide did not understand me, but he did the best thing possible. While I scanned in much trepidation the formidable rocks, which seemed to be quite destitute of holds, Pollinger plucked some edelweiss and put it in my buttonhole. Then he clapped me on the shoulder, and beamed on me with his big friendly face. This was evidently a man to be trusted, so I dismissed my groundless fears, and let him tie me up and take me wherever he liked. I enjoyed the scramble thoroughly.

Not long afterwards, when Pollinger had gone off to the Oberland, I crossed the Adlerjoch with only an indifferent guide. The pass is usually a fairly easy snow climb, but the summer of 1887 had been exceptionally hot, and we found that all the snow had melted off the steep part of the ascent, leaving a slope of hard, grey ice. You could have curled on it had it been level, but it lay at an angle of about 50°—steep enough to let me count the nails in my guide's boots above me. After we were committed to this ghastly ice-wall I realised that the expedition was a bigger thing than I had bargained for. The guide did not relish it either, judging from his growling soliloquy in *patois*; but to give him his due, he worked hard with his axe, and for nearly two hours sent splinters of ice showering down on me. It was my first experience of "unmitigated ice," and my balance was not improved by carrying a knapsack. I tried to get a grip with my ice-axe but failed, and did not know how to fashion a handhold. I then looked down to see where the party would go if either of us slipped—a stupid thing to do—and I saw, 300 feet below us, a network of gaping crevasses. The result was that I began to feel very bad—more uncomfortable than I ever felt before or since. It was not dizziness but sheer funk. The impulse to speak to my guide, however, was somehow resisted, and after trying to lift my eyes to the hills, I set myself to work deepening the steps. My heart, which had been

down in my hobnailers for a while, gradually returned to its proper domain, and by-and-by the slope eased off, and we reached a tongue of snow that took us to the col.

On the third occasion, I ascended the Unter Gabelhorn alone, when two trying episodes occurred. A guide had taken me up the peak a year or two before by an unusual route which included an awkward traverse along a very narrow ledge, where there were no handholds and we merely rested our hands on a steep slab above. I was on the look-out for this ledge, but must have varied the line of ascent, and so got among some horribly loose rocks. First one rock came away in my hand, and immediately afterwards I stepped on a large block, much weathered and looking as if it had lain there for ages. Nevertheless, it turned slowly over, and, after giving me nice time to jump off, vanished into the depths of the Trift-thal, and created such a rumpus that I felt positively ashamed. A short distance farther on was the upper end of the ledge just described, so that I had passed it, and there was no need to go along it; but, for fun, I must of course do the traverse and come back again! I started gaily enough, but when half-way across the unexpected happened. A loose stone lay on the middle of the ledge out of sight, and when I trod upon it, it turned over under my foot. Happily I did not lose my balance, but I got such a fright that I turned tail ignominiously without completing the traverse. On my descent from the summit, the defeat rankled in my mind, so "hardening my heart" I went along the ledge, and this time without mishap.

Is the faculty of enjoying precipitous places congenital or acquired? "Partly both," as a Glasgow undertaker said when asked by a friend on board a Clyde steamer whether he was down on business or pleasure—"Partly both, I've a corp in the bow." Some young fellows have probably been born with steadier heads than others, but practice and perseverance will, I believe, enable every one to enjoy steep climbing who has any spirit of adventure in him; and if he is destitute of that he had better stay "downstairs." A member of a mountaineering club never succumbs to actual giddiness, nor is he likely to be seriously incon-

veniened by fear, but I suspect that if we were all perfectly frank in relating our experiences, we should have to tell of many minor shocks and thrills and sensations, all allied to fear in their origin. The effect of practice is that the places which excited these unpleasant sensations at first, gradually lose their power to disturb the climber, and he becomes more and more callous, so that he soon begins to really enjoy difficulties which troubled him a good deal in his rudimentary efforts. In climbing snow or rocks familiarity does *not* breed contempt, but it enables us to see things in their true proportions, to appreciate real dangers, to ignore imaginary ones, and particularly to gauge what we can do.

Mountaineering at home, and especially when attempting new expeditions, requires more pluck than climbing with good guides famous Alpine peaks by well-known routes. There the rocks are often so scored with nail-marks, and so littered with "dead marines," that nobody can miss the way without considerable ingenuity. Into such places the unknown or unexpected element hardly enters, and that is, I repeat, the most common cause of loss of nerve when climbing. The veriest beginner will follow a guide up a peak like the Ober Gabelhorn without any searchings of heart.

Most men, I believe, feel more at home in difficult places at the end of a climbing holiday than at the beginning, and the same thing is more or less true of a single day's expedition. We are more impervious to "thrills" in the afternoon than in the early morning, and if I mistake not this accounts for the descent of steep rocks being often accomplished more comfortably than their ascent—not because it is easier, for it isn't, but because the climber is more hardened.

In the cultivation of a steady head, is there anything we can do to "assist nature," as the doctors say? The administration of "Dutch courage" will certainly not supply a substitute for the real thing! When we are reasonably satisfied that a climb is justifiable, let us go ahead, nothing doubting, and throw fear to the winds. Once embarked on a climb, if unbidden thoughts seek to enter, *obsta*

*principiis*, and refuse to harbour a suggestion of danger. Elaborate efforts to steer clear of all risk may have a contrary effect. When the bridge was being built across the Zambesi below the Victoria Falls, a net that had been slung underneath to ensure the safety of the workmen had to be removed, as they complained that the sight of it made them nervous!

If we accustom ourselves, little by little, to do the things we are afraid of, they will gradually cease to frighten us, and that no doubt holds good in mountaineering as in other walks of life. Constant practice will do wonders.

In the event of our feeling shaky at some stiff place, I believe that our best plan is to devote our whole mind and attention to the business in hand, and occupy ourselves in deepening the steps in front of us, making handholes in ice, anchoring the party, attending to the rope, or otherwise. The harder we work the better. It will also be "judicious" not to needlessly survey the landscape between our feet when we are far from an anchorage.

If during a solitary climb a short pitch be encountered that looks as if it might give trouble in the descent, it may be advisable to descend and re-ascend the place while the details are fresh on our memory, so that any anxiety about getting down may be dismissed. The authorities, I know, decry solitary climbing of any severity as unjustifiable in all circumstances, and far be it from me to say one word to encourage rashness, which is only a distant relative of courage. But, subject to proper precautions, there is no doubt about the reality of the "fearful joy" referred to by Sir James Ramsay at our last Dinner. When an unroped man swings by his hands, say across a gap in a ledge, where the momentary relaxing of a few small muscles would of necessity launch him into the next world, the situation has a peculiar zest for some queer people.

The cure for fear of all kinds is to be found in its opposite, namely, trust or confidence; and applying this rule to climbing, I think it will be found that our confidence may, can, or must consist of—*first*, trust in an unseen arm shielding us from harm; *second*, the confidence arising from



the experience of many past difficulties overcome ; and *third*, reliance upon our climbing companions. As regards the last point, it has generally been my good fortune to climb with comrades who seemed to be blest with more nerve than myself, but I can imagine that it would be very demoralising to accompany people who were obviously unsteady from fear. Many of us must have admired the smiling composure shown by ladies and even by children while climbing steep rocks. Perhaps they fail to realise the risks, but the chief cause of their tranquillity is, no doubt, their confidence in the man who is holding the rope.

Nobody ought to be discouraged from taking up the glorious sport of climbing because of an element of danger in it, for that can be reduced to a minimum by the exercise of prudence, mixed with a small quantity of the virtue which we have been considering.

## SKI-RUNNING IN SCOTLAND.

BY ALLAN ARTHUR,

*Member of Scottish Ski Club ; Member of Ski Club of Great Britain.*

THE sport of ski-ing has come to stay. It makes each winter a growing number of devotees, and as it is at its best and most to be enjoyed on the mountains, it is the mountaineer who can best appreciate its charms and enjoy its exhilaration.

The members of the S.M.C., then, are the men to whom this fascinating sport should most appeal, and the hope that it may do so must be the excuse for the writing of the present article. If its appearance should "enthuse" to closer acquaintance those who already know something of the delights of ski-ing, or inspire those who have never yet tried it to take it up, I will feel that I have been well repaid in trying to bring before the notice of the S.M.C. members a sport which I personally think is second to none in its attractions and possibilities.

The word is pronounced, not as spelt, but with the *k* soft as "she," and to us men is bound to prove attractive after the formal, and often difficult and embarrassing, introduction has been successfully accomplished.

I well remember my first experience on ski. I spent the first fortnight of 1906 at Villars-sur-Ollon in the Rhone Valley, and was told by an enthusiast that once I had taken up ski-ing I would drop skating and tobogganing in its favour. I did not believe my friend, and when I returned to the hotel for lunch one forenoon, very wet, uncomfortable, and discouraged after tumbling about for two hours in soft, sticky snow, I was more than ever convinced that I never would be able to keep my balance on such unwieldy understandings. After lunch, however, and in a happier frame of mind, I determined to have another go. By this time the thaw of the forenoon had given place to keen frost, and with the snow in much better condition my opinion changed completely, and from that time forward I

became an enthusiastic convert. My friend's prognostication was a correct one, as the remainder of my time in Switzerland was spent almost entirely in learning to master the slippery ski. I am convinced that it only wants a beginning, and will then for itself draw many recruits from the ranks of mountaineers. After all, ski-running at its best is not pottering up and down practice slopes near the hotel, but it is making use of the ski on the mountains which, while adding to the climber new sensations, will do so in addition to, and not at the expense of, the well-known pleasures of mountaineering.

The types of the ski and their bindings in most common use are three—the Alpine ski with "Lilianfeldt" or metal binding, those with "Ellersen" or thong binding, and the Norwegian ski with the "Balat" or slipper binding. For beginners the Alpine ski, with plain surface and rigid binding, is perhaps the best, because it is easier to learn on than the ski with Ellersen bindings, while the Norwegian ski, with grooved blades and leather slipper, although more difficult to master, combines the flexibility of the Ellersen and the rigidity of the metal binding without the disadvantage of the latter, viz., the greater chance of a broken or sprained ankle or knee in case of an awkward fall, which at first, at any rate, is by no means an uncommon experience. I have tried all the three types mentioned above, and, for my own part, have no hesitation in recommending the "Balat" binding as much the safest and most suitable for our Scottish hills. As regards the length, one ought to be able to put the palm of the hand flat on the top of the ski when the arm is stretched up to one's full reach. Much longer ski than this are used for racing in Norway, where the surface of the snow is invariably good, but for ordinary touring and hill work here the length should, if anything, be less rather than more than that stated above.

So much for preliminaries—and high time, too, say some of my readers, but preliminaries are necessary before one goes very far into anything new.

Like all other sports and occupations, ski-ing becomes easy when one knows the way, but as steady running depends on so many things, such as steepness of gradient,

change of slope, deep, soft, hard, or iced snow, strength of wind, correctness of balance, and a hundred and one other things—the ability to keep one's feet always or otherwise is, I think, little criterion of one's standing as a ski-runner.

I will next say a little about the snow conditions commonly prevailing in Scotland before going on to relate the experiences of one or two typical days. Probably most of the S.M.C. members know far more about Scottish snow than I do, but these conditions for mountaineering and for ski-ing are approached from two totally different points of view. Sometimes one meets with ideal snow, but unfortunately this is not often the case in large fields. By ideal snow I mean that after several heavy falls of snow, covering the ground to a depth of from two to five feet or more, a bad thaw has set in, followed by a sharp frost, and then a fall of snow of three or four inches. This affords one a solid foundation to work on, while the fresh coating of powdery snow on the top enables one to get a good grip of the surface, and thus maintain one's balance in a satisfactory manner. The running in such snow is very fast (thirty or forty miles an hour being quite common), but one must be careful not to venture on to too steep slopes, this especially being the case while ascending, as the snow may break away. When descending it is, after a little practice, an easy matter to alter one's direction of motion relatively to the slope and also the relative positions of one's feet to one another, which enables the skier to keep his balance and to get quickly away from any patch of snow that he might find troublesome to negotiate. Much more common snow conditions, however, on our Scottish hills consist of alternate patches of soft or sticky and iced or slippery snow into which the ski will not bite. Practice, of course, enables one to keep one's balance fairly well while crossing such snow, but it is often very difficult, as no sooner has one got the proper balance on an iced patch than he is into a soft drift, and if instinctively and at once he does not alter his balance to meet the new conditions, as his body is travelling faster than his ski, he inevitably finds himself nose down in the snow, the points of his ski deep

in it, his heels in the air, and his stick perhaps 100 feet farther down the slope. It is this glorious uncertainty, especially when travelling fast, that makes the sport such an exciting and popular one. As long as the skier can run straight down the slope, with the blades of both ski flat and parallel, it is comparatively easy to maintain the upright position, but it becomes much more difficult when the angle of the slope entails stemming with one or both feet, especially on icy fields. Perhaps it would be well to describe what stemming really is, as on a hillside it is a most necessary accomplishment. One ski, called the running ski, is kept parallel to the direction of motion, and on this ski almost the whole weight is put, the knee being bent as required. The steeper the slope, the more is the knee bent, and *vice versa*, but this is only learned by practice. The other ski, called the stemming ski, is kept at an angle to the direction of motion, the points of both ski almost touching. The knee of this leg is bent in towards the other knee, so that the edge of the ski, and not the flat, is on the snow surface. Some little weight is put on this foot, depending again on the angle of slope and the pace, but if due to some unevenness on the surface, more weight than ought to be is for a moment thrown off the runner and on to the stemmer, the latter at once runs across the former with the result that one's legs become tied in a knot, and one is thrown gently or otherwise to the ground.

This balance difficulty becomes much greater in double stemming, where both ski are at an angle to the direction of motion, and both are equally runners and stemmers. Double stemming is of course only resorted to where the slope is very steep, and where one wants to descend very cautiously. Of course, it is difficult on paper to give those who have never been on ski a fair impression of the difficulties, &c., which they are apt to imagine as unsurmountable. This, of course, is not so, as a very little experience of ski-ing will at once prove. It is all, however, very largely a matter of balance, and this, as in everything else, only comes with practice.

As one nears the hill tops, especially on the sides

exposed to the force of the prevailing winds, one finds that the snow surface takes the form of waves. Where possible, the skier should run along and not across those snow waves, otherwise progression is often very unpleasant. Often too, the tops are so wind-swept and icy, that one is better to take off one's ski, and carry them, as little progress can be made, especially on ground covered with boulders and scree.

As to ascending, if it is continuous, one should vary the method of ascent, turning repeatedly, to prevent the motion becoming monotonous.

Go easily for a bit, try rising six or nine inches sideways with each step forward, then herring-boning, by crossing the heel of one ski over the heel of the other alternately. The ski will then be at right angles, and the ski runner should face right up the direction of the slope, while he leans on the sticks for support. If only one stick is used, it should always be on a higher level than the skier. As a rule, I use two sticks, the one being a strong bamboo pole about 6 feet 6 inches long, with an iron spike and 3 inch plate at one end, and the other, a light bamboo one, with swivel pig-skin basket at the foot for support on the snow. In mounting, one stick is held in each hand, the left-hand stick helping the right ski, and the right-hand stick the left ski, both pushing from behind. When coming down, the basket of the lighter stick is hooked over the pole, and the two, held tightly in both hands, are used as one. Too much dependence should not be placed on the pole. It should not be used much in descending, except for making sharp S turns down a steep slope, the breaking required being done as much as possible by stemming. A beginner should not have a stick at first, otherwise he depends too much on his stick, and too little on his own balancing powers, which is a bad habit, and much more easily acquired than cured.

In Norway and Switzerland little straps of hide or fur are fastened to the blades of the ski to prevent back slipping when going up, but as I have never tried them, I cannot say anything about the advantage of using them, although I should think it would be considerable. They

are of course removed at the top, and the ski are often then waxed for the run down. Many preparations are made specially for this, such as ski wax, Bercolin, Skiol, &c. These however, can only be got in Norway and Switzerland, but I have found, that ordinary floor polish makes a very good substitute, after it is thoroughly rubbed in, and used with considerable elbow grease. Ski can now be got in this country, either in London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, or Dundee, but I think probably the best way to obtain them is to write direct to Och Frères, Montreux, or other Swiss makers. Although the cost is considerably more than that of those purchased locally, one is sure that one gets the genuine article.

From my experience of the last four winters, I think, that one could count on having the best ski-ing conditions in Scotland from about 10th February till 15th March, but of course this varies, and depends almost entirely on the season, and also on the district to which one goes.

I am quite sure, however, that in an average winter one could get good ski-ing from the middle of December or earlier till the end of March, if one studied the weather reports and did not mind carrying one's ski, sometimes to a level of 1,500 feet or thereby. At the same time, it is certainly preferable to leave and return on ski to the hotel where one is staying, and this too, I think could quite often be accomplished if the centre of operations were carefully considered and selected beforehand. Kingussie, Aviemore, Pitlochry, Tyndrum, and Kingshouse would, in a normal winter, all give the skier plenty of opportunity for sport.

In February 1906, on three successive Fridays I left Glasgow by the 6.10 P.M. north express, arriving at Pitlochry about 9.30 P.M., where I spent the night. On the first of these Saturdays, I had a good day on Ben Vrackie, although the snow was rather soft and heavy. The following Saturday I spent on the hills due south of Pitlochry. Although I was never over 1,700 feet, the snow all day was in splendid condition, and I was able to leave, and come back to the hotel on my ski, and even crossed the Tummel on them. Needless to say, for the latter traverse I also had the assistance of a boat. The view all round was

exquisite, and as I returned about 5.30 P.M. in the evening, ready for a good high tea, the light on the frosty snow reminded me of the Swiss afterglow. The third Saturday's expedition proved to be the best of the three. Two of the members of the Ski Club of Great Britain, who were staying at Kingussie, had wired me on the Friday to come on there, but as I could not leave town before 6 P.M., I had to reply that I could not manage it. After arriving at Pitlochry, however, I discovered that I could get an early local train to Blair Atholl, where I caught the Inverness express, due at Kingussie at 8 A.M. It was a morning to delight the skier's heart, when I tumbled out of bed shortly after 4 A.M., with a clear crisp atmosphere, and not less than twenty degrees of frost. After breakfasting at Kingussie, and much to the amusement of the villagers, the three skisters, on a perfect morning, with perfect snow, and at peace with all the world, started off for the top of Carn a Fhreiceadain (2,861 feet), which was reached about 1 P.M. We had lunch near the summit, in a blazing hot sun, and notwithstanding the heat, the snow was as keen and dry as any I ever skied on in Switzerland. The glorious views, too, of the Cairngorm giants, under their white mantle and not twenty miles away, were truly magnificent. We then ran down to Ben Vrackie (2,618 feet), and Meale a Chocaire (2,294 feet) and continued on, with many a good run, and some Telemark and Christiania swings (the latter done by the other two men only), and got back to the village about 4 P.M. to find a crowd of about two hundred lining the road to witness our return. My two friends spent some time longer in the district, accomplishing some excellent expeditions among the Cairngorms, most of which they conquered, and also teaching some of the natives how to use ski, while I reluctantly, but very satisfied with my excellent day, returned, as on the two former occasions, by the Grampian Corridor due in town at 9 P.M. I had another excellent day in March, going down to Bridge-of-Weir by a morning train, putting on ski there, and journeying *via* Queen's Hill (1,673 feet) and Misty Law (1,663 feet) to Lochwinnoch, a distance of about eighteen miles, and thence back by train. During



the winter of 1907 I had several good days near Amulree, but otherwise had little opportunity.

With my wife and two members of the Scottish Ski Club, I spent the first week of 1908 at Newtonmore, and we had several good expeditions. Unfortunately there was little snow below 1,000 feet, but above that level we had all we required, and the higher one got the better and deeper did the snow become. There was very keen frost during the whole week, and the bright sun added very much to our enjoyment. On three different days some of us got to the top of A'Chailleach (3,045 feet), while another good expedition was to Meall na Cuaich (3,120 feet). We unfortunately started out too late on this occasion, and so did not manage to get to the top of the hill. As we approached it from the north, the snow was very hard and icy, and as the slopes were too steep for good ski-ing we made very slow progress. The day was, however, an enjoyable one, although we did not attain our object.

The winter of 1909 was a fairly good one for the skier, although what falls of snow there were, on the low land at any rate, disappeared very quickly. Notwithstanding, I have had several very enjoyable and interesting expeditions. One of these was on the hills above Glen Luss, Loch Lomond, in February, where, although there was not much snow below 1,300 feet, an excellent day was spent on the slopes of Beinn Ruisg (1,939 feet), and at the summit the snow was quite good. The slopes on all the hills around Glen Luss are excellent for ski-ing, being smooth and very free from rocks; but unfortunately the snow does not lie for very long, so that one must take one's chance when it occurs. Another glorious day was spent on Ben Ledi, Callander, along with three other members of the Scottish Ski Club. When we left the hotel at 9 A.M. the sun was just rising, and lighting up the snow-covered peak of the Ben, and the scene was quite Alpine. We had to carry our ski from the Pass of Leny to about 1,400 feet level, but above this to the top (2,875 feet) we had plenty of snow, and in good order too. I was twice on the top, ascending again after coming

down almost to the snow-line, and the condition of the snow may be imagined from the time taken for the last descent, which was about ten minutes for 1,500 feet. As we returned to Callander in the clear evening air, we one and all agreed that even in Switzerland such an expedition, on such a day, could not well be beaten. I must add a note about the Ben Nevis expedition at the S.M.C. Easter Meet in April. Naismith and I carried our ski to the foot of the Tower Ridge, and in the Allt a Mhuilinn Coire had some excellent running. From about 300 feet below the arête joining Carn Mor Dearg and Ben Nevis, which we followed to the top of the Ben, we again carried our ski, but were well rewarded for our labour, as on returning *via* the path we had some fast and very good running down to the level of the half-way hut. Unfortunately the rainfall during the previous six weeks had been only a fraction of an inch, and therefore the amount of snow lying was much below the average.

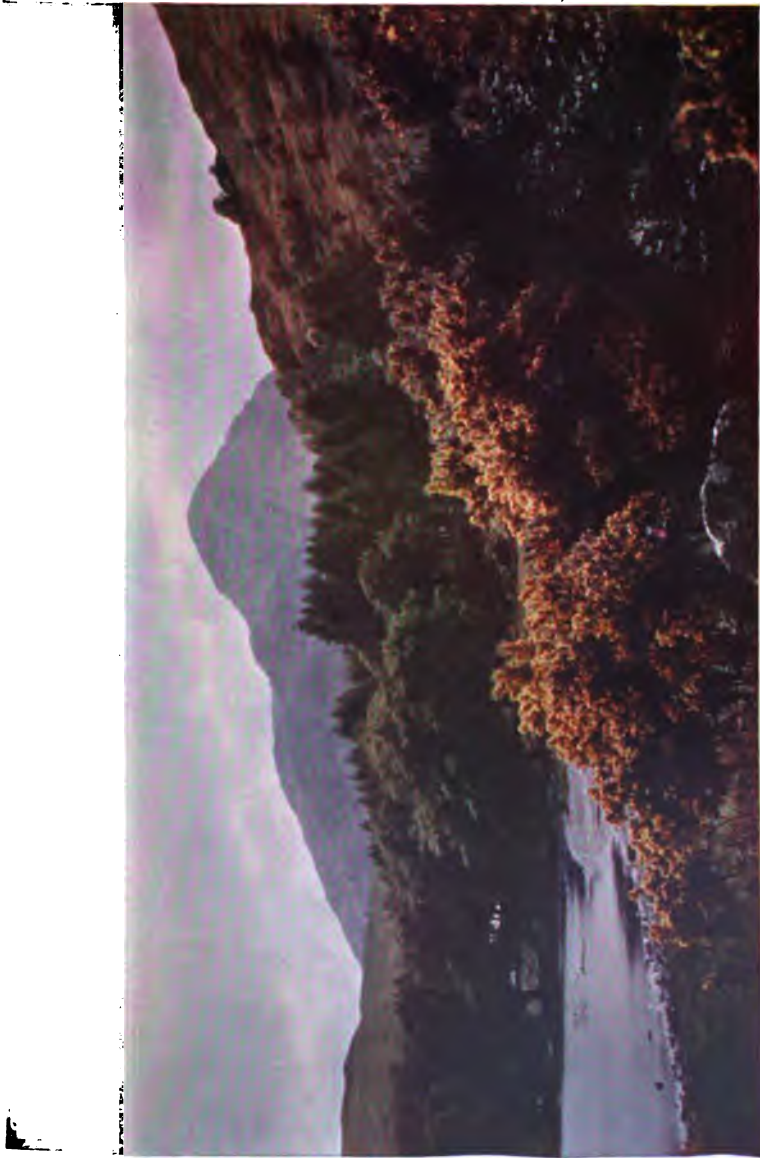
In conclusion I can only repeat what I stated to start with, viz., that ski-ing only wants a beginning, and I have no fear that amongst mountaineers it will become most popular. We have two clubs in this country, both formed with the objects of encouraging and extending the sport—the Ski Club of Great Britain and the Scottish Ski Club, either of which will be glad to enrol new members. Weekly weather reports are issued by the clubs from the different centres, and will often give one the opportunity of having a good day's ski-ing, which otherwise would not be thought of.

If I can be of any assistance to any one interested, I shall esteem it a great privilege to do what I can to further this excellent sport. I must apologise that so much of this article has been egotistical, but as all the expeditions and experiences have been personal, it has been difficult in describing them to avoid the use of the first personal pronoun. My last word is—Make a start and keep it up till you master the art a little, and very soon, if I am not mistaken, you will be down badly with the ski fever, which I question if even Father Time will cure.

PHOTOGRAPHY IN COLOURS FOR  
MOUNTAINEERS.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

THERE are few of us who have not longed for some photographic process which would reproduce the colours of nature in all their variety and intensity. The spring time and summer lay their magic touch on the landscape of winter, and a new life stirs in it—a life of colour. Autumn comes, and again the wizard wand is waved, the now sombre lines of late summer being replaced by the many shades of yellow, red, and brown. The merest tyro in photography must have noticed that all natural subjects are not equally interpreted by the camera, and that while the harvest field with straining reapers, or the jagged mountain range, are grateful subjects, there are others such as the wasted moor, which seem to baffle the powers of photography. Why is this? It seems to me that the answer lies in the varying share that form and colour take in producing an effect that gives us pleasure. There are certain districts in Scotland which charm the eye, but somehow or other are non-photographic. The eye sees beauty in them; the camera fails to reproduce it. On the other hand, there are districts where photographs seem competent to fairly recall the charm of natural beauty. As an example of the first, I venture to suggest the Cairngorms, or many parts of the hilly Lowlands. Of the second, the view across the Firth of Lorn from Ballachulish to Ardgour, or even the sacred precipices of Ben Nevis itself. A comparison of these subjects will show that *colour plus form* is more easily represented photographically than a minimum of form *plus colour*. This was first borne in on me when, after a successful photographic holiday in the Tirol, I compared my results with those obtained in the Highlands of Scotland. My feeling was that the Tirolese photographs did more justice to the Tirol than the Highland ones did to Scotland. In other words, the steeper



*W. Inglis Clark.*

CROIS FROM INVERUGLAS.

*June 19th, 1909.*



slopes of the Tirol more equally impressed the eye and the camera than did the softer outlines of our northern land. How often one has gazed across some featureless moor, and been enchanted by the delicate hues of moss and heather changing with kaleidoscopic rapidity under the light and shade of an April day. But try and reproduce this with the camera in black and white, and the result is failure. Yet many of our artists produce works, the glory and charm of which is the moor. 'Tis the colour that gives the moor its value, if we except those emotions aroused by considerations of solitude, desolation, or mere extent. Then, again, who is there that has stood on rugged Blaven and looked down the long depression of Sligachan Glen to where pinnacled Sgurr nan Gillean bristles to the sky? Is it the mere outline of the peak that fascinates the eye and draws it back and back again to scan its rocky crest or scree-strewn flanks? I freely admit that this is possible in certain lights, when the leaden sky saddens colour and hushes down romance. But the clouds break, and a shaft from Phœbus scatters the gloom. The distant peak now glows with the blue of a subdued turquoise, or melts away in a sheen of rich purple brown against a dark background of northern cloud. At such a time we long for the brush of the artist to transfer to canvas these colours, and crystallise for ever those visions of the hills. The rise of colour photography has placed in the hand of the mountaineer the means of so recording the real impressions of the Highlands. As yet it is in its infancy, but it has burst on a delighted public with so much of perfection and certainty that there is little to prevent any one of our members from early testing its powers. It is with the object of stimulating this that the Editor has kindly allowed me to write this paper. I may here point out that there are many people—perhaps even noted mountaineers—who derive but little enjoyment from the colours of nature. To them a picture in black and white is almost as satisfactory as a photograph in colours. And then there is the large number of those who are colour blind in varying degrees, some grouping all the varying shades of browns as one, or even scarce distinguishing them from black. It has been borne

on me repeatedly in public lecturing that the lantern slides toned in monochrome blue receive at least twice as much applause as those in artistic shades of brown and brown reds. From this I gather either that blue is more easily recognised as such than is brown, or that the public think blue pictures more resemble nature than do those in brown. The latter conclusion would, I think, be at variance with all ordinary artistic taste. In this paper I have not to deal with the rendering in monochrome of mountain landscape. I personally think, however, that in the lantern, effects not so truthful, but perhaps quite as effective, may be obtained without recourse to a natural colour photograph.

Of the history of Colour Photography I propose to say nothing, for many workers have laid the foundation of modern processes. I can hardly, however, avoid saying a little about the theory of the process. I shall assume that all our members are familiar with the general principles of photography. What now remains is to see how these have been developed so as to yield pictures in natural colours. We have been taught that white light can be reproduced by the mixing of various coloured rays, and indeed the spectrum gives us a clue to this. But it is not necessary to use all the colours of the spectrum to attain our object.

It can readily be shown that all shades of colour can be reproduced either by blending the colours red, green, and blue, or their complementary colours, greenish blue, pink, and yellow, and on this is founded modern colour photography. I need hardly say, that as yet, no successful process has been devised whereby a developed plate receives a deposit of multi-coloured particles producing natural colours. All types of colour photographs are in reality modifications of the well-known three-colour process. In its simplest form three negatives of the same subject are taken through three coloured glasses or screens, viz., red, green, and blue. It is evident that the negative taken through the red screen will show a deposit of silver corresponding to the red light which, emitted from the landscape, has passed through the screen, to the exclusion of the other colours. So also with the green and blue. If

we now make positives from these negatives, we have a black deposit corresponding to the colour screen used. The black deposit represents the complementary colour, and if we can change it from black to that colour, it is possible to reproduce the original colour of the landscape. It is easy to tone the positive to a greenish blue, by various processes, and the positive from the red screen is therefore toned in this way. The positive from the green and blue screens require to be changed to pink and yellow respectively. This is not done chemically, but by printing on celluloid films sensitised with bichromate of potassium. In this way we get a lantern plate toned blue from the red screen, and celluloid prints stained pink and yellow from the green and blue screens. When these are superimposed so that the three images fall exactly over each other, the original scene is reproduced in the original colours, if the tints have been properly adjusted. But it is a big "if." The whole process is a delicate one and takes much time, yet, in the hands of an expert, it yields exquisite transparencies, well suited for the lantern. There are drawbacks, however. The shades of colour are in the hands of the worker, and he may exaggerate an effect, or entirely distort it if he desire or be colour blind. In general, also, it is difficult to get the infinite delicacy of tints, so that three-colour transparencies run the risk of being crude in colour, and (in the lantern) unreal in effect. On the other hand, the three-colour is the only process applicable to paper. How this is accomplished would take me beyond the scope of this article. For the benefit of those who propose to try this process, I may say that panchromatic plates, sensitive to all colours, are a *sine qua non*. The three coloured screens cost but a few shillings from Messrs Wratten & Wainwright, and ordinary dark slides complete the equipment. The process is not suited to conditions of changing light. As not less than one minute, and frequently three minutes, may elapse between commencing the first exposure and ending the last, clouds will have moved, and even the shadows of near objects will have travelled. In consequence, while the stationary objects will be in register



(for the three images) and show correct colours, the moving objects will show the blue, pink, and yellow, not above each other, but spread, giving an unnatural appearance. I have therefore learned from bitter experience that passing clouds are almost fatal to a successful three-colour photograph.

*Screen Plate Photography.*—About two years ago the world was startled by the announcement that Lumière & Co., the great French photographic firm, had put on the market a plate which, when developed, gave a picture in natural colours. The "Autochrome," as it was called, like most new productions, had many defects, and it required enthusiasm to persevere under the numerous difficulties which at first met the photographer. Many of these defects have been remedied, and on 1st April 1909 the price was lowered to 2s. 6d. for four lantern-plate, 3s. for four quarter-plate, and 7s. 6d. for four half-plate sizes, at which figure it now stands. Before referring to the use of these plates it is necessary briefly to refer to their construction, and relation to the three-colour process. An Autochrome is a not very rapid panchromatic plate, in which the emulsion has been laid on the top of a three-colour screen. Were there no screen, the plate would give a negative in black and white like any other plate. The function of the screen is twofold—firstly, to sift out the various colours reflected from the landscape; and secondly, to enable one to reproduce the original colours by looking through the finished plate. If one washes off the sensitive emulsion from an Autochrome, the screen is left behind as a neutral tinted layer with, to the eye, but little grain. Under the microscope it is seen to consist of blue, red, and green starch grains, not overlapping, and uniformly distributed in definite proportions. These starch grains are very small, about  $\frac{1}{1600}$  of an inch in diameter, and regular in size. I shall not refer to the ingenious method of manufacture, but only point out that the *screen* corresponds to a series of coloured filters, analogous to those in the three-colour process, but so small, that, as it were, every part of the plate is supplied with its



*W. Inglis Clark.*

LOCH LOMOND FROM FIRKIN FARM.

*June 19th, 1909.*



own set of filters. Consider now, the effect of exposing an Autochrome, and to make it more easily understood, confine ourselves to a red object. Looked at through the red screen it appears light, but through the green and blue it appears black. Consequently, through every red starch grain the red light pours and affects the silver bromide behind it, giving a black image on development. But nothing comes through the green and blue grains, consequently, on development no black image is formed behind them. If we now look through such a plate, we see the green and blue light mixed together, but no red. and the image appears in the complementary colour to red. But the plate has still the unaltered bromide below the green and blue starch grains, and the object is now to "reverse" this by dissolving away the black deposit behind the red grains, and subsequently to expose to light, and develop the bromide which had previously been hidden and protected by the green and blue grains. When this is done, the image appears in its true colour, because now the green and blue grains are blocked by a silver deposit, and any light that passes must come through the red grains, hence the image is now a positive, and is red. Explained in this crude way, I trust it will be seen that any other colour is similarly obtainable, and the more delicate tints are produced by the blending in different proportions of the light from the various coloured grains. Thus, one might have a single red grain, with ten blue and ten green, or even a fraction of a single red grain (say  $\frac{1}{100}$ ), to ten blue and ten green grains. Simple though this may appear, there are many scientific points requisite to a full explanation, but the above bald statement must suffice. So far the process seems simple, and it is in the application of it that difficulties arise.

I hope now to be able to explain what are the difficulties that may arise in mountain colour photography. These arise from two characteristics, viz., extreme delicacy of the film and want of latitude in the emulsion. Every photographer knows that the sensitive side of a plate is coated with gelatine, and that this is

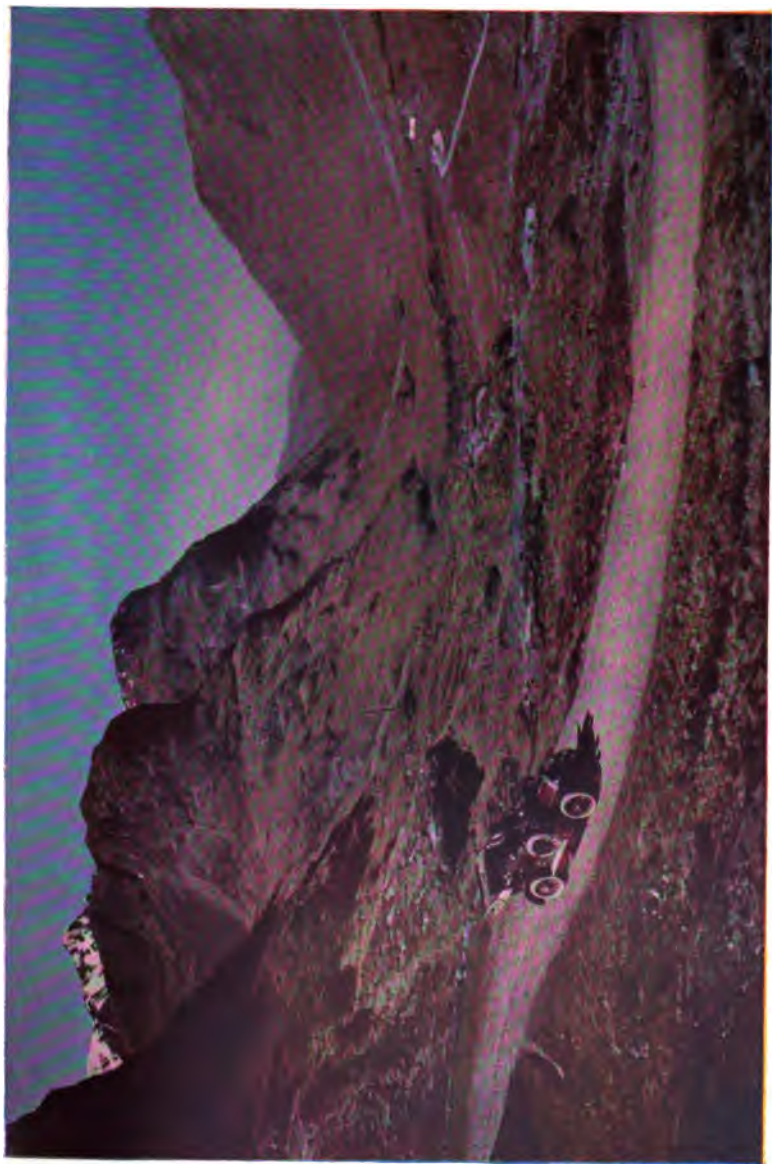
liable to abrasion whether wet or dry. Many of us have lost cherished negatives from this cause. The Autochrome is many times more liable to injury. At first it was a common thing for the whole film to frill off the plate and disappear. Although this is now remedied, yet a small particle of dust present on the film may ruin it, and the movement of dark slides in the rucksack may induce holes and other defects. The joys of glissading and motoring involve grave risks to the Autochrome film. It may therefore be taken for granted that fourfold care is requisite with these plates. As regards want of latitude: every one is familiar with the fact that in photographing a distant scene, say clouds or mountains, the exposure is only from a quarter to tenth as great as is necessary for near objects, as houses and the like. By the use of colour sensitive plates, mountaineers are gradually overcoming this difference, and with suitable "light filters," such as yellow glass, &c., are able to produce pictures which give requisite detail in the foreground without obliterating the mountains or cloud world. The Autochrome up to quite recently was a grave offender in this respect, and the mechanical system of development insisted on by Lumière & Co. emphasised this defect. So marked was it, that at the Franco-British Exhibition but few of the exhibited Autochromes showed a respectable sky with clouds. Indeed, I called at Lumière's London agency to see examples of skies, and they were unable to show me any. That this was primarily due to error in development is evident, because even with the old plates it was possible for me in the same picture to get clouds, blue sky, snow, coloured foreground, and water. Matters are now much improved, and in the recent batches of plates the latitude is considerable. Perhaps a few practical details may here be inserted, referring for full particulars to the makers' pamphlets enclosed with each box of plates. The plates are packed in pairs face to face, and should be fitted into the slides in total darkness or in a room lit with a safe green light (not red). The slightest leakage of white light tends to cause a blue fog. The sensitive film must not be touched with the fingers or rubbed. It is laid face down on a black card supplied by

the makers, and inserted in the dark slide with the glass side to the shutter, so that the photograph is taken through the glass, the reverse of ordinary practice. Affixed, preferably to the back of the lens, is a special yellow correcting screen supplied by the makers. In this position the screen alters the focus sufficiently to allow for taking the picture through the glass, but if placed in front, this must be allowed for. All is ready for the exposure. The mountaineer has already ascended his peak, and is returning home in the evening light. A forest of Scots firs, their ruddy branches gleaming in the sunshine, crowds on knobby rock and forms a foreground to the distant mountain. The clouds circling round its summit become now yellow, then yellow-red, and finally glow with the marvellous colours of a rosy sunset. What is the exposure to be? The answer is a difficult one, and as it is a vital question, an answer must be given. Here lies one of the peculiarities of this plate. We are accustomed to use an actinometer, such as Wynne's or Watkin's, and by the rapidity of darkening of the sensitive paper decide how long to expose an ordinary photographic plate. We have come to regard these meters as well-nigh infallible, and use them alike in summer and winter. But with Autochrome plates it is otherwise. I must be pardoned for entering into details, but this paper will be valueless without them. Let us suppose that the lens is stopped down to f.8, and Wynne's meter darkens in 10 seconds. The exposure is not the same in winter and summer, in morning and mid-day, and in sunshine or diffused light. Assuming the above intensity of light, 10 seconds, I would expose for 10 seconds during the months October, November, December, and January, unless during the hours 11 A.M. to 1 P.M., when 7 seconds would suffice. In early morning and late evening the exposure might run up to 20 or even more seconds, even though the meter registered only 10 seconds. But even in winter bright sunshine must be regarded, independently of the meter, and 5 seconds would suffice. In summer, *i.e.*, from 15th April to 15th August, the relative exposure is much less, and I find that in sunshine 2 seconds at f.8 will give good results for foreground and

distance over practically the whole day. For sunset effects in spring and autumn when the sun is but a few degrees above the horizon, from 1 to 2 seconds at f.8 will suffice, the colours of the sky and clouds being vivid, with dark foreground. The unclouded sun may even be taken as it dips out of sight by an exposure of  $\frac{1}{2}$  second at f. 16, and in such a case the colour of the sky is good with no halation. Rainbows require about 5 seconds at f. 8, but judgment must be used. It was at first believed that snow could not be well rendered, but I find no difficulty in getting vivid snow with mountain effects. On reading over the foregoing estimates of exposure, I realise how difficult it is to guide my fellow-members in this interesting work. I therefore sum up the exposure question as follows:—Unless the colours are very vivid, sunshine is almost a *sine qua non*. On a dull day the eye allows for want of brilliance, but I never found a friend who made any allowance for a dull Autochrome. Autumn effects with bright reds may possibly look well even without sunshine, but for genuine delight the sun is requisite. After rain the colours stand out well. For portraiture dull light is no obstacle. As a general rule in the winter months, the time of darkening Wynne's paper may be assumed to be the exposure at f. 8, but at mid-day or in sunshine less ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$ ) should be given, and the time increased in early morning and late afternoon.

I must point out that there are other plates on the market besides Autochromes; but while I have been very successful with one of these, the Thames plate, in portraiture and interior work, I have not found them so suitable for mountain photography. Possibly before these lines are in print great advances will be made in these and in other plates.

Referring now specifically to the photographing of mountains, the method of treatment must be quite different, according as we wish a black and white photograph or one in colours. Mountains in themselves are either rocky, grassy, or partly covered with forest. We may wish to treat them topographically or pictorially, or from both points of view if possible. Let us suppose that



*W. Inglis Clark.*

**GLENCOE.**

*May 8th, 1909.*





one were visiting Ben Nevis in April. The deer fence has been crossed, the Cairn Dearg buttress turned, and as we look up to the shattered walls of Coire na Ciste the whole glittering scene opens before us. Of what use would a colour plate be? Generally I would answer, None! The proportion of colour in such a scene is negligible, and a photograph in black and white, or slightly blue and white, would probably be satisfactory. But if the sun were setting, and the clouds glowed with vivid light from the northerly sun, it might be better to use a colour plate. There is one point connected with colour which must never be allowed to drop out of sight, and it only requires to be stated to be appreciated. In nature we deal with large masses of colour, but on a colour plate  $3\frac{1}{4}$  by  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches the patches of colour are very small. Thus a clump of moss may be 1 foot across, and yet on our small plate it may not cover  $\frac{1}{16}$  of an inch. If then we have two clumps of moss, one brown and one dark green, the eye will in nature readily see the difference, but it takes a skilled eye to recognise this in little discs of  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch diameter. Hence the need for intensity in the colour. The colours may be all there in the plate, but may produce a weak effect if the intensity is too slight. Thus a colour transparency 1 foot square will seem far more brilliant than one 3 inches square, if the subject-matter is identical. It is this necessity for intensity that makes sunshine so desirable. In the reproduction of Glencoe we are dealing with a subject, the colouring of which is pitched in low tones. If we except the red of the motor and the blue of the sky, the colour chiefly plays on combinations of brown-greens and yellow-greens. We must therefore not expect to get any result more vivid than that of nature. The grading of colour by distance, moreover, enables one better to appreciate the size of a mountain peak than would be possible from the same point of view in black and white. I have included the picture in the forest at Loch Tulla as illustrating the great possibilities of the process. All of us know view points where the mountain towers up behind a foreground of forest or heather or bracken, or perhaps where loch or river mirror the blue of heaven and the colours of the

buttress or peak. How vastly enhanced is the pleasure of photographing such a scene when we can carry away a record in colour the correctness of which is open to no doubt. And were our S.M.C. meets to be recorded, with the sunburnt faces and healthy complexions of our members, who can tell how many might be led to eschew the languid joys of the plain for the intenser joys of our Highland hills? What more can I say for the pursuit of colour photography? The plates and dark slides and camera weigh no more than the ordinary, the stand alone being an addition to the rucksack. The time taken in operation is the same, the four illustrations in this paper having received an exposure of but 4 seconds at f. 11. Development and finish are shorter than usual, for I can guarantee to produce a finished picture, dried and mounted complete with cover glass, within from fifteen to twenty minutes of exposing the plate. Can any simpler or easier process appeal to the lover of the mountains, or one more likely to give greater pleasure round the fireside? I am keenly aware that for the sake of brevity I have had to sacrifice many important details, and for the sake of simplicity to neglect many qualifying statements. For this reason, and as a loyal member of the S.M.C., I am, as usual, at the service of any one who might wish assistance in their early efforts in colour photography.

At the risk of repeating what I have already said, I give concisely my *modus operandi*, confining myself to those points which are necessary for the beginner.

The plates are removed from their packets and placed *face down* on pieces of black card supplied by the makers. Care must be taken to avoid rubbing the surfaces. The *backs* of the plates are rubbed with a handkerchief to remove finger marks, &c. The *plates and cards* are then put in the dark slide so that the *glass side* on back of plate faces the lens. These operations must be carried out in total darkness or in a room lighted by Wratten's green safe light or by Lumière's Virida paper screen.

*The Camera* differs in no respect from any other, but a special filter of brownish yellow glass, obtainable from the makers, must be put before or behind the lens. I



*W. Inglis Clark.*

IN THE FOREST, INVERORAN.

*April 16th, 1909.*



prefer behind the lens, as in this position the filter alters the focus so as to correct the error caused by having turned the plate in the dark slide. A cap or shutter suffices for the exposure.

*Exposure* with stop f. 8. In winter for open landscape, 11 A.M. to 2 P.M., give the actinometer light of Wynne's meter, or longer according to subject. Earlier and later give one and a half times the actinometer light. In spring and summer it is important to discriminate between bright sunshine and diffused light. Speaking generally a quarter of the actinometer light for sunshine and full tint for diffused light. Extra allowance for morning and evening, say from one and a half to three times. As with ordinary plates, so Autochromes require shorter exposure for distant objects. Sky and sea will generally do with one-tenth of the actinometer tint, although there is sufficient latitude to get fairly good results in bright sunshine of foreground, water, and sky, with an exposure of quarter tint. Portraits generally require full tint. Sunsets are often deceptive. In April the exposure is shorter when the sun is just dipping into the horizon than it is in June. In the latter case the sun sets much farther north, and the hour is much later. This can be tested by noticing the brilliance of the unclouded sun to the eye. If it is possible to look at it without winking give 10 or more seconds at f. 8.

*Development.*—I use only two solutions:—

(a) Developer.—Rodinal, 1 part ; water, 50 parts.  
1½ oz. for lantern plate size.

(b) Reverser.—Pot. permanganate, 1 grain.  
Water, 1 oz.

Add just before use sulphuric acid, 5 drops.

1 oz. for a quarter plate.

Temperature about 60 degrees F.

Using a green light, remove the plate from the slide, avoiding touching the sensitive side with the fingers, and shielding the plate from the light. Place in the developer and rock. In about 20 to 30 seconds a faint image will appear, and development be complete in from 6 to 10 minutes. If not over-exposed the longer time is beneficial.

It is difficult to give a rule for developing by inspection. If the subject is a forest scene, the whole surface should become grey. If half the image is sky then it will be well to tilt the dish when the sky becomes first visible so as to develop up the foreground more fully. A few trials will give confidence in development. The plate is now washed with a spray of water (rather than a violent jet) for  $\frac{1}{2}$  minute, and then plunged into the reversing solution. The ordinary light is turned up. In about 3 to 4 minutes the image will be seen *clearly* but faintly in colours, but it is a mistake to hurry this reversing process. Rinse again for 1 minute to remove the permanganate solution, and return the plate to the original developer. Expose to daylight or strong artificial light till the plate becomes quite black.\* Rinse for 1 minute in spray of water, and place for about 20 seconds in dilute reversing solution (1 part in 10 of water). Rinse for 30 seconds and dry as quickly as possible. The plates dry very quickly, and the process can be hastened by revolving them in a whirler, or standing them on a warm mantelpiece. They must not be dried in the sun or before a fire. The dry plate is varnished with celluloid varnish (containing only amyl acetate and celluloid) and mounted with a cover glass.

Occasionally intensification will improve a plate, and for this I recommend Lumière's formula as given with the plates. Intensification may take place before drying, or at any time subsequent to this and before varnishing. Fixing is not necessary.

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\* Sometimes it may be advisable to use a stronger developer than 1 in 50, but this must be left to the judgment of the operator.

## THE BERRIES OF SCOTLAND.

BY JOHN MACMILLAN, D.Sc., &amp;c.

SOME time ago the Editor asked me to write a short paper on the berries of Scotland for the *S.M.C.J.* Here it is. First of all we must ascertain what a berry is. One well-known botanist defines it thus: "The berry (*bacca*) is a succulent, syncarpous, polyspermal, unilocular, indehiscent fruit, with seeds immersed in a pulpy mass formed by the placentas. The name is usually given to such fruits as the gooseberry and currant, in which the ovary is inferior and the placentas are parietal, the seeds being ultimately detached from the placenta and lying loose in the pulp. Others have applied it also to those in which the ovary is superior, as the grape, the potato and *Ardisia*, and the placentas are central or free central." Another authority goes into more detail, and says that berries are succulent fruits in which the succulent mass is more or less pulpy, and the seeds, which are usually hard, are embedded in the pulp. The berry differs from the drupe essentially in the fact that there is no stony endocarp, although epicarp, mesocarp, and endocarp may be differentiated. The endocarp, if present, is never stony. Baccate fruits may be derived from inferior ovaries (*e.g.*, currant, gooseberry, melon, cucumber), or from superior (*e.g.*, grape, orange). The *orange* is a multilocular superior berry with axile placentation; the outer glandular skin is the epicarp, the underlying white substance the mesocarp, and the inner membrane lining the loculi or *liths* the endocarp. The juice is secreted by a large number of multicellular hairs developed from the walls of the loculi. The orange in older works on botany is called a *hesperidium*—a name reminiscent of the golden fruit in the garden of the Hesperides. The gooseberry is formed from an inferior unilocular ovary in which there are usually two, sometimes three, parietal placentas. The pulp is derived chiefly from the placentas, partly from the seed-coats. The *date* is recognised as a berry and *not a drupe* by the fact that the "stone"



is not endocarp but seed. The banana is a berry from which, through over-cultivation, the seeds have disappeared. Sometimes the fruits called berries are in reality *drupes*. Thus the holly berry is a drupe, and the berries of the yew are botanically speaking cones the scaly bracts of which have become succulent. The strawberry is a pseudocarp consisting of an *etærio* of achenes scattered over the surface of an enlarged fleshy thalamus. As the fruit develops, this thalamus expands enormously, and the *achenes* are spread out over its surface. Popularly these achenes are called seeds. Strictly speaking they are not so. Each is a carpel containing one seed. The fruit of the bramble is an *etærio* of drupes; so is that of the raspberry. In both, the little rounded bodies which form the berry have the structure of a typical drupe and are inserted on a fleshy conical thalamus. Lastly, some of the berries cannot be strictly classed. Thus the ivy berry is a fleshy fruit containing several seeds: these are not enclosed in a stony endocarp, but there is a firm investment round each. The fruit, to some extent, resembles a drupe and may be called a drupaceous berry.

But enough of this: let us to our berries. And we shall call berries all fruits popularly so-called and, in general, eaten as such. In writing this short paper I have consulted references rather too numerous to mention. As examples I shall give three.

1. Murray's Oxford Dictionary.

2. Turner's "Herbal." Its title is, "A new herbal: wherein are contained the names of herbs, in Greek, Latin, English, Dutch, and French, with the properties, degrees, and natural places of the same." Folio. London, 1551.

There are several editions of this work quoted, some of them of later date.

3. Rembert Dodonæus [1518-1585].

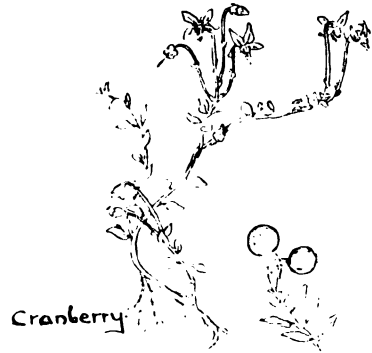
(1.) "Medicinalium observationum exempla rara." Hardevici, 1521.

(2.) "De frugum historia, liber unus. Accedunt ejusd. Epistolæ duæ—una de farre. . . ." Antverp., 1552.

PLATE I.



yew.



Cranberry.



Common Bilberry.



Red Whortleberry.



Bearberry.



Lily-of-the-Valley.



Great Bilberry.

M. Inglis Clark.



There are several other works by Dodoens which were translated by Lyte with the following title:—

- (3.) "A new herball, or history of plants, translated out of French into English by Henry Lyte." 4to. London, 1586.

As regards the illustrations, I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to Miss Mabel Inglis Clark, who is both a skilful artist and an enthusiastic mountaineer.

**Alder.**—The Berry-bearing Alder, another name for the buckthorn, *Rhamnus frangula*, which see. (Plate II.)

**Asparagus.**—The plant is *Asparagus officinalis*; natural order, *Liliaceæ*. Etymology: the old Greek name. The berries are a quarter of an inch in diameter, red. Naturalised only in Scotland.

**Barberry.**—The name is of unknown origin and history. About 1480 in "Anturs Arth." there occurs, "Vndur a lefe sale, Of box and of barbere." In 1578 Lyte has, "the leaues and fruite of barberies are of complexion colde." As to the berries: 1533, Elyot, "Cast. Helth," says, "Digestyves of cholere: Endyve, lettyse . . . berberyes." In 1796 the famous Mrs Glasse (of *pseudo*-"first-catch-your-hare" memory) says in her *Cookery*, "Garnish with barberries and lemon." The berries have not lost their reputation: even in 1859 Thoreau says, "I am off a-barberrying." By the way the attribution to Mrs Glasse of the proverb "First catch your hare" has occasioned some controversy. The proverb is not found in her "Art of Cookery," but her words, "Take your hare when it is cased," may have suggested it.

The plant is *Berberis vulgaris*; natural order, *Berberideæ*. The berries grow in loose bunches, are oblong, and of a red colour. The American species, at least, have a grateful, sour, astringent taste, and contain malic and citric acids. They are refrigerant, astringent, and anti-scorbutic. An agreeable syrup is made from the juice, and the berries are sometimes preserved for the table. In Scotland, however, the fruit is too acid to be eaten, even the birds will not eat it, but it makes excellent preserves

and jelly. Their sensibly astringent properties were sure to secure for them a medicinal reputation. Woodville in his "Medical Botany" recommends an infusion of barberries as a beneficent drink in fevers.

On analysis the juice of fresh berries yielded in 100 parts, 5.92 parts of malic acid, 4.67 of sugar, 6.61 of gum, 67.16 of water, and 0.06 of salts of potassium and calcium. (Plate III.)

**Bearberry.**—The plant is *Arctostaphylos Uva Ursi*; natural order, *Ericaceæ*. *Uva Ursi* means bear-berry, so does *arctostaphylos*. The name was given by Clausius, a Dutch botanist, in 1601, is composed of bear and berry, and is an instance of the association of the name of an animal with that of a plant. There are many such, *eg.*, cow-parsnip, horse-radish, dog-violet.

Though there are no bears in Britain, the last bear having, according to Munro ("Prehistoric Scotland"), been killed "*circa* 500-1000 A.D.," yet they are plentiful in Northern Europe. The plant is sometimes called bear's bilberry, sometimes bog whortleberry, sometimes meal-berry, in Danish *meelbær* from the mealy character of the fruit. The fruit is a small, round, depressed, smooth, glossy, red berry with an insipid, mealy pulp, and five cohering seeds. It is ripe in September. The mealy part, says an authority, has an austere, disagreeable taste, and the berries cannot be recommended as food. They are said to constitute for a short time the chief food of bears in Russia, Sweden, and America. The bearberry is the badge of the clan Colquhoun. (Plate I.)

**Bilberry.**—Another name for blaeberry, which see.

**Bittersweet.**—The plant is *Solanum dulcamara*; natural order, *Solanaceæ*. The potato, *Solanum tuberosum*, belongs to the same order. *Dulcamara* means bittersweet. The name bittersweet or woody nightshade is mentioned by Turner in 1551, by Gerard in 1597, who says, "Bitter sweete bringeth forth woodie stalks as doth the vine." 1671, Salmon, "Syn. Med.," has, "Bittersweet helps the jaundies." It is the stem rather than the fruit which gives the succession of tastes which has given the name of bittersweet.

PLATE II.



Dewberry.



Bittersweet.



Rowan.



Bramble.



Berry-bearing Alder.



Privet.

(11)

The berries are of an oval shape and a bright scarlet colour, and continue to hang in beautiful bunches after the leaves have fallen. They contain the alkaloid *solanine* and a glucoside *dulcamarine*. Solanine is obtained as a white powder, sometimes as delicate acicular crystals. One grain of it killed a rabbit in six hours. The berries are poisonous. They proved fatal to a boy four years of age, while two older sisters who ate them at the same time suffered slightly or not at all. The symptoms in this fatal case were vomiting and purging, convulsions and insensibility alternating with each other, and death in convulsions (*Lancet*, 28th June 1856, p. 715). The evidence as to the poisonous properties of the berries of this plant, and their degree of activity, is very conflicting, and the case just cited is not free from the suspicion that some of the black berries of *Solanum nigrum* were eaten at the same time Bourneville (*Gazette des Hôp.*, 1854) has recorded a case of severe symptoms in a child aged eleven from ten dulcamara berries. (Plate II.)

**Blackberry.**—See Bramble and Black Currant.

**Blaeberry.**—The name blaeberry is evidently derived from the blae or blue bloom on the berry. Other names applied to the berry or plant which bears it are bilberry, whortleberry, bleaberry, crackberry, hurts. In fact, the various species of *Vaccinium* are rather confusing, for the name is applied with or without qualification to other species of *Vaccinium*, e.g., to the great bilberry or bog whortleberry. We shall consider these species under the one heading of Blaeberry. (Plate I.)

1. *Vaccinium myrtillus*, the blaeberry; natural order, *Ericaceæ*. It ascends to 4,200 feet in the Highlands. The berries are one-third inch in diameter, dark blue, glaucous. Blaeberreries are, as every one knows, very sweet and agreeable, and make delicious jellies and tarts. In Yorkshire large quantities of blaeberreries are brought to market, being extensively used as an ingredient in pies and puddings. In Devonshire they are eaten raw with clotted cream. The delights of going a-blaeberrying are not unknown even to such superior mortals as mountaineers. The juice of the berries mixed with powdered alder bark



and alum is used by the women of Northern Russia to dye their hair a bright red. A kind of schnapps or alcoholic liquor is made from them in Germany.

The word bilberry is apparently of Norse origin. The Danish *bölle-beer*, from *bölle* (used separately for bilberry), and *baer*, berry. Notices of the word are: 1577, Dee, "Relat. Spir," "The cloth, hair-coloured, bilberry juyce." 1594, Barnfield in his "Affectionate Shepherd" says, "Strawberries, or bil-berries, in their prime." 1598, Shakespeare in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," "There pinch the maids as blew as bill-berry." 1640, Parkinson in his "Theatrum Botanicum" has, "*Vaccinia nigra fructu majore*, The great bilberry." (Plate I.)

2. *Vaccinium uliginosum*, the great blaeberry, or great bilberry, or bog whortleberry. The berries are larger than those of the blaeberry, and inferior in flavour. An intoxicating liquor is made from them, and when eaten in large quantities they produce giddiness.

The bog whortleberry (*Vaccinium uliginosum*) is the badge of the clan Buchanan, and probably also of the clan Macmillan—if they ever had a badge. (Plate I.)

3. *Vaccinium Vitis Ideæ*, red whortleberry, or cow-berry. *Vitis Ideæ* means vine of Mount Ida, and was the specific name given by Linnæus. But why Mount Ida? The plant was never heard of on that mountain. Linnæus had to give specific names to thousands of plants and animals, and must have been sorely taxed to find names for them all. Now Mount Ida would do just as well as a hundred others, and Mount Ida it is to this day. The berries, sometimes called *cranberries*, are dark red in colour, acid, and not nearly so agreeable as the blaeberry. They make excellent jelly, however, useful for sore throats, and much used in Sweden as an accompaniment to venison and other roast meats.

The red whortleberry (*Vaccinium Vitis Ideæ*) is the badge of several clans; Macbean, Mackintosh, Shaw, Macgillivray, Farquharson, Macduff; the red whortleberry bush of clan Macpherson. (Plate I.)

**Blaeberry.**—Same as blaeberry, which see.

**Bogberry.**—Another name for the cranberry, which see.



Cloudberry.



Barberry.



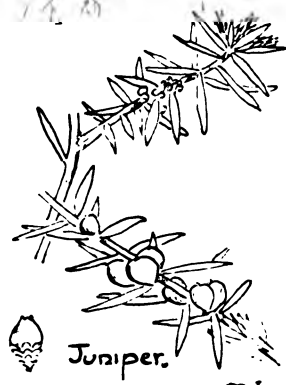
Ring-necked Buckthorn



Cornel.



Hawthorn.



Juniper.



**Bog Whortleberry** is *Vaccinium uliginosum*. See Blae-berry.

**Bog-wort**.—Another name for the cranberry, which see.

**Bramble**.—There are many forms of the name. Murray gives eighteen, brémel, braémel, brymmeylle, brymble, bramble. The old English was brembel, braemmel.

The plant is *Rubus fruticosus*; natural order, *Rosaceæ*. There are many notices of the plant. About 1000 A.D. Ælfric, Genesis iii. 18, "Dornas and bremelas heo usprit the."

In 1382 Wyclif, Job xxxvi. 40, "For whete he sprung to me a brembil." In 1481 Caxton in "Reynard" has, "Tho cam we in a felde ful of brome and brembles." In 1562 Turner's "Herbal" gives, "The bramble bindeth, drieth, and dyeth heyre." In 1852 the *Gardener's Chronicle* says, "In Scotland [and North of England] black currants are called 'blackberries,' and the fruit of *Rubus fruticosus* is called 'bramble-berries.'"

As to the berries, known to English children as blackberries, there is in Saxon Leechdom (about 1000 A.D.), "Drince seoca of braemel berian zewrungen oft." In 1655 Mouffet and Ben, "Health's Improvement," have "Bramble-berries or blackberries . . . are . . . nourishing to a weak stomach."

The berries, strictly speaking, *drupes*, eaten when ripe are very refreshing and grateful to the taste. Preserves of a very delicate flavour are prepared from them, and also a pleasant and fairly potent wine. In autumn the leaves are beautifully varied in colour, and form a most lovely table decoration.

Poet and painter have celebrated the beauties of the picturesque freedom of the bramble's growth, as well as its mingled fruit and flowers. Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn-law Rhymer, has addressed to it some lines of great beauty which may well bear quotation.

"Thy fruit full well the schoolboy knows,  
Wild bramble of the brake!  
So, put thou forth thy small white rose:  
I love thee for his sake.

Though woodbines flaunt and roses glow  
 O'er all the fragrant bowers,  
 Thou needst not be ashamed to show  
 Thy satin-threaded flowers ;  
 For dull the eye, the heart is dull  
 That cannot feel how fair  
 Amid all beauty beautiful  
 Thy tender blossoms are !  
 How delicate thy gaudy frill !  
 How rich thy branchy stem !  
 How soft thy voice, when woods are still  
 And thou singst hymns to them ;  
 While silent showers are falling slow,  
 And 'mid the general hush  
 A sweet air lifts the little bough  
 Lone whispering through the bush !  
 The primrose to the grave is gone ;  
 The hawthorn flower is dead ;  
 The violet by the moss'd grey stone  
 Hath laid her weary head ;  
 But thou, wild bramble ! back dost bring  
 In all their beauteous power  
 The fresh green days of life's fair spring  
 And boyhood's blossomy hour.  
 Scorned bramble of the brake ! once more  
 Thou bid'st me be a boy,  
 To gad with thee the woodlands o'er  
 In freedom and in joy."

(Plate II.)

**Bryony.**—The White Bryony is not a native of Scotland: the Black Bryony (*Tamus communis* ; natural order, *Dioscoreæ*), though the same name, has no relation to white bryony. Hooker says it is absent from Ireland, but does not say whether or not it occurs in Scotland.

The berries of the black bryony grow in clusters, and when ripe are like those of the white bryony, of a red colour. The berries have made children sick.

**Buckthorn.**—There are two species of Buckthorn.

1. *Rhamnus catharticus* ; natural order, *Rhamneæ*. Its fruit is, strictly speaking, a drupe, but is commonly called a berry. It is a quarter of an inch in diameter, globose, black. The berries ripen in September, says an authority, are of the size of a pea, round, somewhat flattened at the top, black, smooth, shining, with four seeds in a green, juicy

parenchyma. The odour is unpleasant, the taste bitterish, acrid, and nauseous. The blackish juice expressed from the berries is reddened by acids. Upon standing it soon begins to ferment and becomes red in consequence of the formation of acetic acid. The juice of the ripe berries mixed with alum or lime furnishes the sap green so well known to water-colour painters. A crystallisable principle *rhamnín* is obtained from the berries and also *cathartin*, and to this is due the cathartic properties. The name is made up of buck (he-goat) and thorn. 1578, Lyte, "The Italians do call it Spino Merlo (blackbird's thorn), some call it Spino ceruino (deer's horn) . . . ; we may call it in English, bucke thorne." In another place he says, "They (the berries) be not meete to be ministered but to young and lusty people of the countrie which doe set more store of their money than their lives." 1579, Langhalm, "Gard. Health," "Bvckthorne, the beries do purge downwards mightily flegme and choller." (Plate III.)

2. *Rhamnus frangula*, of the same natural order, is commonly called the Berry-bearing Alder. The berries, strictly drupes, are a fifth of an inch in diameter, glóbose, black when ripe. When unripe they afford a good green colour readily taken by woollen stuffs: when ripe they give various shades of blue and grey. The colouring matter is the principle *rhamnín*. Both plants have cathartic properties. (Plate II.)

**Bulberry.**—Another name for blaeberry, which see.

**Butcher's Broom.**—The plant is *Ruscus aculeatus*; natural order, *Asphodeleæ*, naturalised in Scotland. The flowers of this half shrubby plant are small and of a yellowish green colour, grow on the *cladodes* or flat stem-like leaves, and are succeeded by large red berries, one-third of an inch in diameter, the size of small cherries, of sweet and not disagreeable taste, but of doubtful wholesomeness. The prickly branches were formerly used by butchers for sweeping their block, hence the name.

**Cloudberry.**—The name Cloudberry appears to be of popular origin, but exact information as to its first use is wanting.

1597, Gerard, "Of cloud-berrie. This plant groweth

naturally upon the tops of high mountaines . . . one in Yorkshire called Ingleborough, the other in Lancashire called Pendle . . . where the clouds are lower than the tops of the same all winter long, wherefore the people of the countrie have called them cloud berries."

1633, T. Johnson in "Appendix to Gerard's Herball," "This knot, knout, or cloudberry (for by all these names is it knowne to vs in the North)," The plant is *Rubus chamæmorus*; natural order, *Rosaceæ*. The berries, really drupes, are one-third of an inch in diameter, are at first scarlet, and then of a rich orange colour. Gathered fresh and eaten with sugar and cream, or without these, after a long day's tramp they are most acceptable. An infusion of the berries is largely used in Russia as a diuretic in dropsy. Dr Popoff found in them a crystallisable acid which is an essential diuretic. The cloudberry is also known as the mountain bramble. (Plate III.)

**Cornel.**—The plant is *Cornus Suecica*; natural order, *Cornaceæ*. The name is from the Latin *cornu*, from the *horny* hardness of the wood. In our little Cornus, however, this does not apply, for its stem is only from six to eight inches high. A tiny plant ascending nearly to 3,000 feet; it flowers in July and August. The berries, really drupes, are one-fifth of an inch in diameter, red. They are eaten by the Highlanders to improve appetite, and hence are called *Lus à chroais*, or plant of gluttony.

The name is the mediæval Latin one. Other names are Dogberry, Dogwood.

1589, Fleming, "Georg. Virg." ii. 13, "The peare tree changed for to bear apples grafted thereon, And stonie cornells to wax red with damsons or with plums." 1634, Brereton, "Cornowlee makes an hedge like privett." As for the fruit: 1601, Holland's "Pliny," "Others turn red, as mulberries, cherries, and cornoiles"; 1578, Lyte, "Like to a small olive or cornell berry." (Plate III.)

**Cowberry.**—The name Cowberry according to Murray is apparently a rendering of the Latin *Vaccinium*, of or pertaining to cows, applied to some plant, supposed to be the blaeberry or bilberry and now taken as a name of the genus. A bookname of recent bestowal for *Vaccinium*

*Vitis Idea* and its fruit : called also Red Whortleberry, Red Huckleberry. The name was unknown to Lightfoot (1789), who has only Red Whortleberry. See under Blaeberry.

**Crackberry.**—A name applied to the blaeberry from its crispness when bitten. See Blaeberry.

**Crakeberry.**—A name for the crowberry, which see.

**Cranberry.**—The name, Murray says, is of comparatively recent appearance in English, was entirely unknown to the herbalists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who knew the plant as and the fruit as marsh-whorts, fen-whorts, fen-berries, marsh-berries, moss-berries. The German is *Kranichbeere*, crane-berry, and the name seems to have been adopted by the North American colonists from some Low German source and brought to England with the American cranberries.

1672, Josselyn, "New England Rarities," "Cranberry or bear berry . . . is a small trayling plant that grows in salt marshes."

1694, "Account of Several Late Voyages." "A shrub whose fruit was . . . full of red juice like currans, perhaps 'tis the same with the New England cranberry or bear-berry with which we make tarts."

The plant is *Oxycoccus palustris*; natural order, *Ericaceæ*. The name from the Greek *oxus* and *kokkos* from the *acid berries*. It grows in peat bogs, ascending to 2,700 feet in the Highlands. "The berries," says Sir Joseph Hooker, who was in Ross's Antarctic Expedition with the "Erebus" and "Terror" in 1840, and is still alive, "are an excellent antiscorbutic, and used as such on long voyages."

Large quantities of the fruit, which is chiefly used for making tarts, were formerly collected in parts of Britain, though the drainage of bogs has now made it scarce where it once was plentiful.

Wine is made from it in Siberia, and a beverage made from it is sold in the streets of St Petersburg. The berries of the cowberry or red whortleberry are sold under the name of cranberries in Aberdeen and other places, and are used in the same way.

The cranberry is the badge of the clan Macfarlane. (Plate I.)



**Crowberry.**—Murray says the name is probably a translation of the German *Krähenbeere*: the Northern synonym crakeberry may be of Norse origin.

1597, Gerarde, "Herbal," Appendix to Table, "Crow berries, *Erica baccifera*." 1776, Withering's "British Plants" (edition 1796), "Black-berried heath, black crow-berries, crake-berries in bogs and moorish ground."

The plant is *Empetrum nigrum*; natural order, *Empetraceæ*, and the name *en petron*, from growing in stony places. It ascends to 4,000 feet in the Highlands. It is a small, procumbent, shrubby plant, the branches from six to eighteen inches, slender, wiry, spreading, and trailing, leafy. The berries, really drupes, are a quarter to a third of an inch, black, surround the branches in crowded clusters, and each contains six to nine bony seeds and a watery acidulous juice. A fermented liquor is prepared from them in some Northern countries. They are a favourite food of game.

The crowberry is the badge of the clan Cameron and clan Maclean.

**Currant.**—Forms of the word are (raysons of) Coraunte, (raysyns, &c., of) Corance, and thirty-nine other forms. 1334, in Rogers' (Professor Thorold) "Agriculture and Prices," "raisins de Coraunte." 1390, in Warner, "Antiq. Cul.," "Lat it seeth togedre with poudere-fort of gynger . . . with raysons of Coraunte." 1589, Lyte, "The first kind is called . . . *Ribes rubrum*, in English redde gooseberries, bastard Corinthes." 1629, Parkinson, "Paradisus Terr.," "Those berries . . . usually called red currans . . . that are not those currans . . . that are sold at the grocers." The *wild currant* is *Ribes rubrum*; natural order, *Saxifrageæ*. The etymology is an Arabic word *rheum*, wrongly applied to this genus. The plant occurs in woods and thickets from Mid-Scotland southwards. The berries are a quarter inch in diameter, red, acid. They are used for dessert, for pies, and for making jelly, eaten with mutton and hare. From them is made an agreeable and refreshing beverage called by the French *eau de grosseilles*. It is made from the juice of the fruit, water, and sugar, strained and iced. There is also made the well-known currant wine,

which contains, according to Brande's analysis, 20.55 per cent. of alcohol.

The *white currant* is a mere variety of the red, the result of cultivation with fruit less acid.

The *black currant*, *Ribes nigrum*, found also from Mid-Scotland southwards, probably always a garden escape, has berries two-thirds of an inch in diameter, much larger than the red currant. The jelly and preserves made from it have a reputation for curing sore throats, so has *black currant vinegar*, made in the same manner as raspberry vinegar. In France a liqueur named *liqueur de cassis* has been prepared from it. Gerard speaks of the fruit as big again as the ordinary red currant, "but of a stinking and somewhat loathing savour"; and in Gray's "Supplement to the Pharmacopœia," published in 1848, describing the black currant, he says, "Odour similar to that of bugs." "In Scotland," says a fair writer, "a rob or jam is extensively made from black currants, which is esteemed as an addition to the whisky toddy there so much liked." Here is a fair Englishwoman who thinks that Scotland takes black currant jam to its toddy!

The *red flowered currant*, *Ribes sanguineum*, was introduced into Great Britain in 1826. Its berries are bluish black, insipid, and, though non-poisonous, are not used as fruit, or for making preserves.

**Dewberry** is *Rubus cœsius*, found in hedges and thickets from Perth southwards. The plant is distinguished from the bramble by its weaker and more prostrate glaucous stem, and by having a few large, bright red, glaucous berries, really drupes, which have a characteristic dew-like bloom. The fruit is very sweet and agreeable, and makes an excellent wine. The name dewberry is made up of dew and berry; thau-beere, dew berry, Ober Deutsch taubenber, *i.e.*, dove-berry. Shakespeare's dewberry, says Murray, which is mentioned among delicate cultivated fruits, is supposed by some to have meant the gooseberry. Hanmer conjectured raspberry. 1578, Lyte, "The fruit is called a dewberie or blackberie." 1655, Moufet and Bennet, "Health's Improvement," "When mulberries cannot be gotten, blackberries or dewberries may supply their room."

1590, Shakespeare, "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Feede him with apricocks and dewberries, with purple grapes, greene figs, and mulberries." (Plate II.)

**Dogberry.**—See Cornel.

**Dogwood.**—See Cornel.

**Elder.**—The plant is *Sambucus nigra*; natural order, *Caprifoliaceæ*. Etymology is the Greek *sambuke*, being formerly used for musical instruments.

Forms of the name are *ellaern*, *ellaen*, and twenty-eight others. About 700 A.D., "Epinal Gloss," "Sambucus . . . ellaen." 800 A.D., "Corpus Gloss," "Sambucus . . . ellaern."

1362, Langland in "Piers Plowman," "Iudas he iapede with po Lewes seluer, and on an ellerne tree hongede him after."

1598, Shakespeare, "Merry Wives of Windsor," "My heart of elder." 1579, Spenser in the "Shepheardes Calendar" has, "The Muses . . . Now bringen bittre eldre brances seare."

The berries are nearly inodorous, but have a sweetish acidulous taste, dependent on the presence of sugar and malic acid. The expressed juice is capable of fermentation, and makes a wine much in vogue several generations ago. A pleasant wine is still made from the berries. It contains 8.79 per cent. of alcohol. It is generally drunk hot or *mulled*. A rob made from the berries is an agreeable domestic remedy for colds, coughs, and sore throats. It is slightly purgative. [The term Rob (*rob*, dense, Arabic) is an old one for an inspissated juice of ripe fruit, sometimes mixed with honey or sugar.] They are said to be used in England but not in Scotland in the adulteration of port wine. It *may* have been this port wine which is referred to in the well-known epigram—

"Firm and erect the Caledonian stood,  
Old was his mutton and his claret good ;  
'Let him drink port,' the English statesman cried :  
He drank the poison and his spirit died."

"We have heard," says a botanical writer, "of the confessions of an innkeeper in a University town who revealed on his retirement from business, that elder wine judiciously flavoured with vinegar, sugar, and small quantities of port

constituted his favourite clarets so much admired and so highly paid for by the undergraduates. The quotation from "Piers Plowman" shows the tradition that Judas hanged himself on an elder tree. Ben Jonson mentions it, "Look you, he shall be your Judas, and you shall be his elder tree to hang on" ("Every Man out of his Humour").

**Fenberry.**—Another name for the cranberry, which see.

**Gooseberry.**—Older forms of the name are gose-, gows-, goos-, gous-, goose-berry. "The grounds on which," says Murray, "plants and fruits have received names associating them with animals are so commonly inexplicable that the want of appropriateness in the meaning affords no sufficient ground for assuming that the word is an etymological corruption. The name then is goose and berry."

About 1532, Du Wes, "Gose berrys, groiselles."

1573, Tusser, "The gooseberry, respis and roses."

1669, Worlidge, "Gooseberries being through ripe, taste the most like grapes of any of the English fruits."

The plant is *Ribes grossularia*; natural order, *Saxifrageæ*. It is found wild in hilly districts in the North of England, an escape elsewhere. It has been so long naturalised in Scotland that we must reckon it a berry of Scotland. The ripe fruit and its products are too well known to require any description.

**Guelder Rose.**—Forms of the word are gelders, gilder, gelderland rose, and several others. Named from Guelders, a town in Prussia on the borders of Holland, or from Guelderland, a province of Holland formerly a German Duchy, of which Guelders is the capital.

1597, Gerarde, "The rose elder is called in Latine *Sambucus rosa* and *Sambucus aquatica* . . . in English gelders rose and rose elder."

The plant is *Viburnum opulus*; natural order, *Caprifoliaceæ*. It is found in copses and hedges from Ross and Moray southwards, rare in Scotland. Often else called snowball tree from the dense white cymes in which the flowers grow. These cymes or clusters are two to four inches in diameter, subglobose, the outer flowers of the cymes are white, three-quarters of an inch in diameter rotate, the inner cream white. In autumn, the brilliant

red clustered fruit forms a striking feature where the shrub occurs. Before the berries are quite ripe, they are beautifully tinted with yellow on the sides least exposed to the light, and have a semi-transparent waxen texture.

The *Viburnum lantana*, or wayfaring tree, naturalised in Scotland, belongs to the same genus as the guelder rose, and is very like it both in flowers and berries. These berries are at first green, then take a fine red colour, and finally become black.

The berries of both are used to a considerable extent, especially in America, as a substitute for the ordinary cranberry in the making of jellies, and are certainly anti-scorbutic. The bark is so acrid as to blister, hence its use in rustic medical treatment. In the "Foure Bookes of Husbandry, collected by Conradus Herebachius, newly Englished and increased by Barnabe Googe, Esquire," we read, "Nature hath appoynted remedies in a redynesse for al diseases, but the craft and subteltie of man for gaine hath devised apothecaries' shoppes, in which a man's lyfe is to be sold and bought, where they fetch their medicines from Hierusalem, and out of Turkie, whyle in ye meantime every poore man hath the ryght remedies growing in his garden: for yf men would make theyr gardens theyr physitions the physicion's craft would soone decay." Quite right, Conrad!

**Hackberry.**—Another name for the bird cherry.

**Hagberry.**—A variation of hackberry.

**Heckberry.**—A variation of hackberry.

**Hegberry.**—A variation of hagberry.

1597, Gerarde, "Herbal," "Birds cherrie . . . in Westmerland . . . called hegberrie tree." 1728, Lightfoot, "Flora Scotica," "Bird-cherry, *Anglis*; hag-berries, *Scotis*." Sir Walter Scott in a letter to Willie Laidlaw says, "I shall send . . . also some hagberries." The word is of Norse origin; Danish, *haegge-baer*. The hackberry or hegberry is the berry, really a drupe, of *Prunus Padus*, the bird cherry. The flowers of this well-known tree grow in lovely white sprays, and are succeeded by pendant bunches of fruit. The *cherries*, black when quite ripe, but previously passing through various tints of green and red, are not fit for

human food, being nauseous in flavour and probably dangerous if eaten in quantity. They nevertheless communicate a pleasant flavour to spirits. They are a favourite food of birds.

**Haws** are hawthorn berries. Old forms of the word are haza, hawe, haughe, hag, hague, hage, haigh, meaning *hedge*. About 1000 A.D. "Cinum," hagan. Twelfth century, K. Alis, "Other mete thai ne habben bot hawen, hepen, slon, and rabben." 1374, Chaucer, "They eten mast hawes and swych pownage." 1626, Bacon, "Sylva," "Stores of haws and heps do commonly portend cold winters." 1784, Cowper says in the "Task," "I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws." While the poets have written much of the hawthorn blossom, they have said very little about the berries. Earlier writers have, of course, found them medicinal. William Coles, author of "Adam in Eden" (1657) declares that "the powder of the berries, or the seeds of the berries being given to drink in wine, is generally held to be singular good for the dropsy." (Plate III.)

**Henbane** with its poisonous berries is not a native of Scotland.

**Hindberry**.—A name given to the raspberry, so called as growing in the woods and assumed to be eaten by hinds.

**Holly**.—Forms of the word are holi, holie, holiz, hoolly, holy, holee; a glossary about 1150 A.D. has "*Ulcia*, holi." 1225, Ancr. R., "Ne mid holie ne mid breres ne biblodge hiresulf." "Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century" (Percy Society), "Here commys holly, that is so gent."

The plant is *Ilex aquifolium*; natural order, *Ilicineæ*, or *Aquifoliaceæ*. It ascends to 1,000 feet in the Highlands. The berries are small, the size of a pea, scarlet, rarely yellow or white. Their abundance adds much to the beauty of the tree in winter, and affords food for birds, but to man they are purgative, emetic, and diuretic, and in larger quantities poisonous. The berries, examined by Pancoast, were found to contain tannin, pectin, two crystallisable organic principles, and salts of potassium, calcium, and magnesium. One of the crystallisable principles was inodorous and tasteless, the other odorous but intensely bitter. It has been named *ilicin*.

Holly with its pretty red berries was used in very ancient times for the decoration of churches and places of worship. It seems first to have been introduced for religious purposes by the early Christians at Rome. It was used in the great festival of the Saturnalia, which occurred about that time, and the early Fathers tried to assimilate what was good of Pagan worship with Christianity. The Harleian MSS. possess a carol in praise of the holly written in the time of Henry VI.

“Nay, Ivy, nay, it shall not be, I wys,  
 Let Holy hafe the maystry as the maner ys,  
 Holy stond in the halle, fayre to behold,  
 Ivy stond without the dore, she ys full sore a-cold.

Holy and hys mery men they dawnsyn and they syng,  
 Ivy and hur maydanys they wepyn and they wryng ;  
 Ivy hath a lybe, she laghtit with the cold,  
 So mot they all leafe that wyth Ivy hold.

Holy hath berys as red as any rose,  
 They foster the hunters, kepe them from the doo ;  
 Ivy hath berys as black as any slo,  
 Ther com the oule and ete hym as she goo.

Holy hath byrdys, a ful fayre flok,—  
 The nyghtyngale, the poppyngy, the gayntyt lavyrok :  
 Good Ivy ! what byrdys ast thou ?  
 None but the hoolet, that how ! how !”

Stone, in his “Survey of London,” published in 1598, says that in his time every man’s house, the parish churches, the corners of the streets, market crosses, &c., were decorated with holme, ivy, and bays at Christmas time.

**Honeysuckle.**—The name was first applied to the flowers of clover, especially the common red clover. Thus in 1265 in a glossary, “*Ligustrum* i. triffoil, i. hunisuccles.” Turner in his “Herbal” applies it to the honeysuckle, “Woodbynde or honysuckle . . . windeth itself about bushes.” The plant is *Lonicera periclymenum* ; natural order, *Caprifoliaceæ*, honeysuckle or woodbine. The etymology of the name is *A. Lonicer*, a German botanist. The berries are nauseous, and said to be emetic and cathartic, and those of one species, not Scottish, have caused poison-

ing. In autumn and early winter they become very ornamental. When quite ripe they are of a bright transparent cornelian red, but before that, assume successively various tints of green, yellow, or orange. They are grouped five or six together, and vary in size. An old herbalist describes them as "like to bunches of grapes, red when they be ripe."

**Hurts.**—Hurts are blaeberrys. The word hurt is allied to whort; the fuller name is whortleberry, a name which first appears about 1450. In 1542, Boorde, "Dyetary," "Raw crayme . . . eaten with strawberyes or hurtes." About 1460, J. Russell, "Book of Nurture," "Of strawberies and hurtilberyes with the cold joncate." 1562, Turner, "Herbal," "Bleberries or hurtel berries." See Blaeberry.

**Ivy.**—Many forms of the name are given, ifiz, ivi, yve, and twenty others. There are many references. 1400, Maundey has, "It [a tree] is alle greene as it were ivy beryes." 1483 in "Cath. Angl.," "An iven bery, corimbus." 1530, Palsgrave, "Ivy berry, grayne de hierre." 1647, Milton in "Comus" has, "His clustering locks with ivy-berries wreathed." The plant is *Hedera helix*; natural order, *Araliaceæ*. The berries are black, rarely yellow, one-third of an inch in diameter, have an acidulous, resinous, somewhat pungent taste, are said to be purgative and emetic. A bitter alkaline principle, *hederine*, has been extracted from them, which also yields *hederic acid* and *hedera-tannic acid*. The berries which succeed the flowers in thick and numerous clusters, remain on the plant throughout the winter, and are not fully ripe till the following spring, forming meanwhile the favourite food of many birds. The blackcap clears away the elder berries in the autumn, wanders abroad, and returns to find a store of ripened ivy berries ready for it. Many virtues were attributed to the ivy by our forefathers. Its berries were regarded as a specific for plague and similar disorders for which it was infused in vinegar. They have long disappeared from the British Pharmacopœia. Though the older poets—such as they are—have contrasted holly and ivy to the disadvantage of the latter, all have not done so. "A rare old plant is the ivy green." Barton speaks of its constancy thus—



“ It changes not as seasons flow,  
 In changeless silent course along ;  
 Spring finds it verdant, leaves it so,  
 It outlives Summer’s song.  
 Autumn, no wan nor russet stain  
 Upon its deathless glory flings ;  
 And Winter o’er it weeps in vain,  
 With tempest on his wings.”

The ivy is intimately associated with the festivities of Christmas ; the ease with which it can be made into decorations makes it welcome in the adornment of the home. Its black berries contrast admirably with the red ones of the holly, and the pale wan berries of the mistletoe.

For centuries it was the custom to hang a bunch of ivy over a tavern door as a sign of the entertainment to be had within. Hence our old proverb, “ Good wine needs no bush,” and its French equivalent, “ *Au vin qui se vend bien, il ne faut point de lierre.*”

**Juniper.**—Other forms of the word are junipere, iwnipere, giniper, and many others. Notices of the word are : 1400, Maundy, “ That tre hath many leuves as the gynypre hath.” 1578, Lyte, “ Iuniper, or the berries thereof burned drieth away . . . all infection and corruption of the ayre.”

The shrub is *Juniperus communis* ; natural order, *Coniferae*. Like those of most coniferæ the cones take two years to ripen. They are, like the cones of other fir trees, green the first year, and lose this colour when they become ripe at the end of the second year. The fruit of the juniper is, botanically speaking, a *galbulus*. It is, as said, really a cone. The bracts composing the cone gradually soften, become pulpy, and thus form the *berries* of the juniper. These berries are covered with a glaucous bloom, beneath which they are of a shining, blackish purple colour. They have an agreeable, somewhat aromatic odour, and a sweetish, warm, bitterish, slightly terebinthine taste. They owe their properties chiefly to a volatile oil which is distilled from the green one-year-old berries. In the berries which are nearly ripe it has been partly changed into resin, and in those perfectly ripe completely so. Oil of juniper

is lighter than water, its specific gravity being 0.839; it is limpid and colourless. It imparts diuretic virtues to water and alcohol. They are very largely used in the preparation of gin.

Mithridates, King of Pontus, who so long resisted the Roman arms, lived in constant fear of being poisoned. To prevent that he took each morning as an antidote twenty leaves of rue, a little salt, two walnuts, two figs, and twenty juniper berries all beaten up together. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." From him we name an antidote to poison a *mithridate*.

Juniper is the badge of the clans Gunn, Ross, and Macleod. (Plate III.)

**Knotberry.**—Another name for the cloudberry, which see.

**Lily of the Valley.**—The plant is too well known to require any description. The berries are red. (Plate I.)

**Marsh-berry.**—Another name for the cranberry, which see.

**Marsh-wort.**—Another name for the cranberry, which see.

**Mealberry.**—Another name for the bearberry, which see.

**Mistletoe.**—Forms of the word are mistiltan, mistilto, myscelto, and twenty-nine others. References are numerous. About 1000 A.D., Ælfric, "Glossary," "*Uiscerago*, mistiltan." 1548, Turner, "Names of Herbes," "*Muscelto*." 1550, Lloyd, "*Mysceltowe* layd to the head draweth out corrupt humores." 1558, Phaer, "*Æneid*," vi., "*Mysceltowe*, called of some misteldew growing on trees in winter with a yellow, shiny berry." 1716, Gay, "Now with bright holly all your temples strow, With laurel green and sacred misteltoe." The name is thus composed of the Teutonic word *Missel* and *tau* = twig. The plant is *Viscum album*; natural order, *Loranthaceæ*. The etymology is the Greek *ixos* or *biskos*. Not a native in Scotland, according to Hooker, but long naturalised there. The berries are white, nearly half an inch in diameter, ovoid or globose, full of a very viscid juice. *Viscum* in Latin is birdlime. The missel-thrush, that is mistletoe-thrush (*Turdus visci-*

*vorous*) is very fond of the berries, and propagates the plant by transferring the viscid berries which cling to its beak to the trees. Mr Bonar of Saltoun who cultivated mistletoe with great success in his Edinburgh garden, did so by making an incision into the bark of an apple tree, inserting a seed and then covering it up to prevent birds eating it. The seeds germinated, and the plants grew vigorously. The mistletoe, a parasite, grows best on species of *Pyrus*. It rarely grows on the oak.

Much of the tradition about the Druids and mistletoe comes from Pliny, whose "Natural History" is a vast storehouse of all sorts of odd knowledge. "The Druids," he says, "(thus they call their chief priests) hold nothing in greater veneration than the mistletoe and the tree on which it grows, provided only that be the oak. They select groves of oaks standing by themselves and perform no sacred ceremony without green foliage. Indeed, they truly believe that whenever mistletoe grows on the oak it has been sent from heaven, and they consider it a sign of a chosen tree. But the mistletoe is rarely found upon the oak. When it is discovered they proceed to collect it with very great devotion and ceremony, and especially on the sixth day of the moon. This period of the moon's age when it has sufficient size without having attained the half of its fulness makes the beginning of their months and years, and an age, which but consists of thirty years" (C. Plinii, "Historia Naturalis," xxi. 44). And again: "Calling the mistletoe a heal-all and having got the sacrifices and the good things for the feast all properly ready under the tree, they lead up two white bulls and begin by tying them by their horns to the tree. The Arch-Druid clothed in white robe, then mounts the tree and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle. It is caught as it falls in a white cloth. Then they offer up the victims as a sacrifice, praying that God would make His gift prosperous to those to whom it had been presented. They believed it would give fruitfulness to all barren animals, and would act as a remedy against all poisons." The animals were killed, cooked, and distributed. Then each one present received a small piece of the mistletoe which had not been allowed to fall to the

ground. This was to be a New Year's gift—a talisman which should preserve them against disease, poison, and all ills.

The medical reputation of the mistletoe does not seem to have disappeared with the Druids. Gerarde says: "A few berries of mistletoe, bruised and strained in oil and drunken, hath presently and forthwith rid a grievous and sore stitch." The chief virtue ascribed to the mistletoe was its power of giving fertility to all animals. Hence its long-continued reputation. In one of Colepeper's MSS. in the British Museum is a curious notice of Sir Peter Freschville's house at Stavely in Derbyshire: "Heare my Lord Freschville did live, and heare grows the famous mistletoe-tree: the only oake in England that bears mistletoe."

The Countess of Danby writes to Mrs Colepeper for a sprig of this mistletoe:—

"Dear Cozen,—Pray if you have any of the mistletoe of yo<sup>r</sup> father's oke, oblige me so far as to send sum of it to yo<sup>r</sup> most affectionate servant, Bridget Danby" (*Notes and Queries*, vi. 119, 1st Series).

A well-known herbalist speaks of it as "good for the grief of the sinew, itch, sores, and toothache, the biting of mad dogs and venomous beasts." Even so learned and level-headed an authority as the author of the "Religio Medici" alludes to its virtues in the cure of epilepsy. Modern enlightenment has banished the belief in its virtues and but one remains, most delightful and too well known to need mention!

The supply of our mistletoe and berries comes mostly from the apple orchards of Normandy.

**Moorberry.**—Another name for the cranberry, which see.

**Mossberry.**—Another name for the cranberry, which see.

**Mountain Bramble.**—Another name for the cloudberry, which see.

**Privet.**—The origin of the name is unknown. There are numerous references. 1452, Elyot, "Ligustrum . . . this tree dothe grow in watery places as wyllowes and salowes do, and bearith a black fruite lyke to an elder tree;

they whiche doe take it for the bushe callyd Priuet, be moche deceyved." 1548, Turner, "Names of Herbes," "Ligustrum is called in . . . Englishe prim, priut, or priuet, though Eliote, more boldly than lernedly, defended the contrary." 1578, Lyte, "Priuet is a base plante very seldom growing upright." 1573, Tusser, "Let priuie or prim, Let boxe like him."

The plant is *Ligustrum vulgare*; natural order, *Oleinea*. Etymology, *ligare*, to bind from a use of the twigs. It is naturalised in Scotland. The berries are a third of an inch in diameter, globose, purplish black, have a sweetish bitter taste, and are said to have purgative properties. Death in a child between two and three years old is recorded as due to the eating of privet berries. Those yield a rose dye, and a bland oil used for cooking in Germany. The rich masses of berries ripen in autumn, and continue to decorate the bush during a great part of the winter, when they form a most attractive food for thrushes, blackbirds, finches, and other birds. (Plate II.)

**Raspberry.**—The name is made up of rasp and berry. Rasp or raspis is possibly connected with the old French *raspeit*, *raspée* (modern French *râpé*). Italian, *raspato*. The name raspisberry occurs in old writers, for example:—1548, Hall, "Chron. Henry VIII.," "The aubespine . . . and the framboister, which is in English the hathorne . . . and the raspis berry." Turner (edition of 1568) says, "The raspis is found in many gardines of England." 1623, in Whitburne, "Newfoundland," "Cherries, nuts, raspberries, strawberries." 1633, Gerard says, "The raspis is planted in gardens . . . it groweth not wilde that I knew of, except in the field by a village in Lancashire called Harwood, not far from Blackburne." 1664, Evelyn, "Raspberries, corinths, strawberries." 1675, Worledge in his "Systema Agriculturae," "being the mystery of husbandry discovered and layd open," says, "Raspberries are not to be omitted out of the number of the most pleasant and usefull fruits which yield one of the most pleasant juyces of any fruit, and being extracted and preserved, will serve to tinge any other liquor with its delicate aromatic gust."

The plant is *Rubus Idæus*; natural order, *Rosaceæ*; the

raspberry. Pliny mentions it as *Idæa*, the Greeks naming it so after Mount Ida, where it was abundant, and Linnæus continued the name in *R. Idæus*. It ascends to 2,000 feet in the Highlands. The drupes, popularly berries, are many, red or yellow, stone-pitted. The flavour of the wild raspberry is preferred by many to that of the cultivated one. The berries and their uses require no description.

**Roebuck-berry.**—Another name for the stone bramble.

**Rose Elder.**—Another name for the guelder rose.

**Rowan.**—The plant is *Pyrus aucuparia*; natural order, *Rosaceæ*. The specific name *aucuparia* was given to it because it has long been the custom for bird-catchers in Germany and other countries to trap redwings, thrushes, and other birds in hair nooses baited with rowan berries. Mountain ash or rowan tree: the first name is quite inappropriate; it has no connection with, or relation to the ash tree. Other names are witchen tree, wigger (a corruption of witchen) tree—these terms relating to its reputed anti-witchcraft properties—quicken tree, quick beam, mountain service, roan tree.

The berries grow in clusters, are at first green, but soon turn to a rich, glowing, orange colour. They are harsh and austere, according to man's standard, but are greedily devoured by birds. A writer says, "A very pleasant preserve may be made from them, and the mountaineers of Scotland make them into a kind of cyder, or by distillation extract from them an ardent and potent spirit." From them is obtained a sugar called *sorbin*, susceptible of vinous fermentation; malic acid has been prepared from it. There are two acids, *sorbic* and *para-sorbic*, and a saccharine principle, *sorbite*. It does not undergo vinous fermentation.

A branch of the tree was hung up over house portals and the doorways of stables and cowhouses to preserve the respective indwellers from evil. Moreover, it was planted at every hamlet for the same purpose.

We cannot omit to quote the exquisite lines of Lady Nairne on the rowan tree—round which her memory lingers, and which she so lovingly describes. It recalls for her the scenes of childhood which cluster round it.

“ Oh rowan tree, oh rowan tree, thou'lt aye be dear to me,  
 Entwined thou art wi' mony ties o' hame and infancy,  
 Thy leaves were aye the first o' spring, thy flowers the simmer's  
 pride,  
 There was nae sic a' bonny tree in a' the country side.  
 Oh ! Rowan Tree.

How fair wert thou in simmer time wi' a' thy clusters white,  
 How rich and gay thy autumn dress, wi' berries red and bright,  
 On thy fair stem were mony names, which now nae mair I see,  
 But they're engraven on my heart—forgot they ne'er can be.  
 Oh ! Rowan Tree.

We sat aneath thy spreading shade, the bairnies round thee ran,  
 They pu'd thy bonnie berries red, and necklaces they strang,  
 My mother, oh ! I see her still, she smiled our sports to see,  
 Wi' little Jeanie on her lap, wi' Jamie at her knee.  
 Oh ! Rowan Tree.

Oh ! there arose my father's prayer, in holy evening's calm,  
 How sweet was then my mother's voice singing the Martyr's  
 psalm.  
 Now a' are gane ! we meet nae mair aneath the rowan tree ;  
 But hallowed thoughts around thee twine o' hame and infancy.  
 Oh ! Rowan Tree.”

(Plate II.)

**Snowball Tree.**—A cultivated variety of the guelder rose, which see.

**Spindle Tree.**—The wood of the tree is hard and tough, and was used for the finer sorts of gunpowder, spindles, &c., hence the name. The German name *Spindelbaum* refers to the same use.

The plant is *Euonymus Europæus* ; natural order, *Celastrineæ*. It is rare in Scotland. The seeds have a complete *arillode*, which is enclosed in an albuminous fleshy capsule. In our plant the capsule is pale crimson, the arillode orange. The fruit looks like a berry and, in popular language, may be called such. In September, these curious pendent four-celled seed vessels are ripened. When fully ripe, the rosy pink or crimson coloured capsule opens out, and shows within their cup the brilliant orange-coloured seeds. These seeds, though very poisonous to mankind, are eaten by thrushes, blackbirds, and other birds. An oil is expressed from them on the Continent used in manu-

factures. The name *Euonymus* from *Euonyme*, mother of the Furies, was given on account of the poisonous berries. Happily the plant is rare in Scotland.

**Stone Bramble.**—The plant is *Rubus saxatilis*; natural order, *Rosaceæ*. The name stone bramble is a translation of this. Its slender runners creep along the ground; the leafy stems are 2 to 3 feet high, the flowering stems 6 to 18 inches. It ascends to 2,700 feet in the Highlands. The berries, really drupes, are two to three in number, globose, scarlet, persistent, and are of an agreeably acid flavour.

**Strawberry.**—In Middle English the names are *strawbery*, *strauberi*, *strabery*, and many others. The use of the word *straw* is uncertain; it may be taken in the sense of "a long stem," referring to the numerous runners of the plant, or it may allude to an old custom of stringing the berries on a straw, or it may be from the Anglo-Saxon *streow*, *stro*, from the berries being strewn on the ground. It has no connection with the straw laid to preserve the berries from mud, sand, &c.

The plant is *Fragaria vesca*; natural order, *Rosaceæ*, and the name implies that the food is both fragrant and eatable. It is not necessary to say how much cultivation has done for it. As already mentioned, the berry is, botanically speaking, an *etærio* of achenes. These achenes, commonly called "seeds," are really carpels containing a single seed. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet, and strawberries are none the less delicious for their ridiculous-looking botanical name. Nothing need be said of this delicious fruit except that the strawberries of Scotland are the finest flavoured of all.

**Wayfaring Tree.**—See *Viburnum lantana*, under Guelder Rose.

**Whortleberry.**—A name for the blaeberry and other species of *Vaccinium*, which see. See also Hurts. (Plate I.)

**Woody Nightshade.**—Another name for the bitter-sweet, which see.

**Yew.**—The name in Early Modern English; *yewe*, *yeugh*, *ewe*, *eugh*, *ewgh*, *yowe*; in Middle English it is *ew*, *u*. The Gaelic is *iubhar*.



The plant is *Taxus baccata*; natural order, *Conifera*. The etymology of the name is the Greek *toxon*, from the wood being used in making *bows*.

It is rare in a native state, yet several trees are known of great size and great age. The yew in Fortingall churchyard measured in its palmiest days  $56\frac{1}{2}$  feet in circumference, and must have been a tree when the Romans came to Caledonia. The fruit, like that of the juniper, is a cone. It consists of a few minute scales, and one terminal ovule seated on a fleshy dick which enlarges into a red, fleshy cup containing the seed. This fleshy cup is the berry.

The leaves of the yew are poisonous. Many instances of cattle having been poisoned by them are on record. The berries also appear to be a deadly poison. In a fatal case the child which had eaten the berries was found semi-comatose, with convulsions, and a cold clammy skin, difficult respiration, dilated pupils, and attempts at vomiting. There seems to be reason for believing that the poison is in the seeds rather than in the flesh of the berry. See *Lancet*, 1868, p. 630; 1870, p. 471.

An alkaloid *toxine* has been obtained from yew seeds. It is a white, poisonous, crystalline powder, slightly soluble only in water, easily soluble in ether, alcohol, chloroform, benzol, and carbon disulphide but not in benzene. It gives a red colour with concentrated sulphuric acid. A volatile oil has been obtained from the leaves.

The yew is the badge of the clan Fraser. (Plate I.)



*Enrico Ross.*

THE CLIFFS OF BEN NEVIS.

*A. Romiti.*



PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

FORTY-THIRD MEET OF THE CLUB, EASTER 1909.

FORT WILLIAM.

*Members present.*—Gilbert Thomson, W. Inglis Clark, C. Inglis Clark, Comber, Donald, Douglas, Farquhar, Garden, Gibbs, J. Gibson, Glover, Goggs, Goodeve, Howie, Levack, Ling, Low, Macalister, M'Intyre, Mackay, Macmillan, MacRobert, Maylard, Miller, Morrison, Mounsey, Munro, Naismith, Nelson, Raeburn, Reid, Rennie, A. E. Robertson, E. Robertson, Rorie, Russell, Sang, A. D. Smith, Solly, Unna, Workman, Worsdell, C. Walker, H. Walker, and Young.

*Guests.*—Air, Arthur, Beard, Collins, Edwards, Menzies, A. Thomson, and White.

THE well-nigh interminable series of snow, wind, and rain-storms, which characterised the winter of 1908-9, and which had reduced the majority of the inhabitants of these islands to the verge of exasperation and despair, only served to whet the appetite of anticipation of those members of the S.M.C. who had the good fortune to be able to attend the Easter Meet at Fort William.

During March, the weather was expected to improve, but it didn't, on the east coast, at any rate. Like the weather in Skye, it "was not unsettled, for it rained steadily." \* At Aberdeen there were twenty-nine rainy days in March, whilst in Edinburgh things were not much better; and it was poor consolation to learn that now, day after day, the sky was clear and the sun shining brightly on the west coast.

With the advent of April the area of sunshine spread grudgingly to the east, and, at last, all Scotland blinked in the unaccustomed glare and hung itself out to dry.

Now came the question, Would the weather "hold" over Easter?

The early days of the week just before Good Friday were beyond reproach. The barometer had been high

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\* See Vol. X., p. 131.

for days, but it began to drop slowly, and, if the weather meant to break, it would, of course, begin on Ben Nevis.

No doubt the unusual severity of the winter had something to do with the eager rush of so large a number of members to Fort William to celebrate the end of their winter's work, and so the record number of forty-five members and eight guests rallied under the shadow of the mighty Ben. The rush of everyday work, the noise of cities, and the gloom of sunless days, all were joyfully forgotten in the eager handshake and glad recognition of friends whose beaming faces showed only too plainly their delight at being once more simply and solely members of the S.M.C. assembled for their Easter Meet.

Possibly, also, the enthusiasm can be in part explained by the fact that the grand *objectif* of the Meet was the finest precipice in Britain, whose subtle attractions compel its most intimate worshippers to return, year after year, to renew their acquaintance with its corries, rock-ridges, and corniced gullies.

The first men to arrive were Munro and Solly, who reached Fort William on the morning of Thursday the 8th, and went for a walk on the hills to the south of Glen Nevis, returning by the General Wade road. Comber also arrived on Thursday morning, and went for a tramp up Allt a Mhuilinn.

The evening of Thursday found most of the men at Fort William, comfortably housed in three hotels, the Alexandra, Caledonian, and Imperial, and eager to start climbing on the morrow. But a good day's work had already been done on Beinn Dothaidh. Douglas, Garden, Ling, Mackay, and Raeburn, with Collins (non-member), in company with some members of the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club, whose Easter Meet was being held at Inveroran, set out from that station on Thursday morning. On reaching the foot of the north-east corrie of Beinn Dothaidh the party split into three groups, one taking the main gully, another the subsidiary gully to the left, whilst the third ascended the well-defined arête on the buttress running up the right side of the main gully. In each case a lady led the climbers, and right well and



*J. Rennie,*

BEN NEVIS.

*Easter 1909.*



truly did she do it, although the work was difficult, and, at times, demanded considerable skill. In the descent, after a short rest at the south cairn, some remarkable glissading evolutions are mentioned as having been performed before the party reached the foot of the hill.

On Friday morning breakfast at 6 A.M. was the rule, and most of the men were on their way to the hills an hour later.

The early morning mists were low down on the hills as we left the hotel, but, as we mounted Meall an t-Suidhe, the higher tops began to show, and the mist to waver and thin out. By early forenoon it was certain that the day was to be fine—and so it proved to be—one of the finest on record, with brilliant sunshine and blue sky, cloudless except for a few stray wisps of far away cirrus, the mountains clear and distinct, and everything as it should be.

To those of us who were visiting Ben Nevis for the first time, and who, scrambling down from the shoulder of Carn Dearg towards the "Lunching Stone," got our first glimpse of the great corrie and the famous rock-face of which we had heard so much, the view looking up the Allt a Mhuilinn was astounding, marvellous. All the details of the great ridges and gullies were sharply defined, whether bathed in the brightest of sunshine, or, by contrast, lying in the blackest of shadows.

Several parties set out for Ben Nevis.

Raeburn, Ling, Gibbs, and Mounsey climbed the Tower Ridge, including the "Boulder" by its west arête. "The Tower was ascended by the 'Recess' route. The rocks low down were in ideal condition, but high up they were very considerably iced. Time out—12½ hours."

Mounsey's photograph of the Tower Gap (see illustration facing p. 338) shows the condition of the rocks encountered by Raeburn's party high up on the ridge.

A. E. Robertson, Garden, Reid, and Levack sauntered up the Allt a Mhuilinn, photographing as they went, climbed up to the Carn Mor Dearg arête, and so on to the top of Ben Nevis. On leaving the arête, they were joined by Comber, who climbed alone up the steep snow slope from Coire Leas, on to the shoulder of Ben Nevis.



Munro, Solly, Rennie, Douglas, and Collins followed the route of A. E. Robertson's party to the Observatory, whence an adjournment was made to the top of the cliffs to look out for Raeburn's party on the Tower Ridge. Raeburn was soon descried, working busily in the "Recess," the chip, chip of his axe being plainly heard, whilst every now and again a shower of ice could be seen to shoot out and rattle down the cliffs, indicating what was being done to get the road clear.

Rennie photographed to some purpose, and his pictures (see illustrations facing pp. 275, 334, 336) will recall very vividly to members the views enjoyed by them that day on the hill.

The route homewards for all parties seemed to be the Red Burn, which gave a fine sitting glissade of 1,500 feet (aneroid measurement).

Goodeve, Workman, and Young, having arrived that morning from Glasgow, started at once for the "Castle," but the sun being now well up, they found the Castle corrie resounding with ice avalanches falling from the perpendicular face of the Carn Dearg Buttress. They, however, proceeded to climb the Castle by the ordinary route, but had not proceeded far when they were startled by the noise of a large ice-fall right above them, and were just able to dodge it. "The ascent was continued, after some debate, keeping as near the North Castle Gully as possible. One other fall occurred before we were obliged to traverse back into the track, and we were proceeding to negotiate the forked chimney when a third fall took place, a large block of ice missing the leader's head by a matter of inches. A precipitate retreat was then made, and the party returned to Fort William by the Allt a Mhuilinn."

M'Intyre, Mackay, Naismith, Nelson, A. D. Smith, Gilbert Thomson, and White drove to Polldubh, and made the round of the Am Bodach horseshoe:—An Gearanach, An Garbhanach, Stob Coire a Chairn, Am Bodach, Sgor an Iubhair (from which M'Intyre and Nelson made a separate descent, *vid* Coire nan Feusgan), and Sgor a Mhaim. When descending the north corrie of Sgor a



*Easter 1909.*

THE TOWER GAP.

*W. A. Mounsey.*

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Mhaim they had 1,500 feet of glissading—1,000 feet sitting and 500 feet standing. Goggs, Russell, Unna, E. Robertson, Sang, Menzies, Beard, and Edwards left Roy Bridge about 10 A.M., did all the Easains from Stob Coire an Easain to Sgor a Choinnich Beag, thence down to Steall, through the gorge at the head of Glen Nevis, arriving at 7 P.M. at the point where the driving road begins and where a conveyance was waiting them. They had magnificent views of the Aonachs and Mamore Forest hills.

H. Walker, C. Walker, Dr Inglis Clark, and C. Inglis Clark motored from Tyndrum to Corran Ferry, drove to Inversanda, and climbed the ridge of Garbh Bheinn.

*Saturday.*—Weather still very fine.

Raeburn, Goggs, Gilbert Thomson, and Unna ascended Ben Nevis by the North-East Buttress. "The route followed was by slabs to the right of Slingsby's Chimney, and, thereafter, the arête was very closely followed. No serious difficulty was met with except at the forty-foot corner, where every hold was thickly caked with ice, much more so than was met with on the Tower. By afternoon the snow began to show signs of slipping off the underlying ice."

Workman, Young, Goodeve, Macalister, and MacRobert climbed the Tower Ridge, including the "Boulder," by the same route as that taken by Raeburn's party of the previous day. They found the snow on the traverse below the Tower and on the arête leading to the summit very loose and dangerous. M'Intyre, Nelson, and Macmillan ascended No. 3 Gully, M'Intyre leading. Naismith and A. Arthur took their ski to Allt a Mhuilinn, and enjoyed some good sport in a curved valley below Douglas's Boulder. Then they climbed to the arête at the head of the glen, and so to the top of Ben Nevis, carrying their ski. From the top they had a glorious run down for 2,000 feet, almost to the half-way house.

E. Robertson, White, Edwards, and Menzies climbed the Castle Ridge. Donald, J. Gibson, Rorie, and C. A. Air ascended Carn Beag Dearg from Inverlochty, thence to the top of Carn Mor Dearg and along by the arête to Ben Nevis. Sang and Dr Inglis Clark had a pleasant and

restful day in Allt a Mhuilinn, admiring the back of the big Ben and taking photographs. They clambered up to the Carn Mor Dearg arête, where they were joined by C. Inglis Clark, Naismith, and Arthur.

Solly, Collins, Worsdell, and Glover walked up Stob Ban from Achriabhach, crossed Mullach nan Coirean, and down by General Wade's road.

Douglas, Farquhar, Howie, Levack, Reid, Rennie, and A. E. Robertson took a day off and visited the aluminium works at Kinlochleven.

Garden, Gibbs, Miller, Mackay, Mounsey, and Russell climbed the buttress on the left of the great gully on the south-west face of Garbh Bheinn. This climb, a description of which, by the late W. Brown, appeared in an early number of the *Journal*, evidently gave the party splendid sport. They had fine weather, first-class rock, and magnificent views.

In Dr Inglis Clark's photograph of Garbh Bheinn (see illustration facing p. 342) the steep ridge high up on the left of the picture and leading directly to the summit cairn was the part ascended.

Garden's photograph (see illustration facing p. 340) shows the route more in detail.

Munro took the morning train to Invergarry, whence he climbed Sron a' Choire Ghairbh, and Meal an Teanga, returning to Fort William by the evening train. He had good views of the Nevis range.

*Sunday*.—A dull grey morning, not very promising. Macalister, MacRobert, Workman, Young; and White climbed the Castle Ridge, several variations of the usual route being attempted.

Clark, jun., Low, Donald, and Air also climbed the Castle Ridge.

Macmillan, Inglis Clark, Morrison, and Sang, with the first named triumphantly leading, climbed the Carn Dearg Buttress, up No. 5 Gully, to a large snow patch; then, holding to the right, they reached the top of the buttress. A glissade down the Red Burn filled the leader's cup of happiness to overflowing.

Glover, Goodeve, Worsdell, Ling, H. Walker, and



*Easter 1900.*

GARBH-BHEINN OF ARDGOUR.

*H. Gairden.*



C. Walker drove to Steall and climbed Aonach Beag. Three of the party, Goodeve, Worsdell, and C. Walker, then traversed the whole Aonach ridge, but Glover, Ling, and H. Walker got pounded by some ice ledges and had to return.

Howie, Douglas, and Rennie walked some miles along the Lundavra road, then crossed the hill into Glen Nevis, visiting the vitrified fort and rocking stone there.

Gibbs, Garden, Levack, Mounsey, and Reid walked up Stob Ban from Achriabhach, and the weather being thick, they missed the ridge leading to Sgor a Mhaim and got "wandered," ultimately descending by the south-west shoulder of the hill. Mullach nan Coirean was then climbed, and the party returned home by Glen Nevis.

Raeburn left for Glencoe.

The President went to church.

The weather on Sunday was gradually getting worse. The higher tops were shrouded in mist all day, and there were frequent showers of hail, rain, and sleet.

Monday broke dull and rainy, and was obviously going to be a stormy day on the hills. Nevertheless, the plans made in the smoking-room on Sunday night were resolutely adhered to, and several parties had early breakfast and started out.

Collins, Ling, and Naismith climbed the North Castle Gully in a snowstorm. Unna, Workman, and Young drove to Steall, and traversed the Aonachs down to Glen Spean. They experienced very high winds and driving snow, and were much surprised by a strong electrical brush discharge, which took place from the points of their axes.

Macalister, MacRobert, A. Arthur, and A. Thomson also drove up Glen Nevis, intending to go over Stob Coire an Easain to Roy Bridge. At Steall they found the weather too bad for ridge walking, so they crossed the river, went up Sgor a Mhaim by the north-east corrie, and glissaded down again, and so back to Fort William.

Nelson and Gilbert Thomson started for Carn Mor Dearg with cameras, with no result other than a thorough wetting.



Howie, Farquhar, and Rennie walked to Banavie.

Raeburn, along with W. A. Brigg and C. C. Tucker, climbed the north gully on the Crowberry Ridge of Buchaille Etive (second ascent), under very bad conditions. "The old snow in the gully was good and firm, but it was snowing nearly all the time, and the fresh snow kept pouring down and was heavy enough to sweep out the party without careful hitching. The pitches near the top were difficult owing to ice on slabby rocks. The last pitch was turned by a traverse which was somewhat difficult under the prevailing conditions. The climb took four hours and twenty minutes."

It was very stormy on the summit—a gale of wind, with heavy snow and hail showers.

By Monday night the Meet was officially at an end, but a few of the men lingered on, loth to return to everyday routine.

On Tuesday, Morrison and Comber walked up Carn Mor Dearg *via* "Long John" Distillery, and back to Fort William by the same route.

On Wednesday, Maylard and Morrison went up Ben Nevis by the path, obtaining good views during the ascent and descent, but getting into mist and rain at the summit. A great deal of fresh snow had fallen, so much so—and this will be interesting to members—the Red Burn glissade refused to "go."

On Thursday, Dr and Miss Inglis Clark climbed the Castle Ridge in a foot of new snow, Miss Clark leading.

On the same day, Mrs Clark, C. Inglis Clark, and Morrison climbed the North Castle Gully.

On Friday, Mr Solly finished up on the Cobbler, and the Meet was over.

J. R. LEVACK.

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#### CRIANLARICH.

*Present.*—Messrs Hugh S. Ingram, D. Mackenzie, and F. C. Squance—*Members*; John H. Ingram, E. Lawry Squance, and H. B. Widdows—*Guests*.

AS they had to leave by the evening train, an early start was made on Friday morning for Ben More by



*H. Inglis Clark.*

GARBH-BHEINN OF ARDGOUR.

*8th April 1900.*



Messrs Hugh and John Ingram, accompanied by the son of the latter.

The ascent was made in perfect weather, the snow being found in excellent condition, and some good glissading was enjoyed on the descent.

The remaining four started together also for Ben More, the younger and more energetic couple, Messrs Widdows and E. L. Squance, ascending the steep and hard snow slopes of the north-west corrie, and descending to the col between Ben More and Stobinian, where they were joined by the others who had traversed the western face of the mountain at about the height of the col. The whole party then ascended Stobinian, descending direct from the top towards the Ben More Burn, some good glissades being enjoyed on the way, one of the party illustrating a new but not improved method of stopping. The day was perfect, and magnificent views were obtained in every direction.

Saturday was another very fine day. Messrs Widdows and E. L. Squance climbed Ben Lui from the north-east corrie, ascending by the south central gully, and descending by the eastern face. The snow was very soft all the way up. Quite a considerable avalanche was observed in the central gully during the ascent.

Mr F. C. Squance made the circuit of Loch Tay by motor, Mr Mackenzie accompanying him to Killin, from whence he explored Glen Lochay.

Sunday morning was wet, but clearing partially after mid-day, Mr Widdows made the ascent of Cruach Ardran by the central gully. After the first 100 feet the snow became so soft, nearly waist deep, that it was necessary to clamber out and work up the glazed rocks on the left. Thick mist at the top followed by a snowstorm. Descending in the mist he came out below the col connecting Cruach Ardran with Stob Garbh, and then re-ascended to the top of the latter. Snow everywhere was very soft. The descent was made by the burn to Crianlarich, the whole valley being exceedingly wet.

The thirst created by a somewhat rapid ascent and descent in wet and stormy weather led to the dictum being

laid down by one of the older members, "No peak no pint."

Monday morning being very wet was spent in industrious idleness in the motor shed. In the afternoon a visit was paid to the Falls of Falloch—very fine after all the recent rain—some good boulder practice being obtained on the way.

The afternoon train from Fort William was met, and news was obtained of the great doings on Ben Nevis and elsewhere.

Tuesday morning saw the break-up of a most enjoyable Meet, the first to leave being Messrs F. C. and E. L. Squance by motor, Messrs Mackenzie and Widdows following by the mid-day train.

The party were most comfortable at the recently altered and enlarged hotel.

F. C. S.

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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*The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions. These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.*

SKI-RUNNING ON DEESIDE.—There was no ski-ing on Deeside until the end of February. The heavy snowfall in Christmas week which isolated Aberdeen for some days, did not extend far inland, and a party who went up to Inverey expecting to find snow everywhere, found very little and had to spend most of their time in ordinary climbing. By the end of February snow had gathered on the hills, and Henry Kellas and his brother Arthur Kellas, who spent the last week-end of the month at Derry Lodge, had some excellent ski-ing. Their chief day was the Sunday when they went up Meall na Guaille (2,550), and on to Beinn Bhreac (3,051), descending again to Glen Derry some miles above the Lodge. The weather on the tops was very rough with drifting snow, but the surface was in good condition and they had fine running down into the valley. On the same day three other Club members, James A. Parker, J. Bruce Miller, and Henry Alexander, did Beinn a Bhuird from Braemar not on ski but walking.

In the second week of March a very heavy snowstorm set in throughout the Cairngorms. At Ballater it was described as the worst storm which had been seen for twenty years. There were 2 feet of snow in the village and the hills were literally covered, not with a mere sprinkling of snow which looks white at a distance but is little use for ski-ing, or with snow drifted into deep patches here and there, but covered all over with an even and uniform depth of 2 feet or more. On Sunday the 7th three Aberdeen men, Ian M. M'Laren, Henry J. Butchart, and Austyn J. C. Fyfe, had some good ski-ing on the Glengairn hills below Morven, but the weather was very stormy. During the week more snow fell, and James A. Parker, Henry J. Butchart, and Henry Alexander had a very fine week-end's ski-ing. The snow was in perfect condition. On Saturday the 13th Parker and Alexander went up Pananich Hill and ran down upon Braichlie. Butchart joined them on the Sunday and the day was spent on the hills behind Braichlie and between Glenmuick and Glen Tanner. Mist and drifting snow on the tops made the running rather trying, but on the lower slopes when the weather cleared and

the sun came out, the running was perfect and the view down upon the fir-woods with the village in the valley below, was for all the world like some Swiss winter resort.

On the Monday, the 15th, Parker had to return to Aberdeen, and Butchart and Alexander went to Mount Keen (3,077). The whole expedition from the hotel in Ballater to the top of Mount Keen and back again was done on ski. In all some fifteen miles were covered. The ski were put on at the hotel door and had not to be carried once during the day. The weather was more settled than on the previous day, and but for an hour's snow and mist when crossing the head of the Pollagach Burn—a broad and rather confusing plateau—the day was clear throughout. There was a magnificent run down out of the mist, in which we dropped some 700 feet in half a mile, and came right down upon Corrievrack at the head of Glen Tanner. From here to the top of Mount Keen was about 1,700 feet of steady climbing. For uphill going, as on the previous days, we used rope, wound in criss-cross fashion round the front halves of our ski. The rope serves as a non-slip, and with it one can go straight up a slope almost as steep as the roof of a house. It is an invaluable device for cross-country ski-ing. Before going downhill the rope, of course, has to be slipped off. The summit was reached shortly before three o'clock, six hours from Ballater. The return to Ballater was made by the headwaters of the Tanner, practically along a plateau over the Hare Cairn, Am Mullach, and Cairn Leughan, and down upon Braichlie. Towards the top of Mount Keen the snow was furrowed with the wind, and this spoiled the downward running. Elsewhere, however, it was in ideal condition, and we had some splendid runs with S turns. The hills were one waste of snow as far as the eye could see. On foot we could only have gone a few miles from Ballater, for the snow was not hard enough to bear one. With ski, however, it was possible to go anywhere, and on a day like this, with the snow over valley and hill, and the sun above us, we felt that we had the hills at our command. The exhilaration of these great white expanses and the thrill of the long coasting runs with the snow whistling beneath the ski, are things to remember in the dull city days.

This winter the Post Office supplied the postman at Braemar with ski, and during the snowstorm he used them regularly between Braemar and Inverey. In view of the success of the experiment the Post Office authorities propose to equip other postmen in rural districts with ski. This is the first official recognition of ski-running in this country.

H. ALEXANDER.

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AN AVALANCHE EXPERIENCE ON BEN ACHALLADAR.—On Saturday, 10th April, a party of seven ladies of the L.S.C.C. set out to

climb Achalladar. The weather was fine, the drive to Bridge-of-Orchy and even the trudge over miles of railway sleepers were cheerfully accomplished. After lunch we climbed the moor, keeping well over to our left, and eventually arrived at the foot of the large corrie facing north. At this point the party divided into two, one party choosing the broad gully which leads to the col, and the other having for their objective the steeper gully to the right, divided from the col gully by a rib of rock. The top of this gully comes out considerably to the left of the summit. It is said that those who live successful lives leave no history to tell their tale—whether this means that there is a deadly monotony which is uninteresting, or whether it is that their tale is soon told we will leave—suffice to say that the col party, viz., Misses M. Inglis Clark, Gillies, and Hood were successful, and gained the top of the peak. When we said good-bye to the others we roped up—Mrs Douie Urquhart, the President, Misses Stuart and M'Bride—all went well; we moved steadily and carefully up, axes driven into the snow, rope hitched, and only one moving at a time. The snow was rather treacherous, soft on the top and quite hard below. After climbing in this way for about an hour, suddenly there came a curious hissing sound, and to our intense astonishment an avalanche of snow rushed its way down the gully. Fortunately we were quite a foot to the left of it. We did not like it, but thought that by keeping well in to the rocks on our left we would be safe. This we did, but as we got higher the condition of the snow became worse. We then decided that our best plan would be to get on to the rocks to our left and leave the gully. Just as our leader turned to attack the snow leading to the rocks, the snow upon which she was standing gave way. We threw our whole weight upon our axes already driven into the snow. It was of no avail, another and a larger avalanche, which had evidently been started by us, came swiftly down and carried us irresistibly along with it. Down we went, and to my horror the ropes began to tighten round my neck. In another minute I would have been strangled, but with a big effort I managed with my left hand to get the ropes pushed off, holding on to my axe with the right. I dared not think what might be happening to the others. Then came another danger; we were making straight for an island of rocks. I really gave up thinking then, and expected to be crashed into bits. To my astonishment we sailed over the big boulders. What a relief! I then did all I could to stop our wild career, and finally we came to a halt. I was afraid to look round on my companions. I can never forget how thankful I felt when I found that they had not a scratch! only the ice-axes left in the gully! The snow of the avalanche had been in such quantity that it acted as a cushion to carry us safely over the rocks. We did think of going up again for the axes, and actually started to do so, but decided that we had had enough for one day, and that the axes might be rescued another time. The sequel to the tale of the axes is that one was



found by a party of the S.M.C., viz., Messrs Morrison, Boyd, and Raeburn, and returned to its owner with rejoicing. The other remains there to this day.  
 JANIE INGLIS CLARK.

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CORUIISK.

*Lines suggested by Mr Burns' Picture in the Royal Scottish Academy,  
 April 1909.*

WE lay upon the southern slope, and saw  
 The clear blue water lave the wrinkled stone,  
 And yonder lingered a thin white smoke,  
 Marking the feet of mighty Druim nan Ramh,  
 Upon whose battlements one ray of light  
 Shone like the fall of water in the air,  
 And all this imaged in the lake below :  
 Then, far above the meadow and the stream,  
 The seething cauldron of the coming storm,  
 Mysterious hollows filled with purple gloom,  
 "And wind-enchanted shapes of wandering mist,"  
 That half-enshrouded Ghreadaidh's solemn cliffs,  
 Or soared to Mhadaidh's many-headed crest :  
 High in the west the sombre-glowing eve,  
 And Bidein's turret struck with sunset fire.

W. C. S.

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EASTER NOTES (1909), BY EDRED M. CORNER.

THREE papers published in former years in the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* urge me to publish these notes made during an Easter holiday. Our Secretary wrote "The Motor in Mountaineering," which needs an amending note. During my last two Easter holidays a motor has been used in mountaineering, and on all kinds of roads. Being a mere Englishman, the very bad state of the roads over which it is necessary to travel, has impelled me to hire some one else's motor to bear the shocks and shakings of the journeys. Such a precaution is highly important, because the principal use and excuse for the "Motor in Mountaineering" is that it enables the climber to get to out-of-the-way hills and climb them, necessitating the traverse of little frequented and badly kept roads. On such occasions it is far better to use some one else's car. This is the note I would add to our Secretary's communication.

Secondly, Mr Raeburn has written of Scottish Snow, and has made little reference to a very constant (perhaps the most constant) feature of the snow in Scottish winter climbing—newly fallen snow. The dangers and deceits of newly fallen snow were never so strongly forced upon me as they were this Easter. When a layer of soft new snow lies on smooth steep slopes as on Am Bathaiche in Western Ross, it forms a great danger when descending, and is less apparently dangerous when ascending.

Thirdly, our Editor in his extravagant youth wrote a paper on a "Mountain Pass from Dundonell to Kinlochewe." Dr Pinches and I were invited to make a mountain pass from Tulloch to Dalwhinnie. And a long pass it was, consisting of three sections—about ten miles of track to the foot of the hills, a few hours over the hills, and a nine or ten mile walk to Dalwhinnie.

In addition to attempting to imitate these three great examples before us, we did a lot of journeying, observing, and exploring in a district which is but little visited by members of our confraternity, in attempted emulation of the more solid and less showy work of Munro and Robertson. Such notes as were made have been put together in this communication.

*Sgurr Mor.*—This is the easiest hill to ascend in the district. It is steep enough for height to be gained quickly, and not long enough to be toilsome. It is a big hill (3,290 feet high), well separated from its neighbours, commanding an excellent view, especially of Sgor na Ciche. It was ascended by my wife, Dr Johns, and myself, on Saturday, 10th April, from Kinlochquoich. A good deal of snow was present, so that we had some excellent glissades whilst coming down. Personally, I created a record by ascending a hill over 3,000 feet five days after one-and-a-half hours' anæsthetic, and with over half-a-dozen stitches in the back of my neck. No harm was done, and another 3,000 foot hill ascended next day. An ascent is a splendid way of excreting the last traces of an anæsthetic—ether in my case.

*Sgurr Gairloch.*—Ascended by my wife, Dr Johns, and myself on 11th April. We approached it by the swing bridge over the Garry river, just after it has left Loch Quoich, and made our way to the foot of the east ridge of the hill. Having ascertained previously that the hill was grassy and large, we were surprised to find the east ridge rocky and steep, and the state of the snow necessitating a traverse on to the south face of the mountain, which is very steep and has a few crags. In the winter the eastern approaches to the upper part of this hill are more dangerous than difficult, on account of the steepness and wet snow. Under these circumstances it was not the large, simple grass hill that it may be in summer.

*Am Bathaiche and Sgurr a Mhaoraich.*—On the map, and in Mr Munro's Tables, Am Bathaiche is given as a minor peak of Sgurr a Mhaoraich. Moreover, Mr A. E. Robertson in his article

on "Sgurr a Mhaoraich,"\* mentions it, and speaks of a good ridge walk. In the frame of mind engendered by these statements, my wife, Dr Johns, and I ascended the west peak of Sgurr a Mhaoraich from the watershed above Loch Hourn, on 13th April. We duly set our aneroids at 3,101 feet, and recorrected them on the summit

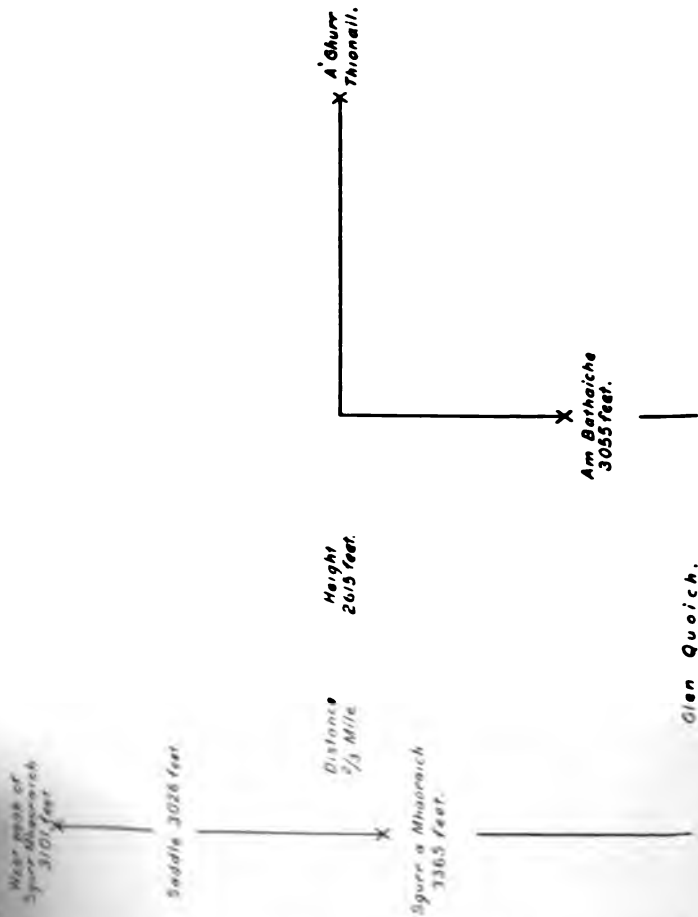


FIG. 1.

The line of the picture is the eastern side, the right hand side the north at Benlach an Dubh Leine, between Sgurr nan Sgine (3,000) and Crag nan Damh (3,020) to Glen Shleil.

of Sgurr a Mhaoraich, 3,365 feet. The mist was now thick, but with light hearts we set out for the ridge walk to the dependency, Am Bathaiche, as yet unmeasured. In spite of rifts in the mist, we could not find the ridge. The compass led us to a steep slope,

\* S.M.C.J., Vol. VIII., pp. 260, 261.

along the edge of which we sought for the connecting ridge, until we found our footsteps on the col between the summit and the west peak. Not content with this failure, we again ascended towards the summit, and by careful compass directions, for the second time reached the edge of the steep slope, and descended for 700-800 feet without any sign of a ridge. This was the saddle connecting the two mountain masses of Sgurr a Mhaoraich and Am Bathaiche; height 2,615 feet, the mean of the corrected readings of two aneroids. By means of ascending a broken wall of rock, we gained the steep slope of Am Bathaiche. Its summit has no cairn, and is 3,055 feet high, 440 feet above the saddle. We descended in an easterly direction, crossing some very steep and dangerous slopes of long wet grass, thinly powdered with wet new snow; turned southward down Glen Quoich to the car at the Bridge of Quoich.

The question naturally arises, Is Am Bathaiche a separate mountain? I think the answer should be "yes," as though both Sgurr a Mhaoraich and Am Bathaiche have been carved by the elements out of one mass, they have no connecting ridge between them. In this it forms a marked contrast with the west peak of Sgurr a Mhaoraich, which connected with the summit by a ridge with a saddle 3,026 feet high, Am Bathaiche being separated by a distance of two-thirds of a mile and a drop of 750 feet.

Thus, I would suggest that the mountain mass consists of two mountains—Sgurr a Mhaoraich, whose ridge runs roughly east and west, and Am Bathaiche, with a northern outlier, A' Ghurr Thionail.

*Gleourach and Spidean Mialach.*—On 14th April, W. Lamond Howie and T. Meares, having attended the Meet at Fort William, joined us at Tomdown. And on the 15th we all ascended Gleourach from Glen Quoich, at first going up long steep grass slopes covered with slippery snow. Having attained the ridge of the southern shoulder of the west end of Gleourach, it was followed to the summit (3,395 feet). Our line of ascent would be easy of descent in summer, but should be avoided in winter. The ridge of Gleourach was followed to its east end (3,291 feet), and Spidean Mialach (3,268 feet) reached after a dip of about 1,000 feet.

*Creag a Mhaim.*—On 17th April, T. Meares, Dr Johns, Dr Pinches, and myself ascended the eastern summit of the ridge south of Glen Shiel, with the intention of following the rises and falls until we were tired of it, and descending to join the car in Glen Quoich. But wind, sleet, and cold prevented us getting beyond the summit of Creag a Mhaim. Dr Pinches has now made two attempts on this ridge, and has never succeeded beyond Creag nan Damh at one end and Creag a Mhaim at the other.

*Meal an Teanga.*—Just north of Loch Lochy on the Caledonian Canal are two mountain masses, each with a summit over 3,000 feet high. The highest of these is Sron a Choire Ghairbh (3,066 feet), amply

described in the *S.M.C.* Guide Book.\* Meal an Teanga, the tongue-shaped hill, is the name of the second. It is mentioned in the Guide Book, but no further noticed. In his famous Tables Mr Munro has included Meal an Teanga as a part of Sron a Choire Ghairbh, quoting Dr Heddle's measurement, 3,047 feet, as its height. The distance between them is  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles. In order to determine the true relationship of these two hills, my wife, Dr Johns, Dr Pinches, and myself climbed Sron a Choire Ghairbh from Tomdown on 14th April, and Meal an Teanga from Glas Dhoire on Loch Lochy on 19th April. By means of this double journey we were able to make ample and sufficient observations, the result of which may be summed up as follows:— Meal an Teanga is the summit of a mountain mass separate from Sron a Choire Ghairbh. They are separated from each other by a distance of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles as the crow flies, two saddles, 1,990 and 2,378 feet high, a shoulder of Meall Dubh, intervening. Sron a Choire Ghairbh forms a large horseshoe-shaped *massif*, and Meal an Teanga is associated with Meall Odhar and Meall Coire an Lochain to join another *massif* to the south-west. Meal an Teanga is only marked in the Ordnance Survey map by a 2,750 contour circle, and is a hill which very soon loses its snow on account of its rounded shape, the general absence of corries, and its consistence of moss, mud, and small stones. It is considerably lower than Sron a Choire Ghairbh (3,066), a little higher than Meall Coire an Lochain (2,971), and lower than Dr Heddle's estimate of 3,047. As the result of six aneroid observations, we found its height to be 3,012 feet, doubly corrected twenty minutes away on Meall Coire Lochain. Our measurements may be briefly summed up as follows:—

Height of saddle south-west of Sron a Choire Ghairbh -	1,990 feet.
Height of Meall Dubh - - - - -	2,798 "
Height of saddle between Meall Dubh and Meal an Teanga - - - - -	2,378 "
Height of Meal an Teanga - - - - -	3,012 "
Height of saddle between Meal an Teanga and Meall Coire an Lochain - - - - -	2,693 "

The aneroids were set and corrected on the top of Meall Coire an Lochain, whose height is 2,971 feet.

Before leaving these hills a word must be added about the tracks marked in the map, and mentioned in the Guide Book. On the east a good sheep track exists from Glas Dhoire on Loch Lochy. On the north a road exists as far as Greenfields, but there is no other track, although two are marked passing Fedden from the north, one continuing south down Glen Cia-aig, and mentioned in the Guide Book. The country is rough walking, and let no one rely on any track for his return journey except from Greenfields northward, and from the top of the pass down to Glas Dhoire.

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\* *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., pp. 197, 198.

*An Cul Choire, Stob Coire an Fhir Dhuibh and Tom na Sroine of Aonach Mor.*—On 21st April Dr Pinches and I walked up the valley of the Allt Coire an Eoin to the saddle between Aonach Beag and Sgor a Choinnich Beag. This pass is dominated on the west by a splendid peak rising 1,100 to 1,200 feet above the pass, and supported by a rocky buttress from the corrie under Aonach Beag. Looked at from the north, south, or east, this top has an obvious existence. On previous visits in 1897 and 1899 I had determined to survey this peak. So putting aside the softer charms of the north-east ridge of Aonach Beag, we set out on our laborious task of gaining the summit of Sgor a Bhuic (3,165 feet), where we set our aneroids. The col north of the Sgor a Bhuic is 2,963 feet high, the mean of four measurements; though in the map the ridge is represented as never falling below 3,000 feet. A rise brought us to the top of the peak over the pass, which from four measurements we made 3,513 feet high, *i.e.*, 640 feet above the col, and two-thirds of a mile from Sgor a Bhuic. The col to the west of the "Peak of the Pass" we made 3,450 feet; a drop of only 63 feet between the "Peak of the Pass" and the top of Choire Bhealaich (3,644 feet), from which it is half a mile distant. If one of these tops has to be discarded, the "Peak of the Pass" is a far better defined top than that of Choire Bhealaich. Having concluded this part of our day's work, we went on to Aonach Beag up icy slopes, which, if steeper, would have demanded step cutting. The cairn of Aonach Beag was not to be seen; the wind having got up, no delay was made, and the summit of Aonach Mor attained. Here the aneroids were set for exploration of the east ridge, and a direction east of the cairn taken. In 1895 I put a large rock on a stone due east of the cairn to mark the place to leave the summit plateau, and gain the ridge. To my surprise I found my old landmark after fourteen years' interval! \* It was impossible to face the wind and driving snow, and descend from here. So selecting a nice easy snow slope to land on, we proceeded to climb down the steep "cornice" snow. Naturally, the heavier man was the first to make an involuntary glissade and the acquaintance of the slope below. When the party had reformed, the top of An Cul Choire was ascended. Professor Heddle had made this top 3,580 feet high. We made it 3,530 feet high. From the top of An Cul Choire a descent is made on to the summit of Stob Coire an Fhir Dhuibh, the dip between them being about 50 feet, and the distance about the third of a mile. Hence these two tops are really on one mass; the top of An Cul Choire being the summit of the ridge when seen from above; and Stob Coire an Fhir Dhuibh forming a very fine top when seen from the glen or from Spean Bridge below. "Anatomically" they are not distinct. We made the height of Stob Coire an Fhir Dhuibh 3,230 feet, although the map shows a 3,250 contour.

The third top on this east ridge is Tom na Sroine. It is well

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\* *Cairngorm Club Journal*, 1898, ii. 226-231.

separated from the others by both dip and distance. We made its height 3,015 feet.

Our surveyings may be summarised as follows:—

Col south of the "Peak of the Pass" - -	2,963 feet.
"Peak of the Pass," Sgor a Bhealaich - -	3,513 "
Col to west of the "Peak of the Pass" - -	3,450 "
(All the above are from four measurements.)	
Top of An Cul Choire - - - -	3,530 feet.
Stob Coire an Fhir Dhuibh - - - -	3,230 "
Tom na Sroine - - - - -	3,015 "

The height of the unmeasured Ben na Soccaich, across the valley, was estimated at about 3,075 feet.

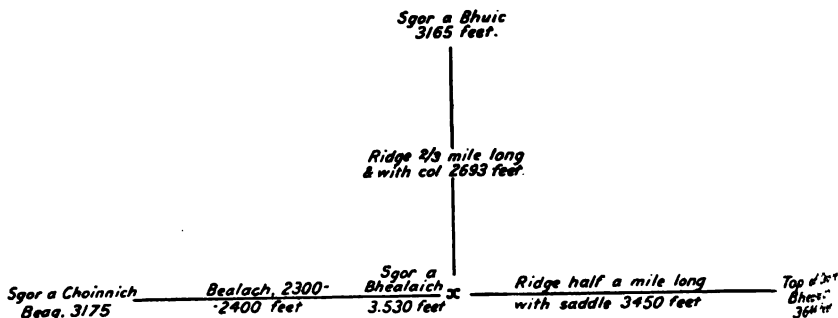


FIG. 2.

In this figure the name of Sgor a Bhealaich has been used to designate the "Peak of the Pass."

*Stob Coire nan Ceann and Stob Coire an Lochain.*—This is the name of the beautiful sharp conical hill seen from Roy Bridge at the eastern end of the "Easains ridge." It is marked on the map with a 3,500 contour, the height not being given. Mr Munro in his Tables quotes the reading of Professor Heddle's aneroid, and gives the height as 3,720 feet. Dr Irving Pinches and I ascended the hill on 23rd April to make some further attempt to estimate its height. Two aneroids were used and carefully checked on Stob Coire Clairigh and the Larig road.

A "top" is solely useful to denote a particular geographical point, recognisable from above or below, as distinct from the neighbouring summits. The north-east shoulder of Stob Coire Clairigh fulfills such conditions. It is about a mile from Stob Coire Gaibhre, half a mile from Stob Coire nan Ceann and Stob Coire Clairigh, separated from each by dips ranging from 100 to 700 feet; it is the meeting point of three ridges, being in consequence important and easily recognised from above, whilst the parallel and vertical quartz buttresses make it

obvious from Spean Bridge and Roy Bridge. We carefully estimated its height, and found it to be a little higher than Stob Coire nan Ceann. As it dominates a corrie with a little loch, why should it not be Stob Coire an Lochain?

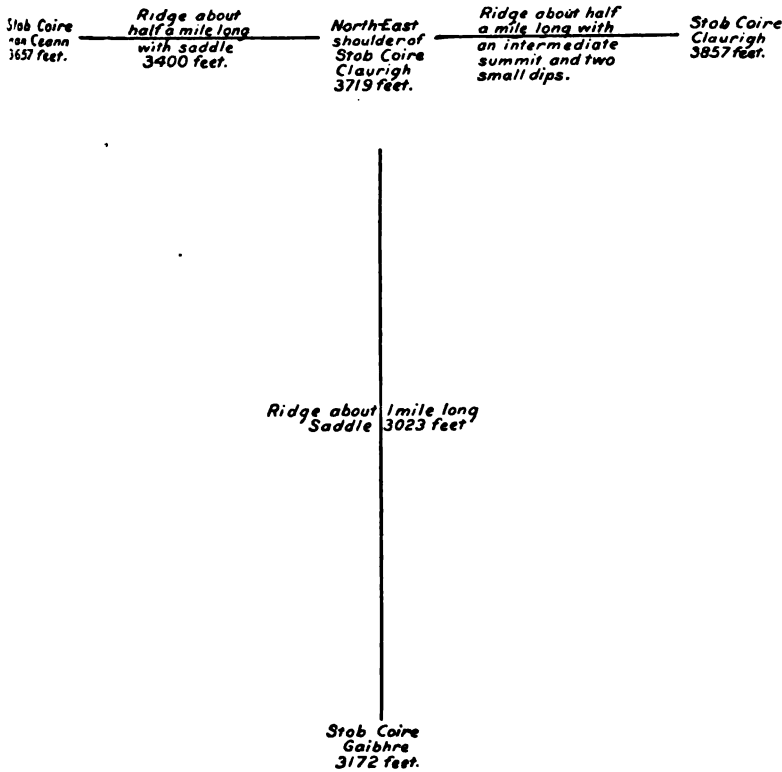


FIG. 3.

The name of Stob Coire an Lochain has been suggested for the north-east shoulder of Stob Coire Claurigh.

Height of north-east shoulder of Stob Coire Claurigh, 3,719 feet.  
(Stob Coire an Lochain)

Height of Stob Coire nan Ceann - - - - 3,657 "

The dip between them is about 300 feet, with a shelter at the lowest part, and connected with Stob Coire nan Ceann by a narrow rocky ridge.

In descending from Stob Coire nan Ceann to the Larig nan Leacain, bear to the south, as the ridge ends in some cliffs which are a nuisance to descend at the end of the day.

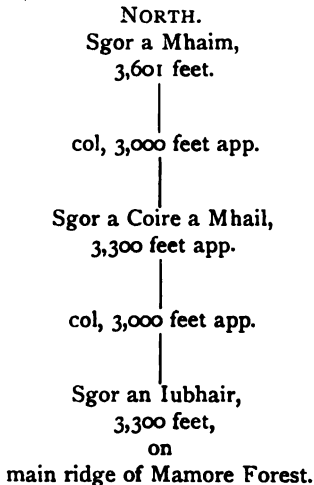


*Stob Coire Gaibhre.*—On Friday, 23rd April, Dr Irving Pinches and the writer ascended this hill in order to estimate its height. It is one of the lower outlying hills to the north of Stob Coire Claurigh of the “Easains” group, near Spean Bridge. The time taken to ascend it from the Larig nan Leacain was an hour. In order to estimate the height as accurately as possible two aneroids were used, and carefully set at the height of 1,187 feet, where the larig road crosses the burn, and recorrected at the Ordnance height on Stob Coire Claurigh. By these means the following figures relating to this hill were obtained :—

Height of Stob Coire Gaibhre - - - 3,172 feet.  
 Height of saddle between Stob Coire Gaibhre  
 and the shoulder of Stob Coire Claurigh 3,023 „

The hill is grassy, with stone-strewn quartz ridges, and has some small cliffs facing the corrie on its south-eastern aspect. Mr Munro, in his Tables, gives Mr Colin Phillip’s “estimate” of height of this hill as 3,164 feet.

*Sgor a Coire a Mhail, 3,300 feet approximately, Mamore Forest.*



Sgor a Mhaim is a prominent peak in the southern open part of Glen Nevis projecting northward of the main ridge. Sgor a Mhaim (3,601 feet) is at the northern end of this lateral ridge, and Sgor an Iubhair (3,300 feet approximately) is at the junction of the lateral ridge with the main ridge of the Mamore Forest, and about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles distant. In between Sgor a Mhaim and Sgor an Iubhair is a peak about 3,300 feet high, separated from each by a col about 3,000 feet high. It is unnamed, but the corrie to its east, a sanctuary, is Coire a Mhail. Hence, after the manner of the district, this peak could be called Sgor a Coire a Mhail. It

possesses considerable individuality, being a narrow grass ridge with steep slopes; at one place the line of the ridge is broken by a gap. A hill presenting such individuality merits recognition. For further details reference must be made to the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, July 1904.

*Tulloch to Dalwhinnie.* — On 24th April Dr Pinches and I drove from Spean Bridge to Tulloch Station, and began walking at 10.15 A.M. First we followed the railway south for a mile and a half or so, and then the track by Fersu. This track extends right to the head of Loch Ossian, attaining a height of about 1,650 feet, skirting the basis of Meall Chaorach and Meall na Dearcaige. We followed it to the bridge over the Ossian, half a mile beyond Inbhireala. From here we ascended to the tops of Mullach nan Nead (3,025) and Uinneag a Ghlas Choire (3,041) to the summit of Ben Eibhinn (3,611). The morning had been dull, with insistent rain, and we had been now in the mist for some time. We then descended to the col, and ascended to Aonach Beag (3,646). The lower parts of this ridge are easy, narrow, and quite interesting. The drop between Aonach Beag and Geal Charn, the next mountain, is much less and gentler. On the vast plateau of Geal Charn (3,688) we could find no cairn, and in the mist found ourselves confronted with quite a fine pinnacled ridge rising from Coire Cheap. It was here in the mist that we lost so much time that we were unable to ascertain the height of Sgur Iutharna. Then we journeyed over Diollaid a Chairn (3,029) to Carn Dearg (3,391). When at this last top darkness was falling fast, and we made for the shooting track by the Allt a Chaoil Reidhe, which, by previous experience, we knew to be good. In the darkness we missed each other, and did not meet again till a mile from the Dalwhinnie Hotel, where we arrived at 11.15 P.M.

After this day the weather broke so badly that nothing further was done before our return. In consequence, a descent was made on Edinburgh.

Dr Johns, Dr Pinches, and I have now done some "geographising" for three successive Easters (*S.M.C.J.*, 1907, pp. 50-54; 1908, 124, 125, and in this paper), and it is interesting to note how estimated heights or inadequately measured heights are almost always in excess of what they have turned out to be when measured in the cold light of many and corrected observations.

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THE CAIRNWELL AND GLAS THULACHAN GROUPS.—With the prospect of a long outing on these rather remote hills, D. H. Menzies and the writer left Blair-Atboll about 7 o'clock on the evening of 12th June. It was a glorious walk up the steep road by the Falls of Fender, and the views both in front and behind



of a mile to the west of Loch nan Eun. Then a longish ascent brought us to Glas Thulachan, our last and highest hill, at 5 o'clock, twenty-two hours after leaving Blair.

After a short rest we descended along the up and down ridge, ending in Carn nan Sionnach, and so to the road—about two miles from where we had left it in the morning. We then went down to the An Lochain, which drains Loch Loch. Just before this river joins the Tilt we found a small bothy with a shepherd in charge. Here we rested for an hour, and enjoyed many cups of tea, and at 8.30 started down the glen. Another halt of half an hour was made near Forest Lodge, and Blair-Atholl reached at 12.30. Five hours' glorious sleep, and we left at 6.55 for the south and the "daily round."

The weather throughout was perfect. Neither the Saturday nor the Sunday night was ever dark. The heat of the sun through the day was trying, and made a large number of short stops necessary. The view from every hill was good, especially that of Ben a Ghlo from Glas Thulachan, and the Cairngorms from all. We had that magnificent range of mountains in view almost all the time. Perhaps they showed up to the best advantage from the otherwise uninteresting Carn Bhac. Of the twenty-nine and a half hours which the expedition occupied, about seven were spent resting. The distance is difficult to calculate, but we estimated it at about sixty-five miles.

W. M. WILSON.

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GLEN TILT.—None of the maps mark any bridge over the Tilt above the Black Bridge north-east of Forest Lodge, but there is an excellent bridge with stone piers  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles higher up, just south of the junction of Allt Fheannach and the river Tilt.

F. S. G.

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WESTERN BUTTRESS OF SRON NA CICHE, SGURR SGUMAIN, SKYE.—A direct route up the centre of this buttress was made in June last by Messrs E. W. Steeple and H. E. Bowron. The climb commences with a thin vertical crack about forty-five yards to the right (west) of the foot of the Central Gully. The mass of overhanging rock in the centre of the face was passed by means of a difficult slab and a thirty-five foot chimney, the left of two well seen from below. Above this the rocks are steep, but the holds are very good. The climb finishes with a long chimney which

leads to the broken ridge of the buttress a little below its crest, and overlooking the top of the Western Gully.

This route gives about 1,000 feet of very enjoyable climbing, in which the interest is well sustained.

E. W. STEEPLE.

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A NEW CLIMBING CLUB FOR NORWAY.—A select club, of which Mr Eilert Sundt Kristiana is president, has been recently formed, under the name of Norsk Tinde-Klub. From its rules it would appear that only candidates who have had several years' experience of the hills and are capable of leading with safety on difficult ascents will be eligible for election. We wish it every success.

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