



From a Photograph by Gilbert Thomson.  
BEN NEVIS, NORTHEAST BUTRESS AND TOWER RIDGE FROM THE NORTH.

THE SCOTTISH  
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB  
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# EXTRACTS FROM RULES.



## OBJECTS OF THE CLUB.

The objects of the Club shall be:—To encourage mountaineering in Scotland in winter as well as summer; to serve as a bond of union amongst all lovers of mountain climbing; to create facilities for exploring the less known parts of the country; to collect various kinds of information, especially as regards routes, distances, means of access, time occupied in ascents, character of rocks, extent of snow in winter, &c., and in general to promote everything that will conduce to the convenience of those who take a pleasure in mountains and mountain scenery.

## PROPRIETARY AND SPORTING RIGHTS.

The members of the Club shall respect proprietary and sporting rights, and endeavour to obtain the co-operation of proprietors.

## THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting for the election of office-bearers and the transaction of all other business connected with the Club, shall be held alternately in Edinburgh and Glasgow on one day—preferably a Friday—between the 10th and 22nd December inclusive. The Annual Dinner shall take place on the day of the Annual General Meeting.

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP.

Every candidate for admission to the Club must forward to the Secretary (on a special form to be obtained from him), at least one month before the Annual General Meeting in December (or any other General Meeting), a list of his Scottish ascents, stating the month and year in which each ascent was made, or a statement of his contributions to science, art, or literature in connection with Scottish mountains. Such list or statement must be signed by the candidate, and by two members of the Club acting as proposer and seconder. If, in the opinion of the Committee, the qualifications are deemed sufficient, the name, designation, and address of the candidate, along with the names of his proposer and seconder, shall be sent by post to each member at least one week before the day of balloting.

[Members of the Alpine Club are eligible for election without further qualification; and gentlemen who have made ascents or given valuable contributions as above, elsewhere than in Scotland, may be recommended for election at the discretion of the Committee.]

At the Annual General Meeting, elections shall take place of those whose qualifications for membership have received the approval of the Committee. Not less than eight balls must be deposited for the election of any candidate, and one black ball in eight shall reject for one year. Elections can also take place at any General Meeting of the Club; provided that the various conditions stated as required for election at the Annual General Meeting are complied with.

#### FEES.

The entrance fee shall be one guinea, payable at the time of election; and the newly-elected member shall not be admitted to the privileges of the Club until such fee, and the first annual subscription, are paid. The annual subscription shall be half-a-guinea, due on the first of January.

#### THE CLUB-ROOM.

The Club-Room shall be a centre for collecting the various kinds of information—whether topographical, geological, or botanical—which members in their sundry expeditions may be able to give.

The Club-Room for the time being will be at the offices of the Honorary Librarian, Mr GILBERT THOMSON, 75 Bath Street, Glasgow, who has very kindly placed a room at the disposal of the Club until permanent quarters can be secured.

## THE JOURNAL,

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12 11 10 9 8 7



*From a Photograph by W. Douglas, April 1, 1893.*

**LOCH TOLL AN LOCHAIN, AN TEALLACH.**

- 12—Buttress of Corrag Bhuidhe.
- 11, 10, 9, 8—Top of Corrag Bhuidhe.
- 7—Lord Berkeley's Seat.
- 6—Sgurr Fiona.

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## CLIMBING NEAR WASTDALE HEAD.

BY NORMAN COLLIE, PH.D.

To the mountaineer who makes his way from Seascale or from Drigg to Wastdale Head, the Cumberland hills, with their long rolling outlines, their flanks concealed by superincumbent soil and vegetation, do not seem to promise well for the rock-climber. Only here and there do the ridges break into rocky precipices; nowhere is seen the rugged grandeur of Glencoe with its rock-built walls, nowhere do we see peaks with splintered summits like An Teallach. Yet the rock-climber who stops at the inn at the head of Wastdale may spend weeks before he has exhausted the district. He will be lucky indeed, and a first-rate climber to boot, if he has done the best of the climbs without further aid than that afforded by the "moral" support of the rope. Only last year a celebrated climber of Alpine repute came to Wastdale for the first time. "Climbing in the Caucasus," he said, "was easy and safe; also it was usually easy and safe in the Alps, though sometimes difficult; but climbing as practised at Wastdale Head was both difficult and dangerous."

The great delight of the climber in the Cumberland hills is in gullies, or "ghylls,"—and no wonder, for there are many gullies both great and small, which vary with the state of the weather, and may be easy or difficult, wet, dry, or dirty, according to circumstances.

Then, again, the climber must have a perfect contempt for streams, and an ascent of a perpendicular "pitch"

underneath the descent of a shower-bath will be one of his earliest experiences. But there are other climbs not in gullies. Hidden away in the recesses of the hills are sharp and jagged pinnacles of hard porphyritic rock, precipices smooth, flawless, and often overhanging, whose firm grey bastions have withstood the storms of ages; whilst only at their feet, where lie the remnants which have yielded, flake by flake, from the massive buttresses above, does the ruin proclaim that the hand of time carves the rocks on the mountain side as well as the valleys below.

The inn at Wastdale Head stands alone. The accommodation is rough, but good. At Easter time there is usually a great gathering of the mountaineering clan. They come from all points of the compass, and swoop down on Wastdale, bringing with them every sort of mountaineering appliance. They rush into the inn, soon to emerge again clothed in wonderful suits of clothes, carrying cameras, ropes, ice-axes, and luncheons; and they sometimes reminded me of an instructive toy machine which was presented to a friend of mine in the days of his early youth. "Morality made easy," he afterwards called it. Its object was to inculcate at an early age the virtue of moderation. You turned a handle, making a procession of respectably dressed people, with eager smiling faces, enter the front door of a public-house, over which was written in large letters,—

" They quietly enter the doorway within,  
For an hour's indulgence in riot and sin."

Another turn of the handle, and the scene changed. From the back door dishevelled and staggering figures emerge, with no resemblance whatever to the former ones. Above is another couplet :—

" Then rushing out wildly, their senses departed,  
On Ruin's dark pathway the victims are started."

Please note Ruin with a big R. Of course, in the case of the mountaineer, an emendation at the end of the first couplet is necessary; perhaps "quiet lunching" would be appropriate. But I have wandered from my subject.

My first acquaintance with climbing amongst the Wast-

dale hills was at Christmas two years ago. I had heard that there was a pinnacle on Great Gable, and also that another rock climb might be obtained on the Pillar Rock. A woful state of ignorance! I little knew what a series of rock problems awaited me. Since that time I have been back to Wastdale at least four separate times. The climbs are not all finished yet; and I am afraid that were I to give a description of only a few of the magnificent scrambles I have had amongst the crags in this centre of the Cumberland hills, the present paper would be of most abnormal length.

I shall therefore content myself with only a brief description of the more important.

The Wastdale inn lies in the very centre of the climbing, and two or three hours at most take one to his work. On the south are the gullies on the Screes; the great gully opposite Wastdale Hall will occupy an ordinary party at least three hours. The first 300 to 400 feet are by no means easy, and are thoroughly typical of ghyll climbing. On the east of Wastdale is Scawfell, with its splendid precipice, where there are three first-rate ghyll climbs,—Moss Ghyll, Steep Ghyll, and Deep Ghyll. At the top of Deep Ghyll is the Scawfell Pinnacle,—a pretty little climb if taken from the top of Scawfell; but if ascended from the foot of the precipice *via* Steep Ghyll, and then by the arête which lies between Steep Ghyll and Deep Ghyll, it will give several hours of really good rock work. Next to Scawfell are the Scawfell Pikes and Great End. On both of these interesting scrambles can be found.

On the north, almost above the inn, the slopes of Great Gable stretch up towards the Napes rocks, with its Needle, and several arêtes.

Farther away, on the north-west, lies the Pillar Mountain, with its great buttress of rock jutting out into Ennerdale. Up the Pillar Rock there are at least half-a-dozen different routes, and none of them can be called perfectly easy. But these are by no means all the climbs that can be got from Wastdale Head. There are gullies on Pavey Arc and the Langdale Pikes, and there is another on Dow Crag, near Coniston.



My first climb was the Napes Needle. I have been up it many times since, but it always remains as interesting as ever. I must confess though that the first time I tried it I was very glad to get the assistance of a hand from the first man up. We were climbing without a rope, and had no nails in our boots, owing to our proper mountaineering equipment having been delayed at the Drigg Station; and, as we afterwards learned, we had shocked Dan Tyson of the inn by going to the hills in what he considered to be our Sunday clothes.

But the Pillar Rock is the most famous crag near Wastdale. It lies on the far side of the Pillar Mountain from Wastdale, and is not a great distance below the summit; it consists of a mass of rock standing far out from the side of the mountain. The end nearest the Pillar Mountain is cut off from the hill-side by a great gash, whilst the other end overhangs Ennerdale (on the north), and plunges down almost perpendicularly for about 800 feet. The great Pillar climb is up this Ennerdale or north face. At the bottom a broad grassy band runs across the foot of the precipice. It is from here that the climb must be begun, but every way up this face finally converges towards one spot, called the "Split Block." Above is a vertical precipice, whilst 400 feet straight below is the grassy band. For nine years all attacks on the Ennerdale face of the Pillar ended here. Only in 1891 was it conquered. Two of the party were lowered down into a savage-looking gully; they then ascended to a spot some thirty to forty feet higher than the Split Block, and were then able to pull up the last man direct. This sounds as if it were comparatively easy for the last man; but as the ascent is literally made through the air, unless an extra rope is sent down to help him, with a noose at the end which he can use as a stirrup, he will arrive up above in a somewhat congested state. Moreover, the two ropes should be worked by responsible people, otherwise the unfortunate last man will soon find his head in the place where his feet ought to be, and he will speedily lose faith in the use of the Alpine rope.

From this spot a gully leads to within 200 to 300 feet

of the final summit, which can be reached by an interesting rock climb of no great difficulty.

This ascent of the Pillar Rock is certainly a remarkably fine one. It is full of variety, and nearly the whole of it is on the bare rock. It should not be difficult to find, as the scratches on the rocks are now easy to detect.

Of the ghyll climbs the one in the Screes already mentioned is well worth trying. I climbed it first with J. W. Robinson and G. Hastings, and I could not have been in better hands. Robinson is *the* great authority on the hills of the Lake district; there is not a rock on a mountain side that he does not know. In sunshine or mist, in daytime or at midnight, he will guide one safely over passes or down precipitous mountain sides. Every tree and every stone is a landmark to him. We started for the great gully in the Screes one perfect winter morning. Not a breath of air stirred; hoar frost covered the ground; the trees were a mass of silver glittering in the morning sun. Looking across from the road by Wastdale Hall, the rock face opposite does not appear to be much broken, but as one approaches the gullies deepen, and in reality are great gashes penetrating far into the hill-side.

The bottom of the gully is reached by ascending a mass of loose stones, which stretch almost down to the lake side. There is no great difficulty at first, but after a short time the gully branches off into two, and it is the left hand branch which has to be followed. Here the first pitch gave us some trouble. The stream was completely frozen, forming a beautiful cascade of ice, and we were forced on to the buttress which divides the two gullies. Hastings was sent on to prospect, whilst I had to back him up as far as possible. With considerable trouble he managed to traverse back to the left into the main gully, using infinitesimal knobs of rock for foot and hand hold. We then followed him, and found ourselves in a narrow cleft cut far into the side of the hill. Perpendicular walls rose on both sides for several hundred feet; above us stretched cascade after cascade of solid ice, always at a very steep angle and sometimes perpendicular. Up these we cut our way with our axes, sometimes being helped by making the steps close to

the walls on either side, and using any small inequalities on the rock face to steady us in our steps. At last we came to the final pitch. Far up above at the top the stream, coming over an overhanging ledge on the right, had frozen into masses of insecure icicles, some being twenty to thirty feet long. Obviously we could not climb up there. However, at the left-hand corner, at the top of the pitch, a rock was wedged, which overhung, leaving underneath a cave of considerable size. We managed to get as far up as the cave, in which we placed Robinson, where he hitched himself to a jammed boulder at the back. I was placed in a somewhat insecure position; my right foot occupied a capacious hole cut in the bottom of the icicles, whilst my left was far away on the other side of the gully on a small but obliging shelf in the rock face. In this interesting attitude, like the Colossus of Rhodes, I spanned the gulf, and was anchored both to the boulder and to Robinson as well. Then Hastings, with considerable agility, climbed on to my shoulders. From that exalted position he could reach the edge of the overhanging stone, underneath which Robinson was shivering, and was thus enabled to pull himself up on to the top. Robinson and I afterwards ascended this formidable place by means of the moral support of the rope alone. But I know that in my case, if that moral support had not been capable of standing the strain produced by a dead-weight of about ten stone, I should probably have been spoiling a patch of snow several hundreds of feet lower down the ghyll. Above this pitch the climbing is easier, as the gully opens out. The route to the top may be varied according to taste; some ways are difficult, and some are easy.

There is just one other climb I should like to describe. It was one of the pleasantest I ever had in this splendid land of rock scrambles. On Scawfell, Moss Ghyll is the most easterly of the three gullies on the rock face which looks towards the Pikes. Up to last Christmas this ghyll had not been climbed, although several parties had been up a considerable distance. The highest point attained was just underneath a huge overhanging block of rock weighing hundreds of tons, which formed the roof of a great

cave. Robinson, Hastings, and I were very anxious to see whether it was not possible in some way to circumvent this objectionable block. We had already carefully prospected the upper part of the ghyll from above, and found that there was no great difficulty after this obstacle was passed. We next attacked the ghyll from the bottom, hoping that we should be able to discover a way where others had failed.

We started at the bottom of the precipice, choosing the easiest route up the rock face on the right hand of the ghyll. Here the climbing chiefly consisted in getting from one grass ledge to the next, up slabs of rock. We soon, however, got into the gully itself, where we found a perpendicular wall, which we had to climb up in order to reach a ledge called the "Tennis Court," probably on account of its being more capacious than those lower down. If it were to grow, perhaps in time it might become just large enough to run about on; but when we got there it only afforded space enough for three to sit comfortably. From here we traversed back again into the ghyll, and got up underneath the overhanging block. We found that below the great slab which formed the roof another smaller one was jammed in the gully, which, stretching across from side to side, formed the top of a great doorway. Under this we passed, and clambered up on to the top of it. Over our heads the great rock roof stretched some distance over the ghyll. Our only chance was to traverse straight out along the side of the ghyll, till one was no longer overshadowed by the roof above, and then if possible climb up the face of rock and traverse back again above the obstacle into the ghyll once more. This was easier to plan than to carry out; absolutely no hand-hold, and only one little projecting ledge jutting out about a quarter of an inch and about two inches long to stand on, and six or eight feet of the rock wall to be traversed. I was asked to try it. Accordingly, with great deliberation, I stretched out my foot and placed the edge of my toe on the ledge. Just as I was going to put my weight on to it, off slipped my toe; and if Hastings had not quickly jerked me back, I should instantly have been dangling on the end of the rope. But we were determined

not to be beaten. Hastings' ice-axe was next brought into requisition, and what followed I have no doubt will be severely criticised by more orthodox mountaineers than ourselves. As it was my suggestion, I must take the blame. *Peccavi! I hacked a step in the rock,*—and it was very hard work. But I should not advise any one to try and do the same thing with an ordinary axe. Hastings' axe is an extraordinary one, and was none the worse for the experiment. I then stepped across the *mauvais pas*, clambered up the rock till I had reached a spot where a capital hitch could be got over a jutting piece of rock, and the rest of the party followed. We then climbed out of the ghyll on the left, up some interesting slabs of rock. A few days later the ghyll was again ascended, by a party led by Mr J. Collier. They did not follow our track to the left after the overhanging rock had been passed, but climbed straight up, using a crack which looks impossible from down below, thus adding an extra piece of splendid climbing to the expedition.

Just as it was getting dark we got out on to the top of Scawfell. The sun-god had plunged once more into the baths of ocean, leaving behind him the golden splendour of a perfect evening. In the far distance lay the sea, with banks of sullen mist brooding over it; nearer, like a rich purple curtain, stretched the low hills by the coast; whilst far away in the south, towering into the sunset glow out of a level surface of sea mists, rose the peaks of Snowdon and the two Carnedd's in Wales. Towards the east, range after range of mountain crests encompassed the horizon as far as the eye could see, from the Yorkshire moors with their strong massive outline, crowned by Ingleboro and Great Whernside, to Skiddaw and the Scotch hills beyond the sands of the Solway. Delicate pearl-grey shadows were creeping in amongst the wealth of interlacing mountain forms in the clear air, deepening towards the far east into the darkness of approaching night. No sound breaks the stillness, all around are piled the tumbled fragments of the hills, hoary with memories of forgotten years. The present fades away, and is lost in the vast ocean of time; a lifetime seems a mere shadow in the presence of these change-

less hills. Slowly this inscrutable pageant passes, but blacker grow the evening shadows; naught remains but the mists of the coming night, and darkness soon will fall on this lonely mountain-land,—

“ A land of old, upheaven from the abyss  
By fire, to sink into the abyss again ;  
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,  
And the long mountains ended in a coast  
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away  
The phantom circle of a moaning sea.”

## AN TEALLACH: ROSS-SHIRE.

Compiled from Notes supplied by W. W. KING and H. T. MUNRO.

THE absence of definite knowledge regarding the Teallachs had for many years cast a halo of mystery round this splendid mountain group, for the only information that could be obtained from those likely to know these hills was of the most meagre and contradictory character. From printed records little could be learned. The Ordnance Survey Maps give the erroneous impression of gentle slopes and uninteresting ridges. On the 1-inch map the whole range is very roughly contoured; and from the 6-inch map it would appear that, south of Sgùrr Fhiona, the district had not been surveyed, as for several miles no heights are given. Among ancient writers, Pennant and MacCulloch join in extravagant language to describe their "awful" and "terrific" grandeur. Extracts from their writings are given in Appendices A and B.

Thus it was, that last Easter when we (the party referred to in the September Number of the Journal) approached Dundonnell, our minds were in a pleasant state of uncertainty as to the character of the Teallachs,\* till the glorious hills themselves, suddenly bursting through the storm-clouds that had roared round them all day, stood out black, snow-slashed, and jagged against a setting sun, and encouraged the hope that a vague tradition of an unclimbed peak might prove a reality.

The weather on the morning after our arrival was better than what we had experienced the day before on the Fannichs;† but the wind was strong, and heavy clouds were flying high over the hill tops, giving promise of a stormy day.

A start was made about 9.30, but we had not gone far before a slashing shower of sleet sent us rushing for shelter. This over, we reached the farmhouse called Auchtascailt,

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\* The name An Teallach applies to the whole range; each peak is separately named, and no single one is called An Teallach.

† Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, Vol. II., page 306.

where two of the party left us, electing to travel (for photographic reasons) with the sun, and intending to join the main ridge or back-bone of the range at the south-east end just beyond Loch Toll an Lochain, *i.e.*, "*the loch of the hollow of the little loch*," while we were to take the hills in the opposite way.

As all existing maps of the Teallachs are singularly incomplete, the accompanying sketch map is given, from which the position of the fourteen peaks of the range can be easily identified. (Plate II.)



BIDEIN A' GHLAS THUILL FROM THE NORTH.

(1) Glas Mheall Mor (3,176 feet Ordnance Survey height), *i.e.*, "*the great grey hill*," lies at the north end of the range, and is the only peak that can be seen from Dundonnell. It now rose on our right with a great dome-shaped top, formed by the lip of a lofty corrie deeply filled with old snow. On the north of this corrie was a formidable-looking buttress of terraced rock, and up this we proposed to climb. Ascending by track marked on the 1-inch Ordnance Survey map, we were again caught in a snow-storm which covered the grass and rocks with a thin coating, and made everything so slippery, that when the buttress was reached the



rope was deemed necessary, though it would not have been required under ordinary circumstances. Above the rocks an easy scree slope led us to the top, and we found there that Pennant was not far wrong in allocating the abode of Æolus to these hills.

On our leaving the cairn on the summit at 1.10, we skirted the deep corrie on our left, getting a splendid view of the grand pinnacled branch ridge that extends east from Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill to Glas Mheall Liath (3,080 feet, Dr Heddle's aneroid height), *i.e.*, "*the pale-grey hill*," whose great gullies filled with snow run up for more than a thousand feet between the formidable teeth that surmount the ridge. The south side of this branch ridge is not so precipitous as the one that faced us; and, later in the day, from Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill we saw that it could easily have been traversed. It ends in (4) Glas Mheall Liath, which as seen from the west is cone-shaped and topped with quartzite,\* and separates the two great eastern corries of the Teallachs—Coire a' Ghlas Thuill and Coire Toll an Lochain.

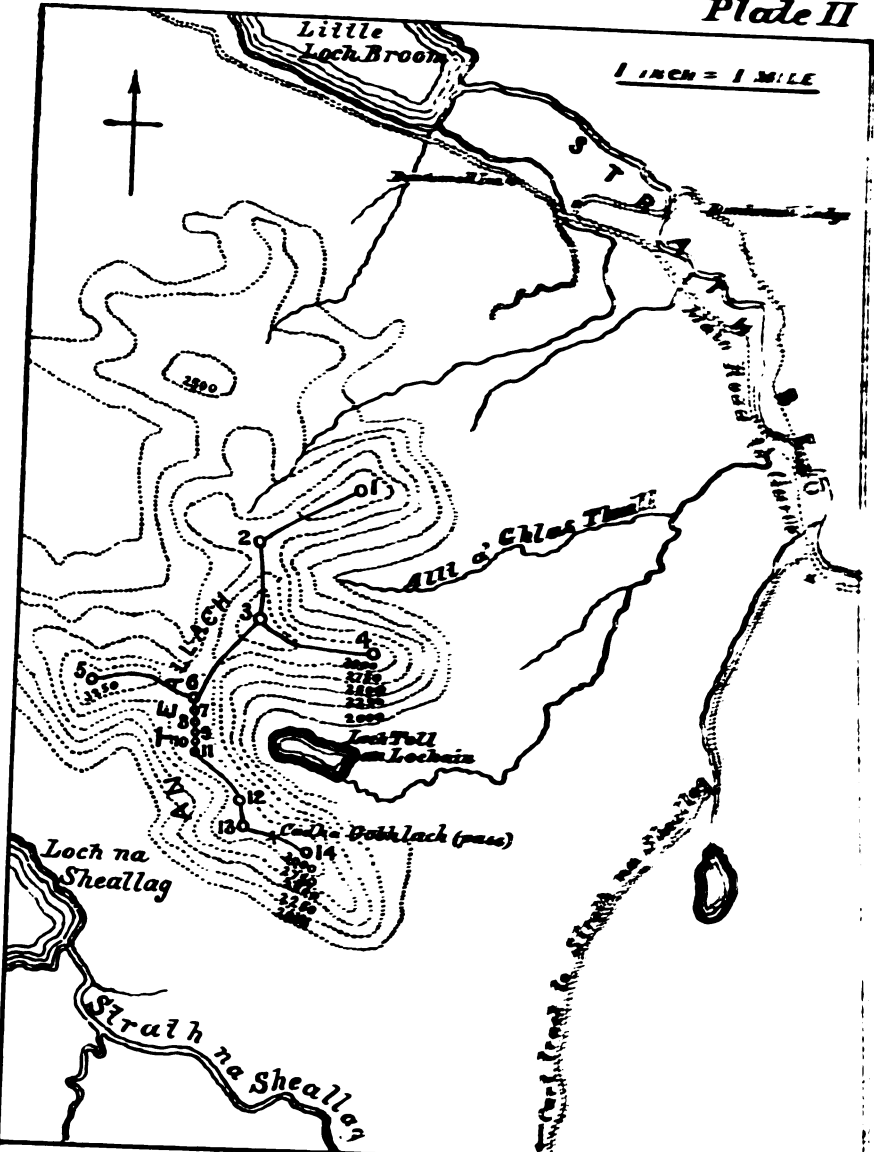
A gentle descent to the next col, 2,872 feet,† and an easy pull up brought us at 1.55 to the top of the highest point of the range—(3) Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill (3,483 feet Ordnance Survey height), *i.e.*, "*the little sharp-pointed peak of the grey hollow*." From the summit of this peak we saw round us the whole of the beautiful mountains which comprise the Teallach group. Below lay Loch Toll an Lochain bounded by the steep buttresses and gullies of Sgùrr Fhiona, making one of the finest pieces of mountain scenery in Scotland.

The views throughout the day were fair, though the distance not of the clearest. The Lewis was invisible in the haze, and the north of Skye only dimly seen. Ben More of Coigach showed a fine craggy face due north of us over Loch Broom. To the right, and rather farther away, Coulbeg and Coulmore; and behind them Suilven showing his broadside and giving no indication of his grand sugar-

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\* Geikie's Scenery, 2nd Edition, 1887, page 205.

† A slight detour westward, from near the col, was made so as to ascend to (2) the point marked 3,001 feet in the 6-inch map, reaching it at 1.25. This can scarcely be considered as a distinct "top," and has not been reckoned as such in "Munro's Tables."



- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 Glas Mheall Mòr 3176         | 8 Corrag Bhuidhe N. top 3425 up                      |
| 2 Unnamed 3001                 | 9 D <sup>o</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> top 3406 up         |
| 3 Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill 3480  | 10 D <sup>o</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup> top of plateau     |
| 4 Glas Mheall Liath 3080 up    | 11 D <sup>o</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> top of great lower |
| 5 Sgurr Creag an Fich 3350 up  | 12 D <sup>o</sup> buttress 3000 up                   |
| 6 Sgurr Fìdha 3474             | 13 Top above Cadha Gobhlack 3 <sup>rd</sup> Corrag   |
| 7 Lord Berkeley's Seal 3325 up | 14 Sail Liath 3100 up                                |



loaf appearance when seen end on. Then the big mass of the Assynt Ben More. Forty-five miles north-east is Ben Clibrig (3,164), and Ben Armine to the right of it. A dozen miles east of us the range of the Ross-shire Ben Dearg. Ben Wyvis, looking very wintry with a good deal of fresh snow, is twenty-seven miles E.S.E., and the low land of the Black Isle beyond. Our friends of yesterday, the Fannichs, looking well. To the S., or rather S.S.W., we have a full-length view up a wild glen—the Gleann na Muice—with Beinn a' Chlaidheimh, Sgùrr Ban, and Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair on the left, and beyond the head of it Slioch looking very fine. Right opposite us, rising from the south shore of the sombre Loch na Sheallag, is Beinn Dearg Mhor (2,974), who, if he is not a 3,000 feet mountain, deserves to be. He shows us a grim north-east cliff rising very steeply straight from the loch. To the right of Slioch we see Ben Eighe and the other Torridon hills, while on his left we get glimpses in the far distance among the clouds of some big southern Ross-shire hills, probably An Riabhachan, possibly Mam Sodhail. Both Lochs Broom are seen; Gruinard Bay, Loch Ewe, and a broad expanse of the Minch lie to our west; while in clear weather the horizon is bounded by the eastern shores of the Long Island.

An Teallach is composed entirely of Torridon sandstone, upon which the Cambrian quartzite lies unconformably at the south and eastern extremities only. The rock measures are tilted at a low angle, and the planes of bedding are well marked. The weathered sandstone pinnacles which adorn the ridge looked for all the world like gigantic cottage loaves piled one on the top of the other. Omitting the Glas Mheall Liath ridge, we descended to the next col (3,017 feet Ordnance Survey height), between Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill and Sgùrr Fìona, by a gradual slope of scree and snow. As may be gathered from the accompanying illustration (Plate III.), the view of Sgùrr Fìona taken at this point is very grand. It presents a sharp cone-shaped outline, backed to the left by the four turreted summits of Corrag Bhuidhe.

(6) Towards the top of Sgùrr Fìona (3,474 feet Ordnance

Survey height), *i.e.*, "*the hill of wine*," the rocks were at one point slightly glazed with ice; but, considering the time of the year, the mountain was exceptionally free in this respect, and we certainly saw none of Mr Pennant's glaciers.

Close to the top another storm burst on us, and a rush was made for shelter. This we found by climbing a short way down under the cornice of the east face, and from our neuk the snow slope fell away to Loch Toll an Lochain with appalling steepness for many hundreds of feet.

The finest part of the climb now commenced; (7) Lord Berkeley's Seat, and the four tops of Corrag Bhuidhe with (12) its buttress, forming the beautifully serrated ridge we had admired from the road on the previous evening, had still to be traversed.

Lord Berkeley's Seat is a pretty little rock tooth, over-topped on either side by Sgùrr Fìona and Corrag Bhuidhe. (8, 9, 10, and 11) Corrag Bhuidhe (3,360 feet, Dr Heddle's aneroid height; 3425 feet, Mr Munro's aneroid height) does not, like the others, end in a single point, but has a longish and serrated back, consisting, as already mentioned, of four tops, and on its eastern face it shows very plainly the stratification of the Torridon sandstone.

On the fourth turret, at 4.10, we passed our friends with the cameras, and learned from them that the snow-gully—Cadha Gobhlach—by which they had ascended runs without a single break from the ridge almost to the loch, and that we could probably glissade from top to bottom.

In keeping to the crest of the ridge we had, on leaving this summit, a scramble over the steepest rocks encountered during the day, although an easier way could have been found on the western face. Crossing the buttress of Corrag Bhuidhe (3,050 feet, Mr Munro's aneroid height), and (13) the top above Cadha Gobhlach (3,100 feet, Mr Munro's aneroid height), *i.e.*, "*the difficult, forky, or narrow pass*," we reached the col of that name at 5.20 P.M. This pass is guarded on the north side by two pillars of rock, which on climbing we found to be just 3,000 feet; and the gully which comprised the pass was filled with hard snow, stretching in one unbroken slope almost to the edge of Loch Toll an Lochain, 1,300 feet below. From this point

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X

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*From Photographs by J. Rennie, April 1, 1893.*  
 7—Lord Berkeley's Seat. 6—Sgurr Fiona.

SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE MAIN RANGE OF AN TEALLACH.

14—Sail Liath X—Cadhha Gobhlach. 13—Top above Cadha Gobhlach. 12—Buttress of Corrag Bhuidhe. 11, 10, 9, 8—Corrag Bhuidhe.



we ascended in a few minutes the south-east peak of the range, (14) Sail Liath (3,100 feet, Mr Munro's aneroid height), *i.e.*, "the grey heel." Retracing our steps to the head of this pass, we had to cut fresh steps down it, as those of our friends were nearly obliterated, and the frozen slopes were too steep and hard to glissade. To add to our joy another storm broke on us, and the wind, which was terrific, swept the snow up the slope into our faces, and we were very glad when this short but fierce storm blew over. After about 300 feet of step-cutting we glissaded down some 800 to 900 feet to a point close to the loch.

The view from this loch is one to be remembered. Huge buttresses of rock, 1,000 to 1,500 feet high, encircle this lonely sheet of water, and rise sheer from its west and south shores, with little or no scree slope at their base to detract from their vertical height. Between the buttresses are deep-cut gullies, filled with old snow; and the very distinct lines of rock-bedding, with their ledges also white with snow, greatly enhance the effect of this grand piece of rock scenery. (*See Plate I.*)

It was now 6.15 P.M., and we still had before us what is usually the most wearisome part of a day on the hills, *i.e.*, a four mile tramp over the moor. The right way is to cross the stream at the foot of the loch, and keep very high up, so as to avoid the boggy ground, and descend to a point as near as possible to Auchtascailt. This was impressed on us by a "rough and tumble" over the moor, which was by no means pleasant, as it was dark long before we reached the road. We had kept too close to the stream, and thus wasted much time. Ultimately, however, we arrived at Dundonnell at 9, only too ready for dinner.

The only two peaks of the range which we did not visit were (4) Sgurr Creag an Eich (3,350 feet, Dr Heddle's aneroid height) lying to the west of Sgurr Fìona, with which it is connected by an easy shoulder, and the ridge terminating in Glas Mheall Liath, which runs east from Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill.

Our climb had been a most enjoyable one, though it cannot be said we had any real difficulties to surmount.



This is due to the fact that the rocks of which the range is composed is the Torridon sandstone, and this, being formed of coarse grits and conglomerates, always affords the most excellent foothold. The beds are slightly tilted in a southerly and easterly direction, so that the easiest ascent of the hills is made from the north or west. The whole west side is a gradual slope.

The districts where this rock is exposed should suit all who like rocky ridges without many difficulties. On the other hand, the more ambitious climber who prefers to go up a mountain by a steep gully which no other person has thought of ascending before, could probably spend with enjoyment many days on the cliffs of either of the two eastern corries. The rocks of these gullies, it is true, would be sloping the wrong way, and in view of the fact that the edges of the sandstone are everywhere more or less rounded it might in places be difficult to obtain a grip. It is however possible that there are many cracks at right angles to the dip which could be relied on, as the rocks are not rotten. It is also well to remember that in consequence of the excellent foothold less handhold is necessary. Let us hope that at some future time we may have an account in the pages of the *Journal* of the ascent of some of these gullies.

It should, in conclusion, be stated that the mystery previously referred to was not at first entirely removed by our visit to the district, and that some difficulty has been experienced in working out the details of our notes, and making the tops actually crossed tally with those assigned to them in the tables in Vol. I. In this we received the greatest assistance from the excellent set of photographs taken on the occasion by Mr Rennie and Mr Douglas.

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#### APPENDIX A.

*Extract from MacCulloch's "Highlands and Western Isles," 4 vols, 1824, Vol. 2, p. 315.*

In continuing the ascent [of Kea Cloch, *i.e.*, Teallach] the river [Allt Airdeasaidh?] was soon found running along its channel, shaded with birch and alder, the sweetest of pastoral streams; and I almost forgot that I was 3,000 feet above the sea, so tranquil and rural did

everything appear. But the change of scene was sudden indeed, when, taking a near course through a lateral valley, we found ourselves in the region of snow, on a brilliant frozen plain. As this snow could not have dissolved before the winter, it is probably here permanently from year to year. The summit of the mountain, extending to five or six hundred perpendicular feet above this point, is a rocky and narrow ridge, serrated into peaks, and of a very marked and picturesque character. Though formed of sandstone, as is the whole mountain from the very base, it has the general aspect of granite, resembling the summits of the Arran hills. Overtopping all the neighbouring land, it commands a wide extent of the interior country, displaying all the details of Loch Broom and Loch Greinord, and losing itself eastward in a series of deep valleys, ridges, and ravines of bare white rock, characterised by an aspect of desolation not easily exceeded. . . .

I proceed for some distance along the giddy ridge, in the hopes of seeing its termination; but all continued vacant, desolate, silent, dazzling, and boundless. Of the height of Kea Cloch I cannot speak with precision, having forgotten to bring up the barometer. But though it seems to have been completely overlooked by map makers and travellers, it must be among the highest mountains of the west coast, if not of Scotland; while it rises immediately from the sea by as steep an acclivity as is well possible, and without competitors, its apparent altitude is greater than that of any single mountain in Scotland, excepting perhaps Ben Nevis.

#### APPENDIX B.

*Extract from "Pennant's Tour in Scotland," dated 30th July 1772,  
p. 326.*

To the west is a view where the awful, or rather the horrible, predominates,—a chain of rocky mountains [the Teallachs], some conoid, but united by links of a height equal to most in north Britain; with sides dark, deep, and precipitous; with summits broken, sharp, and serrated, and springing into all terrific forms; with snowy glaciers lodged in the deep shaded apertures. These crags are called Sgur-fein [Sgùrr Fìona], or hills of wine; they rather merit the title of Sgur-sbain, or rocks of wind; for here Æolus may be said to make his residence, and be ever employed in fabricating blasts, squalls, and hurricanes, which he scatters with no sparing hand over the subjacent vales and lochs.

#### APPENDIX C.

The following list gives all the "tops" in the Teallach range, with the times at which the party was on such of them as were visited. It is believed that the heights measured by Mr Munro are more accurate than those given in his tables of 3,000 feet "tops" in Vol. I.,

as his aneroid corresponded fairly well with such heights as are given on the O.S. :—

1. Glas Mheall Mòr, 3,176 [6 in. O.S.]. A cairn. Time, 12.55-1.10.  
*Lowest point between tops 1 and 2, 2,974 [6 in. O.S.].*
2. Unnamed top, 3,000 cont. [1 in. O.S.], 3,001 [6 in. O.S.].  
A dilapidated cairn; scarcely worth counting as a top. Time, 1.25.  
*Col 2,872 [6 in. O.S.].*
3. Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill, 3,483 [O.S.]. Time, 1.55-2.10.
4. Glas Mheall Liath, 3,080 [Dr Heddle's aneroid]. Not visited.  
This name is from the 6 in. map.
5. Sgùrr Creag an Eich, 3,350 [Dr Heddle's aneroid]. Not visited.  
This name is from the 6 in. map.  
*Col between Bidein a' Ghlas Thuill and Sgùrr Fìdna, 3,017 [6 in. O.S.]. Time, 2.30.*
6. Sgùrr Fìdna, 3,474 [O.S.]. Time, 2.55-3.10.
7. Lord Berkeley's Seat, 3,300 [Mr Phillips' estimate of height]; 3,325 [Mr Munro's aneroid]. Time not taken.  
Local name not on any map.
8. Corrag Buidhe, highest or north top, 3,360 [Dr Heddle's aneroid]; 3,425 [Mr Munro's aneroid]. Time not taken.  
This name is from the 6 in. map.
9. Corrag Buidhe, second top, 3,400 [Mr Munro's aneroid]. Time, 3.45.
10. Corrag Buidhe, third top [Mr Munro, somewhat lower than No. 9]. Time not taken.
11. Corrag Buidhe, fourth top [Mr Munro, again somewhat lower than No. 10, but much higher than No. 12]. Time, 4.10.
12. Corrag Buidhe, buttress, 3,050 [Mr Munro's aneroid]. Time, 4.30.  
This is the last of the teeth.
13. Top above Cadha Gobhlach, 3,040 [Dr Heddle's aneroid]; 3,100 [Mr Munro's aneroid]. Time, 5.10. This is not one of the teeth; it is altogether rounder.  
Small tooth just to north of col of Cadha Gobhlach, about 3,000 feet by aneroid.  
*The name Cadha Gobhlach is from 6 in. map.*
14. Shìl Liath, 3,100 [Mr Munro's aneroid]. Time 5.30.  
Previously stated in "Tables" (Sec. XI.), Vol I., to be slightly below 3,000 feet.  
Loch Toll an Lochain. Time, 6.35-6.50.  
Road, 8.15. Dundonnell, 9.

## STUC A CHROIN'S EAST FACE

(11th November 1893).

BY WILLIAM BROWN, LL.B.

THE moral of our Stuc a Chroin expedition is *Don't miss your train*; and if the moral be not pointed by one of the most dolorous experiences that can befall a mountaineer, the fault lies not in the experience itself, but in the manner of relating it. It seemed an easy thing to Tough and myself, on the previous night, to catch the 6.45 A.M. train for Callander, but the blackguard who missed it wishes it to be understood that he has changed his opinion upon that point. His wretched victim, after moodily pacing up and down the platform for the better part of an hour, ultimately captured the delinquent in Lothian Road, and saw him safely into the next train, three hours later.

Callander was reached at 11.45, and Arivurichardich, the shepherd's cottage at the foot of Glen Keltie, at 1.15. The day was an ideal one for mountain climbing,—cool, clear, and bracing, with a touch of frost in the air, which caused the ground to crunch pleasantly underfoot as we sped over it with long vigorous strides. As we began the ascent towards the col communicating with Gleann an Dubh Choirein, the snowy crest of Ben Ledi rose up grandly over the brown hills on the opposite side of the valley, and the rocky ridge culminating in the massive crag of Ben Each. Far away in the south-east a conical hill stood up boldly on the skyline, affording us ten minutes of highly animated wrangling. For the rest, an apparently endless vista of brown undulating moorland completed the picture.

Crossing the col at 2 o'clock, we entered Gleann an Dubh Choirein, and followed it over peat-haggs and long heather till it led us beneath the precipices of Stuc a Chroin, up which we proposed to force a way. Like the eastern face of Ben Ledi, they presented a most wintry appearance, being in this respect in marked contrast with the black scree slopes of Ben Vorlich, on the opposite side of the glen. Looking up at the huge icicles, which streamed over

the rocks, we thought with regret of the trusty steel rusting idly at home, and resolved that never again, when winter had fairly set in, would we start on a big excursion armed only with a miserable walking-stick. These and similar reflections, genially promoted by the pipe, which Mr Naismith recommends at Vol. II. p. 289 of the *Journal*, wasted a good half-hour, so that it was fully half-past three when we commenced the ascent. This route has not yet been described in these pages, but it is certain that when its possibilities have been brought under the notice of our cracks an interesting narrative will be the result. Climbing fair, and shirking no difficulties,—by which I mean striking practically a bee-line to the summit,—there will be plenty of obstacles to try the metal of the most experienced cragsman. The only drawback is that some of the rocks are so steep and smooth as to be quite inaccessible, even to a monkey.

Zigzagging among the crags, we discovered and followed a route which, in summer, would be little more than a rough scramble. Now however it was far from easy, leading in places over smooth slabs, coated with ice and snow, where an axe was almost indispensable. By vigorously using our sticks, we succeeded however in hammering out a way, and, after much ticklish worming round icicles, which threatened to break away and demolish us, struck the wire paling which crosses the col not far from the summit. We had a rope with us, but did not use it, as in consequence of the treacherous nature of the footing, and the smoothness of the rocks, there were many places where, in the event of a slip, it might have caused two falls instead of one; from all which the experienced Alpinist will draw the conclusion that the climb was a most unorthodox and undignified scramble.

As we neared the summit, the mist swooped down and enveloped us in its chill embrace; and as the hour was late (4.45), the darkness, which it brought with it, caused us not a little uneasiness. Neither of us was previously acquainted with the mountain, and to that circumstance, and the fact that in the semi-darkness consulting the map was an operation of greater labour than profit, is to be attributed the mistake which we now made. Instead of following the

ridge over Ben Each, and descending to Strathyre, we set off in a north-westerly direction, and finally stumbled into Glen Ample. It was now pitch dark, or as near it as a cloudy moonless night generally is. Far away in the west a spot of lurid crimson still burned in the sky, against which the dark shadows of two lofty peaks could be seen with wonderful distinctness. Nearer, the snow slopes, which we had just left, rose up like phantoms out of the gloom, producing a strangely eerie effect in the dead stillness of the night.

What the character of Glen Ample is in daylight I cannot tell, never having seen it under these conditions; but in darkness, and at the end of a long day's journey, it is not a place calculated to inspire agreeable reflections. To us, on this memorable occasion, the heather appeared longer, the rocks harder and more numerous, the streams deeper and colder, and the peat-haggs more artfully arranged to entrap the unwary, than anywhere else out of the Isle of Skye, to which I unhesitatingly award the palm. Once there came floating through the still air the voice of Tough anathematizing something with unusual energy. Inquiry showed that he had been mistaking the patches of smooth grass for slabby rocks, which, after carefully avoiding, he had just discovered afforded the best walking in the glen.

At last we struck a path, or something which in the local imagination doubtless passes for such. In Glen Sligachan there is a track, described by Mr Pilkington as "ankle-breaking and temper-destroying." Such, as we experienced it, is the path through Glen Ample. The chief trait in its character is an extraordinary affection for bogs and streams, through which it plunges and wallows with the zest of a Newfoundland dog. There being nothing aquatic about Tough or myself, we refused to follow it in some of its gambols, preferring to strike out a drier course across the heather.

About two miles from Edinample there is a lonely cottage, where we learned to our dismay that Lochearnhead Station was still four miles distant. Here was a fresh and unpleasant complication. It was now 6 o'clock, and our train, we suspected, was due at Lochearnhead at 6.45.

Clearly there was no time even for the glass of milk which my thirsty friend persisted in bargaining for. So off we set, half walking half trotting, splashing through mud, charging over heather, and often sinking to the knees in bog, while a voice shouted after us through the darkness, "It's no use, you can't do it." We had all sorts of adventures in that short mad rush. A bull chased us across a field; we missed the road, such as it was, and had to ford a stream, up to the knees in icy cold water; a barbed wire fence destroyed our knickers—and our tempers as well. At last the lights of Edinample flickered through the trees, and we stepped on to an excellent carriage road, which surely never before was so joyously greeted. Matches were struck, and watches eagerly consulted. Time, 6.25, and more than two miles still to go. Faster and faster grew the pace, till our sober walk of the morning had developed into something resembling the finish of a mile race. It was magnificent, but it was not mountaineering. So I draw a veil over our sufferings, and hasten to say that when the leading man rushed panting into the station at 6.43 the train was the loser by just fifty yards. But it had its revenge. Deaf to entreaties, bribes, and threats of violence, directed against the person of the guard, it gathered up its handful of passengers, gave a snort of defiance, and steamed out of the station as the winner of the third prize came clattering in at the other end! Here was a pretty fix. Two broken-down pedestrians, the last train gone, and the nearest hotel (as we thought then) three miles distant. However, Providence, in the shape of an unattached engine,—literally a *Deus ex machina*, according to the bad joke which its appearance excited,—now smiled upon our distress. We were hoisted on board, there was a screech and a whistle, and out we shot into the darkness, in a cloud of steam, and never halted till Stirling was reached. Here our singular journey came to an end, and with it all that is worth recording in the present narrative.

## THE CREAG MEAGHAIDH RANGE.

BY ARCHIBALD E. ROBERTSON, M.A.

MOY, consisting merely of a small but comfortable inn and a cottage or two, is situated a mile and a half from the south-west end of Loch Laggan, and commands a splendid view of the many fine mountains which surround it. Although somewhat uninteresting to the ordinary tourist, it is a most attractive centre to the climber, and it was with the purpose of exploring some of its mountains that I arrived there last July.

Among the many great ranges that are within easy reach of this snug little inn is Creag Meaghaidh (pronounced *May-ghe*), whose highest point, 3,700 feet, is situated three miles N.N.W. from the lower end of Loch Laggan, and extends along the whole of the northern side of the loch. It embraces, according to "Munro's Tables," no less than fourteen tops over 3,000 feet, three of these being isolated enough to be considered separate mountains. When seen from any of the Cairngorm range it is easily recognised by the well-defined V-shaped gorge, which seems almost to split the mountain into two halves. This gorge or gully is the top part of the famous Coire Arder, and is locally known as the "Window."

Coire Arder is quite the feature of this range; so much so, that many of the natives call the whole group by that name, and do not know anything about "Creag Meaghaidh." It is interesting here to note that Mrs Grant of Laggan, in her "Letters from the Mountains" (Vol. I., p. 264), writing in 1789, refers to the range as "the lofty Corryarder," showing that even then the name was in general use.

On 11th July I left John M'Laren's excellent quarters in the well-appointed four-horse coach which every morning passes Moy Hotel at nine on its way from Fort-William to Kingussie. Half-an-hour's smart drive took me down the five miles to Aberarder, a farm-house on Loch Laggan side. After leaving the coach, and passing through the steading, I picked up a rough track, which took me in



a very short time on to the shoulder of Carn Liath. At a height of about 1,500 feet the track ceased to be of service to me, so I took to the hill-side, and headed almost due north up the slope. The appearance of the Coire Arder, as it gradually opened into view the higher I ascended, was very fine. Bit by bit the massive rocky face, some 1,000 feet high, appeared. This face, which looks north-east, is furrowed by six or seven vertical gullies or chimneys, locally known as the "posts" of Coire Arder. These would afford ample scope for the energies of any "Black Shoot party;" some of the chimneys at anyrate looked as if they would "go" all right. A turn in the hill disclosed what one would expect in such a place,—a dark sombre tarn, lying snugly enclosed in its cradle of rock boulders and screes. Lower down, the glen is studded with moraine heaps, reminding us of the snow and glacial ice which once must have filled the corrie; and ponded back by the *débris* of the retreating glacier, the loch, now still and dark, is also left as a memorial of the glacial age. Soon the large patches of grey lichen-covered stones—from which the name Liath, grey, is taken—tell me the summit of Carn Liath, 3,298 feet, must be near. At 11.45 the cairn is reached.

I now got a clear view to the north. Over on the other side of Glen Spey were the Corrieyairack hills, and I could trace the old road running up to the well-known pass. Away north rose the big bulky mass of Ben Wyvis; north-eastwards there was a fine view down Badenoch way, with Cluny's Creag Dhu quite near, and Ord Bain distant some thirty miles. To the south, right over the long shoulder of Beinn a' Clachair, Ben Alder appeared; while far away beyond him were the Perthshire hills, looking blue and faint in the distance. Before I took leave of the cairn, I did not fail to notice Loch Spey, the source of one of our largest rivers, almost at the head of Glen Spey.

Leaving at 12, I continued along the ridge in a westerly direction. The ridge gives good walking, and never descends below 3,000 feet for about five miles.

Passing along the top of Coire à Chaoruinn (*i.e.*, "corrie of the rowan trees"), I was soon on Sròn Garbh Choire



the day clear, the view would be most extensive. As it is, the weather is dull and threatening, and the sky hazy. Over to the north-west, on the other side of Glen Roy, one can get a capital sight of the "Parallel Roads." Away further over in the same direction the well-rounded hills of the Beinn Eun Forest appear; and just at the foot of them, towards the left, a peep of Loch Garry may be obtained. Further west, the many hills about Clunie Bridge inn, Loch Quoich, and Glen Shiel, which are so difficult to identify individually, were dimly made out through the fast-approaching mist. W.S.W., and quite near, was the long three-topped ridge of Beinn a' Chaoruinn (*i.e.*, "the hill of the rowan trees"), while right away over this ridge was Ben Nevis and the Aonachs. More to the east were the serrated stony peaks of the Caisteal and Stob Choire Claurigh (pronounced *Clau-ar-ee*), then the two graceful cones of Stob Choire an Easain Mhoir, rising out of Loch Treig, the north end of which could be plainly seen. I had just time to make these hurried observations when the rain, which had been threatening since noon, now commenced to fall, bringing with it that ever-faithful ally the mist. Further delay on the top was useless. The best thing to be done was to make straight tracks for Moy. An easy descent would be just due south to the Moy burn, which, if followed, would take one past the doors of the house. I preferred, however, bearing more to the south-east, to descend by the corrie between An Cearcallach (*i.e.*, "a hoop"), 3,250 feet (pronounced *Kirkel*), and Meall Coire Coille na Froise, 3,299 feet. As I gained the lip of this corrie a lift in the mist revealed Bidean's rugged northern face and the Buchailles Beag and Mòr; while far to the south, away down in the depression between Cnoc Dearg and Beinn Eibhinn, Beinn Heasgarnich showed a fine clean-cut peak.

The next hour has left nothing very definite in my mind save a vision of rain, soaking bogs, and what Mr Stott would call "villainous peat hags." But the thought of hot water, dry clothes, and dinner spurs one on to get over the ground rapidly, and I arrive at Moy about 4 P.M.

(*i.e.*, "the nose of the rough corrie"), 3,248 feet. The name is well given, and as one looks over the ledge, and rests his eyes on the tiers and tiers of rocks below him, he feels safer and more comfortable at the top than in the middle of such a place. A mile further on Crom Leathad was reached. All along here the view of the rocks which form the south side of the Coire Arder was very fine. Ten minutes walk along the grassy ridge brought me to the top of Creag an Lochan, 3,460 feet, which also commanded a magnificent survey of the corrie.

At this point I made a slight detour in a northerly direction in order to get a peep of Loch Roy, which lies at the foot of the slope. The watershed has been crossed, and all the water on both sides of the hill now drains into the Atlantic. Retracing my steps, I continued on my way. The ridge here begins sharply to descend into the "Window." The descent is not difficult; in point of fact it is much as one cares to make it. By keeping well over to the south, or Coire Arder side, one can get rock-scrambling to his heart's content; whereas by keeping well over to the north, or Glen Roy side, one can almost get grass to walk on the whole way. The bealach or *col* is just over 3,000 feet; my aneroid made it about 3,030 feet.

It was now fully one o'clock, and the time and place suggested lunch. A runnel of clear ice-cold water decided the matter, and sitting down I did justice to my simple fare. This over, a scramble up some loose stones for about 100 feet brought me within sight of the north-east face of Creag Meaghaidh. This face is a distinct contrast to the south side, and presents some fine rock faces and noble crags, which even yet, in this hot summer of '93, screen some plots of snow from the glare of the sun. The 675 feet of ascent from the "Window" I scarcely felt at all, so gradual is the rise and so smooth is the walking; indeed, the ground which slopes away southward from the immediate neighbourhood of the cairn of Creag Meaghaidh is so grassy that one could roll down, should he desire to renew the days of his childhood.

At two o'clock the top—3,700 feet—is gained. Were

## A CLIMB FOR A VIEW—SCOUR OURAN.

By SCOTT MONCRIEFF PENNEY.

THE evening and night of Tuesday, 15th August, I spent on the top of Ben Nevis, and was more fortunate than those who had ascended earlier in the day. Just before the top was reached (5.30 P.M.), the clouds, which had been resting there all day, lifted, allowing a good view of the mountains of Rum and of the Coolins.

After tea in the Observatory, where an introduction secured me a welcome, a variety entertainment was started. From the roof my attention was directed to an extraordinary illumination on Loch Eil. At first the loch glowed like a lake of fire, the rays of the sun being focussed upon it through a dark bank of clouds, but in a way quite different from a sunset effect. The water then became more visible, but streaked with green, red, and yellow lights, until by degrees it assumed its normal hue. Next we wandered towards the precipices in the east, where we wakened up the echoes. I had never before heard such a succession of distinct echoes in Scotland, and only regretted that the bugler, whom I had heard at the Gap of Dunlo, was not of the party. Schiehallion showed well up to the east; but my interest was more taken up with the Ross-shire mountains to the north-west, as yet total strangers to me. It is impossible to identify the peaks, so much alike are they; but Mr Omond, in his panoramic sketch, sets down the most prominent little horn as Scour Ouran (Sgurr Fhuaran), with which I was before long to make closer acquaintance. Meanwhile the Ben became lit up at intervals by sheet lightning, soon turning to something more serious. One or two photographs of forks were successfully taken, and then all took refuge in the Observatory, as one of the sharpest thunderstorms of last summer burst upon us. It was a new and strange experience to sit in the Observatory with lamps turned low, and to watch flash after flash light up the summit of the Ben, each in turn recording its presence with marked emphasis in the tick of the needle of the telegraphic apparatus. It was noted that

when the direction of the current was at right angles to the earth the needle was silent. There was a curious absence of thunder, but Mr Omond told me next day that when the thunder clouds are resting on the mountain below the summit, the sound travels down rather than up. The nightly message we are so well acquainted with in the columns of our morning newspaper is generally sent off at 9 P.M. It was more than an hour later that night before it was considered safe to handle the instrument.

The chief was below, but the Observatory had more than its full complement of observers, so I had to "sleep out." I found the "hotel" very comfortable, and the sheets dry, notwithstanding the fact that I went to bed amid torrents of rain, which the windows were not tight enough to exclude. I fell asleep thinking that I at least had no reason to complain of the monotony of life on Ben Nevis.

One afternoon four weeks later I found myself at the head of Loch Duich. It was a wonderful day. A strong north wind the day before had cleared the atmosphere, and quiet beauty rested upon mountain, loch, and glen. The reflections on river and loch were most lovely, and not being an angler I fear I did not sufficiently sympathise with the disconsolate salmon fishers.

Scour Ouran stood out so near and clear, I thought it hardly credible that it was really the top I saw, and that 3,505 feet up; but then I had been where a higher point would have shown itself had such existed.

It was 3.30 P.M., and I had not meant to climb that day; the prospect of no common view led me to change my mind. I confess that ice and snow on mountain tops are still strange elements to me in Scotland, as I have not long been a member of the Mountaineering Club. I can speak to many baptisms of rain, but still I plead to enjoying a view as much as a climb, and so crossed the bridge from the inn and kept up the right bank of the Shiel, through somewhat swampy level ground, for two miles. Having crossed a ravine, at 4 P.M., it was just a case of straight up the nose of the mountain to the top,—a long steady steep slope, slightly trying to the wind,—which was reached at 5.22 P.M. I was not mistaken in my expecta-

tions. Such a prospect one sees twice or thrice in a lifetime. The "Long Island" was visible from the hills in Harris to the south end of Barra. The jagged peaks of the Coolins rivalled each other in sharpness of outline. The mountains of Rum, the Scur of Eigg, Canna, Ben More in Mull, and the Paps of Jura (?), made up the line of the west seaboard. North Ben Eighe, Slioch, and An Teallach were all well in evidence, and, in fainter outline, behind them the mountains between Ullapool and Lochinver. Beside me, to the north, stretched the long ridge of Ben Attow, with Mam Soul to the right, shutting off further views in that direction. A small piece of Loch Affric could just be seen. To the south-east, Ben Nevis and Ben Alder seemed ridiculously near; beyond them, Bidean nam Bian and the Glencoe mountains were plainly visible; and I think it must have been Ben Cruachan I saw further to the south. But the peak that rivetted my attention was one standing alone, faint but distinct, far beyond Ben Alder, and seen over its left shoulder. That is the line of Ben-y-Gloe, but I do not remember that mountain ever looking so solitary. The outline was more like that of Schiehallion as seen from Ben Nevis, but that again would be too much to the south. I had unfortunately no compass with me, although I had a good general map. Whatever it was, the radii of the view circle from my centre must have averaged seventy miles. To see everything that can be seen, and not to be able to put a name on it, is the one drawback to the enjoyment of such a view!

Half-an-hour took me to the ravine. I know no hill you can so easily run down. It is so steep, every step tells; so grassy, without being slippery, that restraint is unnecessary. Another half-hour took me to the inn, ready for the excellent dinner I found just served.

I have since read Mr Rennie's "Diary" with great pleasure. My own subsequent walks by Lochs Hourn, Nevis, Morar, Ailort, Moidart, Sunart, and Linnhe, although exceedingly pleasant, scarcely partook of "mountaineering,"—except that of the day I left Shiel Inn when I crossed (with too heavily-weighted a knapsack!) "The Saddle" by the Pass of Corryvarlingen to Kinlochourn.

Rounding Loch Hourn head, I followed the ups and downs of the most charming of loch-side paths to Barrisdale, raced daylight up the cart road across the col to Glen Dulochan, and descended after dark to Inverie, thankful even for that somewhat disappointing and dilapidated hostelry by the sea.



## THE CHEVIOT IN 1726.

BY DANIEL DEFOE.

THE following account is perhaps one of the earliest descriptions of an ascent in this country for the purpose of recreation. It is not only interesting in itself, but it acquires an additional charm in coming from the author of "Robinson Crusoe." The extract is taken from Vol. 3, pp. 116-120, of a very rare book, generally known as "the genuine Defoe," and entitled "A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain" (3 volumes, 1724-5-6), and is not to be confused with the many volumes with similar titles published at various dates during the early part of last century:—

From Kelso "we made a little Excursion into *England*, and it was to satisfy a Curiosity of no extraordinary Kind neither. By the Sight of *Cheviot Hills*, which we had seen for many Miles Riding, we thought at *Kelso* we were very near them, and had a great Mind to take as near a View of them as we could; and taking with us an *English Man*, who had been very curious in the same Enquiry, and who offer'd to be our Guide, we set out for *Wooller*, a little Town lying, as it were, under the Hill.

*Cheviot-Hill* or Hills are justly esteem'd the highest in this part of *England*, and of *Scotland* also; and, if I may judge, I think 'tis higher a great deal than the Mountain of *Mairock*\* in *Galloway*, which they say is two Miles high.

When we came to *Wooller* we got another Guide to lead us to the Top of the Hill; for, by the Way, tho' there are many Hills and Reachings for many Miles, which are all call'd *Cheviot-Hills*, yet there is one *Pico* or *Master-Hill*, higher than all the rest by a great deal, which, at a Distance, looks like the *Pico-Teneriffe* at the *Canaries*, and is so high, that I remember it is seen plainly from the *Rosemary-Top* in the East-Riding of *Yorkshire*, which is near sixty Miles. We prepar'd to clamber up this Hill on Foot, but our Guide laugh'd at us, and told us, we should make a long Journey of it that Way. But getting a Horse himself, told us he would find a Way for us to get up on Horse-

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\* The height of Merrick is 2,764 feet, and the Cheviot 2,776.

back ; So we set out, having five or six Country Boys and young Fellows, who ran on Foot voluntier to go with us ; we thought they had only gone for their Diversion, as is frequent for Boys ; but they knew well enough that we should find some Occasion to employ them, and so we did, as you shall hear.

Our Guide led us very artfully round to a Part of the Hill, where it was evident, in the Winter Season, not Streams of Water, but great Rivers came pouring down from the Hill in several Channels, but those (at least some of them) very broad ; they were overgrown on either Bank with Alder-Trees, so close and thick, that we rode under them, as in an Arbour. In one of these Channels we mounted the Hill, as the Besiegers approach a fortify'd Town by Trenchers, and were gotten a great way up, before we were well aware of it.

But, as we mounted, these Channels lessen'd gradually, till at length we had the Shelter of the Trees no longer ; and now we ascended till we began to see some of the high Hills, which before we thought very lofty, lying under us, low and humble, as if they were Part of the Plain below, and yet the main Hill seem'd still to be but beginning, or, as if we were but entring upon it.

As we mounted higher we found the Hill steeper than at first, also our Horses began to complain, and draw their Haunches up heavily, so we went very softly ; However, we mov'd still, and went on, till the Height began to look really frightful, for, I must own, I wish'd myself down again ; and now we found Use for the young Fellows that ran before us ; for we began to fear, if our Horses should stumble or start, we might roll down the Hill together ; and we began to talk of alighting, but our Guide call'd out and said, *No, not yet, By and By you shall* ; and with that he bid the young Fellows take our Horses by the Head-stalls of the Bridles, and lead them. They did so, and we rode up higher still, till at length our Hearts fail'd us all together, and we resolv'd to alight ; and tho' our Guide mock'd us, yet he could not prevail or persuade us ; so we work'd it upon our Feet, and with labour enough, and sometimes began to talk of going no farther.

We were the more uneasy about mounting higher, because we all had a Notion, that when we came to the Top, we should be just as upon a Pinnacle, that the Hill narrowed to a Point, and we should have only Room enough to stand, with a Precipice every way round us; and with these Apprehensions, we all sat down upon the Ground, and said we would go no farther.

Our Guide did not at first understand what we were apprehensive of; but at last by our Discourse he perceived the Mistake, and then not mocking our Fears, he told us, that indeed if it had been so, we had been in the Right, but he assur'd us, there was Room enough on the Top of the Hill to run a Race, if we thought fit, and we need not fear any thing of being blown off the Precipice, as we had suggested; so he Encouraging us we went on, and reach't the Top of the Hill in about half an Hour more.

I must acknowledge I was agreeably surprized, when coming to the Top of the Hill, I saw before me a smooth, and with respect to what we expected a most pleasant Plain, of at least half a Mile in Diameter; and in the Middle of it a large Pond, or little Lake of Water, and the Ground seeming to descend every way from the Edges of the Summit to the Pond, took off the little Terror of the first Prospect; for when we walkt towards the Pond, we could but just see over the Edge of the Hill; and this little Descent inwards, no doubt made the Pond, the Rain water all running thither.

One of our Company, a good Botanist, fell to searching for Simples, and, *as he said*, found some nice Plants, which he seem'd mightily pleas'd with; But as that is out of my way, so is it out of the present Design. I in particular began to look about me, and to enquire what every Place was which I saw more remarkably shewing itself at a Distance.

The Day happen'd to be very clear, and to our great Satisfaction very Calm, otherwise the high we were upon, would not have been without its Dangers. We saw plainly here the Smoke of the Salt-pans at *Shields*, at the Mouth of the *Tyne*, seven Miles below *New Castle*; and which was South about forty Miles. The Sea, that is the *German*

Ocean, was as if but just at the Foot of the Hill, and our Guide pointed to shew us the *Irish* Sea ; But if he could see it, knowing it in particular, and where exactly to look for it, it was so distant, that I could not say, I was assur'd I saw it. We saw likewise several Hills, which he told us were in *England*, and others in the West of *Scotland*, but their Names were too many for us to remember, and we had no Materials there to take Minutes. We saw Berwick *East*, and the Hills called *Soutra* Hills North, which are in sight of *Edinburgh*. In a Word there was a surprizing view of both the united Kingdoms, and we were far from repenting the Pains we had taken.

Nor were we so afraid now as when we first mounted the Sides of the Hill, and especially we were made ashamed of those Fears, when to our Amazment, we saw a Clergyman, and another Gentleman, and two Ladies, all on Horseback, come up to the Top of the Hill, with a Guide also as we had, and without alighting at all, and only to satisfy their Curiosity, which they did it seems. This indeed made us look upon one another with a Smile, to think how we were frighted, at our first Coming up the Hill. And thus it is in most Things in Nature ; Fear magnifies the Object, and represents Things frightful at first Sight, which are presently made easy when they grow familiar.

Satisfied with this View, and not at all thinking our Time or Pains ill bestowed, we came down the Hill by the same Rout that we went up ; with this Remark by the way, that whether on Horse back or on Foot we found it much more troublesome, and also tiresome to come down than to go up."

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE Fifth Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the St Enoch Station Hotel, Glasgow, on Friday, the 15th December 1893, at six o'clock. The President, Professor Veitch, occupied the chair. Twenty-one members were present.

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

The Hon. Treasurer submitted his accounts for 1893, and they were unanimously adopted.

The election of the office-bearers for the ensuing year then took place :—President, Professor Veitch ; Vice-Presidents, Professor Ramsay and Mr J. Parker Smith, M.P. ; Hon. Secretary, Mr A. E. Maylard ; Hon. Treasurer, Mr W. W. Naismith ; Hon. Librarian, Mr Gilbert Thomson ; Hon. Editor, Mr W. Douglas ; Committee, Messrs R. A. Robertson, Rev. Colin Campbell, W. R. Lester, A. I. M'Connochie, T. Fraser S. Campbell, and F. J. Dewar were unanimously re-elected.

Mr H. T. Munro, on the motion of Mr Steel, seconded by Mr Gibson, was elected Vice-President, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Sheriff Nicolson.

Mr J. H. Gibson, on the motion of Mr Campbell, seconded by Mr Steel, and Mr J. Rennie, on the motion of Mr Douglas, seconded by Mr Naismith, were elected new members of Committee, in place of Mr H. T. Munro and the Rev. John Steel, who retired by rotation.

Messrs H. C. Boyd, H. H. Tickell, J. B. Pettigrew, F. W. Jackson, A. E. Robertson, Rev. J. F. Daly, J. A. Parker, Arthur Bird, and William Low, were balloted for and elected members of the Club.

The best thanks of the Club were voted to Messrs W. Lamond Howie, Howard Priestman, J. Rennie, W. Douglas, and Cameron Swan, for their kindness in presenting the Club with sets of very beautiful photographs taken by themselves ; and to Mr Gilbert Thomson for the continued use of a room in his office for Club purposes.

The Hon. Secretary stated that during the past year the

Club had lost by death 2 members, by resignation 3, and by default from non-payment of subscription 2, leaving the ordinary membership of the Club 101. The result of the ballot raises this number to 110.

The President then briefly alluded to the very serious losses the Club had sustained during the year by the deaths of Sheriff Nicolson and the Rev. Walter Low.

The following fixtures were made for Club Meets :—

Dalmally for New Year.

Kilmun (February 1st to 5th).

Inveroran for Easter (March 22nd to 27th).

The Annual Dinner was held in the St Enoch's Station Hotel at the close of the General Meeting. The President, Professor Veitch, occupied the chair, and the Rev. Colin Campbell and Mr H. T. Munro acted as croupiers. There were thirty-four members and guests present. The toasts were "The Army and Navy," by Professor Veitch, replied to by Colonel Wavell; "The Club," by Professor Veitch; "The Alpine Club," by Mr William Brown, replied to by Mr Edward Whympier, who referred to the loss sustained by that Club in the death of its distinguished honorary member, Professor Tyndall. Mr Whympier mentioned that he had recently seen Professor Tyndall, and suggested the bringing out of a new edition of "The Glaciers of the Alps," a work in which, it will be remembered, certain strong statements appeared regarding the controversy between the author and the late eminent Scotsman, Professor J. D. Forbes, on the question of glacier motion. Professor Tyndall told Mr Whympier that he much regretted the statements in question, and had consequently refrained from republishing the book. Had he ever done so the regrettable expressions would have been expunged. Then followed the toasts of "The Bens and Glens," by Professor G. G. Ramsay, replied to by Mr H. T. Munro; "*The Journal*," by the Rev. H. S. Oldham, replied to by the Editor; "The Guests," by Mr Fraser Campbell, replied to by Dr Murray; "The Office-Bearers," by Mr W. Ramsay, replied to by Mr Gilbert Thomson.

# NOTES AND QUERIES.

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## EXCURSIONS.

*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 FIFE LOMONDS.**—Fifeshire is admittedly weak in hills, but it can boast of at least two which are well worth a visit. These are the Lomonds, East and West, so familiar to everyone who has stood on the Mound in Edinburgh, on a bright clear day, and looked northwards across the vista of chimney-cans and roofs which lies spread out beneath.

To the Edinburgh man upon whom the Pentlands are beginning to pall, I cannot recommend a more agreeable variety for a Saturday afternoon than a walk across these hills from west to east. The reverse is said to be the more attractive route, but, in the meantime at least, the pedestrian who elects to follow it must reckon with an unsympathetic railway company, which refuses to run trains to suit his convenience.

Leaving Edinburgh (Waverley) at 1.40 P.M., one can be at Mawcarse at 3 o'clock, and at the top of West Lomond (1,713) an hour and a half later. Allowing another hour and a half for the walk between the summits, and an hour for the descent to Falkland Road—both extremely liberal allowances—there will be 34 minutes to spare, in which to enjoy the manifold beauties of the station and its surroundings. Or, better still, one can descend to the village of Falkland and drive in state and ease to the train in the 'bus provided for the purpose; but if this course be followed, it is well to remember that the 'bus starts at 7 o'clock, punctual to the minute—a fact of which Douglas and I were made practically aware by missing it.

Another fact, which was somewhat rudely impressed upon our memories, is that if Kinross be chosen as a starting-point instead of Mawcarse, the connection will probably be missed at the other end.

Leaving Kinross at 3.10—quarter of an hour late—one oppressively hot Saturday in early summer, we skirted the northern shore of Loch Leven, and arrived in about an hour under what appeared to be the highest point of Bishop Hill (1491). Thence a toilsome climb over steep grassy slopes, deeply scarred by landslips, led us to the crest of a long flat ridge, where we looked out over acres of grass, heather, and gorse, on which a herd of cattle was peacefully browsing. So flat

indeed are the whole surroundings, that it is a matter of the nicest discrimination to discover the summit. Chance led us, after some wandering, to a couple of grassy knolls at the southern extremity of the ridge, and these, as we afterwards discovered, are a few feet higher than any other part of the hill. Unfortunately there was no view, the broad expanse of Loch Leven being seen with the utmost difficulty through the thick haze, which had been steadily gathering for the last hour and a half.

The West Lomond, rising finely out of a foreground of moor, was our next point of attack. To reach it you must traverse the long ridge of Bishop Hill, and descend into the valley named on the 6 in. Ordnance Survey map as Glenvale. You will then find yourself at the base of your hill, and if the day be like Saturday the 5th of June, it will be some time before you reach the top. There was much stopping to tie the proverbial boot-lace, and many frantic appeals for water, before Douglas and I found ourselves there. In ordinary circumstances we should now have wanted to spend a thoroughly idle half-hour in the enjoyment of Nicotine and Nature, but the hands of our watches, pointing with hateful unanimity to 6 o'clock, reminded us that Falkland Road was still many miles distant. So we raced down the steep eastern slope of the hill, scrambled across some exceedingly long heather, gained a good road in about half-an-hour, and went tearing into Falkland at 7.1 in time to see the 'bus go lumbering out at the other end. We had promised ourselves all manner of luxuries at Falkland, but a glass of beer and a biscuit, while a trap was being got ready to drive us to the station, was the fare on which, hungry and thirsty as we were, we journeyed back to town,—well satisfied, however, as the newspapers say, with our day's outing.

W. BROWN.

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THE FARRAGON HILLS AND BEN VUROCH.—The former are familiar to many from their graceful, "broken-topped" outline, especially as seen from the north side of the Garry. They lie on the watershed between Loch Tummel and the Tay, and have three recognised summits—Meall Tarruin'chon (2,559 feet), Farragon Hill (2,559 feet), and Beinn Eagach (2,259 feet).

We started one July morning, from near Loch Kinardochy, to cross these tops in the order named, the first being at the western extremity of the little range, but the weather compelled us to be content with the Meall. A dyke leads to the cairn—a very slight one, just on the north side of the fence. Blaeberreries and crowberries, especially the latter, abounded all the way up; a few cranberries also were seen. Schichallion looked very imposing as we rested in our upward climb; generally he had a misty covering on the upper part of his fine cone. Ben More and Am Binnein were also seen; indeed the prospect presented was as promising as one could have wished. But dark clouds and driving mist soon degenerated into rain; and the rain



ceasing, left a mist on us so dense and close that it could almost be cut. In such circumstances it was quite out of the question to range over the numerous and bewildering rocky peaks of the Farragons. Seeking the French burn, therefore, a way was readily found to Loch Tummel. The burn-side formed a pleasant route, adorned with mountain-ashes in the upper parts; while lower down, alders, birches, and brackens made a very paradise of a gorge, ere the stream, crossing the public road, forms a peninsula on entering the loch. We crossed the river Tummel where it leaves the loch, and so made our way to Killiecrankie.

The following day was given to Glen Giraig and Ben Vuroch. The Ben lies at the head of the glen, and is drained on the north side by Glen Fearnach. Ben Vuroch is well known by sight to most visitors to Beinn a' Ghlo. Seen from the lower end of Loch Loch, it has rather a bold appearance, as it blocks the further view southward. Viewed, however, from the south-west it is somewhat disappointing, seeming little more than a lowish ridge on the west side of Glen Fearnach. The route up Glen Giraig affords a capital view of the various summits of Beinn a' Ghlo,—in fact no one can thoroughly know that group without having gone through both it and Glen Tilt. The four principal summits are capitally seen. Occasional showers and mist did their best to spoil our day, but Ben Vrackie, the Farragons, and Schichallion were noted on the way up. Green-banked Loch Valican was passed on the left; three fishers were busy on that remote sheet of water. White heather and cloud-berries were particularly abundant,—the latter more so than we have ever seen them. Apparently extremely little of that fruit comes to maturity, spite of the numerous plants and blossom that hillmen so frequently stumble across. Huge clouds of mist latterly covered Beinn a' Ghlo, all that was visible of it at one time being the depression between Carn Liath and Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhagain. The summit of Ben Vuroch (2,961 feet) is flattish and bare; a fair-sized cairn marks the highest point. An hour was spent there, but the mist allowed little to be seen. A happy thought struck us, and a slight descent was made, and then beautiful Glen Fearnach was visible for miles. An excellent view was also got of Beinn a' Ghlo and Loch Loch from a slender eight-feet cairn five minutes' walk in a northerly direction from *the* cairn of Ben Vuroch, at an elevation about 100 feet lower. The lower cairn has, one would think, been set up to distinguish the spot where the best prospect may be had; and from our experience we should say that a visit to it when on Ben Vuroch must not be omitted.

ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

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WHAT SOME OF OUR MEMBERS DID IN THE ALPS. SEASON 1893.—Dr Colin Campbell had a successful season in the little-known Oberalp district and elsewhere. The following is a list of peaks climbed:—Piz Nurschallas, Schneehühnenstock, Six-Madun (first

descent by south arête and Piz Tegliola), Piz Toma, Piz Prielet, Plaimcaulta (the last three believed to be first ascents), Taneda, Punta Nera, Piz Alv, two Piz Borels, Piz Ravetsch, Galenstock, Jungfrau, Pigne d'Arolla, Aig. de la Za (by Arolla face), Petites Dents de Veisivi (with first descent across east face to Col de la Zarmine).

DR NORMAN COLLIE, along with friends, accomplished the following expeditions, all of them guideless except the last:—First ascents of the Dent du Requin, a difficult aiguille situated opposite the ice-fall of the Glacier du Géant, and of a nameless peak near the Col de Triolet. First ascent of the Aig. du Plan from the Chamonix side, by the Glacier des Pélerins. Petit Dru, Aig. de Grépon, Grand Combin (by a new way). "High-level route" to Zermatt (Col du Sonadon, Col de la Crête Sèche, Col du Val Cournera, and Furggenjoch). Matterhorn from Breuil (on which occasion the whole party were struck by lightning, though not damaged). Piz Bernina, from Pontresina.

REV. J. FAIRLEY DALY spent six weeks in Switzerland, and, among other expeditions, ascended the Rimpfischhorn, Breithorn, and Monte Rosa, all from Zermatt. Mrs Daly accompanied her husband to the top of the Rimpfischhorn. We learn from Mr Daly that the Monte Rosa clubhut will be finished by next summer.

MR W. LAMOND HOWIE paid a visit to the same charming climbing centre in July, when he was successful in obtaining a large number of beautiful photographic views (with a sight of which we shall hope to be favoured by-and-bye). Among other ascents, he and his camera climbed the Unter Gabelhorn, and the Matterhorn as far as the hut.

MR W. WICKHAM KING spent a month in the Alps. Though his trip was devoted largely to geology, he found time to ascend the following giants of the Oberland:—The Schreckhorn, Eiger, and Finsteraarhorn—the last-named by the difficult Agassizjoch.

MR HOWARD PRIESTMAN had a most successful season among the Dolomites, both as regards photography and mountaineering. He accomplished the following peaks among others:—Monte Cristallo, Monte Cadini, Grosse Zinne, Croda da Lago, Cimone della Pala, Sass Maor (both peaks), Cima, and Campanile di Val di Roda.

MR WALTER BRUNSKILL was also in the Tyrol, and ascended most of the above in Mr Priestman's company.

MR JAMES ROSE, though hampered by a good deal of bad weather, accomplished the following climbs, viz. :—The Diablerets, Oldenhorn, Alphubeljoch (Zermatt to Saas-fee), Lyskamm (first ascent of the year). During the descent of the Lyskamm, bad weather forced the party to make for Fiéry, and after being storm-stayed for some days among "the Italian valleys of the Pennine Alps," they returned to Switzerland over the Théodule.

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ACCIDENT ON THE COOLINS.—My attention has been called to a sensational, and on some points a misleading, article in the *Daily Telegraph*, of 11th September 1893, describing the misadventures of a

tourist while on a visit to Skye. From evident want of knowledge, added to a lively imagination, the writer of the article has done scant justice both to the tourist and to Mr Sharp of Sligachan Hotel. The facts supplied by a credible authority are as follow :—

Mr W. Wilson Greg left Sligachan about 11 A.M. on Tuesday, 5th September, and reached Camasunary about 1 o'clock. He then passed the "bad step" to Loch Scavaig without difficulty, and from there followed the south banks of Loch Coruisk and the stream flowing into it. Heavy rain here set in, but as he had provided himself with map and compass, and being not unused to mountain travel, he decided to carry out his plan of striking the Glen Brittle track from Sligachan by crossing into Coire na Creiche. Following the branch of the stream flowing south from Bidein Druim nan Ramh, till he found the rocks above impracticable, he traversed west, and reached the ridge at a height of 2,700 feet by his aneroid. From here he entered the Tairneilear branch of Coire na Creiche by a chimney, and, crossing some scree and rock, came to another and smaller chimney. It was now dark, and the mist was thick. In climbing down this second chimney his foot slipped, and he fell thirty or forty feet, severely straining the muscles of his thighs and his hips, besides receiving bruises and cuts. He spent the night where he fell, and at daybreak on Wednesday made a fresh start; but owing to his injuries and want of food,—having eaten nothing since he left Camasunary,—combined with the roughness of the ground, he made slow progress, and night again overtook him before he got clear of the corrie. Starting at 6 o'clock on Thursday morning, he at length reached the road, where he was found asleep shortly after by two men, and was then taken to the nearest house some two miles off, occupied by the shepherd Watson, whose wife tended him with much kindness during the two days he remained there. On the 9th he was moved to Sligachan, but it was five weeks before he was able to leave for his home.

It is due to Mr Sharp to say, that he sent out search parties both on Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday—the day when, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, "no search seems to have been made"—he had eleven men out all day.

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THE SNOW-BUNTING IN THE CAIRNGORMS.—Our Editor has asked me to contribute a short account of the taking of the nest of the Snow-Bunting in the Cairngorms this summer, as being perhaps of interest to some of our members who have no doubt frequently seen these birds on the high tops in the spring, and possibly also in the nesting season.

A common winter visitant to this country, the Snow-Bunting retires to high northern latitudes to breed; but it has always been suspected that a few pairs remained in the Highlands for that purpose, and there are records, extending back over a number of years, of the birds

having been seen in summer on the higher summits. Some thirty years ago, indeed, Dr Saxby obtained a nest in Unst, the most northern of the Shetland Isles ; but it was not until 1886 that the first nest recorded for the mainland of Scotland was found, by my friend Mr Peach and myself, on one of the rugged quartzite mountains of the Assynt district. Since that date three nests, at least, have been taken in the same locality, and I have also seen young birds in July on more than one hill-top in West Ross. In the Cairngorms, though the birds were frequently observed, no nest had, to my knowledge, been found previous to this year.

An interesting article by Mr David Bruce, entitled "A Nest-Hunt in the Grampians," appears in the volume of *Good Words* for 1887, giving an account of several campaigns in the Macdhuil district, in which, however, the author was unsuccessful.

It was my good fortune to spend the early part of the past glorious summer at Inchrory, at the foot of Ben Avon. Here I was joined early in June by Mr Eagle Clarke, of the Edinburgh Museum. On our first ascent of Ben Avon, we were lucky enough to come upon a pair of Snow-Buntings on the brow of a high and steep corrie on the north-west face of the mountain. From the motions of the birds, we felt sure that they had a nest not far off ; but a long course of patient watching and hunting failed to reveal its position, nor were we more successful on returning the next day.

In the meanwhile a party of ornithologists had arrived at the Lodge, with the purpose of obtaining, if possible, nests of the Snow-Bunting and Dotterel for the British Museum. As we had so far been unsuccessful, we thought it only fair to put them on the track of our birds, which, as far as we had seen, were the only pair on the hill. On Monday, 5th June, we all made the ascent, and nearing the spot soon heard the sweet song of the male bird, and reaching the edge of the corrie saw the female fitting about the rocks below. Taking up our positions in line along the face, we kept silent watch for about ten minutes, when I had the satisfaction of seeing her alight on a stone immediately below me. A moment of breathless suspense,—she crept in,—and I knew the nest was ours. Climbing down without much difficulty, I found it placed some way in among the loose granite blocks forming the scree, several of which had to be carefully moved before it could be reached. The nest was built of dry grass and a little moss, lined with deer's hair and a few ptarmigan feathers, and contained five eggs, perfectly fresh. The elevation was about 3,700 feet above sea-level.

So tame was the bird, that while I was peering into the hole she crept in by a side crevice and got on to the eggs, not a foot from my face.

Later on in the season I saw and heard Snow-Buntings in the great corries on the east side of Beinn a' Bhuird, on Bynack, and on Macdhuil, but had no time to give to further nest-hunting. I am

however, of opinion that there are few suitable scree-slopes of sufficient extent and elevation in the Cairngorms which will not be found to have their pair of Snow-Buntings resident throughout the summer.

The nest is a difficult one to find,—first, on account of the rugged and often well-nigh inaccessible nature of the ground which the birds frequent; and, again, from the impossibility of spotting its exact position among a wilderness of loose blocks unless the bird is seen going in or out. In fact, unless the female can be found off the nest, the case is hopeless; but if she can be seen, *and followed with the eye*, patient watching will do the rest.

LIONEL W. HINXMAN.

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THIRST AND HOW TO QUENCH IT.—“Some years ago there was a superstition—and it may still exist for all I know—that nature is quite wrong in urging the thirsty man to drink deep, especially when mountaineering or doing any sort of laborious work in the sun. It emanated, I fancy, from a scientific climber, who knew more about glaciers than physiology. One was told that the right thing to do is to cheat nature by sucking a pebble, a raisin, or something of that sort. Go to, you foolish scientific man, with your foolish advice! Nature is not to be cheated, and she knows best. When she asks for water, it is folly to offer her a stone. The truth is that there are two kinds of thirst—a genuine and a spurious. The former is caused by the withdrawal of moisture from the body. The tissues normally contain a certain amount of water, which is necessary for health; and when that is withdrawn, it must be replaced. Hence the craving for a deep drink after great exertion or exposure to great heat. The spurious thirst is due to mere local dryness of the mouth and gullet, which may possibly be cajoled with a pebble. It may be doubted, however, if this kind of thirst ever occurs in healthy people of healthy habits. Probably it is due to promiscuous goes of ‘Scotch’ or some equivalent, in which case the sufferer is not likely to be put off with even the choicest of pebbles. In fact the pebble theory will no more hold water than the pebble itself. It is one of those alluring paradoxes which some people always prefer to nature and commonsense. The old-fashioned word for thirsty was ‘dry,’ as we may learn from the ingenious history of Sandford and Merton. When Mr Merton offered little Harry Sandford a glass of wine, the rustic youth replied, ‘No, thank you, sir; I am not dry.’ The thirsty man is dry, and what he wants is to be moistened with liquor in proportion to his dryness.

“In choosing a drink, therefore, with which to quench a good big thirst, one should look in the first place for something that can be taken in large quantities. And that is, indeed, what people naturally do. For a really royal thirst, such as that described above, there is nothing like water.”—*St James's Gazette*.

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FATAL ACCIDENT DUE TO ROPE.—The most recent example of how not to use the rope comes, not from the Matterhorn or Sgurr nan

Gillean, but from Peterhead. At an inquest held there on 1st December on the death of Henry Hanley, a convict, who was killed by falling down a quarry face, from which he was engaged, along with another convict, in removing loose material, it was proved that the two men were tied to ropes, held at the top; but how the ropes were fastened—whether by a running noose or a sailor's knot—there was no evidence to show, although several witnesses were specially interrogated on the point. Hanley slipped, and, his rope being slack at the time, he fell ten feet before it tightened—sustaining injuries, which are described as “the fracture of the breast bone in three places, the breakage of several ribs, and a double fracture of the left leg.” The medical man, who conducted the examination, was of opinion that, apart from the injuries to the chest, the other injuries would not have proved fatal. Probably the left leg was broken after death. His view was that the sudden jerk of the rope, when it became taut, snapped the ribs and crushed them into the lungs. The rope, which was intended for the deceased's safety, was therefore the direct cause of the accident. Had it been held taut, the fatality would not have occurred. He was unable to say what distance of a drop would produce the injuries above described; but he thought that in the case of a man of 149 lbs. (Hanley's weight) it would begin to be very serious after six feet.

If the above opinion is correct, a new terror is added to mountaineering, and fresh testimony furnished of the absolute necessity of keeping the rope taut. It seems also to point to a possible danger in hitching a bight of the rope round a projecting knob of rock as is often done by way of additional security.

W. B.

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A NEW ATLAS OF SCOTLAND is to be brought out under the auspices of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. The editors are Sir Archibald Geikie, Dr Buchan, Professor James Geikie, Mr Harvie-Brown, and Mr Bartholomew, under whose superintendence the work is now being produced. The basis of the Atlas is Mr Bartholomew's half-inch map of Scotland reduced from the Ordnance Survey. This map has lately been undergoing a very thorough revision, and many new features have been added, but in order to further insure accuracy the sheets are to be submitted to local authorities all over Scotland for final examination. In the circular issued with the proofs, special directions are given for revision, and members of this Club may have something to say on the following points:—

“Roads.—(a) To distinguish by coloured ink or pencil (red preferable) the main driving roads. Note new bridges. (b) To mark for deletion or reduction (blue preferable) any roads that are no longer suitable for traffic. (c) To mark for deletion any roads that are now *entirely* disused. (d) To note all ‘drove roads,’ even although they may not now be much used. (e) All footpaths should be shown as far as the scale permits. The following especially should be marked:—

1. Recognised rights of way across country and through mountain passes. 2. Access to places of interest. 3. Recognised routes to hill tops. *Hotels and Inns.*—To add them where not shown, and to delete them where they no longer exist as such.”

Mr Bartholomew wishes it to be known that any members having marked material corrections on any sheets of his “Reduced Ordnance Maps,” and will send their sheets to him at the “Edinburgh Geographical Institute,” he will return them after noting corrections, and will also be pleased to send copies of the corrected sheets when they are printed.

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THE CLUB SONG, *vide* Vol. ii., p. 69. The following additional verses have been received from Mr Stott :—

LET the Switzer boast of his Alpine host ;  
But the Scotsman kens of a thousand Bens—  
Oh ! their names are most supernal, but you'll find 'em in the  
“Journal.”

As compiled by that enthusiast, Munro.  
The Salvationist takes his pick from the list,  
And the agile Ultramontane finds the exercise he's wantin'—  
Each gets climbing that'll please him, as the mood may chance to  
seize him,

When we go up to the mountains in the snow.

—*Chorus.*

Good comrades we, of the S. M. C.,  
We're a jolly band of brothers, tho' we're sons of many mothers ;  
And trouble, strife, and worry—Gad ! they quit us in a hurry  
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.  
For our northern land offers sport so grand,  
And in ev'ry kind of weather do we ply the good shoe-leather ;  
And from Caithness down to Arran, on the mountains big and barren,  
You “can trace our little footprints in the snow.”

—*Chorus.*

From the sunrise flush, when the hill-tops blush,  
Till the moonbeams quiver on the ice-bound river,  
We push attack and foray, over ridge and peak and corrie,  
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.  
When the long day's done, and the vict'ry's won,  
And the genial whisky toddy cheers the spirit, warms the body,  
Then the ptarmigan and raven, far aloft above our haven,  
Hear our chorus faintly wafted o'er the snow.

—*Chorus.*

J. G. S.

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## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

MOUNTAINEERING. By CLAUDE WILSON, M.D. With Illustrations by Ellis Carr. (The All-England Series : Bell & Sons.)

IN one way, at all events, the mountaineering beginner in these days is distinctly better off than was the earlier race of Alpine climbers,—sound practical advice lies more easily within his reach. And such advice, stated in clear straightforward language, can be had for the sum of 2s. in Mr Claude Wilson's recent handbook.

To "Mountaineering in Great Britain" (Chap. III.) many readers of this Journal will naturally turn first; though, apart from Skye, they will find but scanty reference to our own sphere of influence. Any objection on this score, however, the author would perhaps be justified in treating as merely the ramping of the Scottish lion. Still, after what the late Sheriff Nicolson has said in these pages, it is noteworthy that Mr Wilson uses the spelling "Cuchullins" (p. 19), and also writes "'Coolin' hills" (p. 20). The new six-inch Ordnance Survey might perhaps have had a word.

The dangers of mountaineering are fully dealt with in Chapter IV.; and under the head of "Self-made Dangers (which should never be incurred)" are included those arising from the "incompetence of one or more members of the party." One beginner, however, who is incompetent merely from inexperience, as most are, is generally thought to be safe enough when climbing between two experienced guides. Indeed, if he were not, how could the incompetent one ever learn? Climbing "two on a rope," and climbing "with a bad rope," are two sources of danger, which some of us at home may lay to heart. Quite as glaring an example of the use of a bad rope as that cited could be given from observation once made at one of our Club meets. On the moot point as to whether in a thunderstorm the danger is more imaginary, or more real, the author leans to the latter view. He adds, however, "I am not aware that anyone has been killed by lightning in the high Alps." The case of the Mrs Arbuthnot, who was killed by lightning on the Schilthorn in 1865, was perhaps not strictly speaking an accident on the high Alps, but it was a highly suggestive imitation. Nor should it be forgotten, that we never can know with certainty the cause of every Alpine accident. There is a strong belief among some of the Grindelwald men, that the accident by which Dr Haller and his guides lost their lives on the Lanteraarjoch in 1880 originated in one or more of the party being struck by lightning. As a detail, is it quite fair to the Roche Melon, a mountain 11,660 feet high, to describe it as "a sub-Alpine peak"? (p. 52).

Guides are written of in Chapter IV. They are divided into four classes—"first-rate, good, indifferent, and bad;" and in default of the first class, the beginner is told he must look for his leading guide among the second. The advice is excellent; the pity is he cannot always get them. How many *good* guides are to be found at either Zermatt or Chamonix?—not to go further afield. The scale of guides'



prices is that common to Switzerland and Savoy, without reference to the outlying districts. This is perhaps on the principle that in the "centres," in the neighbourhood of the Jungfrau, the Matterhorn, and Mont Blanc, most men find their first Alpine loves, let "eccentrics" charm never so wisely. Perhaps one of the best things in the book is the advice given to turn back in bad weather, whenever a guide hesitates, and seeks to throw the responsibility on his employer. Had this been always acted upon, there is at least one accident of recent years that would have been averted.

The chapter headed "General Considerations" contains a number of useful hints on various topics, and, among others, on the all-important one of diet. The present writer is glad to see justice done to "hot bread and milk" for breakfast when an early start is made from a mountain hotel. The Scottish mountaineer would no doubt prefer porridge, but, alas! the Alpine hotel-keeper knows not the virtues of oatmeal,—as the inn-keeper in "Old Mortality" would say, "The pock-puddings ken nae better." That Mr Wilson has thoroughly learned the value of that eminently mountaineering virtue, caution, is evident from the studied reserve with which he approaches the delicate and much-vexed question whether ladies ought to climb. He leaves it, like the Bermoothes, still vexed; it is enough for him that ladies do climb, in spite of sunburn and the British matron. Of the equally-contested question of clothes for lady climbers, he says "the matter is probably not yet ripe for final treatment."

To snow and ice work, and to rock work, Chapters VII. and VIII. are respectively given. But where all is good, it is not easy to know what to single out for special comment. The phrase "naked glacier," here used to describe the portion of a glacier below the snow-line, seems happier than "dry glacier" employed in a former work; on a hot afternoon it is anything but dry. We do not notice that any new light is thrown on the "unmitigated ice" controversy, at present raging in these pages; but a kind word is said for the rock-climber.

Among hints medical and surgical, of which Mr Wilson is specially qualified to write, the prescription is given (p. 151) of a very excellent specific against sunburn, for which the present writer can personally vouch. It is not becoming, but it is efficacious.

In a second edition, the glossary of Alpine words will no doubt appear in a completer form. Among other omissions that occur are—in German, *kamin* (chimney), and *berg* and *stock*, as in Mettenberg and Bristenstock; and in Italian, *ghiacciaio* and *vedretta* (glacier), and, less obviously, *punta* and *sasso*.

Mr Ellis Carr's illustrations are as spirited as they are true to life; indeed the only complaint with them is they are so few.

In short, so far as it is possible to teach mountaineering by means of a book—and at best the means are inadequate to the end—then so far, we think, Mr Wilson, within the space at his disposal, has been signally successful. If with this manual in his hands the beginner

fails in the course of time to convert himself into a fair mountaineer, the fault must lie in his own incapacity to learn.

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**GUIDE TO BEN NEVIS.** With an Account of the Foundation and Work of the Meteorological Observatory. Edinburgh and Glasgow: John Menzies & Co. Price 1s.

A WELL-GOT-UP guide, ornamented with photographic reproductions of Ben Nevis scenery in winter and summer, panoramas of views from the summit, and an orographical map. The first chapter gives a description of the ascent from Fort-William by road and pony-track, and of the view from the top. In clear weather the high ground of north-east Ireland can be seen.

In the next, life and work in the Observatory are described, connecting mountaineering with the other profession—meteorology. Some examples of Ben Nevis weather in winter, and at its worst, are given as follows:—During violent wind-gusts the observer had better lie down. In ordinary strong winds the angle at which he has to lean to preserve his footing is a valuable factor in estimating the wind-force. South-east gales, blowing continuously for three or four days at the rate of 80 to 100 miles an hour, carrying lumps of hard snow through the air. Silver thaw, or rain falling while temperature is below freezing, covering everything with a coating of ice. Details of various devices to protect instruments from snow-crystals, and of the electrical and optical phenomena observed, follow. The origin and history of the Observatory are next given. Surely Mr Clement L. Wragge holds a unique record among British climbers in his daily ascent of the Ben during the summer of 1881!

For those interested in meteorology, it will be instructive to read the account of the various phenomena which constitute "weather" from a scientific point of view. For those who regard "weather" as merely a question of rain or no rain, the fact that Ben Nevis has a mean annual rainfall of nearly 12 feet—stamping it as the wettest station yet known in Scotland—will probably be the most remarkable. A list of some of the principal high-level meteorological stations in the world, and of a few of the highest mountains in Great Britain and Ireland, together with the accounts of the Ben Nevis Observatory Fund, complete an interesting little book.

J. RENNIE.

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**BARTHOLOMEW'S NEW SERIES OF REDUCED ORDNANCE SURVEY  
MAPS. No. 24.**

THE latest published sheet of these excellent maps is No. 24—Gairloch and Loch Inver. It appears to have been most carefully and accurately prepared, and only one or two very trifling mistakes are to be found,—as, for instance, two points a mile and a half north of the Gairloch, which, though coloured as under 500 feet, are respectively

547 and 522 feet. Only the more important roads are marked red, and this is clearly stated in the margin.

I regret to see, however, that Mr Bartholomew has apparently finally decided on what I cannot but consider as a confusing method of colouring. In the sheet under notice we have seven gradations, each differing very slightly from the last. The colours indicating the heights between 1,500 and 2,000 feet, and 2,000 and 2,500 feet respectively, are almost impossible to distinguish one from another. I have in previous reviews expressed the opinion that the special value of these maps to the mountaineer and the tourist depends on the possibility of immediately recognising at a glance the elevation of any given spot. For this purpose the colours cannot be too distinct; and I would call Mr Bartholomew's attention to my remarks on page 248, Vol. 1., of the *Journal*, and again recommend him to revert to the colouring of the Arisaig Sheet, No. 14, or better still to that of his capital maps in Baddeley's Guides.

H. T. MUNRO.





UPPER CWM-GLAS WITH SUMMIT OF SNOWDON.

FROM THE NORTHERN ARête OF CRIB-GOCH.

-Parson's Nose.

-Crib y Ddyssyl.

-Snowdon, 3,560 ft.

-Bwlch roch, Pass to Cwm Dylh.

-Great Tower of Crib-goch.

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## RISE AND PROGRESS OF MOUNTAINEERING IN SCOTLAND.—I.

BY J. PARKER SMITH, M.P.

[Under the above title it is contemplated having a series of articles in which will be recorded the history of our sport in Scotland from its earliest beginnings to the form in which it is now practised by the modern school of climbers. The history of such a sport must necessarily to a large extent be "the history of its great men," and therefore the plan to be followed in the subsequent articles will be that of tracing in the lives of distinguished travellers and climbers the stages through which mountaineering has developed and progressed towards its present position among British sports.—ED.]

IT is not easy to realise how recent are the developments which have made mountaineering in Scotland a pleasure conceivable by Englishmen or by dwellers in the Lowlands. The mountains of the Scottish Highlands have always been traversed by men yielding to none in skill, endurance, and instinct.

"Each path by mountain, lake, and heath,  
They knew through Lennox and Menteith ;  
Right up Ben Lomond could they press,  
And not a sob their toil confess."

No doubt the Highlander knew and loved his mountains, but he was as little able to describe or criticise his enjoyment, to record or express his feats, as the stag or the eagle which he pursued. To all others the mountains appeared unapproachable. The old writers who describe Scotland almost ignore their existence. They deal only

with the settled parts of the country, and it is as hard to find mention of the hills as it would be of the clouds. They appear to take no greater interest in the one than the other, and, in fact, until the settlement and disarming after the '45 the mountains were almost as inaccessible to the ordinary traveller, as if they had been in the moon.

Take, for example, Richard Franck, "the contemplative and practical angler," who wrote his "Northern Memoirs" in 1658. He was a thoroughly keen fisherman; his tour extended over the greater part of Scotland, and his descriptions of the rivers and lochs are accurate and interesting. But whenever he alludes to hills, he becomes vague and perfunctory; for example, in describing Loch Lomond:—"This small mediterrane is surrounded with woods, mountains, rocky, boggy, sandy, and mirey earth."

Another traveller of the same period was that prolific pamphleteer, John Taylor, known as "the Water-Poet." Though his tastes were as aquatic as those of Franck, he climbed Mount Keene (3,077 feet), about the end of August 1618, to pass from Glenmark to Braemar. His account is amusing:—

"The next day I travelled over an exceeding high mountain, called mount Skeene, where I found the valley very warme before I went up it; but when I came to the top of it, my teeth beganne to dance in my head with cold, like virginal's jacks; and withall, a most familiar mist embraced me round, that I could not see thrice my length any way: withall, it yeilded so friendly a deaw, that it did moysten throw all my clothes; where the old proverbe of a Scottish miste was verified, in wetting me to the skinne. Up and downe, I thinke this hill is six miles, the way so uneven, stony, and full of bogges, quagmires, and long heath, that a dogge with three legs will out-runne a horse with foure: for doe what wee could wee were foure hours before we could passe it.

"Thus with extreme travell, ascending and descending, mounting and alighting, I came at night to the place where I would be, in the Brea of Marr, which is a large country, all composed of such mountaines, that Shooter's hill, Gad's hill, Highgate hill, Hampsted Hill, Birdlip hill, or Malvernes

hill, are but mole-hills in comparison, or like a liver, or a gizzard under a capon's wing, in respect of the altitude of their tops, or perpendicularitie of their bottomes. There I saw mount Benawne (Benavon in Braemar), with a furr'd mist upon his snowie head instead of a nightcap: for you must understand, that the oldest man alive never saw but the snow was on the top of divers of those hills, both in summer, as well as in winter."\*

It has been pointed out by Professor Veitch ("Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry," vol. i., p. 107), that in the early Scottish poets there is no trace of the strong delight in mountains which fills the minds of Scott and Leyden, and was almost for the first time expressed by Byron. The mountains are almost ignored, and where mentioned it is with feelings of terror and dread, or at least of repugnance. Neither is this hard to understand, in view of the constantly recurring disturbances in the country, when misty mountain and moorland might conceal the approaching foe, or the stealthy reiver's troop. Even after the period of which Professor Veitch speaks the repugnance continued, no longer through dread of reivers, but for a more prosaic reason, the lack of roads. Every one has it in mind that railways are a creation of the present reign; it is harder to remember that roads in the Highlands are not very much older. Ten years' work was undertaken by General Wade, beginning in 1723, and 250 miles of important roads and many bridges were built.†

A great deal more was done after the 1745, but many of the military roads then constructed were subsequently abandoned as useless, and very few of the present roads are more than a century old. Roads being made, sport and travel became possible. Accurate maps, shooting-lodges, and comfortable hotels have followed. Mountaineering became a pleasure; the mountains, instead of enemies, became friends; and admiration of bold outline and colour-

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\* Hume Brown's "Early Travellers," p. 119.

† Very carefully described by Captain Burt, who assisted in the work, in the last of his "Letters from the Highlands." His account of the engineering difficulties, and of the prejudice against the new roads, is most interesting.



ing, took the place of dislike of their "horrid confusion" and "crude purple."

The frankest and fullest account of the Highland hills, as they impressed a capable English soldier, is that given by Captain Burt. His letters give a most curious picture of the country and its inhabitants as they struck a friendly, though rather sarcastic, Englishman living amongst them from 1725 to 1735, or thereabouts. His account of the appearance of the mountains is—"There is not much more variety, but gloomy spaces, different rocks, heath, and high and low . . . the whole of a dismal gloomy brown, drawing upon a dirty purple, and most of all disagreeable when the heather is in bloom."\*

After complaining of the "stupendous bulk, frightful irregularity, and horrid gloom" of the mountains, he describes the failure of certain English officers to climb Ben Nevis, "a mountain in Lochaber, of three quarters of a mile of perpendicular height."

"This wild expedition in ascending round and round the hills, in finding accessible places, in helping one another up the rocks, in disappointments, and their returning to the foot of the mountain, took them up a whole summer day, from five o'clock in the morning."

He points out the risk they ran of being caught in mist, frequent in "that dabbled part of the island," in which case "there would have been no means left for them to find their way down, and they must have perished with cold, wet, and hunger."

He declares that "if an inhabitant of the south of England were brought blindfold into a narrow rocky hollow enclosed with these horrid prospects he would be ready to die with fear as thinking it impossible he should ever escape."

Finally, with such "monstrous excrescences," he contrasts "a poetical mountain, smooth and easy of ascent, cloth'd with a verdant flowery turf where shepherds tend their flocks, sitting under the shade of tall poplars, etc.,

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\* Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland to his Friend in London, vol. ii., p. 10.

in short, Richmond Hill, where we have passed so many hours together delighted with the beautiful prospect."

It is interesting to find Dr Johnson in his wonderfully acute and sympathetic "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland," undertaken nearly fifty years later, describing the same route from Inverness, along the line of the Great Glen in almost identical language, admitting that "this uniformity of barrenness can afford very little amusement to the traveller, that it is easy to sit at home and conceive rocks and heath and waterfalls, and that these journeys are useless labours which neither impregnate the imagination nor enlarge the understanding," and yet plodding steadily on, not for pleasure but "to become possessed of more certainties, and consequently gain more principles of reasoning, and found a wider base of analogy." (Edition 1775, p. 60.)

Defoe, writing about the same time as Burt, describes a journey in the Highlands in terms such as might now be used of Matabeleland or the Pamirs:—"It would be no unpleasant account to relate a Journey which five, two Scots and three English Gentlemen, took in this manner for their Diversion, in order to visit the late Duke of Gordon, but it would be too long for this place. It would be very diverting to shew how they lodg'd every Night. How two Highlanders who attended them, and who had been in the Army, went before every Evening and pitch'd their little Camp. How they furnished themselves with Provisions, carry'd some with them and dress'd, and prepared what they kill'd with their Guns; and how very easily they travelled over all the Mountains and wasts, without troubling themselves with Houses or Lodgings, but as I say the Particulars are too long for this place." \*

In the various narratives of the flight of Charles Edward and his followers after Culloden, the scene lies for the most part among the wildest mountains and seas of Scotland. Less than 150 years ago, in what are now the finest deer

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\* "Defoe's Tour," 1727, vol. iii., p. 212. This opens up the wider question of the pleasures of travel in Scotland, as to which Captain Burt's letters, Smollett's "Humphrey Clinker," and Churchill's satires may be consulted.

forests in Scotland, men were the hunted as well the hunters. When shut up in Lochaber, for instance, "enclosed by a chain of twenty-seven little camps," this was the life of "the P—," or "the Pr.," as with judicious ambiguity he is always called.

"From morning to night the Prince and his attendants were obliged to lie flat among the heath or shrubs, and sometimes in the greatest agony of thirst, even within hearing of a brook ; but as they were in sight of the enemy, durst not stir. When it grew dark they made their way among camps and sentries that were within speaking of one another. They had nothing to subsist upon but a little cheese and oatmeal that they carried along with them, and the quantity was so small that they had to restrict themselves to a very little morsel of cheese and a pinch of oatmeal strowed on it once a day." \*

Under such circumstances it is perhaps not surprising that we find no appreciation of the scenery. There is no sport that brings men into such close relations with the hills as deer-stalking. There are no men with keener appreciation of mountain scenery than deer-stalkers ; but when the liberty and the life of the stalker depend on the success of his stalk, it is not strange if he has not time to spare for the beauties of nature. The only exception I have found is in the interesting "Memoirs of the Chevalier Johnston," who, when offered a refuge among the Cairngorms, enlarges on "the natural beauties of the country, the waterfalls, the mountain-glens, the rivers, lakes, and woods ; the grandeur and magnificence of nature, which could hardly fail to produce a strong impression on the most insensible minds" (p. 225). At the same time it seems to have been a very mild form of mountain seclusion that was contemplated—"a hut with every kind of provisions, and no want of books ; a flock of six or seven sheep to take care of ; a stream abounding in trouts, a distance of a mile from the castle ; and frequent visits from the amiable lady of the castle to her shepherd." The whole description sounds more of Arcadia than of Aber-

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\* Maxwell's "Narrative of Prince's Expedition," p. 182-3.

deenshire ; but even so the scheme was rejected, though with regret.

There is no need to enter more fully on the feelings of a time of which Mr R. L. Stevenson in "Kidnapped" and "Catriona" has made a most careful and accurate study. Neither is it within the sphere of the present article to show how, as the Highlands became accessible, the admiration for them gradually grew. To trace the feeling for mountains through Pennant and Gilpin, Byron and Wordsworth, to their full development in Scott ; to trace the fascination of sport through Thornton and Hawker to its modern supremacy, must be left to other pens in other numbers of this journal.

In examining the early history of mountaineering it is to be feared the results are mainly negative ; but I hope that the fact has been sufficiently explained, without attributing any softness or lack of venturesomeness to our forefathers.

[ "THOMAS PENNANT," by Prof. Veitch, will be the subject of the next Paper.]

## SNOWDON AT CHRISTMAS.

BY T. V. SCULLY.

WHILST staying at Bangor at the end of 1892, I made a few expeditions into Snowdonia, and I hope the following notes on them—and on a former trip at Easter 1887—may prove interesting to some of our members.

Bangor is conveniently situated as head-quarters for mountaineering in winter, as with the aid of the railway all the important mountains in the Pen-y-gwryd district can be reached, either from Bethesda at the entrance to Nant Ffrancon or from Llanberis. There is not much choice of trains, and no very early ones at this time of the year, but on the whole they suit well enough. The following are the times :—

TO BETHESDA AND BACK.			LLANBERIS.		
A.M.			A.M.		
Dep. Bangor	- -	8.5 9.20	Dep. Bangor	- -	9.15
Arr. Bethesda	- -	8.23 9.38	Arr. Llanberis	- -	10.23
P.M.			P.M.		
Dep. Bethesda	- -	6.40 8.10	Dep. Llanberis	- -	6.0
Arr. Bangor	- -	6.57 8.27	Arr. Bangor	- -	6.59

NOTE.—The second train back from Bethesda is too late for practical purposes in winter.

22nd December 1892.—I set out from Bangor on foot, in lovely weather, and walked to Bethesda, enjoying the views of Penrhyn Castle and the valley of the Ogwen. Then past the huge Penrhyn slate-quarries, with their ugly surroundings, into Nant Ffrancon. 12.45—Crossed the Ogwen by a foot-bridge opposite a farm house—"Ty-gwyn" in Baddeley's map,—and struck up the slopes of Y Foel-goch. It is astonishing how exhilarating the keen mountain air feels, and how easy it is to climb in winter. After a brief halt for luncheon by the side of a stream which here comes down in cascades, I worked round a sharp ridge running N.E., and gained a narrow saddle at the foot of the final ridge leading to the summit of Foel-goch. A deep inaccessible gully lay on the other side of the saddle, and vertical rocks rose above to the *arête*, which seemed

a splendid one for climbing. It was more than I cared to venture on alone, but the point is well worth a visit if only for the grand view it affords of the surrounding rocks and mountain. I descended the other side of the ridge near the gully by zigzags, and skirting the precipices of the N. face went up to the summit (2,726 feet), reached just at sunset. There is a fine view from here of the ridges of Snowdon and the heights around Nant Ffrancon, but as dusk was coming on I beat a rapid retreat, and got down into the high road again in about half-an-hour.

Two days later I left Bangor by the 9.15 train for Llanberis ; passed Treborth, where they were skating on a lake close by, and the Britannia Tubular Bridge, then along the misty shores of the Menai Straits, and under the walls of Carnarvon Castle. There we changed to the branch line, and wound up the pretty glen of the river Seiont, and by the shores of Llyn Padarn into Llanberis. It was a fine frosty day, and I buttoned up as I faced the bitter wind that was blowing down the Pass. The lower part, like Nant Ffrancon, is disfigured by the Dinorwic slate-quarries, but when these are left behind the Pass grows more and more impressive, until the grand mountains surrounding Cwm-glas are reached. At noon crossed opposite this point, at the junction of two streams, by foot-bridges, and began the ascent. Passed a farmhouse and on up the slopes, skirting some dark-looking precipices—a kind of lower buttress—down which a mass of ice had formed, and then a few bits of scrambling brought me into Cwm-glas. This wild mountain hollow, and the towering ridges of Crib-goch and Crib-y-ddysgyl, form the finest view of the Snowdon range. I first saw it at Easter 1887, an unusually severe year, when the whole mountain was deeply covered with snow and ice, and we all agreed it was a perfect Alpine scene. But there was very little snow on the mountain this Christmas, just a cornice and a few streaks on the upper parts. My solitary rations were consumed in contemplation of the “gendarmes” on Crib-goch, and, after a short pipe, I made for them. They were very steep, but afforded good foot and hand hold, till, finding them coated with ice in places, I made a slight

traverse and got on to the ridge at the right. It was now about 3 o'clock, so I scrambled over the towers and along the ridge for some distance before turning. Across the valley the N. crags of Lliwedd, rising 950 feet sheer above the dark waters of Llyn Llydaw, recalled my ascent in '87, which I will mention presently. I retraced my steps, and pushed on along the ridge of Crib-y-ddysgyl. These ridges of Snowdon give splendid sport, being very long and narrow, and broken up into numerous rock towers, which afford some real climbing in places. On either hand the view down into Cwm-glas and Glaslyn is most impressive. The summit of Snowdon was reached just after sunset, and I climbed on to the top of the huge cairn of stones; but the view was obscured by fogs in the distance, and Christmas Eve alone on the top of Snowdon, with an icy wind blowing, is not cheerful, so I was glad to leave and hurry down.

The track to Llanberis is an easy gradual descent after the first slope, but I cannot recommend it, at least in the dark, as the path is very rocky, and all the water in the neighbourhood seems to use it as a natural channel. This was hard frozen, but luckily aided by a slice of moon—of the approved Ottoman shape—I was just able to detect the white ice. An hour and a half of stumbling at last brought the long descent to an end, and emerging from a dark coppice I once more regained the road, and reached the station of Llanberis in time for the six o'clock train. The homeward journey was beguiled by merry Christmas folk and the hour to Bangor went quickly by, so ending a most enjoyable Christmas Eve.

A few words about my first visit to Snowdon in 1887. A party of three of us came through from Euston the Thursday before Easter to Bettws-y-Coed, and drove up the same evening past Pen-y-gwryd to the Cromlech in the Pass of Llanberis. There we dismissed the carriage at midnight, lit the lantern, arranged our packs, and started climbing up to Cwm-glas at once. We were stopped in the dark, somewhere about the lower buttress I have mentioned, and turned into our blanket-bags at 2.30 A.M. It was indeed a change from London, to wake up that morning on

the open mountain-side, just below the snow-line ! We had a very interesting climb, first up some steep rocks, and then following a kind of frozen water-course, which gave us some step-cutting, to Cwm-glas. We wound up with a pretty snow-gully, which brought us out on the ridge near Ddysgyl. This ridge was then traversed to the summit of Snowdon. It was enveloped in clouds most of the time, and the snow and ice added greatly to the interest of the climb. The summit of Snowdon itself was covered with a deep mantle of snow, and the little inn was almost buried in it, with great icicles hanging from the door. We returned the same way, and then along Crib-goch, and glissaded down into Cwm-glas from the slopes beyond, to rejoin our knapsacks, which had been left there.

But the best climb we had on Snowdon was a few days after, on Easter Monday, when two of us ascended Lliwedd. We did not know the difficulty of this rock-climb when we started, and the 950 feet took us three and a half hours. We ascended first by the gully in the middle of the north face for a short distance ; but as I did not appreciate



N. face of Lliwedd (2,947 feet), showing crags 950 feet high.

the ice with which this was coated, we turned out, cutting some steps across a steep ice-drift to a ledge on the right of the gully. We then took to the rocks, and climbed straight



up to the summit-pole on the right buttress. The central gully is really the easiest way, and the angle of these rocks is exceedingly steep, but there was fairly good foot and hand hold (the rocks were a bit loose sometimes), except in one place. This was over half-way up, where we came to a narrow ledge on the face of the precipice with about twelve feet of smooth rock above, and no way of turning it. My friend, who led throughout, got on the top of my ice-axe and disappeared up; then when he had found a secure place some way above, the axes were drawn up, tied to the rope, and I prepared to follow. But as the rope could not be held straight over me, I did not succeed in getting up until the third attempt; but swung gracefully round twice, and had to be let down to the ledge to recover breath, after scoring the rock ineffectually with my boot-nails. After a pipe on the summit, we scrambled down to Llyn Llydaw from the depression between Lliwedd and Snowdon. At Pen-y-gwryd they told us that evening that this north face of Lliwedd had not been ascended before by the buttress, but only once by the central gully. There have been other ascents since, but I do not know whether the left buttress has been climbed yet.

But to leave Snowdon and 1887, and to return to my visit to Bangor the Christmas before last. We had had a succession of bright cloudless mornings, and on the 29th of December the stars were still shining when I got up at seven. I left by the 8.5 train, and was at once plunged into darkness again in the tunnel, as the only light in the carriage came from my morning pipe. Bethesda was soon reached, and I strode past the quarries as the bells were clanging at nine o'clock to warn the men of the hourly blasting. The sun had risen when I entered Nant Ffrancon, the Glencoe of Wales, and lent a little warmth to this ice-bound region. Passed Foel-goch, with its finely-shaped summit, and along under the steep rock-strewn slopes of Carnedd Dafydd (3,430 feet) to the top of the Pass. The frozen Falls of the Ogwen here presented a curious scene, and Llyn Ogwen was frozen over in rough waves. The splendid wall of mountains which encircles the head of the Pass—the Glyders, and the abrupt rocky mass of Y-Tryfan—rose in front, seeming to

block the way. In 1887 we climbed about Tryfan, and encamped one night under the E. face in Cwm-Tryfan, crossing the Glyder-fach next morning from that side. I now kept straight on towards the dark-looking precipices of the N. face, and ascended to Llyn Bochlywd. It is a wild mountain tarn, lying under the shade of the Glyders, and was a sheet of glass ice.

As I made my way round I would hardly have known the rills were frozen, the ice was so pure, if I had not probed them with my steel-pointed stick. The clouds were driving over the topmost rocks of the Glyders, leaving a thin white film on their black surface, which told of wind and snow-storms up above. I mounted the steep slopes of scree, bearing gradually to the left, up the face of the Glyder-fach, until a convenient spot was found for the mid-day halt and luncheon, and from which I enjoyed a bird's-eye view of Nant Ffrancon and the country beyond to the Menai Straits. I finally got on the ridge leading from Tryfan, about half-way up, and had a splendid scramble along it. It is sheer down on the side of Cwm-Tryfan, and the passage is broken between high rocky teeth, which at first appear to bar further progress, until a way on is discovered. The rocks were here coated over with a kind of snow-feather.

I reached the top of the Glyder-fach (3,250 feet) in a slight snow-storm, about 2.30 P.M., and a loud "jodel" announced the fact to those whom it concerned, viz., myself and a solitary mountain-hare, which appeared to be the only other living thing in these parts. After disporting for a while among the extraordinary piles of rocks on this summit, and getting duly powdered with snow in return, I proceeded along the flat ridge to the Glyder-fawr (3,275 feet), hoping to get a view. The wind was very cold, and I "battened down" by tying the flaps of my cap under my chin. But an occasional glimpse of the valley of Llanberis and the ridges of Snowdon beyond was all I could get, and then the snow would drive up again and hide all from view. Time was getting on, so I left the summit about 3.45, and descended to the "Devil's Kitchen." I had read in Baddeley that there was a way up the cliffs,

somewhere to the left of the chasm, from below by a rocky ledge and the course of a streamlet; but it was getting dusk, and I had no time to find it.

The rocks looked very steep, and any water would have been frozen. So I made my way, as I had originally intended, up 1100 feet again, and over the top of Y Garn (3,105 feet). It was now a race with the darkness. The E. face of this mountain is very bold and steep into Nant Ffrancon, and might not "go," so I pushed on at top speed, and rounded the summit of Y Foel-goch just in time to verify my former route down. Fortunately the moon was shining, as there was a lot of ice on the mountain side, and in many places wide circuits had to be made to avoid steep ice-covered slopes. Hastening downwards, I brought up once, only just in time, on the top of one of these ice slopes, lying in the shadow of the precipices of Foel-goch. I was thankful to escape with a few stumbles, and reached the bottom of the valley in a little over half-an-hour.

Crossing the Ogwen by the foot-bridge, I once more regained the high road, and, lighting my pipe, soon began to put the mile-stones behind me at the rate of twelve minutes each. I often looked back at the mountain I had just left, all wrapped in darkness except the outline of the summit, and was very glad I had escaped the night out, which at one time had seemed not all improbable. A glare of light, and a hasty draught of beer at the "Douglas Arms," then the train was caught at 6.40, with no time to spare, and Bethesda was left behind.

The moral of these winter expeditions is evidently to take a pocket-lantern, and it may be useful to mention that a capital one can be obtained for 8s. 6d. at Hill's, 4 Haymarket, London. They are made for the Italian Alpine Club, and fold up like a pocket-book.

I am indebted for the excellent sketch of Upper Cwm-glas, and the outline of Lliwedd, to Mr H. Speyer.

## THE STREAPS AND SGURR GHUIBHSACHAN.\*

BY COLIN B. PHILLIP.

WHEN the West Highland Railway is opened to Fort-William, the mountains round the heads of Lochs Eil and Shiel will become more accessible to the climber than they are at present. There is fairly good accommodation at the stage-house of Glenfinnan and at the inn at Kinlochailort; Banavie or Corpach being also within possible reach, though these entail a long drive or road walk in the first instance.

I have made several traverses in this country, but shall confine myself in these notes to two walks I took in the summer of 1893. The weather in the month of June was very hot and dry, too hot indeed for walking, which suggested to me the expediency of going by night. Starting at twelve midnight, after a very hot and thundery day, from the ex-keeper's cottage at Kinlocheil, where I was living at the time, I began operations by walking up the Arisaig road for three miles and a half. Sgurr Ghuibhsachan (2,784 feet) was my goal, and to reach it the coach road must be left opposite Callop, a watcher's cottage on the Cona Glen forest. Though the night was quite clear, the valley was filled with white heat-mist, giving the beautiful groups of birch, alder, &c., with which the low ground is adorned, a very spectral appearance; there was also no wind, which made walking very warm work indeed; the half light also made the track beyond the cottage very hard to find. This turned out to be the most troublesome part of the route. The path, once got, is fairly good, and follows the burn descending a long glen between Sgurr na Craobh Charuinn (2,542 feet) W., and Meall nan Damh E., and ultimately leads to Cona Glen, at the head of which, and between it and Loch Shiel, stands Sgurr Ghuibhsachan. The scenery here is very fine indeed, especially seen as it was with all the mystery of very early morning light.

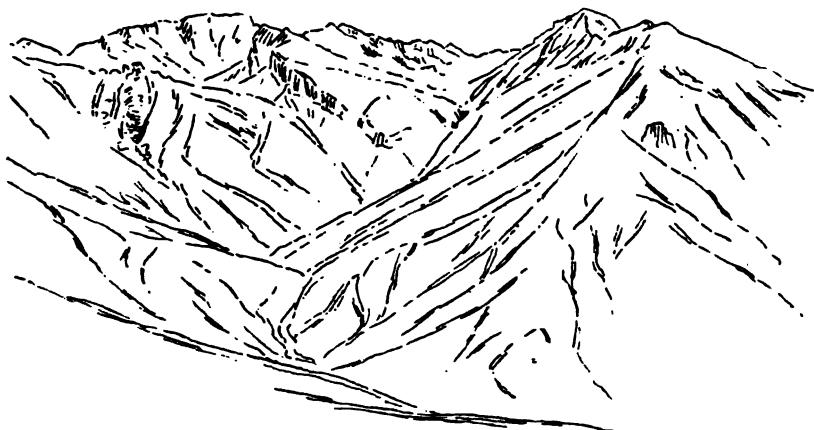
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\* Sgurr Ghuibhsachan lies four miles south of the stage-house of Glenfinnan, at the head of Loch Shiel, and is not named on the 1-inch Ordnance Map.

Northwards, the grand hills Gulvain and Streap, with Sgurr Choilean and the peaks of Glenfinnan, stood out sharply defined against the coming dawn, the foreground being formed by wild wood, birch, hazel, and fir, scattered boulders, *roche moutonnée*, and thick rough heather. After a steepish pull, the path enters the flat upper part of the glen, and, after winding through this for some miles, comes to a sudden descent into Cona Glen. Here also Sgurr Ghuibhsachan comes into view, and a very grand-looking hill it is. This is true of it seen from most points, notably the head of Loch Shiel, there being few finer peaks, certainly not of its very moderate height, Loch Shiel, however, is only sixteen feet above sea level, so it gets, along with its neighbours, full benefit of its "feet." Arrived at this point I struck off to the right, up a long grassy slope leading to the ridge connecting Sgurr Ghuibhsachan and Sgurr na Craobh Chaoruinn, and followed it to the base of the first-named hill. From this side, when at a little distance, it looks as if the rocks meant business, but when closer a very easy couloir, partly filled with stones, is found dividing the slabby rocks. Up this I went, and soon reached the top, just as the sun rose. The view was hazy to the W. and S., but clearer to the N. and E. The peaks of Loch Nevis, Sgor na Ciche, &c., were well seen, also the groups of Ben Nevis and Glencoe. Cruachan, however, was hazy. The great feature of the view was Loch Shiel, seen nearly in full length, walled in by the wild and rocky hills of Moidart,—the two Ben Odhars, Druim Fiaclach, and A'Chroit-bheinn in Glen Aladale, being especially striking. To the south, Sgor Dhomhail (2,915 feet), and Garbh Bheinn (2,903 feet) with its great northern cliff, were grand objects. I returned to the ridge and followed it, passing Corrie Ghuibhsachan, a deep glen, on the left. Sgurr na Craobh Chaoruinn looks very imposing, even more so than Sgurr Ghuibhsachan, from a climbing point of view, having a vertical wall of rock about 150 feet high, apparently making an inaccessible fortress of the top. However, after preparing myself for a rather more than ordinarily stiff climb, I walked round a corner and up a steep green slope to the top. The sun being well up it was by this time getting

very hot, so I rather hurriedly descended into the corrie on the north side,—Corrie na Leacach, or the corrie of the flag-stone, called so from the nature of the rocks in it. Here I saw a large number of deer and some wild-goats on the cliffs. Between the corrie I was in and the path of the morning, Sgurr na Craobh Chaoruin has a curious buttress called Meall na Cuartaige, with steep conical summit like a thimble. Round this I made my way to the Cona Glen path, and returned home in time for breakfast. I never remember a much closer night, and though the whole walk was of moderate length I felt it fatiguing out of all proportion to the amount of exercise.

The other walk I made a good deal later in the month, when the weather had cooled very considerably, and the atmosphere was much clearer. I also walked by day, though the views lost somewhat in effect, they gained in the topographical information they gave.



The Streaps from the ridge of Druim na Taille, between Glens Fiermlighe and Dubh-lighe at the head of Loch Eil.

The two Streaps were my object. They stand at the heads of Glens Finnan and Duibh-lighe. In appearance they are strangely different, though of nearly equal height, viz., Streap (2,988 feet), W.; Streap Chomhlaidh (2,916 feet), E. The first is a long jagged ridge, very steep on the Glenfinnan side, but presenting towards the south (Glen Duibh-lighe) a rocky but shallow corrie at the top,—Coire

a' Chairn, "corrie of the cairn," from a very large and rough *débâcle* of stones on its floor. One of the chief features of this hill is the largest stone or pinnacle of this cairn, called Caisteal a' Chairn. It stands just at the end of the *débâcle* and at the lip of the corrie, just where the ground begins to descend steeply into the glen. It may be thirty feet high, but I can give no accurate information on this point, not having been close to it, and it looks as if it might afford a rock scramble to those so disposed.

Streap Chomhlaid is a strong contrast to Streap, being very steep and green, with screes, and having a double top,—one rounded and steep, and the other rather more of a pointed ridge. I had heard a good deal from the people about Locheil of the formidable character of a ridge somewhere on these tops, shepherds having refused to cross it, &c., and that a man could sit astride, but I never could make out in what part it was. I picked out a backbone just under the top of the Streap on the east side as a likely spot, looking at a distance as if it were sharp, but as events turned out I was wrong.

I followed the Arisaig road for  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles, to where a rough cart-track branches off to what is marked in the Ordnance map as Druimasallie Mill. It is now a keeper's cottage. From here a path, of a sort, leads up Glen Duibhlighe to the shepherd's cottage, and beyond it to the head of the glen. The scenery of the valley is of the "romantic" order—*i.e.*, rocky, and woody slopes, and a fine highland burn. Some little distance beyond the shepherd's cottage the Streap peaks come into view. I made straight for Streap Chomhlaidh, and after a long and rather stiff pull arrived at the first top, which is divided from the highest peak by a somewhat narrow ridge with precipitous green sides, the ascent from this point being steep. The top is cut down finely on the N.W., and shows another steep-looking *arête* running north; this is, however, out of the line of march. From here I began to think that I had guessed right about the position of the "Pass," and that what I was about to traverse was the much-talked-of ridge; so, after descending very steeply, I prepared to tackle it. It turned out quite a delusion; there was a ridge certainly,

but you could walk anywhere on the north side, though the other descended sheer for perhaps 250 feet into Coire Chairn. At the top thereof I found that *the* ridge was due south. It certainly is a sharpish *arête*, but I was surprised at the shepherds being so scared by it. Though the slope into Glenfinnan is extremely steep, you can always walk off the ridge, if it were necessary, which it isn't; and the same is the case with the Coire Chairn side. The dip is not great between the Streaps and Stob Coire nan Cearc (2,911 feet), which is rough and craggy; but as it became misty at this point, and remained so till after I had begun to descend Meall an Uillt Chaoil (2,769), the top beyond, I can't say much about either. There is a steep descent from the latter to Bealach a' Chait, between it and Beinn nan Tom (2,656 feet; Ordnance Survey, Cairn, 2,603 feet). Here the view was superb, as it also was from Beinn nan Tom—Loch Shiel and Loch Eil, due S. and E. respectively, the latter splendidly closed by Ben Nevis and his brethren; northwards, the Streaps and Gulvain formed a grand middle distance to the fine peaks of Loch Nevis, Kintail, &c. It is a long, rather tiresome, descent to Glen Duibh-lighe, and so home by the road.



## BEINN MHIC MHONAI DH.

BY FRANCIS J. DEWAR.

BEINN MHIC MHONAI DH (2,602 feet) lies on the south-eastern side of Glenstrae, and although under 3,000 feet, and therefore unclassed as a "Ben," is worth a visit from members of the Club who may be at Dalmally, and who have exhausted the 3,000 feet hills in its neighbourhood. I distinguish it from the other smaller hills in the district from the peculiarity of its standing entirely apart, an unusual circumstance, I think, in hills of its altitude, more especially when "the accommodation is limited," as is the case in the glens east of Cruachan.

From Glenstrae, its north-westerly sides rise very steeply, and present for the height of the hill an imposing appearance. The north and north-east faces, again, are rocky and precipitous, and would do credit to many a hill a thousand feet higher. The top is a table-land of about half a mile in length, and is honoured with a very elaborate cairn. The view from it is a particularly fine one, and includes, on a fairly clear day, at least thirty-five known first-class Bens, ranging from Ben Lomond on the south to Bidean nam Bian on the north, and from Cruachan on the west to Beinn a' Ghlo in Athole. The view of Ben Vorlich on Lochearnside is very striking, the more so as I do not remember having seen it from any other hill in this district, although no doubt it must be visible from some of the hills in the east of the Blackmount.

From Loch Awe or Dalmally the shortest route is by Glenstrae; and for "the old brigade," an ascent of the bealach by the Allt nan Giubhas will be found most convenient. The "Ultramontanes," on the other hand, will find some climbing if they start from the head of the glen and ascend the north-east face. For my own part, however, from a scenic point of view, I prefer going by Glenorchy. The river can be crossed near Cat-innis by the iron bridge at the Falls, and a track from thence leads by the side of the Broigleachan burn to the bealach to Glenstrae. This is a beautiful walk, and as the track ascends it opens out

a charming view of Glenorchy to the right, while on the left again are the remains of what at one time must have been an extensive wood of firs, oaks, and birches. Ben Lui, to the south, presents a unique appearance, its north top and the small corrie above Carn Garbh alone being visible. The hill on both sides of the track has recently been forested, and members of the Club will no doubt respect its privacy during the stalking season. The *fera natura* on the hill would have done credit to a district more remote from civilisation. There were not only deer, blue hares, and ptarmigan, but a noble eagle caused me some little disquietude by circling over me, in what I considered a too inquisitive spirit. Having satisfied his curiosity, however, and come to the conclusion no doubt that I was not edible, he betook himself in leisurely fashion to the more peaceful fastnesses of the Blackmount. As I saw him, or her, as the sex might be, a week later near the same spot, I fancy that there must have been a nest among the rocks on the east face.

Early one morning, some days later, I started from Corryghoil for the Blackmount, *via* Glenorchy, the bealach to Glenstrae, and thence by the pass to the left at the head of Glenstrae. The heat however was tremendous, and the flies, especially that atrocity the "cleg," so great a torment, that I finally collapsed in a state of exhaustion and irritation at the top of Glenstrae. The past summer has been too tropical for much climbing, but I would not have minded the heat had the plague of flies not set in so early, and with such extraordinary severity. It required the expenditure of more muscular and nervous tissue to combat them than would have sufficed in ordinary circumstances for the ascent of three full-sized Bens. Even on Ben Lui, clegs and midges were rampant one fine hot afternoon, where I was sunning myself on the top; and if there is a place in Scotland where one would expect to be free from the attentions of the insect-world, it is surely there. Perhaps some entomologist would tell us how they get up, or do they hibernate in the centre of the cairn? If the latter, I do not grudge them a little amusement at my expense at midsummer. But to return to this abortive expedition to

the Blackmount, I subsequently concluded, when on Stob Coir an Albanniach later on, that it would have been a most fatiguing route, and much longer than the one by the bealach east of Ben Eunaich. I am therefore perhaps indebted to the flies after all for saving me an unnecessarily long tramp.

## BEN DEARG (STRATH NA SHEALLAG).

BY EDWARD GREENLY.

BEN DEARG MHOR and Ben Dearg Bheag are two of the principal peaks in the tract of mountainous land which lies between Little Loch Broom and Loch Maree. They are concealed from the ordinary tourist by the Loch Maree mountains and by An Teallach on the S. and N., and by Ben a Chaisgein and the Fannichs on the W. and E. It was in July 1891 that I made their acquaintance, while carrying on the Geological Survey in these parts; and long shall I remember my stay at the little iron lodge of Larachantivore (kindly lent to the Survey for the time), right at the very foot of the steepest face of Ben Dearg Mhor. Some one remarked in the columns of this *Journal* that if not a 3,000 feet mountain, Ben Dearg deserved to be; and nothing can, indeed, be more impressive than the view from the east, with the serrated ridges that circle round the great dark corrie relieved against the evening sky. And the corrie itself is one of the grandest I have seen, narrow and pit-like, and walled by crags that cannot be much less than 1,000 feet in depth. There is another corrie between the two Beinns, Toll an Lochain, fine, but not precipitous: and the western side as a whole is far less craggy (an exception on the west coast). A narrowish ridge leads across to Ben Dearg Bheag, which is itself another ridge about three-quarters of a mile long, trending away to the N.W., and overlooking Loch na Sheallag. Both mountains belong to the great series of peaks so well known to the mountaineer in the N.W., to which An Teallach, Suilven, and others belong, composed of the massive purple grits of the Torridon series. Without expatiating on geology, most climbers will be glad to have their attention drawn to the singular perfection of the moraine which lies across the mouth of the great eastern corrie. It would be difficult to find a more perfect example, even in a text-book; it would, I think, convince the most sceptical of the public that there is truth in some, at least, of the romances told by geologists concerning the great Ice Age.

Naturally during my month at Larach I saw Ben Dearg in many parts, and from many points, and in many aspects of sun and storm. But it was one morning, in a stretch of fine weather early in July, that I set out for my longest day upon it. Geological surveyors on the west coast find it necessary to lose no chance of really fine weather while there remain "tops" to be done, and a very fine day indeed I had. It was rather *too* fine in the low ground, for, after crossing the waters, I found it a long, hot, and weary pull across the mouth of Toll an Lochain and the slopes of Doire Gainiemhich up the side of the lesser Dearg. But when I climbed an easy chimney between the crags, and gained the ridge (2,500 ft.), then came my reward. The ridge itself proved a walk over: pleasant green turf and moss, with the indescribable exhilaration of being high in air, genial and cool, as only summer mornings in such places ever are. I walked along to the west end and looked over (the crags there are really very fine) and then turned, and getting down a chimney on the south side (I only remember one break in the ridge that meant any climbing), scrambled along the top of some very heavy scree to the S.E. end. Then I got round the base of the cliffs to the north side, to draw an important line, and then again rounded the west side of Toll an Lochain. It was *very* hot. I was almost getting down 600 feet for a drink, but found a small but excellent spring. Then I crossed the connecting ridge, and went up the smooth back of Big Ben Dearg (no climbing at all); and then I sat down by the cairn to really enjoy myself, and look into the great corrie. And here I had excitement of an unexpected kind. I had noticed eagles soaring as I came up, and on reaching the verge I looked for their eyrie, getting down the crags as far as I dared, but they had disappeared and I could see no sign of it. So hot was it that even at the cairn (2,972 ft.) I chose the shady side, and flung my discarded jacket down upon my bag behind me. And I suppose, after long dreamy gazing over An Teallach and Sgur Ban, and the distant Fannichs, and all the eastern mountains, dim with heat, I must have gone to sleep, or nearly so. For a stir and whirring close behind made me jump as things only do

when one is suddenly awakened ; and on starting round, what should I see but one of the eagles in the very act of rising from my precious bag and jacket, scarcely a yard from my shoulder ! Well, that did wake me up. I had often wished to see an eagle close by, and certainly I never saw one closer, nor do I expect to again in a hurry. Perhaps my stillness had aroused his curiosity. I watched him soar and wheel grandly round and round over the mountain top ; and then I walked round to the north side of the circling ridge, getting down for a bit here and there, the grits giving capital foot-hold. Then round to the S.E. corner, and then down a hollow with long grassy slopes on the S.E. side of the mountain, leading out near Glen na Muice Beag. This was uneventful in the climbing way, but interesting from finding a large mass of snow, about 50 by 10 by 3 feet, in a deep crack, as low down as 2,000 feet or lower, unusual so late in July in a warm season. And thus ended my longest day over the tops of Beinn Dearg.

I cannot leave off without recommending to anyone on Beinn Dearg on a fine summer evening, the view from a broad ridge the other side of Loch Ghiubsachain, called Creag Mheall Mor. Both Bens Dearg and An Teallach light up with red from the low sun. To the north, mountains as far even as Ben Klibreck, in Sutherland, can be seen ; and on the west, Ben a Chaisgein Beag looms up dark against the sunset, while the sea and the Summer Isles, with very likely the far Hebrides, make one of the most enchanting scenes in the Western Highlands.

## BEINN AN DÒTHAIDH AND BEINN DOIREANN.

BY GILBERT THOMSON.

THE meet was evidently coming to an end. Numerous Clubmen were loafing round the door at Inveroran; but more than one was attired in a style fitted for the street rather than the hillside, and there was a lack of the business-like air of previous mornings. A pile of luggage at the door suggested departures in something more than light marching order, and indicated that Inveroran would have some spare accommodation that night. Such was the aspect of affairs on Monday morning, the 27th of March. Parties had been arranged and re-arranged, in a manner suggesting kaleidoscopic effects, and even at breakfast there was great doubt as to the various programmes. Breakfast at eight seemed (from beneath the blankets) a most barbarous thing, and the inquiry propounded from that refuge by a certain member of menu-card fame seemed a very practical one: "In a case of unmitigated laziness, is it better to employ the pick or the spike?" About half-past nine a party of five got under way, leaving their luggage addressed to Tyndrum—to be forwarded. Breakfast was not over, but one member (who has been heard speaking of himself in public as the first "windbag" of the Club) ran out to say farewell, and to give us a parting piece of good advice: "Never, at a Club meet, be last for breakfast." The earnest and impressive tones convinced us that the advice came from a full heart—and from an empty stomach. The Inveroran people had struggled gallantly against heavy odds, but the cooking department had no chance against a score of hungry mountaineers, and supply had sometimes a stern chase after demand. Our adviser suffered too, although on that point we maintained a discreet silence, from the fact that most of the portables had been requisitioned, and were safe in our pockets for lunch.

W. Ramsay was the organiser of our expedition. He had secured the adhesion of the other four by a glowing description of a gully on the north face of Beinn an Dothaidh (pronounced *Dor*), which he had climbed two days before,

and, what was of more consequence, of several others which he had not climbed. To reach the face we had to cross the Orchy, and, in order to save the long walk round by the bridge, a boat was sent down to put us across the foot of the loch. The sheet of glassy water, with its fringe of woodland, formed a beautiful foreground for the white tops around, and the rich glowing morning suggested June rather than March. The same suggestion became too pronounced for our comfort as we trudged over the moorland, gradually rising until we rounded the north-west shoulder of the hill, and it was with more than ordinary satisfaction that we at last were in full view of the grand snow corrie, which gave at least the appearance of coolness. It was under any circumstances a striking scene. The whole face of the mountain was white, except where great rock-buttresses ran down far into the snow, and even they were traversed by lines and patches of white snow or of grey ice. The skyline was fringed with snow cornice, and here and there deep furrows below showed where avalanche-snow, probably from the cornice, had ploughed its way. Looked at from a mountaineering point of view, there was on the extreme right the main corrie, evidently increasing in steepness as it rose, and promising a long stretch of somewhat monotonous step-cutting; next there was a rock-buttress, intersected by a gully which branched into two half-way up, the right-hand branch being the one previously ascended; beyond this buttress, to the left, there was a smaller corrie; and finally another buttress with a zig-zag gully. A long consultation was held as to the propriety of attacking the left-hand branch of the double gully, which led almost directly to the summit; and before deciding it was resolved to ascend the preliminary snow-slope to the foot of the buttress. A nearer inspection confirmed what was previously suspected, that the gully, filled as it was with ice, would probably be too severe a tax upon our time; and a traverse was made below the buttress to the smaller corrie. Step-cutting became necessary, and ropes were put on. As the party was rather large for one rope, it was decided to divide, and to try both the small corrie and the gully beyond. The former had a cornice



which had won Douglas's heart, so he persuaded Naismith to go with him for the corrie, while the other rope was used in the gully by Boyd, Ramsay, and Thomson. For some distance the routes were the same, and the two parties proceeded to cut parallel tracks, until it bethought a member of one party to have a photograph of the other. But loose objects sometimes show a disposition to strike out for themselves. A sudden yell of "Catch it!" made those in front look round in time to see a small black object, which had *not* been caught, executing a series of graceful leaps on the frozen snow, the forces of gravitation and of elasticity being well illustrated by the steady increase in length and height of each successive leap. On our way up we had rounded a small rock face, and the last that was seen of the unfortunate view-finder was a wild bound into space from the top of the rock. Naismith volunteered to seek the truant, and descended the slope with a half-running glissade,—the Mummery spikes with which he had that morning decorated *one* of his boots being (possibly) of some assistance. Douglas meantime hitched himself on to the other party, and remained with it as a passenger until in the small corrie we were rejoined by Naismith,—without the view-finder. The old order was then resumed, and the courses diverged. The party in the gully had as much step-cutting in snow as they wanted (ends being changed several times), a few steps in ice, and a little rock scrambling; and although they had no special adventure, they had an excellent and typical winter climb. A very small experience of step-cutting convinced each in turn that the apparent coolness of the place was a delusion and a snare. The crest was reached in time to see the other two plodding patiently up towards the cornice over a slope that was evidently hard as well as steep. It is very interesting to see other people working hard, and this pleasure we enjoyed by anchoring our axes well back, fixing our rope to them, and then in turns, with the other end tied on, crawling forward to the edge and stretching our heads over. Out of consideration for those below, a place a little out of the vertical line of their ascent was chosen. But the gallant assailants of the cornice suggested, that as they had by this time had nearly enough

of step-cutting, our eighty feet of rope might be used by anchoring one end and dropping the other over so as to give them its moral support. This was done, the anchorage being two axe-shafts sunk to the head; the third axe was laid on the edge to act as a runner, and the owners of these axes proceeded to haul in slack. The amount of tension put on that rope apparently differed widely above and below; at all events the opinions held by the haulers on the one hand, and the "morally supported" on the other, agreed about as closely as those expressed by the Government and the Opposition press on the significance of an election result. Black Care, it is said, has never been seen above the snow-line: is it possible that the Third Law of Motion is similarly circumscribed? If the scientists of the future should find that action and reaction are not always equal, our rope may be canonised along with Newton's apple and Watt's tea-kettle.

The cornice was about ten feet high, with in some places a considerable overhang. Where the ascent was made it was broken away so as to be about vertical, with a crevasse about two feet wide between it and the slope below, the slope finishing with a sharp edge. This crevasse was in some places apparently about as deep as the cornice was high. Without the rope from above, Douglas and Naismith were of opinion that while the obstruction could have been surmounted with safety, it would have been very tedious. The slope immediately below measured  $59^\circ$ , and appeared to be even steeper further along.

After lunch on the top the ropes were stowed, and a start was made for Ben Doirean. This was little more than a walk down one slope and up another. On reaching the cairn, Douglas gave a practical demonstration of the method of utilising its sun-heated stones to melt snow for drinking. It was successful, but slow, the latter characteristic being if anything the more pronounced of the two. Then, on going over to the east side, and after descending a few feet, the joyful discovery was made that the snow stretched down not in little patches, but for at least hundreds of feet. It was too soft for a standing, but steep enough for a sitting glissade, and three or four slides were enjoyed with a short horizontal

traverse between. Then as a climax came a magnificent shoot over a slope of varying but always steep gradient, and when, after a further small slide, the aneroid was consulted, it was found that we were 1,100 feet below the summit. We had glissaded over 1,000 feet, and half of that or more was in one unbroken slide. The snow had of course insinuated itself into every crevice of the clothing, and had in one instance at least developed considerable openings in parts usually continuous, but no one suggested any doubt as to the game being worth the candle.

Making our way round to the south face we reached the road, after a steep descent over scree, with an occasional bit of rock, and walked on to Tyndrum. Next morning most of the party took the first train for town.

SECRETA MONTIUM.

ONCE more the silence of the hills  
Is round me ; in this lonely place,  
Unvexed by faintest human trace,  
The burden of their mystery fills  
The air with mute unbreathing awe,  
As though some sight the blind rocks saw,  
Whose brooding held the impatient winds at rest  
That wont all day to rave round each sky-piercing crest.

Black rock, brown heath, and here and there  
Of bracken sere the scattered flame :  
O'er the high pass by which I came  
The sky leans blue and close : and bare,  
Bare to each topmost dizzying ledge,  
The giant rock-wall's rampart-edge,  
Cleaving the azure, seems to frown and swell  
Impregnable, eternal, voiceless, terrible.

In this tremendous solitude—  
No sound but the far eagle's cry ;  
No sign beneath the broad blank sky  
Of moving creature to intrude  
Upon the overwhelming sense  
Of Nature's fixed omnipotence,  
Here where she reigns in absolute supreme,  
And ages pass untold like shadows of a dream.

In this remote and awful spot,—  
Amid these vast unchanging forms,  
That front the centuries' snows and storms  
With tireless mastery, yielding not,—  
How frail, how phantom-vain, appear  
The things of daily hope and fear,  
The paltry cares of pride and passion born,  
The world's deceit or favour, men's esteem or scorn.

All that but yesterday had power  
To chafe my blood, and poison life  
With wild unrest and envious strife—  
The baubles of the fleeting hour,  
The alluring of the court and mart,  
The day-dreams of a homeless heart,—  
How each and all fade from me, as I lie  
Watching the moveless line that cuts the clear blue sky.

What boots besiege with recreant moan  
 The abysmal calm of earth and heaven,  
 Blind toy of Being, darkly driven  
 By forces awful and unknown?  
 Thy petty grief or joy shall find  
 No response here; the unthinking wind  
 Breathes not more light o'er rock and heath and stream  
 Than thou and thy brief thought o'er Nature's age-long dream.

Amid these Titan fastnesses  
 What room for thee and thy desire?  
 What hope to attain, what gain to aspire,  
 An atom 'mid immensities?  
 But this be thine, at peace to lie,  
 And share the calm of earth and sky,  
 And make thy very own the august repose  
 That neither change nor dread nor sense of frailty knows.

By many a tempest scarred and torn,  
 By myriad passions vexed and rent,  
 Learn here thy longing's rightful bent,  
 And bid farewell to strifes outworn.  
 Ay, read this master-lesson here,  
 That neither change nor woe nor fear  
 Can touch the essential spirit, havened far  
 Beyond all shocks of things, and Being's ceaseless war.

Child of a day, whose dream-like span  
 Falts from dark to dark so soon,  
 Stain not thine hour of burning noon  
 With thoughts that 'wilder and unman.  
 Deep lies within thy secret soul  
 A force transcending Fate's control,  
 And brief but brave thy passage here must be  
 So that thou shalt not shame the power that dwells in thee.

Calm and endurance, victor strength  
 Serene, self-centred steadfastness—  
 Such law these sovereign heights express:  
 Oh make their teaching thine at length.  
 Find here thy rest, thy goal, thy home;  
 Endure, thou too shalt overcome;  
 Endure, be strong, be master of thy care:  
 Bear, for thou canst, thy life; life is not long to bear.

Be strong. 'Tis weakness to repine,  
 And madness to despair. Do thou  
 Before the eternal order bow,  
 And make its calm and glory thine.

Rage and regret are doubly vain :  
To kick the goads but courting pain.  
Not at their own wild will the wild winds blow,  
And peace a man may have, but freedom?—dreamer, no.

Be strong, be steadfast. Change and chance  
Whirl like driven leaves all things beside.  
Rest thou secure, whate'er betide,  
Through each assault of circumstance.  
And joy to find, while rend and fail  
Life's brittle guards and faithless mail,  
The informing spirit stands serene and strong,  
Needing no outward fence its deadliest foes among.

Undeviating, inviolable  
Is the high rule by which we live.  
To this no faltering homage give.  
Make this thy will, and all is well.  
Seek not for freedom where the crowd  
Seek it with blows and outcries loud :  
In service of true law is liberty,  
And they are slaves who deem revolt can set them free.

Now, when life's middle term is won,  
And graver years have left behind  
The fever of the restless mind,  
That counted labour scarce begun  
For nigh achieved, demanding fruit  
Ere well was sunk the searching root,  
Now learn to look life full in the face, and see  
Beyond all masks and forms its naked verity.

Front thou all facts. Accept thy lot.  
Forget vain loves and longings vain,  
Illusions of a dream-sick brain—  
Desires forsaken, not forgot—  
These and all else that flowered and fell  
Leave where they lie. One mute farewell,  
And the grown man must face the work of men,  
Nor stoop reluctant glance to boyhood's dreams again.

They pass, the sunrise shapes of youth ;  
Hope, joy, and love—all bright things fade.  
But let them leave thee undismayed.  
Choose thou the sober tints of truth.  
And learn to prize the unshrinking light  
More than all meteors dazzling-bright,  
Whose false mirage and fleeting glamour threw  
Enchantment o'er thy path when brain and heart were new.

They pass, but not with these is lost  
 The spirit's fire that gave them birth.  
 Earth-born, it dies not back to earth.  
 Baffled and smitten, tempest-tost,  
 Shipwrecked on reefs of doubt and pain,  
 The soul that counts all trial gain  
 Deep in itself the unfailing strength shall find  
 That neither years can tame, nor earthly fetters bind.

Fear not ! No ills can menace bale,  
 But what the soul has strength to endure.  
 Thy fortress of defence is sure  
 Against whatever foes assail.  
 This mighty Whole, that wheels its course  
 Of stars and systems, has no force,  
 In all its myriad orbs has yet no power,  
 To touch the soul that lives serene its destined

Fear not, be strong. Endure to the end.  
 Victory and peace are thine always.  
 No shaft of circumstance can slay  
 No strain of lethal anguish bend  
 The untiring will, that hails with awe  
 Its kinship to supernal law,  
 And boasts in all the shocks of time and sense  
 Proofs of its inborn might, the conqueror's evidence

Nor count it hard, nor fear it vain,  
 The toil that wins no earthly meed.  
 Since manhood grows in darkest need,  
 And strength is perfected by pain ;  
 Strength that shall bear thee scatheless  
 Through serried storms of mortal ill,  
 Sustain to fateful hour thy sinking breath,  
 And crown with victor palm the very brows of death

Since not for nought, befall what may,  
 This listed conflict ; not for nought  
 The set campaign of life is fought,  
 Though darkness shroud its end to-day.  
 And these survive, when all is gone,  
 The immortal force to labour on,  
 The trust, that something is, beyond the night,  
 And after tempest peace, and after darkness light.

T. S. OMOND.

## BROCKEN SPECTRES, BOWS, AND GLORIES.

BY HENRY SHARPE.

THERE are several natural phenomena which may be seen from mountains, but most of them not from low ground, at least not in this country. They are so rarely seen that most people do not know the names of them, or only have a dim recollection of them in scientific books, along with the water-spout and mirage. Names are constantly given to them which do not belong to them. The word halo is the one that has been most misused. A halo is a large circle *round* the sun or moon. Coronæ are smaller circles *round* the sun or moon. These halos and coronæ are not peculiar to mountains, so I take no further notice of them. Rainbows, solar and lunar, are also not peculiar to mountains. All the bows that I am going to describe are opposite the sun or moon, not round them.

In May 1887, a paper of mine was read before the Royal Meteorological Society on Brocken spectres and the bows that often accompany them. I am not a member of that Society. In order to write that paper I searched in a great many places, and succeeded in collecting thirty descriptions. I took no notice of general descriptions in scientific books, because I did not know what they were based upon. I send a copy of my paper to the Club Library, so that any member who wishes may look further into the subject.

Brocken spectre is the name given to a shadow on cloud or mist which appears to be gigantic, or at any rate larger than life. The Brocken is a mountain in Germany, from which the first descriptions came. The earliest explanation attempted is what I call the candle theory. The fog is like a wall on which the shadows grow larger the further the object that produces them is from the wall; the sun takes the place of the candle. This theory will not stand examination. The sun is not a point; it is 850,000 miles in diameter; its distance from us is 92,700,000, that is 109 times its diameter; consequently, the further the shadow is from the man, the smaller it is. I have found by experi-



ment with my own shadow cast by the sun, that at sixty yards it could not be distinguished as the shadow of a man, that at thirty-five yards the arms and legs were barely visible, that the furthest distance at which a good shadow could be made was seventeen yards. The subject has been much complicated by writers of scientific books, who have given pictures of what no one ever saw, and who have made statements without having enough descriptions to work upon.

I consider that the apparently gigantic size is caused by a mistake in judging the distance. The observer thinks that his shadow is a long way off and gigantic, when it really is closer to him and life size. When two people together have seen a Brocken spectre, they have usually differed about the size. Another fact pointing in the same direction is this. When two people stand close together they can see each other's Brocken spectres; when they are a few yards apart sideways, each can see only his own. My explanation is this. The shadow is not cast on a wall, but on a number of fog particles stretching a long way from the man. Looking into this from near the man you see a great many yards into these darkened particles and can distinguish the shadow. Looking across it you only look through a foot or two and do not notice it. If the shadow was as far off as it appears to be, moving a few yards to the side would not make it disappear.

My explanation is confirmed by experiments made by Mr A. W. Clayden, F. R. Met. Soc., with shadows cast from a lantern on to London fog, the distance of which he was able to calculate. He called in several people to guess the distance, and they all over-estimated it. I have found the same difficulty in judging distance when coming across animals in a fog on a mountain. A sheep may look bigger than a cow. The same occurs in sand-storms in a desert. Nordenskiöld mentions some extraordinary mistakes in fogs in the Arctic regions.

If there are any people who believe that these shadows are really gigantic, let them test them in any way that they can. If two are together, first let each guess the height and distance, and write it down before comparing. Let

one go back a little towards the sun and see if his friend's shadow still looks gigantic and the same size as his own. Then let them go a little apart sideways and see what effect that has on the shadows.

The usual state of the weather when Brocken spectres are seen is, the observer in bright sunshine, the shadow on fog blown up from below, wind strong. They are seldom seen unless there is a sharp drop in the ground in front. When the observer is in the fog, the shadow does not appear to be gigantic. The phenomenon often only lasts a few seconds. The longest time recorded is a quarter of an hour or a little more. I use the words fog and mist as meaning the same thing. Some more correct people make a difference.

Sometimes the shadows of the arms cannot be seen when they are still, but can be seen when they are moving. An explanation is wanted. Sometimes dark rays are seen stretching away from the arms or head of the shadow. These are upon fog nearer than the rest of the shadow. The explanation is too difficult to give here.

The Brocken spectre that I saw was surrounded by a bow. In other descriptions of Brocken spectres I continually came across this bow. Of the thirty descriptions in my paper nineteen had the bow. It also occurred seven times with shadows not said to be gigantic. It has never been recorded without a shadow. It had no name of its own in scientific books, and observers usually called it by a name belonging to some other phenomenon — rainbow, fog-bow, cloud-bow, halo, prismatic halo, prismatic circle, fog circle, mirage. I was obliged to invent a name, and thought Brocken bow the most suitable. I give here a woodcut of a Brocken bow, and also one of a Glory, to which I shall refer later on. They are not supposed to be exact, but are intended to impress upon the eye the difference between the two phenomena.

A Brocken bow is like a small Rainbow. Its colours are the same as those of the Rainbow, in the same order, with the red outside. When faint, the colours on the inner side are hardly visible. This is also sometimes the case with a Rainbow. The breadth of the colours bears something

like the same proportion to the space inside them in a Brocken bow as it does in a Rainbow. A Glory, on the contrary, touches the head of the shadow. A Brocken bow has sometimes a secondary bow outside, colours reversed, red



Brocken Bow.



Glory.

inside and fainter, as is also the case with the secondary Rainbow. Rough estimates of the angular measurement have been given, varying from  $8^{\circ}$  to  $20^{\circ}$ . The Rainbow is  $84^{\circ} 44'$ . Measurements are much wanted. It may turn out that the size is always the same.

Some observers have described the bow as not circular, but oval, ovoid, elliptic, or horseshoe. I was at first inclined to doubt the possibility of this, but so many are described in this way that I cannot pass them by as wrong. Some people think that the eccentricity is due to false perspective. The observer thinks that the bow is in one plane when it really is in another.

The weather suitable for Brocken bows is the same as that mentioned with Brocken spectres. The temperature is sometimes above and sometimes below freezing-point.

Descriptions should be written on the spot, and should contain the following particulars and anything else that may seem important:—Time of day; state of atmosphere; 1, towards sun; 2, where observer stood; 3, away from sun; description of ground, wind, temperature, whether freezing or not. Date, place, and height above the sea, may be added afterwards. Before writing the description the bow should be measured, as that is the point upon which information is most wanted. Of course no one carries instruments. I suggest this method if no better can be thought

of: Shut one eye; hold up a stick or pocket-handkerchief in one hand at arm's length; let one end cover one side of the bow, and mark where the other side of the bow comes to; this fixes the three points of a triangle. When next you come across a measure, the assistance of a friend and a little mathematics will enable you to find out the angle at the eye. An observation of this sort should be right within a degree or two. Bows of all sorts should be photographed when there is a chance. I am told that it cannot be done. It ought to be tried.

I have seen all Mr Omond's reports of "Glories, Halos, and Coronæ, on Ben Nevis," that have been printed by the Royal Society of Edinburgh. These include his observations to the end of 1887. He has seen a large number of Glories, but not a single Brocken bow. This is peculiar, because from all other sources I have collected about the same number of descriptions of Brocken bows as of Glories. The state of the atmosphere up there, or the shape of the mountain, may have something to do with it.

I believe that bows in the spray of waterfalls and fountains are Rainbows, not Brocken bows. They should be measured.

The state of the atmosphere with Glories is sometimes different from that which is suitable for Brocken bows. In descriptions of Glories the observer sometimes states that he is in the fog, and that there is fog towards the sun. The weather is more settled, and there is less wind. Glories are sometimes seen for hours at a time. Though usually seen from mountains, they are also sometimes seen from low ground, and in the Arctic regions from the sea. The temperature is sometimes above and sometimes below freezing-point.

Glories differ from one another in every particular. The most simple form is a bright circular disc round the shadow of the head. Hence the name. They often consist of a bow, of the colours of the Rainbow, touching the shadow of the head, red outside. Outside this may be a similar bow, red outside. A Glory never has a secondary bow outside it, with the colours reversed, as the Brocken bow has. The

outer bow may touch the inner bow, or there may be a space between. Sometimes there are more bows outside. If the inner one is of the colours of the Rainbow and in that order, the outer ones are of the same colours and in the same order. The largest number of bows reported in a Glory is seven. A great number of angular measurements of Glories have been taken at Ben Nevis Observatory with instruments made for the purpose. These show that there is no fixed size for the bows, and that there is no fixed proportion between the inner bow and the outer ones. The largest bow measured on Ben Nevis was  $12^\circ$  radius. There were three inside this. The inner bow may be only  $1^\circ 30'$  radius. A Glory may consist of a bright light round the shadow of the head and a bow outside that. I have seen one description at least of a Glory that was not circular.

Glories are not always of the same colours as the Rainbow. Unfortunately, when we come to talk of colours, there are great difficulties. Many men are slightly colour-blind, or from want of practice in judging colours are not able to distinguish slight differences. Some men talk of the Rainbow as composed of three colours, others say seven. Mr Omond does not state in each case whether the glories that he saw were of the colours of the Rainbow. I understand that they nearly always were of those colours. No two Glories which vary from the Rainbow agree with one another in colour. If there are two or more bows, the outer ones usually vary a little from the inner one, but the colours are never reversed. The red is not always outside, but I believe that there is red in every bow. In all Glories seen from Ben Nevis the red was outside in each bow.

Outside Glories are sometimes seen one or two large bows called Fog-bows. They are usually white. Observations show that their sizes vary only within narrow limits. The inner bow has a radius of about  $33^\circ 30'$  or  $34^\circ 30'$ . It is sometimes called Ulloa's bow, from a Spaniard who first described and measured it in 1736. Mr Omond twice reports having seen red on the inner edge of this bow. No one else has reported colour. The outer Fog-bow is more often coloured than the inner one. It has been reported red outside, white inside; and sometimes of all the colours

of the Rainbow, red outside. When white, the breadth of the white has been reported  $5^{\circ}$  to  $7^{\circ}$ . When of all the colours of the Rainbow, the breadth has been reported  $2^{\circ}$ . These measurements require confirmation. The radius of this bow to the middle between the inner and outer edge is reported from  $37^{\circ} 30'$  to  $42^{\circ}$ . The Rainbow is  $41^{\circ}$  to the same place. Neither of these bows can be a secondary to the other, because each is sometimes seen alone. The outer one is the brightest, and most often seen.

The bows just described are solar. Mr Omond has also seen two lunar Fog-bows. Radius of inner bow, to the inside  $34^{\circ}$  to  $38^{\circ}$ , to the outside  $41^{\circ}$ , probably very difficult to take; white, except on one occasion, when there was a trace of red on the outside. This inner lunar Fog-bow appears to agree in colour and nearly in measurement with the outer solar Fog-bow, and both may be variations of the Rainbow. The outer lunar Fog-bow was white, and no measurements were taken. It is much to be regretted that Mr Omond's observations since 1887 have not been printed. No one else is likely to see a lunar Fog-bow.

Temperatures reported with Fog-bows have varied from  $19^{\circ}$  to  $56^{\circ}$ . It is peculiar that temperature does not appear to make any difference to any of the bows that I have described. This seems to point to the conclusion that water in fog or cloud is in the same state, whether the temperature is above or below freezing-point.

What I have said about fog-bows suggests these questions:—Can there be a white solar Rainbow? What is the size of a white lunar Rainbow? Has a coloured one ever been seen?

Many of my statements will require modification, when more observations have been recorded. I can only generalise from descriptions that I have seen. Two hundred years ago Sir Isaac Newton explained the Rainbow; since then no other bow opposite the sun has been explained. What is now wanted is more observations, particularly of the sizes of Brocken bows and Fog-bows.

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## NOTES ON BROCKEN SPECTRE.

BY R. T. OMOND, *Superintendent, Ben Nevis Observatory.*

ATMOSPHERIC optical phenomena may be classed in two groups—those seen looking towards the source of light (sun or moon) and concentric with it, and those seen looking away from the light and concentric with the shadow of the observer. This classification corresponds to the names *parhelia* and *antheria*; but it is well to keep the specific names of the various phenomena seen in each direction definite and distinct. The following are those most commonly seen:—

I. *Parhelia*, or concentric with sun.

*Halo*.—Large circles,  $22^\circ$  to  $90^\circ$  radius, which may have radial lines crossing them, tangential arcs, or mock suns, white or coloured.

*Coronæ*.—Small circles, not more than  $10^\circ$  radius, always coloured, with the red outside each set of colours; there may be one, two, three, or four sets of spectrum colours.

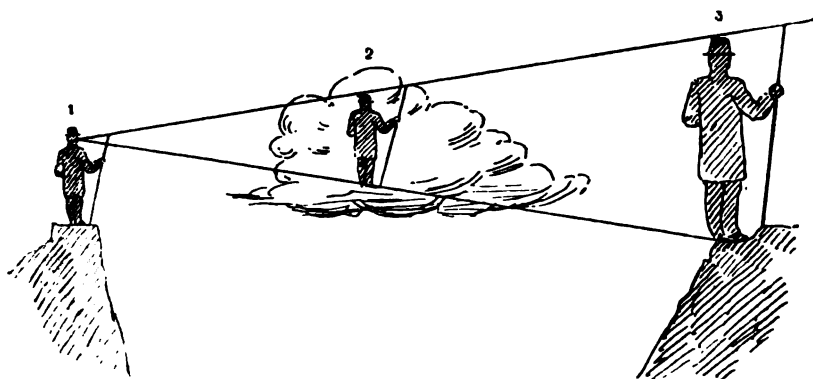
II. *Antheria*, or concentric with shadow.

*Rainbows*.—Formed on drops of water, the primary or inner bow about  $40^\circ$  radius, and having red outside. The secondary about  $52^\circ$ , and having red inside; sometimes spurious bows, repetitions of the primary, may be seen inside it.

*Fog-bows*.—Similar to rainbows, but formed on a bank of cloud or fog, not on raindrops. The radii vary slightly—say  $35^\circ$  to  $55^\circ$ —and the order of colours is often inverted, and are always fainter and more diffused, both in colour and outline, than rainbows.

*Glories*.—Circles, generally coloured, and then always with red outside, formed round the shadow of observer. As many as five sets of spectrum colours have been seen, the radius of the outer never exceeding  $12^\circ$ , and the colours filling practically the whole space from the shadow outwards, thus distinguishing them from fog-bows. These are occasionally seen at the same time as glories, the latter forming a mass of colour round the shadow, and the fog-bow a wide arc quite distinct and far away from it; comparable to the nave and rim of a carriage-wheel of which the spokes are invisible.

The necessary condition for the formation of a glory is that the sun or moon shall be sufficiently bright to cast a sharp shadow, and that that of the observer shall fall on a bank of cloud or fog. Naturally this is most likely to happen when standing on an elevation, and when the sun is low; but glories have been seen on the low fog that lies only a foot or two thick over hollow ground. When standing at the edge of a cliff, with the sun high up behind and mist floating about below, the glory is formed on a definite part of the mist, its distance away—whether a few feet or many hundreds—is obvious, and the central shadow appears of its natural size. But when the sun is low, and the shadow is thrown on mist rising out of a valley alongside of the spectator, then a vivid imagination beholds the Brocken spectre in all its terrors. The shadow and glory are formed on the surface of the mist near the spectator, but he regards it as being at the furthest limit that he can see through the



1. Spectator.

2. Fog with Real Shadow.

3. Apparent Position of Shadow.

mist. Thus if there be only a thin wreath of fog through which a hill-top several miles off is visible, the shadow, really life-size at say ten yards off, becomes a giant on the far-away ridge. The above diagram represents a case with the sun near the horizon.

If two or more persons are present, each sees a glory on his own shadow, that being a diffraction effect dependent on the observer, the sun, and the fog; but he may see the shadows of his friends as well as his own. It is interesting,



when the fog is near, to notice how the shadow of a person a few yards off forms a long dark tunnel running back into the fog.

All of the five classes of optical phenomena mentioned above have been seen both with sunlight and moonlight, and may even be produced with an artificial light ; but the superior brightness of sunlight makes the solar cases more frequent and easier to observe, except in the case of haloes where the dazzling effect of the sun often prevents them being noticed.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

DALMALLY MEET.—*January 1894.*

ON the occasion of the New Year Meet of 1893-94, the Club once more made its headquarters at "Snug Dalmally," and on the evening of Saturday, the 30th December, there gathered round the smoking-room fire—Messrs Boyd, Scott (guest), Douglas, Maclay, Parker, Rennie, A. E. Robertson, Tough, Burnett (guest), W. Brown, and Fraser Campbell, the two last-named arriving that evening, the others having already put in a day's work.

To many of the older members Dalmally has now become to a great extent an "exhausted centre," all the principal ascents—Cruachan, Beinn Eunaich, Beinn a Chochuill, and Ben Lui, with their various faces, peaks, spurs, and "shoots"—having been climbed in every weather and at every season by more than one even of those present upon this occasion. But although some familiar faces were missed, it was gratifying to find that such a large proportion of new and enthusiastic members and friends had turned up.

On the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the weather conditions were of the least attractive, dense clouds hanging low down upon the flanks of the sodden hills; but on the evening of Sunday matters greatly improved, and the 1st of January 1894 was an absolutely ideal day—creating hopes of a brilliant winter, *which were alas doomed to be destroyed.* A sharp frost had set in, giving a crispness to the turf which on the previous day had been a bog, and filling the atmosphere with that sense of life which is half the charm of our favourite sport. There was just sufficient breeze to temper the warm rays of the sun, and from the summits were obtained exceptionally clear views in every direction,—Ben Nevis, heavily coated with snow, and capped with cloud, appearing in the north; while to the south the Isle of Arran lay bathed in a sea of golden glory, Cir Mhor, the Castles, and even the "witch's step" being clearly outlined against the frosty sky.

On Saturday, Parker and Maclay ascended the N. face

of Cruachan, *via* the Larig Noe and Coire Chat ; Rennie and Douglas, Beinn a Chochuill and Beinn Eunaich, from the Larig Noe ; Robertson, Tough, and Burnett, Beinn Bhuiridh, by one of the gullies on the N.E. face ; Boyd and Scott, Ben More, from Crianlarich, arriving at Dalmally by the late train.

On Sunday, some went to church, and some—did not. Ascents were made of Beinn a Chleibh, the "Horse-shoe" peaks of Cruachan, one member going alone to Ben Eunaich.

On Monday, two excursions were organised. One party, consisting of Tough, Burnett, Maclay, Brown, Robertson, Boyd, and Scott, attacking Ben Lui ; while the remainder ascended Cruachan, *via* Sron an Isean and Stob Diamh to Stob Garbh. From here Campbell and Parker continued the ridge, and ascended Beinn a Bhuiridh from the saddle, a short but very interesting climb. Rennie and Douglas, intent upon photography, which had entered largely into the day's proceedings, descended into the corrie by the spur of Stob Garbh. Three eagles were observed sailing round the peak of Stob Dearg, and ptarmigans and snow-buntings were also seen.

The Ben Lui party, after driving for some miles on the Tyndrum road, forded the Lochy, and turning the flank of Stob Garbh got into the great corrie, making the ascent from there by the N.E. face. This being filled with hard snow necessitated the use of the rope, and for fully two and a half hours the party were engaged in step-cutting. The descent was made by the N.W. corrie, which afforded a field for the creation of records in the matter of glissading, and was taken full advantage of. The lower slopes of the mountain were traversed in semi-darkness.

Upon the Monday most of the members had to return home ; but Brown, Parker, Tough, and Burnett made a final attack upon Cruachan. Beginning the ascent from the Cruachan burn, Meal Cuanail was first topped, and a traverse made from there to Stob Dearg. Owing to the condition of the slabs of rock which here abound, and which were covered with ice, great care had in places to be exercised. From Stob Dearg a magnificent prospect was

obtained, especially to the north, where the peak of Blaven in Skye was clearly visible. Retracing their steps, the party made the ascent of the main peak, thence to Drochaid Glas, Stob Diabh, and Sron an Isean. The hotel was reached about five, the whole ascent having occupied just six and a half hours from the burn. Beautiful weather was experienced until Drochaid Glas was reached, about 3 p.m., where the climbers were struck by a blizzard, which, as these notes are being compiled, still wreaks its vengeance alike upon the just and upon the unjust.

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#### INVERORAN MEET.—*Easter, 1894.*

AMONG the most successful Meets of the Club, the gathering at Inveroran at Easter of this year must be unanimously accorded first place. Pace Milton (and with no reference to "Munro's Tables"), it was "in the highest heights a higher height." In his excellent paper upon the Easter Meet of 1892 (printed in the September issue of that year), Mr Maylard has sufficiently, but in no exaggerated manner, extolled the natural beauties of Inveroran, and its claims to rank among the best climbing centres of Scotland. But the exceptionally beautiful weather with which the party were favoured upon this occasion, following upon the dreary months of rain through which the community had passed, in conjunction with the very large turn-out of members and their friends, contributed to a result which can hardly be excelled, and which perhaps may hardly be equalled in the annals of the Club,—not at least until engineering enterprise, or the greed of man, has opened up communication with other and wider fields, and accommodation has been provided therein for a greater number of visitors. But in proportion to such increased facilities for travel, so will disappear much of the real charm of such a Meet as this has been. Inveroran is at present ten miles from anywhere, and a good deal more than that from most places, and the inn thereat is certainly smaller than the Metropole; but a certain amount of roughing it is not ungrateful to the

healthy pedestrian, who gaily tramps along the ten miles of road from Tyndrum to Loch Tulla with nothing to carry but an axe, and no care in his mind—beyond a hope that the cart which follows with his one or two well-packed bags of dry clothes, &c. &c. &c., will be up to time. Nor is it repugnant to the slave of fashion to have it entirely within his own option at this time to perform his toilet either in the privacy of his own apartment (if that can be called his own which is shared by others) or upon the road, with no one to say him nay but a collie dog or a tame deer. The resources of the inn were certainly strained to their utmost, and some of the party sought shelter at Kingshouse, but on Saturday morning no less than seventeen sat down to breakfast at Inveroran.

There were present in all sixteen members of the Club and four guests, the latter being Col. Wavell (Black Watch), Mr G. A. Solly, Mr J. Collier, and Mr C. C. B. Moss ; while the members were—Professors Ramsay and Bower, Dr Coats, Dr Norman Collie, Messrs Howie, Lester, W. A. Ramsay, Naismith, Gilbert Thomson, Rennie, Douglas, Fraser Campbell, Maclay, Hinxman, W. Brown, and Boyd.

It is impossible within the limits of these notes to give any detailed description of all the expeditions which were made. All were full of interest, and of some it is hoped that we shall have fuller accounts in some future issue of the *Journal*. It must suffice meantime to allude briefly to the following principal ascents.

Stob Ghabhar was ascended on Friday by Stob Ghabhar. Bower, Howie, Douglas, Hinxman, Rennie, and Col. Wavell. The feature of this day's climb was that some fifty photographs were secured of the hill in outline and in detail, the cornice views by Mr Howie being especially good.

On Saturday also this peak was climbed by W. Ramsay, Maclay, Boyd, Campbell, and Moss. This party made the ascent by the N.E. face, varying the route described in Maylard's paper by taking to the snow on the left side of the corrie, and making a traverse to the "upper couloir." Here they took to the rocks on the right, which, though

fairly difficult, are quite practicable. Progression, however, with a party of five proved too slow; and after ascending about thirty feet, led by Ramsay, they made across the rocks into the couloir—an operation of some delicacy. Cutting up to the foot of the “frozen water-fall,” they found their progress barred. Its ascent being voted impracticable by the leaders, and a return to the rocks at this place being apparently very hazardous, the party descended the couloir, and continued the ascent by the corrie to the right, which affords easy access to the summit.

It will interest those who have access to any photographs taken upon this occasion (by Boyd and others), to compare the aspect of the mountain with that shown in the view given in the September 1892 issue of the *Journal*. What is there called the “Lower Couloir” was now entirely obliterated, and the whole of this face, up to the precipitous rocks below the summit, presented a vast unbroken surface of snow.

A further ascent was made on Sunday by Howie, Bower, and Brown.

Ben Achallader was ascended by two parties; one of which, consisting of Brown, Thomson, Naismith, and Coats, attacked it on Friday from Ben Dothaidh, which they had ascended from Bridge of Orchy. Proceeding from Achallader over Meall Bhuidhe, they topped Ben Creachan (3,540 ft.), and glissading down the W. side of his N. ridge, past a frozen loch, they completed a long day’s work—the three first by walking on to Kingshouse, while Coats rejoined the rest of the party at Inveroran, walking across the moors and round the west end of Loch Tulla.

On Saturday, Ramsay (Sr.), Wavell, Hinxman, Howie, Douglas, and Rennie, made another ascent, ferrying across the loch and taking the hill from the north; Hinxman, who had to leave, making for Tyndrum alone, across Ben Doireann.

The ascent of Buchaille Etive Mor—the beauty of whose appellation, the “Great Shepherd of Etive,” will be appreciated by all who have viewed his grand form standing sentinel



between Glen Etive and Glencoe—formed one of the most interesting features of the Meeth. On Friday, it was climbed by two parties,—one consisting of Naismith, Thomson, and Brown; the other of Collie, Solly, and Collier,—both starting from Kingshouse, to which the three last had driven that morning.

Naismith's party made the ascent by the great snow gully on its N. face.

On descending, Brown proceeded at once to Inveroran; but his companions, who returned to Kingshouse, made an ascent of Sròn Greise (2,952 ft.), the northmost Clachlet. peak of the Clachlet.

Collie's party had meantime made an attack upon the formidable crags of the E. (Glen Etive) face, and up these they succeeded in forcing their way to the top.

A third ascent was made on Sunday, by Douglas, Boyd, and Rennie, who followed to a great extent the route taken by Naismith's party on the previous day.

Ben Dothaidh (pronounced for some in Ben Dothaidh. scrutable reason *Dōr!*) proved a most popular climb. Viewed from Bridge of Orchy this mountain, like its neighbour Ben Doireann, presents a somewhat uninteresting aspect; but his N.E. corrie affords a most interesting field to the climber, several long steep gullies, of varying difficulty, running up to its summit between splintered and precipitous masses of black rock.

As already indicated, Naismith and party had ascended it on Friday from Orchy Bridge; and upon Thursday evening, Rennie and Brown had crossed it from Ben Doireann. Ben Doireann *en route* from Tyndrum.

On Sunday the two Ramsays, Campbell, and Moss, crossing its N.W. spur from the side of Loch Tulla, struck the corrie about half way up, and making a traverse until they came to a big gully, they cut up this and came out just west of, and perhaps one hundred feet below, the summit. Fully two hours were occupied in step-cutting, undertaken by the Ramsays *père et fils*.

On Monday, Boyd, Douglas, W. Ramsay, Thomson, and Naismith, followed the same route to the corrie; but making a longer traverse, they struck up a larger gully to the E. of



the summit, its lower slopes filled with avalanche debris. After ascending this for some distance together the party divided,—Boyd, Ramsay, and Thomson taking to a small, narrow gully running at right angles to the big one, up which they cut, reaching the top before the other two who had continued the original ascent, a most interesting one, of which a full account will be found in Mr Thomson's paper elsewhere.

The party being now re-united at the top, proceeded along the ridge to Ben Doireann, down the S.E. end of which they made a speedy descent, assisted by a series of grand glissades for fully 1,000 feet—one "shoot" alone clearing half that distance.

On the same day, and making a start about 9 o'clock, Rennie and Maclay ascended Stob Coire an Albannaich, Glas Bheinn Mhòr, and Ben Starav. Proceeding thence along the ridge to Glas Bheinn Mhòr and Ben Starav, the latter was reached about 4.45. Leaving Ben Starav about 5 o'clock, they returned to Inveroran by Glen Kinglass and Glen Dochard, arriving about 8.50 p.m. The same evening they drove to Tyndrum, where they found assembled the party from Ben Dothaidh, all the rest of the members having returned by this time to their several homes.

Dr Collie's party, after leaving Kingshouse, made numerous ascents in the neighbourhood of Glencoe, and subsequently climbed Ben Nevis by the precipice on its north face—a further account of which will be looked for with interest by readers of the *Journal*.

And so ended this famous Meet, which will live for ever in the memories of those who were permitted the pleasure of taking their part in it. Never perhaps within the experience of the climbers had the Scottish mountains borne an aspect so truly Alpine. Immense quantities of snow filled all the corries, especially to the north. The summit ridges were crowned with huge cornices, overhanging in many places by ten feet or more the grand unbroken slopes below, upon the surface of which were frequently seen the evidences



of recent avalanches. Where rock-face and snow-slope met crevasses were frequent, and even what might be correctly called "berg schrunds" were not wanting to complete the picture. It is hardly necessary to say that rope and axe were in almost constant use on the higher slopes; and the "glissade," as a means of descent, was indulged in as naturally as the domestic staircase.

The views obtained from the summits were perhaps disappointing, owing to a warm haze which overspread the landscape; but from the lower slopes vistas of surpassing beauty were revealed. From a spur of Ben Dothaidh, and looking back across Loch Tulla, in the glassy surface of which was mirrored every detail of the nearer hills and woods, the hills of the Black Mount, the Clachlets, Stob Gabhar, Meall nan Eun, Stob Coire an Albannaich, Glas Bheinn Mhòr, Ben nan Aighean, and others, succeeded one another in dazzling whiteness; while away to the S.W. the Cruachan group showed their summits beyond Glen Strae. Beyond the Clachlet, and twenty miles from us to the N.W., Ben Nevis proudly revealed its giant bulk; while further north the Aonachs, and other hills whose names we could not decide upon, towered range upon range until they became merged with the horizon. To the N.E., across the Moor of Rannoch, the view was less distinct; but a misty hollow revealed where Loch Ericht lay narrow and dark among her lonely hill sentinels, the long flat top of Ben Alder and his buttresses closing in the scene, and recalling to some of us memories of days spent years ago among its wastes.

T. FRASER S. CAMPBELL.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.



### EXCURSIONS.

*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 SHEPHERD AT HOME ON 24TH AND 25TH MARCH."—No less than three parties availed themselves of this invitation. The first, consisting of Messrs Brown, Thomson, and Naismith, left Kingshouse inn at 9.40 on the 24th, and followed the Glencoe road for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile beyond its junction with the Glen Etive road, with the object of finding a way up the north side of the mountain. They were wrong in supposing that that side had never been scaled, for they afterwards learned that Dr Collie had climbed it some years before by the identical route chosen by them. As seen from the road, Buchaille Etive Mor appears "mighty stiff," as Mr Stott expressed it (Vol. I., p. 26), the black rocks looking smooth and forbidding, and the snow gullies among them very steep. One large snow gully attracted particular attention, and it was decided to try it. Deeply sunk in the mountain side, it leads right up from the glen to the final ridge, a little to the west of the cairn. Crossing the river, the party made for the rocky ridge on the east side of the gully, and after mounting by the ridge for a short distance, descended into the bed of the gully at a height of 1,500 feet. They there put on the rope in case of anybody breaking through the snow into a burn, which could here and there be heard rushing underneath. As so often happens, the ascent of the gully proved a much simpler affair than it looked from a distance. Instead of the snowy floor being set at an angle of 50 or 55 degrees, as had been anticipated, the steepest gradient observed was 43, and the general inclination did not exceed 40. It was, however, one of the grandest and most impressive gorges any of the climbers had ever seen. Extending practically the whole height of the mountain, it was hemmed in by tremendous rock walls—in some places several hundred feet in height—while far above a snow crest on the sky-line was

brightly illumined by the sun, and by contrast made the ravine appear sombre in the extreme. The snow was rather soft, and steps could be kicked as a rule, but in the upper 500 feet it was quicker to scrape shallow notches with the axe. In some places the ravine was filled with avalanche debris, but whether the result of a slip of the snow in the gully itself, or of avalanches falling down its rocky sides, could not be determined. The climbers scarcely touched rock during the ascent, except at one point where a waterfall was uncovered, and had to be dodged by scrambling up steep but good rocks on the east side. A short distance further up, where the gorge was fifty feet wide, it was crossed by a large crevasse, which was almost concealed on the surface by a thin layer of snow, but widened underneath to perhaps five or six feet. As it was evidently many feet in depth, a solitary climber tumbling in might have found it an awkward hole to get out of. On one side the crevasse narrowed, and was easily crossed. From the head of the gully a gentle slope of snow took the party to the summit ridge only a short distance S.W. of the cairn (3,345 feet), which was reached about 1.30. A long halt was enjoyed on the top. Unfortunately the climbers were in complete ignorance of the presence of another party on the mountain, consisting of Dr Collie and Messrs G. A. Solly and J. Collier. These gentlemen had driven from Inveroran in the forenoon, and were at that moment engaged in forcing their way up the formidable crags fronting Kingshouse inn. This was accomplished successfully, and is the earliest recorded ascent of these rocks. Their route kept slightly to the left of a straight line drawn from the inn to the summit of the Buchaille. Looking from the inn, a precipitous ridge comes almost straight down from the top. To the left of this ridge four parallel vertical ribs of rock may be observed, which higher up merge into one buttress. Dr Collie and his friends started by mounting snow between the first rib and the one next to it on the left; then they got upon the rocks of the first rib, and thence worked upwards, keeping somewhat towards the right, partly on snow, but chiefly on rock, until they reached a big snow patch directly under the summit. They described the climb as most interesting, and not difficult, while their route could have been varied indefinitely. The rocks (of porphyry) are much broken up, and afford grand holds. It may here be well to remind any novice desirous of treading in their steps, that this party included some of the best rock climbers in the Alpine Club. While upon the face, one or two small avalanches of surface snow swept down the gullies. They reached the top a couple of hours after the others.

Next day, Messrs Boyd, Douglas, and Rennie, started from Kingshouse about 10, and climbed the mountain by the big gully in its north face. Their only important variation from the route followed by the first party, was that they entered the gorge considerably higher up than the latter. They kept to the rocks on its east side until well above the waterfall before mentioned, and thus had an interesting rock climb. The descent into the gully where they joined it required care,

and involved a traverse of some smooth ledges sloping the wrong way, and covered with shallow snow.

The views from the top on the 25th, though still hazy, were clearer than on the previous day.

All three parties descended by long glissades down some easy snow slopes lying on the Glen Etive side of the mountain.

W. W. N.

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STOB COIR AN ALBANNAICH, GLAS BHEINN MHOR, AND BEN STARAV.—Mr Rennie and I left Inveroran at 9.15 on the morning of 26th March. About one and a quarter hour's walk westwards brought us to the lower end of Loch Dochard, and three quarters of an hour more of winding among what seemed to be moraine heaps in a more northerly direction brought us to the foot of our first hill. The ascent was up a glen which separates Stob Coir an Albannaich from the round-headed Meall nan Eun. The soil was peaty, studded with granite boulders, and a glance at the geological map on my return, showed that just here we entered the granite region which stretches from the line of Loch Awe on both sides of Loch Etive, half-way up Glen Etive, and has Albannaich, Starav, and Cruachan as its largest peaks. The ascent was not stiff, but the day was hot and close. The burn flowed over inclined slabs most of its course, and presently we descended alongside it for the breeze, and after getting well within the snow line, we rested and had our first lunch. This would be about noon. We quickly after this reached the col, which is over the 2,000 feet line. The back of Albannaich, with the corrie beneath, presented a most magnificent amphitheatre of snow. The slope to the cornice that fringed the highest part of the ridge seemed very steep, and we resolved not to try it, but subsequently we easily got up it near its steepest part. The route we selected zig-zagged between ridges of rock that cropped out of the snow. We intended to attack the ridge some way below the summit where it seemed easy, but on a nearer view we thought it was feasible to go straight up, which had the advantage of enabling us to escape the sun. Soon we had to commence to cut steps, and the snow proved pretty tough, and seemed steep, though the steepest angle measured was only 48°. We reached the summit (3,426 feet) about 1.45 P.M., four and a half hours from the hotel.

A second lunch here, and we proceeded. Starav, which stood out grandly with its steep northern face mantled in white and flanked and buttressed by narrow ridges, was now our somewhat vague El Dorado. The summit was distant only three miles on the map, but long sinuous ridges and deep dips lay between. The dip to the col between Albannaich and Glas Bheinn Mhor was, we estimated, about 900 to 950 feet. A somewhat fatiguing ascent of about 800 feet brought us to the summit of Glas Mhor (3,258 feet). Then another drop of about 800 feet, an ascent again, a traverse along the south side of the

hill to avoid a rise in the ridge, and then another considerable dip, and we were at the foot of the ridge of Starav, which resembled in shape the letter "Γ," viewed from Glas Mhor. Although it was now 3.45 P.M., it was still quite oppressive, without a breath of air, and the ascent of the first ridge was found very tough. This surmounted, we had to traverse a jagged *arête*. On each side the ground fell away steeply, but the ridge itself was four to six feet broad, and presented no difficulty. Once across it we quickly arrived at the summit (3,541 feet), which was reached at 4.35 P.M. We found we were looking right down on the upper end of Loch Etive. The view though fine was hazy. The grandest views of the day, however, were those of the huge snow masses on the northern faces of Albannaich, Glas Mhor, and Starav, and of the hills between Glen Etive and Glencoe. These latter were especially striking betwixt Glas Mhor and Starav, where we could see right down into Glen Etive. Ben Nevis stood up boldly in the distance.

Leaving the top about 4.55, we descended to the corrie in which the Allt Halldter rises, and keeping towards the side of Starav made for the col that descends to the upper easterly flowing arm of the Kinglass river. We got some glissades in descending into this glen. A long trudge down it, and then across the col separating it from the easternmost arm of the glen, brought us to the road through Glen Kinglass quite near to the water-shed. It was now close on 7 P.M. and getting dark, and the remaining part of the journey was performed amidst ever deepening shades; and after a somewhat long two hours, in the course of which we waded the Dochard, as we found it advisable to keep the road the whole way, we reached the hotel about 8.55 P.M.

The whole day's work was hard going, with no more than the necessary rests. The  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles, as the crow flies, from the top of Starav to the hotel, occupied exactly four hours.

It was certainly a delightful day, and one to be remembered, though it must be added a fatiguing one, as we both felt. The ridge between Glas Mhor and Starav was a good deal longer than it appeared, and, in fact, was a pretty deep bow. We calculated we climbed at least 5,200 feet in all.

JAMES MACLAY.

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BEN MORE, PERTHSHIRE, IN BAD WEATHER.—On the 17th of February, the condition of the "big mountain," from a hill-walker's point of view, was as bad as can be imagined, and Mr Naismith and I were certainly entitled to congratulation on reaching the top that day. We found the hill entirely under new snow, extending in one unbroken sweep from crown to base, and a thick mist wrapping the whole mass in an impenetrable dark cloud, from which silently, but steadily, fell the large white flakes that ever added to its soft mantle of winter. As we wished to see the iron cross, erected where the ill-fated tourist lost his life some twenty years ago, and as we had

been told that it lay about 500 feet below the cairn in the direction of Glen Dochart House, we followed the road from Luib until we brought these two points into line. From here we struck a compass course (due south) for the summit, but failed to find the cross owing probably to its being buried out of sight by the snow. The ascent was somewhat arduous, for the snow was deep and soft from the commencement, and often in the steeper pitches it covered slopes of ice which necessitated many steps being cut, especially on the steep final slope leading to the edge of the rounded dome of the summit. Round about the cairn the scene resembled a fairy picture. The snow had everywhere wreathed itself into a wondrous variety of the most beautifully fantastic forms covered with fog-crystals, and I longed for a gleam of daylight to allow my camera to record permanently some of its beauties, but this was not to be, and after a short halt we descended the 1,000 feet to the col. The thick mist here also proved an annoyance, for its presence quite precluded the idea of our indulging in a glissade. Another rise of a similar height placed us on the summit of Stobinian at 3.45. This allowed us the ample time of two and a half hours to catch our train at Luib, but not reckoning on a deep snow drift in Rob Roy's Glen [Coire Choarach]—through which we had to plough our way knee-deep—we had the satisfaction of seeing our train whizz past, actually a few minutes before its time, just as we reached the road about a mile from the station. Many a time had both of us been out in as thick a mist, but never before had we experienced one more calculated to bewilder the climber. The mist and the snow being of exactly the same colour, blended together and made it impossible to tell where the one began and the other ended. All dark objects were covered up, and we were often puzzled to know whether our next step would be over a precipice or against a blank wall. The rope was found exceedingly useful, both as an aid in steering a straight course, and in allowing the leading man to go ahead fearlessly, trusting to his comrade in the rear to anchor in event of his disappearing over a cliff. In spite of the many discomforts and disappointments—missing our train included—the whole day's outing was voted a distinct success, and as an experience of the joys of climbing in bad weather it could hardly be surpassed.

W. DOUGLAS.

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**BEN VOIRLICH, STUC-A-CHROIN, AND BEN EACH.**—On New Year's Day, Naismith and Thomson, who had not sufficient time to reach Dalmally, left Glasgow at 7.10, left the train at Kingshouse, and climbed Ben Voirlich by crossing the intervening ridge. A clear view was got from the summit, and a route was selected among the cliffs of Stuc-a-Chroin, somewhat to the left of the projecting nose. Two conspicuous gullies unite at the bottom of the upper cliff, and it was the one on the right that was chosen. After passing the col, and climbing

a little way up, an easy traverse was made along a break in the cliffs, and then steps were cut about half way up the gully. This becoming somewhat monotonous, the glazed rocks on the left side were tried ; and after a little cautious scrambling, a stretch of steep snow was reached, leading right up to a small cornice, which had to be broken through. Turning to the left, the top was gained in a few minutes. From it the ridge was followed all the way to Ben Each, but as that peak was not reached till 4.45, the descent to the Keltie by the east ridge was by starlight. On the lower ground the steering also was by the stars, which unfortunately do not indicate the bog holes and other hindrances, nor the best place to ford a swollen burn. We got to the road at 6.10, and an extemporised "go-as-you-please" brought the party to Callander, with a margin of five minutes to catch the homeward train.

GILBERT THOMSON.

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ARRAN—27th September 1893.—Naismith and Thomson crossed to Brodick in the evening, and walked to Corrie, seeing a fine lunar rainbow on the way. Leaving the hotel next morning before five, a start was made for Glen Sannox ; but no sooner was the Glen entered than the rain, which had been threatening for a day or two, commenced to fall steadily. In the hope that it might be a passing shower, the party sheltered for some time behind a heather-covered wall, but as it became evident that a drenching was inevitable there was nothing to be gained by waiting. Getting to the foot of Cir Mhòr, the nearest of the three gullies referred to in a previous article (Vol. II., p. 17) was attempted, but the weather conditions were worse than before, and it was given up. The second one having been already ascended, the one nearest Glen Iorsa was tackled, and a short climb led right into a huge cave, over the mouth of which a cascade was tumbling. The gully simply stopped, and resumed its course at a level of perhaps 20 feet higher. All the rocks were covered with sheets of water, and were exceedingly slippery, and for some time it was doubtful if we would succeed in turning the obstruction. Naismith, however, found a sufficiently sporting route, and his companion, with the "moral" support of the rope, followed by another equally so. There was no further difficulty, and after reaching the top of Cir Mhòr the walk was continued over A' Chir, Beinn Tarsuinn, and Beinn Nuis. The difficulty on the ridge of A' Chir was got over by the crack along the Rosa side (Vol. II., p. 80), and not by the direct route which we had previously followed in the opposite direction (Vol. II., p. 139). About midday the weather cleared, and contributed in a small degree to dry the saturated garments. Brodick was reached just in time for the afternoon boat.

GILBERT THOMSON.

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**A DAY AMONG THE MOURNE MOUNTAINS.**—These interesting hills are situated in the extreme south of County Down, and although none of them are of any great height,—Slieve Donard, the highest, being only 2,796 feet high,—one or two of them afford fairly good climbing. With the object of climbing Slieve Bearnagh (2,394 feet), locally called the Broken Mountain, I took the early train from Belfast to Newcastle on the 14th July 1893. Leaving Newcastle about 9.30 I followed the Kilkeel road through Bryansford as far as the bridge over the Trassey River, from which a very rough road leads southward across the moor to the foot of Slieve Bearnagh. The north-west slope of the hill, up which I now made my way, is very steep and consists of granite slabs and patches of heather. The granite is very rough and affords excellent foothold. I reached the summit about noon (7 miles), it consists of a ridge of granite running N.E. and S.W., divided into three pinnacles, and rises about 50 feet above the hillside on the N.W., and falls precipitously for two or three hundred feet on the S.E. The ascent of the three pinnacles proved interesting, but presented no difficulty, as I selected the easiest way. There are also two lower pinnacles, which are detached from the other three, but these I did not climb.

Leaving the summit at 12.45, I descended towards the north-east, till I reached the head of the Mill River, and then followed a good footpath along the south slope of Slieve Commedagh (2,512 feet) towards Slieve Donard. On this slope there are some exceedingly fine examples of Cyclopean walls, and what appeared from below to be pinnacles. Slieve Donard, which I topped at 2.45 (10 miles), is a grass hill, and presents few features of interest to the climber. The view from the summit is, however, very fine, and is said to include Merrick in Scotland, Scafell in England, and one or two of the Wicklow Hills. During the Ordnance Survey observations were taken from it to stations on Scafell and Snowdon, distant 111 and 108 miles respectively.

I left the summit a little after three o'clock, and descending to Newcastle (13 miles) by way of the Hermit's Glen, reached Belfast by train early in the evening.

J. A. PARKER.

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“THE WINDOW”—CREAG MEAGHAIDH.—I have received a letter from a correspondent, intimating that in my paper in the January number of the *Journal* I have given the name of “The Window” to a portion of the hill to which it does not belong. He says—“Standing at the edge of Lochain a Coire, at a point where it receives the waters of two small streams, and looking up towards the summit of the cliffs above, a small almost circular hole will be noticed through a portion of the rock which juts out against the sky. This I believe it is which is locally known as ‘The Window.’” Though I have never seen nor heard of it myself, it is possible that this hole may originally have been



called 'The Window,' but at present when the natives use the term they mean the gully leading from Coire Arder into Glen Roy. I have heard them speak of cattle and sheep having been driven through 'The Window' in former days—a statement which has manifestly no reference to the hole in the cliff. I am unable to reconcile those conflicting statements, except on the assumption that this name, originally applied to the hole in the cliff, has been extended to the better known gap in the hills, with which it is now generally associated.

A. E. ROBERTSON.

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AT A MEETING OF COMMITTEE, held on 24th April, the following recommendation was approved of:—

The Committee think it well to remind members that as the Club has brought climbing in Scotland (as distinguished from hill walking) into notice and popularity, a certain amount of responsibility rests upon its members.

Climbing is now undertaken by many who do not realise that its safety depends entirely on proper precautions; and the Committee would ask members, by their influence and personal example, to further the observance of these precautions. While experience only can give mountaineering knowledge, the following are suggested as points to which attention should be directed:—

1. In selecting a route, regard should be had to the capabilities and experience of the party.
2. No climbing-party should consist of more than four; and not more than one party should be in a gully or on a rock face at the same time.
3. Personal equipment should be provided in keeping with the character of the work; and, in particular, properly nailed boots should invariably be worn.
4. It is important, in the interests of safety, that in snow climbs each member of the party should carry an ice-axe, and that the party should be provided with a rope.

These suggestions, it will be understood, are meant to apply only to those who undertake serious climbing, and are not intended to discourage those who confine themselves to easier expeditions.

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THE JOURNAL.—Nos. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 are no longer in print. The parts remaining in print are sold by Messrs Douglas & Foulis, 9 Castle Street, Edinburgh, at 1s. each. They also accept orders to supply the *Journal* regularly, at the rate of 3s. (or 3s. 6d. by post) per annum. A few complete sets of the first twelve numbers (Vols. 1 and 2) have been reserved, and these can be had from the Librarian, Gilbert Thomson, Esq., 75 Bath Street, Glasgow, at 42s. a set.



PLATE VI.



*From a Photograph by J. Rennie.*  
MEALL DEARG OF LEAGACH.  
The Third Pinnacle as seen from the Fourth.

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## RISE AND PROGRESS OF MOUNTAINEERING IN SCOTLAND.—II.

THOMAS PENNANT—A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

BY PROFESSOR VEITCH.

THOMAS PENNANT, author of the *Tour in Scotland*, was a Welsh squire. His seat was Downing, three miles beyond Flint, not far from the shore of the estuary of the Dee. His family had lived there on a property of apparently moderate dimensions for some generations. In his Dedication of the *Tour*, published in 1771, Pennant is profuse in his thanks to Sir Thomas Mostyn, his neighbour of Mostyn Hall, who, "by a liberal cession of fields, and meads and woods," had enabled him to connect all the divided parts of his property, and to give a full scope to his improvements. The residence was thus on the flat land by the sea, and considerably removed from the mountainous district of Wales. It was some years after his tour in Scotland that he made regular journeys through Wales, and wrote an account of it.

Pennant was sent to Oxford, where he belonged successively to Queen's and Oriel, but left without taking a degree. He carried with him, however, some classical reading and references. He was awakened to a lively interest in natural history at the age of twelve, through Willoughby's *Ornithology*. He continued to prosecute natural science in its various departments as then understood, and was a voluminous writer on the subject. With

this interest he united marked topographical and antiquarian tastes. He was a friend of Linnæus, knew Buffon, Voltaire, Haller, and Pallas; was a member of the Royal Society, of the Royal Society of Upsala, and a D.C.L. of Oxford. He was not greatly distinguished for originality in his researches, but he was a useful compiler and digester, and altogether a good type of the leisured and cultured English squire of his time.

Pennant gives a somewhat whimsical account of the impulse which led him to visit Scotland. He tells us:—

“A gentleman who made the tour of Europe, discovered before he reached Abbeville, that in order to see a country to best advantage, it was infinitely preferable to travel by day than by night. I cannot help making this applicable to myself, who, after publishing [1776] three volumes of the ‘Zoology of Great Britain,’ found out that to be able to speak with more precision of the subjects I treated of, it was far more prudent to visit the whole than part of my country. Struck therefore with the reflection that I had never seen Scotland, I instantly ordered my baggage to be got ready, and in a reasonable time found myself on the banks of the Tweed.”—(*Dedication*, p. iii.)

This was in 1769, when Scotland was practically a *terra incognita* to the average Englishman, beyond the unpleasant recollection still lingering in the public mind of the wild half-naked savages known as Highlanders, who, in 1745, had struck into the country and appalled the populace of England as far as Derby, and then retreated to their wilderness. Pennant himself says:—

“North Britain was almost as little known to its Southern brethren as Kamschatka. I brought home a favourable report of the land. Whether it will thank me or not I cannot say, but from the report I made, and showing that it might be visited with safety, it has ever since been *inondée* with Southern visitants.”

Pennant could not of course have been influenced by the popular repute of Dr Samuel Johnson's *Journey to the Hebrides*, for this did not take place until 1773, and the book was not published until 1775. It is probable that Johnson himself was influenced by this first considerable pioneer of English discovery in Scotland. The mollifying in some degree of Johnson's prejudices against Scotland, as well as his interest in the primitive people of the North and his desire to visit them, were greatly due to

a perusal of Pennant's narrative. The *Tour* was well known and exceedingly popular in its day, serving to link more closely in feeling and sympathy the northern and southern parts of the island.

Pennant started from Chester on his first journey to Scotland on the 26th June 1769. He was back at Downing on the 22nd September. *A Tour in Scotland*, containing the summer's journey, was published at Chester in 1771. A second and third edition followed in 1774, and a fourth edition in 1776. Again in the summer of 1772, he returned to the north country, and we have a *Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides*, Parts I. and II., undertaken and completed in this year. Part I. was published in 1774; Part II. in 1775. There was a second edition in 1776. The whole, making three quarto volumes, appeared in 1790. The rapid succession of these editions indicates considerable public interest and popularity.

In the course of those two summers, 1769 and 1772, Pennant traversed practically the whole of Scotland and the Islands, bestowing attention on Lowlands and Highlands alike.

There can be no doubt that Pennant's volumes, apart altogether from their references to scenery, are most valuable. He was a keen-eyed, though not always a discriminating, antiquarian, and he has left us numerous descriptions of places and remains whose features are now too frequently blurred or even obliterated. Details and traditions, too, are preserved which otherwise would probably have perished. We cannot be too grateful to the genial and sympathetic English squire for this service.

Crossing the border-line of Scotland into the Merse, Pennant finds a neglect of agriculture, though at Eyetoun there is some attention to the cultivation of barley, oats, and clover. But then he immediately encounters "the black, joyless, heathy moor of Coldingham," though he must have seen it in July. All through his journey similar epithets constantly recur in the same reference. He never seems to have become reconciled to the heather. Even in early August Glen Tilt is "a wild, black, moory, melancholy track." So when he had advanced further, speaking, even,

in the first week of September, of a part of the Highlands dear to all members of this Club, and dear to every true lover of wild nature—the district round the Black Mount—he says :—

“Most of this long day’s journey from the Black Mountain was truly melancholy, almost one continued scene of dusky moors, without arable land, trees, houses, or living creatures, for numbers of miles. The names of the wild tracts I passed through were Buachil-ety, Corricha-Ba, and Bendoran.”

This is the “dauted Bendoran” of Donach Bàn and Principal Shairp! Here is the feeling of the true mountaineer of the present day—

“Mountain-girdled,—there Bendoran  
To Schiehallion calls aloud,  
Beckons he to lone Benaulder,  
He to Nevis crowned with cloud.

Loud the while down all his hollows,  
Flashing with a hundred streams,  
Corrie-Bah from out the darkness  
To the desert roars and gleams.

Desert not deserted wholly!  
Where such calms as these can come,—  
Never tempest more majestic  
Than this boundless silence dumb.”

After Old Cambus he comes on as rich a tract of corn-land as “ever I saw, and East Lothian is the Northamptonshire of North Britain.” The Bass appears to him as “a rock of most stupendous height,” and one side “overhangs the sea in a most tremendous manner.” At length he reaches Edinburgh, which is “a city that possesses a boldness of grandeur and situation beyond any that I had ever seen.” The view from the Castle presents “a strange prospect of rich country, with vast rocks and mountains intermixed,” and he notes “the stupendous rocks” of Arthur’s Seat and Salisbury Crag, the Pentland Hills, and the Moorfoots, whose sides are covered with verdant turf. At South-Ferry

“The prospect on each side is very beautiful; a rich country, frequently diversified with towns, villages, castles, and gentlemen’s seats.”

After crossing the Forth, there is the same admiration for Strath-earn—

“A beautiful vale, about thirty miles in length, full of rich meadows and cornfields, divided by the river Earn, which serpentine finely through the middle. . . . It is prettily diversified with groves of trees and gentlemen’s houses.”

These passages show by example and forecast the kind and character of scenery which had its main attraction for Pennant; and the epithets applied to the Bass Rock and other tolerable eminences give the standard of his ideas of grandeur,—height, and size. His feeling for landscape is the mixed one of the useful and the beautiful,—excellent no doubt in its kind, but suggesting a preference for what Sir Walter Scott afterwards spoke of in contrast to the scenery of hill and moorland, “as the rich garden ground round Edinburgh.”

The Fall of the Rumbling Brig is the first test for him of the wilder scenery :—

“It is a bridge of one arch, flung over a chasm worn by the river Devon, about eighty feet deep, very narrow and horrible to look down. . . . The sides in many places project and almost lock in each other; trees shoot out in various spots, and contribute to increase the gloom of the glen; while the ear is filled with the cawing of daws, the cooing of wood-pigeons, and the impetuous noise of the waters.”

Later on in the journey, however, he expresses admiration for certain of the Highland waterfalls. He refers with considerable appreciation to the magnificence of the mountains to the south of Invercauld, of their surprising height and naked summits, and refers, as “a fine contrast to the scene,” to

“The great cataract of Garval-Bourn, which seems at a distance to divide the whole, foams amidst the dark forest, rushing from rock to rock to a vast distance.”

The eye was evidently being gradually educated by what it saw.

Nearing Dunkeld, he made his entrance into the Highlands :—

“The pass into the Highlands is awfully magnificent; high, craggy, and often naked mountains present themselves to view, approach very near each other, and in many parts are fringed with wood, overhanging and darkening the Tay, that falls with great



rapidity. After some advance in this hollow, a most beautiful knoll, covered with pines, appears in full view, and soon after the town of Dunkeld, seated under and environed by crags, partly naked, partly wooded, with summits of a vast height."

The Pass of Killiecrankie is referred to

"As extremely narrow, between high mountains, with the Garry running beneath in a deep, darksome, and rocky channel, overhung with trees, forming a scene of horrible grandeur."

The road through Glen Tilt

"Is the most dangerous and the most horrible I ever travelled . . . ; while at a considerable and precipitous depth beneath roared a black torrent, rolling through a bed of rock, solid in every part, but where the Tilt had worn its ancient way; salmon force their passage even as high as this dreary stream."

There is in these references to Highland scenery a sort of mild outcome of the genuine feeling for grandeur, mixed with the old dread and shrinking from its power, which had long prevailed in popular sentiment and literature.

Here we may note, in passing, a mode of simple Highland life now unknown,—that of the *airidh*, or *shealing*. Pennant found a tract of mountain in Glen Tilt to which the families of one or two hamlets retire with their stocks to pasture in summer :—

"Here we refreshed ourselves with some goats' whey at a *sheelin* or *bothay*, a cottage made of turf, the dairy house, where the Highland shepherds and graziers live with their herds and flocks, and during the fine season make butter and cheese. Their whole furniture consists of a few horn spoons, their milking utensils, a couch formed of sods to lie on, and a rug to cover them. Their food oat-cakes, butter or cheese, and often the coagulated blood of their cattle spread on their bannocks. Their drink milk whey, and sometimes, by way of indulgence, whisky."

This habit of summer mountain dwelling prevailed both in Lowlands and Highlands down through last century. It has now wholly passed away, leaving, however, behind it a large legacy, both Gaelic and Lowland, of fine natural song. This is how the broken remains of this past life touches the modern lover of nature and man :—

"And by the streams grass-mounds and grey-mossed heaps  
Lay once the homes where thriving men had been,  
And far up Corrie, where the white burn leaps,  
Were pleasant airidhs green.

But no smoke rose from any old abode ;  
From the green summer shealing came no song ;  
No face of man looked on us, where we trode,  
From dawn to gloamin' long."

(Principal SHAIRP.)

Pennant has obviously a genuine admiration for the rivers, lochs, and lakes of Scotland. These are its glory. The river Tay, the Lyon, the Dee, especially near Invercauld, have all attractions for him ; and he notes what is not observed by every one, that certain of our streams are clear, but not colourless, "the pellucidness being like that of brown crystal," a tinge received from the bogs of the country. Speaking of Invercauld and the Dee, he has a touch almost rising to poetry :—

"On the northern entrance immense ragged and broken crags bound one side of the prospect, over whose grey sides and summits is scattered the melancholy green of the picturesque pine, which grows out of the naked rock, where one would think nature would have denied vegetation."

A ride of thirty miles presents the traveller with "the view of four most magnificent pieces,"—including Loch Awe, Loch Long, and Loch Lomond.

"It is idle to say," he tells us, "that seeing one of these is the same as seeing all. Each has its proper characters."

Besides those mentioned, he notices and characterises Lochs Leven, Tay, Rannoch, Tummel, Spynie, Moy, Ness, Oich, Lochy. He gives the palm to Loch Lomond—

"The most beautiful of the Caledonian lakes. The first view of it from Tarbet presents an extensive serpentine winding amidst lofty hills ; on the north barren, black, and rocky, which darken with their shade that contracted part of the water."

This description shows Pennant's reach and his limitation. He did not truly appreciate grandeur, and could not fuse in his mind, as nature has done in fact, the beautiful and grand in one scene.

In connection with the islands of Loch Lomond, which he admires greatly, we have a solitary reference to the heather :—

"Some of them are adorned with trees, loosely scattered either over a fine verdure, or the purple bloom of the heath."

We cannot, and need not, follow the traveller through

his whole journey. We have seen something of the nature of his feeling for the rugged, wild, and grand scenery, and for mountains. He seems to have been contented all along simply to look at the higher and more striking mountains with a sort of bewilderment,—a mixture of surprise and dread, yet almost admiration. Ascend any one of them he very rarely did, but in Jura, on his second tour, he got to the top of one of the Paps,—“Beinn-an-Oir,” or the Mountain of Gold. This was “a task of much labour and difficulty, the mountain being composed of vast stones, slightly covered with mosses near the base, but all above bare and unconnected with each other. Gain the top, and find our fatigues fully recompensed by the grandeur of the prospect from this sublime spot. Jura itself afforded a stupendous scene of rock, varied with little lakes innumerable.”

He also in the same year ascended “Strone-Clachan,” near Killin, whence he had “an enchanting view of a most delicious plain spread into verdant meadows, or glowing with ripened corn, embellished with woods, and watered with rivers uncommonly contrasted.” This is the charm of the landscape for him; but let us do him the justice to say that he admires “the furious Dochart,” as well as “the wooded banks of the gentle Lochy,” and “the great expanse of Loch Tay.” “The northern boundaries of the Lake rise with superior majesty in the rugged heights of Finlarig, and the wild summits of the still loftier Lawers. Extensive meads clothe both sides.” We may take one illustrative example of the impression made upon him by one of the most characteristically wild landscapes in the country. In his second journey, while in Skye, he seems to have got to the top of “Beinn-na-Caillach.” This is his description :—

“After ascending a small part, find its sides covered with vast loose stones, like the Paps of Jura, the shelter of ptarmigans . . . ; the top flat and naked, with an artificial cairn of a most enormous size, reported to have been the place and sepulchre of a gigantic woman in the days of Fingal. The prospect to the west was that of desolation itself,—a savage series of rude mountains, discoloured, black and red, as by the rage of fire. . . . The serrated tops of Blaven affect with astonishment; and beyond them the clustered height of Quillin or the mountain of Cuchullin, like its ancient hero,

'stood like a hill that catches the clouds of heaven.' . . . The view to the north-east and south-west is not less amusing—a sea sprinkled over with various isles, and the long extent of coast soaring into all the forms of Alpine wildness."

This is the Isle of Skye of Pennant. It is difficult to estimate the development of the feeling for mountain grandeur which took place between these dates of 1769 and 1772, and the publication of "The Lady of the Lake" in 1810, and "The Lord of the Isles" in 1814. It was the progress—if we may use the expression without irreverence—of the feeling for nature "to the perfect love which casteth out fear." Take a passage almost at random from the "Lady of the Lake" and we see the difference and advance:—

"It was a wild and strange retreat,  
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.  
The dell upon the mountain's crest,  
Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast ;  
Its trench had staid full many a rock,  
Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock  
From Benvenue's grey summit wild,  
And here, in random ruin piled,  
They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,  
And form'd the rugged silvan grot.  
The oak and birch, with mingled shade,  
At noontide there a twilight made,  
Unless when short and sudden shone  
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,  
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye  
Gains on thy depth, Futurity."

Or best of all (in 1814) :—

"Stranger ! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced  
The northern realms of ancient Caledon,  
Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath placed,  
By lake and cataract, her lonely throne ;  
Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,  
Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,  
Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown  
Mingle their echoes with the eagle's cry,  
And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky.

Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur wakes  
An awful thrill that softens into sighs ;  
Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch's lakes,

In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise :  
 Or farther, where beneath the northern skies,  
 Chides wild Loch-Eribol his caverns hoar—  
 But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize  
 Of desert dignity to that dread shore,  
 That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears Coriskin roar."

Pennant, after his experience of Highland scenery, is obviously glad to be in the outlet from it in the soft and cultivated vale of the Leven, which he welcomes with quite a feeling of rapture. He passed from Scotland homewards by the east side of the Pentlands, and touching at the Crook, made his way to Moffat. All he has to say of the upper valley of the Tweed is that

"After Crook the country assumed a Highland appearance; the hills were high, the vales narrow, and there was besides a great scarcity of trees, and hardly any corn; instead was abundance of good pasturage for sheep."

There is not a single characteristic touch of feeling for the wavy lines and massive sweep of the hills near the source of the Tweed—Broad Law or Hartfell,—and the purple bloom which now (September 18) must have clothed them, or a word indicating the slightest impression from the charming descent of the Annan through its upper dale. And so the good, though somewhat purblind, English squire went back to his well-loved Downing and its flats by the estuary of the Dee.

["JOHN MACCULLOCH," by Rev. Colin Campbell, D.D., will be the subject of the next paper.]

TRAVERSE OF ROSS-SHIRE FROM BEAULY  
TO LOCH CARRON, *VIA* SGURR NA  
LAPICH AND RIABHACHAN.

BY COLIN B. PHILLIP.

THE mountains that give birth to the Beauly River are among the highest in Scotland. They are also rather difficult of access, chiefly owing to the innlessness of the country, but also to their having till quite recently formed part of Mr Winans' numerous deer-forests. Their lessee did not enjoy the reputation of being particularly hospitable to mountaineers at any time of year, spring and autumn alike. Things are much better now, as the event proved; but in any case it takes a very long day's work to land the pedestrian at Loch Carron *via* Glen Strathfarrar and the summits of Sgurr na Lapich and Riabhachan. The old hotel at Struy is closed, and last summer I heard that Invercannich Inn had suffered the same fate.

Sgurr na Lapich (3,773 ft.) is next Mam Sodhail (3,862 ft.) and Carn Eige (3,877 ft.), the highest peak in Scotland, north of the Caledonian Canal. It is the culmination of the long ridge dividing Glens Cannich and Strathfarrar, and is very conspicuous in some of the views near Inverness, its gracefully formed peak being one of the most beautiful features in the long line of the Inverness-shire and Ross-shire Alps. There is a secondary peak of the Mam Sodhail chain, also called Sgurr na Lapich. Though a fine peak it is several hundred feet lower (3,401), and is consequently not a rival.

Some members of the Club had agreed on an informal meet in June, to take place at Strath Carron. Messrs Hinxman, Rennie, and Douglas, together with myself, formed the party. At Hinxman's suggestion it was determined to traverse Ross-shire, instead of going by the more prosaic railway, and thus cover a good deal more new ground. Accordingly Hinxman and myself, who were staying at Aviemore, were joined by Messrs Douglas and

Rennie, and travelled together to Beaulieu. After a council of war, as to time and distance, it was decided to drive to Braulinn, in Glen Strathfarrar, cross the two hills, and strike the path by Loch Calavie to Dronnaig Lodge, at the head of Glen Luing, ordering a trap to meet us at the top of the hill above Glen Attadale, three miles farther. The distance is somewhere between fifty and sixty miles, and most of the ground rough. This entailed a start at a most unholy hour. Some of us showed a terribly degenerate spirit at the discussion, with an inclination towards stopping in bed, sad to see, but the brutal majority ordered 3 o'clock A.M. as the breakfast hour, and 3.30 A.M. as the start. In justice be it said, the whole party, as might be expected of members of the S.M.C., did not quail before the trying ordeal, but rose as one man, and did ample justice to a breakfast as solid and elaborate (which our host of the Lovat Arms most kindly provided), as if it had been served at 9 A.M.

The morning was misty and dull, and the night before had been showery, but as the wind was easterly we had hopes, which proved well founded, that it would clear as we travelled farther west. We were not unbecomingly lively at that early hour, but woke up gradually under the influence of having well breakfasted, and also of the extraordinary beauty of the country. Somebody was heard to say something about "angling for braxies," and sentimentalised about "purple tartan heather," and other poetic Highland ideas.

There is hardly a glen in Scotland to surpass Glen Strathfarrar for beauty, equalling Glen Affric, though surpassed, I think, by it in grandeur. Having many features in common with that superb valley, it is just a *trifle* smaller in scale and effect. Lofty backlying mountains of grand form send down rocky and irregular shoulders to the glen, some wild and bare, others beautifully draped with hanging wood, alternately advancing and retiring, so that the glen is a series of narrow passes and open basins, through which the thoroughly Highland river flows, here expanding into quiet lakes, there foaming over the rocks into dark pools. The road is very bad after leaving Struy, which is

about half way to Braulin, so that it takes a good deal longer to traverse the last part than the first.

Till near Braulin the higher tops remained covered, but on nearing the lodge we obtained a grand view of the fine peak, Sgurr na Muice (2,915 ft.), a spur of the northern range which culminates in Sgurr a' Choire Glas (3,554 ft.). There is a bridge a little distance beyond the house, which gives access to Inchvuilt, and a path up Glen Innis an Loichel leading to the foot of Lapich. A hush fell on the party, as the huge form of a keeper heaved in sight; but, contrary to *my* expectations, at any rate, he proved quite gentle, and after some little talk, disappeared on the box-seat of our retiring trap. We crossed a bridge and began our walk, but had gone scarcely a mile when a second breakfast was proposed and eaten, beside the picturesque little stream, which rejoices in the name of the Uisge Misgeach, the pronunciation of which suggested cooling drinks. Soon after this we crossed the stream and followed the path for four or five miles, when the river was recrossed, and the ascent of Lapich began.

The mountain itself had been quite invisible up to this, though the summit of Riabhachan over Tollan Lochan had been seen now and then, in coming up to the glen. The hill, however, cleared gradually as we ascended, and by the time we reached the top was almost quite clear. The climb proved to be a long grind up grassy and rocky slopes. We halted at about 2,600 feet level and breakfasted again—in fact we fed with great spirit nearly all day. One of the most striking features of the walk, was the lifelessness of these wilds. We came once on a herd of deer, mostly hinds, on the slope of Lapich, but beyond this, we saw little or nothing living between Beauly and Strathcarron. A rather pathetic incident occurred on startling the deer; they all of course bolted, and left an unfortunate calf, which could scarcely run, behind. Its frantic efforts to follow its mother were painful to see, as it fell and rolled over several times in trying to do so. Let us hope it found its dam again. We first reached the top of a sharpish little peak, called Rudha na Spreidhe on the 6-inch O.S. map, 3,443 ft. (Hinxman's aneroid). The view which had been unfold-



ing as we rose, was very striking to the north, where the nearer mountains of Monar, Bidean an Eoin Dheirg (3,430 ft.), and Lurg Mhor (3,234 ft.), and the more distant Loch Carron and Torridon peaks, rose grandly against the sky. Southwards the hills were mistier and not easily disentangled. At this point Sgurr na Lapich revealed itself as a finely formed mountain, with corries, most of which held tarns on all sides. The eastern ridge appeared to be of considerable sharpness, but the cliffs (and this is also true of Riabhachan) were not out of the ordinary in size or character. After a short descent, we resumed the climb to the top, where we found the orthodox bottle in the cairn. We only stayed a short time and then descended to Bealach Toll an Lochan. It is a stiffish dip, over 1,000 ft. with the prospect of having to climb nearly as much to the summit of Riabhachan (3,696 ft.). It is much more interesting ascending this hill than Lapich, as the ridge narrows in and is a true *arête*—though not a very formidable one, certainly—still it is a ridge and not a slope. The first cairn we reached is not the highest point of the hill, it being some half-mile further west.

On reaching the top, we again breakfasted or lunched (I scarcely know which, as about this time I lost count of the meals.) We also with one accord refused to be led into climbing Socach, 3,503 feet (which I may say has a dip between it and the hill we were on of about 750 feet). It was very self-denying of us, but then virtue usually triumphs in these matters after you have risen before three A.M., and walked a good deal, with the prospect of more to come. A direct descent was made to the flat boggy valley of Allt Riabhachan. Messrs Douglas, Rennie, and Hinxman had a longish glissade down some snow,—a rather unusual thing to be able to do in Scotland in June. From this glen a heavy and tiresome ascent led to the col between An Cruachan (2,312 ft.), and Beinn Bheag (2,030 ft.), and then an equally tiresome descent to the bleak tract of land covered with small lochans, or the "divide" between Glen Luing and the streams running to Monar. The day had become very hot and airless, and I must confess I got very tired of this part of the walk, as the

country about was wild, without being especially grand. A huge deer fence was crossed, and a longish uphill pull brought us to the Dronag and Monar path. We had to keep moving, as we were pressed for time, it still being a good many miles to the top of the Attadale road, and the horses naturally could not be expected to stand very long there, without being put up. After passing Loch Calavie, a rather fine sheet of water, and in descending the last hill to Dronag Lodge, I thought I saw a carriage and pair coming towards us. I did not give way to any remarkable display of joy, as it might not be for us, but I am glad to say it was. I blessed that landlord with great energy, and I think that most of the others did too, as he had cut off three dreary uphill miles on a road. After a short rest we began our drive. I never saw a more extraordinary road. It rivalled the Stelvio in the number of corners, but not in engineering. It is about seven miles by a direct path over the hill to Strath Carron, but the road cannot be less than twelve miles. Nothing, however, could be more charming than the drive in other respects. It was now drawing towards sundown. The Glen Luing hills behind us were lit up with a lovely glow of light, throwing their deep corries into purple gloom. But the prospect towards the north from the top of the hill was the principal charm; here the Applecross and Loch Carron mountains rose in majesty against the evening sky—solemn and lovely in the extreme, the appearance of Beinn Bhan from this point being most remarkable. The great precipice of Coire na Poite descends from its plateau summit, a clear thousand feet of precipice so absolutely sheer as to seem like some huge sea-cliff. From here, it is seen in profile, and standing out, as it did, in dark relief against the mountain's more distant buttresses, impresses the beholder with a sense of awe scarcely equalled by any other crag in Britain.

We descended slowly into the pretty vale of Attadale, its hillsides channelled by deep ravines and its floor cultivated. After passing the shooting lodge at the entrance, the road became if anything worse, and it was easier to walk the greater part of the way on the railway line, which runs

between steep hills and Loch Carron. After as much of this amusement as could be wished for under the circumstances, we finally brought up at the hospitable Strath Carron Station Hotel, and I know one of the party that was glad to do so.

## A LONG DAY ON THE HILLS IN MARCH.

BY JOSEPH COATS, M.D.

THE Spring Meet of the Club at Inveroran will be remembered by many as the most successful in which they have taken part. The numbers were large, the weather was brilliant, the place selected gave opportunity to many varied excursions, and the early date of Easter allowed the members an opportunity of seeing more of the wintry snows than is usual at the spring meet.

I have been asked by the editor to give an account of one of the excursions from Inveroran, namely the ascent of the three tops Beinn an Dothaidh, Beinn Achadh-fhaladair (or Beinn Achallader) and Beinn Creachan. These three tops, with their intervening ridges, may be described as forming a great letter S much spread out, and with its chief convexity to the north-west, in which direction the summits overlook the east end of Loch Tulla and the lower part of the Water of Tulla as it approaches the loch. The three tops are of approximately the same height, the numbers in the 6-inch Ordnance Survey map, as given in Munro's list in the *Journal* of Sept. 1891, being 3,283, 3,404, and 3,540 feet respectively.

Beinn an Dothaidh (the pronunciation of which should scarcely be attempted without special instruction from a native) is most directly ascended from Bridge of Orchy. Accordingly, Naismith, Thomson, Brown, and I walked thither by the hill road on the morning of Friday, 23rd March. After crossing the Orchy, we followed a stream leading in the direction of the top till we came to some stiff bits of rock, and before attempting these we roped ourselves together. With Naismith as leader, we took two or three fairly difficult gullies, which were found slightly trying to those of us who were still soft from the winter in town. With the delays incident to the kind of diversion which we undertook it was 1.20 before we reached the top, and I for one felt that almost enough had been taken out of me for the first day on the hills. So far, as we had been on the south-west face, little snow was encountered, although

there were considerable masses in some gullies, and at one fall there were beautiful forms of ice and snow.

It is a considerable way round from Beinn an Dothaidh to the next top, Beinn Achallader (which, fortunately, is pronounced nearly as it is spelt). The distance is about three miles, and the dip is nearly 1,000 feet. As our course now was first east and then down the north-east side of Beinn an Dothaidh, we found very much snow. There were immense fields all over the north and east sides of the hills, these being the sides of which for the rest of our journey we had to make the acquaintance. The snow was mostly soft, so soft that the foot generally sank considerably at each step, and it was by no means in condition for ordinary glissading. There was, however, one great field on which we left tracks broader and smoother than those of the renowned hob-nail boots, the descent being made in the sitting posture. These streaks were visible miles off, and would scarcely be effaced till the melting of the snow.

By the time we reached the lowest part of the dip, I had made up my mind that I would leave the party and return to the hotel, as I had been feeling far from fit. However we had some lunch, *without* any flip from the flask, and I felt able at least for the next top. It is a long and gradual slope from here to the top of Achallader, the distance being nearly two miles, and the elevation about 1,100 feet. By the time we reached the summit I was about as fit as any of the party, and quite resolved to go on.

It is a steep descent from the top of Achallader eastwards, and there was much snow. It was necessary to advance cautiously, as it was sometimes quite impossible to see how steep it might be in front. Fortunately the snow was soft enough to give a good foothold even in steep places, but with a hard crust there might be some stiff work here. There was little sliding except near the bottom of the dip, where we again left those broad tracks visible from afar. It was again a long grind, partly over snow, to the top of Ben Creachan (pronounced "a Chrachen"), the ascent being about 1,000 feet in a little over a mile and a half. On the way we surmounted a smaller top named in

the map Meall Buidhe, and given as 3,193 feet in the 6-inch map (Munro).

It was already 5 o'clock when we reached the top of Ben Creachan, and we had a long journey before us. The north face of the mountain is very steep, and there is a small loch under its cliffs, somewhat in the fashion of Lochnagar. It was necessary therefore to follow the ridge some distance eastwards before beginning the descent. When we got to the level of the loch, but a short distance to the east of it, we had a magnificent view of the great north face. Here there were immense fields of snow lying at a very steep angle, and merging in the frozen loch, also covered with snow, at the bottom. On one of the slopes there were the markings of an avalanche, which had started a short distance from the top, and, gathering in volume, had extended to the bottom of the slope. Whilst slowly traversing a snow-field, and looking towards these tracks, the writer heard what he took to be the rumbling sound of an avalanche. He was convinced of his mistake by finding himself half through the snow into a bubbling stream, whose hollow murmur had deceived his ears. When the valley had been reached, and the Water of Tulla, we were at the end of the interesting part of a very enjoyable day.

The amount of snow on the hills was much greater than we have been accustomed to in the spring meets of the Club. As the sun was shining brilliantly most of the time we had some most superb winter effects. The irregularities of the ground and protruding rocks produced deep and sharp shadows, and the scene was thus relieved from the uniform white of the snow. Some of the effects from the lower parts were particularly fine, especially from the dip below Beinn an Dothaidh, and that below Beinn Creachan.

We had still a considerable journey before us, and the hour was somewhat advanced. My three friends and I parted at the bridge over the Tulla. They started to cross the moor, so as to reach the road which would take them to Kingshouse, a long and weary tramp of about four miles over the moor and five miles over the road. They reached Kingshouse about 9.30, and I am sure were sufficiently tired. My own experience was at first a pleasant one. I

determined to keep on the north side of the Tulla, and walk along the north bank of Loch Tulla. I had a walk of about two miles and a half to the loch, and about two miles along it. I found a good path as far as the loch, and then got into most trying difficult land. I learnt afterwards, and this is a piece of information to be carefully borne in mind by all who may go that way, that the path keeps close to the water's edge. I looked for it higher up, and had two miles of as rough walking as I ever experienced. It was not exhilarating, and the fact that I was alone, and that the shades of night soon closed over me, did not add to the pleasure. I took about an hour and a quarter to this miserable two miles. I had still two miles of a good road before reaching the hotel, but this was easy work. It was certainly a pleasant change to emerge into warmth and light, and to join the large and jovial company of mountaineers assembled after their various arduous efforts.

The excursion which I have related is a very interesting one, and it could be greatly varied in the way of serious rock or snow work. We were told that the north face of Beinn Creachan offered good mountaineering opportunities if the ascent were made from the little loch. Judging from what we saw there can be no doubt of the opportunities here; but if the snow is like what we found it elsewhere, the most of that face is too steep for safety. The homeward journey to Inveroran would be greatly facilitated by having a boat brought to the west end of Loch Tulla. I suppose that by next spring the West Highland Railway will be opened, and there is to be a station at Gortan, close to the base of Beinn Creachan. If a hotel is built here, it will no doubt be the place of future meets of the Club.

## THE NORTHERN PINNACLES OF LEAGACH.

BY W. DOUGLAS.

THE mystic charm that surrounds an unclimbed peak, situated in a country where few hills have been left unscaled, exercises on the mind of the ambitious climber a magnetic influence that is irresistible. Ever since 1891, when Mr Hinxman first discovered to the Club the Northern Pinnacles of Leagach, that ridge has enjoyed this enviable reputation—a reputation which has steadily grown in wealth with every subsequent visitor to the neighbourhood. All who have been fortunate enough to survey its soaring peaks have returned with glowing accounts of its wonders,—some with fantastic sketches resembling the cutting edge of a gigantic saw, and others with marvellous tales of its family likeness to the far-famed northern arête of Sgurrnan-Gillean, thus creating an interest that only a successful ascent could allay.

What wonder, then, when Hinxman, Rennie, and I found ourselves at Strath Carron last June, that we decided, if possible, to scale its untrodden heights before leaving the district; more especially as distinct ridges on the mainland of Scotland, offering climbing of the sensational order, are not as plentiful as midges are in August.

Owing to the kind hospitality extended to us by Mr Darroch of Torridon, one of the chief difficulties in making the attempt was overcome, for no suitable quarters for climbers can be found nearer than Shieldaig, Kinlochewe, or Strath Carron.

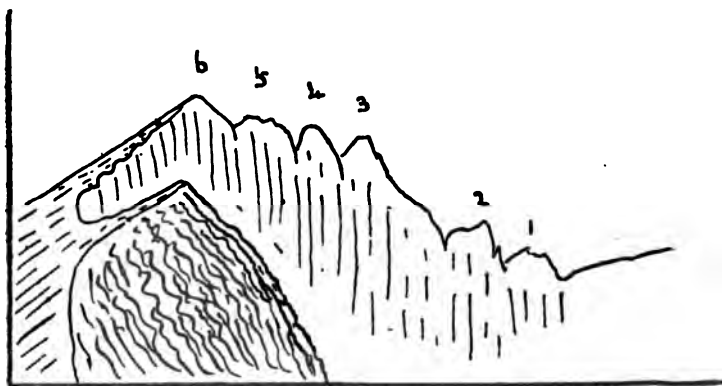
We spent the evening of 10th June at Torridon House, and by ten o'clock the following morning we were ready for the hills. It had rained all night, but now it was fine. The mist had risen to the mountain tops, and the burns roaring down the hill-sides in full spate told in eloquent language of the storm we had happily escaped.

For some distance our route lay along the top of the splendid lateral moraine which fringes the eastern side of the Corrie Glen. Then it skirted the northern slopes of Leagach, and brought us by an easy and gradual ascent



into Corrack Dearg,—as the upper portion of Glas Tholl a Bhothain is called,—at an elevation of close on 2,000 feet. The views up to this point were of the hills lying to the north and east of our track. The shapely hill of Alligin, with its cleft top and projecting horns; the bulky Beinn Dearg, still in its night-cap; and the extraordinary quartzite-topped Sail Mor, delighted the eye, until we turned into Corrack Dearg, when the savage glory of the “unclimbed ridge,” gradually unfolding itself, utterly eclipsed the attractions of its compeers.

The head-keeper, Willie Macdonald, who accompanied us at the start to point out the nearest way to our climbing ground, was delighted at being asked to join the expedition, although he subsequently characterised it as “for all the world climbing over an old tooth-comb, and a blanked old tooth-comb at that.”



The Northern Pinnacles from the Top of Leagach.

Meall Dearg—the local name for the ridge—sweeps out in a semi-circle from the main backbone of Leagach in a north-easterly direction, and, with the Fasarinen and Spidean a' Chore Leith encloses Coire na Caime, the sanctuary of the Torridon forest, and one of the most weirdly picturesque corries in Scotland. The north-east end of the ridge rises sharply from the undulating floor of the Mhic Nobuil Glen in a terraced buttress, and sweeps with a gracefully arched back to the level of the first col. Here the character of the ridge changes. The swelling

outlines of the rounded buttress, clothed with grasses and heather, now give place to a narrow spur of naked rock, with sides that in places plunge down precipitously in great red slabs of Torridon sandstone from an occasional knife edge of shattered rock, to the corries below.

The pinnacles, of which there are six, rise from the ridge in a series of irregular steps, with their steepest and longest faces turned towards the north. For convenience of reference these steps may be numbered from the lowest upwards, a system according to which Mullach an Rathain (3,358 feet) ranks as No. 6. The above diagram illustrates the position of the other pinnacles.

Had we, as I was keenly desirous of doing, made the ascent by the north-east end, no doubt an interesting climb would have been accomplished before getting on to the ridge, for the perpendicular pitches that divided the little terraces on the buttress seemed to offer some good sport. But the others considered it not worth while to expend the necessary time the ascent at that point would involve,—more especially as a climb, exactly similar in character, could be got on any one of the many hundreds of sandstone buttresses that surround the Torridon hills; and in spite of Willie's "Hoots! no man in the world could go up there at all," we decided to strike the ridge at the lowest col, and thus get to the cream of the climb by the quickest route possible.

Crossing the lower part of Corrack Dearg above the waterfall, we ascended first a long stone shoot, and then a steep shallow chimney filled with snow, which placed us on the top of the ridge at the lowest col.

Contrary to the usual character of the Torridon sandstone, we found the whole ridge in a terribly shattered and unstable condition, caused, as Hinxman explained, by the vicinity of a powerful "fault" that crosses the hill from north to south not far from this point. This fracture has left the rocks in a state not unlike that of a Chinese puzzle, pieced together, but ready to fall apart at the slightest touch.

Here the rope was put on, and almost immediately the first difficulty presented itself. An absolutely perpendicu-

lar pinnacle (No. 2), about thirty feet high, barred the way. Half of this was ascended before the leader came to a point where no secure handhold could be got. Every projection came away in his hand and thundered down into the corrie below. After removing countless blocks, fears were entertained that the whole pinnacle would be undermined, and bodily topple over. A descent was then made to the foot of it, and a new route tried a few yards along the west face. This route went easily, and sitting astride on the narrow top we decorated it with an ornamental cairn.

A rough scramble, in which we transferred a large portion of the top edge of the ridge to the corries below, placed us on the top of No. 3, without encountering any serious difficulty.

At the col between Nos. 3 and 4 there is an open space, involving a jump of about three feet across a yawning gulf. This is quite easy, for both "take off" and "landing" are good; but, all the same, it is not the place for any one afflicted with weak nerves.

On No. 4 some chimney work had to be tackled, but it was easily overcome.

In the ascent of No. 5 some awkward corners had to be negotiated, and at one place the most sensational part of the climb was encountered. In traversing along a nasty crack on the face of a sloping slab on the west side of the pinnacle, a large boulder was observed to be insecurely poised immediately above our route. Fortunately for us it retained its position until we were out of its line of fire, when a skilfully thrown stone sent it thundering down the precipice with a mighty roar.

The climb on No. 6 was perfectly easy, and at 2.30 we stood on the top of the final pinnacle.

The ridge in places was exceeding narrow, and the pinnacles were fairly steep on their north, east, and west sides; but were it not for the unstable condition of the whole structure, the climb would have been a very simple affair. No doubt, like all other climbs of a similar nature, it will become easier with every fresh ascent; but I would have considered it foolhardy to have made

the ascent in the condition we found it without the aid of the rope.

The view from the top was limited in extent. The mountain we were on formed the chief feature in the landscape. The jagged tops of the Fasarinen, leading up to the symmetrical white cone of Spidean a' Choire Leith, made a bold, vigorous, though somewhat hard, picture in itself,—a hardness which was intensified by contrast with the light and airy scenes around us, where gauzy wisps of mist were lightly kissing the tops of the encircling mountain groups as they went sweeping silently along on the wings of the wind, here showing a graceful peak, there blotting one out, and ever changing their aspect with kaleidoscopic effect.

Unfortunately, before a photograph of the ridge in profile was secured, the mist came down upon us, and the accompanying illustration of the Third Pinnacle, as seen from the Fourth, shows merely one of the easiest bits on the whole ridge.

After a short halt we descended to lower levels by the great stone shoot, that falls from the ridge, a few hundred yards west of the cairn, almost all the way to the back door of the house known as the Torridon Inn. Partly running with long steps down this steep scree slope, and partly riding on the top of small avalanches of stones, we reached the "inn" at 3.40. Half an hour later we had begun our long tramp through the hills between Meall a' Chinn Deirg and Sgurr Ruadh to Strath Carron Hotel, and accomplished the distance in the excellent time of a few minutes under four hours. The day, the hill, the climb, and not forgetting ourselves, were voted a great success.

## SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN BOTANY.

BY PROFESSOR BOWER.

“It’s no in haunts o’ pleasure within the gaudy toun  
That this vegetable treasure is able to be pu’n.”

— *The Flourrie.*

THE motives which lead men to climb hills have from time to time been discussed in this journal, and sufficiently analysed; but that which weighs most with the writer of these lines has not yet received its due recognition—it is the observation and collection of the plants which are found only on the higher levels. It is to be hoped that no botanist is callous to the beauties of the scenery, or the invigorating effect of the mountain air; because he happens to be interested in plants he does not necessarily part with the ordinary faculties and enjoyments of healthy men, indeed the better cragsman he is, the greater is his chance of success. It must, however, be admitted that the search for plants fixes the eyes upon the ground, and on the level the botanist when on the war-path usually presents accordingly a dejected appearance. But on the mountain side the work should all be done going up hill, and every practical collector knows that on the higher levels he should look upwards if he wishes to see his quarry: it is partly this, combined with the beauties of scenery, and zestful air and exercise, which gives to work on the mountains its superiority over all other field botany.

The appearance of the plants themselves is another attractive feature. Who has ever looked into the true blue eye of the mountain Speedwell without feeling it to be one of Nature’s most perfect works. The depth of colour, the size, the general attractiveness of the mountain flowers, are matters duly appreciated by the lay public; and I venture to assert that the professional botanist is none the less sensitive to their effect because he happens at times to see a little step further in the science than his lay brethren.

But there are other grounds for taking an interest in our Scottish mountain plants; they form a little flora which appears only on the higher levels, isolated, like little

colonies, on island-peaks dotted through the great sea of lower land-levels. These mountain species might be called the old aristocracy of our native plants: alas! a gradually decaying and vanishing minority. I will briefly explain myself. When any one who is well acquainted with the rarer plants upon our Scottish mountains travels in Norway, the plants which he meets will almost all be old friends. On a recent visit to Norway by the Scottish Alpine Botanical Society, only a little over twenty species of flowering plants were observed which were not included also in the Scottish Flora. But the rare plants of our mountain tops are frequently found in Norway by the acre, and at low levels; thus our small and restricted Alpine Flora is near akin to the general vegetation of the Scandinavian Peninsular. How then did the plants come to be dotted down upon our isolated peaks? The explanation appears to be that during the Ice age, of which such abundant evidence is to be found among the Scottish hills, the Alpine Flora, characteristic of a rigorous climate, was widely spread over the lower levels of our country. As the climate became milder, and the ice left us, other plants often of larger growth and better suited to the more genial conditions, encroached upon the lower levels, the smaller Alpine species gradually retired to the higher levels, where they are now found, flourishing best as a rule on rocky cliffs facing the north. Thus the old aristocracy has been forced to give way under the changing conditions to the encroachments of the lowland democracy. There is quite a pathetic interest in looking upon the few remaining specimens of a species—sometimes so few that the individuals can almost be counted—these being the last remnants in our islands of a species which has probably in former times been plentiful enough.

But even these factors, the exhilaration of the scenery and air, the beauty of the plants, their variety and history, are not all that make up the pleasure of Alpine Botany. There is also the biological interest of the plants themselves. The peculiar conditions under which they live have impressed themselves upon the Alpine plants in many ways. Exposed to sudden changes of temperature and

moisture such as lowland plants seldom experience, they have acquired special modifications of form and structure to enable them to maintain themselves alive in their rigorous home. We see from below, after a week perhaps of cloudy and wet weather, during which the hill-tops have been constantly wreathed in dripping mists, how, in an hour the sky may clear, and brilliant summer sunshine burst upon the scene. Imagine the condition of a mountain plant at such a time; saturated with moisture, and with dripping surface, it may suddenly be exposed to a blaze of light, to scorching heat, and consequent rapid drying. To many lowland plants such a change would mean certain death. Against these risks mountain plants are protected in various ways: some have a small leaf area with structural arrangements for preventing too ready loss of water, as is the case with the Heath family; others show hairy or woolly coverings of the leaves, as *Salix zapponum* and *Cerastium alpinum*; others show a covering of glaucous wax over the leaves, as in some mountain grasses; in others, again, there is a strange disproportion between the exposed shoot and the root system; any one who pulls up a plant of *Silene acaulis* will be struck by its stunted shrubby growth, small leaf surface, and inordinately long roots, which penetrate far into the fissures of its rocky perch; it may be selected as an excellent type of a mountain plant, while it is one of the most hardy and successful.

Everybody is nowadays aware that the importance of colouring in flowers is for the attraction of insects, whose visits lead to pollination. The larger size and showy colouring of the mountain flowers will have the effect of making them the more obvious from a distance to the comparatively few insects which venture upwards to the higher levels; thus we have a ready explanation of this well-known fact. But in many cases the risk of non-pollination in various ways has been found too great, and other and more direct means of propagation have been resorted to: one of the most frequent is the formation of bulbils. These vegetative buds which may grow directly into new plants are found in many Alpine species, and are found to be more and more common among Northern

plants as we pass to the Arctic Circle. On our own hills familiar examples are seen in *Festuca vivipara*, and other grasses; in *Polygonum viviparum*, and in *Saxifraga cernua*. From these examples it will then be seen that as a study of adaptations Alpine Botany possesses peculiar attractions.

Artists are often a subject of the envy of less favoured mortals on account of their happy lot, which combines the pleasure of seeking out and observing the beautiful things of the country with the sense of doing the duty which falls upon them as men. I think I have probably said enough to show that botanists are also men to be envied. I am not sure that I would exchange the delightful duties of a botanist pursuing his profession upon one of the higher Scottish mountains, even for the artist's enviable lot. But for any intelligent-minded man the subject is worth pursuit, and, after all, little knowledge is needed to make the observation of mountain plants an additional joy to members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.



## BEN LOMOND.

BY A. ERNEST MAYLARD.

POSSIBLY without exception Ben Lomond possesses the proud distinction of being one of the most widely known and most popularly frequented of our Scottish mountains. Its name transcends in familiarity that of any of its Highland compeers, and it occupies a geographical situation peculiarly favourable for receiving a very wide and constant recognition. That Ben Lomond's fame is likely rather to increase than diminish seems only too probable; for if—ill-fated day!—a big hotel should crown his lofty summit, and a railway riddle his rugged sides, who in the wide world from San Francisco to Yokohama will not know of the Scottish Rigi!

Whether Ben Lomond fully deserves the popularity it possesses, when compared with many another of its Highland neighbours, may justly be open to question; and there are not a few who would very jealously regard many a less known, and less frequently visited mountain, away in some secluded part of the country, when considered in comparison. However, it is no part of mine to detract from the many true merits that Ben Lomond has. He has afforded pleasure to thousands of tourists. He has formed the theme of the poet as he has the subject of the painter. The preacher has found him a fit emblem for illustration. The climber has recorded his rambles in diaries and journals; and like all claimants to fame and popularity he has not escaped the facile pen of the humourist.

A mountain possesses many aspects from which it may be viewed. Indeed, it may be said that the aspects are as many and as varied as the interests of those who show any special regard for the subject. The tourist looks upon a mountain much in the same light as he regards any other object of peculiar interest—merely as something to be done, and that too in as easy a way as possible. The climber rather rejoices in the fact of accomplishing something that has not hitherto been done, and that by a way as difficult as possible. The poet loves the mountain in

proportion to the sublimity of the sentiment which it awakens within his soul; and the painter, in like proportion, to the grandeur in colour and outline which appeal to his artistic taste. So, then, is it possible to multiply the points of view from which every mountain may be considered. Ben Lomond can justly lay claim to the regard of every one of these varied interests.

It is not within my function, much less is it within my power, to regard Ben Lomond from any other standpoint than that of the climber; but I should be doing ill justice to the latter if I did not allow that, in many instances, he is the happy possessor of propensities above those which are purely physical. Although the mountaineer must possess a real pleasure for the pursuit of climbing itself, he may and often does combine with his exercise a real love for nature in its broadest aspects. Sentiments of the most varied character are awakened as he wends his way upwards towards the summit. He need be no writer of prose or poetry, no handler of the painter's brush or the geologist's hammer, to experience within him the pleasures to which he is otherwise unable to give practical expression. He climbs not only because he feels the exercise to be healthful and invigorating, but because he enjoys the exquisite freshness of the air, the varied sounds in nature around him, and, when on the summit, that sublime peace and stillness which give such feelings of rest and repose. Oh! thrice happy he, who, worried with the cares and anxieties of the world, knows how and is able thus to enjoy creation, and in harmonious silence reverence its Creator. But I am wandering into the merits of climbing itself, when my subject rather is the object to be climbed. However, I do Ben Lomond no little honour when I say that he too is capable of awakening all those pure sentiments and noble thoughts which so many a true climber loves to experience.

In endeavouring to give an historical sketch of the ascents of Ben Lomond, and other points of interest connected with the mountain, no little difficulty is encountered. The fact that mountaineering is such a modern sport, reference to ascents, &c., are only to be found in

scattered accounts of visits to Scotland by men at various times and seasons.

One of the earliest narrated attempts to ascend Ben Lomond strangely finds its record in a poem inscribed on a pane of glass in the old inn of Tarbet. The writer had been waiting two days for an opportunity of making the ascent, but the clouds so persistently covered the mountain that only once was it visible, and that for a few minutes. The days, however, were not ill-spent, for the climber for the time being turned poet and inscribed these lines on 4th July 1785:—

\* “Stranger, if o'er this pane of glass, perchance  
 Thy roving eye should cast a casual glance,  
 If taste for grandeur or the dread sublime  
 Prompt thee Ben Lomond's fearful height to climb,  
 Here gaze attentive, nor with scorn refuse,  
 The friendly rhymings of a tavern muse.  
 For thee that muse this rude inscription plann'd,  
 Prompted for thee her humble poet's hand.  
 Heed thou the Poet, he thy steps shall lead  
 Safe o'er yon towering hill's aspiring head ;  
 Attentive then to this informing lay,  
 Read how he dictates, as he points the way.  
 Trust not at first a quick adventurous pace,  
 Six miles its top points gradual from the base.  
 Up the high rise with panting haste I pass'd  
 And gained the long laborious steep at last.  
 More prudent thou, when once you pass the deep,  
 With measured pace, and slow, ascend the lengthened steep ;  
 Oft stay thy steps, oft taste the cordial drop,  
 And rest, O rest, long, long upon the top.  
 There hail the breezes, nor with toilsome haste  
 Down the rough slope thy precious vigour waste.  
 So shall thy wandering sight at once survey  
 Vales, lakes, woods, mountains, islands, rocks, and sea,  
 Huge hills that heaped in crowded order stand,  
 Stretched o'er the northern and the western land ;  
 Vast lumpy groups, while Ben, who often shrouds  
 His loftier summits in a veil of clouds,  
 High o'er the rest displays superior state,  
 In proud pre-eminence sublimely great.  
 One side all awful to the gazing eye,

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\* A Tour in England and Scotland," in 1785, by an English Gentleman [Thomas Newte]. London : 1788, p. 110.

Presents a steep three hundred fathoms high ;  
 The scene tremendous shocks the startled sense,  
 With all the pomp of dread magnificence :  
 All these, and more, shalt thou transported see,  
 And own a faithful monitor in me."\*

In most of the earlier references to Ben Lomond there is a tendency to magnify the difficulties of the ascent. The usual route from Rowardennan, by the southern shoulder, is, as John MacCulloch † very truly described it in 1811, "an ascent without toil or difficulty : a mere walk of pleasure." But contrast this with the ascent which John Stoddart ‡ describes in 1799. "I deviated," he writes, "very much from the easiest path, which lies along a green ridge very conspicuous from below, but anyone who has climbed such a mountain must know how greatly its breaks and chasms deceive the eye. That which you look toward as an unbroken surface, upon your approach appears divided by impassable valleys : an unheard rill becomes a roaring torrent, and a gentle slope is found to be an unscalable cliff." In 1822 Mary Howitt writes in her *Autobiography* : "We found the ascent from Rowardennan a laborious task of four hours. We waded deep in heather, crossed rocky and impetuous torrents, laboured up acclivities only to see unsuspected hollows which must be descended. The bogs which intercepted our course every few yards required a good deal of boldness, contrivance, and circumspection to pass." Her description of the descent is not less awe-striking. "Descending below the region of cloud, we found we had again diverged, but continued our way, sometimes stopped by precipices, sometimes by torrents, and sometimes fearful of being engulfed in the tottering bogs, and all the time sinking deep in the wet spongy moss."

The difficulties or dangers connected with any ascent bears a pretty constant ratio to the physical propensities of the climber and his powers of imagination. What one will

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\* The proprietor of the present hotel at Tarbet informs me that no such pane of glass is to be found in the new building.

† "The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland between the years 1811-21," Vol. I., p. 203. 4 vols. 1824.

‡ "Remarks on Local Scenery and Manners in Scotland during the years 1799 and 1800." 2 vols. London, 1801.

accomplish with ease, another will only overcome with difficulty. What in the realistic mind of one will be merely a rippling burn, will become in the fanciful imagination of another a roaring torrent. So it would seem that the ascent of Ben Lomond to these earlier climbers was either easy or difficult, safe or dangerous, according to the physical and mental propensities possessed by the individual. It would not be like a gallant British soldier if he did not think lightly of an ascent of Ben Lomond by the popular route ; but possibly Colonel Hawker\* a little overrated the ease of the climb, when he wrote in 1813, "In summer ladies very commonly go up, and sometimes take with them a piper and other apparatus for dancing." He would probably have been nearer the truth if he had added that they more frequently, however, sat down than danced when they reached the summit !

Almost without exception the earlier recorded ascents were by the now well-known route from Rowardennan. Another recognised and not unfrequently patronised route is from Rowchoish. It is steeper, but possesses no material difficulty. It is usual to cross the loch from Taret. This would appear to have been the route contemplated by the writer of the lines already quoted ; if so, it is strange that it appears as the earliest approach to the summit recorded.

The third route, which has a recognised popularity, is from the north-east or Aberfoyle side of the mountain. It entails a long walk before the ascent is commenced. The climb is not steep, and the summit is reached by first striking the southern shoulder. This part of the route is the same as that from Rowardennan. Considered from a tourist's point of view, its chief advantage lies in the beautiful scenery that is unfolded to the eye as the climber makes his way upwards.

While these are the three ascents which every guide-book will be found to describe, it need hardly be said that a mountain like Ben Lomond may have its summit approached from any point of the compass. But while thus so widely accessible, it claims the creditable distinction of

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\* "Diary," Vol. I., p. 59. London, 1813.

possessing, on the one hand, a route so easy that any one on foot or on the back of a pony can reach the top ; and, on the other, one so difficult that the most experienced mountaineer will find his powers severely taxed.

The Ben Lomond of the winter climber is an object of totally different character to the Ben Lomond of the summer tourist. Comparatively few know the beauties of the noble Ben "when capped by snow-arête and massive cornices, and with long icicles hanging from every rock."

It is from the month of November to that of May that some of the most interesting climbing may be had. Situated, however, so near the west coast, much variation will naturally exist in the state of the mountain. A mild wet season will give very little of a true wintry garb to the Ben ; but assuming that the season has been favourable, and that plenty of snow has fallen, very few more enjoyable climbs can be had than that on the north-east precipitous face.

Before describing this route, it is interesting to note that in Colonel Hawker's "Diary" already referred to, we have an account of one of the earliest winter ascents. The Colonel apparently ascended by the Rowardennan route. He writes: "To get to the most elevated point of the shoulder we found impossible, as the last fifty yards was a solid sheet of ice, and indeed for more than the last half mile we travelled in perfect misery and imminent danger. We were literally obliged to take knives and to cut foot-steps in the frozen snow, and of course obliged to crawl all the way on our hands, knees, and toes, all of which were benumbed with cold ; and were repeatedly in danger of slipping in places where one false step would have been certain destruction. The going up, however, was comparatively nothing to the coming down, in which our posteriors and heels relieved the duty performed by our toes and knees. . . . We had some very providential escapes, and on our getting below the frozen atmosphere, and again in safety, my guide told us that 'had we slipped nothing could have stopped us.'" This ascent was made on 12th November 1812, and if the Colonel's description be not an exaggerated one, it speaks well for his pluck and persever-

ance, in the absence of such modern appurtenances as would have rendered the route to a climber of to-day devoid of danger, and comparatively free from difficulty.

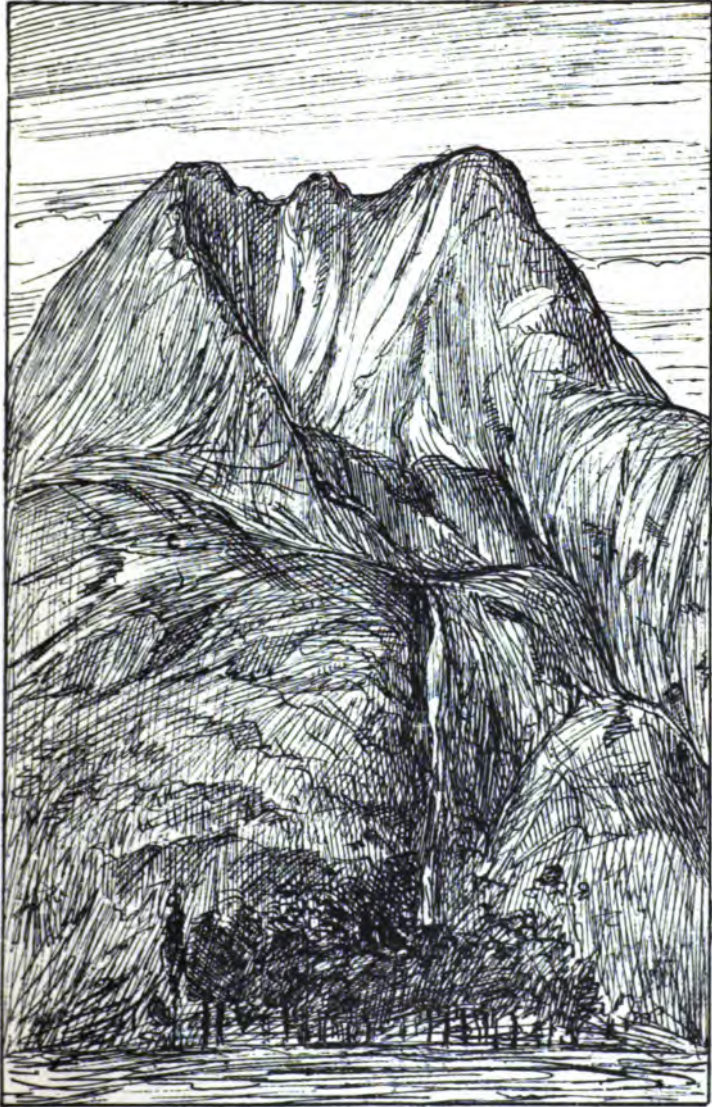
As already indicated, the truly typical climb that an Alpine mountaineer relishes is to be had on the north-east or corrie face of the Ben. Here, under favourable conditions, the snow forms fields of considerable extent and declivity, reaching downwards from the summit, sometimes for hundreds of feet, in unbroken slopes. These afford excellent sport for step-cutting in the ascent, and give equal pleasure in good glissading coming down. Claude Wilson,\* writing in *Mountaineering*, says, "I have indulged in one of the longest glissades I can remember on the east slopes of Ben Lomond."

To understand the features of this north-east face, it should be remembered that the long southern slope from Rowardennan ends at the summit in what the guide-books aptly term "a demicrater." As the observer, facing northwards, gazes downwards from the summit, he sees this crater bounded on the east by one shoulder, and on the west by another. These embrace the corrie. The best snow slopes are on the east face of the west shoulder, while precipitous rocks form the west face of the east shoulder. The accompanying sketch (Fig. 1) shows the corrie as viewed from the head of Glen Dubh, just before commencing the ascent. From this point Ben Lomond seems to have three summits, but the real top is to the right. The rocks on the corrie side of the east shoulder are in places perpendicular, but there are various steep gullies and other places which in mountaineering language will sometimes "go."

The approach to the north-east face is from Aberfoyle, and entails about fourteen or fifteen miles of walking before the base of the corrie is reached. Seven miles of this can be driven over, that is from Aberfoyle to Blaruskinn or, as it is sometimes called Teapot Inn. From this point only a track exists, and must be traversed on foot, although the map most delusively suggests a road as far as Comer. On

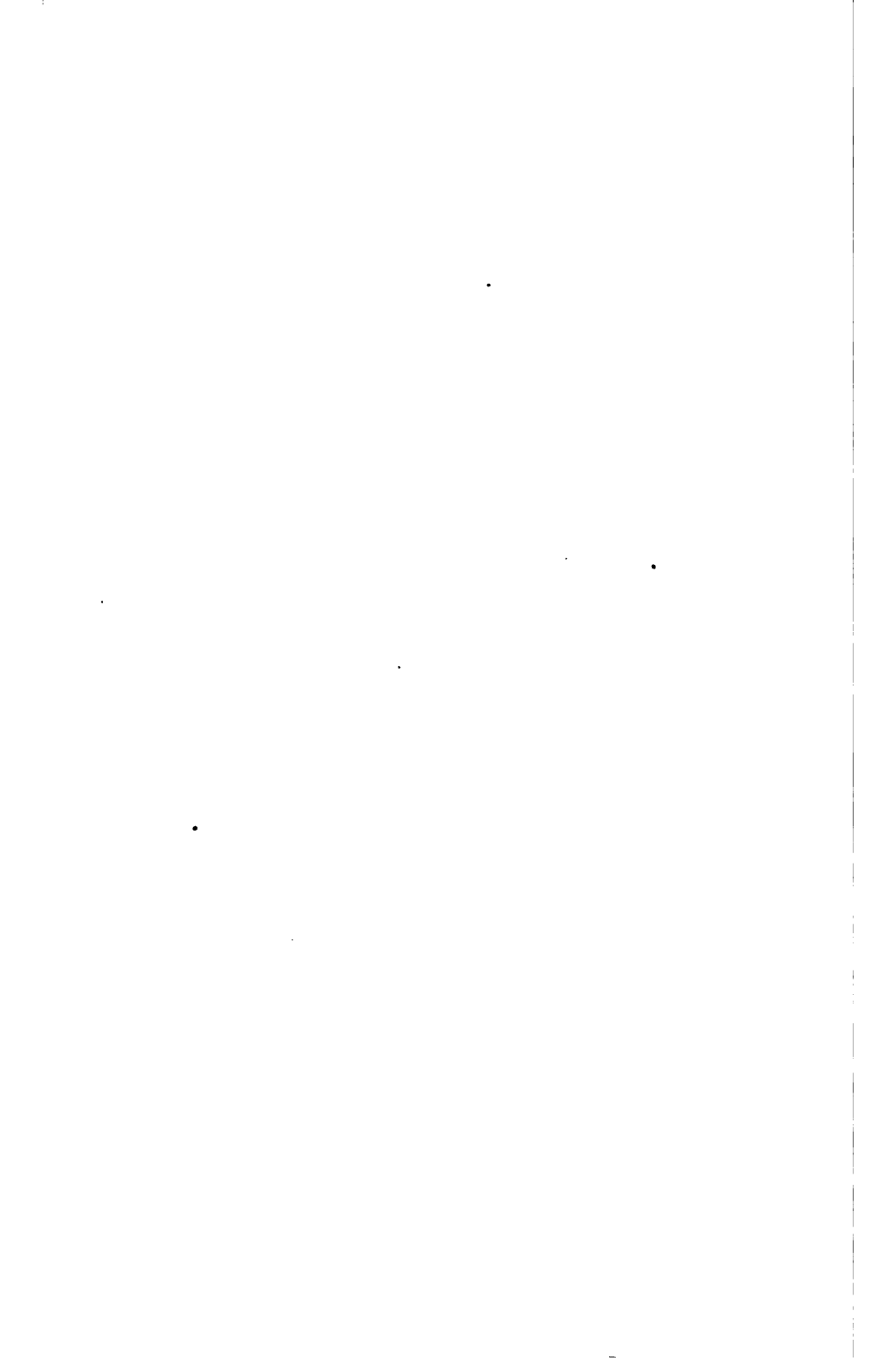
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\* "The All England Series," p. 19.



BEN LOMOND FROM THE HEAD OF GLEN DUBH.—FIG. 1





a clear day the first glimpse of the Ben obtained, as the shoulder of Ben Dubh is turned and Glen Dubh entered, is extremely imposing (*see Fig. 2*). Mantled with snow from



BEN LOMOND FROM THE HEAD OF GLEN DUBH.—FIG. 2

summit to base, as Mr Maclay and I saw it one fine February morning last winter, it presented a truly Alpine appearance. The corrie proper is not entered until about a thousand feet of very “humpy-bumpy” walking is accomplished. On the left is then seen the rocky escarpments of the eastern boundary of the corrie, and in front and to the right are steep snow slopes which lead upwards to the summit. The gradient of these snow slopes is comparatively easy, and in the condition which we found them neither rope nor axe were needed. Both would however be required if some of the rocks and the steeper gullies in front and to the east are to be attempted. Glissading can be freely indulged in, for not only are the slopes long and not too steep, but there

are no precipitous terminations over which a bad fall might be had.

This route, I think, should be known as the "Corrie" one, so as not to confound it with the more popularly recognised route from Aberfoyle. The latter I have described as being practically as easy as the ascent from Rowardennan.

No description of Ben Lomond would be complete without a reference to what can be seen from the summit. As many of us know, one may too frequently see nothing ! But when everything can be seen, what a glorious panorama unfolds itself to the observer

"Of hills and dales, of firths and winding shores !"

The sensations invoked are not solely those connected with the pleasures of vision. The vast picture, so varied in light and shade, in colour and outline, calls forth the major sentiments of awe and admiration. "The scene which is laid open," says Stoddart, "is not indeed picturesque, for it defies the pencil; but nobly poetical, as it excites the sensations of true sublimity."

On a clear day, the observer looking towards the south finds his vision limited by nothing but the far distant horizon. But as he turns slightly westwards, he sees the Arran hills grandly rising from the waters of the Firth of Clyde; and slightly to the east, the rounded summit of Tinto, amid many another member of the Lowland group. Turning then to the west, and sweeping the eye around all the points of the compass that lie north of east and west, a vast ocean of mountains is seen separated here and there by deep glens, and looking like "the perturbed waves of a mighty chaos." It would be invidious to name all the mountains, glens, lochs, and low lying lands which can be seen from the summit. A mere enumeration would not help the observer, nor does space here admit of a topographical description. Suffice it to say that between Ben Lui and Ben More, and nearer the former, Ben Nevis can be seen; beyond Ben Vorlich, Ben Ime, and The Cobbler are seen the twin peaks of Cruachan; Ben Vorlich of Loch Earn rises to the left of Ben Venue, and farther away in a

direction more north Ben Lawers towers conspicuously above his neighbours. More south of east are seen Stirling Castle and Wallace's Monument ; while in the still greater distance looms the capital, with Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. Still more southerly a dark dirty brown cloud hangs heavily over an invisible conglomeration of "toil, grime, and glitter," with but two objects piercing the dense canopy of smoke—the University Tower and Tennant's Stalk !

It would be doing ill justice to Ben Lomond if we allowed that the only joys he has in store for us are those connected with a cloudless sky and a clear atmosphere. When distant views of land and water are not possible, the clouds above, around, and even below us, may form cloudscapes of the most beautiful and varied character. Stoddart, in the account of his ascent, says, that just as he left the summit "black clouds began to collect in the north, and rolling in their pitchy mantle the mountains in that direction, while the setting sun gilded those in the west, and produced the most striking and admirable contrast." Lord Teignmouth,\* in his Sketches, gives an account of the influence of mountains in attracting clouds, as once witnessed by him on the summit of Ben Lomond. A line of black clouds appeared advancing from the west, and at length gathered around the summits of the numerous mountains on the opposite side of the lake, but left the interval quite clear. They then disengaged themselves from the mountains, and separately advanced across the lake to the summit of the Ben, where "they congregated into a dense mass, reddened by the beams of the setting sun, crowning the mountains as with a resplendent diadem, were again dislodged, and, bursting into fragments, floated like so many islands towards the distant Grampians." Instances might be multiplied, not only of the ever-changing cloudscapes, but of the many varied and beautiful mist effects which are so exclusively features of our Scottish mountains.

That which has conduced so largely to Ben Lomond's popularity—its conspicuous position—has equally served to

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\* "Sketches of the Coasts and Islands of Scotland," Vol. II. Edinburgh, 1836.

expose him to the genial satire of the humourist. Burnand\* became so haunted by the constantly recurring reminder, which no tourist fails either to get or to give as he travels to the coast by rail, river, or road, that to him the very sight of Ben Lomond became a perfect *bête noir*. In his eager endeavour to get somewhere where he could not be told he would see Ben Lomond, he betook himself to a friend's house at Kilmarnock. Alas! he might as well have been at Dumbarton. "Only his inherent politeness prevented him from shedding the blood of his host, a man of otherwise exemplary character and amiable disposition, who, in an evil moment, revealed the fact that a view of Ben Lomond was attached to his residence!"

Ben Lomond, although so near us, has not, judging from the records in our *Journal*, been the object of any very serious attacks. Only twice is there any reference to ascents,† yet there are gullies and rock faces stiff enough to tax the skill of the most experienced climber. Anyone of these is as worthy of a name as Nicolson's Shoot on Sgurrnan-Gillean, or the Black Shoot on Ben Eunaich. It is to be hoped that familiarity has not bred contempt, and that climbers, unlike poor Burnand, will be attracted rather than repelled. No Glasgow man will ever again think lightly of his familiar Ben, if he has once gazed on the grand spectacle he presents when viewed from his northern base on some fine frosty morning in winter or early spring. The north-east face of Ben Lomond ranks with so many other of our north-east faces in presenting for winter ascents some of the most truly Alpine work for mountaineers.

I must not conclude this article without expressing my indebtedness to Mr William Douglas for the many references he was good enough to place at my disposal.

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\* "Happy Thoughts."

† Vol. I., p. 123 and 319.

TO ALL INGENUOUSLY ELABORATE STUDENTS IN THE MOST DIVINE MYSTERIES OF THE OROMANIACAL QUEST: AN ACCOUNT, IN WHICH IS SET FORTH THE EMINENT SECRETS OF THE ADEPTS; WHEREUNTO IS ADDED A PERFECT AND FULL DISCOVERIE OF THE WAY TO ATTAIN TO THE PHILOSOPHERS HEAVENLY CHAOS.

AFTER that the three most respectable travellers and searchers after vast protuberances of the earth, in the land of the Caledones, had with haste, joyousness, and precision arrived at those parts, where with observation snow-covered mountains, with rocks and ice in abundance may be perceived; also many other things which commend themselves to true worshippers of that most mystagorical and delectable pursuit,—the oromaniacal Quest into the secret and hidden mysteries of sublime mountains,—they at once determined to so haste, walk, run, climb, and otherwise betake themselves to the upper parts of the hills, that by continual patience, a new entrance towards the topmost pinnacle should be discovered, which should in all respects yield that quintessential pleasure they believed could be extracted from such pursuit of the enigmatical Process.

There be, however, many who deny that the Quint-essence of the true enjoyment can so be attained. Rather, do these argue does it reside in that subtile science, the striking of a ball violently with a stick, but this also is a mystery; therefore I will not launch my little skiff further into the wide ocean of this dispute, neither will I argue with such fellows, for do they not offend philosophically and therefore should be admonished to the end that they meddle not with the quest of the true Brethren.

Thou askest why? I say thou hast not tasted of these things! Hast thou not tarried with those that are below, or ascending; hast thou not proceeded upwards by help of mules, jackasses, and other auxiliaries, or even in those swift luxurious and delectable vehicles drawn by the demon of water ten times heated in the furnace? I bid

thee search that treasure-house of clouds, fountains, fogs, and steep places, on thine own ten toes, and peradventure thou shalt find that which is above resembleth not that which is beneath, neither are the high places of the earth like unto the groves, and hedgerows, or the places where people do most congregate, in towns, villages, courts, and gardens, to the end that they may hold discourse, spagyrising, philosophising, lanternising, whereby is the engendering of fools, a most mystical matter, furthered—also the concocting of many pocalutions; truly these fellows are vulgar tosspots, they attain not the first Matter, nor the whole operation of the Work.

But return we to our purpose. When our three travellers had arrived at that place in the northern land, high *Castrum Guillelmi*, they tarried there awhile, seeking diligently if perchance even in that land, the great Mystery, the quintessential Pleasure of devout Philosophers, could by searching be attained. "Good," said they; "now are we near the Fulfilment, the Entrance into secret Places, the Consummation, the Marriage of the Impossible with the Real." So it came to pass, that on the day following, early and with great joyousness, did they start forth by the straight road. Nor did they issue forth unprepared, for they bore with them the proper, peculiar, fit, exact, and lawful insignia of the brotherhood, a flaxen rope coiled even as the mystic serpent, likewise staves curiously shapen did they take in their hands, for, "Peradventure," said they, "the way may be steep and full of toil, the dangers many; behold! go we not forth in a savage land, where liveth the green dragon, spoken of by the ingenious J. J. Scheuchzerus, doctor of medicine, what time he did wander in the far country of the *Helvetii*. Good, now come we to it! for saith not Aristotle in his *Phisicks*, '*Ab actionibus procedit speculatio*,'—now are all things propitious, let us seek the oracle; the sun shines out bravely, soon shall we come to the high places where abideth the great water, the *Lochan Meall an't Suidhe*. It shall we leave on the dexter hand, for the path lieth not there but onwards, straight without twist or turn along the valley at the feet of the red Mountains, whose hue is multiplied, transmuted, and purified even unto

seven times seven by the ruddy fire of Sol the golden, when he goeth down at eventide into the deep waters of the western sea.

But let not these things turn us from the true Quest. Over against, and opposite, across the valley, shall we see the great Mountain, the Immensity of Greatness, the majestic Silence, the prodigious Dampness, the Height, the Depth, in shape like a great Dome, whereof the base is in the floods and the waters, whence issueth forth delectable springs, welling up for ever, continually ascending, yet ever flowing downwards; here perchance shall we find the Mystery of the heavenly Chaos and the great Abyss, the way to attain to Happiness, even the quintessential, mystagorical Delight and oromaniacal Quest of the true Philosophers.

Thus did they fare onward toward the midst of the valley placed between the red Hill and the great Mountain. Then behold before them rose hugeous rocks and bulky stones standing on end facing to the north, where the ice and snow tarry from one winter even until the following, for in those places the sun shines not, neither are found the comfortable soft and juicy breezes of the south; there the brood of the black Crow and the white vapours and comprehensive congelations of the *Mistus Scotorum* are produced. So were the three Brethren sore amazed, but as yet could see not even the first matter of the Work.

"See," said one, "the way leadeth upward, for doth not a mighty petrolific ridge, full of points, towers, and pinnacles, descend from above, whereon the pursuit may be pursued, the operation of the great work may be begun? First must we fashion in the snow and ice great stairs of steps, by the aid of which, through prolongation, extension, reduplication, and multiplication, shall we be brought on to the ridge, even at the beginning."

So did they enter upon the work, multiplying the steps in a certain mystic manner which had been revealed to them; and it came to pass that they attained at last on to the ridge, whereon might be seen far above, towers, pinnacles, points, and other pleasant places, suitable and useful for the furtherance of the Quest.



First did they traverse a narrow edge of snow fashioned by the wind. Then said one, "Follow me, but look not either to the right or to the left for there lieth the Abyss." So they followed him, and saw how that far above the heavens were separated from the white snow, which was curled and twisted, also falling overhanging and extended, so that they could see no way whereby they might pass through.

But above and beyond lay the summit of the great Mountain where clouds are concocted in the mystic furnace, there also may be seen in the proper season the whole Operation of the Sons of Wisdom, the great Procession, and the Generation of Storms, the Marriage of the Stars, and the Seven Circulations of the Elements. So did they fare onwards; and by inspection were they aware how others had travelled on the same way, for on the stoncs and rocks were there certain petrographical scrapings and curious markings deeply graven, and very evident. But presently came they to a great rock, a majestic tower; here were they perforce compelled to depart to the right hand, placing themselves in steep and perilous positions on slopes of ice, which downwards seemed to end in the empty air, even in the great void. Then were the Three exceeding joyful, for is it not written in the secret books of the Brethren, many operations must they perform amidst the great mountains on the snowy ice, especially, particularly, and creditably, ere they be so transmuted, mystagorified, and metagabolised, that they may be numbered with the True, the Pious, the Elect, even amongst those who are considered worthy of the most mystical and allegorical symbol A. C., by many variously interpreted. For some hold that it signifies "Adepti Cragorum," whilst others "Angelorum Confederatio," for these latter maintain that the Quest can only be rightly pursued, or satisfactorily continued by the aid of wings; but in this matter are they deceived, and argue foolishly after the wisdom of the flesh.

Still all things have an end at last,—good Wine, Pinnacles, Spires, cabalistic Emblems, and oromaniacal Wanderings, even the green Sauce of the philosophers and the pythagoric Mustard of the Great Master himself,

spoken of by Alcofribas Nasier in his merrie work. So did the Three find the perilous passage across the headlong steep finish. Then did they pass onwards to the Labyrinth, the rocky Chaos, and greatly did they marvel at the exceeding steepness thereof; so that only by great perseverance, turning now to right and now to left, were they able to break themselves free from the bonds and entanglements, and climb sagaciously upwards to the summit of the great tower. Whereon they did find a heaped up accumulation of stones, a mystic pyramid, set there doubtless by a former seeker in the work, to the end that true searchers might not despair, but continue the matter of the work with fresh hope and industry. But when they had gazed for a short space, they perceived how that the Consummation, the great Fulfilment, was nigh at hand. Behind, and far below, imprinted in the snow were the steps by which they had mounted upwards, winding now this way now that, looking like scarce seen veins in finest marble. But before them lay the narrow Way, the Ridge, the Cleft, and the white Slope, leading even unto the utmost height, the sovereign summit of the mighty Mountain.

Thither therefore did their footsteps trend. First did they pass along the narrow Way, treading with exceeding care and exactness, for there was but foothold for one alone, the path being no broader than a man's hand. Next did they descend into the Cleft, which thing is also emblematical and symbolical of the precious secret of all philosophies, for without this key can no one unlock the Hermetic Garden, the Arcanum of the alchemists, spoken of by Paracelsus in his Archidoxis.

But now before them stretched the white Slope, which lay beneath the topmost summit, and steeper became the path, going upwards with a great steepness; and now whilst the three travellers toil and seek, endeavouring to meet the perils of the way, yet almost despairing; lo! from out the clouds a rope descended, and a voice was heard:—"Fear not, now have ye attained to the Consummation, enter into the mystagorical, quintessential, and delectable pleasure-house of devout Oromaniacs."

And what joy, think ye, did they feel after the exceeding long and troublous ascent?—after scrambling, slipping, pulling, pushing, lifting, gasping, looking, hoping, despairing, climbing, holding on, falling off, trying, puffing, loosing, gathering, talking, stepping, grumbling, anathematizing, scraping, hacking, bumping, jogging, overturning, hunting, straddling,—for know you that by these methods alone are the most divine mysteries of the Quest reached.

So at last they came even unto the very topmost point, and were aware how that priests from the heavenly Temple, which is placed on the summit of the mountain, had come forth to guide them, without further difficulty, across a level plain of snow to the gates of the Temple itself. But the perils of the way were not yet ended. At the threshold were there many steps leading down and underground to the Temple's innermost recesses, through a domed vault or archway built of the plastered snow. Now were these steps both slippery and very treacherous, having been fashioned in a truly sopho-spagyric manner, likewise did they seem reduplicated and multiplied even by the Pythagorical Tetrad. Moreover, above the portal were there magical characters engraven, even after the same fashion as those seen by the wise Pantagrue at the time when he sought the Oracle of the Bottle in the land of Lanterns. But beyond the portal all was darkness, and the Three did stumble now one way and now another, so that they did greatly fear even that at this very end of their Quest, dangers awaited them far worse than those on the steep places of the mountain.

"Art thou here?" said one. "Prithee, guide my steps!" quoth another. "Alas! we are undone," cried a third. "Zoons, why are ye afraid?" cried a voice; "when ye have passed the three-square Corner and the Darkness are ye safe in the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Elect, even in the Magician's heavenly Chaos, there may ye understand all mysteries. But first answer me,—“Whence come ye?” “From without and below.” “And how?” “By the sevenfold Stairs, nigh unto the great Abyss where liveth the brood of the black Crow, and the engendering of the Mistus Scotorum proceedeth perpetually.” “Good; but how did ye proceed?” “Thence came we by the rocky Laby-

rinth, and by the perilous Passage to the great Tower, and the mystic Pyramid, which is set on the further side of the narrow Way and the Cleft, emblematical of hidden things ; thence by the white Slope to the topmost summit. So have we sought the divine Mysteries of this great Quest with much toil, so have we attained to the Philosopher's heavenly Chaos." Then said the voice,—“Enter into the abode of Knowledge, into the outer chamber of the most sophisticated retreat of the Sons of Wisdom, where are perpetually and endlessly produced, many reasonable and meteorological prognostications ; also divinations, concentrations, observations, and conglomerations, are recorded in divers registers, all of them most deducible, for are they not stored with great care in sundry leathern bags for the delectation of wise men.”

So were they shown by the dwellers in the Temple many and marvellous wonders. In the centre stood a furnace for all transmutations and agitations by heat ; whilst on shelves did they see divers bottles, pans, boxes, and bags, wherein were stored succulent sauces and philosophical essences to the end that the delectable concoctions of the pious might be completed. Likewise great store of books. In some could be found treatises of the true science, also devices, hieroglyphic interpretations, and perspicuous renderings of great wisdom, in others histories of joyous diversions. Also were there curious and ingenious engines for all sorts of motions, where were represented and imitated all articulate sounds, and conveyed in trunks and strange lines and distances. Likewise mathematical instruments, exquisitely made, for the discovering of small and minute bodies in the air. Also were they shown many and marvellous things pertaining to the harmony of the heavenly spheres.

Then did they drink the mixed draught, the comfortable potation, joyously, philosophically, and with discernment, for they had attained to the divine Secrets of the Philosophers, even unto the mystagorical Delight, the great Fulfilment of the spagyrick Quest of devout Oromaniacs.

ORLAMON LINECUS.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

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### EXCURSIONS.

*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.*

GLENCOE AND BEN NEVIS. — After climbing Buchaille Etive (see *Journal*, Vol. III., p. 104), Messrs Collie, Solly, and Collier shifted their camp to Clachaig Inn. From that point they accomplished several expeditions, mostly new, namely: First day—Aonach Dubh, by its north face; second day,—Bidean nam Bian, by a couloir between the two rock buttresses on the Glencoe side of the top; third day,—An attempt was made to climb up a gully that comes straight down the north side of the glen almost to the door of the hotel; but in the course of this ascent they came to one point which seemed to be impassable, and they only escaped out of the gully with difficulty by means of a traverse to the right. On the fourth day the party climbed into Ossian's Cave. They then went to Fort William, and succeeded in climbing Ben Nevis by a ridge which projects from the middle of the great northern precipice—nearly right underneath the Observatory, a superb climb of about 2,000 feet of ice, snow, and rock, that took about five hours of continuous work. Dr Collie describes this climb as resembling in several respects the Italian side of the Matterhorn, and considers it the best climb he has ever had in Scotland. So far as can be learned this route has once before been followed in the reverse direction by some English climbers—Dr Hopkinson and party,—who are believed to have descended the mountain by means of the ridge in question during summer, when presumably the rocks were clear of snow.

Messrs Solly and Collier then left for the South, and Mr Geoffrey Hastings arrived. With him Dr Collie again went up Ben Nevis by the "Precipice Route." The same party also climbed Sgur a Mhaim (3,601 feet), on the south side of Glen Nevis, in the Mamore forest. They afterwards went back to Glencoe, and did the great precipice on the Stob Coire nam Beith peak of Bidean; also scaled the crags of Stob Coire an Lochan, and had a rather difficult climb up the face of Aonach Dubh just to the left of Ossian's Cave. They likewise dis-

covered and climbed a rock pinnacle which stands out of the great gully which comes down from behind Aonach Dubh and faces the Claichaig Inn.

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CLIMBING ROUND WASTDALE.—As Dr Norman Collie's article in the *Journal* of January 1894, and the note in the number for September 1892, will probably induce some members to cross the Border, a few notes of a stay at the Wastwater Hotel in April last may be of service.

First, as to the approaches. It may be worth while to note that the carters from Honister Quarries will take heavy luggage at a very small charge as far as Seatoller; it can be carried from that place by a pony over Sty Head Pass. An alternative plan is to forward baggage by train, *not* to Seascale, but to Drigg, which place is in pretty constant communication with the inn. The postman from Drigg can bring small packages in his cart. The inn is of the simple but entirely sufficient type. It boasts a billiard room, but the waiter "made in Germany" has not yet penetrated into this happy valley.

A glance through the Climber's Book will show the visitor that there is no lack of work before him, and he will be glad if he has come with two tried companions and at least an eighty feet length of rope. An axe will rarely be found an encumbrance at any season of the year.

Those who are in search of the sensational will probably look at the photographs in the dining-room, and decide to spend their first day in and about Napes Needle. Go straight up the green shoulder of Great Gable, bearing to the right when you have reached the rocks, and you will find yourself at the base of the extraordinary-looking *aiguille* of which you are in quest. It is best climbed from the side opposite to that shown in the photographs. As far as the platform is fairly straightforward. The ascent from there to the top is, for the first man, as difficult as anything in rock-climbing well can be. The first reach can be made easier by using the shoulders of the man below, and an axe-head, held well up, will make a right foot-hold a little higher; but the last step is entirely a matter of balance, and no help can be given, or security provided from beneath. Once up, the leader is in a position to hold and help the rest of the party. The top, as a recent climber remarked, on viewing its lately-conquered surface from the arête above, is just the shape of a coffin! A rope can be hitched right round it, and used by the last man in descending to the platform. From the platform the easiest way down is by the crack shown in the views. Care must be taken not to jam the left knee in the narrowest place. After the Needle will probably come the arête, which is a most interesting climb, and leads directly to the top of the Gable. The "Arrow-head arête," on the same side, is said to be more difficult. The rocks on the Ennerdale side of Great Gable also afford fine climbing. On Scafell, Deep Ghyll is the easiest of the three. If it is finished *via* Professor's Chimney (which has a red and perpendicular gully with a very narrow entrance, branching out of it to the

left near the top), it makes a pleasant morning's work. From the top of Professor's Chimney, the Scafell Pinnacle can be climbed by the "easy way" in a few minutes.

Steep Ghyll is fully described in the Climber's Book. The upper part, which looks easy, is the most difficult, as the holds are rotten and slippery, and resting-places are entirely wanting. Axes are best left below on Rake's Progress. Moss Ghyll, the king of the three, should only be attempted by a very strong party. It is described and illustrated in detail in the book, and also by Dr Collie in his article.

The Pillar Rock is the finest piece of rock-climbing in the district. It may be reached by following the Black Sail pass to the railing at the top, and striking down to the track in Ennerdale on the left bank of the Liza, which is followed until the magnificent face of the Pillar comes into view just opposite a huge over-hanging boulder on the path, which may well serve as a luncheon room. A shorter route is to turn to the left at, or near, the top of Black Sail, follow the sheep track and the railing to the top of the Pillar Mountain, and then descend the easy gully with the Pillar on the right until the broad green ledge at the actual base of the Rock is reached. This is a shorter way, but does not give the splendid view of the face of the Pillar which the other route affords. From the green ledge to the top of the Pillar is some four hours most interesting climbing. It will be found that nearly every difficulty forces the party to the *left*. The "Split Block" is unmistakeable. It is some twelve feet high, and split parallel to, and also at right angles to the face. From the top of it a short traverse leads to the "Savage Gully." The leader here is lowered, and is entirely out of sight of the rest until his face appears, a welcome vision, over the overhanging rock above. There is a capital "belaying-pin" in the niche from which he is lowered; he can be secured a little by the rope during his solitary adventures in the gully, and from above he is in a safe position for helping those who follow by the direct route. This is fortunate, for, until the second man can get his left leg over the rounded and steeply-sloping block on which he is spread-eagled, he is powerless to help himself. At this point an axe-sling broke, and the axe was found the following day six hundred feet below on the grass ledge! It is therefore advisable to look to the knots, before taking the step. The rest of the way is easy. The whole expedition will take eight or nine hours, and perhaps nothing outside Skye will be found so full of interest from beginning to end.

Those who like ridge-walking can make a fine expedition by climbing Yewbarrow, and following the summits round as far as they please. In a long day it would be possible to complete the circle as far as Scafell. The rocks on Yewbarrow, especially on the inner side of Stirrup Crag, are very rotten. Screes abound everywhere, and provide a rapid means of descent, unless they are taken as we watched them being negotiated by a pair of timorous tourists, who achieved the descent from Mickledore to the top of Brown Tongue on Scafell by

sitting down and lowering themselves in a series of painful shuffles with hands and heels!

*N.B.*—Knitted anklets will be found a valuable addition to the climber's defences.

There are numerous other climbs and variations to be found within easy distance of the inn.

Just after Easter the Wastwater Hotel is practically given over to the climber, and the place is not too crowded or uncomfortable. In the summer the strain on the resources of the inn is heavier, and rock-climbers will probably go farther afield.

C. W. PATCHELL.

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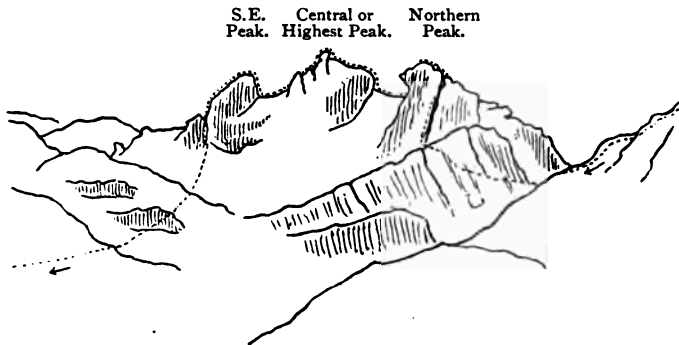
THE DIRC MHOR OF AM FAIREAMH.—Mr Phillip, writing from Dalwhinnie, 24th April 1874, says,—“I think you will like to know of a most remarkable spot near here which is practically unknown, and with which the members of the Club at least ought to be made acquainted. It is called the Dirc Mhor, *i.e.*, Great Cut. It is situated on the N.W. side of the Farrow Hill, the Am Faireamh of the O.S. Map. It is about from five to five and a-half miles from here. The way I reached it was by going to the top of Farrow, then at the cairn crossing the deer fence, and slanting slightly west of Meall Liath, the N.W. shoulder of Farrow, I dropped to about 1,950 feet level, gradually turning from N.W. to N.N.E. I hit the top of the gully. It is a perfectly dry ravine, from 250 to 400 feet deep, with savage cliffs on either side, but much finer on the E. than W., the floor being very uneven, and formed of the fallen masses from the cliffs, some of which are of gigantic size, with deep holes between. It is somewhat of a scramble through it, and requires caution, as heather, &c., frequently hides the holes. The view from the top (S.W.) is superb, one of the finest scenes of the sort I know. It is extremely well adapted to photography, owing to the sharp light and shade of the cliffs. It would take a month to draw at all adequately. There is a similar ravine on the west side of the west hill—Creag nan Adhaircean of the O.S. Map. The 1-inch map gives no idea of it; indeed it might not exist from all one can gather from it. The 6-inch gives more idea. There is a small loch—Lochan Doire Uaine—on the O.S. This is at the head of Dirc Beag, W. of Dirc Mhor; and will show you where it is on the map.”

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BEINN NARNAIN (3,036) AND THE COBBLER (2,891).—Mr Gilbert Thomson and I visited these interesting hills on the Queen's Birthday. The former, which has variously appeared in the *Journal* as “Sugach” and “Ben Varnan,” is hardly a mile from the Cobbler, but has probably not been climbed nearly so often as his eccentric neighbour. Leaving Loch Long near Sugach farm, we got upon the south-east ridge of Narnain and followed it to the top. The ridge offers several tempting steep pitches of rock well suited for scrambling,



especially near the summit, and there we were glad to use the rope, although of course the difficulty could have been avoided. We were particularly struck by the fine views of the Cobbler—still covered with snow patches—which are got from the ridge of Narnain, and we regretted several times that we had not a “camera fiend” in our party.



THE COBBLER, FROM RIDGE OF B. NARNAIN, LOOKING S.W.

Between Narnain and the Cobbler there is a dip of fully five<sup>eight</sup> hundred feet. From the col we held across the Arrochar side of the Cobbler, and mounted some rocks to a plateau, above which the northern peak rises steeply. The north end of the ridge is broken, and could be apparently climbed in many ways, but we selected a prominent gully which runs straight up the Arrochar side of this peak. Near the foot of the gully is a steep bit, where the first man had to get a “shoulder” from his companion. On reaching the central peak we climbed the knob of rock which forms the actual highest point by means of the natural doorway, and descended the other side down rather steep rocks to the col between the central and southern peaks. It was doubtful whether the latter could be climbed from the col (see *Journal*, Vol. I., p. 65), but a perfectly simple way up was discovered, and from marks on a rock we judged we were not the first to climb this side. Crossing the rocky top we went down the east side of the peak, chiefly by very steep grass slopes. A vague tradition which credits the Cobbler with an inaccessible pinnacle may perhaps refer to this southern peak. Two of its sides are quite perpendicular. It offers a fairly good climb however taken, and when burnt up by a July sun the steep grass on the side next Loch Long—the easy side—would certainly present serious difficulties to a tourist with unnailed shoes.

Before this note appears the Arrochar mountains will probably have been brought within about a couple of hours from Glasgow. The two I have referred to will give climbers material for amusement for many a long day.

W. W. NAISMITH.

BEN LUI AND BEN OSS.—On 24th May last Messrs G. D. Stirling and H. B. Watt climbed these hills, finding abundant traces of winter still about their upper regions. Going by the N.E. corrie, the burn, fed by the melting snow, came foaming down in a long white streak, visible a great way off. The first patches of snow were reached at an altitude of 1,950 feet, and the foot of the sheet which extended upwards and around at 2,500 feet. It was a fine sight as we approached from Tyndrum. Made our way up this, finding the snow very soft, every step letting us in over the boot-tops, and being glad enough to avail ourselves of two considerable patches of scree and bare earth. Came on to the N. ridge at an altitude of 3,500-3,600 feet, having worked our way on to it over a steep bit of rock. The snow at this height was hard immediately under the surface, miniature avalanches starting from any movement or from throwing stones on it. The *arête* was quite clear of snow, but the other slope was thickly coated. From the cairn (3,708 feet) no distant view was had on account of the haze, and an idea of the heat may be got when I say that my pocket thermometer read 68° Fahr. on grass, no sunshine, slight W. breeze. Followed the rim of Corrie Lui, which carried immediately under its edge a continuous thick bank of snow, and got to the small cairn on the top of Ben Oss (3,374 feet) in 1½ hours. From here had a run along a snow-covered ridge going N. a considerable distance, and descended 350 feet without a break over snow, but always too soft for glissading. Thence straight down to Coninish Farm and to Tyndrum by hill-track. Very hot in glen, thermometer rising to 94° Fahr. in sun, on heather. Times, never hurrying,—leave Tyndrum, 9.30 A.M.; Lead Mines, 11.15 A.M.; Ben Lui cairn, 1.30 P.M.; Ben Oss cairn, 3.25 P.M.; Coninish Farm, 4.30 P.M.; Tyndrum Hotel, 5.30 P.M. H. B. W.

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STRATHCARRON, 7th and 9th June 1894.—These two days were filled in with exploring and training walks from Strathcarron Hotel. They were done alone, and fully confirm what is apparent at first sight, that Strathcarron is an excellent mountaineering centre, round which the walker or climber can select what sort of country he fancies. The railway here roughly divides the hills into two kinds: generally those to north and west are bare of vegetation and covered with stones of the sharpest and most boot-wearing description; those to the south and east have more grass and are liker the hills around Loch Tay. Both are of the deserted order as far as bird and animal life is concerned. The sea or some sea-loch is always an important feature in the landscape, and does much to lend variety to the surroundings. Starting on the 7th at 10 A.M., I walked by road to Coulags, thence north by rough track on west side of burn to a point in the glen about midway between Fuar Tholl and An Ruadh-stac. I followed up the burn coming out of Loch a Bhealaich Mhoir, and from the loch up an easy face to the cairn of Sgurr Ruadh (3,141 feet)

at 1.45 P.M. There was a clear view all round except west, which was hazy. I made out the Teallachs quite distinctly. The walk back was by the Loch a Bhealach Mhoir, up Fuar Tholl, and on to Achnasshellach Station in good time for the 6.30 P.M. train to Strathcarron. The contour lines of the one-inch O.S. map do not show that Fuar Tholl has steep cliffs on the northern, and a deep corrie on the southern face.

*9th June.*—Train to Glencarron platform. Left this at 7 A.M. and walked south and west to road running along Allt a Chonais. Straight up an easy face of Sgurr a Chaoruinn and got to cairn (3,452 feet) at 10.10 A.M. I found myself on a fine ridge, and slowly promenaded east to Bidean an Eoin Deirg, and then westwards to Sgurr Choinnich (12.20 P.M.), enjoying a magnificent all-round view. Continuing westwards, I dropped to bealach and made a bee-line for Strathcarron (6 P.M.), over a rough and broken country. I found large fields of soft snow as low as the 2,000 feet level on the north side of Sgurr a Chaoruinn, and all the larger corries of this ridge higher up were filled with it.

J. RENNIE.

THE PAPS OF JURA.—During a recent visit to Jura Messrs D. M'Kenzie and H. B. Watt spent the most of two days on these interesting hills. 15th June, left Craighouse about 2 P.M. for a stroll towards the hills, and at 5 P.M. found ourselves on the slopes of Beinn Mhearsamail facing Beinn a' Chaolais (hill of the sound or kyle). The heavy rain of the morning had passed away, but mists were still driving about on the heights, and the temporary clearing which showed us the top of Beinn a' Chaolais lasted only a few minutes. All around, however, was bright sunshine, and the bare rocks and stones and abounding waters glistened in the best "wet gem" style. One lochan occupied a striking position, crowning the top of a great rock buttress which stood boldly out gleaming with wet and sunshine. Resolving to tackle Beinn a' Chaolais, we descended to its base above Glen Asdale, and from an altitude of about 1,200 feet took to the slope, which was largely covered with angular and fragmentary stones, loose and shifty, but with heather and moss stripes between, up which we could zig-zag. Kept pretty straight up through the mist, and hit the ridge a short distance S. of the top, passed two small cairns, and reached the summit cairn, 2,407 feet (biggish but dilapidated) at 6.20 P.M. Along the ridges grew in greater profusion than I have yet seen on any hill, clumps of thrift, the pink flowers making a fine show of colour. Followed the N. ridge a short distance, and then made our way down, the prevailing stones being worse on this slope; and keeping well above Loch ant Siob, made the easy but rather lengthy descent required to get back to Craighouse, which we reached at 9.15 P.M. 16th June—Leisurely made our way to the E. end of Loch ant Siob. From this point a good view of the group of hills is got. Rising from the head of the loch are

the gradual slopes of Beinn Mhearsamail, bare with slabs of dark grey rock : farther away a sharp ridge of Beinn a' Chaolais comes straight towards the loch, stones and scree falling away on either side : then to the N. a low col and a wide opening, and the broken side of Beinn an Oir (hill of gold) with a hog-back ridge (steep underneath and covered with fresh debris) leading to the top of this hill : then an easy ridge leading away behind Beinn Siantaidh (consecrated or blessed hill), which slopes immediately and steeply to the loch, and is covered with stones and capped with an unbroken mass of them far down : behind Beinn Siantaidh is the top of Corra Beinn (steep hill) with a stony ridge running E. ; and looking down the Corran River is a glimpse of the Sound of Jura and Knapdale beyond it. Started climbing Beinn Siantaidh from the loch about 1 P.M., and reached the top (2,477 feet), where there is a good cairn, at 2.10 P.M. ; character of slope much the same as Beinn a' Chaolais but steeper, at one place our way led up a piece of heather-clad ground so steep as to approach the perpendicular. A light mist was flying about, and we had only occasional glimpses over the sea and islands lying beneath us in the bright sunshine. Northwards, Ben More (Mull), barred by a great white cloud, was a striking sight, but southwards and landward nothing was made out. Left at 2.40 P.M. going W., and when some distance down found the masses of broken stone replaced by more solid rocks and small cliffs through which we descended by a short and rough gully. At the col, altitude about 1,600 feet, there is a small loch with a stone hut near it, and from here at 3.15 P.M. we commenced the ascent of Beinn an Oir, keeping to the S. of a trap-dyke clearly seen running up the hill. Many such dykes mark these hills and the stratification of the rocks composing the hills is in many places remarkably well defined, particularly near Beinn Siantaidh. After about three-quarters of an hour's climbing, mostly over heather, reached a subsidiary ridge from which a stiff but short pull brought us to the *arête*, near some cairns and stone-houses. From here a well-made causeway, the work of the Ordnance Surveyors, led to the large well-built cairn on the top (2,571 feet), the highest point on the island, at 4.15 P.M. Sheltered from the strong S.W. breeze behind the cairn for a few minutes, but seeing no prospect of the mist clearing, proceeded downwards by the S.W. ridge. A few feet below the top a long and wide gully, looking rather formidable in the mist, runs up the W. side of the hill perhaps 500-600 feet in length, cutting right into the ridge, removing all but its crest. Did not look difficult to climb, except for the loose stones. and on another day we saw that from near its foot, a second and easier-looking gully runs up to the N.W. ridge in a somewhat similar manner. Kept on down the ridge, which is the sharpest we were on in Jura, and which is thickly and awkwardly covered with angular stones, and from it made a descent to Loch an t Siob, the E. end of which we reached at 5.55 P.M., and Craighouse at 7.30 P.M. A leading feature of these hills, as I have indicated, is their stones. Capped by grey stones, running down to moorlands, showing many

bare faces and slabs of rocks, with numerous lochs and waters amongst the heather and moss, and not a corrie breaking their sloping sides, these hills have a finer appearance than their height might lead one to expect, and present plenty of opportunity for scrambles. The isolation of the group, like other island hills (*e.g.* Arran), affords fine and complete views of them without the loss which distance usually adds to such inland hill-views. It may be worth adding that there is little "accommodation for travellers" in the island, the only inn being at Craighouse, Small Isles Bay, convenient alike for the steamer and the hills. Warning, at least a week beforehand, should be given of any proposed visit.

H. B. W.

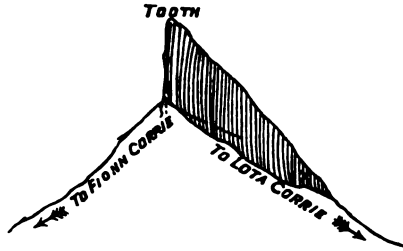
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BHASTEIR AND BHASTEIR TOOTH, SKYE. — Another visit this year gave me the opportunity of some splendid climbs, and our editor asks me to make a note of part of one of them, to which perhaps full justice has scarcely been done,—*viz.*, the passage of the ridge running west from Sgurr-nan-Gillean to Bhastier Tooth. There have been several references to it in the *Journal* already, but a portion of it will bear a little further elaboration.

On the 9th July, accompanied by John M'Kenzie, I followed the route described by Mr Naismith, vol. ii. p. 285 *et seq.* It would be difficult to imagine a better day's sport than the climb of Sgurr-nan-Gillean by the "Pinnacle route," followed by a traverse of the western ridge, keeping absolutely to the crest as far as practicable. Mr Naismith has so well described it to a certain point that there is nothing essential to add. It is only on arriving at the Bealach a Bhasteir that the narrative is to be taken up. I would, however, say in passing, that at the place mentioned on p. 288,—“a straight drop of about 25 feet,”—I found it possible to climb down most of the way, and was gently lowered the rest. M'Kenzie, for his part, looped the rope, and slid down it all the way, to save time. We afterwards looked about on the south side, and found one or two places which we thought might with difficulty “go,” but very likely the 40 feet chimney on the north side, referred to by Mr Naismith, is the best way.

The head of Bhasteir Corrie, as seen from Sligachan, is very striking, owing to the singularly broken character of the ridge, shown in the accompanying sketch. The western sides of Bhasteir and the Tooth are both sheer precipices, tapering down to nothing on the south or Lota Corrie side. It is the turning of these (utterly impossible to be climbed) that causes difficulty, and I can readily believe it might be very puzzling to find the way, especially in a mist, when traversing from west to east. Dr Collie has a note (vol. ii. p. 172) on the Bhasteir Tooth; but unfortunately, standing alone, it does not help one very much, although it is perfectly accurate, and valuable when taken in conjunction with others. He estimates the descent

necessary to turn it at 200 or 300 feet. An exact measurement here would be useful, for it seemed to me to be fully 300 feet. Dr Maylard has a very good reference (vol. ii. p. 5) to the traverse of the Tooth from west to east. A section of the ridge in this direction at Bealach a Leitir would represent the Tooth somewhat thus:—



The west wall is impracticable until it has almost ceased at the place marked with a cross, thereby involving the descent mentioned by others.

The appearance of the Bhasteir ridge, as viewed from the top of Sgurr-nan-Gillean, shows it to be almost perpendicular on the north side, and scarcely less abrupt on the other. Bhasteir itself stands boldly up, but all between it and the spectator is invisible

1                    2                    3                    4                    5 6                    7



1. SGURR-NAN-GILLEAN.    2. GENDARME OR "BAD STEP."    3. BEALACH A BHASTEIR.    4. BHASTEIR.  
5. BHASTEIR TOOTH.    6. BEALACH A LEITIR.    7. SGURR A BHASTEIR.

in consequence of a huge block forming a barrier across the ridge just where it commences. In connection with this present note, a study of the sketch on p. 214, vol. ii., will be helpful. The view, looking N.W. across Lota Corrie, gives a very good idea of the route. As far as Bealach a Bhasteir, Mr Naismith has described it. From thence to the top of Bhasteir is merely a rough walk, scarcely a climb; then a short descent on the south side is necessary to avoid the precipice on the west, and a few minutes more suffice to reach the top of the Tooth. The way is obvious, but unless the climber is prepared for the next stage, he will discover that the long *détour* mentioned by the writers already quoted will require an hour more than he calculated upon. There is but one way to descend from the Tooth, and that is to face Lota Corrie, and go down the shallow gully under the precipice of Bhasteir, formed by a fault or cleavage in the rock. It is fairly steep, and affords in itself a pretty bit of scrambling, because it has to be taken throughout in any position but the upright one, and the climber will encounter little chimneys, walls, and slabs all the way down, some 500 feet. It is not until the thin end of the wedge is nearly reached, as already shown, that it is practicable to climb down to the screes below. If it is intended to return to Sligachan across the ridge, there is a long tiresome ascent over steep loose screes to Bealach a Leitir, immediately under the sheer west wall of the Tooth. The alternative is to continue down Lota Corrie.

Between the Bealach and Bruach-nan-Frithe there is a steep boss of rock; but probably the climber will prefer to descend by Fionn Corrie, a route to be highly commended. It is easy walking all the way, even over the screes, which are firm. Besides, a few hundred feet down, a delicious spring gushes out in four or five places close together. Those who have been on the Coolin ridges for a day know how to appraise the value of water when at length it is reached.

During our walk down Fionn Corrie we saw the effects of lightning displayed in a remarkable manner. Three days before there had been a violent thunderstorm (general throughout Scotland), the probable cause of what we witnessed. Running along the softer part of the ground there was a long rut, several inches deep and about a foot wide, freshly made. Small stones were turned out of it as by a ploughshare. The larger blocks were turned completely over, and large splinters from them were thrown several yards forward. One stone weighed apparently twenty tons, a deep hole showing where it had lain. Another block, standing eight feet high, had been turned up on end, leaving a hole in the ground eighteen inches deep, whilst large splinters from it were scattered round. Earlier in the day we noticed on the Bhasteir ridge a place where a mass of rock had lately been split off, but we did not at the time think of attributing its displacement to anything but frost.

FRED. W. JACKSON.

DEPTH OF SNOW AT BEN NEVIS, 1893-94.—Mr Omond has kindly supplied the figures for the snow-fall during last winter, which show it to have been considerably above the average :—

1893.	Inches.	1894.	Inches.	1894.	Inches.
Oct. 1 .....	—	Feb. 1 .....	85	July 1 .....	17
„ 15 .....	3	„ 15 .....	94	„ 15 .....	—
Nov. 1 .....	14	Mar. 1 .....	108		
„ 15 .....	21	„ 15 .....	125	Snow disappeared	
(on 17th)		April 1 .....	110	from Gauge on	
Dec. 1 .....	20	„ 15 .....	94	4th July.	
„ 15 .....	27	May 1 .....	91	Maximum Depth	
1894.		„ 15 .....	96	at Gauge = 127	
Jan. 1 .....	49	June 1 .....	92	inches on March	
„ 15 .....	50	„ 15 .....	71	13th.	

### BOOT TREES.

*To the Editor of the S. M. C. Journal.*

DEAR SIR,—The great advantage and increased comfort of drying one's "big hobnailers" on boot trees is so patent as to need no demonstration. Unfortunately, though, the ordinary tree is so bulky and so heavy that the knapsack climber is absolutely precluded from carrying it, and even the centrallist will often find that he has no room for it in his portmanteau.

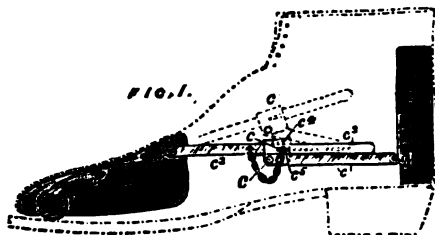


FIG. 2.

I have lately bought from Mr Yapp, of 200 Sloane Street, London, S.W., a pair of trees, which are at the same time so light, so portable, so cheap, and so thoroughly effectual, that I confidently recommend them to members. They are patented under the name of the Packflat



Boot Tree, and are made of aluminium and steel, with a wooden bar for the heel. They are perfectly simple to work, can be lengthened or shortened in a moment at will to fit any boot, and having no springs cannot get out of order. When folded they can easily be carried in the coat pocket; they weigh under 10 ozs., and cost 10s. 6d. a pair.—  
I am, dear sir, yours truly,  
H. T. MUNRO.

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#### MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

CLIMBING IN THE BRITISH ISLES. I.—England. By W. P. HASKETT SMITH, M.A. With Illustrations by ELLIS CARR. Longman, Green & Co.

THIS little book is the first of a series which, according to the publishers' announcement on the first page, is intended to embrace a similar publication upon our own hills. Interest, therefore, of a very personal kind attaches, beyond its own merits, to the present volume, which foreshadows presumably the sort of treatment which our native heath may expect at the hands of the author, Mr Haskett Smith.

It will come as a surprise, we think, to climbers on this side of the border, that a slim booklet of 162 not very closely printed pages can accommodate all that is to be said upon "Climbing in England." Wonder, however, ceases when the book is opened, for it then appears that, except for a few rock scrambles round the sea coast and on Dartmoor, England, for the purposes of mountaineering, is synonymous with that portion of it known as the Lake District. Beyond those narrow limits, therefore, Mr Smith scarcely ever wanders; but it must be admitted that, if his work is circumscribed, it is also excellently well done. The style is simple and condensed, the descriptions clear and practical, and the choice of subjects—no easy task when every stone in the Lake District might have a sermon all to itself—characterised by sound common-sense and an accurate acquaintance with the wants of climbers. It is essentially a mountaineer's manual, written by a mountaineer of considerable eminence, who has himself accomplished, and in many instances discovered, most of the climbs which he describes. No attempt has been made to conciliate the mountain tripper, whose organs, the popular "guide-books," are most amusingly discredited by the simple expedient of quoting without comment some of their highest flights of descriptive eloquence. In short, for the man who "means business," and is not above taking advice, Mr Smith will prove himself in every respect a most useful and competent *cicerone*. For those also who, perhaps already approaching the sere and yellow, love to read of the hills almost as much as to climb them, there will be found much interesting information of a general kind and some flashes of genuine humour, of which we are tempted to quote the following:—"Gash Rock.—We are indebted to Colonel Barrow for this name, which he bestowed on Blea Crag in Langstrath, apparently for no better reason than that he knew a man called Gash, who did not know the name of the rock or how to climb it."

With all its merits, however, the book is not without faults, of which the conscientious critic must take notice. In particular there seems much to object to in its dictionary arrangement, which is an evasion rather than a solution of the difficulties of classification. No doubt great facility of reference is thereby ensured for climbers like the author and his friends, who have a working acquaintance with the district, and know exactly what to look for. To them, perhaps, this A B C of rocks, stones, and proper names, beginning with "Alum pot" and ending with "Yorkshire," may be something less than bewildering. But what of the large and important body of men who have not been baptized of the Lakes, and who are as innocent of the thought that "gills" exist outside of a fish as that Pisgah is a place in England having no connection with the Promised Land and the children of Israel? Suppose an ignoramus of that extreme and yet eminently common type arrived at Wastdale with Mr Smith's book in his pocket, and wished to discover the most difficult route up Scafell, how would he obtain the information? By turning up "Scafell," at p. 132, he would find nothing but a description of Mickledoor, which assuredly is very far from being the stiffest ascent of that mountain. Neither Moss Gill, Steep Gill, Deep Gill, Scafell Pillar, Lord's Rake, or Rake's Progress, are mentioned in the text; and in regard to the two former, at least, two of the finest climbs in all England, it is not very plain how our imaginary visitor is to get upon their track. Similarly Nape's Needle has been divorced from Great Gable, Pier's Gill from Lingmell, and Striding Edge from Helvellyn. No doubt in most instances cross references are supplied, which will keep the careful reader right in the end, but only after much turning over of pages and laborious piecing together of disconnected fragments of information,—trouble which might easily have been saved by simply grouping the subjects under the mountains to which they refer and arranging the latter alphabetically, if need be. The error, however, is probably not all Mr Smith's, but has partly resulted from the microscopic care with which each face and gully in the Lake District has been explored, till now the great mountain masses, which are the real divisions of the subject, have been quite lost sight of in the multitude of minute details which they comprise.

Another fault, small however by comparison, and perhaps unworthy of separate notice, seems to be that the author writes too exclusively from the standpoint of the Lake District expert. New climbs, such as Moss Gill and The Screes, which are at present on the wave of fashion, are minutely dealt with; while older ascents, which may yet be full of difficulty to the stranger visiting them for the first time, are rather indicated than described.

Of Mr Carr's illustrations, which, besides being artistically executed, are most admirably designed to emphasise the important points of the letterpress, nothing but praise, and that of the highest, can be said. They are as nearly perfect as mountaineering pictures ever need to be; and if the general reader, whose soul has been harrowed by Mrs

Radcliff's descriptions, fails to recognise in them the originals of that lady's horrific imaginings, the real climber will rejoice in the accurate knowledge which they uniformly display.

There is a certain interest—for us especially—in speculating whether the good work which Mr Smith has begun in this book will be maintained in the succeeding volumes. One thing at least is certain, that with all the condensation of which the author's style is capable, not 162 pages, but three or four times that number will be required for his work on Scotland. A single county, such as Ross, Inverness, or Argyle, would supply *on a similar scale* materials for two such books. But then Scotland, with all its riches, is but a tenth part explored. Scores of first-class climbs are still to do in almost every county where mountains assemble together; and although much has been accomplished of recent years in Skye, Arran, Ross-shire, and the Blackmount, it will be long before the time is ripe for a comprehensive treatise on the subject such as this Club has long contemplated. Skye and Arran are perhaps even now ready for the historian, but vast tracts of mountainous country in central Ross, Inverness, and Sutherland are practically untouched. Many fine mountains also, whose summits are regularly reached by pedestrians, have untold treasures lying hidden away in their steep north-east corries for the Haskett Smiths of the future. All these must be visited, climbed, and re-climbed, and then perhaps it may be time to think of bookmaking. When it is remembered however that, according to "Munro's Tables," there are 283 distinct mountains of over 3,000 feet in Scotland and 538 separate "tops," the publication of such a work can scarcely be a thing of to-morrow or the day after. We hope, therefore, that Mr Smith will remember those facts, and not attempt to mislead English climbers, who will naturally depend upon him for their information, by claiming for his work a completeness which it cannot possess,—by professing, in short, to treat of all Scotland, while in point of fact the portions dealt with can only be a few well-known centres such as Skye, Arran, and Glencoe.

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#### CLIMBING AND EXPLORATION IN THE KARAKORAMS—HIMALAYS.

BY W. M. CONWAY. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

MEMBERS of the S.M.C. have doubtless, in common with mountaineers in general, looked forward with anticipations of pleasure to the publication of Mr Conway's book on Climbing in the Karakorams. Apart from Mr Conway's reputation in the Alps, to have attained what is probably the highest elevation ever reached on a mountain, if only by a few hundred feet, is alone enough to arouse the keenest interest. After reading the book, however, one is apt to ask with the schoolboy, who, with infinite pains, had mastered the alphabet, "Why go through so much to accomplish so little?" Few, if any, parties have ever started on a mountain exploring expedition so thoroughly equipped and with such resources at their disposal as that headed by Mr Conway, and the feeling of most people will probably be one of regret that in the

700 pages to which the book extends he cannot tell us of more ascents actually accomplished. Much indeed might with advantage have been omitted. The style is inclined to be pedantic and prolix.

The book is profusely illustrated by Mr MacCormick. But here too the general feeling will probably be one of disappointment. Mr Conway, who as every one knows is the editor of the *Alpine Journal*, had in the February number given the first place to a laudatory article, by himself, on Mr MacCormick's skill as a mountaineering artist. It is very doubtful if the public will endorse the views therein expressed, and, with the vivid sketches in Mr Wymper's book on the Andes in our memories, one cannot but wish that the illustrations had been intrusted to other hands. The "roof of the world" has of late been attracting considerable attention. We have most of us read Mr Knight's charming book, "Where Three Empires Meet," and Lord Dunmore's interesting work on the Pamirs, and with these fresh in our minds one is inclined to plod through Mr Conway's book more as a solemn duty than as a pleasure. Still, after a perusal of the work, one feels that if Mr Conway did not accomplish as much as one might have wished, he did it carefully and well; if he is occasionally somewhat tedious, he is at least conscientious and accurate, and "Climbing among the Karakoram" will deservedly find a place in most mountaineering libraries.

H. T. MUNRO.

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DOLOMITE STRONGHOLDS. By the Rev. J. SANGER DAVIES.

London: George Bell & Sons.

Mr DAVIES'S book consists chiefly of descriptions of his ascents of the Croda di Lago, the Kleine and Grosse Zinne, the Cinque Torri, the Fünffingerspitze, and the Langkofel. It is a pleasantly written book, dealing with an extremely attractive district, and one especially so to climbers. The author had apparently no previous knowledge of Dolomite mountains, but "with the aid of good guides, and the memory of youthful scrambles on the cliffs of Britain," the mountains on the list were successfully attempted. Under the circumstances we do not wonder at his being a good deal impressed with many of the climbs, and he is candid as to his reflections while passing some of the more trying points. This may account for some errors of description, as when he estimates the top of Croda di Lago as 30 yards square. Four yards square would be nearer the mark. The drop from the traverse of the Kleine Zinne he gives as 2,000 feet. We should have thought it was little, if any, more than 1,000 feet. Climbers who are proud of their knowledge of snow and ice work, will scarcely agree with Mr Davies, when he says, speaking of men who climb without guides and without experience, "Let such audacity be reserved for the safer slopes of snow mountains, which in fine weather need little more in the amateur than endurance." Nor will most climbers who have climbed the Matterhorn and the Grosse Zinne agree with the author's informant in thinking the latter on a

level for difficulty with the former, before the ropes were fixed. The Grosse Zinne is a somewhat steep, but in no place difficult rock climb. It can be done in less than two hours, and is not in the same class as the Kleine Zinne, Croda di Lago, and Fünffingerspitze. Mr Davies, however, will not be without supporters when he says that, "taken altogether there seems to be nothing equal to good stiff rock-work for full enjoyment, perfect exercise, and the best of discipline for nerves, mind, and body."

Very complete particulars are given of the earliest ascents of the Fünffingerspitze, and the chapter on this mountain is especially interesting.

The book is profusely illustrated, but some of the illustrations are not very successful. We suppose that of the Kleine Zinne traverse must be regarded as diagrammatic; but the fearful and wonderful picture of Luigi Bernard on the Fünffingerspitze can hardly be so excused. Perhaps the illustration which shows a climber negotiating the chimney-breast on the Kleine Zinne is the most extraordinary. The climber appears to be in an impossible position for doing anything but fall down head first, and certainly no such position is required for getting over this obstacle. A short sketch map is given of the district.

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MOUNTAIN, MOOR, AND LOCH, illustrated by Pen and Pencil,  
ON THE ROUTE OF THE WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY.

London: Sir Joseph Causton & Sons.

"MOUNTAIN, MOOR, AND LOCH" forms a very attractive addition to the list of guide-books to Scotland. Taking the West Highland Railway as its centre line, it includes in its descriptions parts of the country far removed from that newly opened route. We cannot find fault with it for in any way under-estimating the beauty and the grandeur of the scenery which it describes. There is even a good word for the Cowlairs Tunnel, while the Moor of Rannoch is referred to in language which would scarcely be endorsed by one who had crossed it on foot. The book, however, is avowedly for the railway tourist, and he, doubtless, will think that he knows the moor well when he has been trundled over it, and will check off the mountains he has seen with as much satisfaction as the climber does those he has climbed. The fact that the book is not written for mountaineers is sufficiently indicated by the warning given against guideless ascents of Ben Nevis.

The illustrations, which are both numerous and good, add much to the value of the book, and the letterpress is evidently the work of one who has an intimate acquaintance not only with the physical features, but with the historical and literary associations of the country. Many mountains are correctly mentioned which are quite unknown to the ordinary tourist; and although the description of Loch Tulla makes it appear that the Orchy runs in and the Water of Tulla runs out, this seems to be an isolated slip. It may be noted that the size of the Tyndrum Hotel is credited, among other reasons, to its being a mountaineering centre. Perhaps the writer happened to drop in on a Club meet.

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IN MEMORIAM.

PROFESSOR JOHN VEITCH, LL.D.,

*President of the S.M.C., 1892-94.*

AND so our President is gone, in the midst of those hills which he loved with a truly personal love;—his last wistful look resting on the broad sweep of heights from which Manor and Glensax and Hundleshope carry down their waters to his beloved Tweed: his one personal longing, amid distress and pain, to be able once more to breast those heights, and breathe the free air of heaven upon the tops—peacefully and lovingly, with all the calm and courage of a pure, brave heart, John Veitch passed away, on that bright September morning, into the great Unknown which had formed the setting of all his thoughts in life, and of which hill and sky and river were for ever speaking to him.

In this journal it is only as a lover and frequenter of the hills that we can speak of our late President. The main business of his life,—his teaching, his literary and philosophical work—lie beyond the ken of the mountaineer. Yet even here we have something to say for ourselves. No literature or philosophy was ever worth anything which was not drawn at first hand from Nature; and Nature reserves her freshest and most sparkling draughts for those who seek them at the fountainhead. And it was there that Professor John Veitch sought them. No man's whole life and work were ever more completely permeated by inter-

course with Nature, more dependent upon daily impressions received from natural sights and scenes. Summer or winter, in town or in country, at home or abroad, it mattered not: through Glasgow fog, under Highland mist or Italian sun, he must be up and out to put himself in touch with pure free Nature, as he would call it: to look for something in earth or sky or cloud undevastated by the hand of man; something that might put freshness and suggestion into his heart, and drive the sense of work and worry from his brain. For the past forty years no form has been so familiar as his in the long summer days on every hillside, by every stream, of the Border country, accompanied always by his faithful dog, who had been made almost human by his companionship. He carried eyes which found beauty in every natural object, however simple—a field, a tree, a blade of grass dancing in the sun—in the

“notes of birds,  
And rippling murmurs in the soft green haughs,  
The lowly flower, the grace of slender birch;  
In pale hill-violet trusted to the winds;  
In last brief hum of solitary bee,  
By moorland burn on late September noon,  
That dies upon the fading heather bloom;”\*

in the

“vast earth-sea of hills  
That ever moves and ever is at rest;”†

or in the

“White streaks of wind-slashed clouds calmed on the blue.”†

I have known of no man, save perhaps Ruskin, who could habitually drink in such pleasure, gather such inspiration, such help and comfort for his daily life, from the everyday sights and processes of Nature. I have seen him take more delight in watching a sunset from Buchanan Street than most of those who jostled him were capable of taking in from the most beautiful scenery in the world.

I cannot presume that many members of our Club can have known our late President very intimately. Senior

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\* “Growth of Nature Feeling.” † “The Tweed,” pp. 17, 26.

to almost all of us, unable to take part in our ordinary "meets," already, alas! struck by mortal illness when elected President in 1892, he had little opportunity of forming new intimacies amongst us; and yet none can have heard his two or three speeches at our annual dinner, or any of those addresses which he delivered at various Border gatherings, without recognising how deep had been his study of Scottish scenery, how intense his sympathy with the tastes which called our Club into existence. On such occasions, beginning in his serious and solemn way, he would gradually warm up, growing humorous, pathetic, or enthusiastic by turns, and requisitioning as materials for his speech not the scenery only of Scotland, in all sorts of detail, but her history, her legends, her poetry, her men of letters, the virtues or the foibles of her people; passing all in broad review before him, suffusing all with a glow of robust sentiment, and making his hearers feel that that voice spoke not for one man only, but was an embodiment of the ruggedness and picturesque beauty of our native land, a true representative of the spirit of her sons.

These addresses, lighted up and warmed as they were by his unique personality, were as echoes from his written books. If we would know all he felt about scenery, we must go to his "Hillside Rhymes," his "Tweed, and other Poems." It is impossible not to draw a parallel from the following:—

"For, as he grew a boy, of gentle mien  
He was, and sacred in his sight were all  
The creatures of the wilds; birds in their nests,  
That timorously peeped with shining eye,  
Were sacred; their first woodland notes became  
His cherished joys; and, towards evening tide,  
He loved to watch the circlings of the trout  
On quiet pools, and then his deep grey eyes,  
As pure and lustrous as a maiden's are,  
Yet wearing oft a far clear brooding look,  
As seeing things beyond sight's finite sphere,—  
Would gleam with gleam of Tweed through softened  
tears."\*

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\* "The Tweed," p. 71.



The following appeals more directly to our Club :—

Ah, hills ! I love you at all times,  
 I love you in your summer days,  
 When glints of light are on your face,  
 And heather blooms athwart your braes.

But now you touch the soul far more,  
 Thus rising dim in misty shroud,  
 Wild snowdrifts beating round your heads,  
 High hill-tops passing into cloud,—

With weird groups in the upper air,  
 Old fancies shaped in living form  
 That flash forth from the storied past,—  
 Flash forth and revel in the storm.\*

And in these next lines we have the true faith of the man :—

“ My faith is that His Spirit still lives here,  
 And communes with the open heart of man  
 On lonely wilds, where'er no hand hath touched  
 The work of God, or marred the holy place  
 Where He first made a dwelling for Himself ! ” †

If, again, we would realise the solid work which Professor Veitch has done in the way of analysing and illustrating the sentiment for Nature-beauty, and of showing what part external Nature has played in moulding the thoughts, lives, and legends of our Border ancestors, we must study “ *The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry,* ” and “ *The History and Poetry of the Scottish Border.* ” The former book deals with the theory of the beautiful, and traces through the whole range of Scottish poetry the varying and progressive modes in which at successive periods the objects of our natural scenery have appealed to the heart and lives of men. The latter book is a monumental collection of the most characteristic incidents and freshest poems of Border life, reduced to a unity of feeling by a highly sympathetic imagination. Every page of the book tells of the temperament of the man. Every page reveals a keen historic sense for details, as well as a wide power of suggestive generalisation, combined with so strong a personal interest in the

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\* A Winter Scene, “ *Hillside Rhymes,* ” p. 42. † “ *The Tweed,* ” p. 17.

scenes and heroes of his story, that one is half tempted to suspect that it would have been more to his liking if Nature had made him a Border riever instead of only a Glasgow Professor.

My friendship with Professor Veitch dates from 1864, the year in which he was elected to the Logic Chair in Glasgow. The close intimacy which soon sprang up between us remained unbroken until his death; and his friendship for me had all that peculiar charm which attaches to confidence and affection extended by an older to a younger man. To most men he was reserved and self-contained, or known mainly as the sturdy uncompromising *propugnator* of any question which he took up; to me, and to some of his earlier friends, amongst whom I must especially name the late Principal Shairp and Professor Sellar, he was as open as the day—concealing nothing, reserving nothing, mincing nothing, but pouring out his whole soul of admiration or contempt or ire, upon books, opinions, or men, as he thought each deserving of them, in the most human and unrestrained of vocabularies. It was ever the hillsides that most completely unlocked his soul. Even when quite alone, on one of his long solitary tramps over Broad Law or Cramalt Craig, or down the waters of Manor, or Talla, or Drummelzier, he would burst into quotations of ballads as he stalked along. Dr John Brown delighted in telling how once a party of mowers in upper Tweed stopped their work to look at him as he careered spouting along the face of the brae: "Ay, sir," said one, shaking his head, "it's sair on him the day!" Or if he was with friends, how he would roll out to them a bit of Wordsworth, when he reached his top! How revel in every feature of the view! How he would declaim against the deluded greed which had converted fine hill grass into unlovely, unprofitable cornfields; or against the barrenness of taste which had marred the graceful slopes of the uplands with plantations of pedantic symmetry! How he would laud the fine taste of the late Sir John Naesmyth, who, by skilful selection and grouping of his *Cembra* and other pines, had made the heights of Dawyck into a joy for ever, and could with truth boast himself to be a landscape painter—with this only

difference from other landscape painters, that his canvas was the mountain side!

It was the love of the hills that first brought him and me together; and it was in the Old College in the High Street, about the year 1866, that was formed the first Mountaineering Club in Scotland—undoubted progenitor (though I have hitherto scrupulously concealed the fact from our Secretary) of the Scottish Mountaineering Club. The Club consisted of three members—Professor Veitch, Mr Campbell Colquhoun of Clathick, and myself; its name was the Cobbler Club; and its object was to promote the climbing of every hill-top that could be climbed from Glasgow in winter-time within the limits of a Saturday excursion. The name had nothing to do with shoe-leather; it came from the gallant Argyllshire hill of that title, which, in those days of more limited rail facilities, was supposed to be the most distant top which could be reached within the day. In this way, many a good height was discovered and scoured over, from Tinto to Ben Lomond, from Dunmyot to Dungoyne, from Earl's Seat to Neilson Pad, in weather of every kind; many were the cracks we had with country folks by the way, many the snug old farm-houses penetrated for shelter or information. In the evening, full of holiday and hill air, we would gather some choice souls together, and hold in high fashion the Professor's Saturday Night, unhaunted by the spectre of an early class, with its "angry" bell, upon the morrow. Then was our friend in his glory. Discarding all his logic, he would pour forth, round board or fire, all his torrents of Border lore: tales full of pathos, of poetry, and of humour; tales of revelling and praying, of rieviers and of poachers, of gruesome family feuds, of family fortunes dogged for generations by a vindictive *árr*: at the end would come queer tales of haunted spots or houses, of gibbering jeering faces pursuing scoundrels in the gloaming, of mysterious lights flashing near the deathbed of some dying drunkard:—all told in minutest detail, and with the impressive solemnity of one who holds that the unseen are the only true realities.

But, deeply as he loved the hills, our late President was not a mountaineer in the modern technical—may I say *slang*?—

sense of the term. He enjoyed, indeed, putting forth his strength, and could glory in a great day's walk; and he could rejoice at the tribulation of some town-bred weakling who had rashly attempted to follow him over peat-hags. But he was no peak-bagger. He never "broke a record," or made "a first ascent." Though often in Switzerland, he knew nothing of axe or rope; he never asked whether a rock-face would "go"; he never appraised an ascent by the number of minutes which it had taken him to perform it; or thought all enjoyment in a climb had gone because he himself, or half a hundred other people, had enjoyed it before.

These things are all very good, nay necessary, in their proper place. Climbing, like other things nowadays, must be conducted on scientific principles; and, for that purpose, the fatal element of competition and of personal excellence can scarcely be eliminated. It is not to be desired that all climbing should be easy; and difficult things can only be done by trained men, and with proper appliances. On all such points, I am myself strictly orthodox in mountaineering matters, and should be glad of an opportunity to point out to some of my young mountaineering friends, that a man has a good deal to learn, and needs a good deal of experience, before he is an adept in the craft of climbing, fit to face any difficulty that may occur, even in Scotland, on rock or snow. But, nevertheless, mountaineering is something more than mere gymnastics. At our very start, I protested against the notion that the mountaineer's ideal was to fit himself to become a successful swarmer of greased poles. We climb mountains because we love them; and we welcome all who love them, and have done good work on them, whether they be accomplished pole-climbers or no. As Mr Douglas Freshfield well says of the Alpine Club in his introduction to the catalogue of Alpine drawings now on view in London:—"Nothing that is mountainous is alien to us; we are addicted to all high places, from Gaurisanker to Primrose Hill, wherever man has not forked out Nature. No doubt we find a particular fascination in the greatest and boldest inequalities of the earth's surface and the strange scenery of the ice and snow world; but we are attracted by any inequality, so long as it has not a

railroad station or a restaurant on the top of it." I trust, therefore, that, as members of this Club, we shall always remember that our highest object, above everything that can be expressed in mountaineering jargon, is to promote a love—an admiring, reverent, sympathetic love—of the hills, and to promote a knowledge of everything, be it history or poetry, geology or tradition, which tends to a more perfect appreciation of them, and of the effect which through all generations they have exercised upon the spirit and life of man. And let me say to you, Mr Editor, if I may take the liberty, that successful as this *Journal* is, it will be still more successful in proportion as it contains more articles of a human sort, like that of the late Sheriff Nicolson on Skye, or of that of our Loretto friend, Recruiting Serjeant for the "Salvation Army"; and fewer articles of the mere Mountain Time-Table kind, with their catalogues of miles, and feet, and minutes, and endless dissection of the unhappy points of the compass.

Of mountaineering in its highest sense—the mountaineering of love, of reverence, of association—our late President was a master. The spirit of the mountains had entered into his soul; he could question, and read, and interpret the hills of Scotland, and especially of southern Scotland, as no man that I have ever met. Within a more limited range, with gifts of a wholly different order, he has done for our Lowland hills a work analogous to that done for Scotland as a whole by the great Walter Scott. He has breathed their true spirit, and made us proud of them; he has shown how the heart of the hills has generation after generation passed into the heart of the people; he has lighted up every burn and law and hope of his native country with the true feeling, if not always with the melodious music, of a poet; and he deserves to be held in remembrance not by this Club only, but by all lovers of this land, as a true Scot, both in mind and in body; sturdy of limb, vehement in conviction, generous and genial in heart; one who, take him all round as a man of action and of letters, stands out as the Scotsman of the last half-century who has deserved best of our Scottish hills.

G. G. RAMSAY.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF MOUNTAINEERING  
IN SCOTLAND.—III.

JOHN MACCULLOCH, M.D., F.R.S., &c.

“THE HIGHLANDS AND WESTERN ISLES OF SCOTLAND.”

BY THE REV. COLIN CAMPBELL, D.D., A.C.

VENUS set Psyche many strange tasks, and the labours of Hercules are famous ; but what were these compared with the task which you, Mr Editor, set me of wading through Macculloch's four garrulous volumes on the Highlands and Western Isles to gather some information on the progress of mountaineering in Scotland? The very sub-title\* is appalling in its length, and in itself quite enough to demand that patience which he asks Sir Walter Scott to “exert” in reading the work. The fare is, however, very palatable, if—as Professor Bonney, in the “Dictionary of National Biography” remarks—somewhat “confused.”

John Macculloch (born 1773, died 1835) was by profession a physician, but by practice a geologist,—a fact to which mountaineering, both then and since, owes much. His mother was a Guernsey woman; but his father was of Galloway descent, and in business in Brittany; and the boy, after a period of school life in Devon and Cornwall, studied medicine in Edinburgh, where he graduated M.D. in 1793, and formed a life-long friendship with Walter (afterwards Sir Walter) Scott. It was during his “boyish wanderings in his college days that he lost his heart to the Highlands” (Vol. I., p. 16), and he showed his affection down almost till his death by travelling nearly every year through the scenery and among the people he loved. His extensive attainments in almost every branch of science, as well as in architecture, mechanics, drawing, music, history,

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\* Here it is in full :—“Descriptions of their Scenery and Antiquities, with an Account of the Political History and Ancient Manners, and of the Origin, Language, Agriculture, Economy, Music, Present Condition of the People, &c., &c., &c., founded on a Series of Annual Journeys between the years 1811 and 1821, and forming an Universal Guide to that Country, in Letters to Sir Walter Scott, Bart.” London, 1824.

folk-lore, and antiquities, prepare us in a measure for the dissertations on these subjects which abound in his books; but all this "weight of learning" did not crush his humour or his sentiment in dealing with the beauty, grandeur, and sublimity of Highland scenery, or the characteristics of the Highland people. If Pennant admires most "the delicious plain spread into verdant meadows, or glowing with ripened corn, embellished with woods and watered with rivers uncommonly contrasted," every variety of Highland scenery appeals to Macculloch,—mountain, lake, river, cascade, wood, rock, sea-coast, deep ravine, lofty precipice, and wild Alpine glen,—and each receives from him its proper meed of admiration and praise. To use the not unambiguous and hardly happy phrase of my late lamented teacher, Professor Veitch, in another sense than his, the "*feeling for Nature*" had in Macculloch's case become a real *grasp* and combination of every feature in Nature that makes for what is grand as well as beautiful. No more significant example of this appreciative faculty can be found in Macculloch than in his pages on the "Characters of Rocks," as determining the character of the scenery (Vol. II., p. 274). He says:—

"It is thus that geology, when it quits the trammels of its disputes and its theories, and puts aside *its jargon* and *its trifling* (!), illustrates even the pursuits of the artist. As far as landscape depends on forms, it will be found that it is very often essentially regulated, as to its beauty or deformity as well as its character, by the nature of the rocks of which a country consists."

After giving several illustrations of this principle from the scenery of Scotland, he adds, "To exemplify it thus [fully] would be to *write a book*,"—a book which a very distinguished honorary member of the Club, Sir Archibald Geikie, actually gave to the world nearly thirty years ago. It was not, however, the "*feeling for Nature*" in the æsthetic sense, whether Macculloch derived it from the poetry of the Old Testament, or of Ossian, or of Walter Scott (for, *pace* my honoured teacher's Shade, it may be found in the oldest of these), that led him to become an explorer in the Highlands; it was geology—"geology, divine maid" (Vol. I., 120). He says she urged him to "risk his neck every day

on mountain and precipice, and his whole carcass on flood and in ford ; . . . to live the life of a Shetland seal at sea, and that of a Highland stot on shore." Let us climbers be thankful that if the *indignatio* of the poet has often provoked him to make verses, the ambition to construct a geological map of Scotland, "with all its bright array of blues and greens, and carnations and browns," moved Macculloch to become her first mountaineer. He should have been chosen as the patron saint of the Club !

It is chiefly as a mountaineer we must here regard him. He claims (Vol. I., p. 109) to "have ascended almost every principal mountain in Scotland,"—almost as many ascensions as Garnerin, the French æronaut ; and yet we miss several well-known peaks from his list of climbs, notably the mountains round "the springs of the Dee,"—with Ben Avon and Lochnagar, the Skye mountains with the exception of Ben na Caillich, Ben More, and many others. Munro's famous Tables, could Macculloch have had a sight of them, would have caused him to modify his boast. Still, his list is sufficiently respectable, and would probably pass the Committee of the S.M.C. None of his climbs, however, were done in winter ; and we therefore look in vain for information as to "height of snow-line," "ice," "glissading," &c., while "axe and rope" are of course entirely unknown. Once indeed (Vol. II., p. 229) he mentions snow in describing the grandeur of Loch Hourn ; but it is in this way :—Condoling with a young girl of fourteen or fifteen on the miseries of the climate, he inquired, among other things, how long the snow remained on the ground, and her answer was, "Weel I wot, it never gangs till the rain comes,"—the parent, doubtless, of many a well-worn Joe Miller on the Scottish weather. In another place, also, he commits himself to the astounding statement that the "mountains of Marr and Cairngorm" are covered with "perpetual snow." As a mountaineer, it must be confessed, he considered it an advantage to be able to ride to the summit of his peak, yet the following passage shows that he possessed the true climbing instinct. He is describing the ascent of Ben na Caillich, which he admits is enough for one day, and adds :—



"Being there, you wish to be on Ben something else, and then a stage higher, and so on, till you come to the Cuchullin Hills, just as in the climbs we make in this world, political and philosophical" (Vol. III., p. 400).

But what will the makers of first ascents, and the builders of cairns and stone-men, and the depositors of cards in bottles, say to the following outburst?

"Doubtless the ascent of Ben Nevis is considered a mighty deed, and in consequence there are various names inscribed on the cairn within the plain, while some had been written on scraps of paper and enclosed in bottles which had been drained of their whisky by the valiant who had reached this perilous point of honour. Such is the love of fame 'that the clear spirit doth raise' to carve its inspiring initials on desks and to scratch them on the windows of inns. Is there a man so unworthy of a name, were it even Macguffog or Bumfit, as not to desire that it should be heard of hereafter; even did it prove no more than that its owner had emptied a whisky bottle on Ben Nevis," &c., &c. (Vol. I., p. 324).

Macculloch takes his readers into the Highlands by way of Dunkeld. The remains of its cathedral he describes with the pen of an architect, and lingers lovingly over Strathmore, which he calls "the pride of the Scottish valleys." We wonder how the poet of "fair Tweed and Teviot's rushing tide" liked this when he read it:—"Three yards of the Isla and its tributaries are worth all the Tweed put together; and three miles of it are worth the whole of the Clyde and the Don, besides Esks and Galas and Etricks and Avons out of number." Similarly, "The Tay, the largest of our rivers, is also their pride, the king of all the rivers of Britain." Glen Lyon he names as one of our finest valleys, and believes it had not then been visited by any traveller. At this point we have a fine example of his discursive style. The celebrated yew-tree in Fortingal churchyard sends him off on a disquisition on English and Scottish archery, and from that to ancient Highland warfare, Highland courage, Highland arms, cavalry (or rather the want of it), war-cries, and the fiery cross! Next we must wade through pages on landscape gardening and gardening in general, not to speak of Loch Tay, before we reach his first mountain, Ben Lawers. It is quite plain that Macculloch was not an "Ultramontane," but a "Salvationist," in

mountaineering, if we may judge from his account of the ascent :—

“The most interesting part of Loch Tay, (1) however, is Ben Lawers, one of our highest mountains, since it is supposed to exceed 4,000 feet [real height 3,984 feet]. It is often a fine object at a distance, particularly from Killin ; but it is much more interesting as a mountain to ascend. *It has the additional advantage to travellers, that the ascent is so easy as to permit riding to the summit.*”

Macculloch certainly did not take the Lochan a Chait route (*S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. II., pp. 276, 277). For view, he gives the palm to Ben Lawers ; Ben Lomond comes next ; but he makes a strange mistake in under-estimating the height of the hills immediately surrounding his pet mountain, by saying that it “towers above them by more than a thousand feet.” One of the nearest, Meall Garbh, is 3,661 feet ; Meall nan Tarmachan is 3,421 feet ; while the more distant Meall Ghaordie is 3,407 feet. In his description of the undoubtedly splendid view from the summit, he curiously omits to mention Ben Vorlich, to the immediate south (*Journal*, Vol. I., p. 159). Of this fine mountain he somewhat extravagantly writes (Vol. I., p. 131) :—

“With the exception of Ben Venue, the leading feature of Loch Cateran (*sic*), no mountain in Scotland presents a declivity so wild and various ; a continued succession of bold precipices and deep hollows, of ravines and torrents, and of woods dispersed in every mode of picturesque distribution ; . . . thus the mountain itself, to those who choose to wander among its strange recesses, presents numberless landscapes of alpine rock and wood, scarcely paralleled anywhere ; lofty cliffs following each other in wild confusion to the sky ; deep hollows shaded from the light of day ; torrents and cascades ; trees springing from the rocks, or crowning their summits, or distributed in all that variety of wild forest peculiar to the Highland hills.”

Before he ascended Ben na Chony (Ben Chonzie, 3,048 feet), Macculloch seems to have suffered much from the garrulous inquisitiveness of “an old snuffy-looking native” in Glen Lednach, who unconsciously gave him an unwelcome taste of his own diffuseness. He declares—

“There is not much interest in the view from the summit, although the mountain itself, particularly on the east and south sides, offers some wild rocks and ravines of a striking and picturesque character” (Vol. I., p. 137).

Strathairn, Drummond Castle, Monzie, Ossian's Tomb, Balquhiddy (he does not say whether he climbed Ben More, Stobinian, or any of the adjacent mountains), Loch Lubnag, Castle Campbell, Doune, &c., claim his attention successively before he tackles Ben Ledi (2,875 feet):—

“Though of no very great elevation, since it is not 3,000 feet high, it rises in graceful and almost solitary magnificence, broad and blue, the chief of the surrounding hills” (Vol. I., p. 156).

It charms him with “the recollections of boyhood,” on that “delicious July evening” long ago, in quite a different manner from that experienced by Mr Macharg and his party on Christmas 1890 (*Journal*, Vol. I., p. 179). But the charm for Macculloch lay not in the view from the summit, for though he made the ascent he never saw anything but rain!—

“I thought that I had known Highland rain in all its forms and mixtures and varieties, in Sky, in Mull, in Shetland, at Fort-William, at Killin, on the summit of Ben Lawers, and in the depths of Glenco; but nothing like the rain on Ben Ledi did I ever behold, before or since” (Vol. I., p. 158).

Loch Cateran (Macculloch derives its name from its banditti!) is the “great attraction of Callander;” Loch Venachar is “but an insipid piece of water;” while Loch Achray is a “lovely lake.” Ben Venue “forms a magnificent termination to a picture which fills the eye by its parts and its ornament;” but Macculloch wishes Sir Walter “had laid the *venue* of his poem anywhere else than at Ben Venue,” because of the stupid “clanjamfray” of tourists the “Lady of the Lake” “had let loose about the place.” He moans in the following style:—“Loch Cateran seems in a fair way of being belaked by the same unholy crew which has made the English Lakes a standing nuisance.” “Do, pray,” he entreats Sir Walter, “take these matters to heart; and in future, let it [the *venue* of his poems] be St Kilda, or John o’ Groat’s House, or the wilds of Ross-shire; there is room enough in the Highlands for these irruptions of the Vandals.” This is quite on the same rope with Mr Conway in his scorn of the “scum of Philistia” at Zermatt. Macculloch also chaffs Sir Walter about his poetic inventions:—

“A Cockney friend whom I met here, after scrambling among the rocks and bogs for an hour, expressed vast indignation when he had reached the Coir nan Uriskin. ‘Lord, sir,’ said the man, ‘there is no cave here but what Mr Scott made himself.’ ‘What the d—l, no cave?’ ‘Na, sir, but we go where the gentry chooses, and they always ask for the goblin cave first’” (Vol. I., p. 165).

Macculloch is much disappointed with the view from the summit of Ben Venue,—so were Messrs Douglas and Howie, for another reason, in February 1893,—though, to be sure, he saw the smoke of Glasgow and Greenock!—

“The declivity,” he admits, “has no rival anywhere; it is the singular felicity of this mountain, that while its outline is everywhere elegant or graceful, its simplicity and breadth of form and of general surface serve to support and to harmonise, according to the true rules of beauty, whether in nature or in art, that endless variety of parts of which it consists; its cliffs and knolls and precipices,” &c. . . . “It towers aloft in all its simple sublimity” (Vol. I., p. 171).

Loch Lomond, the “queen of Scottish lakes” (Vol. I., p. 202), leads him to describe Ben Lomond’s graceful cone” (3,192 feet). Again Macculloch’s “Salvationist” propensities crop out. “It is the advantage of this well-known mountain that its ascent is without toil or difficulty, a mere walk of pleasure.” Though he has already placed it, in respect of view, just next to Ben Lawers, and repeats the statement farther on, he here says (Vol. I., p. 203), “The views from its summits are exceeded by *very few* mountain views in Scotland.” Many a time has he “sat on its topmost stone, enjoying the magnificent prospect around;” and once he found himself in a dead calm at the summit while a raging storm was washing the waters of the lake below into foam. He has an even more pleasing experience on this occasion in meeting two unattended young ladies, sisters, descending the mountain, after making a guideless climb, much to the astonishment of the cautious Macculloch. He was too gallant not to enter into conversation with them, remarking that the hill was steep and the ways deep,” whereupon the “youngest and fairest” made a dexterous reply in displaying “a delicate silk stocking and a more delicate shoe, which had suffered what might have been expected in the campaign.” This was not his only experience of mountain flirtation:—

"It was not a less ingenious fair who contrived to discover my name, on a similar expedition, where I had acted the part of a *preux chevalier*. After having tried a great number of ambages and circumvolutions in vain, she succeeded at last. 'Oh, dear sister! let us write our names on this rock.' The names were written with the point of a scissars, and the scissars were very politely handed over to the mysterious beau" (Vol. I., p. 208).

"Geology, divine maid," had, after all, powerful rivals in attracting Macculloch to the mountains!

Loch Lomond naturally detains him for a while after these pleasing adventures. But we must get on. The "Cobbler," whose Highland name he says is Arthur's Seat, at last arrests him, impressing him with a sense of stability amid the changes of human things. Ascending probably from the Loch Long side, he found the ascent "not difficult" as far as the foot of the cobbler's figure, and at last he got astride the rocky saddle,—the bridge Al Sirat,—"with one foot in Loch Long and the other in Glencro." The scene he beheld was "magnificent." But, sly man, he does not tell us how he got down from the razor edge, though he admits that it was "easier to ascend than to go downwards." Loch Fyne, from Cairndhu to Inveraray, he characterises as "mean" in style. The "tedious but not difficult" ascent of Ben Cruachan he makes from Taynult; and again he finds a possible rival to his pet Ben Lawers in point of view. He pokes fun at Pennant for mistaking mere quartz for white marble, and tomahawks him mercilessly as to the height of Tyndrum.

We cannot follow Macculloch closely through Glenco! nor across the Moor of Rannoch, when he *jumped* half the distance of twelve miles from island to island of firm ground! nor on his less lively ride up the "heavy and graceless form" of Ben Nevis, "whose ascent is not often made," and whose height is "geometrically inferior" to that of Ben Muich Dhui, and others of the mountains of Mar. In connection with this district, we can only note that Macculloch was the first to satisfactorily explain the phenomena known as the Parallel Roads of Glen Roy in being lake-shores; but the complete disappearance of his retaining barriers puzzled him and every one, till "Agassiz

suggested the idea of a dam of glacier-ice" (Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland," p. 267).

Cairn Gorm is the only one of the great Aberdeenshire group he seems to have ascended. He found its ascent easy; and the view from the summit less interesting than that from Ben Nevis. Botanically "it is almost a blank." "The well-known brown crystals," called cairngorms, are, he says, not peculiar to this mountain; nor, if his story is true, were they in his day much in evidence in the jewellers' shops of Edinburgh, "who sell Brazil crystal under this pretence, at twenty times its value!"

No ascent of Ben Vrackie is mentioned, though he speaks of its "elegant conical form;" and on Schiehallion, which is "easy to climb from Kinloch," he could find no trace of Maskelyne's observatories. No true mountaineer will corroborate his opinion of the view from Cairn Gower (Carn nan Gabhar), Beinn a' Ghlo's highest summit, as being "quite uninteresting, presenting but one continued sea of mountains." To do him justice, however, he adds that in the background the mountains that lie about the sources of the Dee show "bold and broken precipices of granite, and wild forms and savage aspect, . . . and snow which never melts in their deep recesses" (Vol. I., p. 466).

Coming to another part of the country, he sings the praises of the Arran peaks. "The high and serrated forms of the northern division are peculiarly striking, presenting a rugged mountainous character unequalled in Scotland, except by the Cuchullin hills in Sky." Goat Fell he found "gentle and easy" to ascend; it is unlike every other mountain in Scotland, "from its bold spires of naked rock, from the depths of its valleys," into which the light of noonday never reaches. His guide tells an amusing story of the purpose of a reverend doctor's ascent on a former occasion. It was not for etymology, nor botany, nor mathematics, nor mineralogy, &c., &c.—he went up, but "*he just went down again!*" (Vol. II., p. 32).

Macculloch was an excellent boatman as well as a climber. He visited the whole of the west coast from "the high and bold mountain land" of Cantyre, whose

rocks he credits with "extraordinary beauty," to the "towering and noble pyramid" of Cape Rath, the fitting "termination of the rude mountain ranges of Scotland" (Vol. II., p. 361). The lochs and the rocks, the creeks and the islands, all pass in review; he jokes on Loch Nevis ("heaven") and Loch Houran ("hell") being neighbours, and seems to prefer the latter for beauty and grandeur; and considers the "district included within a line drawn from Ullapool or Loch Inver, round by Dingwall to Glen Elg," "a scene of universal mountain," as being the wildest part perhaps of all Scotland. We pass over his lamentations on the want of vegetables in the Highlands; his rhapsodies on Loch Maree; his ascent of the "graceful, *solid, broad* Ben Lair," so tempting to a mineralogist; and of Sleugach (Slioch), whose "effect, seen at once from base to summit, is perhaps more striking than that of any mountain in Scotland;" and we come to his account of the Teallachs, or, as he calls the range, Kea Cloch (Vol. II., p. 308). Macculloch was among the first to ascend any one of its summits, but it is difficult to make out, from his description, and even with the help of the excellent article and plates in last January's *Journal*, which summit it was. He speaks of a "long and laborious expedition," of "a torrent of great size, with a length of almost continuous cascades," descending from the mountain, in leaps of 150 and 200 feet; and of John Macdonald, his guide, and himself being "caught in a trap," on a projecting shelf, from which they had to jump across the torrent in order to continue the ascent. As his account has already been quoted in the *Journal* (Vol. III., pp. 16, 17), it need not be here repeated.

From Kea Cloch he proceeds, through a disquisition on herrings, in which he again bludgeons poor Pennant,—this time for daring to suppose that a herring could be two feet long, even in Iceland!—to Suil Veinn and Coul Beg. Of the former he says:—"To almost all but the shepherds it is inaccessible; one of our sailors, well used to climbing, reached the summit with difficulty, and had much more in descending." Obviously Macculloch did not attempt it. Coul Beg's "terrific peak," however, he says he ascended

in rain (Vol. II., p. 344). Yet it is difficult to reconcile this statement with what he says further on (Vol. II., p. 354):—

“Coul Beg is even more remarkable than Suil Veinn, while its form is more elegant and versatile. In every view, it is as graceful as it is singular; . . . the ascent from the shore to the base of the rocky cone is long and tedious, over a land of lakes and rocks; but *beyond that there is no access.*”

“The Stone-Doctor,” as the medico-geologist was called at Loch Eribol, just mentions Ben More Assynt, without climbing it, and hurries on to Caithness and John o’ Groat’s House. The Outer Hebrides are afterwards visited, and the characteristics of each and of their inhabitants are described in his usual loquacious manner. What, however, could be better than this on Highland procrastination?—“Time is never *present*, but always *past* or *to come.*” Hecla, in South Uist, baffles him on a short September day; while in North Uist he praises the advantages of getting completely wet in five minutes. You don’t need to wait for it in fretful expectation. This is how he classifies the mountains of Skye:—

“Glamich, near Sconser, and Ben na Cailich, near Broadford, are among the most conspicuous of the central mountains, which all rise to between 2,000 and 3,000 feet. The forms are in general conical, or tamely rounded, and disagreeably distinct, as if so many independent hills had been jumbled together; nor is there any ruggedness of outline or depth of precipice to vary the general insipidity. . . . Another group, varied by ravines and precipices, covered with scattered woods, and of a very picturesque character, occupies the division nearest to the mainland, ranging to 2,000 feet. But the highest group, as well as the most rugged, is that to the south, including the *Cuchullin hills and Blaven*, distinguished from the preceding by its dark leaden and stormy colour—a hue which it retains even in sunshine and a clear sky.”

The ascent of Ben na Cailich has been already noted as the only climb Macculloch made in Skye. Was it because of the following incident?—

“I ought to have acquired mountain wit enough ere now not to have tried short cuts down mountains; but instead of that, in ten steps I found myself on the face of a rock beyond which I could descend no lower; and when I wanted to get back, I could not climb to the point from which I had let myself down. Thus have I seen a sheep lodged for life, and that life not to be a long one. They were a



long ten minutes—the longest ten of all my life—before I found a way out of this scrape, and felt myself again at the foot of the Old Lady's Cairn."

The Coolins richly deserve all the praise he heaps on them towards the end of his third volume. From Loch Scavaig he attempted an ascent, but "soon finding myself on the bare face of a smooth rock, suspended, like Mahomet's tomb, between heaven and earth, I became glad to retreat, before retreat was too late, from a spot where, like Francis the First, I should have probably 'lost all but the honour' of breaking my neck." His description of the desolation of Loch Coruisk deserves to be read, and is too long to quote here. "Ech!" said one of his breathless men, who had gone to search for the lost Macculloch,— "ech! this is an awfu' like place!"

Canna, Rum, Eigg, and Mull, which he has the bad taste to call "a detestable island, trackless and repulsive, rude without beauty, stormy, rainy, and dreary, a heap of rude mountains, . . . an entire mass of trap rocks," &c., &c., and other islands, claim his attention. His ascents of Ben More in Mull, and of Ben an Oir and Ben na Cailich in Jura, present some incidental features interesting to climbers! On Ben More (real height 3,169 feet, Macculloch found it 3,097 feet) in August during a hailstorm, his whisky, diluted with hail, suddenly became a mass of ice,—a circumstance which might be rather disconcerting to some mountaineers; while, if the printer is correct, the Paps of Jura are no mean rivals to the Himalayas: "their medium height is about 25,000 feet!" (Vol. IV., p. 419).

And now it is time to take leave of Macculloch, in case you, Mr Editor, are "deaved" as poor Sir Walter was with his Letters. But they are well worth reading, provided that, like the Highlander, you do not include Time in your list of the Categories.

[Mr Walter A. Smith has kindly consented to write the next paper for this series. It will deal with J. Hill Burton, the Rev. Thomas Grierson, George Fennel Robson.]

## THE GRANITE PEAKS OF ARRAN.

BY W. DOUGLAS.

AMONG the more striking works of Nature's architecture the granite mountains of Arran will always take a foremost place, and although their serrated outline, as first seen from across the rippling waters of the Clyde, recalls to the climber many of the sterner glories of Skye and Rum, he will find on closer acquaintance that they have an individuality all their own. But if they have power to charm when clothed and wrapped in the blue monotone of distance, they become far more fascinating when viewed from some central point in the range itself. Here the climber is surrounded by a very chaos of rock and boulder, of soaring summits, frowning precipices, and startling pinnacles, that represent to him a perfect paradise in which to exercise his favourite pursuit. Of their strange and fantastic appearance Alexander Nicolson has well spoken, when he wrote that the peaks of Caisteal Abhail and Ceum na Caillich, as seen from the shores of Sannox in wild and misty weather, "have a fearful look of life about them, like the primeval sea-monsters tossing their heads in the air." And many a time during a recent holiday in Corrie was this apt simile brought home to me.

Hardly a day passed during the whole month of August but the attraction of the hills drew me to one or other of their tops, and as their forms gradually became more familiar, their power in changing their character with every phase of the atmosphere daily became more marked. No matter whether bathed in mist or in rain, in sunshine or in shadow, they remained beautiful under every aspect. Each of them had hidden charms, only revealed under certain conditions of the weather; and never before was it so thoroughly brought home to me, that to understand the beauty of mountain scenery, it must be seen under all its aspects of storm and of calm. Mr Leslie Stephen has said, "There is nothing more delightful than fine weather in the Alps; but, as a general rule, bad weather is the next thing to it." And this is even more true of Arran than of

Switzerland, for no matter how strongly the wind blows, or how heavily the rain falls, one is never prevented from roaming at will far into the innermost recesses of its wildest fastnesses. To know any hill well is indeed a privilege, but to become on intimate terms with a mountain group such as that of Arran, is something that adds much to a man's life.

But to leave generalities and rise to particulars. Five new routes were discovered and climbed on the precipitous east face of Cioch na h-Oighe, and some ridge-wandering indulged in on the serrated crest of that mountain. A descent was made to the Punch Bowl—as Coire na Ciche is locally called—by the pinnacled gully at its head. The Goatfell ridge\* was followed from end to end more than once. The subsidiary ridges of Mullach Buidhe† and

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\* The name "North Goatfell," when used, should no doubt apply to the most prominent point on the Goatfell ridge north of the summit, and that appears to be the top that rises to 2,684 feet half a mile north of the summit. This sends an arm northwestwards to the Saddle and Cir Mhor. Written descriptions, however, apply the name indifferently to the several summits on the ridge, and as it does not appear on the Survey Maps it is impossible to say definitely to what point the name belongs. I have inserted the name tentatively on the accompanying map at the place where I think it ought to be. The four peaks or towers, between the point I refer to and the summit, are called on the 6-inch map Stacach, their heights being, commencing with the one nearest Goatfell, 2,689, 2,628, 2,620, and 2,596 feet.

† Mullach Buidhe divides Coire na Ciche from Coire nan Larach. It is a round-backed shoulder, running east from the Goatfell ridge, and can be climbed easily on all sides. Its height, as given by the Ordnance Maps, is 2,541 feet, but where it joins the main ridge it rises to 2,687 feet. The ground at the head of the Punch Bowl is torn up in a most marvellous manner. A native of Corrie told me that during the great thunderstorm of 12th August 1884, a waterspout burst at the head of the corrie and caused this destruction. In a book lately published, entitled, "Studies from Nature on the Coast of Arran," by George Milner, this "river of rocks" is thus described:—"Two or three years ago a great waterspout broke on the ridge, and poured a tremendous flood down the mountain. What that flood must have been we see from what is around us. Along its course the very bones of the hill, as it were, are laid bare; rocks, many tons in weight, have been hurled from their beds, and have evidently crashed and bounded over each other. You can still see how the ground has been flattened, or dragged, or ploughed up by what went over it; and how, in some



**THE ARRAN HILLS: CORRECTED FROM THE SIX-INCH MAP.**

*Scale - One Inch to the Mile*



Am Binnein\* were explored. Several climbs were done on the north and south faces of Cir Mhor, of which Mr Thomson is to speak at length. A'Chir and the Witch's Step were often visited; a ridge climb made on the entire west range from Beinn Nuis to Suidhe Fhearghas; the gully from the Witch's Step to Glen Sannox was descended; and, thanks to a hint from Mr Fraser Campbell, an amusement for the "off-days" was discovered on the four huge ice-worn granite boulders that are perched in the vicinity of Corrie. I must, however, disclaim for myself any credit that may attach to the more difficult of these climbs, for their accomplishment was entirely due to the skilful guidance of Mr Naismith, whose delightful companionship added so much to the pleasure of my holiday.

Many interesting papers on climbing in Arran have already appeared in our *Journal*,† and there is little more left for me to do than to gather together some loose threads of information and weave them into a record for the benefit of future visitors.

Of all the peaks of the Arran hills, Cioch na h-Oighe exercised on my mind the greatest fascination. I was never tired of wandering up to the Punch Bowl, and of gazing at its great cliff, or of hearing the ravens croak as they flew out from their nest far up on the face under an overhanging rock, or of admiring its beautiful horn that

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cases, a rock larger than usual has stopped in its headlong course, and thus divided the stream of smaller rocks. In one place I took a measurement, and found that the width of the torrent must have been fifty yards. It would not be easy to find a scene of wilder confusion, or a more striking evidence of what may be done by the uncontrollable forces of Nature."

\* Am Binnein divides Coire nan Larach from Coire Lan, or the White-Water Corrie. It is the spur that runs east from the main Goatfell ridge, one mile north of the summit. It is rounded in outline, and is strewn all over with countless blocks of granite of large size, round which heather grows luxuriantly. Its height, according to the maps, is only 2,172, but where it joins the ridge it rises to 2,716 feet.

† "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. "A Night on A'Chir," by W. W. Naismith, Vol. II., p. 139. "Cir Mhor to Beinn Nuis," by Gilbert Thomson, Vol. III., p. 108.

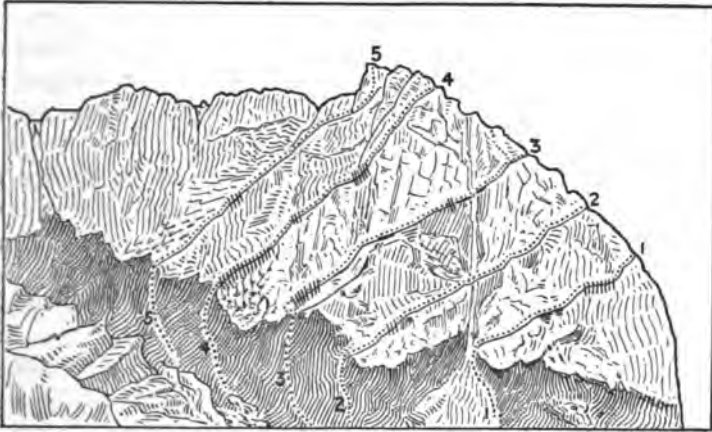
forms the north termination of the Goatfell ridge, and rises to 2,168 feet above Sannox,—a horn that changes its shape with wonderful rapidity as one circles round the base of the mountain. As seen from the shore, in approaching Corrie from Brodick, it actually appears to overhang the long narrow ridge that stretches out to join Mullach Buidhe. The next view one gets of it from the shore going northwards, is after the little hamlet of Sannox is passed. There it presents a rounded summit, resembling the top of a sugar loaf, rising proudly on the one side above the perpendicular cliffs that line the western boundary of the Punch Bowl, and on the other above the wonderful stretch of sloping slabs that sweeps upwards in an unbroken line from the base facing Sannox. This again gives place to a long flattish top as one gets further up the Glen, and so on it goes changing in form with every few hundred yards gained.

It was on its great precipice that walls the west side of the Punch Bowl that most of our climbs took place. This precipice extends for half a mile from the slope of the granite slabs to the pinnacled gully that cuts the ridge close to where it is joined by Mullach Buidhe, and consists for the most part of bare rock, rising for about 800 feet at a general angle of 60 degrees. Crossing this face diagonally from left to right are five well-defined ledges, chiefly of heather and grass. Through the lower three of these runs perpendicularly a shallow gully, commencing a short distance north of the top, and ending at the bottom of this cliff in a gravel shoot. This gully we named "The Water-fall," from having been freely baptized by the small run that trickles down its face.

NO. 1 LEDGE is the lowest of the five, and was first climbed on 25th August by Messrs Maclay and Naismith. The chief difficulty lies about a third of the way from the top, where the ledge dwindles to almost nothing for about 50 feet. The holds, however, are fairly good. The lower branch of this ledge has not been tried, but it would probably "go." The sky-line shown in the sketch from No. 1 to 5 can be climbed without difficulty.

NO. 2 LEDGE was the first of the five to be attempted.

It was climbed by Mr Naismith and myself on 6th August, and was found to be quite easy, except at its lower end, where it is very steep, and necessitates care to secure a firm stance in the short heather. It is composed in its entire length of heather and grass.



EAST-FACE OF CIOCH NA H-OIGHE.

Routes . . . . . Difficult places |||||

NO. 3 LEDGE was first ascended by Messrs Naismith, Thomson, and J. J. Douglas on 9th August. The lower 60 or 80 feet of this ledge is very narrow, but as most of the footholds are on sound rock the difficulty is not great. Above this part the ledge is broad and easy, except at one point where it is crossed by "the waterfall." A sporting variation may be made at this point, by leaving the ledge and climbing up the north side of "the waterfall," but as the rocks were shaky, and the foothold not of the best, no serious attempt was made to climb it. The ledge continues beyond "the waterfall" at an easy gradient.

NO. 4 LEDGE.—Messrs Maclay and Naismith were, on 21st August, the first to climb this. For the lower 100 feet this ledge is not very well defined, and the climbers had to traverse a steep rock-face mixed up with tufts of heather, with good holds few and far between. Higher up the footing improves, though the ledge is very narrow for another 100 feet or so. Two-thirds of the way up it



divides, the upper and steeper branch leading more directly to the top.

NO. 5 LEDGE is composed of heather and grass in its entire length, and forms a perfectly easy and simple route to the top. It is, however, narrower and longer than some of the others, and there is one somewhat sensational corner to go round.

In estimating the order of difficulty of these ledges they may probably be arranged thus: No. 2, No. 5, No. 3, No. 1, and No. 4,—No. 2 being the easiest, and No. 4 the most difficult.

On all the other sides of Cioch na h-Oighe there are perfectly easy ways to the summit, and even a descent can be made without difficulty down the steep Sannox side, in a direct line for Cir Mhor.

To show what may be done in Arran in the way of ridge-wandering, I shall describe a day's walk that Messrs Maclay, Rennie, Naismith, and I took on the 24th of August. We left Corrie in a trap at a quarter past eight, and taking to our legs, half-an-hour later, at the Brodick Church, we sauntered leisurely up Glen Rosa as far as the



THE ARRAN HILLS FROM BRODICK.

1. *Beinn Nuis.* 2. *Beinn Tarsuinn.* 3. *Beinn a' Chliabhain.* 4. *A'Chir, or Lord Brougham's Nose.* 5. *Cir Mhor.* 6. *Goatfell.*

Garbh Allt. Our pace was slow, for the sun was hot, and the smokers of the party, contrary to all mountaineering ethics, kept their briars alight all day, and therefore would not be hurried. After crossing the Garbh Allt, and following the north side of this tumbling mountain stream for nearly a mile over steadily rising ground, we crossed it again. Then a tedious trudge over a heathery moor

brought us to the edge of the splendid precipice of Beinn Nuis (pronounced Ben Noosh, *i.e.*, the face-mountain), round which we circled, and arrived at the top (2,597 feet) at 11.15. Here ended the fagging part of the day, for now the air was crisp and sharp, and the views that stretched themselves out on all sides superb. Jura, displaying her rounded lines of beauty, rose from the blue expanse of the broad Atlantic, and leading the eye round to the big mountains of Mull, and on to the jumbled group of Highland hills—from the stacks of Cruachan to the tops of Lomond and Ledi,—all too far off to afford the cataloguer of peaks any pleasure in identifying them by name. But what do the Arran hills require of distant views to enhance their glorious personality? They themselves are the grandest work achieved by Nature. Where can a finer sight be found than that of the massive form of Goatfell, rising in great sheets of polished rock intersected with long lines of brilliant heather, from the deep green hollow of Glen Rosa, and its long northern ridge of splintered pinnacles clear cut against the sky? A'Chir! Cir Mhor! and Caistel Abhail! Oh the beauty of those matchless peaks! Their starting pinnacles and frowning precipices will never fade from my memory.

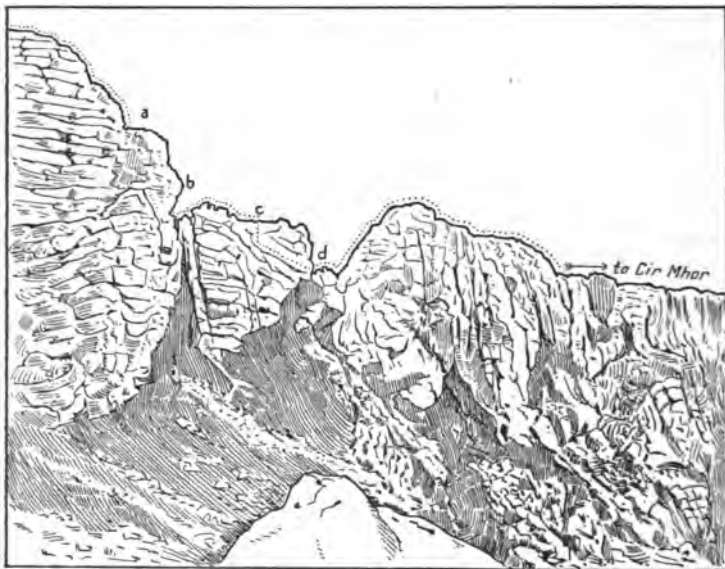
Then followed a delightful turf walk, with the Beinn Nuis precipice—of granite blocks piled mass on mass, with rocky and apparently inaccessible pinnacles projecting here and there from its ramparts—immediately below on our right, till the top of Beinn Tarsuinn, *i.e.*, the transverse mountain (2,706 feet), was reached at 12.5. The descent to the Bealach an Fhir-bhogha, *i.e.*, “the pass of the bowmen” (2,106 feet), was partly over rock, heather, and boulders, and we arrived there a few minutes later. From this pass the sky-line of A'Chir \* (pron. Ah Keer, *i.e.*, “the comb”) is

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\* “The ridge is formed by the edge of vast tabular masses or sheets of granite, inclined towards Glen Iorsa at a considerable angle, and cut sharply down on the side next Glen Rosa, so as to present towards it a continued precipice formed of successive tiers of granite sheets and rhombic blocks. The jagged outline is due in part to irregular wearing of the coarse-grained granite, but still more to the intersection of the ridge by a series of whin dikes. The horizontally prismatic

soon struck, and we had a good rock climb over it. At one o'clock we reached the top of the underhung boulder that rests on the summit, and there we had lunch. The height of A'Chir is not given on any map, but the aneroid stood at 2,335 feet, which probably is about right, for it read correctly when the next bealach (1,933 feet) was reached.

Beyond the summit, that is on the northern half of the A'Chir ridge, lie the two gaps previously referred to in the *Journal*.



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

The above diagram will explain how they are usually passed.

At *a* the descent is on the Iorsa side. The way lies structure of these subject them to a more rapid decay than even the friable coarse granite, and hence most of the deep notches of this jagged ridge mark the situation of whin dikes. The range, width, and structure of the dikes are well seen as we pass along; the width is various, in some five or six feet only, in others ten to twelve and fifteen to eighteen, the broadest being of this latter width. It consists of a crumbling greenstone, and ranges north  $39^\circ$  west. The others have various ranges between west and north."—BRYCE'S *Arran*, 4th ed., p. 61.

between some boulders, and leads to a grass-filled crack on a sloping granite slab ending in a shallow chimney leading to the col *b*. This col is the narrowest part of the ridge. On it there is an "open place" to step over. At *c* the descent is made on the Rosa side. Here a rock wall, some fifteen feet high, with excellent hand holds, lets the climber down to a grass ledge running diagonally along the face of the cliff, and leads to the col *d*. The ledge ends in a little chimney, which is more easily descended than ascended. From the col *d*, and looking back to the cliffs immediately below *a*, will be seen evidences of an eagle's eyrie. We picked up near the spot several feathers belonging to the birds. Beyond this col the rest of the ridge is quite easy.

After passing these bad steps in the usual way, we ascended Cir Mhor (pron. Keer Vore, *i.e.*, "the great comb," 2,618 feet), by the gently sloping western shoulder. On the top we met a tourist, who pointed out to us a lightning-struck rock on the summit. This was a great boulder, which had been split in two by the electric current. The edges of the fracture had been fused, and now presented a vitreous bluish appearance. Our informant told us he had seen it two years ago, and it then appeared to have been freshly done.

We left Cir Mhor at 2.15, and were not sorry to arrive at the well-known spring that pours out such a flow of icy-cold water on the shoulder of Caisteal Abhail. Here we made a long halt while refreshing the inner man and admiring the view. Cir Mhor perhaps looks better from this point of view than from any other. It thrusts its head up like some Alpine aiguille, and towers above its great north precipice with startling prominence.

A short ascent from the spring brought us at 3.30 to the four tors crowning Caisteal Abhail. These extraordinary towers are built up with gigantic flagstones, piled one on the top of the other with the regularity of built masonry.

The highest of these which we climbed is, according to the 6-inch Ordnance Map, 2,817 feet, not 2,735 as stated on the 1-inch map.

It is sometimes difficult to hit the Suidhe Fhearghas ridge from this point, for one is apt to follow the spur—

Cuithe Mheadhonach—running into North Glen Sannox ; but having been misled on a previous occasion we did not again fall into this error. Some good rock scrambling will be had if the crest of the ridge is religiously stuck to, and



CLIMBING THE CYCLOPEAN WALLS OF ARRAN.

all the pinnacles and boulders that lie between the tors of the Castles and the Witch's Step climbed. Naismith and Maclay, having apparently an inexhaustible supply of energy, climbed everything ; while Rennie and I occasionally dodged a pile or two of rocks, by taking the sheep path-way on the Sannox side.

Soon we reached Ceum na Caillich, or, as it is more frequently called, the Witch's Step or Carlin's Leap. This

is an immense gash \* on the ridge, overlooked by granite walls. The height of the west side is 200 feet, and lies at an easy angle to the col. The east, however, rises for 150 feet more perpendicularly, and it is on this face that "the climb" is to be had. There is no difficulty in reaching the col † by the face of the west side. From a few feet above the col, the ascent of the east side commences in an easy diagonal chimney of about ten feet, formed by the edge of one rock mass overlapping another. Above this there is an *earth* landing, just large enough for one person to stand on comfortably, and when the climber arrives there he will be able to survey the next stage. He will see the route for the next fifteen feet lying straight before him over a smooth sloping slab of granite. This is the most difficult part of the climb, and if he can persuade a companion to give him a "leg up" from the earth landing, no doubt he will get to the top all the easier. Once past this, the rest is all fairly plain sailing. First, fifteen feet of steep grass, then ten feet of a rock wall, then fifty or sixty feet of steep grass, at the end of which, by turning to the right between two immense rock masses, a natural chimney of about fifteen feet high

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\* "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."—BRYCE'S *Arran*, p. 160.

† From the col a descent can easily be made to North Glen Sannox, but it is more difficult on the Glen Sannox side. Messrs Thomson, Naismith, and I did the latter on the 10th of August. Our route led us first over a steep slope of crumbling trap-rock covered with gravel, then along the top of a narrow wall of loosely piled blocks in such an uncertain state of equilibrium that the last man had to use extreme care to avoid dislodging them. This brought us to the head of the gully, which is filled with great granite boulders, and these being firmly wedged the difficulty was at an end. Probably it would have been easier had we avoided the wall, and come down the gully all the way. The rock scenery of this gully is wild in the extreme. The huge walls of granite rise up defiantly on each side, above which the great towers of the Witch's Step soar aloft and make a scene of wonderful grandeur. Especially sublime is it if during the descent, as we experienced, a gale of wind is roaring through the gap, shaking the fabric and shrieking with baffled fury at meeting an irresistible force.

will be found on the left leading directly to the summit. But this is not all of the climb. The boulder that crowns the summit has still to be scaled, and if this is done the climber may congratulate himself on being no longer an out-and-out duffer!

Rennie and I, after doing the Step in the usual way, did the boulder roped, but our two companions, despising such aids, ran up it like the proverbial lamplighter. These gentlemen, whom we had left on the other side of the Step to sketch Cir Mhor, had followed us up by a different and more difficult route, lying a little more to the south of the regular one, and involving a good deal of "chimney-sweeping."

Leaving the top at 4.50, and Suidhe Fhearghas (pron. Sui Fergus, *i.e.*, Fergus's Seat, 2,082 feet) at 5.15, we descended in a direct line for the Sannox golf-course, and reached Corrie at 6.30.

Before leaving the subject of climbing in Arran, perhaps Goatfell (2,866 feet) ought to have a word, as it has never hitherto been mentioned in our *Journal*. From nowhere can it be more easily ascended than from Corrie. Leaving the road soon after the telegraph-cable signboard is passed, the south bank of the White Water (as the Corrie Burn is locally called) is followed to where the shoulder—Meall Breac, 1,871 feet—rises on the left. This shoulder is ascended, and on the top of it the track from Brodick is joined half a mile from the summit. The whole ascent from Corrie is little more than an easy walk. I timed myself one day, and without hurrying found it took me an hour and thirty-five minutes to ascend, and an hour and ten minutes to descend.

But for one person that climbs Goatfell from Corrie I dare say a dozen will make the ascent from Brodick. Nicolson wrote for the *Scotsman*, some twenty years ago, "A Geological Excursion in Arran," in which is given an account of the ascent from Brodick, and which, being practically inaccessible to most of us now, I may be pardoned for quoting:—

"There are few mountains with so pleasant an ascent as Goatfell. Instead of having, as is often the case, to traverse miles of rough or

boggy moor before getting near the mountain, you are exhilarated at the outset by the charming walk through Brodick Castle grounds ; then after clearing the wood, where you get some lovely peeps of the mountain over the green fir tops, the ascent to the old mill-dam is very easy, and the path well-beaten. From this point, again, to the ridge that leads to the top, the ascent is even more gradual, though a little rougher as you ascend. The last 500 feet alone presents any difficulty, and that not great. At one place in the beaten track the granite blocks interpose some obstruction, requiring the use of hands ; but by taking it easy, and avoiding obstacles, the ascent of Goatfell may be comfortably accomplished by any one fit to walk ten miles on a level road."

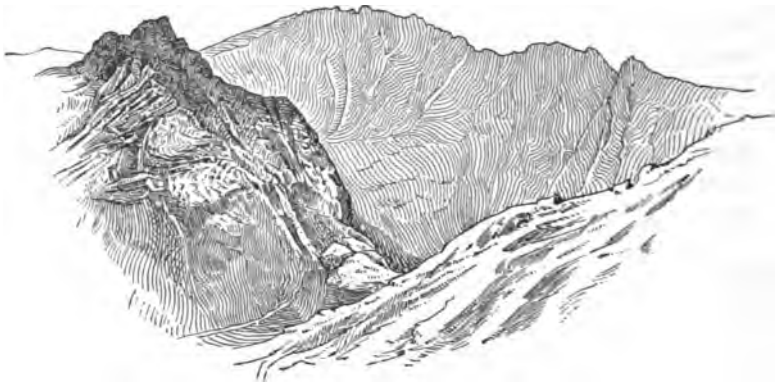
As for the view from the top, it is one of the most sublime scenes I have ever witnessed. Nicolson goes on to describe it thus :—

"One of its distinguishing peculiarities is, of course, that being an island of moderate size, you see the sea all around, which, were there nothing more, makes a splendid panorama. It embraces the whole Firth of Clyde from Glasgow to the Mull of Kintyre, the Ayrshire coast in its whole extent of ninety miles, and beyond it to Loch Ryan and Portpatrick. Beyond the blue hills of Galloway, if the air were only clear enough, which it seems never to be, a glimpse would be got of the Isle of Man. To the south the coast of Ireland is distinctly visible, if there be no haze,—to-day there is, and in that direction the only distant thing we see is Ailsa Craig, towering very blue and conspicuous out of the deep. To the west is Jura, beyond Kintyre. Northwards beyond Loch Fyne, one sees in the far distance the double peak of Ben Cruachan ; and as the eye wanders eastwards one sees the beautiful Kyles of Bute, with the mountains beyond, from Loch Striven to Ben Lomond. Along the shores of the Clyde, if the sun shines, are seen white glimpses of Dunoon, Kilcreggan, Helensburgh, and Dumbarton ; in the far distance looms the smoke of Glasgow ; nearer, gleams the smoke of Greenock, over its forest of masts ; the Cloch and the Cumbrae Lighthouses are bright specks over the blue water ; and up and down the whole way, as far as the eye can see, between Dumbarton and the southern horizon, steamers and sailing craft of every sort and size are passing to and fro, 'Laden with spoils of commerce, from the busy shores of Clutha, and the banks once green and broomy.'

"Such is the distant view from Goatfell, than which there cannot be many finer sights to be seen from any hill-top on this side of Mount Axsbeck. The near view is not less remarkable. The two chief features of it that impresses 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. Very pretty looks the Bay of Brodick, with its bright border of yellow sand, its green woods and braes, and neat white cottages. The Holy Isle rises clear to view with its fine profile, and the curve of Lamlash Bay comes distinctly out. Southwards stretches the long Glen of Shiskin, green and fertile; and on the opposite coast of Kintyre one sees the entrance to the harbour of Campbelton. The prominent peaks that arrest attention are those of Cir Mhor and Caisteal Abhail. The former is joined to Goatfell by the col, about 1,000 feet high, that divides Glen Rosa and Glen Sannox, and you have here the very best position for studying its bold and weird features. Between it and the Caisteal Abhail is the head of



CIR MHOR, CAISTEAL ABHAIL, AND THE WITCH'S STEP, FROM GOATFELL.

Glen Sannox, of which you get a glimpse; but to see it well you must go lower down. From the summit of Goatfell, however, there is a perfect view of the whole crest and face of Caisteal Abhail, which, for jaggedness of contour, is not surpassed by anything in Scotland excepting the Coolin Hills. It terminates on the north in a cleft of stupendous depth and darkness, called Ceum-na-Caillich, or the Carlin's Leap, on the other side of which rises a sharply-peaked horn, connected with the ridge that forms the west side of Glen Sannox, the highest point of which is Fergus's Seat (Suidhe Fhearguis)."

So much for Nicolson, and it is interesting to trace also in the earlier writers the gradual development of the appreciation of scenery as depicted in their descriptions of Goatfell.

In 1628, "Lugless Willie Lithgow" describes the Island of Arran as being "sur-clouded with Goatfield-hill, which, with wide eyes, overlooketh the western continent, and the

northern country of Ireland ; bringing also into sight, in a clear summer's day, the Isle of Man, and the higher coast of Cumberland. A larger prospect no mountain in the world can show, pointing out three kingdoms at one sight ; neither is there any isle like to it for brave gentry, good archers, and hill hovering hunters."

In 1811, Macculloch describes the ascent as "gentle and easy." He disparages the distant view, but gives a vivid picture of the surrounding hills of the island.

In 1840, there is an admirable little account of an ascent by the Rev. Thomas Grierson in his "Autumnal Rambles among the Scottish Mountains," a book that ought to be more widely read than it is at the present day. He made the ascent in one and a half hour from Brodick. Grierson must have been a splendid fellow, and a keen mountaineer. He delighted in covering an immense distance in one day, and I doubt if many of our members could rival him in all of the excursions he describes.

In 1841, A. C. Ramsay has a learned account of the geological formation of the island, and gives a delightful description of the ascent of Goatfell, and of the view from the top, in the opening chapter of "The Geology of the Island of Arran."

In 1842, Lord Cockburn made the ascent from Brodick, which he describes in his "Circuit Journeys." The time up and down took him five and a half hours. He says, "In point of climbing, the ascent, except over a few rocks near the top, is not at all formidable—a mule could go to the top."

In 1857, Hugh <sup>M'Donald's</sup> M'ulloch's "Days at the Coast" contains a graphic and only too brief chapter on Arran. He says, from the top of Goatfell there is "such a wild storm of mountains and glens that we are almost tempted to re-echo the Paisley weaver's exclamation on Ben Lomond, 'Man, Jock, are the works of God no devilish !'"

Before bringing this paper to a close, I shall merely remark that climbing in Arran has been frequently likened to that obtained among the Coolins of Skye ; but unfortunately the little island of Arran cannot lay that flattering unction to its soul, for its ridges are neither so

narrow, nor are its peaks so sharp, as those of its northern sister. Notwithstanding, the rock-climber will find many places on the great sheets of granite—so characteristic to the island—that will tax his powers to the utmost. Even on the rock-slabs that lie at a comparatively small angle, he will find that the palms of his hands, the flat of his legs and arms, not to speak of other parts of his body, will be brought into use before some simple-looking place can be overcome ; while in Skye, on the other hand, difficult-looking places often turn out to be quite simple. This is mainly due to the manner in which the two rocks—gabbro and granite—weather. The gabbro of the Coolins splits up and splinters into angular fragments ; the granite of the Arran hills decomposes on the surface, and crumbles gradually into gravel. The result is, that although the climber among the Coolins has to take care of dislodging loose stones, he finds no end of cracks and projections which supply good holds for foot and hand, as well as places to hitch the rope round ; while in the hills of Arran he finds few projections suitable for hand-holds, for the rock is either weathered into smooth sloping slabs, or into tiers of blocks with rounded edges, affording few satisfactory holds save in the joints of the “masonry.” However, if the perpendicular openings between the blocks are wide enough to admit the body, they make splendid chimneys for “back-and-knee” work.

There are comparatively few loose stones on the Arran hills, but the rocks are often covered with a layer of gravel that rolls under the foot, and necessitates care to secure a firm stance. The granite in Arran varies greatly in texture. Sometimes it is coarse in grain, and sometimes it is fine. The coarse-grained granite, when sound, is about equal with the gabbro for “friction grips,” but it decomposes more readily in damp places.

Another noticeable contrast between the gabbro and the granite rock is, that the former does not apparently supply the necessary soil or moisture for the support of vegetation, and is remarkable for its sterility. The granite rocks however are plentifully clothed with grass and heather, and that too on faces of considerable steepness. This

peculiarity largely affects the climbing. In the Coolins the rock is exposed to view, and the climber sees exactly what he has to trust to; but in Arran he frequently finds himself upon ledges and steep slopes covered with luxuriant vegetation, where the only holds available are handfuls of heather. Upon the whole, I should award the first prize to the gabbro as *the best* climbing rock; but for all that the granite is infinitely better than the metamorphic rock of which most of the Highland Bens are built.

## CIR MHOR.

BY GILBERT THOMSON.

GUIDE-BOOKS and geography primers agree in assigning to Arran one of their scanty store of Scottish mountains, and tourist and schoolboy alike are aware of the existence of Goatfell. It is without doubt a fine hill, and the view from the top, whether on a clear day, or at the dawn, or (best of all) under bright moonlight, makes it what the guide-books would call a "remunerative" ascent. It is easily accessible, and is the highest peak in the island. But for the climber it does not take the first place. Across the head of Glen Rosa rises Cir Mhor, a less lofty but a sharper and steeper pinnacle, which has been justly described in the *Journal* as "the dominating peak of the whole range," and "in more ways than one the finest of the Arran peaks." It forms roughly a triangular pyramid, one face being towards Glen Iorsa, one towards Glen Rosa, and the third towards upper Glen Sannox or Coire na h-Uaimh. The main ridges between these faces connect with A'Chir (between Iorsa and Rosa), with the Goatfell ridge, by the well-known "saddle" (between Rosa and Sannox), and with Caisteal Abhail (between Sannox and Iorsa). These ridges are easy, offering no difficulty in any direction, and the Iorsa and Rosa faces do not necessarily present any serious difficulty, although such can be found on the latter at least. The Glen Sannox face, on the other hand, is clearly precipitous,—such a place as is pretty sure to be popularly regarded as inaccessible, and described as "absolutely perpendicular." (This phrase illustrates the grammatical rule that the adverb *qualifies* the adjective, and means a place that one can't go up, or daren't come down.) The face is curiously seamed with gullies, interesting to the climber as suggesting possible routes, and to geologists, because each, we are told, marks the position of a volcanic dike.

The various problems offered by this face were certain before long to attract the attention of the Club. Earlier ascents, no doubt, have been made, but until those referred



A, B, and C—ROUTES ATTEMPTED UNSUCCESSFULLY.  
 D—"TRAP DYKE CLIMB."  
 EE—"EASY ROUTE."  
 FF. CAVE ROUTE.

**CIR MHOR (N. FACE).**

*Explanation of Outline Sketch.*

GG—STONE SHOOT RIDGE.  
 H—UPPER SHARI F.  
 I—MULLAY'S CAVES.  
 JJ—PINNACLES RIDGE.  
 KK—WESTERN STONE SHOOT.  
 L—ACHUI.  
 M—BEN TARBUNN.



to in the *Journal* there are probably no exact records of routes. Possibly some readers may identify their own routes among those here figured. The only records so far are an ascent of the "stone shoot ridge" in October 1891 (*Journal*, Vol., II., p. 17), and of the "western stone shoot" about two years later (Vol. III., p. 108). In August 1894, however, a regular siege of the Arran hills was instituted, and Cir Mhor had its share of attention. Douglas, as a sort of commander-in-chief, took quarters at Corrie for a month; persuaded Naismith (by wheedling, cajoling, and threats of bodily violence) to join him for about half that time; and was aided by flying visits from Boyd, Fraser Campbell, Maclay, Rennie, and myself, among Club members; while assistance was also lent by Dr Douglas, and Messrs Herdman and Sang.

The accompanying illustration of the face is due jointly to Douglas, Naismith, and myself,—in unequal proportions. The three of us took turns in hauling a big camera to the top of Ceum-na-Caillich; Douglas took the photograph, and Naismith made from it the sketch. The first part at least was very hard work, but was made interesting by the persuasive eloquence of the man with the camera arguing, first, that it was time for a rest, and second, that the time so spent was part of his half-hour. The dotted lines indicate the various routes followed, but by no means exhaust the possibilities. They are lettered in succession from the Glen Rosa "saddle," and in the descriptions "right" and "left" are as in the sketch,—that is, facing the hill. The outline of the pinnacle ridge is from a sketch by Naismith.

The gully marked A was explored one very wet day by Douglas, Naismith, and myself. We were stopped by the first of two steep pitches, which, as seen from the other side of the valley, look like caves. The water which came tumbling down was a great obstacle, but it is questionable whether even without it we would have succeeded, and the upper pitch appeared even stiffer than the lower. The top of the gully is low down on the saddle ridge. The scars immediately to the right of A do not suggest feasible routes, as they seem to be mere cracks: B and C, which look more



hopeful, have been tried several times without success. They both appear extremely formidable from below ; while Naismith, who alone has seen them closely from above, reports that there they look a good deal worse. On the face of the hill there is a large patch of steep and rough grass, crossed by two narrow screes. This patch extends to the ridge, running obliquely upward to the left, while B and C lead up to it from below. Further along, a feasible route was found by Dr Douglas and Naismith, who got up the gully marked D. This was a scramble in a groove over wet and rotten rocks, the discomfort being the chief difficulty. From the grass, however, they followed the route marked F F,—the “cave route,”—which gives one of the most interesting bits on the whole face.

I happened to reach Corrie just after its discovery, and was at once invited to accompany the others on a second visit, their benevolent object being to “wander” me in the cave. The grass patch was this time reached by starting from E, the variation having been reconnoitred on the previous visit. It proved quite simple, and the easiest climb up the face of Cir Mhor would be to reach the grass patch by this route, and to follow the grass to the ridge,—that is, from E to E. The lower part is rock scrambling, but of an easy kind. After reaching the grass, I was conducted into the gully from which the lower of the two screes issues. The sides, as well as the floor, are very steep, they come closer and closer, and before long the gully ends abruptly in a cave, the roof being formed by enormous wedged blocks. It seems a clear case of “no road this way.” I was invited to go ahead, cheered by the assurance that the thing had been done ; but before I could make any attempt at progress, my companions (probably remembering that it was not a comfortable place for a prolonged smoke) changed their minds, and Naismith, with the rope, swarmed up a steep block, and vanished through a black hole in the ceiling. The gradual movement of the rope, and the frequent falls of sand and gravel through various smaller holes, were for some time the only indications we had of his progress. At last I was invited to go on, and followed the rope upstairs. The floor of the

drawing-room is in bad repair, and requires to be crossed cautiously, while the lighting arrangements might be better. The rope led through a very small doorway, requiring much wriggling, to an ante-room, into which light was streaming through a similar doorway. Another wriggle, and I found myself in the open air, over a huge pile of blocks, which apparently choked up the gully, and the interstices of which formed the cave. The doorways were originally much smaller, and Naismith, who pioneered the previous climb, is reputed to have illustrated the descent as well as the ascent of man, by the ready way in which his fore limbs adapted themselves to burrowing purposes. In other words, he had to clear the door steps of a great accumulation of rubbish; and, after all, as he remarked, and as I feelingly concurred, the route would not be suitable for any one with a "bow window."

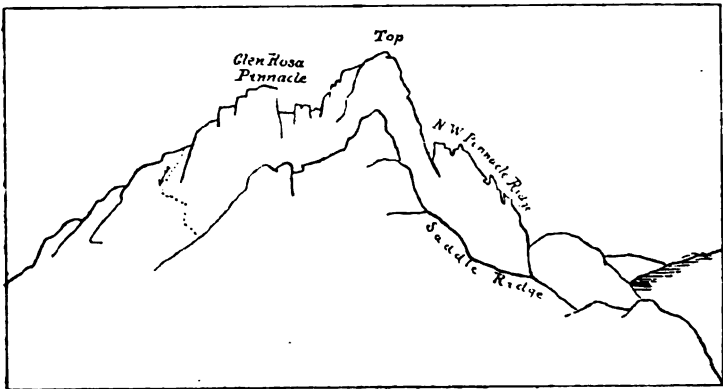
The top of the cave has now a small cairn, marked by a  $\Delta$  on the line F F. In descending through the cave care is necessary to take the right turning. On a subsequent visit the leader wriggled down through a door that led nowhere in particular, and stuck fast.

The ridge marked G G is the line of ascent described in "Cir Mhor from Glen Sannox," and referred to already as the "stone-shoot ridge." It has since then been climbed several times, and one party is believed to have varied it by traversing to the right near the top, and coming out just under the peak. A small cairn is marked by a  $\Delta$ . After our cave experience just described, our party came down this way. There is no difficulty, but care is required, as the rocks are shaky, and there is a deep drop on one side, and in some places on both. The stone shoot itself, on the right of the ridge in the sketch, gives very unstable footing. The lower part is deep, and, if possible at all, would be an exceedingly dirty route.

The upper shelf H was attacked by Douglas, Maclay, and Naismith, in the hope of finding a way to the top. The shelf, however, ended abruptly at the place marked by a cross. To reach the shelf, Maclay piloted the party up a chimney, which had no business to go, but which did. His progress removed the previously scanty holds, and the

others described their ascent as being caused purely by traction from above. Maclay's chimney is marked I on the sketch, but the shelf could probably be reached more easily by the one further to the left, just below H.

The north-west pinnacle ridge J J was explored by Maclay and Naismith. The pinnacles gave a fine climb, and in addition a way was found to reach the shelf from the ridge. The climb was begun by leaving the western stone shoot just under the obstacle described below. The sketch shows this ridge as the sky-line on the right side.



CIR MHOR FROM NORTH GOATFELL.

Naismith and I climbed the western stone shoot (K K) in September 1893. Except in one place it is a mere walk, but at this point we got right into a large cave, with a waterfall pouring over, and on that occasion we climbed out of the shoot and rejoined it above the fall. Last autumn, with the addition of Douglas, we explored the obstacle more carefully. Climbing up on the left side of the fall, we found our way barred by a steep rock face, coming down on to what had appeared from below to be the roof of the cave. This roof was set at an angle too steep for comfort, but had a ledge running along the base of the upper rock, by which we got out to a corner of the latter, above the centre of the gully. A crack running up on the left side of this corner gave us some hold, and after some hesitation we got up with no great difficulty. The

trouble is in making up one's mind to trust the holds on the crack, as there is no good footing below from which assistance can be given or the rope held. The loose stones just above are treacherous, but otherwise the rest is simply a walk to the Iorsa ridge.

On the Glen Rosa side of the hill there projects a very precipitous subsidiary ridge, composed of gigantic blocks of granite. It forms the left side of the outline sketch on p. 216. After our first visit to the western stone shoot, as above described, we found ourselves in a dense mist on the top, and stumbled on to the highest point of this ridge, the "Glen Rosa pinnacle." After getting up by a crack, which made heavy demands both on muscle and on cuticle, we had the satisfaction of seeing that by going round a huge boulder we could have walked up. On all other sides the pinnacle is apparently inaccessible, being flanked by magnificent precipices. The boulder was lately climbed by Maclay and Naismith, who threw a sixty-foot rope over it. They afterwards descended the ridge by a track shown on the sketch, a route which had previously been reconnoitred from below.

From a climber's point of view, the strongest feature about Cir Mhor is the variety of work which it affords. There is climbing over firm rocks and over rotten rocks, over screes and along ledges, by gullies and by ridges, and it varies from impossible to easy, not by one big jump, as many hills do, but by innumerable gradations. It can give easy enjoyment to the view seeker, and tough work to the rock climber. The view from the top is very grand, commanding the two finest glens and the most rugged ridges in the island; but while the climber may be on the hill with enjoyment every day, the view seeker may wait long for weather which makes it worth his while to ascend. Mists, which are frequent, spoil the view for the ordinary tourist. The climber alone knows how to appreciate the grandeur of mist effects.

## STRATHCARRON AS A CLIMBING CENTRE.

BY LIONEL W. HINXMAN.

THE informal "meet" held at Strathcarron last June, and chronicled in the September number of the *Journal*, may perhaps have directed some attention to this place as a convenient centre for the exploration of an interesting and comparatively little known district of West Ross-shire.

As a primary recommendation, the climber will find in the Station Hotel an unpretentious but comfortable hostelry, whose plain but abundant fare is admirably suited to the simple tastes of the hardy mountaineer, who sometimes finds it difficult to extract a square meal from the six or seven relays of minute and chilly portions placed before him in the course of the *table d'hôte* dinner of a fashionable Highland hotel.

Again, through the heart of the district runs that model line the Dingwall and Skye Railway, which is not without its uses when one has fully grasped the fact that the evening train is invariably from thirty to sixty minutes late, except on that particular day upon which, after a long hill-tramp, one has run it rather too fine, and reaches Achnasshellach five minutes after time, to find the train gone and another six miles to walk to dinner.

Looking north from the platform at Strathcarron Station, four conspicuous mountains at once strike the eye. Glasbheinn, on the extreme left, is not particularly interesting from a climbing point of view, though the cliffs on its eastern face that overhang the Bealach of Glasnoic are bold and precipitous.

Further to the right, from behind the grassy slopes of Torr na h'Iolaire, rises the bare rocky peak of Ruadh Stac—the Red Stack, on this side a curious misnomer, presenting, as it does, a cone—in sunshine, uniformly white; in cloud, a melancholy grey. Ruadh Stac is one of the roughest hills in this very rugged region, and affords some interesting climbs. The ordinary ascent is best made from Coire Fionnaraich, following the path from Coulags bridge and turning off to the left a little beyond the curiously

shaped standing stone known as Clach Con-Fionn (the stone of Fingal's dog), to which the legend tells us Fingal used to tie his dog when hunting in the glen. Leaving the path at the highest point of the col, and taking to the north-eastern ridge immediately above the highest of the three small lochans that lie in the intervening hollow, a rough but simple enough climb, mostly over rough blocks of quartzite, brings one to the summit (2,919 feet). From the cairn the view to the south and west is fine, particularly of the Coolins and the peaks of Kintail.

Another, and more interesting route, may be taken by the S.E. face. Here long slopes of glistening quartzite, highly polished by ice action and dipping outwards from the hill at angles varying from  $40^{\circ}$  to  $46^{\circ}$ , have to be crossed by "crack" climbing. A slip from the precarious foothold afforded by the infrequent crevice during this traverse would meet with awkward results, while the friction-heat evolved during an involuntary glissade over a couple of hundred feet or so of hard rock surface would be effectually cooled by the inevitable immersion to follow in the waters of the lochan below. To those in search of something really sensational, the shattered precipices of the northern face may be recommended with confidence. These look bad enough from below, but would, I think, yield to a series of careful traverses from ledge to ledge. The rock, however, is thoroughly rotten and untrustworthy, and great care would be required.

Immediately to the north of Ruadh Stac, and separated only from it by the gloomy tarn that fills the deep hollow of Coire an Ruadh Stuic, rises its sister-mountain Meall a' Chinn Deirg (3,060 feet), whose name (like many other Gaelic place-names) loses considerably by translation. "The bald hill with the red head," as the vernacular has it, is more or less precipitous on its western and northern faces, and has one or two good rock chimneys, but will not compare in interest with its neighbour across the way.

The long range that closes up the view to the north-east, and forms the further boundary of the Coulags Glen, is really one continuous mountain ridge, a high col, over 2,000 feet, alone separating Sgurr Ruadh (3,141 feet), the

sharp northern peak, from Fuar Tholl (2,968), the southern extremity. The latter is the mountain whose outline, seen from the west, is so suggestive of the profile of a distinguished Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Both these mountains should be ascended from the eastern side, the slopes that rise from Coire Fionnaraich and the Coulags Glen being uninteresting alternations of grass and loose scree.

Taking the morning train to Achnashellach (either at 6 or 11.20, according as the climber is a late or early bird), a path will be found crossing the railway a few yards west from the station. This leads up through the magnificent scenery of Coire Lair, closely following the course of the river Lair, a wild mountain torrent that flows for the most part through a deep narrow gorge overhung with fantastically distorted pine trees, and broken by foaming waterfalls.

Over the lower part of the glen from the great precipices of Fuar Tholl, of which those that hem in the corrie of that ilk are "absolutely perpendicular." Absolutely perpendicular too appear to be the sides of the great buttress of terraced sandstone that hangs imminent over the little tarn of Coire Mainrichean, on the northern face of the mountain.

That these cliffs are also absolutely inaccessible I would not venture to affirm, having regard to the prowess of "Orlamon Linecus" and his oromaniacal friends, but the ordinary climber will find the spur that runs out due east the most likely route to the top.

The higher part of Coire Lair forms a second corrie or inner chamber, in which lie the waters of Loch Coire Lair, abounding in freely-rising char. Round the head of this lochan tower the eastern walls of Sgurr Ruadh, which here throws out two spurs to the E. and N.E., separated by a deep and narrow cleft that terminates above in a *couloir*, usually filled with snow till midsummer.

The ascent of either of these spurs, following the skyline, would I think afford a first-rate climb. They descend very steeply in huge steps, and while not so sensational in appearance as the toothed ridge of Meall Dearg of Leagach, will probably be found at least as difficult, though the rock in this case is in a far less shattered condition.

Beinn Liath Mhòr (3,034 feet), on the further side of the glen, Beinn Liath Bheag, and the other mountains that stretch northwards towards Coulin, are more interesting geologically than from a mountaineering point of view. Composed of red Torridon sandstone and white Cambrian quartzite, folded and thrust together in extraordinary complexity, and generally devoid of all superficial covering or vegetation, they present to the eye a series of life-size geological diagrams, in which the outcrop of every bed can be followed from below through all its flexures and contortions on the bare mountain side.

The lower part of Glen Carron, from the head of Loch Dhugaill to the sea, coincides very nearly with an important geological boundary-line; and the difference in character between the hills on either side of the valley is very striking, the *bizarre* forms and naked surfaces of the sandstone and quartzite mountains giving place to smooth grassy slopes and summits broken now and again by rocky buttress or crag-encircled corrie. These eastern heights, composed of different varieties of gneiss and schist, remind one at once of the mountains of central and western Perthshire, to which in geological character they are indeed closely allied.

My acquaintance with the hills on this side of the valley is very limited, but from their general appearance I do not think it likely that the legitimate ascent of any of them would afford anything more than an easy walk, though no doubt good rock scrambling might be got in many of the corries. Some of these mountains are, however, very fine in outline, and this is notably the case with the bold group of peaks that surrounds the head of Loch Monar.

It may be well to mention that nearly all the ground described above is strictly guarded deer-forest, where intruders are looked on with little favour during the later summer months. Up to mid-June, however,—and on the west coast, April, May, and June bring the best chance of good weather,—the climber is not likely to be challenged if he avoid the sanctuaries. A compensating fact exists in the system of capital shooting-paths—extending to up-



wards of sixty miles—that traverse the Achnashellach Forest in every direction. These are a great boon ; both at the start, when they save for the actual climb energy that would otherwise have been expended in toiling over the rough ground of the lower slopes ; and still more at the end of the day, when the excitement is over, and the long descent in the gloaming to inhabited levels has to be faced.

In addition to these climbs, which are comparatively near at hand, there are other expeditions quite within the compass of a long summer's day, that can be made from Strathcarron.

The path through Coulags Glen can be followed over the col under Meall a Chinn Deirg to the head of Loch Torridon, a distance of ten miles. Here one is in the heart of that noble group of mountains of which Leagach, with its two pinnacle climbs of Meall Dearg and the Fasarinen, is head and chief.

The driving road to Shieldaig—notorious seat of ecclesiastical warfare—passes within a mile of the wild corries and stupendous precipices of Beinn Bhan of Applecross, or a short cut can be made to the same point by the Tullich Glen and the Bealach of Glascnoic.

To the south-east of Strathcarron lies the as yet unexplored country about the head-waters of the Ling ; and further afield still, the glorious mountain region of Loch Duich and Kintail.

## CADER IDRIS.

BY T. V. SCULLY.

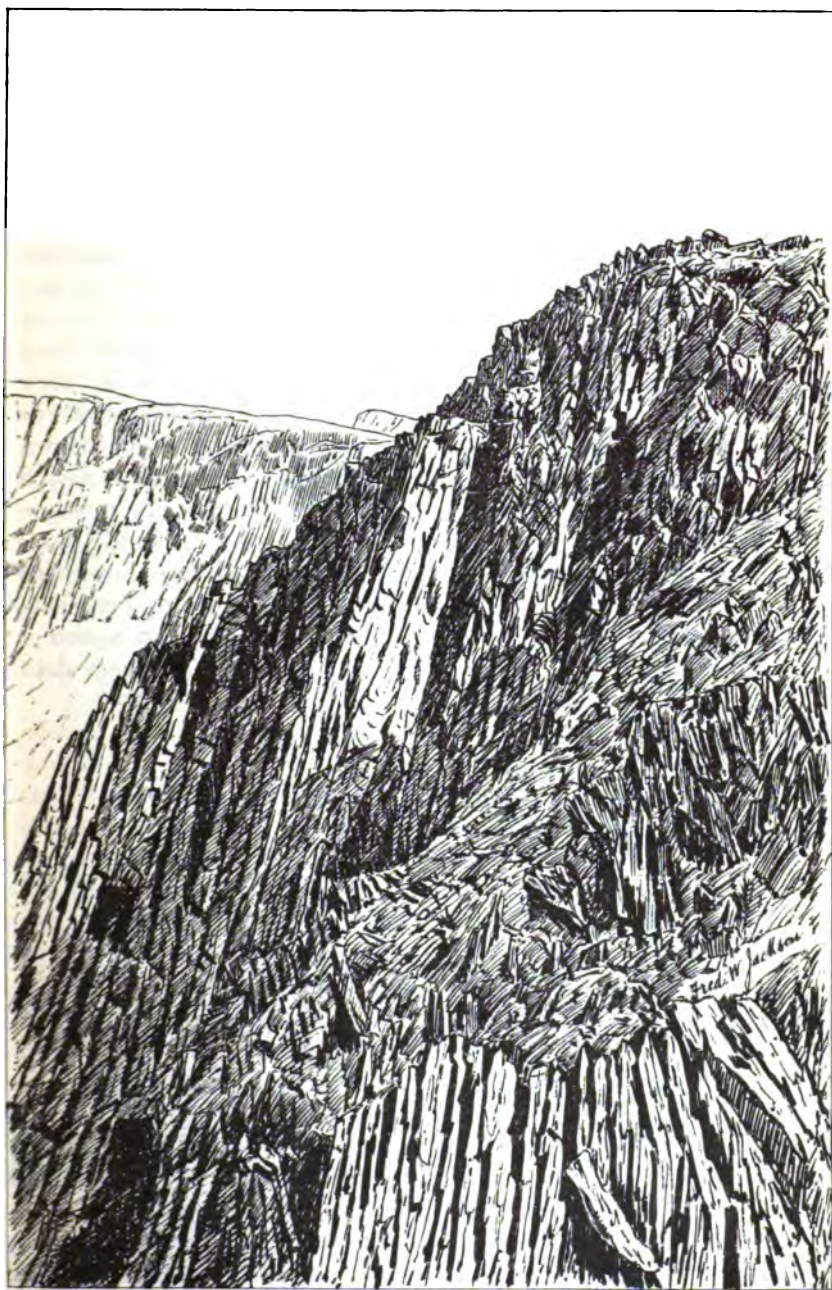
A FEW more expeditions in North Wales may serve to complete a former notice, the mountains of Snowdonia and Cader Idris being the most interesting.

The course of the Afon-llafur, a tributary of the river Ogwen, takes you easily from Bethesda into the heart of the Carneddys,—Llewelyn and Dafydd,—which rise on the east of Nant Ffrancon to nearly as great a height as Snowdon. I had made a late start on Boxing-day last year, tempted by the weather, but the promise of a fine day had not been fulfilled—at least among the high hills—and I was soon obliged to don a light waterproof. The head of the valley forms a wild corrie, flanked by the Carneddys, the north face of Dafydd presenting tiers of crags and precipices rising one above another. But the chief feature is the “saddle” or long ridge connecting the two summits. By two P.M., having mounted the steep slopes of scree, I was close up under the rocks, and could make an inspection. It is a splendid semi-circular wall of rock, very smooth in places, pitched, I should think, at a general angle of about 60°, and little short of 1,000 feet in height. I ascended a bit towards a gully running in a slanting direction to a rock tower, a conspicuous point of the ridge, and there seemed no great difficulty, except perhaps where a large rock was jammed in the neck of the gully. But the rocks were too smooth and slippery with the rain for my taste, and, after a few further gymnastics, I came down and went up to the top by the left of the saddle. It was blowing hard, but I laid a fair course for Carnedd Llewelyn, and reached the summit (3,482 feet) in twenty-five minutes. A grand cornice and snow-slope on the north side would have made a famous glissade. Hastening back along the ridge, the most striking object in the view was Tryfan. It stood out in the waning light, a black pyramid against the face of the Glyder-fach. A cold storm had come up from Nant Ffrancon, and the depths beneath the saddle were getting very gloomy, but there

was consolation in the fact that this year I had a pocket-lantern—"Lanterna Tascabile Excelsior." Still, I was relieved to see the cairn on the summit of Carnedd Dafydd (3,430 feet) just before five o'clock, and, after the usual howl of triumph, plunged down the abominable rocky slope on the other side. In twenty minutes I was off the slope, but, of course, more rocks turned up in the dark—and then bog. I went at it by the light of the evening star, and made some creditable jumps before I got clear of my troubles. Then the lantern was lit to descend into Nant Ffrancon, and gain the road as soon as possible. It blew out once or twice, and I found it needed protection from the squalls. After that it did its work well, and I came down the steep grassy slopes to the hamlet of Tyn-y-Maes, a proceeding in which the inhabitants seemed to take some interest.

Time 5.45 P.M.—Exchanging the light of the lantern for that of my pipe, I swung along the road into Bethesda. I had got regularly wet through on this expedition, and a "wee drappie" helped to keep the cold out until the 6.40 train took me back to Bangor.

Another excursion in this district which certainly repays is Y Tryfan. I cleared out of Bethesda about ten o'clock on the 28th of December, and in an hour-and-a-half was at the foot of the west face above Llyn Ogwen. Ascending the moss-covered slopes,—a contrast to the wet rocks of the "saddle,"—I selected a gully nearly under the summit, at the top of a sort of moraine between two streams. The rocks were very steep, and soon I had to take to the side, which was covered with a rough growth of heather, and afforded but a treacherous hold. It was a relief to get back to rock-work; then the slope eased off, and I climbed up to the perpendicular slabs under the lowest of the three towers which give Tryfan its name ("Three-headed Peak"). Here I got to a ledge with some trouble, but it narrowed to an awkward corner, which could not be negotiated alone, and so I had to go up by the side of the tower, reaching the summit of Tryfan (3,009 feet) at 2.30 P.M. The climb up the face had occupied about a couple of hours, and enables one to appreciate more the



*From Frith's Photograph, No. 3027.*

**ON THE N. FACE OF CADER IDRIS—NEAR THE SADDLE.**



extraordinary shape of this rock-mountain. The ridge also affords a most interesting scramble from the foot of the lake over the masses of green-grey rocks, finishing up with the huge blocks which form the towers on the summit.

The view was mostly of cloud effects,—a sea of clouds streaming round the precipices of the Glyder-fach, and through the deep col between us. Sometimes Cwm Tryfan and the country about Capel Curig, or the head of Nant Ffrancon, would show up; but after awhile the mists settled down, and it was time to be off. I had not gone far, however, before the increasing steepness of the rocks warned me I was going astray, and I returned to the summit to correct my bearings with the aid of the compass. By 3.45 I was out of the clouds, and could tell my whereabouts; then leisurely following the side of the stream that flows from Llyn Bochlywd I reached the road, and wound up with a five mile walk back to Bethesda.

Before leaving the Snowdon district, a word of warning to our members about Lliwedd:—

“Or, if a path be dangerous known,  
The danger's self is lure alone.”

—*Lady of the Lake.*

If it were not for the recent sad accident, by which, on 30th August 1894, Mr Mitchell lost his life, it would hardly seem necessary to point out that the nearly vertical crags of Lliwedd, 950 feet high, are no place for anyone single-handed. In the last May number I described an ascent of the right buttress and the spot we got to, which proved the turning-point in the expedition; it was only passed by the aid of rope and ice-axe. Mr Mitchell was attempting a new gully further to the right, when he fell.

No doubt there are other places—as, for instance, on the north face of the Glyders, above Cwm Idwal, or Cwm Bochlywd, and perhaps on the “saddle” I have mentioned, between the Carnedds—which ought only to be climbed by a party properly equipped. In solitary expeditions one must be prepared for failures, but still good sport can be obtained without running the risk of exceeding one's powers.

On 3rd January—the day after my arrival at Barmouth—I set out about 10.30 for Cader Idris. It was wintry weather, and a bitter easterly gale was blowing, the full force of which is experienced in crossing Barmouth Bridge, a wooden trestle bridge, about half-a-mile long, and which commands a view right up the Mawddach estuary into the heart of the mountains around Dolgelley. But the sand was being driven off the shoals, and I was glad to gain the shelter of the opposite shore. The road winds among the wooded hills and promontories that fringe the estuary, past lichen-covered rocks of a deep orange and olive green. Out in the shallows the waders were busy hunting for food, and the air was enlivened by the thrill of the Oyster-catcher and plaintive cry of Sea-snipe or Dunlin Sandpiper, driven in by the severity of the weather. Away up the loch was covered with ice-floes, and presented quite an Arctic scene. Mounting gently through the woods of Arthog, the way leads by the side of a stream to the more open ground beyond. The day was fine, but with an easterly gale, and thermometer considerably below freezing point, it needed all my resources to keep the cold out. I climbed up the shoulder of Tyrau-mawr, where it abuts on the old road to Dolgelley, and near the summit found an ideal lunching-place, a grassy niche in the rocks facing south-west, and protected from all the winds that blew. Here I enjoyed the view of Barmouth, and the post-prandial pipe. I was fairly driven off the summit ridge of Tyrau-mawr when I came out again, and any microbes that may have been lurking about from the prevalent "influenza" must have perished miserably in the elements. However, after a slight snowstorm, the gale moderated as I entered on the wilderness of loose stones which forms the approach to the first buttress of Cader Idris. The ridge now opened buttress behind buttress, showing a line of precipices and dark hollows on the north face, several miles in extent. Beneath the cliffs of the "saddle" lay the frozen waters of Llyn-y-Gader. Further east, up the valley of the Wnion, the long ridges of Aran Benllyn (2,902 feet) and Aran Mawddwy (2,970 feet) bear a striking resemblance in elevation and general outline to Cader

CAIHER IDRIS FROM ABOVE DOLGELLEY.







Idris. I reached the summit of Cader (2,929 feet), which lies in the centre of the ridge, about 2.30 P.M. The view was limited, but all the nearer mountains were clear of mist, and they suffered in comparison with Snowdonia, especially the billowy ranges in the south. The chief interest lay undoubtedly in the beautiful view of the Mawddach estuary, and the open sea beyond. The hut just under the summit was of course deserted, and looked quite picturesque, with its great stone blocks covered over with a sprinkling of fresh snow. I descended a little on the other side to peer into the lonely depths of Llyn-Cau, guarded by the grand precipices of Craig-y-Cau opposite. Then pushing on, Mynydd Moel (2,835 feet) was topped at 3.30, and as this terminated the ridge proper, I made my way down the steep frozen slopes to Llyn Aran, and skirted the cliffs to Mynydd-y-Gader ("The Giant's Nose"). The huge wall of Cader Idris stretched away, its snow cap lit up by the setting sun. I turned reluctantly, and hastened along, in the gathering gloom, among the maze of rocky hummocks and bogs which form the extensive ridge of Mynydd, over its highest point, and down into the road near the farm of Gilfach, reached shortly before five o'clock.

As I strolled round by Dolgelley, the icicles with which my headgear had been firmly bound for several hours yielded at last to returning warmth. I finished up at Penmænpool before a blazing fire, and awaited the train to Barmouth. Outside, the wind was rising on the estuary, the forerunner of more stormy weather. Next day it came on a perfect blizzard, and I found to my regret my last climb was over.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held at Glasgow, on Friday, 7th December 1894, when Colonel A. G. Wavell, Mr Harry Walker, Mr Godfrey A. Solly, Mr Charles C. B. Moss, Mr E. Aleister Crowley, Mr T. Hart Bell, and Mr Walter Barrow, were balloted for and elected members of the Club.

THE SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Central Hotel, Edinburgh, on Friday, the 14th December, at six o'clock. The Vice-President, Mr H. T. Munro, was called to the chair. Nineteen members were present.

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

On the motion of the Chairman the following motion was unanimously carried :—

“That this meeting of the Scottish Mountaineering Club desires to record its deep sense of the great loss it has sustained through the death of its President, the late Professor Veitch, and its sympathy for Mrs Veitch in her sad bereavement ;” and further, “That the Honorary Secretary be requested to forward to Mrs Veitch a copy of this resolution.”

To fill vacancies in the list of office-bearers the following were elected :—*President*—Mr Hugh T. Munro ; *Vice-President*—Mr Robert A. Robertson ; *Members of Committee*—Professor Joseph Coats, Mr Lionel W. Hinxman, and Mr James Maclay. The remaining office-bearers were re-elected.

Mr Munro moved, and Mr Fraser Campbell seconded, that the paragraph in Rule XV. which reads thus :—

“. . . . . If in the opinion of the Committee the qualifications be deemed sufficient.”

be altered to read thus :—

“. . . . . If in the opinion of the Committee the qualifications connected with Mountaineering be deemed sufficient.”

Mr Macpherson, seconded by Mr R. A. Robertson, moved the previous question on the understanding that the Rule should be so read that the Committee should have power to deal generally with the candidate's qualifications, social as well as climbing.

On a vote being taken, Mr Macpherson's motion was carried.

Mr William Brown moved, and Mr A. E. Maylard seconded, the following motion :—

“That this meeting (1) approves of the Committee's recommendation that a Climber's Guide to Scotland should be published under the auspices of the Club ; (2) pledges itself to co-operate heartily in the work of production ; (3) appoints an editor to take such steps as may be required to collect the necessary materials, with power to nominate a small committee to assist in the work ; and (4) votes £10 out of the Club funds to cover initial outlays.”

In speaking to his motion, Mr Brown explained that there was an opening at present for a work which would combine the accurate and precise information of a guide-book, written from the climber's standpoint, with general articles descriptive of Scottish Mountaineering from the pens of competent and well-informed writers. Such a work might be divided into two parts, viz. :—1st, Introductory, containing perhaps articles on Scottish Mountaineering, past and present, Snowcraft, Rockwork, Equipment, Mountain Photography ; and 2nd, a more technical portion, containing brief accounts of all the Scottish Mountains of a certain class or height to be afterwards fixed, with information as to their physical features, where to climb them from, lines of ascent, &c. &c.

The book ought to be well illustrated, and should also in its introductory portion be as attractive and interesting as possible. In this way a sale would or might be insured among the general public. The time might not be fully ripe for such a work, but competition was threatened which might encroach upon the information in possession of the Club ; and at any rate, it was certain that the starting of such a work would, by stimulating members to greater activity and directing their efforts into the proper channels, tend to create means by which it could be expeditiously carried out.

After some discussion, in which Professor Smith, Messrs James Maclay, R. A. Robertson, and H. T. Munro took part, the motion was unanimously carried, on the footing that the committee to be appointed should be left to decide upon the details of the scheme. Mr W. Douglas was unanimously appointed Editor.

The Honorary Treasurer submitted his accounts for 1894, showing that the income amounted to £84. 8s. 10d., and the expenditure to £67. 10s. 2d., leaving a balance at the credit of the Club of £60. os. 11d., as compared with £46. 2s. 3d. at the corresponding date of last year, and they were unanimously adopted.

The Honorary Librarian stated that during the past year the Club had received various contributions. To Mr Edward Whympfer it was indebted for a copy of his *Travels among the great Andes of the Equator*, and its Supplement; and to Messrs Boyd, Douglas, Howie, Priestman, and Rennie, for numerous photographs and lantern slides.

The following places were selected for Club meets:—

New-Year—Tarbet, on Loch Lomond, from Friday, 28th December, to Wednesday, 2nd January.

Easter—Fort-William, from Thursday, 11th, to Tuesday, 16th April.

Regarding the membership of the Club, the Honorary Secretary stated that during the past year one member had died, one had lapsed by default, and three had resigned. The present membership consisted of one Honorary President, three Honorary Members, and one hundred and twelve Ordinary Members.

After a hearty vote of thanks to Mr Gilbert Thomson for the continued use of a room in his office for Club purposes, the business of the meeting was concluded.

THE ANNUAL DINNER was held in the Central Hotel, at the close of the General Meeting. The newly elected President, Mr H. T. Munro, occupied the chair, and Mr R. A. Robertson acted as croupier. There were twenty-nine members and guests present. The Toasts were:—“The Club,” by Mr H. T. Munro; “Kindred Societies,” by Professor George A. Smith. Dr Leith replied for the Alpine Club, and Mr James Rose for the Cairngorm Club. “The Journal and its Contributors,” by Mr R. A. Robertson, replied to by Mr W. Brown; “The Guests,” by Mr W. Ramsay, replied to by Mr Reginald Macleod.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.



### EXCURSIONS.

*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.*

BEN NEVIS—NORTH FACE.—On the 27th September 1894 (Glasgow Autumn Holiday), Mr Gilbert Thomson and I ascended Ben Nevis by the ridge which has been merrily, yet withal accurately, described by Orlamon Lenicus (Vol. III., pp. 151-7). This ridge projects in a N.N.E. direction from the summit plateau, some 300 yards west of the Observatory, and may be readily identified from the valley in clear weather by its prominent tower, crowned by a large cairn on the top and a stone-man on the edge of the cliff—the latter, at least, visible from below.

We kept the high road for nearly half-a-mile past Nevis Bridge, then crossed the moor, and climbed up steep grass to the top of the ridge (1,600 feet) that points towards Banavie. Passing Lochan Meall an t'Suidhe, half-a-mile off to our right and out of sight, we held straight on along the valley of the Allt a' Mhuilinn, gradually rising. After proceeding leisurely for a couple of miles beyond the ridge above mentioned, the whole of the great northern precipice of Ben Nevis—for the most part bare rock—was spread out before us, and was pronounced the most savage mountain face in all Scotland.

The "Tower Ridge," which we were in search of, is not so prominent—that is, it does not project so far into the valley—as the two huge buttresses on either side of it. One of these descends from Carn Dearg (3,961 feet, the N.W. spur of Ben Nevis), and the other is the great north-eastern buttress, which joins the summit a short way east of the Observatory, and which is bounded on its far side by the most tremendous cliff on the whole mountain. Both of those buttresses appear to offer *possible* routes to the summit for adventurous cragsmen. Between the "Tower Ridge" and the Carn Dearg buttress several gullies were noticed that are evidently climbable, and one of them *has* been climbed by Mr Rankin of the Observatory staff. All these gullies held masses of old snow, so that men going in for gully-climbing there ought, even in summer, to take their ice-axes.

Leaving the burn when opposite the end of the Tower Ridge, we got upon the easy rocks of its east side at a height of about 3,000 feet.

The ridge soon became steeper, and several moderately difficult pitches were encountered ; but the route over this lower portion of the climb is evidently capable of considerable variation. We did not, I think, strike the actual crest of the ridge till we reached 3,600 feet, where we lunched. Above the luncheon-place the angle eased off for some distance, and the crest of the ridge was followed to the foot of the Tower, which is "A.P."\* on this side. A traverse to the right along an easy shelf took us to the N.W. angle of the Tower, whence we got a view of the steep rocks of its west side. The obvious route led up to a broad platform, twenty feet straight above which there was a recess in the face of the cliff, and we thought if that could be reached the rest would go. To reach it we took to the rocks on the right of the platform, as far as a block with a crack behind it, affording a good hitch for the rope. From this block to the recess involved a climb to the left, up eight feet of smooth and almost vertical rock, with not quite satisfactory handholds, and this was the only little bit of the whole day's climb where there was any real difficulty.

On gaining the recess we went to the right for a few feet, to where a fallen slab rested against the face (which slab, by the way, would probably give the last man a good hitch, if he wanted one, in a *descent* of this difficult bit), and from that mounted straight to the stone-man. The ridge beyond the Tower is a narrow wall with perpendicular sides, but the rock is firm and good. The wall ends in a cleft eight feet deep, about which a curious anecdote is related. It seems that the builder of the first cairn on the Tower conceived the brilliant idea of making his peak inaccessible ; and accordingly, on his way back from the Tower, which he had approached from above, he either manufactured the cleft, or at least deepened it considerably, by throwing down a lot of loose blocks. It is readily crossed, however, with the moral aid of the rope. From the cleft to the summit plateau was only a few minutes' scramble up easy rocks, powdered on this occasion with fresh snow.

The time taken from the foot of the ridge had been 2½ hours, including a halt for lunch. In its winter conditions, with the rocks plastered over with ice and snow, as "Lenicus" found it, the climb must be a very different matter. The rock throughout is a tough dark-gray porphyry, and admirably adapted for scrambling.

The afternoon was perfect—sky almost cloudless, no mist or haze in any direction, wind north, shade thermometer 31°. The view was simply marvellous, and embraced, without any exaggeration, most of the mountains of Scotland. Why doesn't somebody prepare a "panorama" of the peaks visible from Ben Nevis? Among the islands were clearly seen Jura, Mull, Eigg, Rum, Skye, and even South Uist, ninety miles away ! It was a view to be enjoyed only once or twice in a lifetime, and the two hours spent on the top passed all too swiftly. Before leaving, a visit was paid to the N.E. buttress and its overhanging precipice.

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\* [A contraction for "absolutely perpendicular."—ED.]

We then descended to Carn Dearg (3,348 feet, a mile S.W. of the Observatory), whence we went down into Glen Nevis by a rocky buttress, west of the cairn (the steepest we could discover—rope used at one place), and joined the road a mile and a half above Glen Nevis House.

W. W. NAISMITH.

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NIGHT ASCENT OF BEN LOMOND.—On 13th September, Messrs Lyon, M'Millan, Coubrough (non-members), and I took the evening train from Glasgow to Balloch, and starting thence about 10 P.M. walked up the shores of Loch Lomond to Rowardennan, and climbed the Ben in time to see the sun rise. My fancy still lingers fondly round that moonlight walk; there was an inexpressible charm about it. The night was simply perfect, the moon full, hardly a breath of wind stirred the still waters of the loch, and all around slept the silence of the hills. It was one of those scenes of perfect beauty that are happily not unfamiliar to the lover of the mountains, and that remain as pictures in the mind for a lifetime.

The moon had set before we reached Rowardennan, and during the first part of the ascent there was a good deal of groping after the path. But when we struck the crest of the long southern shoulder of the hill, there were the first streaks of early dawn already lighting up the eastern hills with a feeble glimmer, which steadily grew brighter and stronger, until, while we were still a short way from the summit, the sun itself shot up in a blaze of glory from a bank of cloud. Breakfast was enjoyed at the spring near the top, under its benign influence, but at that hour Boreas was stronger than Sol.

The whole northern view, but especially the line of hills from Ben More and Stobinian to Ben Cruachan, was remarkably fine. The early morning clouds capped many a familiar summit, or veiled many a rugged mountain shape in their fleecy folds, leaving the dark peaks floating above them, inky black in contrast to their whiteness. All around, on every hill, seemed to be the home of cloudland, but Ben Lomond itself was visited by only one or two stray wisps and wreaths of mist. It was not till we were sailing down to Balloch that the heavy masses settled down. In the east, the most interesting objects were Stirling Castle and the Wallace Monument, both standing like islands in a golden haze.

A pleasant scamper brought us down to Rowardennan just in time to catch the first steamer to Balloch; and a delightful expedition was brought to a close by a charming sail homewards on the broad-bosomed loch.

H. C. BOYD.

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BEN CHABHAIR, &C.—*Thursday, 27th September.*—The West Highland Railway morning train took a party of six (Messrs J. W. Reoch, Hugh Reoch, Thomson, Scott, Donald, and Boyd) up that most fascinating line to Ardlui, where it deposited them about 10 A.M. Crossing the Falloch at 10.30, by the bridge at Benglas Farm, they followed the course of the Allt Innse as far as Lochan an Amhghair,



which lies just at the foot of Ben Chabhair, and a stiff pull placed them on the summit (3,053) at 12.50. The air was exceptionally clear, and a magnificent view was obtained in every direction. The vast mountain panorama extended from Arran in the south to Ben Nevis in the north, and the peaks of Jura and Mull in the west; but the most commanding objects in the extensive prospect were, beyond a doubt, the shapely peaks of Ben Cruachan and Ben Lui on the one hand, and Ben More and Stobinian on the other—the massive bulk of Ben Lawers thrusting itself over the col that divides the two last named. For beauty of mountain form, and grace of outline, the opinion was unanimous that Ben Cruachan “had it.”

After three-quarters of an hour pleasantly spent over lunch and the view, a course was shaped straight for the top of An Caisteal (3,265), which was reached at 2.40. Twenty minutes breathing-space, and a start was made for Beinn a Chroin. The southern shoulder of An Caisteal, over which the route lay, is pretty rough and broken, and some interesting scrambling was enjoyed over the rocks that diversified the descent. The west top of Beinn a Chroin (3,078) was reached at 3.45, and the east top (3,101) at 4.20. A steep scree gully was next descended, and the rocky eminence of Stob Glas passed on the left. Stob Glas is of comparatively trifling height, but the south-west face, along the base of which the climbers proceeded, presents some bold rocky buttresses, intersected by several fine chimneys and gullies, which should afford capital sport, especially in winter. The top of Cruach Ardran was not attained till 6.55, about an hour after sunset; and the view of the tops of Cruachan standing out in inky outline against a narrow blood-red band in the western sky, which was all that remained of the sunset glow, formed one of the most glorious and impressive spectacles of the day.

The original programme had included Ben Tulachan and Stob Garbh, with the *possible* addition of Ben More and Stobinian. Want of time, however, necessitated the curtailment of this ambitious scheme, as there was now a risk of being benighted on the hills. The intention had been to catch the seven o'clock train at Crianlarich for Glasgow; but of course that hope had to be abandoned, and the chances of reaching Glasgow that night left to the disposal of fortune. The descent of the hill, following the course of the Allt Coire Ardran, was made as rapidly as the darkness permitted; and after a two hours' walk, during which remarkably few mishaps were encountered, considering the darkness and the fact that the ground was utterly unknown to any of the party, the jaded pedestrians stumbled into Crianlarich Station at nine o'clock. A late excursion train from Fort William, which dashed into the station just at that moment, and into which they had barely time to scramble, bore them safely home to Glasgow, after an absence of about eighteen hours.

Though two cameras were carried with the party, no satisfactory photographs were obtained. Never had photographer clearer atmo-

sphere for his work, but the hills in the immediate neighbourhood were round and lumpish, and the reverse of picturesque—rugged, no doubt, but lacking alike in grandeur, in grace, and in dignity; while the more distant views, though extremely beautiful, were beyond the reach of the photographic lens.

H. C. B.

BEINN A' CHROIN AND BEN VORLICH.—Beinn a' Chroin had been among the unaccomplished part of our programme when, on the 17th February 1893, Mr Colin Campbell and I had a long day on the Braes of Balquhider. On the 14th September last I returned to climb it. Leaving Crianlarich at 3.30 P.M., and ascending by the Falloch, I reached the summit 3,101 feet without difficulty at 6 P.M. in a thick but warm mist, and the 3,078 feet summit (6-inch O.S.) a half mile west in another twenty minutes. The needle of my compass had got jammed, and in the thick fog and gathering darkness I did not think it wise to carry out my original plan of crossing the shoulder of Beinn Chabhair and descending the Allt Innse, so striking due north by an easy though steep descent, followed the Falloch right down to Ardlui, reaching it at 10 P.M.

Beinn a' Chroin without such a view as Mr F. Dewar enjoyed (see Vol. I., p. 119) is an uninteresting mountain. *N.B.*—It is three miles measured in a straight line from Inverlochclairig Farm to the summit, and not two as in Mr Dewar's article.

Next morning I got a fair view from Ben Vorlich, catching the afternoon train to Glasgow and Perth.

H. T. MUNRO.

BEINN A' CHAORUINN, CREAG MEAGHAIDH, AND THE MONADH LIATHS.—On the last day of last October, the afternoon train landed me at Roy Bridge, a little before 10 P.M., not much over half-an-hour late, which for the N.B.R. is a creditable performance. The inn is fair, but not cheap. Next morning, after a wild night of rain, I left by the 7 A.M. coach, and leaving it as it turned down to Inverlair Station at 8, walked on a mile or so to Roughburn, whence I struck up by the easy shoulder to Beinn a' Chaoruinn (3,437 feet) at 10 A.M., the mist having been reached about 2,500 feet. Crossing the middle summit (3,394 feet),\* the north top (3,422 feet) was reached in twenty minutes, and the Bealach at the head of Coire na h-Uamha, "corrie of the caves," at 10.45, just below the mist. From what I could see, Beinn a' Chaoruinn, "hill of the rowans," is ill-named, for it had no trees of any kind on it. There is little intermediate dip between the three summits, the mountain being a long broad ridge, dropping away easily to the west, but with some fine cliffs with good snow gullies descending east to Coire na h-Uamha. The two southern tops have cairns, the northern has none.

The ascent from the Bealach to the big cairn of Creag Meaghaidh

\* Height from 6-inch O.S.

(3,700 feet) is up an easy slope, and took three-quarters of an hour easy going. From here I visited in turn all the tops of the range west of "The Window"; Creag Meaghaidh, east top (3,594 feet); Crags above Coire Ard Dhoire\* (3,591 feet); Sròn a' Ghaohair,\* "the hound's nose" (approximate height 3,150 feet); Creag Mhòr (3,496 feet).† So far the walking had been almost level, wandering about in the mist. To the north-east (?) of the summit of Creag Meaghaidh is a huge cairn, as big as a house, on the *side* of the hill, the work of a neighbouring farmer, who, unsound in his mind, has for some years past been going up the mountain every day whenever possible to add to it. A little uncertain as to my whereabouts, I descended from Creag Mhòr to the little loch to the south-west, crossed the burn where it leaves it, and climbed in half-an-hour to Meall Coire Coille na Froise (3,299 feet).† Thence in twenty minutes to An Cearcallah, "the hoop" (3,250 feet), from which an easy descent to Moy at 4 P.M.

I can endorse Mr A. E. Robertson's note on p. 109 of this volume. I found "The Window" was locally understood to mean the gap between Coire Ard Dhoire and Glen Roy.

*Friday, 2nd November.*—A rainy morning, so took coach to Newtonmore, where there is an excellent hotel. After luncheon, started 1.30 P.M., reaching the cairn of A'Cailleach, "the old woman" (3,045 feet), in rather under two hours, and Càrn Sgulain, "the cairn of the little old man" (3,015 feet), a half hour later. This hill has no cairn on it. Returned to Newtonmore before 6.

*Saturday, 3rd November.*—Leaving Newtonmore at 8 A.M., a track west leads up the river Calder to Dalballoch, where I turned north-west up Gleann a' Bhealaich, and bearing to the left reached the south top of Carn Dearg (3,025 feet)† at 10.50, and the north top (3,093 feet)† ten minutes later. Both summits have small cairns. The ridge here is fairly narrow, thirty to forty yards, with some bold crags facing north-east into Gleann a' Bhealaich, and a steep descent into the sombre little Loch Dubh to the south-west. Carn Dearg is the highest of the Monadh Liath range, "the greyish hills," from here, as well as when viewed from a distance, a dull uninteresting flat-topped moorland, lying round the head waters of the Findhorn. A descent of something under 200 feet led to the Bealach, and then in mist I reached Carn Mairg, "the cairn of woe" (?) (3,087 feet). Here, some fifty yards west of the cairn, a sheep fence forms a right angle. Turning left, and keeping west along this fence over boggy moorland for fifteen minutes, I reached Snechdach Slinnean,\* "the snowy shoulder" (3,011 feet),† merely a slight rise in the wet and peaty moor, without a cairn. Returning over Carn Mairg, I followed round the angle of the fence north, and afterwards north-east over the same kind of ground to Carn Balloch, the two summits of which (the southern being marked 3,009 feet on the 6-inch map, and the northern with a 3,000 feet contour on the 1-inch) are a little difficult to identify

\* Name from 6-inch O.S.

† Height from 6-inch O.S.

in mist, so level is the moor. I saw no traces on the top of the track which, according to the map, crosses from Gleann a' Bhealach to the Abhain Cro Clach, "the water of the stone of the cows," as the main stream of the Findhorn is here called. Hence descending into the next glen to the east, called, I presume, judging by the name of the farm at its foot, Glenbanchor, I reached Newtonmore by 3 P.M., and leaving Kingussie at 5.5 got home the same night.

On all these days the weather was warm and misty, and I need never have stood on snow, what there was in the corries was old and firm. In clear weather, from their central position, the Monadh Liaths should command grand distant views; but the hills themselves are intensely monotonous, though even here there are few on which the ardent cragsman would fail to find a rockface somewhere.

H. T. MUNRO.

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THE S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1894.—Messrs Brunskill, Priestman, and Barrow had another good season in the Alps, their joint mountain expeditions including the following:—Petit Charmoz, Pic du Tacul Aig. de la Za (by W. face), Pigne d'Arolla and Mont Collon, both traversed, and the Riffelhorn from the glacier. Messrs Priestman and Barrow also crossed five snow passes between Chamonix and Saas. Following the late Mr Donkin's example, Mr Priestman carried his camera to the top of the Za.

Dr Colin Campbell, after visiting Engelberg and climbing the Titlis, went to the Vispthal, and ascended the Dom (14,940) and the Breithorn. From the Schwarzsee Hotel, Dr and Mrs Campbell made several long glacier excursions. Bad weather prevented their ascent of the Matterhorn; indeed, during eighteen days in August the snows of the Cervin remained untrodden.

Dr Norman Collie was a member of a party whose remarkable guideless exploits speak for themselves:—A new pass, the Col des Courtes, between the Argentière and Triolet glaciers; a traverse of Mont Blanc from Courmayeur to Montanvert by the Brenva route, involving two nights in the open air, one passed on a rock above 12,000 feet; a new way up the Aiguille Verte, by the ridge going down to the Aig. du Moine, said to be both safer and quicker than the ordinary route by the long couloir. Dr Collie's party afterwards "flitted" to Zermatt, where, in addition to minor climbs, such as the Triftjoch, Pigne de l'Allée, and Col Durand, and some repulses owing to the elements, they scaled the Matterhorn by the Mummery ridge (only the third ascent, and the first for fifteen years), the Dent Blanche, and the Gabelhorn.

Mr W. Lamond Howie visited the Mont Blanc district in July, and subsequently basked in the sunshine of the Italian lakes. To photographers he recommends the Jardin (best light in the early morning) and the Brévent as among the finest points of view at Chamonix.

The tour of Mont Blanc (cols still snow-covered) brought Mr Howie's party to Courmayeur, where "the picturesque grandeur of the Italian side of the range" proved "quite entrancing after grappling with the pictorial impossibilities of Chamonix." Mr Howie exposed 150 plates, and secured many charming mountain views, as we can personally vouch.

Messrs A. E. Maylard, M. W. Maylard, and E. A. Crowley were in the Tyrol, and climbed together, without guides, the Schrötterhorn (nearly to top, snow bad) and the Vertain Spitze (by a gully in the Rosenwand; descent over Angelus Scharle and the N.W. ridge).

From Sulden, Mr Crowley made the following ascents:—Monte Cevedale, Sulden Spitzse, Tschengglser, Hochwand, König Spitze, Thürweise Spitze, Ortler Spitze, Eisse Spitze (from N.W.), &c.

After parting from Mr Crowley, Messrs Maylard went to the Dolomites, and climbed, among others, Tofana di Mezzo and the S. peak of Nuvolau.

Mr R. A. Robertson was at Arolla, and ascended the popular Aig. de la Za, also the Dent de Veisivi, traversed Mont Brulè, climbed the north peak of the Aiguilles Rouges by the northern arête, and accomplished the first ascent of l'Evêque by the S.W. arête.

Mr G. A. Solly revisited the Caucasus with a party of guideless climbers. In Suanetia, as in Switzerland, the weather last summer seems to have been very broken, and there was more snow than usual. An attempt on the S. peak of Ushba was frustrated by the weather and state of the mountain; as also an attack on the virgin Svyetgar (13,482 feet), when the party were stopped on an ice-slope of nearly 70° within 500 feet of the summit. They accomplished the following new expeditions:—First ascent of Bakh (11,739 feet), a peak near Betcho; Machkhin (12,700 feet), situated east of the Leila; and the first passage of a col from Gul to Mestia (about 10,600 feet), named the Bear Pass.

Mr H. T. Munro on Easter Sunday, accompanied by Mrs Munro, ascended a semi-extinct volcano of about 11,000 feet, called Irazu, in Costa Rica. The mountain commands a magnificent view, both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans being visible.

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THE WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY.\*—The completion of the West Highland Railway opens up large tracts of new climbing-ground, including some of the highest ranges in Scotland, which to the mountaineer whose time is often limited to a Saturday to Monday, or public holiday, has hitherto been almost inaccessible. It may not be amiss briefly to indicate some of the higher mountains which are now brought within easy reach.

From Arrochar, the fine group clustering around the head of Loch

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\* This Note was crowded out from the September number.—Ed.

Long, and comprising—besides Ben Arthur (the Cobbler, 2,891 feet)—Beinn Ime, Ben Vane, Beinn Narnain, Ben Vorlich, and Beinn an Lochain, all exceeding 3,000 feet, will now, in winter as well as in summer, be easily within the compass of a day's excursion from Edinburgh or Glasgow. Of these, however, Ben Vorlich is best ascended from Ardlui, from which place, as well as from Crianlarich, the group consisting of An Caisteal, Beinn a' Chroin, and Beinn Chabhair, may be easily climbed.

Bridge of Orchy lies at the very base of the beautiful range at the head of Glen Lyon, of which Beinn Creachan (3,540 feet) forms the culminating height, but Beinn Doireann is probably the best-known mountain; while Inveroran Inn is brought within three miles of a railway station.

Rannoch Station, on the north bank of the Geàrr Ghaoir, albeit somewhat too far south, is the best, if not the only, starting-point for Carn Dearg and Sgor Gaibhre, lying to the S.W. of Ben Alder, while a fine cross-country walk might be taken over the last-named mountain to Dalwhinnie. I may here remind members that comfortable quarters may be obtained at Cul a' Mhuilinn, near the head of Loch Rannoch (see Vol. I., p. 235).

It is to be regretted that there is no station at the head of Loch Treig; possibly the guard may be induced to stop the train there for a party of climbers. Besides Beinn na Lap and Cnoc Dearg, to the east of Loch Treig, this would form the most convenient starting-point for Binnein Mòr and the grand mountain range on the south side of the head of Glen Nevis; while on the north side of the glen, Stob Choire Claurigh\* (3,858 feet, and the fifteenth highest mountain in Scotland), as well as Stob Ban, Stob Choire an Easain Mhoir, and the rest of the eastern Lochaber mountains, could be ascended in a cross-country walk to Roy or Spean Bridge.

Inverlair Station is some four miles from Moy, where accommodation may be obtained. This is the best place from which to climb the Beinn a' Chaoruinn and Creag Meaghaidh groups. It is needless to point out that the whole of the Ben Nevis range is now brought within reach of a railway, and it will now be possible to spend a winter's day on the monarch of British mountains and reach Glasgow or Edinburgh the same night.

Among the greatest benefits which the new railway will confer on our Club must be reckoned the new centres which it will provide for Club meets. Tarbet and Fort William have already been fixed on for the forthcoming New Year and Easter meets, and Roy Bridge and Spean Bridge will doubtless soon "behold our jolly faces"; while the proposed extension to Mallaig, in North Morar, will give access to some of the very wildest mountains in the beautiful West, hitherto only familiar to a few of us.

H. T. MUNRO.

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\* No name or height given, except on the 6-inch map.

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

HAND-BOOK FOR TRAVELLERS IN SCOTLAND. Sixth Edition.

John Murray. London, 1894.

MEMBERS of the S. M. C. have little need for the ordinary tourist's hand-book, which at most only gives information about the easiest ascents of the best-known mountains ; and, until the publication under the Club's auspices of a "Climber's Guide," the one-inch Ordnance map serves our purpose well enough for actual climbing. Still there is much general information contained in a tourist's guide, connected either with the district we are in, or the means of reaching it, which we should be unwise to despise, even if our mountain knowledge chance to exceed that of the guide-book compiler.

Most of us are familiar with Baddeley's and Black's Guides to Scotland, and some of us may now and then have come across an antiquated volume, with obsolete information, published by John Murray. To such, the new edition just issued will come as a revelation. Of convenient size, taking up no more room in the pocket than Part I. of Baddeley's Guide, it covers the whole of Scotland, from the English Border to John o' Groats, as well as the Outer Hebrides, Orkneys and Shetlands. Every district is described, and not only every main route, but almost every possible cross-country expedition—as, for example, (pp. 226 and 288) Speyside to Braemar *via* Glens Feshie and Geldie, (p. 323) Ormidale to Otter Ferry, (p. 384) Gairloch to Torridon, (p. 391) the route through Glen Dessary to Loch Nevis, and (p. 415) the excursion from Kyle Sku to the magnificent though little known fall Eas-coul-aulin.

The book is divided into nine sections, clearly marked on an index map, which also shows at a glance the route and page where any place may be found. This is a great convenience. It is further provided with a very full index and directory, and throughout the body of the book a "\*" constantly, and often most unnecessarily, refers to this directory for further information. For instance, "Boat of Garten *Hotel* (good)," "Carr Bridge *Hotel* (comfortable)," "Canty Bay *Hotel* (small)." In every instance it is necessary to turn from the text to the index to find out if there is a hotel at a place. This is an intolerable nuisance. It is all very well to refer one to the directory in the case of a town like Perth or Oban, where many hotels exist and various information has to be given, but where there is only one, or at most two hotels, these should be mentioned in the text. Then also, instead of—or as well as—such vague expressions as "a seaside resort," "a small town," "a brisk manufacturing town," the population should be given immediately after the name, as in Bædeker's pattern guide-books. A "t" following a name indicates a telegraph office, and should be given in the text as well as in the directory. And if Bædeker's excellent principle were followed of adding the height of each locality, it would be an advantage, especially to the climber. Nevertheless, the amount of matter condensed into the smallest

possible space is great. The special attractions of each place are given ; the name of every house and shooting lodge, with that of its proprietor ; with a fund of historical, geological, and general information ; and although this is by no means infallible, or free from errors and misprints, it is, on the whole, wonderfully correct considering its extent. Page 158—The Siege of Stirling by Prince Charlie was, of course, in 1746, not 1646. Page 171—The height of Beinn a' Chleibh is 3,008 feet, instead of 3,000 feet. Throughout the text of the book the height of Ben Nevis appears as 4,404 feet ; in the map, however, the familiar 4,406 is given. On p. 364 the height of Bidean-nam-Bian is correctly given as 3,766 feet ; on p. 174 it is 3,756 feet. Page 252—King's Seat, 1,235 feet, is *not* the highest point of the Sidlaws ; it is not even in the highest part of the range ; Craigowl,\* 1,493 feet, Auchterhouse Hill (1,399 feet), and Gallow Hill (1,242 feet) all exceed it. Page 253—The compiler must have goodish vision to see twelve counties from the top of Glamis Castle ; I have never been able to make out more than three. Page 379—The Pass of Bealach-nam-Bo, Applecross (2,054 feet), is *not* the highest driving road in Scotland ; as stated on p. 285, the Cairnwell road is 2,200 feet, while the road from Braemar to Loch Builg, which I cannot find mentioned, attains about the same elevation.

The pronunciation and translation of many of the Gaelic names is given ; I could wish, however, that it had been done in all cases where possible, as also that a uniform system of spelling had been followed. We all know that the orthography of the O.S. maps is sometimes peculiar, but these maps are the standards, and the hand-book should at least so far agree with them as to make it possible to identify the places named. The tourist will fail to recognise the Ben Attow and Scour Ouran of the guide in the Beinn Fhada and Sgùrr Fhuaran of the O.S. ; and Ben na Main, instead of Beinn Mheadhoin, is likely to lead to confusion, especially when there is in the near neighbourhood a Càrn a' Mhaim. Garrawalt is undoubtedly the local name, but unless the O.S. Garbh Allt is also given the meaning is lost. There can be no reason why the Ben Vorlich, Beinn Doireann, Drumochter, and Pabay of the O.S. should be spelt *Ben Voirlich*, *Ben Doran*, *Drumouchter*, and *Pabba* ; while on the other hand the O.S. spelling is retained without a key to the pronunciation in Bhrotain, Eilean Fhionain, Ben Bhuidhe, Sgur(r) (a') Mhoraire, and many more.

The book is provided with a map of Scotland, reduced from the Ordnance Survey to the scale of ten miles to the inch, and cut into twenty-three sections, of convenient size, shown on an index map. It has also, in addition to twelve plans of the principal towns, several large scale maps—two miles to the inch—contoured and coloured after the style of Bartholomew's well-known maps. They appear to have been carefully prepared, though successive shades of brown at intervals

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\* See *Journal*, Vol. II., p. 33.



of 500 feet is a little confusing. I notice that the mistake of colouring Braeriach—the third highest mountain in the kingdom—as if under 4,000 feet, has been copied from Bartholomew's *old* sheet, No. 16; while a misprint copied from his *new* sheet, gives the extraordinary name of "Beag More" to the principal summit of Lochnagar. These coloured maps are not sufficiently numerous. There are only about half as many as in Baddeley's guides, so that for many important districts—*e.g.*, the surroundings of Stirling, Oban, Lochinver, Ullapool, and Gairloch, and the lower half of Loch Lomond—one has to trust to the ten mile to the inch map.

Our members will naturally turn with most interest to the mountains. Here, too, conciseness is the order of the day, and while a considerable number of ascents are indicated, the details of the routes are often rather inadequate, and the descriptions of the views meagre. Compare, for example, with Baddeley, Ben More (Perthshire) and Beinn Laoigh (to each of which Mr Murray devotes only eight lines), Ben Lawers, Ben Vorlich (Perthshire), Ben Cleugh, Ben Wyvis, Suilven, Ben Ledi (five lines), or even Ben Lomond, and the result is all in favour of Baddeley. The ascents of Schiehallion, Slioch, and Ben Sgiol are merely indicated, while those of Ben Rinnes, Beinn Fhada (B. Attow), and Mam Sodhail (Mamsoul), are not mentioned at all. On the other hand, several ascents often omitted from guide-books are indicated, *e.g.*, Braeriach and Cairn Toul, Ben Chonzie, Farragon, and the high level walk from Brodick to Corrie over Bienn Nuis and along the ridge to Suidhe Fhearghas.

"Brevity is the soul of wit," but it may be carried too far; and the hand-book would be considerably improved by adding a little more detail to the descriptions of mountain ascents and views, by occasional repetition to avoid some of the incessant cross references, by the addition of a few more large scale maps, as well as by the adoption of the above suggestions relative to hotels, population, and altitudes. All this might be done without increasing the bulk of the volume by again copying Bædeker, and excluding all advertisements, of which there are sixty pages, and only one—that of a Glasgow S.S. Co.—has the remotest connection with Scotland. When these improvements are effected, as I hope they may be in a future edition, "Murray's Hand-book" should take the first place among Scottish guides.

H. T. MUNRO.

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THE PLAYGROUND OF EUROPE. By LESLIE STEPHEN. New Edition. London: Longmans, Green, & Co.

WE hail the publication of the new edition of Mr Leslie Stephen's "Playground of Europe" with mingled feelings of pleasure and sadness. With pleasure, that such a charming book should now be within the reach of every one's grasp, and that too in a form which alike delights the eye, the hand, and the sense of artistic fitness. The paper is good, the type is excellent, and the binding is all that could be

desired. Of course, no word in the way of review on such a "classic" as the "Playground of Europe" can be expected at this date, for to offer such would be as unbecoming as to criticise the merits of a new edition of the works of William Shakespeare. We may, however, point out, as does Mr Leslie Stephen in his preface, that two chapters have been suppressed—one upon the "Eastern Carpathians," as irrelevant, and one upon "Alpine Dangers," as obsolete; while three papers, written at a later period, have been substituted for these, one upon the "Col des Hirondelles," from the *Alpine Journal*, and two, "Sunset on Mont Blanc" and "The Alps in Winter," from the *Cornhill Magazine*.

Our feeling of sadness arises in that our old friend has once more to do battle with the world, and work his way into the favour of a new generation of climbers. No longer is he clothed in his timeworn jacket of rusty brown, on which the eyes of his admirers have long lovingly lingered; no longer is he surrounded with the fictitious value that "the inaccessible to those who have not long purses" confers; no longer can the proud possessor exclaim, as he takes him down from the shelves to show to some admiring friend, "Handle him gently, for he is one of 'the rarest of alpine books'"—for now he falls an easy prey to all who can jingle six shillings in their pockets.

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THE ALPS REVISITED. By EDWARD WHYMPER. Illustrated from Photographs and Sketches by the Author. (See *The Graphic* of 29th September, and 6th, 13th, and 20th October 1894.)

THESE papers describe a visit to the old playground in July and August 1893. While they are characterised by the author's clearness of thought and diction, they are a trifle sensational for our taste, a large part being taken up with the somewhat gruesome subject of accidents on the Matterhorn and Mont Blanc; but that style of writing no doubt appeals to the general public.

Leaving the railway at Randa, Mr Whympfer and his guides followed a promiscuous high-level route, sleeping sometimes in tents and sometimes in mountain inns, until they emerged from the mountains at Aosta some two or three weeks later. First they ascended the Rimpfischhorn from the north, but were stopped on the last rocks by a storm. They next traversed a hitherto unnamed pass across the Rimpfischwange from the Täsch Valley to the Findelen, and thence proceeded by the Gorner and Théodule Glaciers to the Schwarzsee, where they stayed ten days during broken weather. As illustrating how tourists keep to the beaten paths, Mr Whympfer mentions that while he was at the Schwarzsee Hotel there were only five or six people at table, though Zermatt was at the time filled with "a seething mob."

Speaking of the first catastrophe on the Matterhorn, in 1865, after referring to the "baseless, monstrous" stigma that attached to poor old Peter Tangwalder, Mr Whympfer discusses the question of the utility of the rope. He admits (1) that if the party on that day had

not been tied together, two and perhaps three lives would have been saved ; and (2) that if the rope had not broken as it did, seven lives would have been lost instead of four. For all that, he is too orthodox a mountaineer to think of blaming the rope. Looking back over nearly thirty years, he ascribes the accident to two faults, viz., in allowing a young and inexperienced man to join the party, and in neglecting to fix spare ropes when descending the difficult places. He says further, "I have always regarded this accident as arising from *divided responsibility*, through no *one* person being in command."

Parts III. and IV. are occupied with Mont Blanc, on the top of which our friend wished to pass a night. From the Schwarzsee he went by the Col de Valpelline, Prerayen, and Aosta to Courmayeur. There he fell foul of the absurd guide regulations, still apparently enforced in the Mont Blanc district, and makes some incisive comments thereon. Eventually he got his tent and baggage conveyed to the Refuge Vallot by the Dôme Glacier route, and along the knife-edged snow-ridge stretching south from the Dôme du Goûter, where a party led by J. J. Macquignaz perished in August 1890. "We passed," our author says, "two of the hottest hours of the day traversing this uncanny place, progressing at the rate of about a yard a minute." At half-past two, when they reached the "Refuge," the air was still and the horizon cloudless. One hour later a hurricane was blowing, which lasted all night, and recalled a similar storm in 1870, when eleven lives were lost on the Calotte. Considering the number of observatories and refuge huts about, not to speak of a line of stakes below the Grand Plateau, such a dire calamity now seems almost impossible.

Mr Whymper waded down to Chamonix next day through the fresh snow, engaged new guides, and again started for Mont Blanc. The party spent a night at the Grands Mûlets, "one of the most elevated hotels in the world, both as regards its position and its charges." Referring to the early ascents of the mountain, Mr Whymper expresses surprise that the persons concerned did not more often come to grief, considering their ignorance of the conditions existing above the snow-line, and the fact that they were provided only with alpenstocks, which, moreover, if we judge from old engravings, they did not know how to use.

On reaching the summit Mr Whymper erected his tent, and proceeded to make himself as comfortable as the circumstances permitted till 8 A.M. next day. He enjoyed a perfect sunset and sunrise, and was unaffected with mountain sickness—was this owing to his Andean training? He thus describes the sunrise:—"I promenaded the summit ridge, with hands in pockets, smoking my short pipe, 145 paces W.S.W., and then as many back again. At 4.30 I looked at the thermometer, and found it standing at 19°. Presently a glow behind the Mischebelhörner indicated where the sun was about to rise. At the next turn, ranges began to take form, and in the direction of

Aix-les-Bains an unknown mountain as high as Mont Blanc itself made its appearance. While returning to the E.N.E., the orb of day came up with a bound ; rays streamed between the peaks and separated the ridges, and gleaming tops broke out like watch-fires around the vast circumference. The next turn to the west showed that the unknown mountain was a fraud—it was the shadow of Mont Blanc projected in the air."

The numerous illustrations attached to these interesting articles could hardly be improved upon. They include a good portrait of the author ; a thrilling representation of the last Matterhorn accident, with the Dent Blanche as a background ; a view looking north from the rocks near the summit of Mont Blanc ; the "laundry" at the lower Théodule Hut, &c. &c.

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ON THE TOP OF BEN NEVIS. By EDWARD WHYMPER.

(See the *Leisure Hour* for September 1894).

THIS is a pleasantly written article by Mr Edward Whympier, which appears in the September number of the *Leisure Hour*. It contains much interesting information connected with the work and history of the Observatory, some of which, however, is already familiar to readers of the *Journal*.

The article commences with what at first sight seems a rather astounding statement. Quoting from the tables of 3,000 feet mountains in the *Journal*, Mr Whympier says there are fifteen "Bens," the names of which he gives, which are more than 3,000 feet high. To us who are familiar with the toast, "The Bens and the Glens," the word simply means a "mountain." It is clear, however, that Mr Whympier does not use it in this broad sense, as in a note he quotes from our *Journal* that 283 mountains exceed 3,000 feet. The explanation is probably this: only such *Bens* as are so spelt in the Ordnance Survey maps, and consequently in the tables, have been counted. But, even so, their number should have been twenty—Ben Avon, Ben More (Perthshire), Ben More (Mull), Ben Vorlich (Loch Lomond), and Ben Chonzie being omitted from his list ; while among the distinct mountains there are forty-four more which are spelt *Beinn*.

Mr Whympier tells us that the great northern precipices have never been climbed. As readers of the *Journal* are aware, this is incorrect ; indeed the "precipice route of Ben Nevis" now bids fair to become a favourite Club climb. One other criticism, and I have nothing but praise to bestow. It is hardly fair to accuse Sir Walter Scott of want of observation, in failing to note the flora of Ben Nevis, when the quotation given refers not to that mountain but to Loch Coruisk.

It seems unnecessary, when the authorship is considered, to say that the style is pleasant, and the illustrations good and plentiful. Altogether, I confidently recommend members to expend a sixpence in buying the September number of the *Leisure Hour*.

H. T. MUNRO.

NEW SERIES OF BARTHOLOMEW'S REDUCED ORDNANCE SURVEY  
MAPS.

I HAVE before me three sheets of these maps, No. 26—Tongue and Cape Wrath, and Nos. 12 and 16—Central Perthshire and Braemar and Blair Athole, the two latter being revised from the already published sheets. I am sorry to see that Mr Bartholomew is apparently still experimenting as to the best colouring to adopt for this useful series of maps; for not only do Nos. 12 and 16 differ in colouring from the two sheets of the same numbers previously issued, but the sheets under notice are not uniformly coloured.

I have always, in these pages, urged that the main usefulness of these maps consists in their enabling the tourist at a glance to recognise the height of any point. The multiplication of colours, therefore, is a mistake. In the new Braemar and Blair Athole sheet, Mr Bartholomew has hit upon an expedient which will suit all tastes; for while each 250 feet is distinguished by a different gradation of colour, heights up to 500, 2,000, 3,000 feet, and above that elevation, respectively are indicated by distinctly different colours. This sheet appears to have been most carefully prepared, and to be very nearly accurate. I notice, however, that the Loch of Lintrathen, which was more than doubled in area for the Dundee Waterworks in 1875, is still left at its former size, and a misprint gives the curious name of "Beag More" to the 3,768 feet (southern) summit of Lochnagar, the 3,786 feet summit being marked "Cac Carn." Obviously *Beag* should apply to the northern (3,786 feet) top, for though higher it is the smaller peak (see Vol. II., p. 194); while the 3,768 feet summit should be named *Cac Càrn Mòr*.

The Tongue and Cape Wrath sheet is coloured exactly the same as the above, except that all heights above 3,000 feet are left white. For the sake of uniformity, they should have been the same as sheet 16; but as only four points attain that elevation, it is of little importance. This sheet also gives contours of soundings round the coast.

In the Central Perthshire sheet an entirely different system of colouring has been followed, the gradations altering every 500 feet instead of every 250; the red browns extending up to 3,000 feet instead of to 2,000; and the greenish browns to 3,500 feet. So far it is in agreement with the old sheet; above 3,500 feet, however, everything is, or is intended to be, left white. I notice, though, a good many mistakes. Schichallion, 3,547 feet, Beinn Creachan, 3,540 feet, Beinn Heasgarnich, 3,530 feet, and Meall Garbh (Ben Lawers), 3,661 feet, are coloured as under 3,000 feet, though a small red brown patch in the middle of the greenish brown leads to the supposition that the mistake is in the printing; while Meall Gruaidh, 3,280 feet, is coloured as under 3,000 feet. An improvement on the old sheet is a heavily dotted line showing the county march.

It is to be hoped that Mr Bartholomew will soon arrive at finality, and issue a complete and corrected set of maps, uniformly coloured.—  
H. T. MUNRO.

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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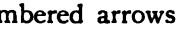
## RISE AND PROGRESS OF MOUNTAINEERING IN SCOTLAND.—IV.

BY WALTER A. SMITH.

- I. SCENERY OF THE GRAMPIAN MOUNTAINS: Illustrated by George Fennell Robson. London, 1814.
- II. GUIDE TO THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND: George and Peter Anderson, of Inverness. *Third Edition*, 1850.
- III. AUTUMNAL RAMBLES AMONG THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINS: Rev. Thomas Grierson, Kirkbean. *Third Edition*, 1856.
- IV. THE CAIRNGORM MOUNTAINS: John Hill Burton. Edinburgh, 1864.

THE difficulty of tracing the early history of Mountaineering in Scotland has already been pointed out in this series of articles. The difficulty has arisen manifestly from the fact that, comparatively, there has been no early history to trace. Climbing for the sake of climbing, or even in pursuit of the sublime and the beautiful, seems all so very modern. Our Scottish hills were always "there." Indeed, as the geologists tell us, they are among the oldest, or rather the "remains" of the oldest, mountains of the world. The Alps are young compared to them; and yet I suppose it must be confessed that it is among the latter that "mountaineering," as *now* understood, found its origin. But this point will doubtless fall to be discussed in the next article, and meantime we may content ourselves with the reflection that the minds and limbs of many Alpine

climbers received their early training and practice in Scotland.

Our hills were always here, but, as has been shown by Professor Veitch, they were really not much thought of, except as obstacles and difficulties in travel, until Sir Walter Scott roused the imagination of Scotland, and the world, to appreciate their marvellous romance and beauty. One of the earliest to be fired with the new enthusiasm appears to have been "a Member of the Society of Painters in Oil and Water Colours, London," called GEORGE FENNEL ROBSON, whose delightful volume of Forty Etchings of the Grampian Mountains, published in 1814, is doubtless known to many of our members. Robson was born in Durham in 1790, and, after earning some money in London while a mere lad, started off to Scotland with the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" in his pocket, and his sketch-book in his hand. Clad as a shepherd, he explored not only the nearer "Scott Country," with the Trossachs as its centre, but boldly found his way—and it must have required in these early days considerable spirit and determination on the part of the young Englishman to do so—to scenes that are even now considered remote and difficult of access. Instance two of the most striking of his "views," viz. No. 35, "Loch Avon," from near its foot (to which he had crossed by the Dhu Lochan), and No. 37, of "Braeriach and Cairntoul," from the head of Glen Dee. The artistic merit of the plates, which are "soft etching" reproductions of pencil drawings, is of a high order, and the true and faithful rendering of the shape and outline of the hills is very marked indeed. His volume is prefaced by a curious map, on which "numbered arrows" (  ) show his points of view. And he has on the whole been very happy in his choice of subjects, and must have had a keenly appreciative eye for the main features of a mountain landscape. Certainly a different eye from that of that other Englishman, of whom Hill Burton tells us in his racy little book also noted at the head of this paper, who, having charge of "the Aviemore section contract" of the Highland Railway, remarked "them 'ills, when you blast 'em, make first-class ballast"! And yet we do not find much evidence in

Robson's descriptive notes appended to his plates that it was with much of a "climber's eye," so to speak, he surveyed the scenes he drew so well, as beyond some reference to the views to be obtained from the tops of Ben Lomond and a few other peaks, the only "ascent," so far as I remember, he particularly mentions is that of Braeriach, from making which he urges "neither difficulty nor danger should deter the tourist." "In a situation so exalted," he continues, "admiration is raised to enthusiasm," and looking down into the great corry of the Garachory between Braeriach and Cairntoul, he feels—

"How fearful

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eye so low."

He concludes by remarking that the precipice he refers to is "five times the height of St Paul's Cathedral," which is not far from the fact. It is curious to note also that his artistic eye seems to have been offended by the "snow patches" on the Cairngorms with which we are so familiar and have so much delight. But his whole volume is charming, and, amongst other characteristic sketches therein, one is tempted to dwell specially upon No. 2, Ben Lomond, from Loch Ard; No. 6, The same from Glen Falloch; No. 13, Glen Finlas; No. 17, Ben More, from Glen Dochart; No. 21, Schiehallion, from Loch Rannoch; No. 22, Loch Tummel (the favourite and popular view *now* well known from photographs as "the Queen's"!); No. 29, Ben-y-Gloe, from the head of Glen Tilt; and No. 32, Lochan-y-Gar, perhaps about the finest drawing of them all. Turning over his pages recalls many delightful days, and is, and no doubt has been to many, a strong incitement to go and see, *and climb*, our Scottish hills.

Three other volumes whose titles are written above are evidence of the existence of a strong generation of pedestrians and climbers in Scotland, among the "thirties," "forties," and "fifties" of the century, some of whom are still with us, and whose personal influence and experience have doubtless trained the early footsteps of many of us younger men in the virtuous paths of climbing, and the rights of way across our native hills.

Amongst those whose kindly example and leader-



ship it was my good fortune as a lad to not unfrequently enjoy, were the late Robert Cox, W.S. (of "Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties" fame), who did good service in the great "Glen Tilt" case, and the late Professor W. B. Hodgson. Many a time have I heard "the hills re-echo" with our shouts of boyish laughter at the endless stories, wit and humour, of these two delightful and accomplished gentlemen, both of them keen pedestrians. But even as I write these few pages, another great and leading Scottish spirit has passed away from the mountainous land it loved so well. An ardent enthusiasm for the hills and glens of Scotland was a main "motif" in the eager life of Professor Blackie. He could read his Homer on the top of Ben Cruachan as well as in his study; and of the 'lone and wild' Glenfeshie he has written,—

"I will seek no nobler temple  
Than thy glen to worship God."

He and another kindred and well-loved Edinburgh man, the late Dr John Brown (the memory of whose kindly face and figure is still green in our hearts), are spoken of by Hill Burton, in his book already referred to, as "sturdy vagabonds" as well as sturdy thinkers; and the historian also recalls how, to go a little farther back, Professor Wilson (the great Christopher North) used to revel with wild delight in the recollections of his roving days.

Perhaps it may be the proverbial tendency to exaggerate the goodness of "the good old times," but one is certainly inclined sometimes to think that in these now comparatively old days, there was more true "pedestrianism" in the way of prolonged "knapsack" excursions and tours throughout Scotland than there has been in more recent years. The extension of the railways in the north is no doubt a temptation to take the shortest available means of access to some favourite centre among the mountains and there abide; and in some districts, in the northern portions of Inverness-shire and in Ross-shire especially, the closing of several of the old country inns is a serious interference with the legitimate convenience of pedestrians. This evil is referred to in Mr Philip's account of "A Traverse of Ross-shire" in the *Journal* for September last, and

has no doubt been experienced by many of us. I am glad to be able to say that a delightful new small hotel (taking the place of an indifferent inn closed several years ago) has been opened at Torgyle, that exquisitely lovely corner in Glen Moriston where the old drive route from Fort Augustus to Strathglass crosses the glen ; but it is much to be regretted that the old houses at Aviemore, Struy, Glen Affric, and Craig (on the Dingwall and Strathcarron road), all now show inhospitably closed doors to the wayfarer. Could not the "Club" do something towards supplying this "long-felt want," to some extent at any rate? The Alpine Clubs have their huts! Why not we our cottages, if not our inns? Let the council think on't! But this is a digression. However, I think there are not wanting signs that the rising generation in our large cities is alive to the ever fresh and wholesome joys of a cross country "Tour in the North," and the influence of our Club and other similar bodies will help to foster this healthy revival, and some of the old inns through such increase in the demand for them may yet be restored to us.

GEORGE and PETER ANDERSON'S green volume is a good bulky one of some eight hundred pages, and it is offered as a Guide to the Highlands and Islands, "even in their most remote and sequestered byeways." To a great extent this is no empty prefatory profession, as there is much solid and valuable information, agreeably, and often enthusiastically stated, as to long and remote mountain routes and ascents, with much local history, tradition, and anecdote as well. Their notes as to such routes, &c., while delightfully suggestive, are however frequently rather vague, and leave much to be ascertained and determined by a personal inspection of the ground, with the aid of the ordnance maps. But in their days of course these latter "were not," and it is therefore all the more to their credit that they traced out the remoter routes, such as the "Minikaig" pass, one of the highest in Scotland and the most direct route from Blair Athole to Kingussie—the various routes from Beauly to the West, by Strath Farrar, Glen Cannich, and Glen Affric—the wild pass or "saddle" of Corryvarligan, from Shiel House (Loch Duich) to Loch

Hourn—and the picturesque succession of high crossings constituting the direct “high level” route from Loch Nevis to Loch Eil, by Mam-na-Cloich Airde and the heights to the south of the top of Glen Dessary. As to these, and many other cognate matters, the student of Scottish hills will find pleasant and profitable reading in the book of the worthy Andersons of Inverness, notwithstanding Lord Cockburn’s rather extravagant anathemas noted in his “Circuit Journeys.” The ire of his Lordship, who was also a hill climber and keen enthusiast in Scottish Mountain Scenery (he gives the palm as a point of view to our lowly yet bold-faced friend Cairketton at the end of the Pentlands, but then *that* overlooks his own Bonaly!), seems to have been rather unnecessarily aroused by Anderson describing certain hills in Glenmoriston as “sugar-loaved” while *he* considers them as “*mammalated*,” and therefore the former is a “blockhead!” But he owns to Anderson’s “miles” being correct, which after all are perhaps more important in a guide-book than “adjectives”!

The Rev. THOMAS GRIERSON was minister of the small parish of Kirkbean, at the base of Criffel in Kirkcudbrightshire, in the first half of the present century. While a mere boy, he says, roaming alone among the hills of Nithsdale was one of his chief gratifications, and his love of solitary rambling and scrambling seems to have remained with him throughout life. His portrait is that of a strong, homely, Scottish face, with a fine high head, a thoughtful observant eye, and a mouth not without humour; and he dedicates his “third edition” to another old and stalwart Scottish Mountaineer, the late Professor (Sir Robert) Christison, whose son is a member of our Club. Mr Grierson would have been well “qualified” as such, as he gives in the preface to his “first edition” quite an imposing list of ascents, from Merrick to Ben Nevis, and from Ben Alder to the Pentland Hills! He was up Schiehallion at least five times; and although he was “never a quick walker,” he mentions a few “cross country” routes he has taken which certainly require almost as much effort of the imagination to believe in, as some of those narrated by another and contemporaneous reverend pedestrian, Mr Latrobe, in his quaint old book

of Alpine Travel called "The Alpenstock." The latter gravely assures his readers he crossed the Grimsel from Meiringen to the Rhone Valley, and thence in to Italy by the Gries Pass and the Tosa Falls, *all in one day!* Among the "mountain fags," as he calls them, that Mr Grierson tells us of, is how he "left Ledard on Loch Ard one morning, crossed the mountains to Loch Katrine, where he was boated over by a shepherd; over the mountains *again*, through the Forest of Glen Finlas, and its deep and dreary bogs, to Balquidder; over the mountains *again* to Glen Dochart and Killin; over the mountains *again* to Glen Lyon; and *once more* across the mountains to Loch Rannoch side, which he reached before midnight." Now this is nearly forty miles "as the crow flies," and even the stoutest and strongest of us know how sadly far from that supposed straight standard our poor human crossing of almost any Perthshire range falls short, and we may therefore safely credit our old friend (if we *credit* his story at all!) with some sixty miles of tramping on his native heaths that day. Is it not possible that he had a quiet night of "sweet forgetfulness" at Balquidder *en route*?\* But be that as it may, his "Rambles" were many, long, and various, and he states it was his custom to do his fifteen miles or so *before* a nine o'clock breakfast! This plan may be admirable, and one enjoys it on the Alps. I confess I never tried it here at home, and must own to a fondness for the lingering delights (in moderation) of a Scottish breakfast, and a matutinal pipe, after one's bath, before taking the road or the hillside. But it no doubt has its advantages.

Mr Grierson's opening chapters are devoted to Arran, and I am rather amused (referring to some foregoing remarks of my own) to notice that the first thing he speaks of (he is writing in 1840) is the present disinclination of young Scottish gentlemen to visit the Highlands on foot, as was their custom twenty years before *that!* He speaks hopefully, however, of the numbers of young *Englishmen* whom he meets on his travels, on foot and with knapsacks on their backs. He met some at Loch Ranza ("a place to

\* He did not seem to mind a "night out" occasionally! See p. 207.

dream of"), and they all had," he quietly says, a very happy evening over "some excellent whisky toddy—and tea." But Mr Grierson deserved his supper that day also, as, having on the previous day been up various peaks and "cyclopean walls," as he calls them (see No. 16 of "the Journal," p. 204), on the Goatfell ridge, and crossed the rugged saddle from Glen Sannox to Glen Rosa, he had walked to Loch Ranza from Lamlash.

Before taking his readers to the Highlands, Mr Grierson devotes two or three pleasant chapters to the mountains of Galloway, and describes his ascents of Merrick (the highest of the Galloway hills), Cairnsmuir of Carsphairn, &c., in which region special interest has lately been aroused by Mr Crockett's romantic story of "The Raiders." The region is certainly well worthy of a visit, as I know of few more beautiful valleys than those of the Cree and the Ken, and Loch Trool is very finely placed among its hills. The place is full too of romantic tales of the Covenanting days. Loch Enoch, on the steep north-east shoulder of Merrick, which figures so picturesquely in the "Raiders," and which is described enthusiastically by our late much honoured member Sheriff Nicolson in *Good Words* for April 1879, is thus referred to:—"A more desolate, dreary, unapproachable scene can hardly be imagined. All its shores are granite, bleached by the storms of ages, and the precipices of Merrick above 'have a fearful aspect.'"

But everything is relative, and a few years afterwards our present guide visits Loch Coruisk and "the Coolins," where his enthusiasm knows no bounds. Of the loch he writes: "When the forked lightning darts from the splintered crevices, and a thousand echoes reverberate the crash of thunder, *what* imagination can conceive a more tremendous scene?" And as to the Coolins, he narrates: "I have the best authority (the *ministers* of Strath and Portree) for asserting that an active, cautious, persevering pedestrian *may*, without imminent danger, reach *all* the highest points." Note the guarded language, and the numerous qualifying adjectives!

Mr Grierson got as far north as Sutherland, and ascends Ben More in Assynt; but we shall not follow him there,

but rather accompany him on his "Fortnight at Deeside." He approached Ballater by the Capel Mount and Glen Muich, after stopping at the charming hamlet of Clova to see the "gathering" there. The "hill-race" seems to have been a disappointing affair on this occasion (20th August 1850), as of nine men who started only two turned up at the winning post, and *they walked in hand in hand!* This may have been amusing, but Mr Grierson did not seem to care for it, as he started the same afternoon up the Capel, hoping to reach "the Spital" of Muich that evening. He did not do so, however. Rather rashly, apparently, he left the track to climb north-west up towards Lochan-y-Gar to see Loch Dhu, beneath its surrounding cliffs. On descending to Loch Muich, however, he was benighted, and had to spend the night under a rock, and had thus a most appropriate and romantic introduction to the wilds of Deeside, especially as he woke up in the morning to find the higher mountains white with fresh fallen snow. (He had, however, as he naively narrates, taken the precaution to put on dry shoes and stockings the previous night! A most sensible proceeding.) Like a true mountaineer, Mr Grierson was eager to get on to the Cairngorms, and did not stay long at Ballater, but hastened on to Braemar, with the romantic and salubrious situation of which he seems, naturally, to have been highly delighted. Even in these days, however, there would appear to have been difficulties (or *supposed* difficulties at any rate, probably owing to the Duke of Atholl's attempt about that time to close up Glen Tilt—an attempt which, as we all know, was successfully frustrated by the Scottish Rights of Way Society) in getting access to the Deeside mountains, as we find Mr Grierson had, prior to coming north, corresponded with the Duke of Leeds, the then tenant of the Mar Forest, on this point, receiving from his Grace most satisfactory assurances. On page 228 of the volume now under review is printed a letter from the Duke, freely admitting he has no right to object to any person using any of the old established roads through the forests. He names four,—viz. (1) up Glen Lui and the Derry to Speyside and Abernethy (the "Larig-an-laoigh"); (2) up Glen Lui-Beg and over to the Wells of

Dee and to Aviemore (the Larig-Ghru); (3) up Glen Geldie and over to Glen Feshie for Kingussie, &c.; and (4) all the way up the Dee to join No. 2 near the Wells. With these avenues open (and they are of course still so) Mr Grierson would have had no difficulty therefore in reaching the summits of Ben Muichdhuì and of all his neighbours; but alas! the weather was very unpropitious, and he only made out, on this visit at any rate, the ascent of the great monarch itself, and that through a blinding snowstorm! Through the intervals of the storm exciting and impressive glimpses were got of black Loch Avon, far below on the right, and the great precipices above the head of Glen Lui-Beg down to the left. Descending to Glen Dee, Mr Grierson was rewarded by a clearing away of the storm, and by that grand view of Braeriach and Cairntoul, and their tremendous cliffs and corries, which attracted the artistic eye of George Fennell Robson, whose visit to this region has already been noticed. Mr Grierson makes sundry sensible observations on the propriety of climbers not unnecessarily interfering with the sport of deerstalking, provided *lawful* footpaths, &c., are not interfered with; and he almost summons up courage to go and speak "to the Duke," whom he comes upon catching a fine salmon above the Linn of Dee. But his modesty gets the better of him, and remarking that his "ambition soars infinitely above the domes and pillars of the aristocracy, even to the pillars (presumably Ben Muichdhuì) that support the clouds of heaven," he humbly pursues his route to Castleton. Here we must leave him, with regret, to find his way south by the Spittal of Glenshee. He has been a most delightful companion, full of a simple cheerful humour, and a hearty and honest delight in the hills and the open air, and must have been an "all-round" first-class pedestrian!

JOHN HILL BURTON, the historian of Scotland, was always, I believe, a most active pedestrian. His thin wiry figure, rapidly crossing Bruntsfield Links on his way out to old Craig House, where he lived for many years, is one of my earlier recollections. The monograph of "The Cairngorm Mountains" appeared originally in less extensive form in the pages of *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1847; but

the neat little green volume, published in 1864, with a representation of "The Shelter Stone" on the cover, and a capital engraving of Loch Avon and Ben Muichdhuì, white with snow, as a frontispiece, has for a number of years been among my more treasured possessions. It is a most exhilarating book, and, as already hinted, very delightful reading. Personal reminiscences of adventure and literary companionship are racily interwoven with picturesque description of scenery and safe advice to pedestrians and mountaineers. He devotes some pages of forcible language to the abuse of "the detested bondage of guidehood," and tells of a prominent Chancery lawyer from London gravely asking to be recommended to "a steady guide to Arthur Seat"! Mr Burton recommends a *stream* as a good guide either up or down a hill. To a certain, to a very considerable extent indeed, this is sound advice, *if you choose the right stream*. But that, in mist or on a many-shouldered Ben, is not always so easily done, and you may, unless you keep yourself right with the compass, easily find yourself lured by your pleasantly running guide either down into a wrong valley or up on to a wrong summit. And I daresay many of us know places on our Scottish hills where a stream would lead to rather awkward situations at the edge of crag or cliff. Yet I greatly like a "babbling brook" as a companion, and well remember the delight with which I at last got water running steadily to the right point of the compass after wandering alone for some hours in dense mist on the big high plateau between Glen Callater and Glen Doll, on my way one afternoon from Braemar to Clova. However, our author's other "counsels to climbers" are all, I think, excellent and altogether trustworthy. They include the carrying of a plaid, which for a pedestrian tour is certainly the right thing. But to get back once more to the Cairngorms. Mr Burton, when first visiting them as a lad, was warned by an old keeper against going up among their great wildernesses, because "it was a "ferry fulgar place, and not fit for a young shentleman to go to, at all." But he went, and this is how he graphically describes his impressions:—"The depth and remoteness of the solitude, the huge mural precipices, the deep chasms between the



rocks, the waterfalls of unknown height, the hoary remains of the primeval forest, the fields of eternal snow, and the deep lakes at the foot of the precipices, are full of such associations of awe and grandeur and mystery as no other scenery in Britain is capable of arousing." This sounds almost like exaggeration, but I have known the wild region for more than twenty years and I think it very true, and I doubt not that is the opinion of most of us. If any one desires to realise fully these weird grandeurs and beauties, let him go and spend a night or two at the "Shelter Stone" and see the sunset on the mountain and the sunrise on the loch.

[Here, again, may I interpose a suggestion that the Club might make the "Shelter" a little more habitable; and a hut near the Wells of Dee would be useful too for climbers of Braeriach, Cairntoul, &c., as well as for weary or storm-stayed travellers over the "Larig-Ghru."]

The descent by the "Feith Buidhe," from the hollow between Ben Muichdhuì and Cairngorm to the shelter stone at the head of Loch Avon, Mr Burton states may be safely taken, by one "who understands his business," on a "careful system of zigzagging," converting the channel of the stream "into a rough staircase, some 2,000 feet or so in length." The descent of course is simple enough, with ordinary care, in summer weather; but Mr Burton must have had a prophetic as well as an historic mind, as he suggests that an Alpine devotee, if he chose to come to the Cairngorms in winter, "might realise all the dangers, excitements, and phenomena of any of the great Alpine feats." The suggestion is now, I believe, annually realised by the intrepid Maconochie,\* of Aberdeen, and other enthusiasts from the north-eastern metropolis.

The historian's favourite spot, however, appears to have been the head of Glen Dee, near the Wells, below the precipices of Braeriach, and with the sharp peak of Cairntoul showing above its lower cliffs,—just indeed below the place from which young Robson must have made his sketch (No. 37), mentioned on page 248, and where I have

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\* A. I. Maconochie, author of "Ben Muichdhuì and his Neighbours" (Smith, Aberdeen)—a capital guide-book to those mountains.

just suggested a "hut" might well be built. (Those who have been there will agree with me at any rate that there are plenty "stones" about for this latter purpose!) Mr Burton, however, was apparently independent of such luxuries, as he speaks of having on repeated occasions spent the night here, in the open, on bunches of heather among the rocks; and encourages his readers to do likewise, by reminding them that for sleeping in the open air in Scotland one is not liable, as in England, to the punishment of vagrancy! Still I venture to think the "hut" would be desirable; as I have experienced, on more than one occasion, such stormy weather in this very place, as would make "sleeping out" probably liable to the punishment of death, if not of vagrancy. It is certainly a marvellous and wild scene, this south end of the Larig-Ghru, even on a fine day; and on a still moonlight night, as Burton saw it once at any rate, it must be weird to an extraordinary degree. "Sometimes," he says, speaking of the solemnity of the night, "there is a monotonous and continuous rumble. . . . Then comes a loud, distinct report, as if a rock had split, and faint echoes of strange wailings touch the ear."

The writing and publication of such books as these four I have endeavoured shortly to describe, have doubtless, so far as books can, stimulated that natural love of the hills which is, to a greater or less degree, implanted in the minds of most healthy and active Scotsmen of the present generation. They also serve the purpose of recording the gradual and increasing importance of mountaineering in Scotland as a national and ennobling sport or pastime during the present century, now drawing to a close. In fact, one might almost say that the establishment of OUR CLUB was the next *marked* event of importance in "the Rise and Progress of Mountaineering in Scotland." But of all more recent events and developments, I must, as already said, leave Professor George A. Smith and Professor Ramsay to deal in the next numbers of the *Journal*.

## SCHIEHALLION.

BY JOSEPH GIBSON STOTT.

WELLINGTON, N.Z.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—You ask me for a paper. At first I did not think I could conjure up a reminiscence that would inform and interest; but looking through some literary fragments I brought out here with me, I lit upon the bones of the present article. I have the less hesitation in putting them together inasmuch as the mountain they refer to has received scant attention hitherto in the pages of our *Journal*; indeed its name finds no place in the index of either of our volumes. And I have another joy in writing: to send greetings across the sea to many an old comrade in the Club, who still plies the “big hobnailers” to good purpose on the snow and the heather we all love so well.

Many a time, coiled up in the big arm-chair in my den, with the photos on my walls of Sgurr nan Gillean, the Buchaille, and burly Ben More in the snow time, and the kindly faces present at the first Dalmally and Dalwhinnie meets smiling from the mantel shelf, do my thoughts go back to these good all days. And then I fall “a thynkyng”; and the outlines become blurred and indistinct through the blue tobacco smoke; and the walls fade away; and I hear the cheery voices, and see the dear old faces; and once again am I back in Scotland, and oh!

“— I see, I see the mountains,  
The great sky-cleaving grey-coned mountains,  
The corries, and the foaming fountains,  
And the white mists floating by.”

In New Zealand we have as fine mountain scenery as any in the world,—fantastic rocky pinnacles, untrodden summits innumerable twice and thrice the height of any in Scotland, a perpetual snowline, some of the largest known glaciers, gorges of sombre magnificence, lakes and fiords of every degree of beauty, deep forest-clad valleys with alpine rivers roaring adown them. All this we have, and in not a few instances our place names are borrowed from well-known peaks and glens at home; but there is

an absence of history, song, tradition, legend, and all the glamour that clings around the well-loved home scenes, and to me they never can be the same.

But, Mr Editor, I hear you condemn all this as padding, so let me to my task. It was as long ago as 1885,—before the Club had come into existence, before Munro had compiled his memorable Tables, before the siege of north-east corries with axe and rope had become a fine art. Even in these dark ages, a small coterie seized every opportunity presented by a holiday for a hill ramble; and although the time was early April, and the snell east wind was roaring through the Edinburgh streets, and rain and sleet chilled to the marrow, the word had gone round that Schiehallion was the objective, and thither would we go despite all things. So the night train whirled four of us—Campbell, Kirk, M'Intosh, and the writer—into the north country. It was raining and sleeting at Stirling; it sleeted and rained at Perth; but when we were deposited at 2 A.M. in pitchy darkness at Pitlochry, the weather fortunately was somewhat better. We discussed a meal of sorts over the fire in the porter's room at the station; then we tumbled out into the mud and the mirk, someone struck up "The Boys of the Old Brigade," and we marched for Tummel Bridge.

Day was breaking as we reached Killiecrankie, and often and in varied circumstances as we had trodden the Pass, its aspect now was new to us,—the cold and gloom and blackness, the sullen roar of the swollen Garry, the owls hooting dismally in the leafless woods. The new direction of the road, however, soon brought us into more cheerful surroundings. The hoot of the owl gave place to the crow of the pheasant in Bonskeid plantations; the light grew stronger, over in the east a tawny orange leaped into the sky, and the opening glen and rising mists showed us the hills well whitened with snow.

Swinging along past Fincastle Glen, and high above the course of the hurrying Tummel, after a few miles we turned to the left to enjoy "the Queen's view." Ascending for a few yards through the wood, what a glorious scene burst upon us! From our feet the ground plunged straight down

to the river—three hundred feet of rugged descent. It was not the boisterous river that had been our companion for the last few miles ; it was calm, and broad and sinuous, winding its way through grass meadows, and past clumps of leafless trees that looked as though they had stolen forward from the company of their fellows on the opposite hillside to admire their graceful forms in the mirror of the water. There was the old ferry-boat, drawn half out of the stream in a little creek—there the tumble-down boat-house—and the path winding through the fields to the ferryman's white cottage. Beyond the curves of the river, the eye rested on the loch, visible throughout every furlong of its length and breadth, its shores of alternate wood and green pasture,—its low promontories gliding out into the water, its bold rocky capes, its cottages, farms, and country seats, and the snow dappled hills surrounding it. High above the rocks and the woods towered the mountains beyond : Farragon, with sharp graceful summit ; and the mighty bulk of our objective Schiehallion, a huge volume of white mist resting on his snowy shoulder, and streaming far across towards the northern hills. There was not a trace of life in the landscape, not a man nor beast nor bird to be seen, not even a wreath of smoke from the roof of a cottage, all was lonely.

For four miles our road now led us along the north side of the loch, for most part through charming scenery. The sun was up now, and shafts of gold were gleaming along scaur and woodland. Primroses were peeping on the banks ; soon the birds commenced to twitter, and from the loch came the clamour of the great white gulls. Rabbits were gambolling on every patch of greensward, and out of every other field up whirred the merry brown partridge. Man alone was absent, not a soul was stirring yet except ourselves. At the head of the loch we again met the Tummel river, pouring through a wide glen that grew more lonesome as we ascended. Big boulders strewed the slopes, the birches were stunted and twisted, the bogs black and forbidding, and in front—heaving higher into the air as we drew nearer him—huge Schiehallion with his snows and mists.

Two or three miles of this, and then welcome sight—the Bridge and the inn, promising rest, refreshment, and other joys. Here too we found two other members of the party—Henderson and Dewar—who had come up the previous afternoon, and spent the night comfortably in bed. Of all places whereat to spend a honeymoon at this time of year this seemed the strangest, and yet here we found a newly-married couple enjoying early connubial bliss among the bogs, boulders, and snow-drifts. Let us hope the rest of their lives will be more happily circumstanced.

The view of Schiehallion from here is not nearly so imposing as from more distant places. It is a huge mass of mountain, running nearly east and west; a long, high-backed ridge, descending easily eastwards, but breaking down very rapidly at the other end, above Rannoch. The peak is small and sharp, reaching a height of 3,547 feet. Although very centrally situated as regards the Perthshire Highlands, it is almost more isolated than any other mountain, being cut off on every side by deep glens of some width. This formation gives the best views of it from east and west, where it towers into the sky as a huge steep-sided cone, that must be well-known to all our members who have been upon the Western Bens. When it is snow-clad from top to bottom it is a very imposing mountain, although, considering its height, it is one of the easiest to ascend from any direction.

By nine o'clock, having demolished huge supplies of porridge and chops, we took to the wet moor, tramping through the peat hags and rank heather of Craig Dhu. This surmounted, a spongy morass occupied us for a time; and then we rose at the boulders and burned heather of Craig Kynachan. Here we got fairly among the grouse and the blue leaves, and high overhead the curlews wheeled in air with wailing cry and great commotion.

An hour carried us across the three ridges to the foot of Schiehallion proper. High, high above, he soared aloft into the thin mists,—the lower slopes clad with tangled heather, moss and boulder, and dusted over with the slushy snow of the previous day. Far up above there appeared to be a plateau of some width, and beyond it rose the roof

of the mountain, a steep slope, 500 feet high, for the most part covered by the heavy snow wreaths of winter. Where snow was absent, the glass showed steep-pitched trains of huge boulders.

After a short halt we went to work. Tangled heather as high as the knee, hidden rocks, and soft snow a couple of inches deep on a steep incline, reduced our pace considerably ; but when at the end of half-an-hour we halted, we had risen several hundred feet, and commanded a wide desolate prospect.

Our advent was a source of much astonishment to the mountain hares. These comical beasts, nearly all in their white winter coats, were immensely numerous. They frisked about all around us, and a whole regiment of them steadily retired before us into the higher regions. They had a fashion of sitting upon their hind legs, and blinking at us till we got within about thirty yards, when they turned round and lobbed away over the rocks till curiosity prompted a fresh scrutiny.

The final slope was steep and slippery, but we recovered breath among the hillocks and hollows of the plateau at the top of it. It was very wintery up here. The hollows were full of deep drift, and everywhere there was an inch or two of fresh snow. The pools were frozen over, and the bitter east wind cut like a blunt razor. The vegetation had a beautiful aspect. Each blade of grass and spike of club moss was feathered on the weather side with tiny spicules of ice. Long pendants hung from the rocks, and the boulders were covered with fairy-like frosty encrustations. But the art work of the fairies had a poor chance in the encounter with our ruthless hobnailed boots, as we pushed our way across to the last ridge.

Its lower edge was easy, but presently we set foot on the snow-blanket proper—the white loin-cloth flung across the back of the mountain. It was very steep, smooth, shining, hard-surfaced ; soaring with a sharp edge high into the grey sky above us, trailing down beneath in graceful curves of dazzling whiteness. Like a file of flies on the overhang of a table-cloth we scrambled up, kicking hard into the firm snow ; each man bending his breast

forward to the slope, and panting and puffing muchly. A few minutes of heavy work, and we crowned the ridge, to see a snow slope of similar steepness plunging down the further side.

It is easy now; turning westward we follow the ridge that rises easily in front, with a deep deep glen on either hand. All the hollows are full of deep drift, all the hummocks are piles of granite boulders half-buried in snow and ice. Up we rise, up and up slowly, and quite suddenly we come upon a little rocky mound surmounted by a low cairn, and beyond it our mountain falls fast to the westward. It is the top.

The view was certainly disappointing. In the south, deep Glen More lay just at our feet, dun-coloured, and gashed by the irregular course of a stream. Just across it rose Cairn Maig, not much more than a hundred feet short of our own elevation; and beyond Cairn Maig, uplifting six hundred feet higher, filling up the whole southern sky, a mountain mass whiter than marble, streaked with black rock faces, the Ben Lawers group, the monarchs of Perthshire. Over in the east were the three snowy domes of Ben-a-Ghlo, and Ben Dearg was close to them; but these were the only summits in view, everywhere else were blurred and indistinct masses of mountain, winter's drift lying in their hollows and across their backs in thick white masses, with ribbons and rags of mists careering across the vision. Loch Rannoch and Loch Tummel failed to attract the eye as they should have done, and many a mountain and glen that ought to have been visible was hidden by the trailing mists; and before long the gruesome east winds, fresh from miles of cold snows, searched us out among the boulders where we were lunching, and fairly drove us down the hill.

We descended a long steep pitch of boulders and heather into Glen More, and as we warmed ourselves by the hard work some of us perhaps reflected on all for which Schiehallion is famous,—Cailin, the fairy queen, from whom some etymologists derive the name of the mountain; Robert the Bruce, to whom it gave shelter after the battle of Methven; stout old Struan Robertson, of Jacobite memory;



and the famous Sergeant Mhor, an outlaw of the '45, who played much the same part in this neighbourhood as was done by Rob Roy elsewhere. Schiehallion is also noteworthy as the scene of some pendulum observations to determine the weight of the earth—a bigger job even than the compilation of Munro's tables, I should think.

It took us long to reach the stream at the bottom of Glen More, but once there we found a good path, and the sun that had played truant all day long now came out, and sent troops of sunbeams racing and chasing along the grey sides of the hills and over the whitened summits. A bonny glen is Glen More, and long we lingered in its pleasant recesses, watching the love-making of the grouse on the heathery knowes, the trout in the sparkling amber shallows, the hawks quartering the hillside. Too long indeed we lingered, for when we ran our path into a good road at Tychurrair, and descended the glen past the old Castle of Garth to Glen Lyon at Cushieville, time pressed us sorely. We entered Aberfeldy in most undignified fashion, a straggling procession of mud-bespattered hillmen, running at full speed, or as much of it as was left in us, our knapsacks banging on our backs, all the curs and urchins of the town at our heels. And we had lost that last train after all had it not been for Dewar,—“lunged and limbed like a greyhound,” was said of him after that famous sprint (someone afterwards altered it to “dachshund,” but no matter). Slainte Frank! mony a brae hae we spieled thegither, and mony a one shall we spiel yet, I hope. And such was the ending of a very pleasant ramble.

## TWO DAYS IN LOCHABER.

BY A. E. ROBERTSON, M.A.

AMONG the stern solitudes of Lochaber lies a region little known in the pages of the *Journal*, and seldom visited, I am afraid, by even its most venturesome readers; for Nature, which has scattered her riches here with so lavish a hand, has thrown a barrier round them of moor and mountain, which up till now has kept out the "brutal spectator" and the Saturday-to-Monday climber. Now however that the West Highland Railway has reached Luibruairidh in Corrou, and the snort of the engine is heard at Roy Bridge in Glen Spean, the wild summits that lie between Fort-William and Loch Treig will echo to the sound of hob-nailers and ice axes, and a new and fruitful district, unequalled anywhere save perhaps in Skye, Torridon, and Arran, will thus be added to the rapidly increasing list of good "climbing centres."

July of '93 found me by chance in this glorious district, with nothing but a rucksack to hamper my movements, and two days in which to roam, as the spirit moved, among the surrounding hills.

Starting at 9.45 from my quarters at the south end of Loch Treig, I followed the course of the Amhaim Reidh, over a rough and at times almost invisible track. Two hours of its questionable aid carried me to the point marked 1,320 on the O.S., a wild and desolate spot, set deep in the hollows of the adjacent hills. The morning had been dull and misty, but the clouds were now floating up the hill-sides and melting away from the summit into the clear air. It was under these promising auspices that my mind was at last made up, and I resolved to make for Binnein Mòr (3,700), the highest point in all Mamore. Striking up the burn which comes tumbling down from the south, I skirted the lower slopes of Binnein Beag (3,083), a shapely little cone, and soon found myself in the fine north-east corrie of Binnein Mòr. The floor of this corrie is strewn with coggly boulders, both large and small, over which progress is necessarily somewhat arduous.

Half an hour slipped rapidly away learning the lesson that only "experience does it," before I found myself at the base of the final slope leading steeply upwards to the cairn.

The last 200 feet afforded some excellent climbing, for the rock face was impressively steep; but there being plenty of good foot and hand holds I experienced no real difficulty. Every now and then a broad tempting ledge appeared, inviting me to turn round and drink in the keen mountain air, and the glorious view over the rocky ridges and arêtes of the Easains, the Aonachs, and Ben Nevis. At last I struck the ridge two yards to the east of the cairn, very much as one clammers over the side of a dike. My hands were on the edge, another heave and my head had topped it, when, oh, what a sight was there!—the whole of the south and south-east Highlands springing into view at a single glance. The steep sides of the corrie up which I had been climbing shut out everything behind me, save the limited vista of the Easains and Ben Nevis before mentioned, so that contrast lent point to the surprise. The great feature of the view was the sea, which stretched far away down by Mull, Iona, and Jura, in peaceful and sublime beauty, flecked here and there by the white canvas of a sailing boat. I had been climbing for the previous six weeks in the Cairngorms and in the Ben Alder district, where the view is almost entirely made up of mountain and flood, of brown heath and shaggy wood, but there was always a something that I missed, and here I found it. No view I now think can be complete without the sea. It was a splendid panorama. At my feet lay the Moor of Rannoch, and at the S.E. corner, over its flat, lonely, watery expanse, Schiehallion uprose in solitary splendour, the most perfect of cones. More to the right were Ben Lawers and his satellites, and the clustering mountains round Inveroran. In the south the Glencoe ranges were seen to great advantage, their steep furrowed ridges beautifully tinted with rich red hues.

Ben Nevis and the arête connecting it with Càrn Mòr Dearg looked formidable, and promised some good work on the morrow. More to the N.E. were the jagged white

summits of Stob Choire Claurigh and the Caisteal, then the long flat range of Creag Meaghaidh and the Ben Alder group; while much further away, in the same direction, the Cairngorms were to be seen, but dwarfed and uninteresting in appearance.

The summit of Binnein Mòr is very rough, steep, and narrow. Due south there is a fine ridge connecting it with another top, Coire nan Laogh (3,475), half a mile distant. From this point the main ridge of the mountain divides into two,—one part, jutting out in a S.E. direction, ends in a top, Sgòr na h-Eilde Beag (3,140); the other part, running S.W., rises to a sharp peak, A Gruagach (3,442). It is a characteristic feature of this range that all its tops are connected by narrow ridges, their sides, composed of rough scree slopes, shelving away at an acute angle. In winter, when covered with snow, they ought to present all the characteristics of an Alpine arête.

After revelling in the superb panorama for about half-an-hour, I carefully picked my way down among the broken rocks and loose screes in a westerly direction, getting into Coire na Gabhalach. At six o'clock I regained the track, half-an-hour's walk along which brought me to Steall, a shepherd's house, where they readily gave me shelter for the night. Next morning broke a perfect day. The delicate fleecy clouds lightly resting on the hill tops were soon licked up by the heat of the sun, leaving a perfectly clear atmosphere.

Getting under weigh about nine A.M., I struck up the grassy slopes of Aonach Beag (4,060). The ascent was very easy, and involved no climbing; in fact one could have ridden up on a pony all the way. By 11.30 I was standing beside the small heap of stones lying on the dark brown moss that marks the summit. The view in its main features was similar to that of yesterday on Binnein Mòr; to-day, however, I got a new view of Ben Nevis and Càrn Dearg, the precipitous N.E. face of the one and the sharp red peak of the other being very conspicuous. In the vista between them was a pretty peep of Rum, with Skye further north, its saw-like crest silhouetted on the horizon. About a mile north is Aonach Mòr (3,999), separated from

my vantage point by a steep dip of some 400 feet. It is erroneously called Mòr, as Aonach Beag is the larger of the two.

I descended by a somewhat rough and at times perilous slope to the bealach (2,915) between the Aonachs and Càrn Mòr Dearg. A steep ascent up a delightfully narrow ridge brought me, at 1,115, to the small natural cairn of Càrn Mòr Dearg (4,012). The colour of the surrounding rock is bright red, contrasting very markedly with the dark grey face of Ben Nevis on the one side and that of the Aonachs on the other. Certainly, if one wants to gain some idea of what the north-east side of Ben Nevis is like, this is the point at which it may best be seen in all its grandeur, loneliness, and immensity. You look right across the glen, not half a mile broad, on to this "vast rugged precipice, rising some 1,500 or 2,000 feet above the stream that wanders through the gloom at its base. That dark wall of porphyry can now be seen from bottom to top, with its huge masses of rifted rock standing up like ample buttresses into the light, and its deep recesses and clefts, into which the summer sun never reaches, and where the winter snow never melts. The eye, travelling over cliff and crag, can mark everywhere the seams and scars dealt out in that long warfare with the elements, of which the whole mountain is so noble a memorial."\*

One of the finest arêtes in Scotland connects Càrn Mòr Dearg with Ben Nevis. To traverse it is certainly no very easy task, requiring some steadiness of eye, foot, and hand. In a high wind its difficulty would be immeasurably increased. When I crossed it the stones were very loose and rotten, every step having to be carefully chosen and tested before being trusted. In places the ridge was a true knife-edge, so thin that it was often a matter for speculation on which side an unstable block would fall if disturbed. As seen from Càrn Mòr Dearg it dipped down in a south-westerly direction with a graceful sweep, and curving round abutted itself against the massive grey face of Ben Nevis. The lowest point of the ridge is about 3,300 feet. I had

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\* Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland," p. 162.

thus a final climb of some 1,100 feet to the top of Ben Nevis. The last half of this ascent was rather a pull up. Scrambling over the great rough boulders was toilsome in the extreme, reminding me of the struggles of an ant to attain the summit of a gravel heap.

Eventually the gravel heap was surmounted, and at three o'clock I was standing beside the Observatory. One or two "tourists" on the top looked not a little startled to see the features of a man appear over (what seemed to them) the face of a precipice. The idea of any one attempting the ascent save by the orthodox pony track had never occurred to them.

It was one of the clearest days—so the observers told me—that they had experienced that summer. From Sgurr na Lapaich in the north to Goatfell in the south, from the Minch in the west to the Moray Firth in the north-east, the eye ranged through a cloudless sky. Lochnagar was the only well-known peak I failed to identify, and I doubt if it can be seen from here.

After spending about two hours on the top I descended by the ordinary route to Fort-William.

## BEN ARTHUR—("THE COBBLER").

BY A. ERNEST MAYLARD, B.S., M.B. (Lond.).

SUCH an old friend and near neighbour as the "Cobbler" needs no introduction to West Coast mountaineers; and for that his accessibility to Glasgow possibly renders him equally familiar to most climbers. There are times and seasons, however, when Ben Arthur, as he should be properly designated, is wont to wear a garb which renders him an object of peculiar interest to the climber, both for the difficulties he presents in mastering his rocky peaks, and for the exquisite contrast created by these bold black summits projecting from a snow-clad base below into the glorious azure above. It is only on some "blue" day in winter, when snow has previously mantled the heathery and grassy slopes below, and the cold icy winds have clean swept the rugged rocks above, that such conditions as here referred to are to be met with. Such was the good fortune of some of us on 31st December 1894 and 1st January 1895.

What was Ben Vorlich, Ben Vane, and Ben Ime to Ben Arthur on those days? Near neighbours every one of them, and all over 3,000 feet. Each could look down upon the bare black summits of the Cobbler, as, with his "wife" and his "last," he squatted, only a member of that almost countless and unrecognised mass of the under-three-thousanders. Yet who would venture to have denied that, on those bright wintry days, Ben Arthur more than held his own in almost every respect. His invitation to the climber was much more tempting. Although he would none of the white caps which covered his neighbours' loftier heads, yet who did not gaze with greater admiration upon his black bald pate? Had he no claim to beauty? Forsooth, what Cobbler would care to have any! Could he not boast of a bold open "face," that, undaunted, would defy any but the stoutest cragsman? None need venture to attack his stalwart and upright sides; and only a few at a time will he allow to crawl up or down his almost perpendicular back. But he is firm and sure; no tricks does he play on those who seriously seek his solid acquaint-







ASKIVAL, RUM.

From a Photo by J. W. Pettigrew.

ance. Plant your foot firmly, hold tight, and he will deal fairly and squarely with you. And when you can rest securely on his weather-beaten crown, he lets you know that although he falls short by some hundred feet or so of many another of his loftier compeers, yet he can show you a view which many a proud "three-thousander" might well be jealous of.

So then Ben Arthur, of Loch Long side, is a right fine fellow. He has relations, may I say it, in the far-off lands of Austria. Who that has seen the Dolomites in the Southern Tyrol will not be reminded of them by the sight of Ben Arthur? Such was the impression that immediately flashed upon me, as these bare projecting rocks suddenly burst in view after ascending for some 1,000 feet the undulating slopes below. I do not wish to push the similarity any farther, for I fear it would be much to the disadvantage of our Ben. But there it was. Ben Arthur could proudly claim the distinction, which not many another of our hills could, of recalling to my not too retentive memory those wonderful and beautiful rocky summits of the Austrian Tyrol. The comparison, however, must go no farther.

Ben Arthur is familiar to so many that I almost shrink from venturing to give any account of one particular climb, fearing as I do that such a description must prove very trite and commonplace. However, the more I climb our good Scottish Bens, the more impressed I am with the extraordinary variety which different ascents of the same mountain afford. Rarely will you climb a Scottish mountain a second time under conditions precisely similar to those encountered in the first ascent. If one puts aside the mere physical aspect, that of climbing or walking up the hill, the atmospheric changes are so numerous in our country that these alone lend some of the most charming and varied effects to the lover of pure mountain scenery. If there is one source of certainty more than another, which might be said to ensure the lasting success of our efforts as a Club, it is not that we have a number of hills of a certain height and with certain special unchangeable features, but that we have an ever inexhaustible change in external conditions

which render one mountain a boundless source of pleasure and information. To the real climber and true lover of mountain scenery there should always be almost as much pleasure in returning to an old frequented haunt, as to a new centre for new scenes and fresh endeavours.

May I hope then, in taking up such an old friend as the Cobbler, I am introducing him in one of those many and varied aspects which, if perchance it does not give the newness and freshness which attaches to a less widely known and less frequently visited mountain, may at least add new interest and awaken some fresh desire for a renewed acquaintance.

I am not going to the trouble of saying how the Cobbler is to be reached: that you go to Arrochar, round the head of Loch Long, strike up from the loch or from the Croe Road, and so forth; a glance at Bartholomew's reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet xi., Oban District, will sufficiently indicate the line of approach. But I wish to start from the base of the southernmost peak. And, first of all, let me briefly refer to the nomenclature of these summits, for Ben Arthur has three.

The term Cobbler is generically applied to the whole mountain; specifically, however, it is used to refer more particularly to the northern peak. The other two peaks are sometimes referred to as the Cobbler's "last" and the Cobbler's "wife." These terms are all excessively fanciful and far-fetched. They have a popular and vulgar significance only, and for all descriptive purposes should be abolished. The proper nomenclature to employ should be that in common use with all other mountains. Without, therefore, adopting any of these fanciful stretches of imagination, I shall proceed to describe the mountain under the more dignified terminology of "peaks" and "faces."

As one approaches from the east the rocky mass which rises somewhat abruptly out of the broken slopes below, three peaks are seen. The left or southern stands out in bold relief, while behind it, farther to the west, or more accurately to the north-west, is seen the highest or middle peak. It projects somewhat sharply upwards, and ter-

minates in a summit which vaguely suggests to the imaginative mind a chimney-can. To the right appears the northern summit, which, like the southern, presents a bold projecting mass of rock.

The climb, of which the foregoing sketch is preliminary and explanatory, consisted in taking the so-called "sky line"—that is, traversing the apparent ridge which is seen in viewing the top of the mountain in its entire extent when approaching it from the east.

A start, therefore, was made, as already stated, from the base of the southern peak,—that is, from the base of its eastern face, as approached from the slopes leading from Loch Long. There was nothing of any moment in this part of the ascent; with proper precaution exercised in the use of rope and axe, the somewhat treacherous slipperiness of the rocks was safely manœuvred. The flat top reached, the descent was made directly down the west face. The first step in the descent was not an inviting one. To lean on your stomach and gingerly dangle one leg into space, till by a slow wriggling process you had lowered yourself sufficiently to touch and stand upon the knife-edge of a piece of rock below, was to say the least of it not a very elegant procedure, and by no means an easy one for the unfortunate youth who had become painfully conscious of the rotund effects of some forty summers or more. Albeit, the "*mauvais pas*" was successfully negotiated, and all went well for a few feet, when another obstacle presented itself. Here the difficulty consisted in circumventing a projecting piece of rock which formed the wall to a ledge, itself coated with ice. It was universally voted the nicest bit of the climb. Neither hand hold nor foot hold could be called just convenient, but with the aid of the axe and well-managed ropes the *tour de force* was quite safely and successfully accomplished. Twenty feet occupied a little over an hour, and but for the process being rather a chilly one, it had all the elements of a good piece of rock work. No further difficulty was encountered in the remaining part of this descent.

The "col" which runs between the south peak and the middle peak passes in a direction about north-west. It

was traversed in a few minutes when the base of the eastern face of the latter was reached. Under ordinary circumstances it is a comparatively easy ascent. The ice-covered condition of the rocks, however, gave the climb a distinct piquancy, and made the rope a real need when it might under other conditions have only been deemed expedient. The summit of this peak is the highest point of the mountain (2,891 feet). It is flat, and only large enough to admit of some ten or twelve people upon it. To descend, the steps of the ascent must be retraced for a few feet, and then a sharp turn to the right leads down through a sort of door or window to easy ground below. This passage has been formed by the peculiar disposition of the broken rock, which has so fallen away and become jammed as to leave this convenient outlet.

The connecting ridge between the main or middle peak and the northern peak was traversed in about ten minutes, and then a slightly rugged ascent led to the summit of the latter. The striking feature of this north peak is its enormous rocky buttress, which projects north-eastwards considerably beyond the perpendicular. From this point of view imagination would accord it much more the semblance of a massive bill or beak than a cobbler. The southern sides of the peak also present sheer precipices, absolutely perpendicular, and quite defiant of any access. The descent of the northern face of this peak is merely over huge broken masses of rock, which on this particular day were rendered interesting from the great quantity of ice present everywhere.

In concluding this brief notice of Ben Arthur, I should refer to two other contributions on the same mountain which have appeared in the pages of the *Journal*. The first is by Mr Gilbert Thomson,\* who climbed the three peaks in the month of October, taking a somewhat similar course to that here described. The rocks, however, from the absence of frost, appeared in a much easier condition than on the present occasion. Mr Naismith† gives a note on the Cobbler in the last number of the *Journal*, and embellishes

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\* Vol. I., page 64.

† Vol. III., page 161.

his text by an admirable little sketch which I quite envy as illustrative of my own remarks. These two papers, with my own, I hope will serve to awaken and maintain an interest in a mountain well worthy of all the attention the climber might devote to it, either by a visit or with his pen.

## THE ISLAND OF RUM.

BY JOHN B. PETTIGREW.

IN June last, by the courtesy of the representatives of the proprietor, I was able to realise a desire to spend a few days in the island of Rum. Mr Munro's excellent article in No. 6 of the *Club Journal* had increased the interest which a view of the bold peaks of the island obtained during a previous journey to Skye had aroused, and closer acquaintanceship did not prove in any way disappointing. The weather, unfortunately, was not good, and practically cut down my available time by one-half, leaving then but two days and part of a third fit for climbing or photography, the two chief objects of my visit. The topographical portions of the article alluded to leave little to be added save by way of supplementary detail.

There is now, during the summer months at any rate, regular mail communication with the island, M'Brayne's steamers to the Western Isles calling at Loch Scresort three times weekly on the outward journey from Oban and twice on the inward journey. As, however, the entire island is private property and is devoted chiefly to game, visitors are only allowed to remain on it by permission. Apart from the lodges, which are only in use during the shooting season, there is no accommodation elsewhere than at Kinloch, at the head of Loch Scresort. Here I found comfortable quarters with Mr M'Kay, who has in his charge the stock, some three thousand sheep and a herd of Highland cattle. There are shepherds' cottages at Kilmory, Guiridil, Harris, and Dibidil, but these can hardly be reckoned upon for anything more than a night's shelter at a pinch.

The extreme ruggedness of the island is very striking, and the impression of this which is produced by a distant view from the sea is intensified when one is actually on the spot. With the exception of a miniature strath at Kilmory, it would be difficult to find anywhere half-a-dozen acres of level ground. A narrow trough runs across the northern third of the island from Loch Scresort to the western coast, containing Kinloch Glen on the east and Glen Seiliseir on

the west, these two being bisected on the north by Kilmory Glen, the upper end merging in a shallow depression occupying the middle of the island, the drainage of which is distributed to all the four points of the compass. Glen Harris, opening out upon a pretty little bay on the south-west, completes the division of the island into four unequal parts; and of these the largest, and in every way the most interesting, is the south-eastern. The coast-line all around consists of dark cliffs, usually running sheer down to the sea, and the hills rise directly from them. The 1,000 feet contour line is thus often within half-a-mile of the sea, whilst the 500 feet line is rarely found a mile inland—excepting, of course, where the land falls away again into the glens. The highest peak, Askival (2,659 feet), is a little over  $1\frac{1}{4}$  mile (map measurement) inland; Sgurr nan Gillean (2,503 feet), less than one mile; Ruinsival (1,607 feet), about half-a-mile. One peak in the extreme west, Creag nan Stardean (1,273 feet), is within a quarter of a mile of the waves which wash its base. The hills forming the south-eastern group are in every way the most inviting to the mountaineer, as might be expected from their formation, which is similar to that of the Black Cuillins of Skye, viz., gabbro. They enclose some remarkably wild corries, and all afford good rock-climbing, much of it of a sufficiently difficult character. Six of the seven peaks might be taken seriatim without its being necessary to drop below the 1,500 feet line, and the neck leading to the seventh, Ruinsival, is but 200 feet or less lower. Generally speaking the upper thousand feet is bare rock, weathered in places into sheer crags and splintered ridges, almost everywhere riven and shattered in the mass but firm enough in detail, so affording good foot and hand hold. The southern slopes of Sgurr nan Gillean, Ashval, and Ruinsival, however, offer a complete contrast to these conditions, being smooth and grassy right up to the summit ridge. On the north they are sufficiently broken and rocky.

Askival, as it is the highest, is also undoubtedly the finest of the hills of Rum. It is a true peak, presenting a pointed summit mass from whatever position it is regarded. The ridges leading up to the summit are particularly inter-



esting. The weather, unfortunately, only allowed me an ascent by the northern one. On the afternoon of 22nd June a sudden clearing after the heavy rain, which had been falling persistently since the previous day, seemed to promise better things; and I started off, accompanied by John Ashworth, the Lancashire keeper referred to by Mr Munro, who proved a very useful and agreeable companion and guide. He on his part was naturally well enough pleased to meet some one hailing from his own countryside.

Taking for a mile or more the rough bridle-path leading from Kinloch to Glen Dibidil, we struck off to the right towards Allival and across one or two of the eastern spurs of the hill to the northern verge of Coire nan Grunnd, a wild desolate hollow with an equally grim-looking tarn in its midst. By skirting the corrie across the slope of Allival we made an easy though steep ascent to the bealach between that hill and Askival, the clouds meanwhile rising gradually from the tops beyond. Some time was lost in taking photographs and waiting for a possible clearance, which however did not arrive; so leaving the camera, we pushed on and soon reached the summit of Askival. The bealach is just above the 2,000 feet line, and the ridge rises gradually for some 300 yards, this portion being grass covered—the narrowest grass ridge and with the steepest sides I have yet seen. Beyond this the slope steepens sharply along a fine jagged rocky crest, with a transverse cleavage which breaks it up into numerous small clefts and pinnacles, the western side falling away for the most part vertically, and therefore offering no traverses, the eastern extremity steep but much broken up by the cleavage referred to. We kept along the latter just under the crest on the way up, touching it here and there, and in descending kept upon it all the way down to a point above the gendarme mentioned by Mr Munro. With a rope this would also have been passable; as it was, we took a gully to the right and so turned it. We had throughout good hand and foot climbing.

The summit area of Askival is a very small one. It is strewn with blocks, and has a decidedly shattered, battered appearance. The mist all the time clung obstinately to the upper part of the hill, and we had no views. Ashworth

having decided against attempting in the mist either the eastern or southern ridges, we descended, as I have said, to the bealach and thence passed over Allival. This hill differs considerably in its surface arrangement from Askival, as also in the absence of any definite ridges. It is not so much of a peak, and the upper slopes are broken up into a litter of huge, generally rectangular blocks, which are scattered about in the most promiscuous manner. Some capital climbing is to be had amongst these. We descended in a north-westerly direction to the end of a curious semi-circular hollow, called locally the Long Corrie, which seems to embrace two sides of the hill, and on the south merges in the upper part of Coire nan Grund. I have seen nothing which impresses one with such a sense of desolation as this little corrie. There is only the merest trace of vegetation, the surface consisting of bosses and hillocks of grey ice-worn rock rising from a shallow bed of peaty soil in which lie a few dark pools, with the grim shapeless mass of Allival overhanging all. From this point we made a bee-line to Kinloch, a rough but probably the most expeditious route to take for either the ascent or descent of the hill.

The eastern ridge of Askival is apparently quite as rugged as the northern one, and is said by the Kinloch people to be at one point quite impracticable. This is probably the case, as the outcrop of two parallel strata (composed of a rock harder than that of the main mass), which run right across the eastern face of both Allival and Askival, forms two vertical if not overhanging drops, which from a distance look particularly bad. The ridge runs down to the base of a remarkable flat-topped buttress which is a striking feature of the eastern side of the hill. This resembles a huge wedge, with its base set into the side of the hill and the apex pointing seaward, the two converging sides presenting long rocky walls sufficiently inaccessible on the south-east to be selected by the golden eagle for its resting-place. As the island is approached from the Sound of Eigg, the south-eastern wall is seen against the sky projecting slantwise across the face of Askival to the right of a conical hill, Bheinn nan Stac. It

then looks like a ridgeline or arête, but is in reality a long scarp. This scarp is well shown in the illustration.

The southern and western ridges of Askival, as Mr Munro points out, are, compared with the others, tamer and less interesting. The latter is, indeed, rather a shoulder than an arête. The entire western side of the hill sweeps down into the upper part of Harris Glen in a fine steep slope, strewn with the *débris* of the crags which line the crest above, and seamed with watercourses.

Sgurr nan Gillean and Ashval, although presumably of the same geological formation as the rest of the group, are very different in their character. I have already referred to the tameness of their southern slopes. On the north and east, however, they are rocky, and in places precipitous, and enclose several considerable corries. The largest and wildest of these lies under the summit of Sgurr nan Gillean, and has a north-eastern aspect. I climbed into this with the keeper, and found it an easy but interesting way up the ridge to the west of the summit. The upper south-eastern portion of the corrie is bounded by perpendicular crags, seamed with gullies. These lie directly under the summit cairn and within a few yards of it, and it would be necessary to approach them with considerable care from the top especially in a mist.

Sgurr nan Gillean is connected with Ashval by a long, flat, mossy ridge, with a depression of not more than 100 or 150 feet, another similar ridge going off at right angles to the west to Ruinsival. From Ashval two or three rocky spurs with sharp ridges go down into Glen Dibidil, and one good arête connects with the Bealach an Fhuarain between Ashval and Trallval. The upper portion of this is exceptional in being composed of very rotten rock, and as it is very narrow, with steep sides, great care would be required in traversing it. The keeper had already had an awkward experience on it and would have no more of it, so we kept under it for some distance until it broke off, and thence descended over steep rocks with some awkward smooth slopes to the Bealach, avoiding an apparently impossible drop at the very end of the ridge by going down a gully on the western side.

We had seen nothing from the top, being in dense mist, but from the Bealach we were fortunate in having clear views both eastward and westward; the former, extending as it did right down Glen Dibidil, with Eigg in the middle distance and the mainland beyond, being something to remember.

Skirting the base of Trallval across the head of Glen Dibidil, we next crossed the Bealach an Oir (between Trallval and Askival), and then kept on a very level line under Askival, round the head of Harris Glen, to the Barkival Bealach. The three cols we had thus traversed are all practically on a level of about 1,500 feet—a rather curious coincidence.

My intention was to have taken Trallval, Askival again, and Barkival on the round, but the time occupied in photographing, sometimes with long waits when the mist on a particular peak looked like lifting for a moment, did not allow of this being done. The climber indeed who carries a stand camera with him must be content with doing about half what he may be accustomed to when unencumbered. We reached Kinloch at 10.30 P.M. as it was.

On the following day heavy mists lay on hill and glen alike; and when I left the island the day after I could see nothing of it but a low line of cliffs, everything above being completely blotted out. After that there was a long space of fine clear weather!!

A friend has since remarked to me that it was a *rum* sort of a holiday for a man to take. I replied that it was certainly very much so, but a remarkably enjoyable one, and one to be repeated at the first recurring opportunity.

BIDEIN DRUIM-NAN-RAMH, BY THE  
DRUIM-NAN-RAMH RIDGE.

BY WILLIAM TOUGH.

NOTWITHSTANDING its name, Bidein Druim-nan-Ramh is by no means a giant among mountains. Insignificant in bulk, and attaining, according to Dr Collie's valuable table of heights, an altitude of only 2860 feet, it would seem at first sight to be deficient in the very commonest attributes of dignity. But, fortunately, mere size is not the only—nor even the chief—factor to be considered in determining the merit of a mountain. It is what may be termed its sporting capabilities that count, and it is the extent of these which forms the true test of rank. In this respect Bidein greatly excels some of its much loftier neighbours, an advantage due in no small degree to its remarkable situation. Raising its triple summit sheer from the main ridge or backbone of the Coolins, just at the junction of the latter with the two lofty secondary ridges which approach it at right angles on either side, it forms the centre and culminating point of a great elevated cross whose edges fall precipitously to the corries at its foot. This unique and comparatively inaccessible position permits to the climber an unusual choice in his line of attack, and is at the same time prohibitive of a too intrusive familiarity. Of all the numerous ways by which the top of Bidein may be reached not one can fairly be described as a "tourist route." It may be that in course of time Bruach na Frithe and Sgurr Dearg will have to submit to the profaning presence of the sardine-box and broken-bottle. Bidein, I think, is secure against any such humiliation.

It seems probable that Bidein can be reached directly, or nearly so, from all the four corries at its base. I can however speak with authority of only one, Coir' a' Mhadaidh, which leads right up to the cleft between its first and second peaks. Brown and I, in making a descent from this cleft, found the rocks in the gully extremely loose and rotten. They went thundering down on the

slightest provocation ; and, to avoid being carried with them, we had to begin operations by making a drop from an overhanging rock on the left. Even then our difficulties were not over ; and altogether, my experience of the corries would lead me to counsel their avoidance as much as possible. Their passage, besides being extremely fatiguing, is generally wanting in interest.

The ascent of Bidein is usually made either by the ridge leading to it from the summit of Bruach na Frithe, or by that passing over the tops of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh in the opposite direction. Neither of these routes offers any particular difficulty, while both afford scope for some very interesting work. A third ridge route, that by Druim-nan-Ramh, which stretches south-east from the base of Bidein and forms the wall of separation between Coruisk and Harta Corries, deserves fuller mention here, owing to the neglect with which it has been treated hitherto by climbers.

Unfortunately the weather in Skye during the earlier part of August, when I went over this route, was almost as unfavourable for climbing as could be imagined. Owing to the prevalence of a dense mist the greater part of the excursion was performed under conditions which deprived it of much of its interest and value, nothing being visible at a distance of more than a few yards. The morning, indeed, had opened well, and as Murdoch Mackenzie and I walked up Glen Sligachan we rejoiced in the first gleam of sunshine we had seen for more than a week. Our hopes of a brilliant day were high, and—they were blasted.

After entering Harta corrie, we kept to the low ground until opposite the entrance of Lota corrie ; then holding obliquely upwards, by easy ascent reached the crest of Druim-nan-Ramh at the precise point where it begins to assume the general characteristics of a Coolin ridge. Below this point it is broad and grassy, and as level almost as a carriage-drive. Above it smooth slabs of rock at once begin to show themselves. These soon become sharper and more rugged, begin to ascend more rapidly, and finally rise into pinnacles as the ridge approaches the base of Bidein.

A few moments were granted us after topping the ridge

in which to enjoy one of those glorious views which Skye alone can offer. Of all the black peaks ranged around us, Sgurr-na-Gillean and Sgurr Dearg alone sulked invisible. All else was bathed in sunshine, even the mountains of the mainland standing out in marvellous purity of outline. Then all at once the weather broke. With a rapidity that was almost startling the mist descended. In a few minutes not a mountain was to be seen, and the rest of our day was spent in the clouds.

A detailed description of Druim-nan-Ramh is to readers of this *Journal* quite unnecessary. It is enough to say that it has all the usual features of the ordinary Coolin ridge. While not fulfilling all the requirements of a model highway, it is quite passable, the rough rock affording, as usual, ample and excellent holds both for hand and foot. There are two places, however, which may be indicated as requiring a little more than the ordinary care. A glance at the 6 in. map of the O.S. will show that the ridge at two points is split across its entire breadth by enormous clefts. The descent to the bottom of these clefts is in each case nearly perpendicular, but, although forming the only "*mauvais pas*" in the whole route, appear rather worse than they really are. Moreover, the first of the clefts, which I think is also the more difficult to descend, can be avoided by keeping well down on the Coruisk side of the ridge. The other, which is close up to the base of Bidein, cannot be so easily circumvented. At least such is my impression, but it was not easy to make absolutely sure in the thick mist which prevailed.

Once past the second cleft the rest is easy. The great black precipice which forms part of the south-east base of Bidein, and which seems utterly unscalable by any orthodox means, fortunately does not bar the way. An easy scramble over excellent rock leads straight up to a broad ledge running round the base of the final peak, on the left hand side, and terminating almost above the cleft I have already mentioned as affording access to Coir' a' Mhadaidh. From this point a kind of chimney leads straight to the top of Bidein, which can now be attained without further trouble.

Our descent by the ridge leading over Sgurr Mhadaidh

was not without its difficulties. To one who has only traversed those ridges in good weather it may seem almost impossible to go astray on them. This is far from being the case, however. On this occasion we made an involuntary excursion along the nameless ridge between Coir' a' Mhadaidh and Tairneilear, before Murdoch found out our mistake ; and indeed, until well down into Corrie na Creiche, we experienced not a few of the hardships incidental to walking by faith rather than by sight.

We got home soaked to the skin, after being out about eight hours altogether. This time could, of course, be much shortened under favourable weather conditions. We were provided with a rope but did not use it.



## CHALK CLIMBING ON BEACHY HEAD.

BY E. A. CROWLEY.

TO the patriotic Scot who regards John o' Groats as not far removed from the centre of things, Beachy Head will appear a very outlandish spot to treat of in the pages of the *Journal*. Without incurring, therefore, the reproach that *qui s'excuse s'accuse*, it may be pleaded in justification of this article that the true mountaineer has no domicile ; that the chalk of Beachy Head, though some would call it limited in quantity and insignificant in height, will be found to present problems as interesting in their way as any to be found in this country ; and that, in spite of its proximity to London, the excellent climbing to be had on this remarkable promontory is almost unknown even to English climbers, and has hitherto been practised, with the assistance of the coast-guard, by the Cockney trippers, whose perils during the summer months form a periodic sensation for the local newspapers.

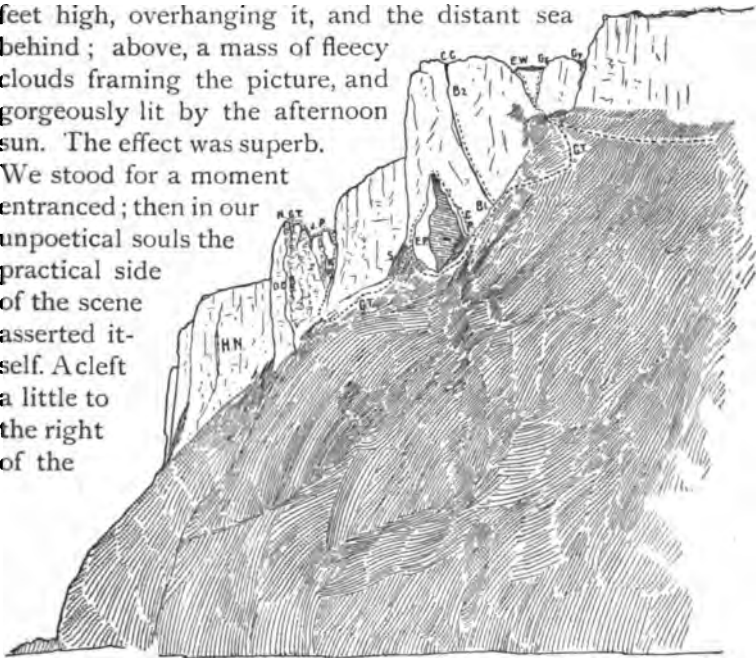
My first visit to the Head took place on the 4th of April in the year of grace 1894, in company with a friend who considers climbing for climbing's sake as stupid, if not actually sinful. Our object was general exploration, and the part we first hit on was the upper portion of the cliff lying between Monkey island and the Devil's Chimney [D.C.], and to this portion we have since kept. Small as it is, we have not yet exhausted it by one-half. Going down by Monkey Island,\* we reached a broad, steep, half-grassy ledge called the Grass Traverse [G.T.]. This runs along to the Devil's Chimney, and its upper limit is the vertical cliff. Broad tongues of rotten grass shoot up from the traverse, and the crags above it correspondingly vary in height from 20 to 200 feet. We passed along this in a westerly direction, and noted the following points of interest in the cliff above. Firstly, a round-topped oblong pillar, which we climbed by the E.

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\* I have made countless vain endeavours to discover what Monkey Island may be. Its position is, however, some distance east of Etheldreda's pinnacle.

and N. Future visitors are recommended to try it by the S. ridge, which would afford a magnificent climb. Secondly, a good many rather shallow gullies. Thirdly, an easy way to the top [E.W.], curtained on its S.W. by a huge buttress of rock. We ran up a grassy slope which hid the lower portion of this formidable obstacle, and a fine sight burst upon our astonished eyes. Behold the entire mass of Etheldreda's pinnacle [E.P.], with the cliff, here fissured with the magnificent "Cuillin crack" [C.C.], some 200 feet high, overhanging it, and the distant sea behind; above, a mass of fleecy clouds framing the picture, and gorgeously lit by the afternoon sun. The effect was superb.

We stood for a moment entranced; then in our unpoetical souls the practical side of the scene asserted itself. A cleft a little to the right of the



#### BEACHY HEAD FROM THE SEA.

*The slope below the cliff, although shaded dark in this diagram, is composed of dazzlingly white chalk, and is only here and there patched with rotten grass.*

B. 1 & 2. Breaks.	D.C. Devil's Chimney.	J. Jordan.
C.C. Cuillin crack.	E.W. Etheldreda's walk.	N. Needle.
C.P. Castor and Pollux chimneys.	G. Gash.	P. Pisgah.
E.P. Etheldreda's pinnacle.	Gy. Gullies.	R.P. Route to Pisgah.
	G.T. Grass Traverse.	S. Scree.
	H.N. Hornet's Nest.	T. Tooth.

"Cuillin crack" attracted our notice, affording a walk to the top [E.W.]. This cleft forms the top of "Etheldreda's walk," so called, I believe, after a lady who never walked

there. It extends downwards and round Etheldreda's pinnacle to the foot of Grant's Chimney.

Directly I saw this magnificent pyramid I determined to climb it at once. Two chimneys, side by side, and since named Castor and Pollux [C. & P.], presented the most obvious route to the ridge joining the pinnacle with the mass of the cliff. The north one (Castor) looked easy, and so I determined to try it. The chimney was not then the well-marked gap shown in the illustration, but was almost entirely filled with chalk dust of the consistency of fine flour, caked on the top, and having blocks of various sizes in the middle. All this, at the touch, came down, and the whole weight jammed on my legs, which were well into the chimney. A convulsive series of amoeboid movements enabled me to get out over the *débris*, when it immediately thundered down, leaving me in a very comfortable gap. I was soon over the jammed stone and on to the ridge. My friend refused to follow, but as he was roped I put on sudden pressure, and he—well—changed his mind. When he reached the ridge I went on for the N. face. This has several natural steps, but the first two yards required a few gentle touches with the magic wand, the chalk being very hard. Thence the route lay westward to the N.W. corner and then back again to the shoulder, only one step being at all awkward. The whole climb, however, requires a method of climbing which may be described as a chemical combination of the writhe, the squirm, and the slither. This indeed applies to all difficult chalk. The rate of motion should never exceed that of a glacier or a South-Eastern express, and a spring or a jerk, it should always be remembered, means a fall. The summit consists of a big square block, which rocked and swayed under me as I sat down upon it. The return to the ridge was soon accomplished, and I then lowered my friend, and tried to swarm down myself, an operation rendered aggravating by the generous but ill-timed hospitality of the numerous projecting flints.

On July 4th we made an attack on the Devil's Chimney, a magnificent pillar of rock which projects boldly from the main cliff at a point rather to the W. of Etheldreda's



*Pollux.*

*Castor.*

**ETHELDREDA'S PINNACLE, BEACHY HEAD.**

*G. Grant's Chimney.*



pinnacle. "Devil's Chimney" is a local name, and, as far as "chimney" goes, misleading to climbers. Nobody, however, who has been twice on the summit, as I have, will entertain the smallest doubt as to its ownership. We walked along the top of the cliffs till we reached the descent to Pisgah, on which my friend fixed himself, while I descended the rotten ridge that leads to Jordan. Above and beyond rises Few-chimney, perhaps 20 feet high, affording what seemed the only possible access to the Tooth. By dint of much squirming, and the judicious use of such pressure holds as were available, I succeeded in reaching the top, to find myself on the top of the block forming the eastern wall of the chimney, while the summit of the Tooth still towered above me in all its rottenness. Both the N. and the E. faces were coated with loose layers of chalk, which came away with a single touch, but the E. had the advantage of being less vertical. After much belabouring of it with my axe I succeeded in reducing it to a condition of comparative stability, and by dint of a few steps and hitching the rope over the top managed to struggle to the summit. The laborious nature of the climbing is evidenced by the fact that two hours and more were required to overcome a vertical height of only thirty feet. After carefully reconnoitring the Needle, which lay beyond, and pronouncing it impossible, I rejoined my friend on Pisgah.

On July 11th I went out to reconnoitre for new climbs, as my cousin, Mr Gregor Grant, intended coming down in the ensuing week to join me. I went down Etheldreda's walk, discovered Grant's Chimney, and proceeded westward till brought up by the tremendous wall of the Devil's Chimney towering some 200 feet above. But the cliff, to my sanguine spirit, seemed practicable, either on the face of the chimney, leading up to the Gash, or on the cliff proper on the right, which would bring me, as I then thought, to Jordan [J]. I now proposed to make the attempt by the latter route. The first obstacle was a smooth hard chalk slope, which needed steps. Once up this the way was easier, but very winding and varied, till a large but unsafe ledge was reached, with a nasty wall rising above

and forming the lower part of a knee-shaped buttress, since called the Knee. The chalk here was very rotten, and the flank of the buttress, where the route lay, exceedingly exposed. The difficulties of the way were somehow mastered, and I found myself on another ledge some 50 feet below Pisgah [P]. A very nasty rotten cirque was above me, but, being fairly firm, I could hack away till some moderate hold was obtained. The ascent of this little steep bit brings one under the vertical or undercut cliff. There is here a colossal buttress some 40 feet high, which will probably come down on the next few parties if they hack away too much. A sharp turn to the left brought me to a nice little scree-shoot leading up to Pisgah, and when I flung myself down on its grassy summit I felt exceedingly comforted. The Knee may probably be avoided by a traverse to the left, and the climb will then lead to Jordan; but I have some doubt whether the attempt would not lead one, out of the frying-pan, indeed—but into the fire.

On July 13th, Grant having arrived, we made another attempt upon Etheldreda's pinnacle, and climbed it by a difficult chimney on the opposite side of the cleft from Castor and Pollux. This chimney is 50 feet high, is shaped like a bow, with the concavity facing outwards, and is closed towards the middle by several large jammed stones. The angle above these is not so severe, and another block forms a fine natural arch. Grant took the lead, and, after some arduous climbing, which involved a good deal of "going outside" at the jammed stones, emerged victorious on the top. From this *col* my previous route was followed to the top of the pinnacle, and in descending we made a new variation by way of the Pollux chimney.

After lunch at the Beachy Head Hotel, we followed the usual high-level route to Pisgah, and then proceeded to do the Tooth as before, of course in much less time than on the first ascent. On this Grant "fixed himself"—a humorous term we sometimes employ—and I went down the ridge into the Gash, "fixed myself," and began my steps. The chalk is much firmer than on the Tooth, but



THE DEVIL'S CHIMNEY, BEACHY HEAD.

*P. Pisgah. J. Jordan. F. Few-chimney. T. Tooth. G. Gash. N. Needle.*





the N. face is, if not undercut, at least vertical, the W. overhangs, and the E. is about  $70^{\circ}$  if not more. On the N.E. corner, therefore, three steps were cut, going as high as possible to save subsequent work. Five times I tried to cross the Gash, but with no decent handhold it is hardly to be expected that one can pull one's self up to a vertical wall. One chance, however, remained. I scooped a hole out in the E. face, inserted my chin, and hauled. I had not shaved for a day or two, so was practically enjoying the advantages of Mummery spikes! The extra steadiness proved sufficient, and I came up into a position of the most ticklish balance conceivable, but the next step was easier, and from it I managed to hitch the rope well over. Soon I was able to get my hands on the ridge; my right leg followed, then the rest of my body, and the Needle was conquered. However, as it is not "built for two," Grant, much to his disappointment, had to stay on the Tooth, and console himself by hoisting the Union Jack, which we left to wave triumphantly over the scene of our victory. For the photographs which illustrate these two climbs I have to thank Mr Sidney Gibbs, who dared the most awful perils in his attempts to depict us.

Later on in the season I returned to Eastbourne with Grant, and prepared for another climb. On October 1st, after Grant had achieved a splendid variation of my climb of the cliff to Pisgah by turning to the right at the cirque instead of the left, and reaching the top by a chimney between the "Split block" and main cliff, we made an unsuccessful attempt upon the "Cuillin crack." This chimney is nearly 200 feet high, and affords the finest and most difficult piece of climbing that I have yet found in the whole neighbourhood. It is broken at two places, one near the bottom, and the other about 100 feet higher up. The first break presents terrible difficulty, but after incredible exertion it yielded, and then I got a leg and an arm jammed, and managed to wriggle up about 60 feet higher. At this point the rope and my strength were alike exhausted, some four hours, without any sort of rest, having already passed. Foothold and handhold there were none

that could be relied upon to support Grant's additional weight, if any pressure were to be put on the rope. There was nothing for it but to let down a rope from above, or to descend with ignominy and much toil. So Grant sped away to invoke the assistance of the coastguard, and meanwhile I sat wedged in a most uncomfortable position, at the bottom of the second break, up to which I had struggled while waiting Grant's return. Presently a rope was let down from above, so that by tying my own length of sixty feet to it I could scramble to the top, climbing for the most part, but receiving now and then aid that was more "moral" than any description of it as such. Whoever first climbs the "Cuillin crack" will have no reason to be displeased with his trophy, and will be able to reflect with satisfaction that the superior character of the chalk renders this climb more justifiable than a great many others.

To sum up, climbing on Beachy Head has a place of its own among the fine arts. But let no devotee seek to penetrate the shrine of this spotless deity when she forbids—I mean on wet and windy days. On the former, the soddened chalk is slippery and dangerous, and too unpleasant in fact to be indulged in by the most enthusiastic. Dry windy days, on the other hand, when chalk particles, varying from fine dust to large nuggets, are being driven about, are fatal to the eyes, which may be bloodshot and sore for days afterwards. In external appearance, also, the worshipper must face the infidel fashion of Eastbourne, and be scorned for a miller or a baker; but then, these are small drawbacks to the glorious sensations that await him who is careless of mockers. But the mighty goddess reserves a terrible doom for the profane who would impiously violate her sanctuaries; he will be a foolish man who treats her otherwise than with reverence and respect. Go then, with true worship, undaunted, and your reward shall be joy unspeakable in the glorious divinity of sun-glistening altitude and towering whiteness.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

## TARBET MEET—NEW YEAR 1895.

AVAILING ourselves of the facilities afforded by the opening of the West Highland Railway, Tarbet Hotel, Loch Lomond, was selected for our New Year Meet this winter. There, in full view of Ben Lomond, which towered in white on the other side of the loch, our party assembled to the number of twelve, consisting of Boyd, Douglas, Maclay, A. E. Maylard, Naismith, Parker, Rennie, A. E. Robertson, Rose, and G. Thomson, members; and Jas. W. Drummond and Alex. Taylor, guests. The peaks principally attacked were the Arrochar group of hills, consisting of Ben Ime (3,318 feet), Ben Vane (3,004 feet), Ben Vorlich (3,092 feet), Ben Arthur, familiarly known as the Cobbler (2,891 feet), and Narnain (3,036 feet). Of these the Cobbler gave the most "sport." On the last day a party went further afield and scaled Chabhair (3,053 feet).

As happened last Easter, the weather seemed to be specially arranged for the Meet. For weeks prior to Christmas it had been close and moist. This continued up till Friday, 28th December; that night the rain changed to snow, and next morning the hills had a coating of soft snow, which was drifting heavily. Saturday was still stormy; but the morning of Sunday the 30th found the roads iron-bound with frost, and bright frosty weather continued till the afternoon of 1st January, when mist came down, and next day the weather again broke.

Friday night saw the first arrival at Tarbet, and Saturday morning added two more; and on that day Parker, Robertson, and Taylor ascended Narnain. The weather was stormy, with showers of rain and sleet alternately, and the snow that had fallen was being driven about in blinding showers of drift. Starting from Sugach farm, at the upper end of Loch Long, they climbed straight up by the S.E. shoulder facing Arrochar, from the top of which they followed the crest of the hill to the summit. The ascent occupied three hours, the latter part being very laborious owing to high wind. The mist lifted whilst the party were

on the summit, and they were rewarded by a view. The descent was by the Allt Sugach, and they reached the hotel again about 4 P.M.

On Sunday, Douglas, Parker, and Rennie ascended the Cobbler by the ordinary route. The day was fine, but owing to a high wind still blowing no difficulties were attempted. After lunching on the Cobbler, Ben Ime was ascended, and the party returned to Arrochar by the Allt à Bhalachain.

Monday saw the Meet in full swing. One party, consisting of Parker, Rennie, Robertson, and Taylor, taking the early train to Ardlui, ascended Ben Vorlich by the N.E. corrie. No particular difficulty was met with, but there was a great deal of ice on the rocks, which made the axe serviceable. Starting about 10 A.M. from Ardlui, three hours brought the party to the north top (3,055 feet). A quarter of an hour thence sufficed to reach the highest point (3,092 feet), the dip being only about 100 feet; thence the main ridge was followed to the south top (2,465 feet); thence a steep descent was made to Inveruglas farm, which was reached about 3 P.M., and another hour brought the party to the hotel. From the higher parts magnificent views were obtained, ranging from Ailsa Craig and Arran on the south, to Bidean nam Bian on the north, and east to the Ochils; Cruachan and the whole Black Mount range were well seen, and the Clyde direction was beautifully clear.

Another party, consisting of Boyd, Douglas, and Maclay, with two friends met on the way, ascended the Cobbler. Starting about 9.15 A.M., and taking the usual route right to the foot of the central peak, they then traversed to the right, below the N.E. top, and as soon as the rocks became scalable ascended the N.E. end straight to the top, with some scrambling but no difficulty. Hence the ridge was traversed, crossing the central peak to the S.W. peak or pinnacle, which was ascended from the N.E. side by a steep and narrow grass slope, which, quite easy in summer, now proved a difficulty owing to the snow all glazed and the turf frozen hard. The descent required considerable care, and occupied about an hour. A

descent was made by the same way, occupying somewhat less time. From this point the party returned to the hotel, enjoying some glissading *en route*, and arrived about 5.45 P.M.

On Tuesday, 1st January, another visit was paid to the Cobbler by a party of six, consisting of Maylard, Naismith, Robertson, Rose, Thomson, and Drummond. Starting a little after 9 A.M., they walked round the head of Loch Long to half-a-mile beyond Sugach farm. Thence they sloped up the hillside, and crossing the Allt à Bhalachain got upon the eastern ridge, where the snow was found less thick than in the valley.

After lunching at the foot of the S.W. peak, they roped in two parties and ascended it from the S.W. side. The peak on this side is chiefly grass, which was very slippery; but the climb is divided into sections by projecting rocks, &c., so that some one could always be anchored. Having crossed the top, they descended by the same, or nearly the same, route as that taken the previous day, without the advantage of having first ascended by it, and the traces of the previous party having been obliterated. The descent occupied quite an hour.

From the col they kept the crest of the ridge to the central peak, which just at the summit gave a short but steep rock scramble, at one point of which, about twenty feet below the summit, some care is called for. After visiting the N.E. peak, they descended its steepish N.E. end; and after some "larks" in two snow-filled chimneys, and various experiments in step-cutting on a rock covered with thick ice, they made their way down the glen to the road, and reached the hotel about 5 P.M.

Three other parties not belonging to the Club (six persons in all) ascended the Cobbler the same day.

Another party, consisting of Boyd, Maclay, Parker, and Taylor, ascended Ben Vane and Ben Ime the same day. Leaving the hotel shortly after 9 A.M., Inveruglas farm was reached in an hour. Thence, bearing to the right round the N.E. side of Ben Vane, they gradually ascended, keeping first by a burn running into Allt Coiregroggain, and afterwards by a steep one running into the Inveruglas Water.

The snow was here found drifted more deeply than anywhere else during the meet. The slope of the latter burn was very steep, and steps had occasionally to be cut in ice. After ascending it some distance, the party turned towards the hill and ascended directly towards the summit. Once clear of the glen the slope eased somewhat. Then a small gully with a frozen water-course was ascended, and thereafter, working their way round the rocky hillsides, the top (3,004 feet) was reached at 1 P.M. After a stoppage for lunch, during which the mist began to touch the hill-tops, they started to descend to the bealach at Lag Uaine (between 1,600 and 1,700 feet), and thence, taking the side of Ben Ime, they ascended straight for the N.E. corrie. The ascent of the corrie was steep and toilsome, the ground being as hard as iron and the stones ice covered. The summit (3,318 feet) was reached amid thick mist about 3 P.M. After a short pause a descent was made towards Arrochar. Owing to the mist considerable care was needed to avoid missing the pass betwixt Narnain and the Cobbler, and map, compass, and aneroid were again and again consulted. At last however the party had the satisfaction of finding the slopes of Narnain rising on their left and the Cobbler looming out on their right, and descending by the usual route they reached the hotel about 6 P.M.

Douglas and Rennie ascended Ben Vane the same day, by the S.E. face from Inveruglas farm, returning the same way.

On Wednesday, 2nd January, Parker, Robertson, Thomson, and Drummond climbed Ben Chabhair. Taking the early train to Ardlui, they walked up Glen Falloch to Beinglas farm, where the river was crossed by a bridge. Setting a course by compass, owing to the mist being low, they climbed Meall Mor Nan Lag (1,902 feet), two miles west of the main peak, the snow being very deep and soft. It had been intended to follow the ridge thence to the top, but this proving very rugged a line of less resistance was sought on the south slope, which was followed till about due north of Lochan an Amhghair, when they again took the ridge, which they followed to the summit (3,053 feet), which was reached about 2 P.M. A steep descent was made

into the corrie drained by the Allt à Chuilinn, the Falloch was crossed by a bridge at Derrydaroch, and a walk of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles brought the party to Crianlarich about 5 P.M., with ample time to get a comfortable meal and catch the evening trains home.

Thus ended a Meet which, though not amid our greatest giants, will be a pleasant memory to all who were at it, for interesting if on the whole not very exciting climbing, bright frosty weather, and beautiful views.



## THE EASTER MEET AT FORT-WILLIAM.

APRIL 11TH—16TH.

AT last the Club has realised its ambition, long deferred during the tardy completion of the West Highland Railway, of holding a Meet at Fort-William, right in the heart of that magnificent region where stands the king of mountains himself. The event had been so long heralded, and so much had been expected of it, that it was not surprising to find the large number of twenty-seven members and guests responding to the Secretary's invitation. From north, south, east, and west they came to take part in what has now come to be regarded as the great carnival of the mountaineering season. From the top of some precipitous Ben, Dr Collie and his companions, who had spent the previous fortnight mountaineering round Corpach, dropped down to meet the goodly company that travelled from Edinburgh and Glasgow by the evening train. Along with them came two other members, who had journeyed by coach from Kingussie, and joined the main contingent at Roy Bridge. Thither also came the President, in full fighting costume, but bringing with him his household gods as a guarantee to the alarmed inhabitants that, in spite of the warlike weapons of himself and his followers, the invasion was of a peaceful character.

On Thursday evening, when this imposing assemblage was ranged round the mahogany at the Alexandra Hotel, it was found to consist of upwards of twenty men. Next day all the trains brought up fresh recruits, which, allowing for those who were compelled to leave, augmented the total to twenty-seven, made up of the following, viz. :—Boyd, Brown, Fraser Campbell, Collie, Douglas, Gunn, Greenhill (guest), Hinxman, Dr Horrocks (guest), Howie, Kellas (guest), Lester, Maclay, A. E. Maylard, M. W. Maylard, Moss, Mott (guest), Munro, Naismith, Parker, A. E. Robertson, R. A. Robertson, W. A. Smith, Squance (guest), Thomson, Tough, and Travers (guest).

Of the merits of Fort-William as a climbing centre, the Meet was little short of a revelation to those of the members—and they formed the majority—who knew them only by

hearsay. A glance at the map is sufficient to show how rich is the field that awaits the climber within easy reach of the hotel door. Besides the big Ben himself, there are two mountains of over 4,000 feet, and more than a dozen others which reach the mystic "Munro" altitude. Small wonder, therefore, that some of the more energetic members, finding themselves in such an Eldorado of mountain riches, should have performed feats of "peak-bagging" unheard of before at a Club Meet. Nor were the Ultramontanes less active in their attack upon rock faces, couloirs, and arêtes. One of the chief objections these indefatigable persons have to the Ordnance Survey is that it was not specially constructed with a view to exhibiting "sporting" bits that will "go." The Ultramontane, therefore, has to find these out for himself; but on the present occasion this task had been considerably simplified by Dr Collie, who has spent several seasons exploring the ridges and corries of this district. Under his guidance and direction, therefore, the Ultramontanes went straight to the best things in the neighbourhood, and great were the feats which they accomplished. The famous Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis was pronounced impossible, being plastered all over with ice and snow, which hung in great white blossoms from the rocks. Several gullies, however, were in a more tractable humour, and up these the axe-men cut staircases with unflagging energy. A new ridge leading to the top of Carn Dearg, and since christened the Castle Ridge, after the huge castellated rock mass which towers over it, was discovered and climbed by three parties, who were unanimous in reporting that, although rather short, it afforded about 1,000 feet of excellent sport. It was reserved, however, for Naismith, Thomson, and Maclay to accomplish the climb of the Meet, by forcing a way up a new ridge on Aonach Beag, which, mildly stated, is not a place for beginners. "The best arête in Scotland," was the verdict of this experienced party when it returned; "beats anything in the Coolins": and as the remark was made with obvious sincerity, some of us felt, almost with sadness, that with the opening up of this new centre Skye's proud pre-eminence might come at last to be seriously threatened.

Other climbs, including those already noted, were as follows :—

Friday, 12th April.—To-day, in thick gloomy weather, a large party drove up Glen Nevis, dividing into two sections at Polldubh, of which one, composed of Munro, Parker, A. E. Robertson, Howie, and Gunn, had a long day's "ridge-wandering" over Sgòr a' Mhaim, Sgòr an Iubhair, Am Bodach, Stob Coire à Chairn, and An Gearanach, the two last-named ascending only Sgòr a' Mhaim. The other division, consisting of R. A. Robertson, Tough, Hinxman, Boyd, and Brown, climbed Càrn Mòr Dearg, and followed the arête to the top of Ben Nevis, where they met Collie, Naismith, Thomson, and Travers, who had made the ascent by the Castle Ridge of Carn Dearg.

In the mist and soft snow an attempt upon the southern slope of the mountain, by the two Maylards, Dr Horrocks, and Squance, terminated late in the afternoon somewhat short of the summit.

Saturday saw most of the Club on the summit of Ben Nevis, where the Observers had a busy time dispensing coffee and other refreshments. A large party, consisting of Douglas, Smith, Horrocks, M. W. Maylard, A. E. Robertson, Parker, Greenhill, and Squance, reached the summit in two divisions by Càrn Mòr Dearg and the arête.

Munro, accompanied by Dr Maylard, Campbell, Lester, and Moss, went up by the northern Carn Dearg, which was ascended about the same time by Tough, Hinxman, and Brown *via* the Castle Ridge. All these parties descended by a series of sitting glissades along the line of the pony track.

Parker, Howie, and Boyd climbed Stob Bàn by the ordinary ridge.

Naismith, Maclay, and Thomson went up Aonach Beag by the north-east ridge, a magnificent climb of over 2,000 feet up a pinnacled arête which for a great part of its length is a true razor-edge.

On Sunday, Tough, Hinxman, Douglas, and Brown climbed Stob Bàn by the most northerly of its three eastern ridges, which are so conspicuous from Glen Nevis. Munro represented the Club at church, and then joined Smith,

Greenhill, and Squance in an ascent of Stob Bàn by the ordinary route. The two parties having joined near the top, Douglas and Brown loafed on the summit, photographing the superb panorama, while the others, with praiseworthy energy, walked round the corrie to Mullach nan Coirean.

Two other parties were again on Ben Nevis on the opposite side of the glen, one, consisting of Horrocks and Parker, ascending from the south somewhat to the east of Carn Dearg, and the other, composed of M. W. Maylard and Gunn, following the path.

Monday witnessed the departure of about half-a-dozen men by the morning train. Three of these, viz., Hinxman, Campbell, and Moss, walked from Inverlair to Dalwhinnie. Of those that remained, Thomson and Howie, turning out at 4 A.M., climbed Càrn Mòr Dearg to enjoy the beauties of sunrise and an approving conscience. Thomson afterwards continued alone to Aonach Mor, and caught the afternoon train at Spean Bridge, while Howie spent the day photographing at high altitudes.

Douglas, Horrocks, and Maclay climbed the Castle Ridge.

The two Maylards, Naismith, and Squance ascended Ben Nevis by the second westmost gully on the north face.

Tough and Brown followed the line of Naismith's party up the north-east ridge of Aonach Beag, and were unable to make any variations on their route.

A. E. Robertson and Parker had a day's "peak-bagging" among the Easains, &c., ascending no fewer than nine "Munros," viz., Stob Coire nan Ceann, Stob Choire Claurigh, Stob à Choire Léith, Stob Coire Cath na Sgine, Caisteal, Stob Coire an Laoigh, Stob Coire an Easain, Sgòr a Chòinnich Mòr, and Sgòr a Chòinnich Beag.

Thus ended a Meet which, whether it be judged by the numbers attending it, by the character of the climbing, or the conditions under which it was undertaken, must be ranked among the greatest ever held under the auspices of the Club. We do not wish to compare it with the delightful gathering at Inveroran last Easter, which never can be eclipsed so far as pure enjoyment is concerned. There was a charm indeed about those March days by Loch Tulla

which we partly missed at Fort-William. But the latter was altogether on a larger and grander scale. The mountains were higher, the climbs were stiffer, the energy even of the climbers seemed greater. And if some of the hearty good fellowship of Inveroran was lacking in the smoke-room at nights, or rather in the two rooms, into which the unwieldy company overflowed, there was no want of spirit and enthusiasm in the climbing itself. The weather, too, was in most gracious humour, and recalled those long brilliant days in the Blackmount, with Tulla lying calm and peaceful under the shadow of the encircling hills. There was perhaps less snow than usual on the tops and in the corries. It was softer, too, and more arduous in climbing, but, as if to atone for those drawbacks, the views from Ben Nevis of the great snowy mountains lying solemn and still all around in the bright sunlight, or of Nevis itself with its mighty precipice towering up into the blue, were inexpressibly grand and impressive.

It should be added that every facility was kindly afforded by Lord Abinger and Mrs Cameron Campbell of Monzie for permitting members to freely explore the mountains on both sides of Glen Nevis, and that the Observers in the summit station of Ben Nevis showed the height of hospitality to all the parties who visited them in their solitary abode.

WILLIAM BROWN.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.



### EXCURSIONS.

*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 FIACAILL, COIRE AN T-SNEACHDA OF CAIRNGORM.—On 10th April, Lionel Hinxman and the writer went up to the summit ridge of Cairngorm by the Fiacaille (Teeth), Coire an t-Sneachda, the rocky spur which separates the twin corries of Lochain and t-Sneachda, so conspicuous from Glenmore. Seen from below, the ridge appears to rise in a broad granite-strewn slope for the greater part of its length, and to terminate on the face of the cliff in a bold rock buttress, not many degrees from the perpendicular. It is this striking appearance, doubtless, that has saved it, so far as can be ascertained, from the attentions of the summer tourist, and even of the more experienced climbers who have explored this side of the hill. Gaining its base after a toilsome tramp through soft snow, we found that the lower portion exactly corresponded with its appearance from a distance, and under existing conditions was more arduous than interesting. Presently, however, the character of the ridge entirely changed. From the rocky knob, in which the lower portion terminates, it dips to a rock saddle, over a series of miniature teeth, and then rises in a couple of bold granite steps to the summit ridge. It is on these steps that the best, and indeed the only, climbing of the ascent is to be had. On the east, stupendous cliffs fall sheer into Coire an t-Sneachda, and by following the sky-line the climber will have them under his feet, and some 250 feet of steep rocks overhead. Legitimately taken these will afford a good and interesting climb. Towards the west, the rock shelves gradually away to a steep boulder-strewn slope leading to Coire an Lochain. Between these two extremes almost every variety of difficulty may be experienced. When Hinxman and I reached the base of these rocks, the terrific hurricane which was blowing somewhat modified our ambition, which originally had been to keep to the sky-line throughout. So we held for the most part to the west, and, by zigzagging between the rocks and the snow, reached the top without much difficulty. Turning now to the west, we skirted the crags of Coire an Lochain, encountering the full force of the gale, accompanied by a blinding blizzard. So

dense was the drift that it was impossible to see more than five yards ahead, and great care had to be exercised to avoid walking over the edge of the cornice. Good luck, however, and some excellent steering by Hinxman, enabled us to strike the western ridge of Coire an Lochain, which we followed through endless snowfields, to the hollow under the southern slopes of Airgiod Mheall, thence over the shoulder of the latter, and through the forest to the sluices of Loch Morlich, from which it was a walk of four miles to our quarters at Inverdrue.

The conditions under which this climb was taken were extremely unfavourable. The wind blew half a gale from the S.W. for the greater part of the climb, and when an actual blizzard was not raging, the tourmente, blowing up out of the corrie and over the ridge, was of remarkable severity. Two days soft southerly winds had made the snow surprisingly soft, even at the very summit, while on the lower slopes it was of the consistency of porridge, in which we plunged heavily up to the knee.

W. BROWN.

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CRUACH ARDRAN BY THE NORTH - WEST FACE. — Saturday, 2nd March, was an ideal winter day, clear and bright, with a north-west wind, and not too much of it, though that little was cold; any number of degrees of frost, and everything as dry and hard as bricks. "King Kodak" was responsible for a late start, and it was 10.10 before W. Douglas and H. T. Munro left Crianlarich. Three quarters of an hour later we were in Corrie Ardran, and in consequence of the hardness of the snow obliged to put on the rope. From here we had two and a half hours' hard cutting up from 700 to 800 feet; the angle was nowhere great, but the snow hard. We made for the saddle between the two tops of Cruach Ardran, on reaching which it takes only a few minutes to either of the summits, the N.E. of which we topped at 2.30. The height is 3,477 feet—the one-inch O.S. gives no height, and the six-inch —77, the first two figures being obliterated; the S.W. summit, however (which, by the way, is scarcely worth counting as a "top"), which is a little lower, is given on the six-inch map as 3,428 feet.

From here, discarding the rope, we made our way to Beinn Tulachan, 3,099 feet, which, though over a mile from Cruach Ardran, should not take much more than half-an-hour to reach, as the slopes are easy and the descent not very great. Then returning in our steps for some way, we made for the col between Cruach Ardran and Stob Garbh, from which descending the Ardran burn we reached the inn in an hour and ten minutes. We had been out exactly eight hours, but of this photography was responsible for at least an hour and a quarter.

The views were good but not perfect, and are too well known and differ too little from that from Ben More, described *Journal*, I. 154, and II. 264, to need repeating here. The N.W. was inclined to be

hazy, as we have remarked on more than one previous occasion from these mountains.

Few living creatures were met with during the day—no grouse or ptarmigan, but a fine eagle gave us a tolerably close view of himself, and up on the mountain side we came on a black-faced lamb, who, in this cold weather and at this early season, looked as if, like the young man in the rhyme, he “wished he had never been born.”

H. T. MUNRO.

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A NEW FORM OF TENT.—Although camping out is not very general among climbers in Scotland, there are certain districts where the plan might be adopted with considerable advantage. The Mummery tent probably represents about the minimum of extra weight beyond the ordinary climbing equipment, but where something bigger is wanted a newly devised pneumatic tent might be worth considering. In place of a pole, its support consists of two or more tubes of flexible material, which are inflated like a bicycle tyre, and take the form each of a semi-circle. Two of these semi-circles set across each other and covered with canvas or other material form a sort of umbrella shaped tent, the umbrella having four ribs, while each additional tube adds two ribs to the umbrella. The four-ribbed umbrella has a base of about six feet square, and a central height of about five feet. As manufactured, the skin weighs 3 lbs. 4 oz.; and each double rib 1 lb. 7 oz.—making a total of just over 6 lbs. When the air has been allowed to escape, a tube can be rolled up so as to go very readily into a pocket. The contrivance has been patented by Mr J. Ballantyne Small, and is manufactured by the Scottish Pneumatic Tyre Company, Bothwell Circus, Glasgow. G. T.

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NAILS FOR CLIMBING BOOTS.—The big hob-nailers have hitherto been mostly dependent on imported nails for their armour-plating, and various methods have been adopted by Scottish and English climbers to secure a supply of the important overlapping edge nails. In the “All-England” book an arrangement is described whereby any one may get a supply from Grindelwald, and a number of private importations have taken place. Some members of the Yorkshire Ramblers’ Club, in whose rambles climbing plays a prominent part, tried the plan of getting English makers to copy the approved Swiss nails, and after several trials they have succeeded in producing wrought-iron nails both for edge and sole which are not distinguishable from the orthodox article. The nails are to be had from T. Hargrave, 14 Market Street, Leeds, and cost 2s. per lb. for the edge nails and 1s. per lb. for the sole nails. It may make it more intelligible to add that a pound of the former will contain about 160, and a pound of the latter about 280. The “regular nailer” depicted in the Badminton book has thirty-eight edge nails and twenty-eight sole nails. The drawing probably is not meant to give an exact number, but in any



case the average of our boots will have at least half as many more. It may be worth noting that a very successful means of securing the edge nails is to put a sole nail close up against each, and to replace these latter promptly whenever any of them are displaced.

G. T.

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### MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

#### SLIGACHAN AND THE COOLINS.

(See the *Cornhill Magazine* for April 1895.)

THOSE who know Sligachan and the Coolins will find in the April number of the *Cornhill Magazine* a more than usually interesting article dealing with them. The salient features of the hotel and the adjacent mountains are very happily depicted. The weather that seems to be their special adjunct, the pelting of the rain upon the smoke-room windows, the sleeping arrangements when the hotel is full, the attention of "Donald" and "John," the sound of the burn outside, the midges, the society at the hotel—these and other points of interest are lightly and pleasantly touched upon. There are some slight errors in the distances given, and the conjecture as to the cause of Mr Greg's adventure is quite incorrect, but these slips scarcely affect the value of the article. The chief interest to members of the S.M.C. will be the description of the mountains, glens, and corries. The writer evidently does not claim to be a climber, but has thorough sympathy with the sport. For this reason his account of an ascent he made of Sgurr nan Gillean claims special consideration; his judgment upon the nature of the ascent, the appearance of the Coolin ridges—"a series of rat-traps"—and the qualifications necessary to safely traverse them, is singularly judicious. There is neither extravagance nor depreciation. Whilst on the summit he had the opportunity of watching two climbers coming up by the "Pinnacle route," and clearly shared the enthusiasm of one of them, who exclaimed, "As good as the Matterhorn!" There are good descriptions of Lota Corrie and Coruisk. Taken altogether the article will be read with great pleasure, more than once, by any who care to read it at all.

F. W. J.

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### ERRATA.

Page 206, line 15, for 2,082 read 2,156.  
 „ 246, „ 41 for 3,000 read 3,500.

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RISE AND PROGRESS OF MOUNTAINEERING  
IN SCOTLAND.—V.

THE WORKS OF PROFESSOR JAMES D. FORBES.

BY PROFESSOR GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D.

FORBES'S Swiss fame was so very brilliant that the lamp he lit in Scotland stands almost invisible against it. I propose to detach this lamp, and to show how much he did for mountaineering in his own land; what actual travel; what surveying, geographical and geological; what appreciation of our mountain scenery and life; with his whole example and heritage to us as climbers and lovers of the hills.

James David Forbes was born at Edinburgh in 1809, and his boyhood was passed between Colinton House, at the foot of the Pentlands, and his father's estate of Pitsligo, in Aberdeenshire. He was never at any school; and the "easy and desultory teaching" which he received at home left him free for those long lonely rambles on moor and brae, than which nothing could have been a better apprenticeship for his future travels. Before he was fourteen he had developed wonderful habits of observing and registering physical phenomena, as well as a great faculty of mechanical construction.

But Nature when she would produce a mountaineer—surely the richest and most balanced of all her creatures—brings other influences to bear. Forbes was a pure, reverent, and religious lad, impressionable to the beauty

and awe of nature, and with a rare love of poetry. He grew up in a society warm with the new enthusiasm for Scottish scenery which the poems of Walter Scott had excited nowhere more strongly than in Edinburgh; and when he went to college he fell under the inspiration of John Wilson. Some one must acknowledge in these pages our debt to Wilson; do not let him be omitted from "The Rise and Progress of Mountaineering in Scotland." Forbes heard the lectures which blew through the Moral Philosophy class-room like a breeze off <sup>the</sup> heather, and a year or two later visited "the manful mountain general" himself at Ellery, and spent a long day with him on the hills of Westmoreland. "I had much conversation with Prof. Wilson, and rode and walked much beside him, and was certainly anew delighted." Again, Providence saved Forbes from becoming either a parson or a lawyer,—estimable mountaineers in their way, but without the large leisure which the everlasting hills require of their familiars,—and made him a professor instead, a Scots professor, with all the liberties of the unbroken summer vacation. This was in 1833, and Forbes's next seventeen summers, nearly all of them filled by mountain travel in one part of the world or another, are not the least convincing of the many answers to the railings of the impious against that providential arrangement in the Scottish curriculum. Finally, Providence kept Forbes a bachelor for ten years, by which the full advantage of his vacation was secured to him.

His first vacation was spent in England; his second partly in the Pyrenees; but his third, in 1836, after a ramble through the Leadhills, he devoted to a long and methodical series of excursions across the greater part of the Scottish Highlands. Most of these were performed alone, and nearly all of them on foot. We climbers of a poor week's end, who are whirled to the foot of an ascent, and set down dizzy and often furiously prejudiced against the points of the compass, must envy the man who with the summer before him, and no trains by which to scamp the country, masters by his own feet the whole calm proportion of the land before he climbs its summits, and connects his holiday triumphs with the accustomed stage of his

work by one long visible path of light. Forbes crossed from Braemar to Aviemore by Glen Feshie, thence to Inverness, and by the Beauly to Erchless; back alone to Ben Muich Dhui (a mountaineer understands what drew him back on so long a double); across by Loch Laggan to Glenfinnan, Knoydart, and Skye, where he climbed the Coolins; thence by Loch Maree to Inverness, down the Caledonian Canal, where he might have had steam, but he walked "in order to visit the neighbouring glens,—Glen Ormiston one day, Glengarry another, Loch Arkaig a third"; from Fort-William to Ballachulish for a day's "leisure survey of Glencoe, which extremely delighted me, and is really the best scenery, on the whole, I have seen in Scotland, and worthy of comparison with any I know;" from Kingshouse down Loch Etive to Bunawe and Dalmally. The summers of 1837 and 1838 were spent in Germany and Austria, and of 1839 in South France and the Alps. But in 1840 he stayed at home, and tramped Dumfriesshire, Kirkcudbright, Nithsdale, and the Galloway coast, climbing Criffel, and then the Arran peaks; later "along Banff coast to Dumphail and Altyre." But the rest of the service he was to do for the hill-craft of his native land had now to be postponed for a more peremptory call.

As early as 1826, when he was seventeen, Forbes had been taken to Italy, and, on the way back, to Chamounix. There the glaciers fascinated him—the glaciers *plus* the scene of Saussure's heroic experiments on the Col du Géant. The entry in the boy's journal is prophetic of the man. "We did not leave Chamouni till half-past six, and as we drove slowly down the valley, I felt it was with more regret that I left this interesting spot than any town or any scene we had visited in our travels." Had Forbes been only a geologist, Scotland need have feared no rivalry; but he was first of all a physicist, and the Alps were a vast laboratory, while Scotland was only a museum.

Accordingly in 1839 he came back to the Alps, and in 1841 commenced (after May in Arran and June on the Pyrenees) the first of those two summer campaigns, of which the labours, the versatility, and the discoveries, are all

recorded in the immortal "Travels," published in 1843. This year he married, and, after a severe illness, was nearly twelve months away from Scotland.

But in 1845 he took up the work started nine years before, and began the first of six successive summers in the Highlands and Islands. A visit to Skye, with a new survey of the Coolins, resulted in a paper "On the Geology of the Cuchullin Hills," about which he says: "I have all but demonstrated the existence of ancient glaciers there, having been myself convinced most entirely against my will." August was spent at Fettercairn, where "the round lumpish Grampians offer no interest, except the mere exercise of climbing them, and a change of air. I often sigh for a snowy mountain." Winter mountaineering was still unknown. If he had not hope of the Alps next year he "would not be so tranquil." Christmas was spent on the Tweed.

In 1846 Forbes tramped the Borders and the Cumberland hills, but in July went to the Alps. In 1847 he settled in Strath Tay at Easter-Tyre, climbed Schiehallion, and took M. Studer to Glen Roy, Ben Nevis, Staffa, Iona, and Arran. He made geological notes on Ben Nevis, and "hoped to write a book on the group." In 1848 he achieved his survey of Ben Nevis, walking round the mountain in three days with a guide, and carrying his own provisions, "Swiss fashion," by Loch Eil and Glen Spean. It is on this journey that we find, so far as I know, the first recorded instance of step-cutting in Scotland. "As we approached the head of the glen, we got only glimpses of snow fields and broken rocks above us; and at length we were immersed in the fog, which fortunately was not very deep. We kept on the rock as long as we could, and at length found that there only intervened between us and the ridge a short steep ascent of drifted snow, most truly Alpine. It was too late to think of receding, and it was not far; so assuming my new mahogany tripod as an Alpine stock, I proceeded foremost to make steps in the most approved Swiss fashion, to the no small edification of my companion, who had never seen such an operation before. The upper few yards were so steep that I actually could not get one foot

stuck into the snow before the other, and had to get along sideways." . . . "I have since been up Ben Nevis, and should have been on the Ben to-day, but though yesterday was magnificent, *just because it was Sunday*, it came on to rain in the night 'à la mode du pays,' and is drizzling away." Thence he crossed to Skye by Loch Affric,—he had arranged to go up Mam Soul, but the day was wet,—Kintail, and Balmacarra. In 1849 he did the Border hills, and then Orkney and Shetland. "The west of Shetland, the least known part, struck me most. We have there the granitic hill of Bøness, the highest land there, and the phenomena of magnificent granite veins into the adjacent rocks, together with very curious associated claystone porphyries. The outmost island of Foula, far to the west, shows a gigantic precipice of 1,200 feet, rising perpendicularly out of the sea. I do not think that even in the Alps I have seen more terrific single precipices than in Shetland." In 1850 he did his last Alpine work, but returned in time to visit our west coast and Aberdeenshire. He crossed from Donside to Deeside, climbed Lochnagar, and traversed the Cairn to Fettercairn.

In 1851, after he did Norway, his health broke, and his climbing days were felt to be over; but in 1855 he is "still crazy about the Alps," and "loves the Scottish hills the better for their snow."

Such is Forbes's Scottish record. I have given the details to show, that whether we look at the extent of country he achieved, or the methodical manner in which he traversed it, or the number of scientific faculties and poetic tastes he brought to bear upon it, Forbes's service to the mountaineering of his native land is only less brilliant than that which he devoted with so much fame to the Alps. The record illustrates Professor Geikie's statement that Forbes "provided the most detailed and satisfactory account yet given that the Highlands of Britain once nourished groups of glaciers" (*Life*, 489). In other departments of geology and topography his services were also eminent. No one has surveyed our Scottish hills with so trained an eye, or a knowledge of hills and their phenomena so varied, as he. The Alps, Swiss, Austrian, and Italian; Norway

and the Pyrenees; Etna and Vesuvius; the glacier and the crater; the youngest mountain ranges in the world and the oldest,—he knew them all, and came with his experience of them to our own hills; surveying much for the first time accurately, discovering effects and explaining formations which nobody had seen or understood before, and contributing to the geology and weather-lore of the country many new details.\* But the range of his service to our hills was as much wider than science as love is wider than knowledge. In his old age he said: "My heart remains where my body can never be. My yearnings towards the Colinton banks," the home of his boyhood, "and towards the Swiss mountains are much on a par—both home-sickness." His biographer† says: "To an artist's appreciation of beauty (and he was no contemptible artist), combined with carefully trained powers of observation, there was added the outburst of a sunny and joyous spirit. How he drank in the pure mountain air, how unwearied was his light active step, and how, at the sight of a fresh gleam of sunlight on the landscape, a cloud shadow, a flower even, he would break off his perpetual merry whistle for an exclamation of delight—above all the chivalrous pleasure in confronting difficulties and dangers which belonged to his strong and noble character . . ." Read what he says himself about the moral advantages of travel among the mountains.‡ "Their solitude is the parent of reflection, and draws forth to daylight the capacities of that dimly seen inward being,

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\* His works on Scotland are, besides a notice of a large Greenstone Boulder on the Pentland Hills (*Edin. New. Phil. Jour.*, 1829, 259-261), Notes on a Vitriified Fort in Carradale (*Edin. Jour. of Sci.*, 1832, 94-100), and Some Records of Observations on the Temperature at Different Depths in the Earth in the Neighbourhood of Edinburgh (*Edin. Roy. Soc. Trans.*, 1849, 189-236), and On the Climate of Edinburgh (*Id.* 1861, 327-356)—only two: the paper on the Topography and Geology of the Cuchullin Hills in Skye, and on the traces of ancient glaciers which they present (*Edin. New. Phil. Jour.*, xl., 76-79); and Notes on the Geology of the Eildon Hills (*Edin. Roy. Soc. Trans.*, xx, 211-218). But scattered throughout all his works, and especially that on Norway, are illuminative observations upon Scotland.

† *Life*, by Shairp, 210.

‡ From an unpublished article in "Travel" quoted in the *Life*, 211.

which now begins to assert its claim to individuality, but which, amidst the busy turmoil of life, might remain a secret and a puzzle even to itself. At such times the mind becomes capable of seriously entertaining thoughts which in hours of luxury or of business would have been instantly discarded. The young mind in particular seems to discover a link between its powers of conception and the greatness of the objects to be conceived. The seeds of a poetic temperament usually germinate amidst mountain scenery; and we envy not the man, young or old, to whom the dead silence of sequestered nature does not bring an irresistible sense of awe, an experience which a picturesque writer has thus expressed: 'It seems impious to laugh so near heaven.'

So it is not merely as the scientific pioneer of our native hill-craft that we reverence Forbes, but as the all-round and ideal mountaineer, in method, in skill, in endurance, in feeling, in worship; whose great and lonely figure, now that we have seen and heard him for ourselves, we shall never fail to feel haunting the loved mountains of our ascents.



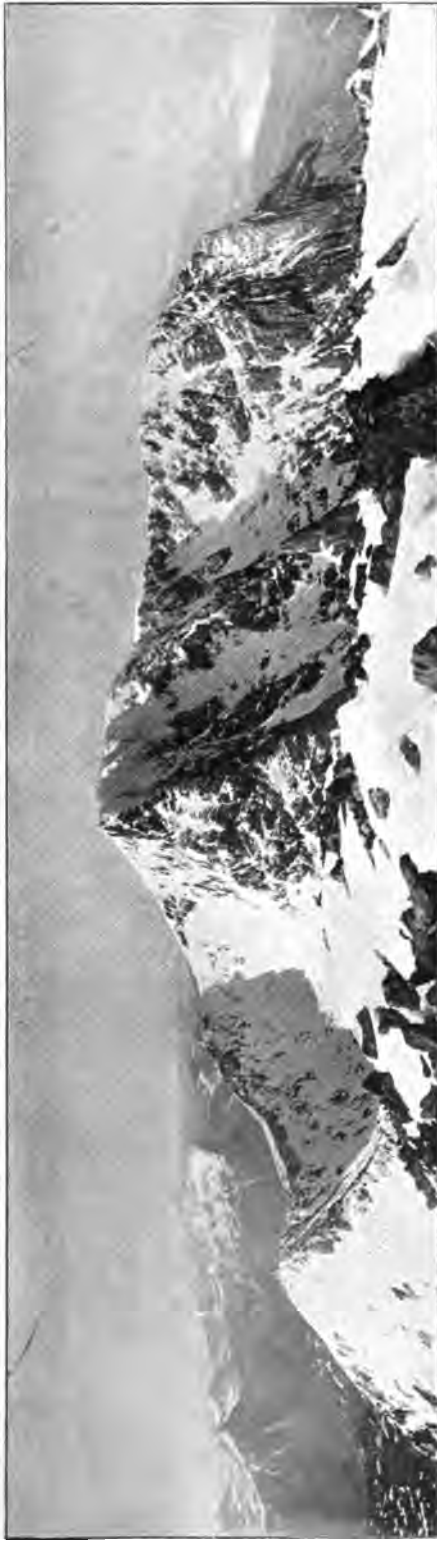
## THE CASTLE RIDGE OF CÀRN DEARG AND THE NORTH-EASTERN PRECIPICES OF BEN NEVIS.

BY LIONEL W. HINXMAN.

TO those who, like myself, have been accustomed to think of Ben Nevis as a big, lumpy hill, vulgarised by a refreshment-saloon at the top and a pay-box at the bottom, between which the summer tourist passes in a continual stream along a well-kept pony path, the first sight of its north-eastern face comes as a revelation.

From the flat plateau that forms the top of the mountain, a range of magnificent precipices of dark porphyry, broken into ridge and pinnacle, and seamed with deep rifts and chasms in which the winter snow never melts, plunges down for more than two thousand feet into the wild glen of the Allt a' Mhuilinn.

This great rock wall forms a slightly flattened semi-circle facing north-east, and extends for a mile and a half from the *arête* leading to Càrn Mòr Dearg at the head of Coire Leas to the northern face of Càrn Dearg. It is broken at intervals by four principal spurs that run out at right angles to the general trend of the precipice, and leap in successive ridge and buttress to the depths of the glen below. Two of these spurs abut on the highest part of Ben Nevis, close to the Observatory, that one nearest the head of the glen being now known as the "North-East Buttress," the second, a quarter of a mile to the west, as the "Tower Ridge." The other two belong rather to Càrn Dearg than to Ben Nevis,—though the former is but a subsidiary peak forming an integral part of the Ben Nevis *massif*,—and join the crest of that mountain, the one immediately beneath the summit, the other at a point a little farther to the north. The former has been this year christened the "Càrn Dearg Buttress," the latter the "Castle Ridge." Between the Càrn Dearg Buttress and the Tower Ridge, a distance of rather more than half a mile, lies Coire na Ciste, a high rock "corrach," or inner chamber in the wall, its



#### BEN NEVIS FROM CARN MOR DEARG.

THE three photographs which comprise this picture were taken on 15th April 1895 by Mr W. Lamond Howie. They now make a panorama with an angle of view of about 145°, which embraces all from Loch Eil on the extreme right to An Gearanach in the left.

The rough foreground of rocks and snow is the summit of Carn Mòr Dearg (4,012 feet); the arete from which sweeps upwards towards the summit of Ben Nevis. The Observatory Tower, just seen over the skyline, occupies the centre of the picture and lies due south-west from the point of view. The range of the northern precipices is in full view. To the east of the Observatory is the North-East Buttress, and to the west the Tower ridge, recognised by the pillar of rock standing at its base. The Castle ridge terminates the range to the north-west, immediately to the right of the Carn Dearg Buttress.

[This picture has been enlarged to 40 x 12 inches, and by the courtesy of Mr. Howie copies in carbon-mounted and finished—can be had for one guinea from Messrs M. & T. Scott, West Savile Terrace, Edinburgh.]



sides seamed with snow gullies, its floor holding two alpine lakelets of crystal water.

The earliest recorded attack on this formidable range of precipices was made some years ago by a party of English climbers, including two brothers of the name of Hopkinson, who descended from the summit by the Tower Ridge, but details as to the time of year and nature of the climb are not forthcoming.

The first ascent, however, was not made until March 1894, when Dr Norman Collie, in company with Messrs Solly and Collier, successfully reached the top by the Tower Ridge, and repeated the climb next day with Mr Hastings. Their experiences are given in somewhat mystical language over the signature "Orlamon Linecus," in No. 15 of the *Journal*. The next ascent, also by the Tower Ridge, was made by Naismith and Gilbert Thomson, on 27th September, and an account of their climb, giving an excellent description of the ridge, will be found in the Notes of the January number 1895. A third ascent, made on 2nd December, by Messrs Bell, Napier, and Macgregor, completes the history of the Tower Ridge up to the date of writing.

The Castle Ridge was the next to fall, and during the last Easter Meet (1895) it was climbed by no less than four parties,—Collie, Naismith, Thomson, and Travers, leading the way on 12th April; followed the next day by Tough, Brown, and Hinxman; and on 15th April by (3) Napier, Bell, and party; and (4) Dr Horrocks, Douglas, and Maclay. The North-East and Càrn Dearg Buttresses are still unconquered, and will probably prove difficult nuts to crack.\*

An alternative series of routes to the top is afforded by the snow gullies which seam the face of the precipice, and are well shown on the 6-inch Ordnance Survey. Most, if not all of these, will probably "go" with the snow in proper

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\* Since the above was written both ridges have been climbed, the North-East Buttress by Messrs Tough and Brown on 25th May, and the Càrn Dearg Buttress by a party composed of the Messrs Napier and Green on 8th June. Accounts of both ascents will be found in this number, see pages 323 and 345.

condition, and offer an interesting variation from the pure rock-climbing of the ridges. At present only two out of the six indicated on the map have been attempted. Both are in Coire na Ciste, and were climbed—No. 3, by Collie and Travers, and by Bell, Napier, and party; No. 4, by Naismith, A. E. and M. W. Maylard, and Squance, during the Easter Meet.

This short description and history of the precipice face may perhaps serve as prelude to a more detailed account of an ascent of the Castle Ridge made by Tough, Brown, and the writer, in April last.

It was a lovely spring morning when we left the hotel at Fort-William, and took our way up Glen Nevis, where the larches that overhang the crystal waters of the burn were already becoming tinged with green under the warm April sun. We passed the farm of Claggan, where a respectably dressed old gentleman accosted us, and opening business negotiations with the offer of the loan of his stick, ended by demanding "threepence to buy baccy," a melancholy example of the demoralising influence of the tourist in these parts. Bearing thence to the left across a peaty flat, we reached the foot and breasted the exceedingly steep grassy slopes of Meall an Suidhe.

It was not long before the beauty of the view—or the steepness of the ascent—called for a halt. The long expanse of Loch Linnhe lay like a mirror at our feet, with Loch Eil turning at right angles and winding away amongst the hills. The morning mists were rolling slowly up the sides of Druim Fada, giving every promise of a fine day, and already in the west the clouds were broken with interspaces of pellucid blue, showing glimpses of far-away snowy peaks in Ardgour and Kintail. Round the crags overhead a pair of buzzards sailed uttering their eat-like cry, and the voice of "the Spirit of Glencoe"—the four times repeated call of the ring ouzel—sounded now here, now there, along the face of the hill.

Warm and breathless, we at last reached the skyline at the head of Coire Dubh, and crossing the Allt Coire Lochain, a short way below its outlet from the loch, followed a contour line along the side of the Allt a' Mhuilinn glen to



BEN NEVIS.

Reduced from the 6-inch O.S. Map. Scale—Four Inches to One Mile.



the western slopes of Carn Dearg. Herein we erred, as this high level route involved us in some very rough and tedious screes, and it would have been better to have struck down at once into the bottom of the glen, the few hundred feet of fall and subsequent rise being compensated by the much better going along the side of the burn.

However, after half a mile or so of very rough work, the last buttress was turned, and, halting at the foot of a deep snow gully, we looked straight up to the Castle Ridge, imminent above our heads. The gully in which we stood ran straight up the face of the precipice, its perpendicular black walls draped here and there with curtains of snow and falls of blue ribbed ice. Near the top it forked, enclosing within its branches the great castellated mass of rock which crowns and gives its name to the Castle Ridge.

We now roped, using two sixty-foot ropes joined together (their combined length proving little enough on more than one occasion during the climb), and with Tough leading, the writer in the centre, and Brown bringing up the rear, crossed the gully and started up the rock slope on the right. For some distance the route lay over smooth slabs of granite, set at an easy angle, to the foot of the porphyry outcrop. Here the rocks suddenly steepened, forming a more or less perpendicular wall, up which the obvious way was through a narrow and somewhat awkward little chimney, in which friction holds came into play. Soon after this we reached another interesting bit, where a steep shelf, lying in a plane at right angles to the ridge, had to be crossed. A convenient crack, that ran up the slab near its junction with the rock-face, afforded fair grips for toes and fingers, and greatly facilitated the ascent, which was made still easier when our leader had removed the loose blocks that covered the upper portion of the shelf.

We now bore gradually to the right, over some fairly stiff bits of rock, until we were on the skyline of the ridge, or even perhaps a little beyond it. Up to this point we had closely followed the "little footsteps in the snow" left by Collie's party the previous day, but we now unwittingly diverged from their line, thus missing the big



chimney of whose ascent we had heard graphic accounts the night before. Whatever we may have lost by not doing the chimney, we agreed that our *détour*—if such it really was—gave us quite the most difficult and sensational bit of the whole climb.

A smooth slab thinly covered with soft snow, and set at an insecure angle, had first to be crossed. This led up to a small plateau under an overhanging rock, on which Brown and I took up our position while Tough disappeared round the corner on our right. After what seemed an interminable interval, during which we pictured our leader spread-eagled on the face of the precipice, clinging on with teeth, eyelids, and other adhesive portions of his person, his welcome shout to come on and give him more rope was heard. On getting round the corner of the shelf, one was confronted by what was really a very nasty bit of climbing. Some forty feet of nearly perpendicular rock had to be surmounted, the holds were few and far between, and at a point half way up the whole weight had to be trusted to an insecure-looking block that jutted out on the extreme right of the ridge and overhung a horrid gulf. However, the rock proved firm enough, and after Tough had removed a couple of loose stones, making a hold for the left foot, the rest was not so bad, though the anchorage on the top was hardly so secure as might have been wished.

We now bore back a little to the left, and found no difficulty until we reached the edge of the rocks overhanging the snow gully, where a somewhat sensational but straightforward bit of climbing ended in a large upright block. This was negotiated by Tough in an orthodox manner, but the mode of progression over it adopted by Brown and myself, although serpentine, could hardly have appeared graceful from below. Our climb was now practically over; the ridge indeed narrowed for some distance into a knife-edge of blocks curiously fitted together as in a wall, but it was horizontal, and we easily walked across it to the short rise that led to the crest of the mountain.

The rope was soon off, the remnant of our luncheon eaten, and surely never tobacco tasted sweeter than the

ensuing pipe, as we basked in the still air and warm sunshine, our spirits filled with the serene satisfaction that cometh of a good bit of work successfully accomplished.

But this *dolce far niente* could not last long. The top of Carn Dearg rose only a hundred feet or so above us, up an easy snow slope, and, although none of us keen "peak-baggers," we agreed that it must be secured.

Coming down from the cairn, we stopped at the head of a snow gully to look down into the profound depths of Coire na Ciste. At that instant the mist, which had hitherto persistently covered the summit of Ben Nevis, was drawn aside like a curtain, and for a few brief moments the whole stupendous face of the opposite precipice, where it falls from the highest part of the Ben, was revealed to us.

Words fail to describe the glories of that scene. One can remember how the level line of the cornice edges cut straight across the sky, accentuating the downward plunge of the shrouded ridges—how the bare rock walls rose stark and grim to meet the fringe of the delicate lace-veil of snow hung over to hide their nakedness—how the sudden sunshine glittered on the glazed surfaces of the snow slopes and lit up the blue caverns of the ice-falls. But who shall describe the magical effect of the whole! the wonderful combination of savage gloom and tender beauty! And then the formless mist closed up once more, and the vision was over.

The black dots which we had for some time observed coming down the snow slopes from the Observatory now resolved themselves into various well-known figures, and before we reached the pony-path two or three more different parties had foregathered. Indeed the slopes of Ben Nevis were that day populous, and a General Meeting of the Club might well have been held at the Observatory, where our kind friends the observers—whose hot coffee will live in the grateful memory of those who were up in the cold and mist of the day before—must have had their hospitality tried to the utmost.

The long glissade down the snow-filled course of the Coire na h'Urchaire burn tempted most of the party.

Others, remembering past experiences, resolved to get home for once with dry and whole garments. But all met on the path below the loch, and strolled leisurely down to Fort-William through the golden evening, well pleased with the experiences of what was perhaps the most enjoyable day of the Easter Meet of 1895.

ASCENT OF BEN NEVIS BY THE  
N.E. BUTTRESS.

BY W. BROWN.

THE mountaineer who makes his way up the Allt a' Mhuilinn, under the stern north precipices of Ben Nevis, sees before him, high up at the head of the valley, a steep black ridge jutting out against the sky, which seems grander and more precipitous than any of its neighbours. This is the N.E. buttress, the finest object on the mountain, and one of the last to engage the attention of the climber.

It was the last Easter Meet that brought this ridge into fame. From being an unnamed and unhonoured incident upon the cliff-face, it became an object of ambition to a large circle of climbers, the chief topic of the smoke-room at nights, and the focus of many critical glances during the day. It would also have been climbed had the ice upon the rocks not forbade the attempt; but though spared at Easter, it stood marked in the intentions of several parties, of which Tough and I formed one.

We had reconnoitred it from Càrn Mòr Dearg, and had come to the conclusion that, in spite of its formidable appearance in profile, and the presence of a sheer cliff one-third of the way up, it was less inaccessible than it was reputed to be. This, however, was more of a pious opinion than a reliable conclusion, for the ridge was enormously steep, and undoubted difficulties beset the path of the climber. Once on the ridge proper, however, above the bottom buttress, it seemed likely that the rest would "go."

And there the matter rested till the Queen's birthday arrived, the date of our projected expedition. The day seemed auspicious. It would be a graceful compliment to the Sovereign to open up a new slice of her dominions, and peradventure the heart of the West Highland Railway might be softened to a cheap fare. These thoughts were very stimulating while they lasted, but they "fled full soon." Cheap fares are only for Glasgow men. When we came to make our arrangements, that zest which is said to consist in triumphing over obstacles was vouchsafed to us

in most bountiful measure. It was either Tough or the West Highland Railway that refused to "fit in,"—the point is still in dispute. But at any rate, owing to our utter inability to find a suitable train, it soon became manifest that if the ridge was to be climbed by us it must be done as the American ship-captain "did" St Peter's. That historical personage, as we all know, reached Rome in the morning, drove straight to St Peter's Piazza, went to the top of the dome, and returned by the first train after lunch to his vessel at the Civita Vecchia. His example is not usually commended for its strict conformance to the canons of mountaineering, but Tough and I had reached a frame of mind when, like good temper at 3 A.M., the canons had ceased to be binding. So we drew up the following original programme, which, as the more candid of its joint-authors remarked, would have been utterly repulsive as applied to anything but the N.E. buttress. It was arranged that we should travel to Kingussie by the night express on Friday, 24th May, bicycle thence to Fort-William, climb our mountain on arrival, and return by the same route, reaching town on Sunday evening. There was a certain gloomy satisfaction that we were doing something quite out of the common, which deepened in gloom as our arrangements waxed in originality. But I am anticipating.

Very grey and miserable was Kingussie when we reached it at 3.50 A.M. on Saturday morning. Rain was falling dismally, and a dense white mist hung low down on the sodden hillsides. Underwheel the roads were a fell compound of mud and newly-laid metal, over which eight miles an hour was superlative progress. Under beetling Craig Dhu, past Clunie, past lone Laggan Bridge, and I may skip forward to the point when, after one or two hours' weary pedalling, we were crossing the watershed of Scotland. Here the sun was making a feeble demonstration, but its rays passed almost unnoticed in the moral gloom which now fell upon the expedition.

It came about in this way. We had just topped a stiff brae, when a sudden report, resembling the simultaneous opening of six bottles of "Bouvier," was followed by Tough's despairing cry, "Your tyre's punctured." It was too true,

and, what was still more exasperating, nothing would mend it. To this day my Norfolk tells of the cementing abilities of a sticky confection, which Tough produced from his rucksack, and of the lavishness with which we applied it. Very sorrowfully, after an hour's abortive tinkering, I pushed my now useless machine to the Loch Laggan Hotel (three miles), whither Tough had already preceded me, and where we expected to find a horse and trap to carry us on to Fort-William. Vain expectation! The zoological resources of Loch Laggan Hotel are rich in midges, but include nothing distantly resembling a horse; so we had to face a walk of thirteen miles to Inverlair, under a sun which was now something more than genial. I believe I could make literary capital out of that walk,—out of the glory of the sunshine, as it fell upon the blue sparkling loch, the fluttering birch trees, and the gaunt grey corries of Creag Meaghaidh,—but our whole souls were fixed, not upon these splendid sights, but on an ingenious contrivance we had hit upon for saving time and muscle. Tough mounted the remaining bicycle, with a pyramid of ropes, axes, and rucksacks piled up on his shoulders, while his fellow-traveller half-walked, half-trotted alongside. In this order, with an occasional change of parts, when the pedestrian became (or said that he was) exhausted, we straggled to Inverlair, and completed the rest of the journey comfortably by train.

The day was close and sultry when, after a hurried lunch at the Alexandra, we left Fort-William at 1.12, and, swinging past Bridge of Nevis and Claggan farm, breasted the steep grass slopes of Carn Dearg—those grass slopes of painful memory. The extraordinary behaviour of even the best mountaineers upon a steep grass slope has often been remarked. They breathe heavily as if their lungs were in difficulties; from their foreheads well fountains of moisture that has been mistaken for sweat; they watch each other furtively, and when one sits down to admire the view, down flops the other as if he were glad of the rest; the trouble of adjusting a bootlace seems more tolerable to them than all the joys of ascending. Almost you would think they were not enjoying themselves.

Tough and I, it must be confessed, exhibited some of these above-noted symptoms, which continued more or less uninterruptedly till we began the descent into the great cleft of the Allt a' Mhuilinn. Here we sat down for the hundredth time, and made an earnest study of our ridge, which descended in profile before us little more than a mile distant. It was a sight to rejoice the heart of the most *blasé* ridgebagger. Seen from this standpoint, the lower portion appears to consist of an almost perpendicular bastion, which terminates in a well-marked platform, to which a steep gully leads up on the west side. Above the platform the rocks rise practically sheer for several hundred feet, and then ease off to a slope of about  $45^{\circ}$ , which continues, with a tendency to increase, till the foot is reached of another straight pitch, about a third of the height of the previous one. From certain points this pitch actually overhangs, but from others it shows an angle which is not greater than  $60$  or  $70^{\circ}$ . The top portion is an easy slope, merging almost imperceptibly in the summit plateau.

From what we now saw, the views formed at Easter were for the most part confirmed, except that the ridge seemed steeper than our recollection of it, and the straight pitches more absolutely perpendicular. Perhaps, however, this was partly due to the sudden approach of bad weather, which threw the black rocks into yet blacker gloom, and made them tower up at an angle which was positively fearsome.

Loud peals of thunder had been rolling harmlessly among the hills since noon, but now the blackness that had been lying in the horizon rose high towards the zenith and threatened to cover it. The Red Mountains were still clear and sunny, but round the flanks of Carn Dearg the mist came stealing,—at first in mere wisps of vapour, then in great smoke-like masses, which mounted to the topmost crag, and blotted out nearly the whole mountain. In ten minutes there was scarce anything to be seen but the scree slope on which we stood, and a black swirling mass straight ahead, where the storm clouds were eddying round the crags of the four great ridges.

The walk up the Allt a' Mhuilinn is grand and impres-

sive under any circumstances, but in such weather as this it is unspeakably weird. We passed jutting headlands of black naked rock, and receding rifts in the cliff-face from which the winter snow gleamed cold and ghastly out of the gloom. The stream we were following dashed in cataracts over its stony bed, fed by torrents the far-off murmur of which came floating down from unknown heights upon our right. Next we entered a wilderness of stones and boulders, littered with the Observatory *debris*,—tin cans, biscuit boxes, and paraffin barrels. Beyond is the steep frowning basement of the north-east buttress, and this we reached at 5.30. The weather had now reached what Mr Campbell (quoting Milton) describes as “in the highest heights a higher height.” Even a native might have praised it. For ten minutes the rain descended with a straightness that would have been creditable in furrows at a ploughing match. Then the mist that had been scudding gaily among the higher crags came down to share in the fun. Crouching behind a stone we saw our visible world fade away into a murky circumference of twenty feet broad, beyond which the wall of the buttress, not fifty yards off, was totally concealed. Early in the day there had been some awful penalties laid upon the man who should breathe even the word “retreat,” but now we shamelessly discussed it in all its bearings. Providence, however, had a better, or at least a higher, fate in store for us. Quite suddenly the deluge of rain ceased to drench us, and the mist, having bamboozled us long enough, betook itself to higher realms, showing our climb towering, crag over crag, above us—an inspiriting sight. There was no longer any talk of retreating, though we could see that the enormous quantity of rain that had fallen would greatly increase the difficulty of the climb. Not even in Skye have I seen rocks so wet. There was quite a respectable waterfall coming off the ridge, and innumerable smaller ones that in England would draw hosts of worshippers.

We had the choice of attacking the bottom bastion either from the east or west, but we unhesitatingly chose the eastern route, which is quite simple, and seemed to offer a convenient approach to the greater difficulties above the



first platform. Up to that point it is literally a walk, but when we had crossed to its extreme south-west corner the real climbing began. We put on the rope (time 6.15), and for sixty or seventy feet followed the broken crest of a nice little ridge which abuts against the steep face of the buttress, just underneath a lofty and, as we thought then, unclimbable tower. Here there is a choice of routes. To the right runs a broad ledge (in Cumberland a *rake*), while to the left a long straight stone-shoot follows the line which in our previous reconnaissances we had judged to be best. We therefore followed the stone-shoot, which led us through a succession of small chimneys and gullies, and out upon a sloping grass ledge, till we could climb up to the right to a level space (called the second platform), where we built a small stone man. Crossing this platform, which is a mere cup scooped out of the rock, we struck the ridge proper immediately above the unclimbable tower, and commemorated the fact with another modest cairn.

Here the really interesting work may be said to begin, for the ridge is fairly narrow, and, besides being very steep, is broken into all the delightful incidents of this form of mountain architecture. There are little towers up which the leader had to scramble with such gentle impetus as could be derived from the pressure of his hobnails upon his companion's head. There are ledges (not very terrible) where it is convenient to simulate the grace of the caterpillar. A sloping slab we found too, where the union of porphyry and Harris tweed interposed the most slender obstacle to an airy slide into the valley.

On the whole, I believe the rocks to be comparatively easy; but under the then conditions, what with the rain and the wearied state in which we approached them, they seemed distinctly difficult. It was most exasperating to find, whenever a friction grip was necessary, how persistently one's sodden knickers and boots kept slipping on the wet bossy rocks, and how unreliable was the hold thus obtained.

Nowhere was this more apparent than when, having climbed up as we thought to within a few hundred feet of

the top, a steep little bastion, with rounded top and smooth unbroken face, loomed up out of the mist. It was crowned by an erection which in the fog, which was again closing thickly round us, *might* have been the Eddystone lighthouse, but which I have reason to believe is a "peeler" of very moderate dimensions. Under ordinary circumstances we would have got up it I think without special difficulty, but a small crack about ten feet up (which is the natural hold) was at that moment extemporised for the descent of a miniature shower-bath. The result was that, perhaps without giving the crack a fair trial, we preferred to try the slabby rocks on the left. 'Twas a most dismal error. These slabby rocks are the man-trap of the ridge. They look quite simple, and are quite the reverse. I stood in the gap under the bastion, and payed out the rope, while Tough, as leader, amused himself among them for nearly three-quarters of an hour. Judging by the movements of the rope, and the vigorous adjectives that reached my ears, the game was more energetic than amusing. At length, after a period of indefatigable energy, Tough rejoined me. The rocks would not "go;" and if ever a charge of positive immorality was brought against a rock problem, it was involved in the emphasis with which the chief guide described how he had innocently swarmed up a nice little gully, and become spread-eagled for ten minutes on a smoothly sloping slab that looked positively alluring from below.

Meanwhile the daylight had been ebbing slowly away. It was now 9.45. Over the gaunt grey rocks the darkness of night had settled down, rendering our position inexpressibly weird and eerie. To me it seemed that the only alternative was to bivouac where we stood; but the chief guide, while frankly admitting that two inches of nose represented his own limit of vision, drove me at the point of his axe to explore the rocks on the right. They "went" quite easily. Up a short gully we raced and panted to the foot of a steep smooth corner about 40 feet high, formed by the junction of two rock slabs. Here, when I mildly suggested the absence of reliable holds, the inexorable guide gave me the choice of going up at the point of his ice-axe, or by pure traction at the end of the rope, along with the

luggage. I chose the former; and such was the mute eloquence of that pick end, pointing upwards out of the gloom, that I succeeded at length in struggling to the top, although the holds are not exactly suited to sustain in the darkness the gravity of  $11\frac{1}{2}$  stones over a nearly perpendicular precipice. At the top we could see the way stretching easily before us, and a dim black object standing up against the darkened sky that looked every inch the top. Abandoning the ridge to save time, we dashed into a stone-shoot on the left, and went rapidly up it to the foot of a final line of crags about twenty feet high. Again we thought we were stuck, but a friendly gully, running up the centre, extricated us from our difficulties, and brought us out at the summit of the mountain, almost level with the Observatory.

Volumes have been written upon the sensations of mountaineers upon finishing a stiff climb; but we simply gave a long shout of triumph, which was taken by our friends the meteorologists as a warning that some very noisy trippers were approaching, and marched for the Observatory.

This we reached at 10.5, and were received with the overflowing hospitality the Club has always received from Mr Rankin and his staff. Very grateful was the warmth and shelter, the glowing stove, the steaming coffee, after the long battle on the porphyry crags. All too short, however, was the hour of sleep, which we snatched between twelve and one, undisturbed by even a thought of what we had passed through. Then came the descent to Fort-William, under a sky which was now calm and serene. The misty curtain was drawn aside, and all around lay the slumbering hills. What mattered it that Bidean nam Bian was indistinguishable from Buchaille Etive, and that the most resolute attempt to identify Stob Ban resulted in mental entanglement among the corries of Sgòr a Mhaim. We took it on trust that Bidean was there, with his darkened crest thrust through the great sea of mist which lay fathoms deep in the valleys, forming islands and archipelagos, capes and peninsulas, out of the spurs and ridges of the hills. Lower down we plunged into the mist ourselves, and when we emerged from it again the morning sun was shining upon the houses of Fort-William and the

waters of Loch Eil. It was the dawn of another day, the third since we had left Edinburgh.

At 4 A.M. the mail-gig for Kingussie numbered us among its passengers. Speyside saw us five and a half hours later ; and Edinburgh and the Editor welcomed us at 6.15, after forty-five hours of continuous travelling.

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NOTE.—Since the above article was written a note in the current number of the *Alpine Journal* recording an ascent of the buttress by Messrs J. E. and B. Hopkinson, on the 6th September 1892, has come under my notice. No particulars are given, but it appears that the ascent formed one of several made by the same party, including the ascent and descent of the Tower Ridge and the outlying pinnacle at its base. It is only necessary to add, with reference to certain statements contained in the foregoing article, that no suspicion that the ridge was other than a virgin peak ever occurred to us, or any one in the district, or having knowledge of the mountain, with whom we conversed. Subsequent to our ascent the ridge has been climbed several times. It was ascended, eight days later, by Messrs Geoffrey Hastings, Howard Priestman, and Cecil Slingsby, who were likewise ignorant of the previous ascents till they encountered our first cairn. This party introduced a difficult variation below the first platform, gaining that point from the west by a steep gully, which, being much in need of cleaning, gave considerable trouble. On 8th June, the buttress was again ascended by the Messrs Napier and Green, who patented still another variation by forcing a way up the steep rocks to the left of Slingsby's couloir. Both parties seem to have turned the unclimbable tower by the broad ledge, or rake, on the west side of the ridge.

## THE NORTH-EAST RIDGE OF AONACH BEAG.

BY GILBERT THOMSON.

THE mountain mass of Ben Nevis has immediately to the east of it two smaller masses, each of which rises above 4,000 feet. There is first the sharp peak of Càrn Mòr Dearg (4,012 feet), connected with the summit of Ben Nevis by a narrow curving ridge, and still farther to the east there is the long broad-backed Aonach, connected with Càrn Mòr Dearg by a very similar ridge. The Aonach itself is classed as two distinct mountains, the northern extremity being called Aonach Mor (3,999 feet), and the southern Aonach Beag (4,060 feet). The names are quite justifiable although the Beag is the higher of the two, for the Mor is much rounder and more bulky, and correspondingly less attractive to climbers.

The Easter meet of the Club will be memorable on account of the number and character of the climbs that were then discovered. As has been already mentioned in the *Journal*, Collie proved a perfect encyclopædia of information regarding possible and impossible routes, and even after his reluctant departure he left a valuable legacy behind. The credit of an ancient victory has by universal consent been ascribed to a "dead Douglas," and in like manner the credit of the first ascent of the north-east ridge of Aonach Beag is undoubtedly due to the absent Collie. By his advice a party of three (Maclay, Naismith, and the writer) accompanied him as far as Spean Bridge on his way to the south, on Saturday morning, 13th April. Full directions were given as to how to find a "beautiful ridge," and shortly before eight we left the train and struck across the moor, passing close to the stalker's house, and then up the valley immediately to the east of the Aonachs. The morning was close and oppressively warm, and the hills were shrouded in mist. It was slow work trudging up the glen, following pretty much the course of the burn, but at last we got fairly under the mountain, and saw a fine-looking ridge on our right. It would be too much to say that its appearance quite came up to the anticipations which

had been raised by Collie's description, but it was the best we could find in the mist, and it certainly had a good appearance. To it therefore we went, and for a thousand feet or more made our way patiently up a ridge that was always interesting, but never difficult. In fact, the suspicion of a joke on the part of our informant was not altogether absent, although it seemed incredible that a man like Collie could play off a joke on such a serious subject as a beautiful ridge. The ridge was treated with all respect,—more than it is ever likely to get again. As we ascended, it became evident that it came to a peak (top of An Cul Choire) some distance from the main ridge of the mountain, and that it was separated from this ridge by a decided dip. Further, it joined the mountain considerably to the north of the summit of Aonach Beag, in fact it was a ridge of Aonach Mor. Our new suspicion, that we had gone astray, soon became a certainty. The mist cleared somewhat as we reached the top of the ridge, and on looking to the south we could see the sharp outlines of another ridge, with two or three pitches that in profile were perpendicular. The ridge we had just climbed suffered so much by the comparison that perhaps our final estimate of its merits was as far short of justice as our first estimate had been beyond it.

The man who reaches the station in time for a stern view of the last train is to be pitied ; and the man who has lost his purse in a strange land may be somewhat uncomfortable. But what are these tribulations compared to the plight of the climber who has spent a large part of his available time in climbing the wrong ridge? But the real one had got to be climbed. The first thing to be done was obviously to get to the foot of it, and a rapid survey and consultation resulted in a course being set for the top of a snow slope, which it was hoped might be a speedy way down. But it was a delusion and a snare. For a short distance it was too steep for a glissade, and immediately after that it became so soft that a glissade was not only a very uncomfortable, but an exceedingly slow, means of locomotion. Even vile snow slopes come to an end, but they may be succeeded, as in this case, by sloppy and rough ground, which is worse. The lower part of our ridge

was evidently very easy, and by crossing almost on a level from the point we had reached on our descent there was a good opportunity of getting on to it by a steep snow gully on its near side. The gully led us through a gap right to the far side, where the snow stretched up in an unbroken slope of considerable steepness. For some five hundred feet we plodded up the snow, a bit of ice giving occasional variety, then for two or three hundred feet more we climbed on the crest of the ridge, up steep but easy rocks. Even when we got on a sharp rock *arête* our old suspicion that the difficulties were imaginary lingered in our minds, and our leader, while scrambling up to a small tower, indulged in some remarks not altogether complimentary to the ridge, perhaps scarcely complimentary to our informant. A moment later an exclamation in a very different tone hurried up those behind. This was what they saw. For fifty feet or thereabout the ridge was level, perhaps it even inclined downward. Beyond, it rose in tier after tier of grand pinnacles. To take these in face was hopeless, while there was little ground on the right, and that very steep; and none on the left, before the ridge fell off sheer for hundreds of feet. It was not a place to take chances, any advance must be made with great care, and with every precaution. After a prolonged survey it was thought that by working round to the right it might be possible to turn the first pinnacle. This involved the crossing of a steep slope of frozen snow, just over the edge of the ridge, and then the ascent of an awkward cleft from anything but a good starting place. The passage was made safe by the fact that throughout excellent hitches were available, so that the party was always securely anchored. Naismith, who had been leading on the lower slopes, continued to do so here, Maclay was at the other end, and the writer occupied the dignified position of passenger. The first pinnacle safely surmounted, the party found themselves at the foot of a fine chimney, quite vertical for some fifteen feet, but with capital holds for climbing. This led on to a narrow horizontal ledge with a flat wall of rock above. The wall was the ridge, and it ended in nothingness on the left, but the ledge ran round the end of it. Face and

end were equally steep, and the place threatened to prove a stumbling-block, although only some ten feet high. Naismith made his way round the end, Maclay tried to work a passage to the right, while the passenger, perched at the corner, was expected to anchor the party. For some time it was very doubtful if either way would go, and the man in the middle had devised a means of climbing up by means of the rope, which by this time had been thrown over the top. But almost simultaneously there was a triumphant shout from each end. Both ways had been made to go, and the passenger, between two ropes, made the ascent in the orthodox sack of flour style. Then came an easy but very short climb up the narrow ridge, to the foot of the topmost pinnacle. Here the thin edge shot straight up for a dozen feet, and the most promising line of attack was by means of a crack just on the right of the extreme edge. A closer examination showed that the top projected beyond the bottom, and that there was an entire absence of holds. There was no standing room at the foot, or the leader could probably have got up from the shoulders of the second. To the right of this tower there seemed a very small chance of advancing, but on the left it looked as if it might be possible, by descending some distance, to take the ridge in flank. Maclay led the way in this attempt. Descending some dozen feet, a secure stand and an excellent hitch were obtained. From that a few feet more of descent led to a triangular patch of frozen grass, at the far side of which there was a six-foot step on to a higher grass patch, both of these being very steep. At the step there was very insecure footing below, and no hold above. This was surmounted after several unsuccessful attempts, but the slope above was very treacherous, and the rope, even when the middle man was untied, was only just long enough to allow the leader to catch a firm rock, and hold on while lying full length on the slope. We reached his position with some difficulty, the middle man tying on again as soon as there was sufficient rope. Since the beginning of the pinnacles a slip at any part would have meant a fall of hundreds of feet, and the rope was of essential service throughout.



The sixty-foot rope was at this point, and for the remainder of the slope, painfully short. The slope continued for about a hundred feet, and was the least pleasant part of the climb, as holds were scarce and poor, and the general character of the place treacherous rather than difficult. It was an agreeable relief to reach the ridge again, although when reached it was a knife-edge, and progress along it was made with the body sprawling on one side and the arms thrown over the other. A few wriggles brought us to a place where standing was possible, and Maclay, who had done some hard work before these difficulties were surmounted, was relieved by the writer of the post of leader. The hard work, however, proved to be pretty much over. The rock ridge, though still sharp, continued at an easier angle, and finally two bits of sharp snow *arête* led to the main ridge, within two or three hundred yards of the summit of Aonach Beag, and only a hundred feet or so lower. Throughout the 1,500 feet of the ridge, right up to the top, there was scarcely a yard which did not need both care and climbing; while at the critical part the chief difficulty was to make sure of having a line of retreat in case progress should prove impossible. On several occasions, notably while Maclay was wrestling with the step on the last awkward slope, our prospects of success did not seem brilliant. The ridge had occupied about four hours.

Arrived at the top, the advanced hour indicated a return to Fort-William by the line of least resistance, but the peak-bagging instinct pointed to the capture of Aonach Mor. It was within easy reach, with only a small dip between, and we must obviously be much behind the dinner hour in any case. It was resolved therefore to "fill up the cup," and a rapid journey was made along the ridge, which is perfectly easy. At one part only is it in any way broken, and one might wheel a barrow or drive a carriage along the greater part of it. The summit of the Mor is a large plateau, rising gently from the col, but bounded on the east by a magnificent range of corniced precipices. Our ridge from the top presented a fine appearance. The scene on the west was very grand. Ben Nevis towered high over

the intervening Càrn Mòr Dearg, and the stately peak, with its two great ridges and its impressive snow gullies, looked well worthy to be the monarch of British mountains. It was a striking contrast to the "Ben Nevis from Corpach" known to the tourist. On reaching the cairn our steps were at once retraced to the col, so as to descend to Glen Nevis, but it would have been wiser to go to the north, and reach Fort-William from the Spean side. The snow slopes on the east side of Aonach Beag, down which we hoped to glissade, were as disappointing as the previous one; they were too steep, they were broken by rocks, and they had occasional bits of ice. Steps had to be kicked down long stretches, and the last straw was laid on when half an hour had to be spent in cutting down a frozen waterfall. Darkness fell on us suddenly as we left the snow, and we had still a long grind before the welcome road was reached. As late as half-past eight there was a short glissade on a long patch of frozen snow in a shaded gully. The path, eight miles from home, was not reached till after nine, and our non-arrival caused some concern to the party at Fort-William, all of whom had returned hours before. It was nearly midnight before their apprehensions were relieved, or, perhaps it would be more correct to say, before the hopes of those who looked forward to the romance of a relief expedition were finally disappointed. The details of this relief expedition, it is understood, were carefully arranged, and will doubtless be at the service of any future climber who may happen to be benighted in the neighbourhood of Fort-William.

## STOB BAN, OR THE WHITE MOUNTAIN OF GLEN NEVIS.

BY W. DOUGLAS.

THE man who has once walked through Glen Nevis will never likely forget the beauty and grandeur of his surroundings; and one of the most striking features of the view is the graceful cone of Stob Ban, facing like Janus both up and down, a conspicuous object in the centre of that mighty group of tumbled Stobs and Sgors which forms the great forest of Mamore. Besides possessing picturesque and flowing lines, leading up to a sharp and shapely top of quartzite-schist, it has two rugged arêtes on its eastern face which, decorated with little pinnacles, afford endless possibilities to those who love climbing for climbing's sake. Another attraction possessed by this mountain, not so obvious at first sight, is often found in the fact that it stands some 1,200 feet lower than the mighty Ben Nevis! The advantage of this will be fully appreciated by those whose muscles after two days' hard climbing require the luxury of a rest.

On a brilliant morning towards the end of the "Easter Meet," Brown, Hinxman, Tough, and myself, wandered off with the avowedly expressed intention of doing "something difficult" without the accompaniment of a long walk.

After leaving the little farm in Glen Nevis called Poll-dubh, we followed the west side of Allt Coire nan Feusgan and sauntered slowly up the glen. The ground was exceedingly rough and broken, intersected by water-channels with precipitous sides, involving, by keeping a direct line for our ridge, some rock problems, the solution of which served to break the monotony of what would otherwise have been an intolerably tedious grind. Over this rough country we trudged, toiling up the long glen under the fierce glare of an all-powerful sun, which, blazing down upon us with remorseless force, absorbed with alarming rapidity all our superfluous energy. Loud were the cries for a "shady neuk which to rest at ease;" and such was the limp condition the party that, strange to say, nothing but anathemas

were hurled at the unfortunate man who had suggested our present route,—for, on the other side of the water, appeared a well-built deer path tantalisingly leading almost to the foot of our ridge. But all things must have an end, and even this morning's toil—two miles up a glen—passed away, and we arrived hot and lazy on the platform at the foot of a small buttress of rock which forms the beginning of the ridge.

Not being one of Mummery's true believers in the enjoyment of rollicking over ridges free from the trammels of the rope, but adhering rather to the school that climbs under the banner of "Moral support," I suggested the practical application of the theory which alone justifies the practice of our sport among precipitous rocks, and at this point we tied up.

It must first be premised that Tough, whom we constituted our leader, was thirsting for the said "something difficult," and therefore led us up everything that was likely to "go," in preference to easier ways where such lay on our route. I wish I could give a humorous account of all the amusing incidents of this delightful little climb, but unfortunately this paper has been unexpectedly left in my hands when all the unimportant incidents have vanished from my memory, and I fear I can only now record its prominent features.

My recollection of the climb as a whole is that it was an easy bit of work,—the leader may have a different story to tell,—with three distinctly good things in it. The first of these occurred immediately after the rope was donned in a chimney of considerable difficulty, from which, soon after the disappearance of the leader, came a stone of ponderous bulk, that, thundering down the shoot in perilous proximity to our heads, caused a precipitate rush for cover. In the animated dialogue that followed, the tenant of the chimney, no doubt from his exalted position and wealth of material lying ready to his hand, had the lead in the argument as well as on the rope; and, with an admonition to allow, during his chimney sweeping, a greater latitude for the law of gravitation, he was allowed to proceed.

The second was found about half-way up the ridge.

From the top of an easy chimney a rather difficult traverse to the right brought us under a slightly under-hung rock about seven feet high, the negotiation of which was not accomplished without due exertion. It was not in the slightest degree necessary to adopt this route, which lay to the right of our previous line of ascent, but as it appeared to offer one of the best climbs on the ridge, our leader of course went for it.

The third critical part of the climb began with the turning of a high rock-tower, which caused us to traverse



RIDGE OF STOB BAN AND BEN NEVIS FROM THE SOUTH.

on to the face of the cliff, along a lovely little crack on the sloping flank of a great slab of rock that overhung the glen below. From the top of this rock a ridge with an extremely narrow edge, extending for about twenty yards, led us to three teeth of mica-schist on the very crest of the ridge, standing solid, sharp, and uncompromising as a row of bayonets. *Over* these we had to go. Their edges were far too sharp to sit upon, and we had therefore to creep over them, gripping their sides with our knees and the palms of our hands, a method of progress more difficult than graceful.

Once over this, the rest of the ridge was a mere walk, leading up to the lower top of Stob Ban, 2,955 feet, about a quarter of a mile to the north of the main summit, 3,274 feet.

Here we fell in with another party, who had come up the north shoulder, and whose eulogistic remarks on the charms of "peak-bagging" were sufficiently strong to induce two of our comrades to join them in their tramp to Mullach nan Coirean. Brown and I were therefore left in peace to admire the splendid view.

I shall not soon forget the view I had from this solitary spot. The immense peaks and ridges of the Mamore Forest were thrusting their rocky heads and sides through a ragged garment of snow that hung streaming in tatters round their flanks, and formed a foreground for the sweep of "peaks behind peaks" that stretched far into the distant horizon. The mighty Ben, white with an unbroken snow cap, and its attendant satellites, played a prominent part in the view to the north, with the Locheil and Ardgour mountains fading into the distance beyond; while the towering heights of Bidean, the Buchailles, and Ben Lawers filled the prospect to the south.

After paying homage to my old favourites, among which Ben Cruachan always has first place, and identifying several others presenting from this point unfamiliar aspects, I proceeded to pick out one by one from an open map the hills that comprised this glorious panorama; but before I had gone a quarter of the way round the great circumference, I fell a-thinking that a compilation of a view, such as this *Journal* has now come to expect, does, for the time being, rob the compiler of all the æsthetic delight that such a scene tends to call forth. For how can the mysterious feeling that wells up unbidden in the presence of mountain solitudes find a home in our hearts, while the eye is ever on the watch to give a local habitation and a name to some distant peak, to paint in accurate and necessarily prosaic language corries and ridges, peaks and tops, or to calculate the climbing capabilities of such and such a cliff face? No, that mysterious influence refuses to associate itself with a long list of unpronounceable Gaelic names, and our thoughts,

while the pencil and map are doing their work, can no longer roam into unseen regions; the blue hills of the distant horizon be they ever so bewitching, or the nearer valleys depicting through the medium of light, shade, or floating mist their wondrous colours in their most fascinating form, are powerless to become anything but hills and valleys. Musing thus, I quietly slipped map, pencil, and notebook into my pocket, and whosoever wants a view from Stob Ban let him go there and see it for himself.

# NOTES AND QUERIES.



## EXCURSIONS.

*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 CLIFFS OF BEN LOMOND.**—Whilst easy from most directions, Ben Lomond, as every one knows, possesses a long line of cliffs extending from near the summit to the S.E. corner of the east corrie, which it has for some time been the writer's desire to explore.

The crest of the ridge is marked by three eminences besides the actual summit. These for convenience sake we shall dignify with the

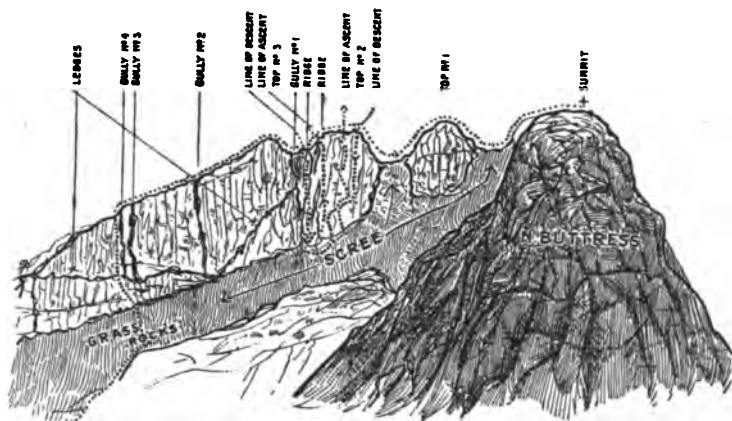


DIAGRAM OF THE CLIFFS OF BEN LOMOND FROM THE N.E.

name of tops. We shall suppose the reader to be standing somewhere to the N.E., where he can scan the whole corrie.

Just to the left of the great northern buttress, which bears the summit at its upper end, is a scree slope by which the corrie is easily reached. Beyond this to the left is the first of the three tops mentioned. This top is the culminating point of the first section of the cliff, which is neither very high nor very extensive.



To the left of this cliff is another scree slope. Beyond this is the second top, and beneath this the second section of the cliff, which is higher (or rather deeper), steeper, more extensive than the first, and deepens considerably towards the left.

At the left end of this cliff is a largish gully, which can be easily ascended. At this point the ridge takes a very decided bend to the E., and the third section of the cliff begins. It is twice as long as the other two together, and at its greatest height is considerably higher and steeper than either. Both the top and the bottom of this cliff slope downwards towards the glen, but the skyline slopes more steeply, and the cliff thins out and eases off towards the lower end of the corrie.

The first section of the cliff appears quite easy. The second is easy towards the right end. At the left end it becomes deeper and steeper, but two ridges at this end have been made to "go."

The third section is the most formidable. Only at a few places does it appear to be practicable. A ledge seems to cross the right half leading downwards from the upper part of the gully mentioned to the bottom of the cliff about the middle, and thence a horizontal ledge seems to offer a return to the skyline not far from the lower end. These ledges looked feasible, though the former appeared a little sensational, and was not easy to trace looking from the middle cliff.

For a considerable distance to the left of the gully the cliff seemed to be too steep and smooth to be climbed. About the junction of the sloping and horizontal ledges mentioned, a small steep and straight chimney or angle in the rock looks very doubtful, but might afford a line of ascent. To the left of this, for some distance, the rocks again look impracticable. Then a steep gully appears, blocked apparently by a rock near the top. Just to the left of this is a narrower and shallower gully, which has been proved to "go." Again the cliff seems unscalable for some distance. Then it gradually eases off, thins out, and becomes broken up by grass ledges.

Some years ago, Fraser Campbell, Lester, and Naismith ascended the face of the middle cliff by a zig-zag route, and descended it by a ridge just to the left of the gully dividing it from the great cliff. The writer does not know of any other attack on the cliffs.

On 23rd May, Naismith and the writer, with the Rev. Walter Weston, essayed the cliffs. Leaving the upper end of Loch Ard about eight A.M., they crossed the hill to the W. of the Chon Water, and descended into Glen Dubh (the valley of the Duchray or upper Forth), which they traversed to Comer, just underneath the Ben. Ascending straight into the corrie and keeping to the left, the base of the cliffs was reached not far from the lower end. After inspection, it was determined to attempt the gully (No. 3), described as being apparently blocked near the top. The smaller gully to the left (No. 4) was noted as an alternative route if the other failed.

The foot of the gully was reached without much difficulty. The bottom, however, was seen to be wet and shiny, and, moreover, required the leader to be assisted by the next man, and swarm up to

get into it. The way to the left was accordingly taken, with the intention of traversing to the larger gully higher up. This was tried twice or thrice, but was found difficult, so the left gully was followed; this, though steep and grassy, and requiring care, presented no particular difficulty, and presently the ridge was reached.

From this point the party walked to the summit, where they picnicked just out of sight of numerous Queen's Birthday mountaineers of both sexes from Rowardennan. Returning to the fray, they descended about the middle of cliff No. 2, and finding it easy traversed somewhat to the left (*i.e.*, in a southerly direction) to prolong the descent. They then walked across the last remnant of the winter's snow, and attacked a rock ridge just to the right of that ascended by Fraser Campbell's party, and guarded on either side by narrow gullies. This ridge was steep but the rock good. At one part where a piece of the rock projected from a practically vertical wall, with a narrow gap behind and steep rocks beneath, a considerable time was spent in getting up.

It had been intended to traverse the two ledges mentioned above, but the climb just described had taken so long that time did not permit. The party therefore descended to a well at an angle of the zigzags of the ordinary track, and, after due refreshment, concluded a most enjoyable day with a long tramp across the upper moors, down Bruach Caoruinn Glen, down the Duchray Glen, and over a low ridge to Loch Ard again, which was reached about 6.30 P.M.

The rock of the upper region is mica schist, and where bare gives good handholds and fair footholds, though sometimes all too sparingly. Where there is grass the rockholds are few, and one ascends by a kind of swarming, using the friction of the hands and forearms and the knees.

JAMES MACLAY.

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**BUTTRESS OF CARN DEARG, BEN NEVIS.**—This massive promontory of rock, the second from the west of the four great buttresses on the north face of Ben Nevis, is of exceedingly formidable aspect from every point of view, as the lower portion drops with an almost vertical descent of startling abruptness for several hundreds of feet into the glen below. The cliffs of this lower portion are of smooth rock, and are apparently quite inaccessible; in some places they seem actually to overhang. The upper portion of the buttress, however, is of a totally different character, and of a very moderate angle.

What is believed to have been the first ascent of the mountain by the buttress referred to was made on 9th June last by a party consisting of Messrs J. S. and R. G. Napier and E. W. Green. An inspection of the lower cliffs having satisfied them that an ascent from directly in front was impracticable, they chose the first grassy ledge running diagonally up the rocks on the left-hand side; but after attaining an elevation of about 180 feet or so, they found farther

progress in that direction inadvisable, though they thought it might be possible with the exercise of care and perseverance. Descending to the base, they next tried a second ledge of rock interspersed with grass, which, starting from the gully on the left, a little higher than the first, ran upwards parallel with it, and terminated far up on the face. A short distance below its termination a stone-shoot struck upwards to the left for about fifty feet, and then another turning to the right over a slope of similar character gave access to the crest of the ridge, just above the precipitous lower crags. There are grouped at this point of the ridge some fine rocks, which bear a striking resemblance to those on the summit of the Cobbler. The rest of the way to the summit plateau, following the crest, presents no difficulty; in fact the climbers found the ascent throughout perfectly easy, and much simpler than that of any of the other three ridges of the north face. The rope was hardly required at all. The whole climb took one hour and twenty minutes from the time of leaving the base. After lunch in the Observatory, the party descended by the north-east ridge, and took four hours and three-quarters to reach the foot, owing largely to several deviations from the previously followed routes, occasioned by a thick mist.

I am indebted to Mr J. S. Napier for the materials for the foregoing note.

H. C. BOYD.

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STOB CHOIRE CLAIRIGH (3,858 ft.), STOB COIRE AN LAOIGH (3,659 ft.), AND SGOR A' CHOINNICH MOR (3,603 ft.).—On the 15th April, Mr A. E. Robertson and the writer climbed these hills from Roy Bridge Station, having come from Fort-William by the early train. We left Roy Bridge at eight o'clock, which gave us eleven hours to cross the hills to Achriabhach in Glen Nevis, where a trap had been ordered to meet us. The weather was perfect, although just a trifle warm on account of the brilliant sunshine with which we were favoured all day. Crossing the Spean by a little footbridge about one mile above the railway station, we struck a south-westerly course across the moor and reached at a height of 1,250 ft., and after a slight descent, the carriage road which runs through the glen east of Stob Coire nan Ceann. We followed this road for about half a mile, crossed the Allt nan Leacan, and calling a halt for lunch beside the burn flowing from the corrie north of Stob Coire nan Ceann, discussed our next movements. This corrie presented a magnificent appearance with its steep snow-clad slopes extending in a complete semicircle from Stob Coire nan Ceann to Stob Coire Gaibhre. The greater part of the skyline was heavily corniced. Had we not had such a big day's work before us, we would probably have worked our way up these snow slopes and one of the curved ribs of rock with which, in one part, they were broken; but wishing to economise time as much as possible at this part of the day's proceedings, we decided to go straight up Stob Coire nan Ceann, where the slope was easier, and which, although out

of the direct line to the summit of Claurigh, would probably prove speedier. This we did, and by following a protruding ridge of quartzite for the greater part of the distance, we made height rapidly, and reached the top (3,720 ft., no cairn) at 11.50.

We were now able to form some idea of the extent of the work cut out for us, for away in the distance, three miles off, lay Sgòr a' Chòinnich Mòr, our second last hill, and between us and it was a wilderness of peaks and ridges all white with snow. The ridge leading to the foot of Stob Coire Claurigh was rather narrow, and gave rise to hopes that we might have some interesting pieces of climbing to do on the ridges later on; but such hopes were doomed to disappointment, as the ridge widened out before we topped Claurigh, and never rose above common-place for the remainder of the day. The roughest part was the rocky descent from Stob Coire an Easain, and the steepest the subsequent rise on snow to Sgòr a' Chòinnich Mòr. At all other parts the ridge was wide and seldom steep. It was usually corniced. The depressions between the different tops are small, the only important one being one of about 400 feet beyond Stob Coire an Easain. There are cairns on Claurigh and Easain, but none apparently on any of the intervening tops, or on Stob Coire an Laoigh, the second highest point of the range.

The details of our climb may therefore be condensed into the simple statement, that starting from Stob Choir nan Ceann at twelve o'clock we kept to the ridge the whole way, taking every top *en passant*, and ultimately found ourselves on the top of Sgòr a' Chòinnich Beag at four o'clock, never having dropped below the 3,000 feet contour during the whole distance, unless for a very small bit at the foot of the latter hill. What was lacking of interest on the ridge itself was, however, greatly made up for by the magnificent panorama from Stob Coire Claurigh, and the view of the east face of Aonach Beag. Binnein Mòr to the south of Glen Nevis looked exceedingly graceful, and we considered it to be, perhaps, the shapeliest mountain in the Mamore Forest.

We now descended over soft snow and grass to Glen Nevis, reaching the path about a mile above Steall a little after five o'clock, which left us more than ample time to reach Achriabhach by seven, and get the trap which was in waiting to convey us to Fort-William.

J. A. PARKER.

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A VARIATION ON CIR MHOR.—On p. 215 of the current volume of the *Journal*, while speaking of the "Stone Shoot" ascent of Cir Mhor, Mr Thomson says, "one party is believed to have varied it by traversing to the right near the top, and coming out just under the peak." Mr Thomson refers here, I believe, to a variation followed in September last by E. W. Green (non-member) and myself, and again in May this year by W. Brown, H. C. Boyd, and myself. When standing by the cairn built by Messrs Naismith and Thomson at the

head of the Stone Shoot, a broad grassy ledge will be noticed running across the rocks on the right, and above this ledge a gully also running across and up the rocks.

Green and I took to this gully. 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 on to a broad grass platform, about fifty feet immediately below the summit. From this shelf it may be possible to continue the traverse right across to the pinnacle ridge, which is well seen from here, but we did not examine this route carefully. The obvious way up the rocks at the back of the shelf is by a groove which runs up for thirty 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 almost entirely by friction, so that there is thirty feet of very hard work—something like climbing the trunk of a tree. Fortunately there are two or three boulders jammed in the groove, which give welcome resting-places. Green and I had first to remove a big stone which was lying loosely in the groove about nine feet from the platform. I stood on Green's shoulders, and found it so loose that I was able to throw it out. Green then gave me a shove into the groove, and with many rests I struggled up. I then anchored, and helped him into the groove with the rope, and he followed to the top.

From the top of the groove a few feet of rock and a grass ledge led to the summit. On the second visit we determined to try the groove without the help of a shoulder and a shove. This added six feet or so to a tough bit of work. This route has the advantage of continuing the climb to the very summit. It may be combined with the trap dyke climb, or the easy route, by traversing across below the cave to the cairn.

J. H. BELL.

THE BUCHAILLE ETIVES.—On Tuesday, 30th April, while stopping at Dalness, in Glen Etive, I ascended both the Buchailles. The Buchaille Mòr consists of a long ridge extending E.N.E. from Dalness to the top of the Pass of Glencoe. The S.S.W. summit Stob na Bròige,\* the "Stob of the Shoes," is the 3,120 feet point of the 1-inch O.S. It rises steeply straight from Dalness, and the view from it is in some respects finer than that from the higher top. There is little dip between it and Stob Coire Altruim,\* the "Stob of the Corrie of the Sanctuary" (3,065 feet).† The next summit, Stob na Doire,\* "Stob of the Cope," is a fine isolated top. My aneroid agrees with that of Mr Colin Phillip in making it about 3,250 feet. Stob Dearg (3,245 feet) is the name of the highest summit. From it the mountain

\* Local name.

† Six-inch O.S.

descends steeply, and in places precipitously, towards Kingshouse Inn. I found, by the way, that the "Mountaineering Club" stood in high repute in the district for the feat of having climbed this face a twelve-month ago.

The Buchaille Bheag is a smaller ridge, both as regards length and height, and runs almost parallel to the Mòr between it and Bidean nam Bian, little more than a mile to the N.W. Its N.E. summit, Stob nan Cabar, "Stob of the Antlers" (2,547 feet), is above Glencoe. Stob Coire Raineach\* (3,029 feet), "Corrie of the Ferns," comes next. There is a considerable dip between this and Stob Dubh, the southern and highest summit (3,129 feet).

I visited in turn all the tops of both. There was nothing in any way remarkable about the excursion, and my excuse for this note is that the day being lovely and hot and fairly clear, I was able on the spot to make notes of the views, which I now give for the benefit of future visitors.

From Stob Dearg, Ben Nevis is nearly twelve miles to the N.N.W., and the Observatory can be plainly distinguished without glasses. The *arête* connecting it with Càrn Mòr Dearg is well seen. Against this, showing no skyline and seen end on, is the ridge of An Garbhanach and An Gearanach above Steall in Glen Nevis. Am Bodach, "the old man" (3,382 feet), to the left of this ridge and rather nearer, and Sgòr à Mhaim (3,601 feet) just to the left of it, the latter showing a fine outline. To the right of Càrn Mòr Dearg is Aonach Beag (4,060 feet); while between them in the distance a fine snowy cone is probably Garbh Leac (3,673 feet), or some other hill near Clunie Inn. Binnein Mòr, on the S. side of Glen Nevis, looks as if joined to Aonach Beag. Between the former and the big mass of which Stob Coire an Easain and Stob Choire Claurigh are the principal hills, a distant flattish range is probably Sròn a' Choire Garbh, in the Glengarry forest. Stob Choire Claurigh\* (3,858 feet) is 12 miles off, and a shade to the W. of N. Next come Stob Choire an Easain Mhoir (3,658 feet) and Stob a' Choire Mheadhonaiche\* (3,610 feet), standing well out above Loch Treig, which however is not seen. Farther off is the Creag Meaghaidh (3,700 feet) range above Loch Laggan, through the depression of which, about forty miles away, are the Monadhliaths, flat and uninteresting as usual. Then, much nearer, the hills in the Ben Alder district to the north of that mountain, culminating in Geal Charn\* (3,688 feet) and Aonach Beag (3,646 feet). Through the pass between these and Ben Alder—the Bealach Dubh—the hills in the Gaick forest and the Western Cairngorms(?) can be seen. Then Ben Alder, and to the south of it the eye ranges over the unbroken expanse of the wide and flat moor of Rannoch, with its humerous lochs, stretching east for twenty miles, the depression being continued through Lochs Rannoch and Tummel for another twenty-five. On its south side Schichallion (3,547 feet) is very conspicuous, with Beinn a' Chuallaich (2,925 feet)

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\* Six-inch O.S.

opposite it on the north side. Between these two Ben Vrackie above Pitlochry can be seen ; and just to the right of it, and still farther away, Mount Blair in Glenisla, Forfarshire ; while yet farther, and more to the right, the round-topped Catlaw in Glen Prosen is visible. To the right of Schichallion the Cairn Maigr group. Then Meall Garbh and An Stuc, the sharp notch between them being conspicuous ; next Ben Lawers, towering up to a height of 3,984 feet. Meall nan Tarmachan (3,421 feet) above Killin, and Meall Ghaordie (3,407 feet) to the S. of Glenlyon. Then the mountains at the head of that glen, Ben Creachan and Ben Achallader. Close to us, across the head of Glen Etive, Sròn Greise and the Clach Leathad (Clachlet). A peep of a hill between its two peaks I could not "locate." Stob Ghabhar is next. Then our old friend Beinn Eunaich above Dalmally. Nearer again Stob Coir an Albannaich, one of the finest looking hills in sight. Then the several tops of Cruachan. To his left, and half way between him and Stob Ghabhar in the far distance, upwards of seventy miles off, are Goatfell and other Arran peaks. Ben Starav to the right of Cruachan, and much nearer. The Paps of Jura over its right shoulder. Beinn Sguliaird (3,058 feet) between the heads of Lochs Etive and Creran. Beinn Fhionnlaidh next ; and then Sgòr na h-Ulaidh, with Ben More in Mull seen over his left shoulder, and a glorious peep of Loch Linnhe with Lismore resting on its bosom, and the Sound of Mull winding away towards the Atlantic. The Buchaille Bheag shows no skyline, being entirely backed by Bidean nam Bian, whose ridges and faces, especially towards Glencoe, are very grand. The Bidean is still heavily snow clad, as are also Ben Nevis and the Aonachs, otherwise the fortnight that has elapsed since the Easter Meet has almost cleared the hills of snow—none has been crossed to-day. Bidean nam Bian is the highest mountain in Argyllshire (3,766 feet) ; its name may either mean "the peaks of the mountains" or "the peaks of the skins," more probably the latter. Between it and the ridge of Aonach Eagach, on the north side of Glencoe, there is a beautiful view of the lower end of Loch Leven about Ballachulish and Loch Linnhe, with the glorious Ardgower mountains beyond, and over them the mountains of Rum(?). Immediately to the left of Ben Nevis, Sgòr a Mhaim ; then left again Stob Ban, looking a fine bold cone. Between them a distant hill is probably Gulvain in the Locheil forest.

The view from the southern top—Stob na Broige—is of course very similar. Stob Dearg, two miles to the E.N.E., naturally hides much. The Moor of Rannoch does not lie so immediately beneath us, and some of it is hidden, and the lovely peep of Loch Leven is lost. On the other hand, it is compensated for by a full-length view of Loch Etive. Beinn Doireann is seen between the Clach Leathad and Stob Ghabhar, and to its right Ben More and Am Binnein, Beinn Oss, and Beinn Laoigh, and the Loch Lomond Ben Vorlich. Some distant hills to the right of the latter are probably in Cowal. Mull is visible, but Ben More is hidden.

H. T. MUNRO.

COBBLER.—On the afternoon of the 25th May 1895, Mr Maclay and I got some good climbing on the north peak of the Cobbler. From the foot of the prominent gully on the Arrochar face of this peak (*Journal*, vol. iii., p. 162), a straight crack runs obliquely up the rocks to the left. The crack, which is not difficult, terminates at a sensational corner where the cliff overhangs. Turning the corner a narrow ledge brought us to a chimney, closed above by a large jammed rock. Maclay made more than one attempt to climb round the rock, but without success. We returned therefore to the corner, and found an easier route, that soon took us to the top in one or two zigzags. Time pressed, so we did not go on to the other tops, but came down the gully already referred to.

W. W. N.

A TRAMP THROUGH KNOIDART AND KINTAIL.—I had long desired to explore the range of country lying to the N.W. of Fort-William, and our Easter Meet there seemed to favour this enterprise. Being joined by two friends, Messrs Moncrieff and Mirylees, at the Alexandra, two days after the last echo of mirth and laughter had died away from the now cheerless rooms of the hotel, we three started for that thinly inhabited country known as Kintail and Knoidart.

The Arasaig mail coach, leaving daily at 8 A.M., brought us in three hours to the beginning of our work. Up Glen Finnan we tramped, and by a sort of track soon reached Corryhully, a shepherd's cottage some four miles from the main road.

Striking N.E., we toiled up the S.W. shoulder of Sgòr Choileam (3,164 feet), the top of which we duly reached in about two and a half hours. Sgòr Choileam is a pointed hill, with a N. and N.E. face well broken up; the side facing the Streaps is also very steep and craggy.\* We managed to secure a capital gissade down the N.E. corrie for some 500 feet. The twin pinnacles of Streap look very well from here, their N. faces standing out in black naked rock picked out by thread-like couloirs. The two rounded summits of Gulvain are due E., but there is nothing in them calculated to fire the zeal of an ultramontane. We made our way down the Allt a' Chaoruinn to the W. end of Loch Arkaig, and at Glendessarry, a large farmhouse, two miles N.W. from the loch, we asked for and obtained accommodation for the night. Next morning we continued on our way up Glen Dessarry. A very high hill in front, Sgùrr na h-Aide (2,818 feet), so attracted our attention by its sharp and narrow summit that we determined to set foot on it. The conformation of the hill presents a terraced outline of alternate slabs of rock with sloping ledges of grass, some broad, some narrow. Its appearance led us to expect some scrambling, and we were not disappointed. A very rugged descent in a northerly direction brought us to the top of the pass, the Màm na Cloich' Airde, famous in the days of the '45. Through the pass

\* *Vide* Mr Macpherson's Sketch, *Journal*, vol. i., p. 255.



runs a rough track leading to the head of Loch Nevis. The keeper at Carnach, a mile from the loch, put us up, and his ready hospitality and kindness will not be forgotten by one of us.

Next day we climbed Sgùr na Ciche (3,410 feet). After crossing the burn in front of the house the ascent commenced at once. We took a slanting course up the S.W. shoulder, and easily reached the neck, from which the final 500 feet had to be done. A thick mist was driving over the summit, and at this point things looked formidable. Steep pitches of rock were distorted by the vapour into frowning precipices; but as we pierced the veil the face resolved itself into nothing worse than a sharp series of steps and stairs.

As we lay curled about the cairn some doubt as to the nature of the descent beyond was felt by certain members of the party. We were soon reassured, however, by the sight of a stone wall! Pocketing our compasses we gladly followed it, and dispensing with sheep-tracks by a succession of elongated goat-bounds, reached the foot of the corrie—the Coire nan Gall. On looking back we were glad to reflect that the Highland air had indeed endowed us with the strength of goats, for the rock faces of the corrie were battlemented in a decidedly angry array. Five miles down the valley, partly over bog, partly over a nominal path, brought us to a keeper's house—Kinlochquoich. Here we obtained refreshment for our bodies, but the reverse for our minds, learning that had we kept the E. side of the Coire nan Gall, and rounded the shoulder of An t' Sail, we would have been rewarded by having an excellent shooting path, and finally a driving road leading to this very house. The path then so beautifully marked on the Gairowan river has practically no existence, but on the S. side a driving road has recently been constructed. Another five miles, this time along the road referred to, brought us to Quoich Bridge.

From Quoich Bridge our next day's work was an easy one. Ignoring the hills on either side (which I may remark, derive their beauty mainly from their rounded outlines and the verdure which clothes their tops), we made our way N. to Altbeithe, and then turning westwards we scaled the Bealach Dubh Leac.

A steep descent brought us to the main road, four and a-half miles from the head of Loch Duich. There we found quarters for some days at Shiel Inn. *Apropos* we may describe our experience to be Highland charges and very indifferent fare—*verbum sap.*

Our first day at Shiel came nearest in this journey to the heart's desire of a peak-bagger. First we scaled the dismal slope known on the O.S. as the contours of Sgùrr Fhuaran (3,505 feet). No interest in the climb, and by reason of the mist very little view. A rapid fall of 500 feet brought us face to face with an abrupt climb of some three hundred feet to the summit of Sgùrr na Carnach. Again a fall, and 500 feet of the Sgùrr na Ciste Duibhe loomed up in front of us. This surmounted, we found ourselves 3,370 feet above the level of the sea, and four miles from Shiel Inn.

The Saddle is certainly the most sporting hill of the district. It is a real rock mountain, and the ridge running S.E. from the summit is very narrow and serrated. Its southern dependency, Sgùrr na Sgine (3,098 feet), has a very narrow flat top, while the face that descends to the E. startles one by its abruptness.

We can cordially recommend this whole range to the rock climbers of the Club.

After a day's rest we resumed operations with Ben Attow (Beinn Fhada), which local credulity believes to be one of the highest hills in the Highlands. The Ordnance Map, however, has a different story to tell, the height there given being 3,383 feet. A combination of road, glen, and mountain slope led easily, but not without toil, to the summit.

Our next stage was to Cluny Bridge. There we found a quite admirable little inn of the simplest and most comfortable type. For the benefit of intending visitors it must be understood that the accommodation is small, but three or four men can be sure of entertainment. Aonachair Chrith, Maol Cheann-dearg, Sgùrr an Lochain, Carn Fuaralach, Garbh Leac, Sgùrr nan Conbhairean, are the giants which stand round this pleasant hostel—all affording the most excellent and varied scrambling.

Garbh Leac (pronounced *Crawlich*) is a short day's work, presenting absolutely no difficulty, yet with some interest as being the highest hill of the district (3,673 feet). Sgùrr nan Ceathramhan (pronounced *Kerrin*) has a good E. face; when I saw it steep snow slopes, broken up by rough pitches of rock stretched down from the ridge to the frozen loch. It is connected with Garbh Leac by a rather fine ridge (lowest point 3,000 feet), which as it merges in the S. face of Sgùrr nan Ceathramhan is broken up into several sharp pinnacles. These two hills, resembling in outline a double cone, are from their height and situation always prominent objects in the landscape.

We then tramped to Shiel, and thence ten miles farther to Glenelg, where we caught a homeward-bound steamer.

A. E. ROBERTSON.

DEPTH OF SNOW AT BEN NEVIS, 1894-95.

1894.	Inches.	1895.	Inches.
Nov. 1	- - - -	Feb. 1	- - - 33
„ 15	- - - 35	„ 15	- - - 33
Dec. 1	- - - 20	Mar. 1	- - - 37
„ 15	- - - 18	„ 15	- - - 43
		Apr. 1	- - - 47
1895.		„ 15	- - - 53
Jan. 1	- - - 26	May 1	- - - 43
„ 15	- - - 26	„ 15	- - - 6

Snow disappeared from gauge on 21st May. Maximum depth at gauge = 54 inches on 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th April.

About 5 inches of freshly fallen snow lay on the summit on the morning of 18th June, and at 8 P.M. on the 19th about 9 inches. All this freshly fallen snow had melted by 22nd June, and there has been none since.

W. S. BRUCE.

27th June 1895.

From the above table it will be seen, as compared with the record of previous years (Vol. II., p. 318, and Vol. III., p. 169), that the snow-fall of the past winter has been remarkably light—in fact, the lowest maximum reading for any year since the Observatory was opened. The maximum reading for the previous winter was 127 inches on 13th March.

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“TWO DAYS IN LOCHABER.”—The 1-inch Ordnance Map has led Mr A. E. Robertson into a not unnatural mistake in his interesting paper on page 270 of the current number of the *Journal*. The height of the bealach between the Aonachs and Càrn Mòr Dearg is really 2,709 feet (6-in. O.S.). The point marked 2,915 feet on the 1-inch map is a hump on the ridge leading up to Càrn Mòr Dearg. I once came down this ridge alone when it was entirely covered with hard frozen snow, and found it rather too “delightfully narrow.” As I had only the 1-inch map, I was considerably puzzled by my aneroid making the bealach apparently about 200 feet too low. Aonach means a “lump,” and although Aonach Beag is 61 feet higher than Aonach Mòr, it is certainly a much smaller lump of a hill, and is consequently well enough named.

H. T. MUNRO.

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BACK NOS. OF THE S.M.C. JOURNAL.—Mr Jackson, 77 Egerton Road, Fallowfield, near Manchester, is anxious to complete his set, and would be greatly indebted to any one who, having spare copies of Nos. 1, 2, or 6, would supply his needs. For Nos. 1 and 2 he is willing to give 2s. 6d. each, and for No. 6, 3s. 6d.

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#### MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

MY CLIMBS IN THE ALPS AND CAUCASUS. By A. F. Mummery.  
London: T. Fisher Unwin.

WE have read this book with a pleasure which is second only—and a good second—to the joy of climbing the great mountains themselves. Mr Mummery is not a scientist, nor a philosopher, nor, except in the last chapter, a disputant in the field of Alpine ethics. He is—better than all of these—a *raconteur* merely of certain very thrilling Alpine tales. Indeed, with a vivid recollection of how the Matterhorn was conquered, how the Schreckhorn was first added to the “play-ground of Europe,” and the great *arête* of the Weisshorn became a high road for the Alpine public, we do not remember anything more

thrilling than the author's victories over the Grépon, and the story of his climb over the Col du Lion. What matters it that the Col du Lion is the most "difficult, circuitous, and inconvenient method of getting from Zermatt to Breuil," and that the Aiguille de Grépon is simply a big stone on the side of Mont Blanc? The accident of height and position is a thing which we Scotch climbers have learned to despise, although few go so far as Mr Mummery, who has a tender side even for the pot-holes of Yorkshire. It is certainly disconcerting when the tripper who has panted up Ben Nevis by the path looks with ill-concealed contempt at the rope and other aids to safety with which you have armed yourself for an attack upon the Tower Ridge. But you have your reward meted out to you in the "wild joy of gripping grey brown ledges," just the same as if no easier route existed on the other side of the hill. So, in reading Mr Mummery, the insignificance of his Aiguilles, the circuitousness of his routes, the inconvenience of his cols and passes, minimise hardly at all the interest and pleasure with which we see our author conquer each successive difficulty, and emerge victorious on the top of his virgin peak.

Partly, no doubt, it is the fact that those peaks *were* virgin till Mr Mummery went forth to attack them that lends so intense an interest to his descriptions. In still greater degree, however, the book is charming on account of the piquant and racy style in which it is written. To say that Mr Mummery writes as well as he climbs would be to belittle his prowess as a mountaineer, and to challenge an absurd comparison with classics like Tyndall and Mr Leslie Stephen. Mr Mummery is never perhaps eloquent, but he has his "purple patches," which bring the reader very near to the great mountains. Can you not see and feel this scene, and revel in its delights?—

"Whilst these details were being satisfactorily completed, the heavy luggage of the party was quietly sunning himself in a comfortable nook, and absorbing that mixture of sunlight atmosphere, glittering lake, and jagged ridge, which makes up a summit view. Long hours of exertion urged to the utmost limit of the muscles, and the wild excitement of half-won but yet doubtful victory, are changed in an instant to a feeling of ease and serenity so perfect, that only the climber who has stretched himself on some sun-warmed, wind-sheltered nook can realise the utter oblivion which lulls every suspicion of pain and care, and he learns that however happiness may shun pursuit, it may nevertheless sometimes be surprised basking on the weird granite ridges."

The vigorous raciness which distinguishes all his narratives never fails him, even when the subject is of the most commonplace character. To take one instance among many. Who is not familiar with the difficulty of interrupting a red-hot description of some mountain scene to impart the prosaic information that the party here sat down and had lunch? And if you desire to enforce the fact that bloater-paste was the staple of your repast, a fragrance of bloater-paste will certainly haunt your narrative from that point onwards. But Mr

Mummery has no such difficulty. He can describe a lunch in fifty different ways. You read of his *dejeuners* on the rocks with the same pleasure (almost) as he evidently eats them, and watch the morning mists curling on the opposite ridge, and the black crags towering above, up which a way has to be forced. This is the same realism which in other places throws your nerves into a flutter when a solitary hobnail is the author's only support, or a staircase has to be cut down tottering ice-flakes with the blue depths of a *bergschrund* underneath, or the party is descending by the light of a lantern through the ice-fall of the Glacier du Geant.

Mr Whympere has somewhere remarked that it is almost impossible to give a truthful picture of Alpine difficulties without producing an impression of greater difficulty than actually exists. It is possible that this fact may explain the author's failure, in some instances, to *show* the reader how certain difficulties were overcome. The situation is described, and seems impossible. Mr Mummery gets a "back up" from his herculean friend Hastings, makes a leap, a wriggle, and while the agonised reader is watching space for his fall, lo! the thing is done. Mr Mummery, with a jest on his lips, is pulling up his less agile companions. Perhaps Hastings could relate how imperceptible cracks and crannies are made to fit into the wriggings of Mr Mummery's anatomy, so as to explain what is now obscure. But, as narrated by the chief actor, it is all as mysterious as the manufacture of omelettes out of a conjurer's hat.

There are other points we could note with approval,—the author's modesty, the utter absence of all brag and bounce to mar the story of his splendid exploits, and the generosity which gives Burgener, Zurfluh, Hastings, &c., the credit of any exceptional achievement. Space, however, compels that we should devote what remains of this notice to remarking upon certain grave faults of manner and of judgment which mar an otherwise perfect book.

These, for the most part, are contained in the last chapter, which to a certain extent sins against the ethics of the author's own preface, and was, in any event, quite unnecessary. It is full of the most inflammatory topics, treated in an inflammatory and rather flippant manner. Why insinuate, even if true, that Burgener, or some other unnamed guide, possesses more knowledge of mountains than is to be found in the "Badminton Library," or sneer at the "precious individuals" composing the Alpine Club, or "the lightning-like flashes of the Badminton and All England series"? This is unworthy of a man whose outstanding qualities are generously admitted by the "precious individuals" in question. We confess also to a sense of weariness in listening to the everlasting capital which is made out of the foibles of the "cheap tripper." As it is no sin either to be a tripper or to travel cheaply, Mr Mummery might have contented himself with denouncing, as he does vigorously in another place, "the fibreless contents of fashionable clothes," who discredit a noble sport by their silly conduct. Such a person was the "mountaineer" the author met at the Monte

Rosa hotel, who had ascended the Eiger because he wanted to "finish off" the Oberland.

There is a deal of intolerant talk also, amid much that is sound and wise, in the author's remarks upon guideless climbing. To be "pushed and hustled up peaks by Swiss peasants" may be very contemptible, but it is not a correct description of the majority of less practised climbers, who habitually employ guides. Guideless ascents are the ideal of the sport; they are what we in Scotland are proud of practising in our limited sphere; they develop independence of judgment, fertility of resource, and steadiness in danger; practised at first in moderation on snow climbs in the Highlands, and in summer among the rocks of Skye, they afford a far better training than the pursuit of a "weary certainty behind two untiring guides"; when practised in the Alps, on the flawless cliffs of the Grépon and Dent du Requin, they are among the finest achievements in the annals of climbing. But when all that has been said, what sane man would dispense with the services of a guide before he could guide himself, which is the mayhap-contemptible state through which all but heaven-born climbers must advance to proficiency?

The same fallacy is responsible for certain extraordinary statements regarding the use of the rope, which has always been regarded as affording the best possible protection to young climbers, while they are still learning under what conditions they may safely dispense with it. Surely the whole philosophy on the subject is summed up in this, that the writer requires the rope when Mr Mummery would scorn its aid, and that Mr Mummery "ties up" where Zurfluh would prefer to be free. A protest may be necessary against the excessive timidity which soon will rope at the Hörnli; but what we regret in Mr Mummery's views is the tendency they will have to encourage recklessness under the name of daring, and a habit of "rollicking on the ridges" to the disregard of all wise and sensible precautions.

"Climbing two on a rope" is another vexed question, which Mr Mummery sums up in the following pregnant sentences:—"The truth would appear to be that if from a party of three you remove the worst climber, the two remaining men will, on steep slopes, be distinctly safer than the whole party. If, on the other hand, you remove either of the more competent men, then the remaining two will be very much less safe." This is excellent philosophy, and is driven home by most forcible illustrations on pp. 350 and 351. In Scotland we go on the assumption that a party of two is quite legitimate, and is certainly the fastest on rocks; but as regards snow-climbs, and crossing snow-covered glaciers, the majority of climbers will, we believe, adhere to the ordinary rule that the party should consist of not less than three. The author's plan for a couple of men to cross a glacier with two lengths of thin rope looped we consider unworkable. Almost every Alpine climb involves some glacier below and rock above, so that the climbers would either have to carry 120 feet of thin rope in addition to an ordinary length, or use the double rope during

the whole day, which on loose rocks would prove an intolerable nuisance.

We must not omit to mention the delightful chapter by Mrs Mummery upon the ascent of the Teufelsgrat. If Miss Bristow can show the members of the Alpine Club how to climb difficult rocks, her sister is able to read a lesson in style to some of the contributors to the *Alpine Journal*, and even to the talented gentlemen who coruscate in these pages!

No Alpine book is complete without its pictures, and Mr Mummery does not scorn their aid. The pity only is that the really excellent photogravures from photos by Mr Holmes, and others, should not possess the additional excellence of contributing some little quota of explanation and elucidation to the letterpress. The general reader may be content to know that such and such a rock is the Grépon, but the climber who reads the text carefully wishes to see where the author ascended. In very few instances is this ambition gratified, it being generally impossible to trace the smallest correspondence between the author's description and the illustrations. This should be considered in a later edition, along with the advisability of retaining the familiar woodcuts which have seen better days in the *Century Magazine*.

These, however, are but spots upon the sun of Mr Mummery's success. Briefly stated, they consist of a too vigorous flouting of the Mrs Grundy of the Alpine Club. Some may appreciate this; but even those who, like ourselves, dissent from it most strongly, will acknowledge their indebtedness to the author for a work which is little short of a revelation of what modern rock-climbing really means. Lastly, it is a powerful vindication of a form of pleasure which is little understood, even by professed lovers of the mountains,—the pleasure of "matching one's skill against the dumb, passionless resistance of the cliffs," and of "beating the long gullies of black ice into submission." And the counterpart to that pleasure, when the weary round of daily toil shuts the mountains from our sight, is the pleasure of reading Mr Mummery's book.

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THE ALPS FROM END TO END. By Sir WILLIAM MARTIN CONWAY.

With 100 full-page illustrations by A. D. M'CORMICK. Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co. 1895.

IT is no mean task that any author sets himself when he ventures to write a book purporting to deal solely with the Alps. Not that those regions have in themselves lost any of their old prestige, or possess in any less degree the pleasures they have ever been wont to give; but they do lack that virgin novelty, that peculiar and weird charm, which is the special feature of an untrodden and perchance unknown region. It is said that not a peak nor a pass exists now in Switzerland but which is known, and has been conquered by the undaunted energy and persistent efforts of the Alpine climber.

It is, however, more by contrast than by anything else that the

Alps do not now excite in the minds of climbers the same intense interest they did some five-and-twenty years ago. Every year brings its contribution of virgin peaks attempted or conquered in some far distant part of the earth. Difficulties and dangers, in some cases insurmountable, or overcome by the hairbreadth escape of life or limb, excite to a breathless pitch the attention of the reader. Thus we have almost come to look upon an ascent as something unworthy of record unless its difficulties entail some extraordinary physical exertion, some feat of endurance, some abnormal prehensile power in the tips of one's fingers, or peculiar stability of mental equilibrium.

There will still exist, however, a considerable proportion of ordinary mortals, who, while they love to climb even for the physical pleasures associated with the exercise, still more enjoy the many other exhilarating concomitants which appeal to the eye and the other senses. To such Sir William Conway's book will have a special charm. He possesses no mean descriptive power; and if we might venture a criticism adverse to the somewhat arduous part taken by Mr A. D. M'Cormick—the depiction of a hundred full-page illustrations—Sir William's word-pictures far and away excel those of his artist's productions. Many of these latter, indeed the larger proportion, it must be confessed, are vague and indistinct, with but little or no realistic value.

If novelty is nowadays a feature of paramount importance in the production of any work on mountaineering, then the present book can hardly claim to reach the necessary standard. Nevertheless there is a freshness about it which renders it not altogether devoid of novel interest. The reader is not, in the usual conventional way, located at a centre, made to ascend some particular peak, and duly brought back at night to his starting-place; but he is carried over one pass to another, down one peak and up another—the scene constantly changes, and with it the ever-varying description of places and people.

To those not quite so familiar as the author with the country and the particular places traversed, it would, we venture to think, have considerably enhanced the interest of the book had there been some sort of an outline-sketch or map to illustrate the route taken. Familiar, it may be, at one point with the author's particular region of action, the reader soon finds himself wandering through a district unknown to him; and in order to graphically connect the one with the other, he is obliged either to plod on disinterestedly till he again reaches known ground, or to seek, by the aid of his Baedeker, to trace the route upon one of those well-planned maps. For a book essentially written for a popular purpose, and for an unpretentious climbing circle of readers, the omission of a plan of route is unquestionably a defect.

At the end of the book is a chapter contributed by the Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge, than possibly no better could be found to act as guide to amateurs wishing to climb in certain regions. In a few pages Mr Coolidge concisely and clearly depicts several excursions, and the best centres for making them. To any one unfamiliar with the Alps, yet



desirous of selecting places of interest and requiring directions regarding routes, no better instruction could be desired than from a perusal of these few pages.

Sir William Conway's work is more likely to find a place on the shelves of public and popular libraries, than among the collections of Alpine literature. Its merit rests rather in its literary and descriptive power than in any technical mountaineering qualities; and if we might, in conclusion, venture a surmise, it would be that the author's aim was the production of a popular work rather than one of any intrinsic mountaineering merit. In that he has succeeded.

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# Ascents

<u>1894</u>			
Jan'y.	1	Ben Each	2660 feet
"	"	Stuc a' Chroin	3189 "
March	17	Arthur Seat	823 "
	23	Little Cairntable	1693 "
"	"	Cairntable	1942 "
	25	Black Law (Stewarton)	787 "
May	12	Meikle Bin	187.0 "
	24	Ben Lui } pg. 163	3708 "
"	"	Ben Oss }	3374 "
June	15	Beinn a' Chaolais } Jura	2407 "
	16	" Siantaidh } p. 164-5.	2477 "
"	"	" an Oir }	2571 "
July	14	Ben Vorlich (Lock Earn)	3224 "
	15	Stob Coire an Lochan	3497 "
Augt.	18	Finto	2335 "
Sept.	7	Dunglass (Strathblane)	501 "
<u>1895</u>			
April	14	Sandlock Hill (Lock Ryan)	803 "
	20	Killeter	978 "
May	4	" <sup>411 11 11 11</sup> Trenchment (over Broadfield)	700 "
	11	Fynloch	1313 "
	22	Ailsa Craig	1097 "
June	2	Auchensaugh Hill	1286 "
	15	Tullich Hill	
July	14	Hill between Lerwick & Scalloway	
Augt.	8	Neilston Pad	854 "
	17	Allermuir Hill	1617 "
Decr.	25	Carn Liath or Braigh Coire Chruim- -thalgairn (Ben y Gloc) Aneroid gave	3350 "
	26	Burnam Hill	1324 "