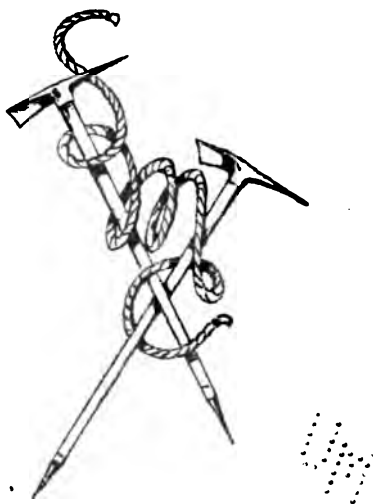


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BEN NEVIS CHIMNEY.

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BEN NUIS CHIMNEY.

BY LEHMANN J. OPPENHEIMER.

WHAT a luxury it is to the climber to have had his chosen centre explored, so that every gully is known by number, letter, or name, and described so minutely that, as has been sarcastically remarked, he knows with which foot to start from the hotel. In his rucksack is a list of climbs in their order of difficulty and danger ; if he be ambitious, he needs waste no time on those enjoyable ascents which are the scorn of the scorner ; by careful selection he may also avoid the risk of defeat. Luxuries pall with use, however, and for a change the uncertainties attendant on climbing unfrequented crags may afford keener enjoyment.

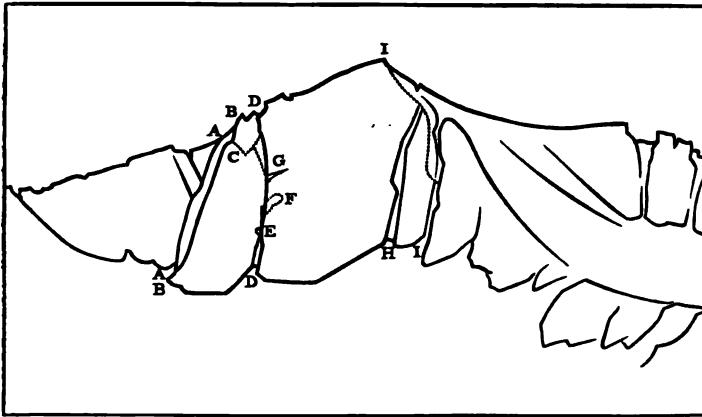
The island of Arran, overflowing every summer with mountain-loving visitors, might seem an unpromising hunting ground for such a place ; yet, of the thousands who yearly find delight on Goat Fell, but few stray on to the range of hills divided from it by Glen Rosa, and the cliffs on this range—the A'Chir, Bealach an Fhir-bhogha, Ben Tarsuinn, and Ben Nuis precipices—have hardly been touched. In spite of a taste for the pleasures of uncertainty, seeing from the shore some well-marked gullies on the face of Ben Nuis, I promptly tried to discover what climbs had been made on it. I was not very successful. All I found was a hint in a paper on Cir Mhor, by Dr Inglis Clark. He says : “ At first sight the lower part of the Ben Nuis precipice seems not forbidding. Granite slabs at no great angle do not look

very formidable, but, as we found to our cost, they are difficult, yes, and dangerous in the extreme, and despite their mild appearance will defy the best among us." This promised well, and, as Baker and Puttrell intended to call at Arran for a day's climb on their way to the Cairngorms, and asked me to look out for something new, I went to Ben Nuis with my wife to see what there was to be done. Mounting from Glen Rosa on slopes covered with sweetly scented bog-myrtle, by the side of a torrent which fell merrily in the sunshine over slabs of granite into cool, smoothed hollows, we came to a large, shallow corrie. Antlers had been visible from lower down, always on the sky line, retreating as we advanced, and now a herd of deer was in flight over heather and boulders, bounding gracefully up the hill side, standing motionless together once or twice to watch us, and then off again and across into another corrie. A nearer view of Ben Nuis was rather disappointing. From some miles away two gullies to the right of the peak promised good rock-climbing, but turned out to be largely filled with steep grass. The base of the precipice, immediately below the peak, seemed hopeless; a gully, or chimney, curving over to the left, appeared feasible and interesting; two others, rather indefinite, still more to the left, comparatively easy. One of the latter we climbed and then traversed into the upper part of the curved chimney, which ended in winding caves amongst a pile of boulders. Wriggling through we found ourselves suddenly in a new country—grassy banks, dotted with sheep, sloping to the summit of Ben Nuis a hundred feet higher—rocks, deer, and heather, and the wildness of the corrie left entirely behind.

We were quite satisfied that good climbing was to be had up the curved chimney, and a few days later—18th August 1901—six of us were at the foot of the precipice to make or watch the attempt. Baker and Puttrell thought an hour and a half or two hours would be sufficient for the climb, and my brother offered to walk round with Mrs Baker and my wife to join us at the top, after which we were to follow the ridge round to Cir Mhor together.

The foot of the gully seemed simple. The side walls

offered no assistance, it is true, but the bed, a rounded slab, 50 feet high, was not very steep. It was in three sections, first an easy 15 feet, with a grass ledge at the top, then 20 feet rather steeper, followed by another 15 feet of slab which we could not see from below. Baker and I waited on the ledge while Puttrell tried the middle part. It was evidently not so easy as it looked. He tried several times, but only got a few feet up. Baker tried with the same result. Altogether it was an ignominious performance



BEN NUIS FROM BEN A'CHLIABHAIN.

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. } EASY GULLIES. | F. TRAVERSE ROUND SECOND JAMMED STONES. |
| B. } | G. SECOND LEDGE. |
| C. TRAVERSE FROM B INTO BEN NUIS CHIMNEY. | H. STEEP GRASSY GULLY. |
| D. BEN NUIS CHIMNEY. | I. GREEN AND BOYD'S CLIMB. |
| E. FIRST JAMMED STONES. | |

before the ladies, who were waiting to see the start. Where better men had failed it was useless for me to try, so Baker steadied me while Puttrell stood on my shoulders and stepped off on to a tuft of grass in the angle between the slab and gully wall. I held his other foot as high up as possible, and by dint of great exertion with the flat of his hands, and digging his right foot fast into the grassy angle, he succeeded in reaching the top of the middle section. Here he rested, spread-eagled over the bend in the slab, while we watched the water, deflected from its natural channel, pouring from his knickers and boots. "Why

don't you move on out of the wet?" we asked, after he had stayed long enough to recover his breath, for it looked to us as though he might now stand up and walk away to a place of safety. Little by little he struggled up, and his boots gradually disappeared from view. At last he shouted that he was right, and Baker and I followed with considerable assistance from the rope at the start, and found the slab's unseen upper part as awkward as it had appeared easy from below. Had it been higher in the climb it would have been too dangerous to attempt; being near the bottom Puttrell took the risk of a slip.

The next pitch was more of the sort of thing we were used to. The gully narrowed to a chimney which cut deeply into the mountain. Forty-five feet directly above us was a group of jammed stones, to reach which we first had to work with back and foot, upwards and far inwards, until the back of the chimney began to overhang, when we worked upwards and outwards. On the jammed stone Puttrell stood to be photographed by my brother below. Unfortunately his efforts to make himself tidy, his smile and attitude of careless defiance were all thrown away. When the plate was developed it required diligent search to find him. I had time enough to admire the scenery from the jammed stone, while Baker, on a shelf of the left wall higher up, looked after Puttrell. The slabs below looked as formidable, now, as they had proved themselves, and (on account of its gloom, perhaps) the chimney, up which we had just come, appeared even worse. Above, the climbing seemed easy. Appearances, however, deceived us throughout the day. A steep, rounded knob, blocking the bed of the gully, offered convenient holds, but the granite here was disintegrated and crumbled away when tested. Puttrell had a stiff struggle to climb it without trusting to anything doubtful; and after we had all passed the obstacle he prepared for what, from the base of the precipice, had appeared the worst part of the climb, the surmounting of the second and largest group of jammed stones, 170 feet up. On nearing we gave up all thought of climbing straight up the chimney. It was agreed that we should have to leave it and make a traverse on the cliff face.

To escape from the chimney some very stiff back and foot work was necessary, and while Puttrell tried this, Baker and I made ourselves as secure as possible. There was nothing to hold (a characteristic of the climb), but we stood in the steep chimney-bed and wedged ourselves tight with back and knees. Meanwhile Puttrell, hidden by a bend in the rock walls, was heard scraping his way up. Then came a long pause. "Are you right?" "No! keep quite firm where you are." Another long pause. Water was streaming down the walls, more particularly on to Baker, who, soaked through and numb with cold, began to get impatient, and urged Puttrell to move on, but the latter was wise enough to refuse to hurry. He was now at the most difficult bit of the climb. He had reached the edge of the chimney's right wall, but found that, in order to be able to use his hands to complete the exit, he would have to turn over, face downwards, all the while keeping wedged fast across the chimney. This sounds rather incomprehensible. I do not mean that he had to turn head downwards in the manner of the never-to-be-forgotten illustration of a certain Dolomite climb. He turned round as in bed—not quite so easy a proceeding when the body is bridged across a cleft and sustained merely by constant pressure against the opposing walls. The feat was successfully accomplished, and Baker and I followed with more or less aid from the rope. I tried to avoid using it, but in reversing at the top my feet slipped on the wall and I came on it for a moment. Had I been leading I should have had a nasty fall.

We had a rest on the long bilberry-covered ledge which we reached, and wished the remainder of lunch had been in our pockets instead of with the ladies, who should, by this time, have been waiting for us on the top for an hour or two. Having got out of the chimney our next problem was how to get into it again above the jammed stones. All we saw before us was a very bad upward traverse away from them on the cliff face, which is here built up of steep slabs, devoid of handholds, but provided with tufts of grass along a few incipient cracks, and here and there also where the angle of the rocks has allowed a sprinkling of earth to gather. It seemed impossible to climb the lowest part of

these slabs unaided, so Puttrell stood on my shoulders and tried the part above. He was afraid, however, that the grass tufts would not bear him, and came down again. Baker, being lighter, took the lead, and, standing on Puttrell's shoulders for a start, while I held both ropes, threaded through a hole we discovered in the rock, he made a very precarious traverse to a corner thirty feet away, from which he worked his way upwards and back until directly above us. On the lower part of the slabs Puttrell and I, to use a too-commonly adopted phrase, "found the value of the moral support of the rope," that is to say, we were partially hauled up; after which a short descent brought us to the top of the jammed stones. We were bound to go on now, for the traverse was impracticable to return by. In front was the first easy bit of the climb, a 40 feet vegetable chimney, steep enough, but, as the angle lessened above it, we thought our difficulties were over. A stretch of broken rocks followed, and 15 feet of stiff back and knee work brought us on to a deep grassy platform, with a new problem set well back at the end of it. This was a 50 feet chimney, divided throughout its height by a thin rib. Both divisions looked feasible, and with any other rock they probably would have been, but the granite was so smooth in one place, and so rotten in another, that nothing could be done. The left wall of the gully was of the "boiler plate" type, worse looking than the traverse lower down. On the right we could step round from our platform to another long ledge of grass and bilberry on the cliff face. This we followed to its end, 50 feet away, and tried the cliff above it at various points without success. Puttrell wanted to traverse out another 50 feet on the rocks, but we dissuaded him. It would have been very risky, and there was no hold or belaying-pin for the rope anywhere near us. While debating what to do we heard a shout from below. The ladies were there again, anxious for our safety. To watch a climb from below is generally more trying to the nerves than to lead up it. The inaction and the impossibility of seeing the smaller ledges and holds intensify the strain, and when, in reply to the ladies' queries, we had to shout that we were only getting on moderately, I am afraid we

did not diminish their anxiety. "Shall we send for a rope to let down to you?" they shouted, after waiting some time. "No, thanks," we answered, and, disgusted at making such an exhibition before them, we returned to try the chimney again. Puttrell struggled at it in vain for a long time, and then my wife shouted, "Do let us send for a rope! You look in a fearful position." We had a consultation. Six hours had already been spent in the chimney, and we had only climbed 240 out of over 400 feet. It would be very ignominious, but as we saw no way out as yet, and darkness would soon be on us, we agreed, and my brother set off quickly for Glen Rosa, the ladies returning to the top of the chimney.

Baker then offered to try the tufts of grass on the left wall. It was risky, and, as he cautiously climbed from one to another, Puttrell and I stood well back in the recess, prepared, in case of a slip, to pull him in on to the grass platform. Some of the tufts showed signs of giving way, but they sufficed for the moment's use, and 40 feet up, to our delight, he reached steep grass, at the top of which, 70 feet above us, was a good ledge. This, I found, on following to be the traverse my wife and I had made from the gully to the left. The remaining 100 feet being easy we unroped to move more quickly, and, half an hour after we had consented to be dragged up, we were out on the ridge, greedily devouring the remains of lunch, while the ladies lectured us on the folly and madness of the sport. I thought that Puttrell had escaped this, but he told me afterwards, that on putting his head out of the final cave, my wife addressed him in most uncomplimentary terms, and when he emerged unroped, without Baker and me—we were coiling the rope lower down—there was a scene for half a minute.

No one suggested following the ridge to Cir Mhor as arranged. Our principal aim was to get down in time to stop the rescue party. But for this we would have lingered on the top, as the sun was setting in state, and on our way we often glanced back at the purple peak of Ben Nuis, standing dark and solemn against the golden light. Soon the jagged upper ridges on our left flushed, and the Ayrshire hills and meadows became one glow of colour—patches of

rainbow-like amber and emerald, bathed in ever-changing rosy mists, and less substantial looking than the water on which they seemed to rest.

In the twilight, some way down the valley, we met my brother, accompanied by two gentlemen who had volunteered for the rescue, and a couple of keepers with ropes and lanterns. I am afraid we disappointed them by extricating ourselves. The lady at the first farm was also disappointed. We heard that she had threatened to stay up, have a good tea ready, and horsewhip us afterwards. So we missed more than one adventure that night.

To those who, like myself, prefer to be more strongly impressed by the grandeur of the rock scenery than by the difficulty of the climb, Ben Nuis Chimney is not to be recommended. The views are fine, but not comparable with those on many easier climbs. I have done too little in Scotland to know what to rank it with. It was certainly stiffer than the far more magnificent "Church Door Buttress" proved ten days later. It disappointed us to find that many of the difficult parts were the least interesting, and some of them even looked easy. I think that perhaps the large scale of the rock on Ben Nuis deceives the eye. There are numerous fair-sized platforms on the cliff, which give it the appearance of being broken up and adapted for climbing, but a closer acquaintance shows the rock walls separating them to be higher than was anticipated at a distance, and so rounded and destitute of holds that the ascent from one ledge to another is at least perilous, if not impossible.

On returning home I made more inquiries about previous ascents of the precipice. Apparently it was climbed for the first time on 6th July 1895, by Messrs Green and Boyd, who chose the well-marked gully most to the right of the peak. This they followed for some distance, and then made an upward traverse to the left, until they reached the summit (S.M.C.J., Vol. IV., p. 63). A few years later this climb was repeated by Messrs Inglis Clark and Raeburn, who also ascended the two easy gullies to the left, and tried the slabs on the face below the peak. These look exceedingly difficult, and appear to have proved also very

dangerous, the climbers feeling lucky to get safely down again, and expressing their opinion of them in the words I have already quoted. No other attempts appear to have been made on the Ben Nuis cliffs.

Another mountain mapped out and its solitudes disturbed ; one climb less for the despiser of trodden paths ; but for him, there are scores of gullies hereabouts unclimbed yet—unattempted even—and though description may ruin the fascination of a climb for the few, it has advantages for the many, which I have too often experienced to depreciate.

THE "MUNRO'S" OF SCOTLAND.

BY A. E. ROBERTSON.

PEAK-BAGGING and record-breaking are somewhat, I fear, looked down upon by the members of the S.M.C. And outside of the Club they are as a rule regarded in the same unfavourable light. The other day, when telling a friend some of my experiences in endeavouring to climb every hill over 3,000 feet in Scotland, he could not see the point of it at all. "Why should you want to climb every hill?" he queried, and then irreverently added, "no one has ever kissed every lamp-post in Princes Street, and why should any one want to?" Yet it must be confessed that the writer has never looked at it in this profane light, and that for many years past he has very much wanted to kiss every summit that finds a place in the historic "Tables." And in a word be it said, after many vicissitudes and exertions, he at length, last September, in Glencoe, wiped out the last of the 3,000 footers, some 283 separate mountains in all, according to Munro's list.

The Editor has asked me in view of this to give some of my impressions of the hills of Scotland as a whole, and I gladly respond, though I must say his request has been found far from easy to fulfil.

The campaign has been a desultory one, and has occupied about ten years. It was begun with no thought of ever climbing them all, but simply from a desire to obtain a general knowledge of the Highland hills. In this way about a hundred, scattered up and down through the country, were climbed. In 1898 a three months' holiday added some seventy-five to the list. The thought then occurred to me that the thing might be completed, and another three months' holiday in 1899 in which some seventy-two new hills were "bagged," brought the goal in sight, which was at length attained this autumn.

The first thought that strikes one in looking back over the hills of Scotland as a whole, is that there are almost none that have not some fairly easy route to the top—and I regret to say it. For although the most incorrigible of

peak-baggers I love a climb as well. Like the keeper I once asked if he would have a dram or a pint of beer, I most emphatically reply, "Both is best!" I only wish I could tell the Club of some far-away unknown peak bristling with difficulties on all sides, but the fact is there are none. The only hills where there are no easy ways to the top are certain of the Coolins in Skye, Sgurr Dubh for example or Mhadaidh and perhaps Sgurr Alasdair, though on Alasdair you have got the Stone Shoot which leads to within 125 feet of the top.

When one asks what are the best climbing hills, provided you are willing to seek out difficulties, the list widens at once. First and foremost I would place the Coolins, then the north face of Ben Nevis, Glencoe, the Torridon Hills, the Teallachs, for rock work; while as regards snow craft, on almost every one of the 3,000 feet hills one can get excellent climbs provided the north or north-east face be taken and there be frost to put the snow into proper order. The inland mountains carry the most snow, for example Mam Soul, Sgùrr nan Conbhairean, the Cairngorms, Ben Alder, Beinn Heasgarnich.

The difficulty of getting at the remoter hills and securing a suitable base of operations, was often a very serious one. In this connection I found my bicycle simply invaluable, and many of the more distant expeditions which would have involved a night out, or a long tedious and expensive hire, were brought by the aid of the wheel within the compass of a long day from some fixed point. Take for example the districts of central Ross-shire and north-west Inverness-shire. One can cycle up Glen Strathfarrar as far as Monar Lodge, up Glen Cannich as far as the west end of Loch Mullardoch, and up Glen Affric as far as Affric Lodge; in this way all the remote summits at the head of these glens can be reached in the course of a long day from Affric Hotel or Struy Bridge Inn. Likewise Glen Quoich can be got at from Tomdoun, and the head of Glen Lyon from Bridge of Balgie. Don't be afraid your bike will run away, or be stolen in your absence! Turn him loose to browse in the heather, and he will be waiting for you when you return. For the few

up there who could ride away with him, would not, and those who would ride away with him, could not !

But there are regions where neither trap nor bicycle are of the least avail, and where hotels are gloriously conspicuous by their absence—and long may such regions exist. When you go to Glen Dessary, to Loch Hourn, and to the more distant parts of Kintail, you have to renounce all ideas of cycling or driving, not to speak of the Capuan luxuries of a roadside inn. There is nothing for it but to tramp it, carrying your all in your own rucksack, taking your chance for quarters at the shepherds' shielings, or keepers' houses passed on the way.

What delightful weeks I have spent in this manner. The long fine spring and early summer days, the loneliness and the wonder of the wild and unknown country ; no trains, no coaches, no villas, far out of the track of that baneful and vulgar modern product the guide-book tourist. You set forth to traverse your peak, and the only house within fifteen miles is that keeper's there, where you must be put up for the night. You sight it with your glass as you lie away up among the tops far down in the glen below. Towards evening you approach the house not without apprehension, the dogs rush out barking vociferously, half in welcome, half in anger. You knock at the door, there is a parley. You are admitted, and once admitted, treated with all the courtesy, dignity, and hospitality that are the prime characteristics of the Celtic nature. In all my wanderings I have never been refused a night's shelter. The Highlander is nothing if he is not hospitable. Of course this has to be gone about in the right way. If a man comes up to a keeper's house and demands a bed in the same tone of voice as he would engage a room at the Metropole, he will be refused—and quite right too—for even a Highland keeper's house is his castle. But if he approaches his would-be host and hostess with fitting politeness, with a certain sense of obligation in his voice and bearing, he will certainly be received and welcomed and given the run of whatever is in the house.

What fine characters these shepherds and keepers are, well read, well informed, interested, capable, God-fearing.

"There dwelt a shepherd, Michael was his name,
An old man, stout of heart and strong of limb,
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs."

And what lonely lives they lead, an isolation scarcely credible in these railway days. In one family that I know well, the eldest girl though fourteen years of age, had never seen a church or a school in her life, yet for all that, quick witted, intelligent, far more truly *educated* by nature and the occasional visit of a peripatetic teacher, than the many town sparrows, crammed with superficial smatterings in our city Board Schools. And what *naïve* ideas many of them have! I well remember the air with which one good woman opened the door of a tiny room in which was a sitz-bath standing up on end, and the pride with which she exclaimed, "This is the bath-room, if such a thing should ever be required."

And what pawky humour too. There is more sly fun in the Celt than he gets credit for. I could fill pages with their stories, but let one reminiscence suffice. "Well, Donald," I remarked one evening as we sat with our pipes over the peat fire, "this must be a wild place in winter." "Oh, yes, sir, a wild place in the winter time." "Big storms, I daresay." "Hoo, yes, storms." "And wrecks?" "Ach, aye, wrecks, the weemans will be taalking about them whiles; but it will be years since she didn't see any." "And strange animals, perhaps?" "Heuch, aye, strange beasts and wild beasts." "Serpents?" "Yes, serpents, aye and sea serpents, great sea serpents. There was waane, it wass two years ago, her heid cam thro' the Kyle on the 7th of June, and it wass the 12th of August before her tail passed oot. I wass tired waatching her."

In the interest of sporting rights, most, if not all the hills under deer were climbed either in spring or early summer. This time of the year has many advantages. The days are long, the high ground is all under snow, the weather is generally settled, for May and June are undoubtedly the driest months in the Highlands, and last

but not least, one is free to move where'er he please without let or hindrance.

In conclusion, let me say that I look back upon the days I have spent in pursuing this quest as among the best spent days of my life. Amid the strange beauty and wild grandeur of rock face and snow slope, scaling tops where literally almost foot hath never aforetime trod, I have indeed come face to face with the sacred sanctities of Nature, and he would be indeed dull of heart who could see her beauties thus unfolded, feel her hand on his brow, her breath on his cheek, who could see and feel that unmoved. When I call to mind the cast-iron peaks of the Black Coolins, the ridges on Ben Nevis, the gullies on the Buchaille, the rich and varied hues of the Lochinver and Assynt hills, the sea-scapes from the Torridons, the wild, lonely, rolling uplands of the Mam Soul range, or the region in and around Ben Alder—the memory of these things is a priceless possession.

“ . . . these beauteous forms
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye,
But oft in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet
Felt in the blood and felt along the heart.”

Nor is it altogether mere retrospect, Othello's occupation is not gone! and to the silly people who ask me, “What will you do now since you have no more worlds to conquer?” I can only say, “I am going to climb them over again.”

FROM BALLINLUIG TO LAWERS OVER
SCHIEHALLION.

BY WILLIAM GARDEN.

IT is with some hesitation nowadays, that one ventures to offer contributions to this *Journal*, which do not deal either with stirring accounts of how, after frantic exertions—aye, it may be even dangers—another gully under peculiarly difficult snow conditions, has yielded to the deftly dealt blow of the ice-axe, or how some forbidding tower has had to succumb to the party skilfully led by Raeburn. With no such tales as these do I intend to associate myself at present.

Mr J. G. Stott, in his article on Schiehallion appearing in Vol. III. of the *Journal*, remarks: "The mountain 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." Mr Stott might make the same observation to-day with equal truth, if exception is given to his own contribution, and the notes for the Guide Book written by the Secretary and appearing in the last number of the *Journal*.

My object in writing this article is twofold. In his notes the Secretary gives us four distinct routes by which the mountain may be reached. I now propose to describe a fifth route, and to give a short account of the comparatively unexplored stretch of country lying between the southern slopes of Schiehallion and the little hamlet of Fearnan, near the east end of Loch Tay.

It was a dull and cheerless day on 21st September last, as I found my way to the station of the "Granite City," *en route* for Perth by the afternoon train, and the chances of the morrow being a fit day for even hill walking seemed exceedingly small. Arrived at the farm of Milton of Tullymet, about a mile from Ballinluig, things looked somewhat more cheerful however, and my friend and I decided to make an early start the next morning. Accordingly, having no desire to break any record in turnpike walking, we started in a dogcart from Milton at

7.45 A.M. The morning was dull and doubtful, and the heavy rains of the past few days had thoroughly saturated the ground. Pitlochry seemed only half awake as we passed through its sleepy streets, and right glad we were when at last the sun gained the battle with heavy looming clouds, and began to diffuse his kindly beams which seemed to penetrate to the marrow of our half-chilled bones. The Garry was in full flood, and from the bridge the linn presented a very fine appearance in its dark and narrow glen—here a deep and restless inky cauldron, there a rapid foaming brown. Bonskeid and the foot of Glen Fincastle passed, we were soon in full view of fair Loch Tummel. At ten o'clock exactly our good steed set us down at Loch Tummel Inn, and after a halt of half an hour, during which innumerable eggs, scones, and cups of tea were stowed away, he carried us on yet another couple of miles to Bohally, where we substituted for him "Shanks mare."

It was indeed a real September day—a blue sky and scudding clouds with the birks' and brackens' already mellowed tints lit up here and there with the now flaming foliage of the mountain ash. All around was a scene of rare beauty—

"And pleased we listen as the breeze
Heaves its wild sigh through autumn trees."

In response to a knock at the ferryman's door, he comes out and pilots us across the Tummel—to-day a rapid amber-coloured stream. The river crossed, we follow for a short distance the right bank, and after pushing through the thick hazels, we strike an old cart road which follows the right bank of the Allt Kynachan, and then crosses it. This cart track eventually brings us on the main road leading to Tummel Bridge Inn. We follow the main road almost up to the small croft of Dalolist. Just before reaching that croft, however, we turn off sharply to the right by a small footpath, which again leads over the Kynachan. (I should here point out that we crossed the Kynachan by a substantial bridge on the main road.) We now follow the left bank of the Kynachan for about a mile

through magnificent birches, keeping the deep gorge of the stream to our left. As we advance the trees become scarcer and the gorge disappears. The stream now flows silently through the flat haugh-lands, and away in front rises blue Schiehallion, to whose top still clings the trail of a silver cloud. Everywhere are to be seen the traces of a once populous district—another of the many examples in our country of the result of emigration and concentration in our large cities. The going for the next mile over the level grassy sward was luxurious. Once more crossing the Kynachan, we reach the Kinloch Rannoch road at 12.15. Pausing here for a few moments to view the glen by which we had come, and Vrackie and Farragon now appearing, our next thought was our route up the mountain. We followed the left slope of the eminence labelled in the half-inch map Tigh An't-socaich (the beak-shaped house), crossed the headwaters of the Kynachan, and gradually ascended to the col (2,700 ft.) north of, and below, the long eastern ridge. From the col we "angled" along the northern face in a westerly direction, the last 300 feet or so being a pull, and finally we reached the stony saddle about the 3,200 foot line. A short walk over the boulders and a slight rise put us on the summit at 2 P.M. It had thus taken us $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours from Tummel Inn. From this, however, must be deducted twenty minutes spent with the ferryman at Bohally, and in Glen Kynachan we went at a very easy pace, for the views were most attractive. Indeed, this glen is one of the most interesting I have had the pleasure of visiting, and I can thoroughly commend it to the attention of others.

For three-quarters of an hour we remained on the summit. The view, though good, was hazy in the distance, and especially in the south. Loch Rannoch looked grand, winding as it does through stretches of the old black forest of Caledonia, but of its western shores it might be truly said,

"And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land."

But some seven years ago it was my luck to have a

view from Schiehallion such as I have never had from any other mountain in Scotland, and I am inclined to say for Schiehallion that it is the mountain *par excellence* for a view of "the rest of Scotland." On the occasion above referred to, we saw quite distinctly North Berwick Law, Arthur's Seat, and the Pentlands, with the lowlands of Perthshire for the foreground of our extensive picture to the south-east. Our range in the other directions of the compass included Lochnagar, the Cairngorms, Beinn a' Ghlo, the Ben Alder and Ben Nevis groups, Ben Lawers and Ben More, which is admittedly a fairly extensive panorama.

The descent was made by the southern slope of the mountain. At first the angle is steep and the going very rough, but as the valley is reached the slope eases off very much, and the boulders give place to long stretches of heather and grass. We crossed the Allt Mór just below its junction with the Allt Creag a' Mhadaidh, which drains the northern slopes of Carn Mairg—a boggy and uninteresting mountain from this point of view. Here again on the flat ground by the stream there are innumerable traces of ruins, and at one time there had apparently been quite a small "clachan." The only house now to be seen is a small bothy of modern construction, which seems to be used as a shooter's box. We observed it from the top of Schiehallion, and we had hoped it was a shepherd's hut where some refreshment might be obtained, but on close inspection we found the place was shut up. Bartholomew's half-inch map is somewhat defective here, for from this bothy there runs a wonderfully good cart track, which runs into the one shown in the map as terminating a little to the north of Meall Crumach. This track we followed, and on reaching the summit of the easy rise, we join a march-fence which follows the path for some little distance, and then leaves it as the path descends to the right. The watershed reached, we now go down into Gleann Munlinn, leaving the eminence of Meall Crumach on our right. This is a pretty glen, and Creag Mhor and Carn Mairg do much to enhance its beauty. We now leave the track and strike for the Allt Odhar, crossing it close to where it

enters a belt of wood. At this point there is a fine subject for the artist of the typical "Highland Burn." The broad brown stream boiling among its rocks and boulders, the deep pool fringed with the rusty bracken, and for a background the distant glen culminating in the heights of Mairg. Another mile now puts us on the slopes behind Glenlyon House, and here an exquisite view presented itself. Beneath us the fertile Strath of Fortingal backed up with the well-wooded Drummond Hill. On the right, the mouth of deep Glen Lyon. In front, the Lyon winding like a silver thread among its emerald haughs, and in the middle distance, the little glen unnamed running through to Loch Tay, of which we could just catch a glimpse. At 5.40 we are at the little inn at Fearnan, enjoying by the door the refreshing influence of that now indispensable luxury, the afternoon cup of tea, to the tune of the wavelets of the loch as they fall upon the pebbly beach. Again the sky becomes overcast, and we hasten on to Lawers by the lochside, cheered on our way by the glimmer of an occasional star peeping through the birches.

IN MEMORIAM—WILLIAM BROWN.

WE shall all miss William Brown from the gatherings of our Club, for there was no more enthusiastic climber than he, and none who took a keener interest in all its affairs. He was a man of great ability, and no one knows as well as the Editor of the *Journal* how much its pages owed to his kindly advice and facile pen, ever ready to edit, review, or give graphic pictures of his more interesting excursions. Even during the wasting illness of the last three years, his interest in Club affairs never flagged. Well will most of us remember his stirring speech at our dinner last year, when he proposed the toast of the retiring Treasurer, and the burst of applause with which it was received. He was not, however, merely a brilliant talker, for while he enjoyed good health, there was no more energetic and skilful climber in the Club, and I look back with fond regret to the happy days on which I followed his lead on many a north-east face. He had a keen sense of humour, but, perhaps, the vigour with which he argued on all points, was one of the most pleasing traits in his character. Never shall I forget the cosy chats we used to have round the fire in some remote Highland inn, and particularly on one occasion when I tried to close a friendly wrangle with, "Well, old chap, we'll agree to differ," his bursting out with, "No, no, I don't like that way at all, for if my case be sound there must be something wrong with my argument if I can't convince you, and, if my argument is weak, why we'll go at it again." This, I think, fairly illustrates the indomitable character of one who was never satisfied until the bed-rock of things was reached.

For many years after he joined the Club, hardly a week passed but he and I would spend an hour or two together, and rarely were the topics of the *Journal*, mountaineering, or S.M.C. affairs omitted from our talk. He never left me without my feeling stimulated by the breezy and wide views he took of all things. He hated sham and all things mean, and was very out-spoken on everything that pleased him not.

One of his letters which he wrote to me some years ago, I have still preserved. Here it is:—

INCHNABOBBART,
GLEN MUICH, 1st August 1895.

MY DEAR D.,—Here we are after six days' continuous hill climbing, smoking the pipe of peace and contentment, under the shadow of the vanquished Lochnagar.

What a time we have had! how much of the "wild joy of gripping grey brown ledges!" Our week began last Friday, when we tackled Buchalle Etive. The weather was simply atrocious—rain, mist, and all uncharitableness. We simply couldn't pick out a route, so made somewhat wildly for the steep rocks to the left of the great north gully, which I had an idea would give an interesting climb. For 400 or 500 feet they are tremendously steep, but the rock is everywhere so firm and good, that we got up without serious difficulty. Next day (still wet) we climbed into Ossian's Cave. On Sunday we ascended Aonach Dubh by a route which may or may not be Collie's, at any rate it afforded an excellent climb, rendered exciting by the prospect which was before us that we would be stuck. Monday saw us on Bidean nam Bian. We failed to get up the "upper right hand buttress," which is rather too "magnificent" for anything but an angel; but we climbed down some distance and spotted a route which may "go." We then ascended the big gully to the left of the buttress, and climbed *en route* Collie's pinnacle, a nice little scramble. On Tuesday we went slap up Aonach Dubh by another route farther west. Having exhausted Clachaig, we made straight for the East country, slept last night at Aberdeen, and came here by train and bicycle this morning. In the afternoon we tackled the "steep frowning glories," and after a most interesting climb—which was more dangerous than difficult—rounded rocks, no hitches, loose moss—forced a way up them, right in the centre of the corrie, at about the highest part. How we cheered when we came out at the top! I append a rough sketch, from which you will see that our route gained the summit by the fine arête we spotted on the big photo.

To-morrow we return to Aberdeen, and I then commence my judicial duties.—Yours always,
W. BROWN.

Does not this speak of the man and of his enthusiasm for the hills as nothing else could?

At the time of his death, Brown was only in his thirty-third year. He joined the Club in December 1891, and served on the Committee from December 1895 to 1899. He formed one of the party in 1895 which scaled Ben Nevis's north-east buttress, and also made the first ascent of the cliffs of Lochnagar, which is so graphically described by Mr Tough. He was one of the happy party which

camped out at the head of Loch Coruisk, in the summer of 1897, and no more delightful companion was ever found. When he spoke at our dinners it was with a verve and enthusiasm that carried all away with him.

Of his life outside the Club we may record that he was born in 1868, was the eldest son of ex-Sheriff Brown of Aberdeen. He took his degree of M.A. at Aberdeen, and that of LL.B. in Edinburgh. He was called to the Bar in 1892, and was recognised in his profession as a sound and acute lawyer. At the time of his death, which took place on the 15th of September 1901, he had acquired a considerable practice, and had shortly before obtained the Lectureship of Civil Procedure in the Edinburgh University.

Farewell, good and kind friend, we shall often think of you kindly. Something has gone from our lives now you have left us.

W. D.



VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT CAIRN, BEN LAWERS, LOOKING SOUTH-WEST, EMBRACING AN ANGLE OF OVER 100°. *From a Photo by W. L. Hewie.*

The west end of Loch Tay is partially hidden by the southern ridge of Beinn Ghlas, which is connected with Meall Corraniach, which slopes to the north behind the cairn of Ben Lawers. Meall nan Tarmachan occupies the middle of the panorama. The chief horizon summits visible in the print, reading in succession south to north, are Ben Ledi, Ben Vane, Ben Lomond, Stob a Choit, Stob Coire an Lochan, Am Binnèin, Cruach Ardran, Ben More. Then comes the dip of Glen Dochart, and first the flat top of Meall Chuirn, then Beinn Bhuidhe (Bui), Beinn Dubh-chraige, Beinn Oss, Beinn Laoigh (Lui), Beinn Chalùim, Crag Mhor, Beinn Heasgarnich, Ben Doirean, and Beinn an Dothaidh. Behind Crag Mhor the twin peaks of Ben Cruachan are visible in the negative, but too faint for reproduction.







VIEW NEAR THE SUMMIT OF BEN LAWERS LOOKING NORTH-EAST, EMBRACING AN ANGLE OF OVER 100°.
From a Photo by W. L. Hervie.

The dark ridge rising behind the round-topped An Siuc and above Lochan a Chait is Meall Garbh, which ridge dips eastwards and rises again in Meall Gruaidh, flecked with cloud shadows. Beyond is seen Kenmore and the east end of Loch Tay. The high ground south of the loch, beginning in Drummond Hill, is topped by Beinn Bhreac and Meall a Choire Chreagach. In the middle of the view, behind the dark undulating tops overlooking Glen Lyon, is seen Schiehallion and Carn Mairg. Beyond, nearer the centre, the 4,000 feet heights of the Cairngorms were clearly visible above the uplands of the Forest of Athol, which range culminates eastwards in Lochnagar. Away to the north, beyond Loch Rannoch, the Ben Alder tops were seen, but, like the Cairngorms, are too distant for crisp definition in a small process reproduction.

S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.



BEN LAWERS.

(GROUP I. SECTION XII.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 33'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 13'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one inch scale, Sheets 46 and 47. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 12.

This group of massive summits lies in the triangle formed by the River Lyon, Loch Tay, and the road that runs from the one to the other by the Lochan na Lairige. The summits included in the group are:—

1. Ben Lawers, 3,984 feet, = the cloven mountain. Lies $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-west of Lawers Inn.
2. Ben Ghlas, 3,657 feet, pron. *Ben Glass*, = the grey mountain. Lies 1 mile south-west of Ben Lawers.
3. Sron Dha-Murchdi, 3,040 feet. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south-south-west of Meall Corranaich.
4. Meall Corranaich, 3,530 feet, = hill of the corrie of the brackens. Lies $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles west of Ben Lawers.
5. Meall a' Choire Lèith, 3,033 feet, = hill of the grey corrie. Lies 2 miles north-west of Ben Lawers.
6. An Stuc, 3,643 feet, = the steep rock. Lies 1 mile north by east of Ben Lawers.
7. Creag' an Fhithich, 3,430 feet, = rock of the ravens. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Ben Lawers.
8. Meall Garbh, 3,661 feet, = the rough hill. Lies $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-north-east of Ben Lawers.
9. Meall Gruaidh, 3,280, = pron. *Grew*. Lies 3 miles north-east of Ben Lawers.

These summits are all rounded, and no sharp rock ridges are to be found anywhere among them—in fact, as a writer in one of the early numbers of the *Journal* in-

formed us, "bulky Ben Lawers, in spite of its 3,984 feet, possesses none of the features of a 'sporting' mountain, and it may even be doubted whether the seeker after the inaccessible will find any part of it more difficult to climb than the 16-foot cairn which crowns the summit. Nevertheless, the various routes by which the mountain may be ascended present widely different degrees of difficulty. The pony track from Lawers Inn is constructed on the most Salvationist principles, and may be followed by the most timid pedestrian without fear of encountering anything more deadly than a Scotch mist and a wetting. The ascent from Lochan a Chait, on the other hand, will be found, it is believed, under certain conditions of frost and snow to put a pretty severe tax on the average hillsman."

The usual time taken to reach the summit from Lawers Inn by the pony track is reckoned at two hours.

A fine upland walk, taking in most of the Lawers tops, can be done in one day, as described by Mr Stott in the *Journal*, Vol. I., p. 131. He and Mr Munro left Lochay Bridge Inn at 10.40, and leaving the road at Edramuchy they reached the top of Ben Ghlas 1.40, Ben Lawers 2.30, An Stuc 4.5, Meall Garbh 4.40, Meall Gruaidh 6.10, and Fortingal at 9 P.M.

In summer a pleasant and easy way to the summit from Lawers Inn is to follow up the Lawers Burn to Lochan a Chait, and from there to make a direct line for the summit. In spring some good glissades can usually be got here.

Another equally good route for those residing in Glen Lyon is to leave the glen near the Free Church. Cross the Lyon by the iron bridge 2 miles east of Innerwick, and follow the burn which rises on the north face of Ben Lawers.

On An Stuc there are some cliffs above Lochan a Chait, but as yet no climbs have been recorded.

Those interested in the flora of the mountain will find a full list of the plants found, in the *Cairngorm Journal*, Vol. II., p. 195.

A cairn was erected on the summit in July 1878, at the instigation of a Mr Malcolm Ferguson. The size of this



LOCHAN A CHAIT.

From a Photo by W. L. Hewitt.



cairn was some 45 to 50 feet in circumference and 20 feet high. It was crowned with a large block of white quartz. Mr Ferguson employed about thirty men of the district and two masons, and the work was finished in one day ("Rambles in Breadalbane," p. 27).

THE KILLIN HILLS.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XIII.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 31'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 19'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one inch scale, Sheet 46. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 12.

(*a*) Tarmachan Group.

(*b*) Meall Ghaordie Group.

- (*a*) 1. Meall nan Tarmachan, 3,421 feet, = round-topped hill of the ptarmigan. Lies 4 miles north by east of Killin.
2. Meall Garbh, 3,369 feet, = round-topped rough hill. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south-south-west of No. 1.
3. Beinn nan Eachan, 3,265 feet. Lies 1 mile south-west of No. 1.
4. Creag na Caillich, 2,990 feet, = crag of the old woman. Lies $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-west by west of No. 1.
5. Meall Glas, 2,547 feet. Lies $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-west of No. 1.
- (*b*) 1. Beinn nan Oighreag, 2,976 feet. Lies 2 miles north-east of No. 2.
2. Meall Ghaordie, 3,407 feet. Lies $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-west of Killin.
3. Meall Taurmie, 2,580 feet.
4. Meall nan Subh, 2,638 feet.

These nine summits may be conveniently grouped together and called the Killin Hills, as from there they are most readily reached, the foot of the southern crag of Creag na Caillich being within the compass of an hour's walk from the station. They are well cut off from the Ben Lawers massif on the east by a deep depression, through which runs the road from Loch Tay to Bridge of Balgay in Glen Lyon. That glen forms their boundary to the north.

On the south the waters of Loch Tay wash the base of the more eastern peaks, while the valley of the Lochay continues their boundary to the western limit, where the comparatively shallow dip of the Allt Learg nan Luon, running between Lochay and Lyon, serves to define their separation from Heasgarnich to the west.

The character of the two groups is somewhat dissimilar, the Tarmachans being by far the rockier. In fact, but for their being overshadowed by the huge bulk of Ben Lawers to the east, the Tarmachans would have received much more attention from mountaineers and tourists than has been the case. Several of the peaks are of bold and abrupt shape, though, perhaps, the whole group is of a rather knobby character and lacks in massiveness.

Meall Ghaordie and its satellites are of a tamer nature, gently sloping and rounded ridges taking the place of the rugged crags of the Tarmachans.

The rock in the area described is mica schist of the Ben Lawers schists, and is not a satisfactory climbing rock. It encourages too much grass and vegetation on its usually slimy and slippery ledges, and few pure rock climbs are to be found.

Under winter conditions the ascent of some of the gullies will give good sport, and on most of the peaks steep snow slopes may be found at any time from November to May requiring the use of the ice-axe.

As previously mentioned, the most convenient point of access to these hills is Killin, the terminus of a short branch line of railway from Killin Junction on the Callander and Oban Railway. There is an hotel at Killin, and also one a mile nearer the Tarmachans at Lochay Bridge.

They could also be reached from Aberfeldy by staying at Innerwick in Glen Lyon, but this involves a drive or cycle ride of 20 miles up the valley of the Lyon.

To reach the summit of Meall nan Tarmachan itself from Killin, the most direct route is by walking or driving down the shore of Loch Tay about 4 miles, when the road may be left and a bee line taken for the top up an easily sloping ridge.

A preferable route, and one not involving greatly in-



THE KILLIN HILLS.

From a photo by W. L. Howie.



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creased time or fatigue, is to ascend Creag na Caillich and follow the summits to the east to Tarmachan.

From Killin the Kenmore road is followed for a mīe to Lochay Bridge, then turning to the left, a farther road, walk up the Lochay valley for about a mile when the hill-side to the right may be taken to, and the ridge followed to the top of Creag na Caillich.

If bound for Meall Ghaordie, the Lochay road should be followed for about 3 miles to Duncroise, the foot of the Lairig Breisleich. The track up this can be utilised to near where the first small burn enters from the west, and the ridge on one's left then taken to and followed easily to the summit, some $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the road. On Ghaordie there does not appear to be much scope for actual climbing.

The horns of the north corrie of the Allt Laoghane possess considerable rock faces, but that of the western horn, Creag-Laoghane, the only one investigated to date, is, though steep in places, too much broken up to afford more than a scramble. This was ascended on 19th October 1901, by Messrs Lawson and Raeburn.

The only climbs hitherto recorded on the Tarmachans themselves are those by Messrs Lawson and Raeburn on 19th February 1898 (*Journal*, Vol. V., p. 70), and by Dr Inglis Clark and J. Inglis on 29th December 1898 (*Journal*, Vol. V., p. 242). These climbs were done under winter conditions, and in summer would probably prove very much easier. The first is at the extreme east end of the group, on a range of crags rising above the foot of Lochan na Lairige, about half-way between Loch Tay and Glen Lyon. The second is a gully on the east side of the subsidiary ridge of Meall Garbh called Carn Creag, and faces south-east. Messrs Lawson and Raeburn on 19th October 1901, descended the steepest face they could find on the south side of Beinn nan Eachan, but found no climbing. Under winter conditions this might give some sport.

H. R.

BEINN HEASGARNICH.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XIV.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 31'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 35'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one inch scale, Sheet 46. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 12.

Beinn Heasgarnich, 3,530 feet. Lies $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-west of Tyndrum.

Stob an Fhir-Bhogha, 3,381 feet, = stump of the bowmen. Lies $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south of Heasgarnich.

This mountain lies far from the ken of most people, and it is a big undertaking to reach the summit from any hotel in the neighbourhood. It is most easily reached from Tyndrum, and from that by the Allt Chonoghlaish to the head of Loch Lyon. From there, at Tomochoarn, the route lies direct to the summit, crossing the glen of the Allt Fionn a' Glinne about the 1,500 feet contour line. Another way to reach the summit is from Sheanvore in Glen Lyon. After crossing the foot bridge, ascend the west side of the Allt Chall for about a mile, then bear slightly to the west, and up the ridge to the top.

An ascent is recorded for March 1889, Vol. I. 325, but no times are given. Owing to its height and distance from the sea, it carries a great deal of snow in the winter time.

[The Editor is open to receive further information about this group as well as Nos. 15 and 17.]

BEINN CHALUIM, BEINN DHEICEACH, MEALL CHUIRN.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XV.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 27'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 37'$, $4^{\circ} 32'$, and $4^{\circ} 29'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one inch scale, Sheet 46. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 12.

Beinn Chaluum, 3,354 feet. Lies $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles east-north-east from Tyndrum.

Beinn Chaluum, south top, 3,236 feet. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of Beinn Chaluum north top.

Meall Glas, 3,139 feet. Lies 1 mile west by south from Beinn Dheiceach.

Beinn Dheiceach, 3,074 feet. Between Glens Dochart and Lochay.

Sgiath Chuil, 3,050 feet. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south from Meall Chuirn.

Meall Chuirn, 3,007 feet. Between Glens Dochart and Lochay.

This range, consisting of three very distinct mountains, occupies the space between Glens Dochart and Lochay, and is well seen from the Callander and Oban Railway. All six tops can be traversed in a fairly long day of about $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours' actual walking between Tyndrum and Killin. The low elevations of the cols between the three main summits, however, involve in all an ascent of considerably over 6,000 feet. A note of such a walk will be found in the *Journal*, Vol. II., p. 31.

Beinn Chaluum shows a bold front to Glen Dochart, and from there looks an imposing mountain. Its southern grassy slopes are most delightful to ascend, but its north face is much steeper, and would give a grand snow climb during some of the early months of the year. The ascent from Tyndrum or Crianlarich is usually made from the farms of Auchtertyre or Inverhaggernie, thence either skirting Creag Loisgte or over it to the summit.

Although neither the name nor height of Meall Glas is to be found on anything but the six inch Ordnance Survey map, it in reality is the higher summit of Beinn Dheiceach, over-topping it by 55 feet.

In like manner Sgiath Chuil, the name of which is only on the six inch map, is distinctly higher than Meall Chuirn, half a mile to the north. In this case the height (3,050 feet) is merely approximate. These two last are best ascended from Luib.

H. T. M.

BEN DORAN GROUP.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XVI.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 31'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 43'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one inch scale, Sheet 46. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 12.

Beinn Doireann, 3,523, pron. *Doran*. Lies 2 miles south-east of Bridge of Orchy Station.

Beinn an Dòthaidh, 3,283, pron. *Ben Daw*. Lies $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles north of Ben Doran.

Beinn Achallader, 3,404, contraction for *Achadh-Haladair*=a mower ; corn-field newly cut. Lies 2 miles north-east of last.

Beinn Creachan, 3,540, pron. *Ben a Chrachan*, from *Krechan* = a drinking shell. Lies $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles east-north-east of last.

The isolated mountain ridge, of which the above are the four principal points, runs in a serpentine line of about 7 miles from south-west to north-east. On the west the group is bounded by the deep valley of the Orchy, containing the West Highland Railway ; on the north by Rannoch Moor ; on the east by the tributary glens which drain into Glen Lyon.

The whole four peaks could be traversed in a longish day by the line of least resistance, viz., by following the undulating back-bone of the range, over the various tops and knolls. Tyndrum ($4\frac{1}{2}$ miles) and Inveroran ($3\frac{3}{4}$ miles) are the nearest hotels, but if any difficult climbing, involving time, be desired on the two northern hills, it might be well to arrange for quarters at Achallader farmhouse.

Ben Doran presents to the south the appearance of a sugar loaf, and is a very prominent object from both the Oban and the West Highland Railways. Keen rock climbers will perhaps avoid Ben Doran, as there are but few crags visible on his steeply sloping sides. Just under the southern brow of the mountain is a steepish pitch of scree and rock, with a gully or two intersecting it ; and on the east side, overlooking the Allt Chonaglhais, some low cliffs may afford a few opportunities for gymnastics. At Easter 1894 a good sitting glissade of over 1,000 feet (by the aneroid) was got on the south end of the mountain.

To the north Ben Doran falls gradually to the saddle connecting it with Ben Dòthaidh.

Ben Dòthaidh.—From a climber's point of view the three principal northern summits strongly resemble one another, inasmuch as each of them is disposed to be long-backed and flat-topped, and has three tamely sloping sides of scree or grass ; but there is also in each case a redeeming feature in the shape of an abrupt north face, hollowed out so as to



BEN DORAN.

From a Photo by W. L. Hervey.

a small loch, at the height of 2,285 feet, with grandly precipitous cliffs, interspersed with snow gullies, right round.

On 21st January 1896, Messrs Boyd, Brown, and A. E. Robertson had an interesting scramble up the snows, glazed rocks, and frozen-turf slopes of this face. The work proved arduous, and involved four and a half hours of nearly constant step-cutting. Starting from the north-east end of the loch their route followed a faintly marked gully which eventually brought them out 100 yards north of the cairn.

Ben Creachan has also an eastern corrie, separated from the northern one by a shoulder, which runs north-east and forms the march between the counties of Perth and Argyll.

Views.—The views obtained from all these summits are similar. Ben Doran naturally commands the best view to the south. Loch Tulla, with its background of Blackmount peaks, is best seen from either of the two central peaks; while Ben Creachan is most favourably placed for a panorama of the wastes of Rannoch.

BENS CHUIRN AND VANNOCH.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XVII.)

Lat. 56° 32'; W. Lon. 4° 40'. Ordnance Survey Map, one inch scale, Sheet 46. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 12.

Ben Vannoch, 3,125 feet, and Beinn a Chuirn, 3,020 feet, lie about a mile apart at the north-west end of Loch Lyon, and their grassy slopes are of more value to the sheep farmer than to the climber in search of rock problems. They are, like Ben Heasgarnich, most easily ascended from Tyndrum and the Chonoghlais glen. The only ascents recorded in the *Journal* are one of Mr Munro in March 1891, from Invermeran at the foot of Glen Lyon, who left in deep soft snow at 9.50 A.M., top of Vannoch at 12, Chuirn at 12.30, Tyndrum 4 o'clock (Vol. I., p. 246), and one of Mr Corner, who crossed Beinn Creachan and Beinn Achallader from Gortan siding, then ascended Bens Vannoch and Chuirn, and returned to Tyndrum by the Chonoghlais glen (Vol. V., p. 317).

From the summit of Vannoch a splendid view of the lonely Loch Lyon is obtained.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in St Enoch's Hotel, Glasgow, on the evening of Friday, 6th December 1901.

A new and very pleasant feature in this winter gathering of the Club was the most enjoyable reception given by the President and Mrs Maylard to the members and their friends. An excellent programme of chamber music was given by Cole's Piano and String Quartette.

To the visitors, however, as well as to the members, a great attraction was the superb collection of mountain photographs which were on view. Probably on no occasion has Scottish scenery been so well depicted, the aggregate of photographs displayed totalling well up to a thousand. Referring to these more in detail :—

The larger of the two rooms in which the reception was held contained a number of framed photographs, either hung upon the wall or placed upon easels.

Lent by the Club were the following :—“*Bruach-na-Frithe*” (20 ins. by 16 ins.), photographed and presented to the Club by Mr Cameron Swan; “*The Inaccessible Pinnacle*” (15 ins. by 12 ins.), photographed and presented by Mr Howard Priestman; “*The Twin Ridges of Ben Nevis*” (13½ ins. by 10½ ins.), photographed and presented by Mr Gilbert Thomson; three separate pictures tastefully mounted in dark-stained oak, one of “*Stob Ghabhar*” (9 ins. by 10½ ins.), another of the “*Lower Ridge of Ben Nevis*” (10 ins. by 8 ins.), and a third of “*An Teallach*” (10 ins. by 8 ins.), photographed and presented to the Club by Mr J. Rennie.

Lent by Mr Wm. W. Naismith were the following :—“*The Eastern Coolins*” (19½ ins. by 17½ ins.); “*The North-East Buttress and Lower Ridge of Ben Nevis*” (14 ins. by 11 ins.), by Gilbert Thomson; “*The North-East Face of Stob Ghabhar*” (12 ins. by 9 ins.), by Wm. Douglas; “*Rock Climbing in Arran*” (8 ins. by 6 ins.), by Wm. Douglas.

Lent by Mr Gilbert Thomson :—“*Panorama of Ben Nevis*” (14½ ins. by 4½ ins.), by Lamond Howie.

Lent by Mr R. G. Napier :—Six frames, each frame containing two photographs ($8\frac{1}{2}$ ins. by $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins.) of different Scottish mountains, by Abraham.

Lent by Mr Lamond Howie :—A very beautiful panorama of the "Summit of Lochnagar" (28 ins. by 11 ins.); two separate pictures, "Sgor-a-Mhaim," as seen from Carn Mor Dearg, and the "Summit of Carn Mor Dearg" (each 12 ins. by 15 ins.), both these were exquisite photographs.

Mr A. Craig Annan sent his now well-known picture, "Evening on the Summit of Ben Vorlich" (15 ins. by $11\frac{1}{2}$ ins.). It represents four figures commencing to descend from the summit in the late evening light, and as a piece of photograph art is considered one of the finest productions of the kind. Mr Annan also sent three photographs (each 15 ins. by $11\frac{1}{2}$ ins.) representing the formation of "fog crystals" on the rock summits.

Mr Abraham, the well-known mountain photographer (Keswick), sent three magnificent pictures of the Coolins (each 2 ft. by 1 ft. 6 ins.). These came in for a large share of admiration; but Mr Lamond Howie's wonderful panorama of Ben Nevis still seemed to hold the laurels of being the finest photographic representation of Scottish mountain scenery. The specimen shown belonged to Mr Maylard, and in its handsome frame, measuring over all 4 ft. 5 in. by 2 ft., was probably the most striking and attractive object in the room.

The smaller of the two rooms was utilised for the exhibition of albums, books, and other objects of mountaineering interest. The albums were placed upon separate tables. The following were the contributors:—Dr Inglis Clark, three large albums, one containing the series of Cobbler photographs now well known in connection with his article in a recent number of the Club Journal; Mr Wm. Douglas, two albums, in one of which were the original photographs of those taken in Skye, and which, it will be remembered, illustrated his paper, "The Climbers' Camp at Coruisk," in Vol. V. of the Club *Journal*. From the Club were three albums well stocked with photographs contributed by the various members of the Club. Album III., however, deserves special notice, as it is entirely filled with large

photographs, the gift of Mr Lamond Howie. Among large photographs Dr Inglis Clark's "Cobblers" and Mr Howie's Fort-William "Bens" rank in the highest place of photographic art, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to say to which should be accorded the highest praise.

Mr Gilbert Thomson lent a small album containing some interesting photographs of snow craft and rock climbing. Mr Gall Inglis also lent a series of separately mounted photographs (6 ins. by 4 ins.), illustrating various Scottish mountains. Mr Abraham, the Keswick photographer, also sent an album filled with his well-known photographs of the Coolins.

Possibly one of the most valuable loans, and certainly one of the most interesting, was Robson's "Scenery of the Grampian Mountains," lent by Mr James Drummond. Published in 1819, it contains forty-one beautifully illustrated plates (15 ins. by 8 ins.). Mr Drummond also lent Knipe's "Grampian Mountains as seen from Ben Cleuch," the summit of the Ochils. A complete set of the Club *Journal* in six volumes was also on the table for the inspection of visitors.

The exhibition was composed exclusively of objects connected with Scottish mountain scenery.

At 6 P.M. the BUSINESS MEETING replaced the gayer festivities. The President, Mr A. E. Maylard, was in the chair.

The Hon. Treasurer's statement for the past year was submitted by Mr Napier, and showed that there was a slight deficit on the year's transactions, balance at the credit of the Club having fallen from £208. os. 11d. to £207. 17s. 10d. in the course of the year. In this connection it was pointed out that the year's expenditure included several exceptional items, and that the cost of the *Journal* had been somewhat higher.

The Hon. Secretary reported that Sir Thomas D. Gibson Carmichael, Frank Sidney Goggs, George Ferguson Gregor Grant, John Norman Heathcote, Wilfred Arthur Mounsey, Charles William Nettleton, and Ewan Barclay Robertson, had been elected, and that the membership of

the Club was now 154. At the beginning of the year the membership had been 151, of whom two had resigned and two had died, while the addition of seven new members brought the membership up to 154.

The President referred to the great loss which the Club had sustained through the death of Mr Wm. Brown, and it was resolved to convey to Mrs Brown an expression of the deep regret and sympathy felt by the members.

The President referred in very appreciative terms to the important services of the retiring Secretary, Mr Gilbert Thomson, and regretted that the Committee had no alternative but to accept the resignation which had been placed before them. He reserved further remarks on the subject for a post-prandial speech.

Mr Gilbert Thomson was then elected Vice-President in room of Mr Rennie, whose term of office had expired. Dr Inglis Clark was elected Hon. Secretary in room of Mr Thomson.

Mr Lawson was elected Hon. Librarian in room of Mr Thomson, and Messrs Drummond and Squance were elected to the Committee in room of Mr Munro and Mr Walter A. Smith, who retired by rotation.

Messrs Rennie and Naismith were then elected to the Committee in room of Dr Inglis Clark and Mr Lawson.

The President reported that, as instructed by the last Annual Meeting, a bound set of the *Journal* had been presented to the Honorary President, Lord Breadalbane, and a letter was read expressing Lord Breadalbane's pleasure in receiving the volumes, and his thanks to the Club.

The recommendation of the Committee that a Club-room should be established in Edinburgh in place of the temporary arrangement in Glasgow, and that the expenditure from the Club funds of a sum not exceeding £100 be authorised for furnishing and equipment was unanimously approved, and the President, Secretary, Editor, and Librarian were appointed a Committee to carry this into effect.

After much discussion, the recommendation of the Committee that the annual subscription should be raised to fifteen shillings, in order to meet the increased expense, was carried by a large majority.

The proposal to add all past Presidents to the Committee was rejected by a large majority.

The proposal that "any member who may have voluntarily resigned may be readmitted by the Committee, but subject to payment of the ordinary entrance fee," also failed to recommend itself.

After some discussion it was agreed that the New Year Meet should be held at Tarbet, and the Easter Meet at Aviemore.

Immediately after the meeting the ANNUAL DINNER was held. The members present numbered thirty-one, and the guests five, with Mr Maylard in the chair.

The arrangements of the Dinner Committee were in every sense admirable, and the design of the *menu*—a view of Alasdair towering up above some sensational gulf—drew the thoughts of many of the diners back to less sumptuous repasts on mountain peak.

The President was supported on either hand by Sir Hector Cameron and Mr F. O. Schuster. After the usual toasts the President proposed "The Club," dwelling especially on the high ideal requisite for the perfect mountaineer.

Mr Raeburn, in proposing "The Alpine Club," pointed out that in so doing, he referred not so much to the individual members as to the spirit which led to its formation, and which has since been its mainspring and motive of existence.

Mr Schuster, in his reply, made a good point in remarking that everywhere he heard of the doughty deeds of the S.M.C., and the marvellous ability of its members, not indeed from Alpine guides, whose testimony might presumably be biassed, but from the surest source of all, "the members themselves."

"The Guests," proposed by Dr Collie, was replied for by Sir Hector Cameron.

The name of the retiring Secretary, Mr Gilbert Thomson, drew forth rounds of applause as Mr Fraser Campbell referred to his zeal, enthusiasm, and popularity.

Another popular toast was that of the President. Mr Solly, in speaking to this, referred in condemnatory terms

to an article on Deer Forests, which has recently appeared in the journal of an English club. The loud applause which greeted his remarks showed how much the members of the S.M.C. dissociated themselves from the sentiments expressed in this paper, and their resentment of the tone in which the author referred to Mr Darroch and to their President.

Mr R. A. Robertson, in a spirited speech, referred to the new Secretary and Librarian, and indicated the benefits which might be expected from the separation of these two offices.

After replies from these two gentlemen, and a rendering of the Club song by the ever-obliging Mr Rennie, the gathering broke up, to reform round the smoking-room fire, and there discuss matters of high policy and state.

EXCURSIONS.

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S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1901.

MESSRS GLOVER, LAWSON, and LING arranged a Swiss holiday on a consecutive principle. Lawson came out first and went to Zermatt, but for the first week, owing to shocking weather, was successful in only a pass to Saas. Afterwards he ascended Monte Rosa, the Wellenkuppe, Ober Gabelhorn, and Dent d'Herens; the first guideless, and the last mentioned on the third attempt. The ascent was made by the Tiefenmattenjoch, the descent by the Col de Valpelline, and the mountain being in bad condition, the expedition entailed a spell of twenty-seven hours on the rope. Ling then joined him, and the pair started forthwith by the High Level Route to Montanvers. The passes traversed were the Col d'Herens, Col de Bertol, Pas de Chèvres, Col de Seilon, Col de Giétroz, Col des Otanes, Col des Maisons Blanches, and the Col du Géant. They had wind, rain, and thunderstorms more or less the whole way, which prevented any peaks being bagged beyond the Tête Blanche and the Aiguille de la Za. On reaching Montanvers Lawson returned home, and Glover's advent being delayed, Ling took up the running alone. Owing to bad weather, he was only able to ascend the Petits Charmoz and Pic du Tacul until Glover joined him, when the pair did the Grands Charmoz, and the first ascent for the year of the Blaitière in bad condition. Ling slept out for the Dru, but was driven back by bad weather. Glover, who had the best luck as regards the weather, stayed on for four more days, and did the Traverse of the Grépon, a sporting climb; after all that he had heard about the "crack," he was not prepared to find it more easy than some of the things at home, but so it is. Certainly, the guide above him should be consulted first before taking this opinion as correct!

MR WORKMAN spent a fortnight in the latter half of July in the Val d'Anniviers, but, owing to bad weather, the only serious climbs he had were a traverse of the Rothhorn from Zinal to Zermatt, and the return by the Trift Joch, with Mr Freeman and Pierre Epiney. In company with Mr Freeman and with Mr Maclay he also climbed one or two smaller peaks.

MESSRS GARDEN and DOUGLAS spent three weeks of August in Switzerland, and among their joint ascents were the Brévent, the High Level Route from Chamonix to Zermatt *via* the Col du Char-donnet, the Grand Combin and the Col du Sonadon, the Ruinette and the Col de Seilon, and the Cols Bertol and d'Herens. From

Zermatt they did the Riffelhorn by the Matterhorn gully, the Weisshorn, the Matterhorn, and the Monte Rosa from the Zysjoch. Mr Douglas also ascended the Ober Gabelhorn. Mr Raeburn accompanied them in their expeditions on the Weisshorn, Matterhorn, and Monte Rosa, and Dr Maylard was also in the Monte Rosa party.

MR R. A. ROBERTSON had a very pleasant three days' walk from he Furka to the Eggishorn across the Galenstock, thence over the Ober aar joch, Gamchilücke and Grünhornlücke to the Concordia.

DR and MRS INGLIS CLARK spent nearly five weeks in the Chamonix district. The weather was not, in general, suitable for climbing the High Alps, but enabled them to make the tour of Mont Blanc, returning by the Col du Chardonnet to Chamonix. They ascended Mont Blanc, Grandes Jorasses, and Aiguille du Géant (the last in company with Messrs J. A. Parker and Raeburn). Among the less important excursions were included Mont Joly, Crammont, Buet (with J. A. Parker), Aig de Berard, and the Cols de Tour, de la Seigne, Ferret, Floriaz, &c.

MR JAMES MACLAY spent some time at St Luc in the Val d'Anniviers and at Ried, Lötschenthal, but owing to bad weather, only succeeded in doing some minor peaks and passes. He subsequently crossed the Col du Chardonnet with Mr Douglas and Mr Garden, and also the Col des Maisons Blanches.

MR and MRS C. W. NETTLETON and Mr F. S. Goggs were in the Dolomites in early June, and found a tremendous amount of snow. Beyond being the discoverers that the Langkofel Hütte had been carried away by an avalanche, nothing of note could be done in the Grödner district. Cortina was reached on foot in three days, Mr Goggs taking the Marmolada *en route*. After being snow-bound at the Hôtel Faloria for two days, their first ascent was Monte Cristallo (by a partly new route up the north face, only possible under the prevailing conditions), followed by Tofana di Mezzo (three hours' step-cutting!), Becco di Mezzodi (traversed), and Cinque Torri (twice). Mr and Mrs Nettleton afterwards ascended the Kleine Zinne and the Croda da Lago (traversed), Mr Goggs going north to secure the first ascent of the season of the Gross Glockner.

MR A. E. MAYLARD was out in the early part of August, and with Mr Drummond made a traverse of the Ober Rothhorn. He also traversed Mont Collon, and with Messrs Douglas and Garden, Monte Rosa. He was successful also in crossing the Cols Durand, du Grand Cornier, du Sielon, Bertol, and d'Herens.

MR KYNASTON spent August in Söndmøre, Norway—a district well known to climbers—and he writes as follows :—

We—*i.e.*, a party of four, including two ladies—ascended Kviteggen from Fibelstadhaugen, with Lars Haugen, and Slogen, and Jagta from Öie. Alone, with Lars Haugen, I climbed Smörskredtind (5,090 ft.)

from Öie by the west ridge. This is a new route, and proved in every way a most interesting climb. The ridge followed forms the profile of the mountain, on the side towards Slogen, as seen from Norangsdal on the south. The actual climbing occupied rather over three hours, and the actual edge of the ridge was followed nearly the whole way to the summit. The ridge is very steep, and is remarkable for its extraordinary knife-edge character, certain portions having to be turned by traversing just below the edge, and grasping the edge of the ridge with the hands. In other parts it is broken up into small, and more or less isolated pinnacles, and every now and then interrupted by sharp, and often perpendicular faces, where a 60-foot rope on several occasions came in very useful. As a rule the rock was firm and the hand-holds good, but in the more difficult places the hand-holds became finger-holds, and were often few and far between, and by no means conveniently placed.

The route leads direct to the summit, and is a first-class ridge-climb. Lars Haugen is an expert cragsman and capable leader.

MR H. T. MUNRO, while on a camping tour in Morocco with Mrs Munro in May last, climbed Gebel Musa—or Apes Hill (2,710 feet)—which rises abruptly from the southern shores of the Straits of Gibraltar. The mountain has probably seldom before been climbed by a Christian, owing to a general but erroneous idea that the tribes in the neighbourhood are unfriendly. The ascent was made from the back by a perfectly easy stone shoot. There are, however, some fine limestone ridges and faces which should afford good climbing—notably the western arête, resembling somewhat in appearance the north-west ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean. The view, extending to the snows of the Sierra Nevada in Spain and of the Atlas Mountains in Africa, each fully 150 miles off, is magnificent.

MR WHINCUP'S FATAL ACCIDENT IN THE COOLINS.—We regret that a fatal accident occurred in the Coolins on 16th August last. Messrs Fraser and Whincup, both lawyers in Aberdeen, set out to climb Sgurr-nan-Gillean from the Coire a' Bhastier side. The small scree plateau to the left of, and below, Nicolson's Chimney was reached in safety. In addition to this chimney, several small gullies start off from the plateau and run out on the main ridge below the summit, the gully to the extreme left being the most conspicuous. The accident occurred in a subsidiary gully between this gully and Nicolson's Chimney. At 3.40 P.M. Mr Whincup was in advance of his companion about 40 feet. When he had reached a point about 60 feet above the plateau, he disappeared towards the right, round a rock projecting from right to left almost across the gully. In a few seconds his companion heard a loud cry; and, on looking up, was horrified to see the deceased gentleman falling to the left in mid-air. The body landed on the scree plateau with such violence that it was

precipitated over a steep rock face, and fell heavily on the great scree slope below, in all a distance of not less than 200 feet. Fraser immediately descended to his unfortunate companion, and found him unconscious. The injuries to the head and other parts of the body were so manifestly serious that medical aid had at once to be summoned. A straight course was, therefore, made for Sligachan, which was reached in about an hour. Willing helpers were found there. A medical gentleman, who was fortunately resident at the hotel, and five others, including the deceased's companion, started at once for the scene of the disaster, which was reached about 6.40 P.M. Life was found then to have been extinct for about three hours. The party, having formed a stretcher from materials they had taken with them, carried the body a short distance. On account of the steepness and difficulty of ground to be covered, however, progress was found to be impracticable without further assistance. One of the party kindly undertook to return to Sligachan and procure this. About 2 A.M. the following morning another party of ten arrived, having been guided by a lantern through the darkness to the spot where the first party was stationed. At dawn, about 3 A.M., the descent was begun, the hotel being reached about 8 A.M., after a difficult and toilsome journey. It is believed that the unfortunate gentleman lost his life through having been overtaken by giddiness, or some sudden illness, which caused him to lose his hold, and rendered him unable to recover his balance. Nothing was wanting in the arrangements made by Mrs Sharp and her assistants to accommodate her establishment to the fortunately unusual circumstances. It should also be recorded that the residents, for several miles round, turned out with most commendable promptitude and rendered valuable assistance.

WILLIAM GARDEN.

A NOVEL SCIENTIFIC FOOT RACE.—Both in literary and scientific circles, the name of the physicist who accompanied the Challenger Expedition, Mr J. Y. Buchanan, Edinburgh, needs no introduction; and it may be of interest to not a few to hear something of a somewhat novel dynamical experiment carried out under his supervision in the wilds of Lochaber yesterday. Himself an enthusiast in athletics, Mr Buchanan, during a recent stay in Fort-William, took a lively interest in what has now come to be known in sporting circles as the Ben Nevis record, and it occurred to him that such races might be turned to scientific account. Having devoted a good part of his life to mountain climbing in Switzerland and other countries, Mr Buchanan, who, it is worthy of note, is a director of the Ben Nevis Observatory, asserts that the ascent of such heights, from a scientific point of view, possesses a significance which is too often overlooked. A competitor, for example, who starts at the foot of the mountain, and gets to the summit in the shortest time possible for him, has tried his power of work-doing and of endurance to the utmost, and if he only has a

measure of the work done, and of the time occupied in doing it, the sporting event becomes a scientific experiment of the highest value. The athletic worth of the contest is in no way affected by the measures which have to be taken in order to secure the scientific advantage. It is necessary to know the vertical height of the finishing point, the weight of the competitor, and the time which he takes to transfer himself from the lower point to the higher one. The races which from time to time have been held on Ben Nevis in former years, embraced the double journey up and down, and as the starting and finishing point was either at Fort-William Post Office or Banavie, a considerable stretch of flat ground had to be covered. These races, doubtless, were extremely interesting viewed from an athletic standpoint, and showed the astonishing power which men accustomed to mountain work and in the highest training are capable of developing, not merely for a spurt, but for a considerable continuous spell. The up and down record from the Post Office at Fort-William and back again is at present held by Macdonald of Leith, his time being 2 hours 18 minutes, while Swan of Fort-William held the record for two years with the very slightly longer time of 2 hours 20 minutes. To the uninitiated these figures may not convey much meaning, but when it is borne in mind that the distance covered adds up 14 miles, and that the gradient on the mountain is 1 in 4 on an average, the nature of the performances will be at once apparent. Those races, however, were of a mixed character. They began with some two miles on the flat, then a lift of 4,300 feet—which taxes the powers of the hardiest competitor to the utmost—followed by a descent of 4,400 feet at breakneck speed, over ground that suggests a sprain or fracture at every step, and finally a farther stretch of two miles on the flat. In Mr Buchanan's opinion, the mere descent of a mountain has no particular significance beyond the risk to the limbs and joints of those who are rash enough to undertake it at a speed beyond the safe normal, and it was decided to eliminate this element of danger from the new contest. Yesterday's race was accordingly one from the base to the summit of Ben Nevis, and to encourage competitors the prizes offered included a handsome gold medal and several substantial monetary awards. Punctually at mid-day the contestants were started by the Observatory superintendent, Mr Angus Rankin, from the farm of Achintee, between which and the Ordnance Survey cairn on the hill-top the difference of level is almost exactly 4,300 feet. There is a fairly good bridle path the whole way, the total length of which is five miles, being equivalent to about six times the vertical height, which gives a comparatively easy average gradient. Having each been carefully weighed, the competitors were started altogether, no allowances of any kind being conceded. They were permitted to make the ascent in such manner and by whatever route they might deem prudent, although in former races the rule was not to deviate from the path during the first half of the journey

up to the lake, but from thence upward each man generally took a more or less independent course. Mr Buchanan himself acted as umpire on the summit, and as each competitor arrived his time was carefully noted, and the corresponding beneficial result to science arrived at. The time taken by a man in good training to lift his own weight through 4,300 feet forms the data for this purpose. If, for instance, his weight in pounds be multiplied by 4,300, the number of foot pounds of work which he has performed will be ascertained, and dividing the product by the number of minutes required to make the ascent, the average rate in foot pounds per minute at which he has been working during the climb will be obtained. The standard rate of doing work was fixed by James Watt when he brought the steam engine to that degree of efficiency that it could be employed to replace the horse in doing many kinds of work, at 33,000 foot pounds per minute, and he called that one horse-power. If, therefore, a man weighing 10 stone, or 140 lbs., makes the ascent of 4,300 feet in, say, 80 minutes, he does 602,000 foot pounds of work in that time, and has been working during the 80 minutes at the average rate of 7,525 foot pounds per minute, developing thereby 0.228 effective horse-power. If the man weighed 12 st. 2 lbs., or 170 lbs., and took the same time to make the ascent, he would do 774,000 foot pounds of work, and would be working at the average rate of 9,675 foot pounds per minute, thus developing an average of 0.293 effective horse-power. The work done by different men in ascending the same mountain in the same time is in simple proportion to their respective weights. In a race like the one up Ben Nevis the small and light man would generally be preferred, but the preference does not take anything like the proportion of their relative weights, whence it may be concluded that for men in good training increase of weight is accompanied by increased power to lift it.

Telegraphing from the summit of Ben Nevis last night, our Fort-William correspondent says that the weather conditions were not altogether favourable for the mountain race. While clear at the base, a thick mist enveloped the upper reaches of the mighty Ben, making it dangerous for competitors to leave the bridle path, and it was impossible to distinguish any of them until within a dozen yards of the goal. In all seven started, and although the competition was well advertised, no competitors from without the confines of Lochaber put in an appearance. Only four reached the summit, and the following are the names, time, and weight of the three successful contestants:—

1. Ewen Mackenzie, Fort-William, 1 hr. 8 mins. 19 secs. ; weight, 12 st. 6 lb.
2. Duncan Rankin, Lochyside, 1 hr. 18 mins. 44 secs. ; weight, 11 st. 12½ lb.
3. Donald Cameron, Lochyside, 1 hr. 20 mins. 34 secs. ; weight, 10 st. 4½ lb.

It was worthy of note that the two first to arrive are in the em-

ployment of the Meteorological Society, and regularly ascend Ben Nevis. The first prize-winner developed exactly one-third horse-power during the time he was climbing the mountain.

—*Scotsman, 2nd October 1901.*

BEINN DEARG, ATHOLL.—On a fine crisp morning towards the latter end of September I left Blair Atholl for Glen Tilt, the programme for the day being to ascend Beinn a Chait, thence on to Beinn Dearg, returning home by Glen Bruar.

The Tilt was crossed at Bridge of Tilt, and recrossed at the old bridge—locally, Black Bridge—then the road was followed to Old Blair, immediately behind the Castle; here it turns to the right, passes the home farm, and winds for a few miles along the west side of Glen Tilt, but ultimately crosses the river and joins the right-of-way path on the opposite side. The advantage of following this road is that it leads to a stalker's track, which winds up the right bank of the Allt Slanuehaidh to a bothy not far from the base of Beinn a Chait. Of course it is just as easy to take the right-of-way path as far as Croftmore, then to descend and cross the Tilt, and thus gain the stalker's path high up on the other side.

It was now a beautiful morning, as I wandered over heath and bog, with nothing to disturb the stillness save the roaring of the stags and the cry of an occasional grouse, as he rose whirring from my feet only to seek refuge round the nearest knowe. This part of the forest was literally swarming with deer, from every hilltop round about I could see antlered heads, and silent figures silhouetted against the sky; and right in front of me, distant only about 200 yards, I counted a herd of between seventy and eighty.

The walk to the foot of Beinn a Chait did not occupy much time, and less was required for the ascent.

Beinn a Chait (2,942) is a high, oval-shaped mass, covered with grass and short heather, presenting easy slopes on all but its eastern side, where it shows a very steep front towards Gleann Diridh. Its large flat summit is the abode of numerous ptarmigan, and its cairn—no doubt owing to the scarcity of material—is in a very primitive condition.

Most of the distant tops were still enshrouded in mist, but the near views were grand, especially Beinn Dearg, its large well-built cairn being sharply outlined against the sky.

The summit of Beinn Dearg lies about two miles almost due north from Beinn a Chait, and there is very little of a dip between them, but the walk is most enjoyable, and affords interesting peeps into the deep and narrow Gleann Diridh. The "going" from the one to the other occupied a little less than an hour, and at 10.45—three and a half hours from Blair Atholl—I stood beside the cairn of Beinn Dearg (3,304).

The upper reaches of the hill are covered with huge boulders of granite, which probably accounts for the large size and excellent workmanship of the cairn.

Being so centrally situated, and of a fairly respectable height, Beinn Dearg, I should say, commands one of the finest panoramas of hills to be seen anywhere ; ridge upon ridge they stretch right round the horizon, with no sign of civilisation, not even the blue curling smoke from a lone mountain sheiling. To the south and south-west, a slight haze hung over the distant horizon, but otherwise the stretch was only limited by my power of vision.

A little to the north-east, and only fourteen miles away, was a very interesting group of mountains—the Cairngorms. Long and earnestly did I gaze on them, and often did I return. They were all there, all the old familiar faces, the titular peak alone excepted.

From the sharp peak of Sgor Ghaoith (3,658), with part of its fine east face, I could follow the line over Glen Eunach ; the huge mass of Braeriach (4,248) dipping into the Larig, the sharp pointed Sgor an Lochan Uaine (Angel's Peak, 4,095), Cairn Toul (4,241), surmounted by its two Cairns, Ben Muich Dhui (4,296), with cairn and Coire of the Allt Clach nan Taillear, Derry Cairngorm (3,788), and the great hump of Beinn a Bhuid (3,924), and Ben Avon (3,843) in one. The foreground was occupied by Beinn Bhrotain (3,797), and Monadh Mòr (3,651), and to the south of Glen Geldie, by Carn an Fhìdhleir (3,276), and An Sgarsoch (3,300). Farther off, Morven (2,862) presided over Deeside, and a little to the south was the poet's own "dark Lochnagar" (3,786).

The view in this direction was now blocked by the great mass of mountains beyond Glen Tilt, comprising the following peaks :—Beinn Iutharn Mhor (Ben Uarn) 3,424, Carn an Rìgh (3,377), Glas Thulachan (3,445), and to the south of these, the three tops of Beinn a' Ghlo lent grandeur to the already wild and rugged glen.

Away on the southern horizon, the faint shadow of the Ochils could be seen through the haze. Nearer at hand was Ben Vrackie (2,757), and a little to the west Farragon (2,559) dominated over the long ragged ridge between Strath Tummel and Strath Tay. Over this ridge the flat top of Ben Chonzie (3,048) showed face. On the eastern shoulder of Farragon a tiny little lochan—Lochan a Chait—lay sparkling in the sun like a precious gem on some fair maiden's breast.

Next came a great crowd of giants, vieing with each other for recognition ; in front, Schichallion (3,547) and Beinn a Chuallach (2,925) guard the entrance to Rannoch ; behind, Ben Vorlich (3,224) and Stuc a Chroin (3,189), Ben Lawers (3,984), Ben More (3,843), Cruachan (3,611), and Laoigh (3,708), all look up for a nod. Westwards, over a conglomerate mass rose the Ben Alder group, overtopped by Ben Nevis and neighbours.

A little to the south of Alder, between it and Chuallach, Buchaille

Etive Mor (3,345) and some of the Black Mount tops demand attention. Farther north were the mountains beyond Loch Laggan, out-distanced by a lofty group of which I knew nothing.

Entomologically, I noticed during my stay on the summit a humble bee, a small tortoiseshell and one of the small Fritillary butterflies ; a little lower down I made the acquaintance of a Red Admiral.

Having spent a couple of glorious hours on the summit, it was with a pang of regret, and many a backward glance, that I turned from such an enchanting sight and descended the western slopes towards Glen Bruar.

While making for a stalker's path, I encountered another herd of about one hundred and fifty deer ; one large fellow among them, evidently just returned from the war, presented a curious sight with only one horn. This path, which I was fortunate enough in locating, landed me on the glen road about half a mile above Bruar Lodge. The stream was crossed at the lodge, and the road with its many windings followed down the glen towards Struan. On passing Cuilltemhuc, the road parts company with the water, and strikes out over the moor for Struan station. Looking backwards from here, the stately form of Beinn Dearg, away at the head of the glen, with the last rays of the setting sun still lingering on its summit, presented a scene of rarest grandeur, a scene for "poet's eye and painter's hand."

About two miles short of the station I left the road and rejoined the stream, just where it enters that deep ravine which has made the Bruar Water famous ; and notwithstanding it was rather late in the season, I had the good fortune to come across some nice sprigs of white heather.

After viewing the falls, I emerged on to the great north road about three miles from Blair Atholl, towards which I directed my steps.

WILLIAM BARCLAY.

STOB DEARG OF BUACHAILLE ETIVE MOR.—During June, in the course of my work on the Geological Survey, I climbed Stob Dearg of Buachaille Etive Mor from Kingshouse by the Crowberry Traverse, curved ridge, and by the north face about half-way between the big, north-eastern gully and the entrance to Corrie Tulachan, and found one difficult bit in gaining the main ridge. Climbed the Crowberry Tower by four different routes—(1) from the upper part of the Crowberry Ridge, easy ; (2 and 3) from the grassy neck connecting the Tower with the main mass of the mountain, the one route going to the right, and the other over a small projecting platform of rock, to the left ; and (4) from the lower south-east side, *i.e.*, from near the head of the gully between the Crowberry and curved ridges. From here I traversed obliquely upwards by narrow ledges to the south ridge or arête of the Tower, which I ascended direct. Found this perpendicular near the upper part and by no means easy.

H. KYNASTON.

SKYE IN AUGUST.—We had shocking weather in Skye, and so I did very little. The only thing worth mentioning was that I went one day with Donald into Coire na Creiche and thence into Tairneilear Coire to within a few yards of the end of it. There is a ledge on the true right (left facing up), and we followed this and got on to the buttress of Sgurr a Mhadaidh nearest Bidein, where there is a good platform. Thence we mounted for about 150 feet up three very steep pitches to easy ground, and arrived, from the north-western side, up to the top of the peak of Sgurr a Mhadaidh nearest Bidein, and had a ridge walk back to Sligachan. It was a jolly climb. It saves climbing up by An Dorus and thence over all the five pinnacles of Sgurr a Mhadaidh if you want to have a ridge walk back to Sligachan.

Naismith writes: "The ridge of Mhadaidh you speak of is, I rather think, the one that Collie took Parker and me up five years ago. If it is the same, it is a big, rounded thing, more of a buttress than a ridge, with a platform half-way up, and tremendously steep above. We turned this steep bit by traversing to the right into a gully, and then Collie discovered a lovely stomach traverse, by which we got back to the main line of ascent." I have no doubt that the ridge Naismith alludes to is the same that I ascended; but I avoided the lower half, and their party turned the steep pitches above the platform.

Another day I went with John Mackenzie to Coruisk with a pony, blankets, &c. We found a big boulder close to the end of the buttress of Sgurr Dubh. Our intention was to climb that peak from there and thence on to Sgurr nan Eag and down to Coruisk again. It was fine till 11 P.M. and then, *miserabile dictu*, down it came. It poured and blew until we were quite clammed, and at 5.30 we gave it up, and I got back for breakfast at the hotel. Afterwards I inspected the Quiraing, but had no companion and so could not try any of these fine pinnacles. I am certain a day spent there would be well rewarded, as one or two of the pinnacles would go, but it would require a strong party and plenty of rope. W. W. K.

[Dr Norman Collie, writing under date 4th October 1901, says of the Quiraing: "The rock is quite impossible and comes away in bits, therefore is exceedingly dangerous."—ED.]

THE MAIDEN ROCK, ST ANDREWS.—This is a small isolated "stack" about a mile along the cliffs to the east of the ancient city of St Andrews. It will afford a few climbs of a somewhat large boulder order. In shape the rock is not unlike the "Pic Robbieson" on an enlarged scale. It is a slab-shaped mass of red sandstone rising from the beach at right angles to the cliff. Like the "Pic" it has a long and short arête, that leading up from the beach being about 40 feet in height, while the one to the cliff slope or south end is under

25. Both sides and both arêtes of the rock are very steep. The ordinary or "tourist route," which is very well worn, is up the centre of the east side. The writer spent half-an-hour on the rock on the occasion of a visit to St Andrews, and found that the west side could also be ascended at two or more places, and that the complete traverse of the arête gave a nice little climb. No marks were observed of any previous climbs here. The rock is sound, but the hand-holds somewhat rounded.

HAROLD RAE BURN.

THE COBBLER.

Among the advantages of being desired to write a guide-book article for the *Journal*, the necessity of visiting the hills to be described may be counted as chief. In this way nine days have been spent on the Cobbler and Narnain alone, and the hills seen under varying aspects. In July 1900, in company with A. M. Mackay, an attempt was made to reach the Cobbler corrie in dense mist, extending nearly to the sea level. Trusting to intimate acquaintance with the hill, no compass was brought. In consequence the entrance to the corrie was passed, and we reached the ridge east of the south peak. A traverse was made of Jean, and subsequently of the central peak; but thereafter, although apparently hugging the corrie on the right, we found ourselves in Glencroe, and had to recross the southern ridge to the Narnain boulders, where camera and baggage had been left. In February 1901, in company with my wife, I had two superb days on Narnain and the Cobbler. The snow was deep, the atmosphere clear, and the distant views unrivalled. On a later day, in company with J. Gall Inglis, fine Alpine effects were obtained, but mist with snowstorms interfered with our plans, and a breathless glissade into the corrie revealed an icy slope which refused the application of our brakes.

On Queen's Birthday 1900, it was my good fortune to be climbing the steep eastern arête leading to the summit of the centre peak. My son was learning to hitch the rope on the rocks just below the peak, and I had reached a point some 20 feet higher. Suddenly a fine buzzard flew forward, and after circling two or three times about me, struck the rock more than once with its wings within a yard of my head, at the same time uttering sounds of rage. It next flew to my son, striking the rock as before, and after that repeated the attack on each of us. Finally with larger and larger sweeps it disappeared and left us to pursue our way in peace. Not half an hour before we were ascending from the corrie by the steep scree slope to the col north of the southern peak, when a large fox with bushy tail was descried on the rocks 20 feet away. Keeping quiet, we watched it for perhaps three minutes, till it disappeared round the corner and was lost to view. The point where the fox stood was just at the corner where the steep north-east face joins the northern face near the col.

PAVEY ARK.—A correspondent writes us with regard to the note on p. 250, Vol. VI. He states that Mr Claude Barton made the first ascent of the chimney, which is now known as the Rake End Chimney, in 1898; and that this ascent is recorded in Jones' book, 2nd edition, p. 218.

ARRAN.—Mr Editor,—When Sassenach S.M.C.'s invade the North, it behoves them to inform you of their doings.

This member, in the company of W. A. Mounsey, heard of Arran through Squance, F. C., and Thomson, G. Then came the *Climber's Club Journal* with article by Corner on the very place.

Designs therefore completed and carried out by a visit to Corrie Hotel, from 13th to 23rd September, producing an impression that will not soon fade, and a desire to go again, which one hopes may be gratified next year.

I have on previous occasions said that I do not look to you for replies to this kind of letter, and perhaps the best way now will be to briefly say what we did from day to day.

Our first half-day was ascent of Cioch na h'oighe by the easiest way we could find, and fearing, in the mist, to get into a wrong glen, we kept the ridge and made sure of descent into Punch Bowl by screes at the head.

The next was a half-day also, and some idea of A'Chir being in our heads—long after dressing—we went up to the Saddle, and seeing our point too far away for time, turned to look at Cir Mhor; scrambling to the top and down the Glen Sannox from the head, answering a stag in his own language on the way until a rival took up the note, but the Innocent thought of dinner only, so we saw no fray.

Sunday.—We went up Fergus' Seat, being joined by M'Leod (forebears of Skye survived the "Gory Stone"), a non-climber, but agreed to go middle on the rope down Witch's Step, spoiling his light tan boots. We passed two lads intent on the ascent. Hope they got on all right, but advised them to be cautious as they had no rope with them. Just as we left the Castles, up came Professor Dixon, of Manchester, from Brodick, with little daughter, and Travers, S.M.C., taken from church in all his glory. They were bent on Carlin's Leap also, but turned back as it was near 6 P.M. We descended into N. Sannox for a change.

Monday.—By No. 3 traverse (variation at bottom) up Cioch na h'oighe; over the tops to Goat Fell, and down east ridge, direct to quarry at Corrie.

Tuesday.—Very wet—not even a boulder. Squance came in at dinner-time with welcome news that Thomson and W. W. N. (my "little father" in Scotia) were to come next day. Therefore met them at landing stage, Brodick, and away up Glen Rosa for A'Chir.

A changeful day and cooler. Sighted chimney, observed from North Goat Fell in scarp at end of ridge from Ben Tarsuinn. In-

spected with W. W. N., rather wide but possible for back and foot, requiring a long struggle, the straightest, and, I think, longest direct climb I saw anywhere. From top saw two exits, but same impression of lot of energy required. W. W. N. thought best with rope from above first. A'Chir—undone drop also examined. W. W. N. keen, G. T. anxious to get in before dark, kept us on the move—most enjoyable ridge—rock much smoother. I think the drop would go with time, and found Gibson's pitòn, that is, W. W. N. did, and showed me. Any amount of variations along A'Chir. Corner says it is best; inclined to agree, though I have not been on Nuis or Tarsuinn.

A cousin of my wife's, Corder by name, saw us leaving ridge, and hailed from Iorsa Glen, but although answering I did not see him. At bottom of Glen Sannox we missed W. W. N. Shouted and waved handkerchief; G. T. lit a match; no go. G. T. said no one was better able to take care of himself than N. True for the "little father," so dashed down glen to find him on boulder waving like all possessed. Corder heard our shouts also as he came into head of glen, but thinking they were meant for him did not reply except to strike a match which we did not see, and he could not catch us up. Some language, Gaelic, in dark Glen Sannox that night.

Thursday.—Very wet and stormy. After lunch to the boulders, Sannox way; got through most of the hoops before dinner. Somehow one looks upon boulders as under your special protection or charge, and W. W. N. produced in my mind an impression of your getting a first step for one of them by standing on a thistle. Wish I could produce the idea on paper, an excellent tail piece it would make!

After dinner Corder and I had some talk with Professor Weiss, S.M.C., of Owens, and wife. They had been searching for fossil plants north of Fallen Rocks.

Friday.—In considerable doubt, started for Cir Mhor. Heavy wind from south and west, Sannox side sheltered. N. took me up trap gully, I think west of B2. The others were to meet below cave, but we had got through latter before they came in sight below. Then traversed to Bell's groove which N., M. and I only did, others not liking the gully below. Groove should have been discovered by Tough; very satisfying amount of exercise to get up. Not much time to investigate further, but N. satisfied me that a likely-looking slab and angle would be very awkward to get off or on to, near the little cairn below summit. So over to North Goat Fell, G. F., and down by the White Water, doing the boulder (Corrie) above the road.

Saturday.—Made early start, *plus* Corder who professes no rocks, but a good walker. By the mines (we went into them after bouldering previous time) to Cioch na h'oighe, and went up what N. called No. 3 ledge, same as M. and I previously, only starting from very bottom in two parties of three. The bad parts at bottom required care. Did ridge more or less religiously according to times been over. N. invited me to do pinnacle in gully head looking into

Punch Bowl. Much hesitation by reason of rotten appearance of straight-up steps, but with rope from above, took heart of grace and pulled at the stuff which looked so doubtful, in the manner directed by N. on the top. From there to ridge over Am Binnein and down into hotel garden, where Mounsey was ready to take a "group," as N., T., and S. were leaving by 5 o'clock boat for Glasgow.

Sunday.—Mounsey and I walked to Loch Ranza enjoying the scenery much. Rain came on at 1 o'clock, so we walked over moors to Cock farm, and so by Fallen Rocks to dinner, a little later than 5 P.M., that unexplainedly curious hour on Sundays.

We left on Monday afternoon, spending the morning in snap-shots of boulders, and Corder up a tree, and inquiring at Sannox after lodgings for next year, if we are spared.

Now, my dear sir, this is surely enough? Do not trouble to reply, I only wished you to know what was done and undone (a gully, Cir Mhor, very poor looking at bottom on a dull day, and N. and I did not much fancy the exit from back of top cave, where plenty of room, but some horrid rotten stuff just below the lip, needs an Alpine stock from above to clean it out first, else, first man up might meet nasty accident), perhaps before the others see you or are able to write.

Remember me kindly to Raeburn—was going to say "the adhesive," perhaps not quite nice enough to express admiration of his clinging qualities—and accept very kind regards from yours faithfully,

G. BENNETT GIBBS.

11 THE GROVE,
SUNDERLAND, 25th September 1901.

GLEN CROE,
ARGYLLSHIRE, December 1901.

DEAR MAISTER EDITOUR,—Me and ma dochter Jean, Friday was aicht days, steppit ower to speer for the guidwife—Jean's mither, ye ken. The auld carlin has been sair forfochen wi' the palsy, forbye being bent 'maist dooble as ye may see wi' a hoast.

Oor road was what I've heard tell some o' ye ca' the richt-angelt gully. Ye'll mind, sir, the place whaur ye gang doon on yer waim, for the roof o' the ledge is unco low-like. Syne ye hae to speil up a steep wee bittie, but onybody can dae it. I'm getting an auld man, but gie me time and I can dae it brawly, gin the rheumatis is no bad wi' me. And Jean, she just maks naething o't.

Aweel, bide still till I tell ye. At this vera spot, whatt suld we stummle ower, think ye? but eh, a muckle heap o' stanes that had been left there by some rapscallions.

It wasna like a sapper's cairn, or else I wouldna hae objeckit, for thae Ordnance chieils, as they ca' them, are douce bit bodies, and mony's the crack I've haen wi' them efter ma work was ower. No, man, I hae ma doots this ane had been biggit for a kin' o' loupin-on stane, as ye nicht see ony day doon bye the Colquhoun Airms, an'

'deed I winna say but aiblins I micht hae used it whiles masel ; gin a body had been in takin' a dram and tethered the auld meare at the doorstep. Hoot aye, there's nae doot ava it was *to help the loons up* the steep bittie ; but I'm thinkin', sir, that yon's no the thing. Ye ken mair about the rules o' yer sport nor me, but they tell me that ony-thing arteeficial—permanent like—is no allood whan ye're speilin' in auld Scotland. In thae furrin pairts it micht dae weel eneugh, whaur the puir folk ken nae better.

Noo, I thocht ye wad like tae hear that Jean and me knockit ower the hale clamjamfrey, and sent the stanes awa' doon to the soor milk burn, wi' siccan a clatter that we waukened the auld wife, and her as deaf's a post.

I'm aye fond o' seeing laddies enjoying themsels when they're weel mennered, and I'll be gled if ye'll gie me a ca', sir, ony time ye're passing.

Dod, man, they tell me ye're no merrit yet, and Jean's getting a soncy bit lassie, tho' I say't masel !—Nae mair yenoo, frae yer auld freen',

THE COBBLER.

THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS.—This enterprising and active club held its Anniversary Dinner at the Hotel Metropole, Leeds, on Tuesday evening, 10th December. Although formed ten years ago, the Club has not hitherto held a general representative dinner. Under the presidency of Mr Cecil Slingsby, some sixty members and their guests were present, including the Vice-President of the Alpine Club, Mr Hermann Woolley, and the President of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, Mr A. Ernest Maylard. Our own representatives, which included, in addition to the President, Mr Wm. W. Naismith, had a most cordial reception. The warmest regard and affection were expressed for the S.M.C. by almost all the speakers ; and also the hope that two clubs whose kindred interests were so closely allied would become drawn together by all the ties that make for mutual pleasure and cordial friendship.

The Club publishes an excellent journal once a year.

GUIDE BOOK.—The next groups that fall to be described are Ben Cruachan, Ben Eunaich, and Ben a Chochuill ; Bens Starav to the Clachlet, Buchaille Etive and Bidean nam Bian. The Editor will be glad to receive photographs or information regarding these hills.

MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

ICE EROSION IN THE CULLIN HILLS OF SKYE. By Alfred Harker.
Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Vol. XL., Part II.

Under the above title Mr Harker has written a most delightful paper, in which he describes the movement of ancient glaciers in the Coolin group of hills. He first shows that the Coolins were covered with an independent ice-cap, and then indicates the line of flow of the Scottish ice-sheet when obstructed by the Coolin groups. A small map clearly shows what the author wants to emphasise. A larger scale map is also given showing the direction of flow of the miniature glaciers as they wended their way down the several corries, and it is most interesting to trace with Mr Harker the subsequent course of these ancient glaciers as they issued from the various corries. Mr Harker's work is, of course, based on personal observation of striated surfaces and dispersal of boulders.

Another interesting portion of the paper will be found in what he says of Loch Coruisk. He, with the assistance of Mr Falcon, has prepared a bathymetrical map of the loch, plotted from 150 soundings. They found the loch had two basins separated by a shallow area, the maximum depth being nearly 90 feet in the upper, and 125 feet in the lower. Mr Harker has kindly presented a copy of this paper to the Club.

MR C. W. NETTLETON, 17 Thirlmere Road, Streatham, London, S.W., offers four guineas for Vols. I. and II. of the *S.M.C. Journal*.

The Club has decided to sell one (of the two remaining) complete sets of the *Journal*. The minimum price for this has been fixed at ten guineas. Applications for the same will be received by the Secretary till 1st February. If there is more than one application a ballot will be taken.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.

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**Office-Bearers for 1902.**  
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Committee.

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THE CLUB ROOM is now removed from 164 Bath Street, Glasgow, to Dowell's Rooms, George Street, Edinburgh, and will be opened some time in February.

THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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MAY 1902.

No. 38.

SGORAN DUBH PINNACLE.

BY H. G. S. LAWSON.

IT had often been urged that one of the many benefits in having a permanent club-room where our members could occasionally congregate, was that it would afford opportunities for expeditions being fixed up. With this object in view the Committee have, as is known, arranged that there will always be some of their number present on a specified day once a month. It is hoped that the members generally will support this experiment, and that as a result many pleasant expeditions, both Salvationist and Ultramontane, will ensue. Besides soliciting or rather obtaining donations for the Library, one of the duties of the Librarian is, I believe, to boom the advantages of the Club-room, and consequently it is with great pleasure that, in my official capacity, I am able to state that a most interesting jaunt resulted from the meeting of members at the inauguration of the room.

Messrs Mackay and Raeburn, along with myself, had had an extremely interesting visit to Arran a week previously, and very early in the evening the same three foregathered, and it was not long before it was suggested and carried unanimously that another expedition should, if possible, be arranged forthwith. Unfortunately the same unanimity regarding vacant dates did not manifest itself, and to the great regret of the other two, Mackay found

himself unable to join on the date that had ultimately to be agreed on. The next point to be settled was where should we go. Both of us had rather a warm side to a certain climb that had not yet been demonstrated to be a climb at all, on Lochnagar. There is, however, an Aberdeen section in the Club which had done much pioneer work, and had acquired almost a vested interest in that locality, and as Rule III. of the Club requires that proprietary and sporting rights shall be respected, it was at once admitted that anything that was not quite above suspicion of poaching on other men's preserves could not be thought of. A little prospecting work among the rocks surrounding Loch Eunach was subsequently considered. Raeburn was keen about a pinnacle on one of the ridges of Sgoran Dubh, of which no recorded ascent existed, and which was reported to possess a magnificently attractive or repellent appearance as seen from the western slopes of Braeriach. This decided the question. Whether it was to satisfy ourselves regarding certain bridge conditions in Glen Eunach, and to be able to impart information generally about what was to be done at the forthcoming meet at Aviemore, or to make quite sure of a first ascent should it prove fairly feasible, I shall not say, but suffice it Loch Eunach was agreed on.

Accordingly, I arrived at Aviemore on the evening of the 7th March. Raeburn joined me next morning about nine o'clock, and we started forthwith. The morning might be described as dull, overcast, threatening or wet, according to the standard of doubtfulness these relative terms suggest to the person making the description, but Raeburn, possibly encouraged by a favourable weather forecast, thought it worth while taking his camera. Unfortunately, however, the prophecy of the Meteorological Office on this occasion belonged to that not inappreciable minority that is officially described as not completely successful, and the camera had not at any time a chance. Going up Glen Eunach I was rather surprised to find a complete absence of snow from the road, and indeed on the hills generally there seemed to be much less than usual so early in the year. We took things fairly easily going up the glen, and reached the

upper bothy situated at the foot of Loch Eunach precisely at noon. A quarter of an hour's stop was made here for lunch, and as it was raining hopelessly the camera was not taken farther. From the bothy a grand view of the eastern face of Sgoran Dubh is obtained. Broadly speaking, it may be said to be divided into five main buttresses, on all of which a lot of good climbing should be obtained. The pinnacle that we had in view lies, perhaps, 800 feet above the loch on the southernmost buttress. There is an excellent bridle path along the west side of the loch, and along this we traversed until we appeared to be just on the line of the pinnacle. We then left it, and after ascending about 300 feet, roped—it was exactly one o'clock—and started climbing, endeavouring to keep direct for our goal. The ascent began over grass and slabs on the south wall of a small cave. Farther to the south was a larger cave, and on the far side of that a large slabby face. On our right was a big gully which cuts up the buttress, striking the ridge at a col about 200 feet above the pinnacle. The climb is treacherous rather than difficult, owing to much vegetable on slabs, and after 100 feet or so, degenerates into a mere scramble till the foot of the needle is gained. We were naturally anxious to keep on the outside edge the whole way, and on reaching the base of the needle, I somewhat impetuously suggested that we should attempt to keep straight on. The first little bit would have been extremely awkward but probably not impossible, and farther up I was lightly reckoning on something turning up. A little more careful observation would have revealed the nakedness of the land, and grasped that the upper portion of it was quite impracticable; but I do not regret my mistake as it afforded my companion a glorious chance. For, be it known, Raeburn has frequently told me that he is quite misunderstood in the Club, and that he is really a good Salvationist. Nobody will be surprised to learn that he is occasionally in difficulties in consistently maintaining this *rôle*, but he does his best and takes full advantages of all opportunities. Here was an opening for him which he promptly saw, and for the next few minutes he beat the big drum, and held forth in a way that would

have gladdened the heart of any member of that militant body, in whose ranks he audaciously classes himself. We ultimately descended by the north flank of the needle, and gained the upper col by a steep and rather treacherous chimney. A good deal of clearing work was done hereabout, which will considerably facilitate future ascents by the same route. Although naturally shorn of a considerable portion of its height, the needle stands up splendidly from the col, and is quite one of the narrowest pinnacles I have ever seen. There was really no great difficulty in climbing it by clamping the narrow edge with hands and knees, but as the top proved too narrow to stand on, and the sleet and wind were damp and chilly, we pretty quickly returned to the col. We then descended still farther on the south side, making a complete traverse round the needle. There were no traces of any previous ascent, and much to indicate that such had not been made.

Our main object had now been attained, but as we had no special reason for hurrying we completed the ascent of the hill. From the col formed by the big gully a steep but simple rock climb leads straight up the ridge, and we unroped at 4.25. There was as usual plenty of wind up above, and we were not sorry when the twenty minutes—that sufficed to carry us round the edge of the Sgoran Dubh cliffs to the cairn—had expired. As quickly as possible we crossed the cornice into shelter, and there had a second lunch. Five o'clock saw us descending, and chiefly by means of glissades of all descriptions we reached the loch side within half an hour. The walk down the glen was a very wet one at first and a very dark one later, but we duly reached the hotel without adventure at half-past eight, delighted with our day, and confident that with anything like moderate luck regarding weather, the forthcoming meet at Aviemore would be highly successful.

TARMACHAN AND THE CRAIG NA
CAILLICH GULLY.

BY A. M. MACKAY.

"EVERY dog is entitled to his mouthful," it is said "of sheep," and so three poor dogs, who had waited days-long in the wet, at last got a *bonne bouche* on the sixth day of this year. Mr S. A. Gillon and the writer forming the "tail of the meet" had wagged feebly enough, failing to rush Ben Lomond in four hours and a thick mist, and had been joined by a friend, G. W. Young, from England. The party had shifted tents to Killin (*via* Cruach Ardran); and now Tarmachan fairly gleamed out at us in the frosty morning sunlight. I know few more magnetic views in Scotland than this of Tarmachan in such conditions. It sends a thrill through the beholder. We had heard of good climbing, and set forth light of heart.

Lacking both map and "S.M.C. Guide Book," we naturally hit on the best route, namely, straight into the Coire Fionn Lairige by the true-left bank of the stream mentioned by Dr Clark (Vol. V., p. 242). The path (for there is one) is good and skilfully constructed to lead through fine old firs to sudden glimpses of snowy falls. Peak after peak sparkled up as we got higher, old friends all, and received a hand-shaking metaphorical. Exhilaration rose to hilarity when the first snow encountered (lying fairly low down) was found to offer firm walking, and the ground was covered in quick time.

The course was laid somewhat towards the right, and, presently crossing the low ridge that here bounds the Coire, we traversed below a long range of delicately stencilled cliffs that form the south-easterly face of Tarmachan. A fine-powdered snow rose ever and again from the black rock's face, but never roughly and rudely. And now the world was narrowed to a rock-screen on this hand, on that majestic Lawers, and a blue glimpse of the loch.

There are several gullies in this long wall that might give fair climbs, but we fixed on one which led straight to

the top of Meall Garbh. It is the left hand of the two obvious gullies on this face, of which the right was ascended by Inglis and Dr Clark (Vol. V., p. 242). This route is of no very steep angle, but under summer conditions would offer three pitches of some difficulty, and if hard frozen might require care and time. As it was these difficulties were passed, with the aid of thinly adhering snow in good condition, by the leader with grace and dignity, by his followers in a style degenerating to a ridiculous sprawl. Works of supererogation are usually the most difficult; we proved this; unnecessarily attacking a last buttress of rock, we spent more time thereon than on the whole gully, the pitch more than once spurning its assailant.

The summit of Meall Garbh (12.15), and what a view! Verily our hearts were uplifted, but what we said was inadequate to the occasion. "Mr Young—Scotland; Scotia's Mountains—Mr Young." So they were made acquainted. We also duly noted that all around was clear and bright *except* the Cobbler and his dour cronies. It were an oft-told tale to recount the landmarks in this prospect, but over the left shoulder of the Ochils appeared a summit that must be Arthur's Seat. It is worth noting that this Meall Garbh is the top called Tarmachan by the natives, and to the eye it appears higher than the top, marked 3,421 feet, a mile to the north-east. I seriously doubt the height given on the 6-inch map.

We now loitered round the much-praised ridge, revelling in frozen slopes (save when we sat hard on them) and sunshine. On the Catnach we met the Eponymous Bird of the Mountain. He could not stay to give us welcome, but he suggested how well the Maol is named, with its black crest on a body of snow.

We had come to the lower top of Craig na Caillich when a snow-cloud that had gathered in the west came ever-magnifying towards us; and a frenzy, no bigger than a man's hand, grew on the horizon of our minds, and made to cloud their sober reason. The cliff below us must be prospected for a climb—that is how we put it.

Hitherto the pilgrims' way had been celestial in its serenity, but *facilis descensus Averno*: that is, being inter-

preted, we glissaded with light hearts down to the beginning of trouble. Approaching as we did along the skirts of the cliff from the south, no one could fail to fall a victim to the steep cleft, icicle-curtained, and darkly overhung by a black bastion of exceeding boldness. This is the Great Gully, in fact the only defined gully on this face. It had never been done. It had to be done. And here the great cloud swept over the ridge above, and the snow began to fall. We started up at 2.55 P.M.

By way of "honouring the stranger" we let him show the way. The first eighty feet is not so steep; there are two rock pitches in the water-course, but they need not be taken direct, and the whole can be cut by a long zig-zag to the right. Thereafter the chief characteristic of the climb is deception. Well is it named the Crag of the Old Witch. The gully has two great divisions, the first rock, the second chiefly grass slopes; in the first there is always a delightful back and knee chimney coming, but the portion at hand is ever open with a flat wall of the more ornamental-than-useful type on the right; in the second division there is always coming a charming Elysian field, broad and delectable, to which the leader may invite a large party to sip nectar; but the portion at hand, knee, or toe, is ever, for a snow-covered grass slope, most unconscionably steep.

Between the two divisions a snowy ledge strikes off to either side, and this is the only possible escape from the gully on the way up. The lower division has three very long pitches, but one of the resting-places was but a great slab of snow adhering to the wall. For the rest the climbing is not easy, but is no way out of the common. It is the second division with its five pitches that is the crux.

The evening was darkening as we entered upon it, and the leader promised haste. But haste is relative, and the soft wet snow came pouring down on our heads much faster than we went up. Though we named five pitches, it is merely a form of words, and they are really continuous. A "pitch" starts from a spot where the grass-flow is broken, and this is always either an overhang, or a deep cleft cut in the overhang. In both cases the leader must climb on to very steep and slippery grass, and run out a long distance;

in the former case there is no hitch. The longest run out took the whole of our sixty-foot rope, but here the second man was jammed in a crack and kept there by a sort of compress, two feet thick, of hard-beaten (but melting) snow poised on his head.

Still it darkened, and still the issue (if any) was not in sight. And now the awesome crag on our right was creeping round and above us. Time was all-important, and to save it the second man went on to a fifteen-foot cleft topped by an icy overhang. In the cleft he jammed, the third man came below him, and the leader rushed up this human staircase, climbing outside the pitch altogether to a ledge which rounded the obstacle above.

The grass now led steeply up to and ended abruptly in the face of the great cliff, which rose in several tiers, each tipped with heavy blue icicles glistening with dripping water. In the almost complete darkness it was terrible. Such a pitch and a night on the pitiless grass slopes stared us in the face. The combined stare was disconcerting. But to it the leader went, standing on the head of his second, who was perched on the highest grass slope. On this pinnacle he could reach a narrow outward-sloping ledge leading to the left. In the snow thereof he beat out steps, and took off gingerly. All went well, and a minute or two after he disappeared came the shout, "We're up. Hurrah." And a still more fervid ejaculation answered.

But hardly yet were we up. The second man, cumbered with an unattached axe, broke through a step, the axe clattered into the darkness, and he was left panting, supported by one elbow on a flat snow step. A pause for breath, a struggle, and position was regained. The last man had to come up *manu forti*, but he did it nobly, and we raced direct to the top at 5.20.

A headlong descent in the darkness took us to comfort in short time, even thick branches of birch in the wood imposing no stay on our course.

The gully gives a glorious climb of 600 feet, but an ye value your peace of mind, O members of the S.M.C., do not start the Great Gully of Craig na Caillich at three o'clock in the infant days of the year.

I have suffered myself to write in the sentiment of that same evening, when the local hillman told us that "not so much as a cat (presumably the Witch's black one) could get up the rock." A running call next morning reproduced the old deceptive impression of easy ledges, but the missing ice axe was found at the foot of the lowest pitch. I since find that the gully was attempted once before by Messrs Raeburn and Lawson (Vol. V., p. 70), who, however, utilised the escape on to the face by the ledge between the two divisions, and completed the climb thus in about four hours. Raeburn estimates the height at only 400 feet. It is difficult to say whether the Gully would be easier in summer. It would depend on the state of the grass slopes, but in any case the absence of that worst discomfort, melting snow, would be a great advantage.

NARNAIN AND VORLICH.

By W. INGLIS CLARK.

IN April 1901, as my family were staying at Tarbet for the Easter holidays, I had further opportunity of testing the mountaineering and climbing possibilities of this district. In company with Raeburn and my wife, a most enjoyable day was spent on Narnain. Although late in the season, a good deal of snow remained in the upper corries, and added to the grandeur of the views. Of special beauty was the appearance of the Cobbler, showing boldly beyond some snow wreaths when viewed from the foot of the wall ridge near the summit of Narnain. This ridge offers some of the best rock climbs in the district. Approaching the summit from the Arrochar side, a col is reached, whence some finely shaped rocks stand boldly against the skyline. The most prominent of these is the wall ridge of Narnain. On approaching more closely, this is seen to be a narrow rock ridge, 80 feet or more in height, with very steep sides, and merging into the summit plateau at its northern end. At its southern end it falls with dolomitic abruptness to the screes below. Two deep cracks divide it transversely in a more or less complete manner, while two gullies or chimneys threaten to cut off the southern part of the ridge. It was the southern arête that first attracted our attention. Messrs Maclay and Naismith had, on a former occasion, apparently climbed this face more to the east, but the western edge looked steeper and more sporting. As seen from the western side, the rocks took on the appearance of a blunt arrow or spear, hence we named it the Spearhead Arête. At the foot of the cliff, a portion of abutting rock forms on the western side a steep and difficult overhanging chimney, which is not to be encountered lightly even if a persuasive rope above guarantees safety. The others of the party ascended by this side, but the writer out of deference to the position of the holds, traversed round and reached the same point from the eastern or easier side. Above this the interest is unabated, for the climb goes directly up the excessively

steep face and round to the left, where a sensational corner is passed and the ascent continued upwards. The ridge is found to be very narrow and is followed to the head of the two gullies nearly intersecting. A steep but not difficult rock face leads one to the upper ridge and thence to the summit. Throughout this climb the holds are excellent, and enable one to thoroughly enjoy the sensational angle of the rock.

Continuing our walk along the ridge the first cleft, the Jammed Block Chimney, was reached. At the top this is about four or five feet wide, narrowing somewhat below. Jammed blocks a few feet down enable one to cross with safety, but the more agile can easily cross at the very top. We decided to attempt the ascent from the bottom by the western side. Reaching the bottom by the summit end, we were soon between the walls of this interesting fissure. The floor slopes upwards to where some jammed blocks give a sporting route to the middle floor. From this point the direct ascent to the top will not probably interest the majority of our members. The walls are about four feet apart, with firm enough footholds, but a projecting roof above forces the climber to straddle the gulf below, turn right round and gain the upper side of the roof, about ten feet above. As the rocks are slippery, this requires nerve and agility, but our leader was equal to the task, and ere long was safely anchored above. My wife next essayed the ascent, but finding it impossible or inconvenient to turn while striding the chimney, gradually made her way farther and farther out to the holdless walls near the face of the cliff. But for the assistance of the rope, her escape up the vertical wall would have been very difficult if not impossible. As the writer noticed that Raeburn seemed none too anxious to test his strength against a weight of twelve stone odd, he decided to leave this part of the climb to those who had already accomplished it, and taking advantage of a high level route over jammed blocks, emerged on the east face about 35 feet below the summit. A few minutes sufficed to unite our party above. Subsequently the other two descended the steep eastern face, and found it also to offer excellent sport, the only drawback being the some-

what uncertain holds. It appears that Maclay and Workman had previously reached the central floor, had passed through to the east side, and had then descended to the screes below. The ridge affords many other short but interesting climbs, but time did not permit of our attempting these. A pleasurable day, the Edinburgh spring holiday, with interesting experiences, was spent on Ben Vorlich. The morning was fine, and as recent heavy snowstorms had topped the hills with new snow, I looked forward with pleasure to the views which might open out during the ascent. The mountaineer, in search of the beautiful, may well delay the ascent of Bens Vane and Vorlich till he has drunk in the contrasting beauty of the outlook from Inveruglas Bay. The conventional view of Ben Lomond from near Luss is undoubtedly fine, with the wooded islands in the foreground, and a long trail of mist dreamily passing across the flanks of the hill, but the finest mountain form is perhaps best seen from Inveruglas (*see* photo, Vol. VI. p. 111). From this point one gets just a glimpse of the great corrie, and imagination may well fill in its Alpine appearance, while the snows of spring still linger on the rocks. Turning to the west the grand shoulder of Crois towers above and beyond the little bay, and its snow-filled gullies tempt the climber to try his mettle against their steepness. These two views should on no account be missed by the lover of scenery. Breasting the steep slopes above Inveruglas, an icy wind of no uncertain strength was encountered whenever I showed face to the west, and as the snow lay far down, the ice axe proved essential. I was agreeably surprised by the rocky character of the south-east ridge and the short gullies and chimneys which on its western side under the wintry conditions were distinctly difficult. Toiling up over the deep and drifting snows, the Corrie nan Bainte opened up below me, heavy cornices presenting themselves whenever the slope was steep. Shortly after this, a blizzard, which had for some time threatened, broke, and I reached the summit in a blinding snowstorm. As this was accompanied by dense mist, I was careful to notice the exact line of ascent, but in spite of this, the retreat was by no means

easy. The air seemed to consist of snow with but interspace of air, and, despite a Jaeger hat tightly fastened over neck and ears, the stinging ice roused the sensibilities, and provoked a tendency to strong language. Footsteps were instantly obliterated, and even in the shelter of a rock, the *tourmente* only permitted a peep at the compass through the finger chink of gloved hands. An attempt to escape to another sheltering rock resulted in an upset, and soon the icy blast had coated my *wetter mantel* with ice and frozen snow, and had searched its way into rucksack and camera, converting them for the nonce into solid receptacles of snow. But what need further to expatiate? Every mountaineer knows such experiences, and feels that they but brace him up the more to battle and win, if only they last not too long. For nearly two hours did the struggle continue, but in the intervals between the blasts, steady progress was made till the well-known peaks of Lomond, Narnain, and Vane greeted me as the last shreds of the storm passed away, and the sun shone out brightly once more.

Looking across Loch Lomond from Tarbet, a little farm-house called Culness may be seen, and rising steeply up the hillside behind, a small glen of the same name can be noticed. The ascent of this burn glen will give the explorer abundance of boulder work and even of higher tests. Besides numerous minor difficulties, there are at least two distinct pitches. The first of these, where a waterfall leaps the face, is passed by creeping up a ledge on the left, and then negotiating a somewhat overhanging pitch above. The second pitch, farther up, is perhaps 60 feet high, and is best reserved for a warm day. A preliminary swim of 30 feet lands one at the first hold, and then follows the sporting ascent to the top. Should the S.M.C. allot a summer meet to Tarbet, perhaps the "morning bath climb" may become one of its recognised institutions.

A CLIMB ON THE ROCKS OF
CORRIE SUGACH.

BY J. GALL INGLIS.

ON the 23rd of November last, Inglis Clark and I started to climb the slopes of Narnain with unbounded satisfaction that for once Arrochar was not living up to its reputation. The atmosphere was surpassingly clear; scarcely a ripple disturbed the placid surface of Loch Long, and the only cloud visible in the deep blue sky was the last remnant of morning mist drifting lazily over the summit of Ben Lomond.

We had originally intended to visit part of the Cobbler identified with one of the "crack" climbers of the Club, and then, if time permitted, to return *via* Narnain and Crois to take a photograph to illustrate a gully climbed by Maclay and Workman some time previously. One of the party, however, having somewhat painful recollections of the benumbing effects of the right-angled gully, grumbled at the prospect of forthwith tackling rocks cooled down by at least one night's keen frost, and the other member of the party was not slow to find the excuse by remarking that the sun would be in a better position for the photograph in the forenoon. And so it came about that we headed for Corrie Sugach.

An hour's walk brought us in sight of the buttresses of which the accompanying photograph, taken from the Crois side at a distance of about half a mile, gives an excellent idea. While Clark was occupied with his camera, I wandered higher up the hillside and studied the climbing possibilities of the buttresses, on which the minutest detail could be clearly seen in the brilliant sunshine, but the general conclusion came to was that they were too slabby to make it worth while going nearer that day to examine them.

Having taken our photographs, we started for the Crois end of the ridge, but our plans that day were fated to "gang aft agley." We had not gone far when I noticed

that the southern buttress of Maclay's gully was not so steep as had hitherto appeared, and showed signs of being broken up. I casually remarked that the buttress seemed climbable, and as if by mutual agreement we stopped—preliminary symptoms of "rock fever." After a brief inspection my companion remarked in a tentative kind of way, "What do you say to have a try at it?" and with the usual inconsistency of human nature, previous decisions anent cold rocks and numbed fingers were thrown to the winds; the motion was unanimously carried, and away we went across the corrie—on conquest bent.

After scrambling up a slope of big boulders to the north of a curious square-looking gully at the foot of the rocks, we found ourselves beside the buttress we had marked. From near at hand it did not look so promising, for the angle was steep and there seemed to be a good deal of slabs. There was a narrow streak of vegetation, however, at one side, running up as far as we could see, and deciding to go on, we hastily roped, as the sun was fast getting off the rocks.

The first pitch was quite short, up a steep slabby face of reddish rock in which lumps of quartz were firmly embedded, forming good holds for the feet. Above this was a steep broken slope of hard-frozen heather and grass, up which we carefully worked to the left towards the "streak," until direct progress was stopped by a vertical cliff. Keeping farther to the left, we rounded a kind of boulder in the direction of another but narrower streak of vegetation, and after one or two trials managed to follow it for several steep and interesting pitches, the rock being all that could be desired. But after some fifty feet or so, progress was again barred by a high vertical pitch.

Clark, who led all through, now tried to scale the left side of the pitch to a point where the vegetation began again. In this, however, he was unsuccessful, and the only remaining alternative was to try our luck on the face round the corner, to reach which we would have to traverse a narrow ledge for twenty or thirty feet, high above the southern edge of the above-mentioned square gully. To the best of our recollection the face was "boiler plate";

however, the leader worked his way out, disappeared round the corner, and presently I heard him shouting, "Come on." After a very interesting traverse along the ledge, on rounding a slightly sensational corner I found myself standing on a small platform of heather and grass, somewhat near the edge of a considerable drop into the corrie. From this platform a crack led upwards for some distance; what lay beyond it was impossible to forecast.

Clark now climbed up for forty feet or so, and then told me to follow, as he would require to be hitched before going farther. The ascent was up steps of earth and moss lying in a shallow crack, which would have been rather awkward to negotiate but for being able to get one's arms in behind them. I stopped just below the leader in a none too comfortable position, and hitched him as best I could while he endeavoured to reach a ledge some ten feet higher to the left.

It was decidedly a nasty place: he had to rise clear of the crack in which he stood, and then pull himself well to the left up a steep smooth slab, the only available foothold being a small ice-covered projection sloping the wrong way, on steeply inclined slabs which sloped sideways into the gully. After several ineffectual attempts to surmount it, the pitch was abandoned, as the risk of slipping was too great under the conditions.

Returning to the platform below, another attempt was made lower down. To the man below it looked comparatively simple, but as usual it was a case of "things are not what they seem." Clark succeeded in getting a little higher on the face, but found so little for either hand or foot that it was with some difficulty he returned at last; and now the only chance left was to attempt a traverse lower down near the edge of the cliff.

What this appeared to Clark, I do not know, but from where I stood, it conveyed the impression of being rather sensational, involving a traverse along a narrow ledge, eight or ten inches wide, with a vertical wall above and a sheer drop below into the depths of the corrie. The leader, however, having managed to get along a little higher up, and above where I stood, reported the holds to be bad, and

presently disappeared, leaving me to pay out the rope. Inch by inch it ran out, but at last, after a final vigorous run, it stopped, and I was comforted by the assurance that "a splendid hitch" had been found. I prepared to traverse the fearsome ledge, which, however, was not all that it bade fair to be. Though very narrow, and practically the edge of the precipice, it was quite flat; the surface was so gritty, that one simply couldn't slip on it, while on the wall above there was a slight projection most of the way, forming a regular finger-rail, and after thirty feet or so of most enjoyable work, we joined company on a broad green platform, from which further progress could be evidently made.

The fourth attempt was by climbing out on the face to the left, where a route—partly rock, partly narrow grass and heather ledges—ran straight up for sixty or seventy feet to the foot of a nearly vertical pitch. I followed, finding it steep enough to be glad of the moral support of the rope, although the holds were good. I found my companion perched on a small platform, only large enough for one to stand on, and I had perforce to stop just below, feeling somewhat like a fly on a wall. Fortunately there was an excellent hitch for the rope just beside my shoulder, else it would have been a trying position to stand in for any length of time.

The next work before us proved for the second time that day, to be a case of a possible but risky pitch. With a stronger man to steady the leader, and give him a slight lift up its nearly vertical face, it could probably have been done, but in the circumstances, it was wisely decided not to risk it, so once more we came down and tried our fortunes farther along the ledge, which now began to broaden out and show signs of affording possibilities of escape, should we not succeed in forcing the buttress.

And now came a fifth attempt, a forlorn hope almost, for it was getting well on to sunset, and only half the climb had been accomplished. Some distance above us was a projecting promontory or nose of rock that rose vertically for sixty feet or so. Clark ascended the face to the right of it, and after some fifty feet, brought up in a kind of cave. When I had worked in behind him, he divested himself of

his rucksack, and turning face outwards, proceeded to tackle the next pitch. We were in a deep narrow crack, of which the above-mentioned "nose" formed one side, and by jamming himself against the side, he managed to get his foot on a good foothold on the side of the "nose," then he worked his way on to the top of it and disappeared from view. When the rope had been nearly all paid out, he cried, "Come on," but as I was burdened with the two heavy rucksacks, I not unnaturally asked if he had a good hitch. Either by accident or design—probably the latter from subsequent observation—the reply was unintelligible, and with some misgiving I started.

It was a pitch to be remembered; the projecting ends of the camera-stand, of course, jammed badly at the first off-go. The footholds were far apart and high above one another, calling for unusual muscular exertion, and it was no easy matter to "warstle" on to the top of the "nose." However, aided by the friendly pull of the rope, I got up at last to the leader, and found him standing in a kind of pulpit of small rocks. As I was about to anchor myself just below, he greeted me with the facetious remark to "take care of these stones, as they arena muckle tae lippen til." This to a man with scarcely a breath left in his body, perched uncomfortably on the face, with a clear view of 200 feet into the corrie, and two heavy rucksacks pulling him back. Such are the amenities of rock climbing. It may be mentioned that with the exception of these large loose stones, there was no loose rock met with in the course of the climb.

Above the "pulpit" the angle eased off somewhat. Working carefully upwards by a slab on the left, Clark once more disappeared, and I thankfully stepped into the "pulpit." Presently there resounded excited cries of jubilation, which resolved themselves into "A knife arête! a knife arête!! a splendid knife arête!!!" I followed with curiosity, and there sure enough was a splendid sharp knife arête, perhaps fifty feet long, which must be straddled ere the climb could be finished; on our right it sloped down in a steep boiler plate, like the roof of a house, into Maclay's Gully; on the left it dropped sheer into the corrie, save

that there was a narrow broken ledge a few feet below the top. The leader did the arête in style, but the "baggage," being very tired, was glad to avail himself in part of the broken ledge. It was a fitting ending to a most enjoyable climb, which had taken three hours to accomplish. The route is indicated in the photograph of Sugach Corrie by the letters T C B.

A hundred feet or two up grass slopes took us to the top of the ridge in time to see the last rays of the sun reddening the top of Ben Vane. Then we went on to the top of Narrain, and descended to Arrochar in brilliant moonlight, arriving in good time for the good cheer awaiting us at Arrochar Hotel.

THE CLIFFS OF SUGACH CORRIE.—On 2nd May 1901, Maclay and Workman did some climbing on these cliffs. It should be explained that, owing to the nature of the rock, the climbs cannot be easily located from the glen, as they are gully climbs at a considerable angle to the front face of the rock.

The first climb (A B on sketch) was described in the account of the Alternative Easter Meet of 1900. On a fresh acquaintance it was again recognised as decidedly difficult. It is marked by the line of scree below. A C was then inspected, but not climbed. It is at the angle between a smooth perpendicular wall and steep slabby rocks. At places it seemed to be difficult owing to slabiness and want of holds, and the top part looked difficult.

Going up and coming down to the ledge J F R, two gullies D and E were found which cannot be seen from below. D was ascended and E descended. D was interesting, but not difficult. E was easier.

The ledge J F R turned out to be a walk, except at the lowest corner. Two gullies or cracks K and L, which had been seen from below, seemed quite hopeless, but a sloping crack between them, M, leading on to the face seemed to show a possible but probably difficult climb. Beyond L a deep gully, N, ending above in an overhanging and seemingly impossible pitch forming a good sized cave, was looked into. It seemed possible but difficult to get out on to the face to the left, S, and so to get up the cliffs. Beyond this, by rounding a corner, they reached the foot of a long gully, G H, which they followed to the ridge. The angle was not very steep, but the rock was smooth, crumbling, waterworn mica schist covered at places with not very thick turf. M, N, and G H were not visible from the glen.

The obvious gully J P seems unclimbable, owing, among other things, to an overhanging pitch near the foot.

J. M.
R. E. W.

On 23rd November 1901, Inglis Clark and Inglis had an excellent climb, which is the subject of a separate paper. Their four unsuccessful attempts and final route to the top are indicated by the letters T C B.

On 1st January 1902, Rennie, Raeburn, and Maclay, paid another visit to these cliffs. The mist was so thick that the rocks could with difficulty be found. The weather was wet, windy, and cold, and did not lend itself to severe climbing.

The gully P F was first tried. The lowest pitch was difficult, and required more time than could be given in the chilling conditions, so it was turned. The upper pitches were not so difficult, and were done. The gully D was then climbed. The gully G H was looked at from the top, but in existing conditions seemed risky, so a descent was made farther to the right, about Q R. Coming along the foot of the rocks to P, a traverse was made round the corner, which landed the party at a deep wall-sided gully (not visible in photo), ending in a cave above, and having a jammed block farther down, about O. Raeburn and Maclay went up to the cave, and after an attempt to climb out of it, which was frustrated owing to deep snow, Raeburn succeeded in climbing out below the block, and going over the block descended into the cave at the place he had previously tried to get up, and was followed by Maclay. This gully formed quite an interesting episode. Beyond the gully the rocks could be easily traversed.

These cliffs merit further attention, as their possibilities are by no means exhausted.

J. M.



THE ROCKS OF CORRIE SUGACH.

From a Photo by W. Inglis Clark.



PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE TARBET MEET, JANUARY 1902.

THE New Year Meet, held this year at Tarbet, was heralded, as is customary, by a sudden break-down in the weather. In spite of the careful arrangements of the Secretary, the effects of which were specially noticeable in all the other departments, he signally failed in his negotiations with the Meteorological Office.

Although the weather conditions were disappointing, they did not, as might have been expected, prevent a large turn-out of members. In fact, the Meet was the largest winter Meet held since the foundation of the Club. Friday, the day before the official starting of the Meet, was frosty and clear. A detachment consisting of four members and two guests put in an appearance in the afternoon. They were Dr Inglis Clark, E. B. Robertson, Drummond, Moorhouse (guest), P. H. Robertson (guest), and Workman. P. H. Robertson and Workman, who arrived early in the afternoon, climbed Ben Reoch, returning in time for dinner.

Saturday dawned wet and stormy, but the whole party set out for Ben Crois. They drove to Inveruglas, and traversed the Ben into the Sugach Corrie, returning by Arrochar. This expedition was attended by a most unfortunate accident. The Secretary, catching his foot in a hollow concealed by snow, severely strained his knee.

Saturday closed as it had begun, wet and stormy.

Drummond and Moorhouse were obliged to leave, and their places were filled by Raeburn and Rennie.

On Sunday Raeburn, Rennie, and E. B. Robertson, set out for Ben Vane by Inveruglas and Loch Sloy. They tried the ice on the loch, presumably with a view to skating, but found it disappointing. The snow on Ben Vane was deep and soft, and climbing was found to be very arduous. The descent was made to Loch Sloy with the aid of several short glissades.

On Monday the early train brought Maclay and Goggs, who, with Raeburn, P. H. Robertson, and Workman, took

train to Ardlui, and traversed Ben Vorlich to the foot of Loch Sloy, returning to Tarbet by Inveruglas. A strong wind was blowing across the ridge, which, at one time, seriously threatened the equilibrium of at least one of the party. Short glissades were indulged in on the descent, with occasional plunges into soft slush. Monday evening brought the President, Munro, Gillon (guest), Inglis, and Mackay, and closed with the invariable rain and wind. The evening was spent by the greater number of the party in the interesting game of curling on the billiard table.

On Tuesday A. E. Robertson and F. C. Squance arrived by the early train, and Kellas by a later one. Gillon, Mackay, A. E. Robertson, and Squance made the last attack of the year on the Cobbler, traversing the ridge from north to south and glissading into the corrie.

Goggs, Inglis, Maclay, Raeburn, Rennie, E. B. Robertson, P. H. Robertson, and Workman took train to Ardlui, and assaulted Ben Chabhair. During their ascent they were fortunate enough to get a near view of a pair of eagles. Some very fair glissading was obtained on the descent to the lochan, and the party arrived at Ardlui at about four o'clock. Here they divided into two parts; one, the more luxurious, waited at Ardlui for afternoon tea; the other elected to walk straight on, and had the satisfaction of arriving at Tarbet two minutes ahead of the others, who had called to their assistance a trap and a pair of horses.

Kellas climbed Ben Vorlich, and reported boisterous weather on its slopes. Napier and Penney arrived by the evening train, bringing with them a clear sky and the promise of better weather. The evening was spent in keen curling contests on the two billiard tables, but few were enthusiastic enough to wait to see in the New Year.

In spite of the promise of the foregoing evening, Wednesday dawned wet and very misty. A party consisting of Goggs, Napier, E. B. Robertson, P. H. Robertson, and Workman were the first to set out. Their goal was the Cobbler, and to it they proceeded by the Buttermilk Burn. They had great difficulty in finding the Cobbler, in spite of his prominence on the landscape, but eventually he was found and his highest height conquered. A good glissade

took the party into the corrie, and they hastened home to catch the afternoon train south.

Maclay, Raeburn, and Rennie visited the cliffs of the Sugach Corrie. They made some interesting explorations which will be recorded elsewhere. Mackay and Gillon climbed Ben Ime from the Inveruglas side, descending to Arrochar.

Maylard, Munro, Kellas, and Penney climbed Ben Vane from Inveruglas, descending to Loch Sloy.

A. W. Russell and A. E. Robertson were also on the Cobbler.

The Meet broke up on Wednesday evening, and the consensus of opinion seems to be that, although the weather was bad, and although no exciting adventures were encountered, it was a very enjoyable one. The hotel was remarkably comfortable, the hostess sparing no trouble in her endeavours to make visitors feel at home.

R. E. W.

THE EASTER MEET AT AVIEMORE.

27TH MARCH—1ST APRIL 1902.

THE opening of the new hotel at Aviemore last June having rendered it possible for the first time to hold a Club Meet among the Cairngorms, there is little to wonder at in its being decided to hold an Easter Meet there on the first possible occasion, and the wisdom of the selection has been amply proved by the great success of the Meet, which has been the largest on record and one of the most enjoyable. Doubtless many more members and friends would have attended but for certain forebodings that may have kept some away, as to the great distances to be covered and the length and fatigue of the expeditions thereby involved; but from the experience gained this year of the great ease with which parties could get to and from the foot of the hills by driving, the writer ventures to predict that the next Aviemore Meet will be bigger and even more successful than that of this year.

Most of those who attended arrived with the late trains on Thursday, the 27th, or the early trains on Good Friday, and the early trains on Tuesday, the 1st April, carried away most of the members, although one or two remained on till near the end of the week to fully enjoy the beautiful surroundings and benefit by the bracing air. Thirty-four members and guests were at one time or another present as follows:—

Members.—Messrs H. C. Boyd, W. Douglas, J. W. Drummond, G. Duncan, T. Gibson, G. T. Glover, F. S. Goggs, L. W. Hinxman, W. Lamond Howie, J. G. Inglis, W. W. King, H. Kynaston, H. G. S. Lawson, W. N. Ling, A. M. Mackay, D. Mackenzie, J. Maclay, A. E. Maylard, T. Meares, W. A. Mounsey, W. W. Naismith, J. A. Parker, H. Raeburn, J. Rennie, G. A. Solly, F. C. Squance, H. Squance, G. Thomson, H. Walker, and H. G. Walker.

Guests.—Messrs Gillon, Gunn, Leathart, and Worsdall.

The weather was perhaps not all that could have been desired by the most fastidious, but it was much better than

the average experienced at Easter Meets, and did not interfere with climbing to any serious extent, unless on the Saturday, when it snowed so heavily in the morning that only half-a-dozen men left the hotel before lunch. High winds prevailed most of the time, with bright sunny spells and occasional snow showers on the low ground, the tops of the hills being usually covered with mist. On Saturday and Monday terrific blizzards were encountered on the higher slopes of the hills. Sunday was, however, a brilliant exception, the weather being perfect, and those who climbed that day were rewarded with magnificent views from the summits. The panorama from Cairn Toul especially seemed to have been very wonderful and extensive, and, like the salmon in the fishing story, appeared to get bigger and bigger at every narration, so much so that when last recounted the Lomonds in Fife seemed to be in danger of becoming part of the foreground.

The hills were almost everywhere covered with soft fresh snow, which rendered walking very laborious. This seemed to be specially the case on Friday, when most of the members were presumably not yet in form, and each party appeared to have encountered softer and deeper snow than any other. The deepest snow was possibly found in the Larig Pass, and the party of photographers who with a complete outfit arrived there late on Friday afternoon, in hopes of an easy and speedy way home "by the path," experienced considerable difficulty in getting away from the Pass again, so much so that their chances of getting clear of the intricacies of Rothiemurchus Forest by nightfall seemed at one time very doubtful.

The work of the Meet was greatly facilitated by the excellent driving arrangements that had been made beforehand by Dr Inglis Clark, and every morning saw several large "machines" put down parties at Glen More Lodge, or at the lower bothy in Glen Eunach, the highest point to which driving was practicable on account of the fresh snow.

The following are the details of the principal climbs that were done during the Meet:—

Sgòran Dubh.—The comparative ease with which the precipitous eastern face of this hill could be reached from

the lower bothy in Glen Eunach, rendered it the most easily accessible face for climbing in the neighbourhood, and to a great extent accounted for its popularity. The southernmost of the five buttresses which overlook the loch had been climbed by Lawson and Raeburn a fortnight before the Meet, and their descriptions of the excellence of the rock and the fact that none of the other four buttresses had yet been climbed attracted parties of climbers to the rocks every day of the Meet.

The most northern buttress, No. 1, is divided into two ridges by a great gully, which was climbed by Glover, Leathart, and Worsdall on the 28th March, the ridge on the south side of the gully was climbed by Kynaston, Mounsey, and Raeburn on the 30th March, and proved very stiff, the party being on the rope for six hours. The north ridge was attempted by Glover's party on the same day but without success, as the rocks proved too slabby.

The next buttress, No. 2, was climbed on the 31st March, its southern or principal ridge being climbed by Naismith, Mackay, Raeburn, and F. C. Squance, while the north ridge was climbed by King, Maylard, and Solly.

The central buttress, No. 3, was climbed on the 28th March by a party consisting of Boyd, Gillon, Mackay, and Raeburn.

The most southern buttress, No. 5, was climbed as mentioned above, by Lawson and Raeburn about a fortnight before the Meet.

The fourth buttress has therefore yet to be climbed, and there are, in addition, many shorter ridges and many chimneys waiting on the enthusiastic climber. Raeburn, who is the authority on the subject, and to whom the writer is indebted for the above information, places the buttresses in the following order of merit:—No. 5, No. 3, No. 1, No. 2, and No. 4, the latter being the worst defined of all.

Braeriach.—Parties were on Braeriach on almost every day, but no difficult work was done on it, although one party on the 30th had a fairly long spell of step cutting up one of the slopes overlooking Loch Eunach. The steep slopes of the Garrachorry were very heavily corniced

with snow, and, when visible, presented a magnificent appearance.

Cairn Toul was ascended by Gillon, Lawson, Ling, and Mackay on the 30th March, *via* Braeriach and the Angel's Peak, a glorious round made under perfect weather conditions. From Cairn Toul the magnificent panorama previously mentioned was seen.

Cairngorm was most popular on the 28th March, when about sixteen members were on it, the route adopted being from Glen More Lodge to the top of the Fiacail ridge, and thence to the summit, or *vice versa*. On the 31st Gillon, Lawson, and Ling made a pass of the summit on their way to Loch Avon, which they visited with the object of prospecting the rocks on that side, the return journey being made by the same route.

Ben Macdhui, being on the remote side of the Larig Pass, where the snow was reputed to be in very heavy condition, was climbed by only one party, on the 31st March, who to accomplish the task, and in hopes of enabling three of the four men to catch the afternoon train, proved the ability of the hotel management to provide breakfast at five o'clock in the morning. The snow in the pass was found not to be in such bad condition as it was on the previous Friday, and the Wells of Dee were reached well up to schedule time. Here a division of opinion, as well as of party, took place, one man going down the valley to closely examine the Wells, while the man who had not to catch the afternoon train successfully lured the remaining two on to some "easy rocks," which took time and proved quite as difficult as was desired. When the rocks were climbed it was found that the upper plateau of the hill was swept by a tremendous blizzard which blotted out everything, and rendered it impossible to get again into touch with the fourth man who had evidently come up by an easier way to save time, as he was once seen for an instant through the blinding drift far in advance. The expedition therefore resolved itself at once into a search party of three, who carried all the provisions, and the lost man, who had nothing more sustaining with him than a 60-foot length of Alpine rope. The latter had, however, a poor

opinion of the ability of the search party to find him, and made straight tracks for the hotel, which he reached about six o'clock, after a fast of nine hours, the search party in the meantime amusing themselves for several hours hunting about for him in the storm on the summit of the mountain. None of the party caught the afternoon train.

Indoors the Meet was a great success musically and otherwise, a new feature being the ping-pong tournament that was held on the Saturday, and in which Mackay and Leathart carried off the honours, the "third prize" being won, after a keen contest, by a member who does not wish his name to appear.

The great success of the Meet was very largely due to Dr Inglis Clark, who had made such excellent arrangements for the members' comfort and convenience that the Meet went off without a hitch, and universal regret was expressed by all present that Dr Clark should have been prevented by illness from participating in the pleasures of the Meet.

J. A. P.

CLUB-ROOM.

As briefly announced in the Report of the proceedings of the Club contained in the last number of the *Journal*, it was decided at the General Meeting of the Club, held in St Enoch's Hotel, Glasgow, on 6th December 1901, that a permanent Club-room should be established in Edinburgh. The expenditure of a sum not exceeding £100 was authorised for furnishing and equipment, and a small Sub-Committee was elected to carry out the arrangements.

An apartment suitable for the purpose was subsequently obtained in Chamber No. 39, Dowell's Rooms, 18 George Street, Edinburgh, and the furnishing was sufficiently advanced to permit of the Club-room being formally declared open by the President, Mr A. E. Maylard, on Monday, 3rd March.

A large turn-out of members attended the opening, and though, naturally, local men predominated, the Sub-Committee have pleasure in stating that the room has since been used by a number of members from various parts, all of whom have expressed themselves as satisfied with the way things have been carried out.

The following list of bye-laws, regulating the use of the room, has been drawn up :—

1. The Club-room will be available for the use of Members from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., Sundays and public holidays excepted.
2. Members may obtain access by applying to the caretaker, who will always be found by application at the office on the ground floor.
3. The fire will be laid every morning, and any Member lighting it is requested to deposit the sum of sixpence in the box retained for that purpose.
4. The Books and other Publications belonging to the Club, with the exception of such works of common reference as the Committee may from time to time determine to have exposed for the general use of Members, shall be kept under lock and key.
5. Members desiring to use the books kept under lock and key may obtain the key from the Hon. Librarian. The books so used are to be returned to their places, the bookcase locked, and the key returned to the Librarian.

6. None of the Club's property (except as undernoted) shall be removed from the Library without the consent of the Library Committee, and then only for some purpose connected with the work of the Club.

7. Members may borrow the Club collection of lantern slides, and all applications for such loan will be dealt with by the Rev. A. E. Robertson, 3 Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh, to whom all correspondence on the subject should be addressed.

8. A book is placed on the Library Table for any suggestions to be made by Members for consideration of the Library Committee.

In the circular announcing the opening of the Club-room it was intimated that, with the view of providing facilities for arranging expeditions, and of promoting the objects of the Club generally, it has been arranged that the Librarian or another official will be in attendance on the evening of the first Monday of each month (July, August, and September excepted). About a dozen members put in an appearance on 7th April, and it was generally thought that these meetings will be useful for the purpose indicated. The Sub-Committee desire that it should be known that the Rev. A. E. Robertson generously consented to give his services in taking charge of the Lantern Slide Collection, belonging to the Club. He expects that the collection, which had recently fallen somewhat into disrepair, will shortly be put in proper order, and subsequently maintained and increased in a manner worthy of the Club.

In times past, there have often been indications that members would willingly present handsome photographs of Scotch scenery, and other works of art, had the Club only accommodation to exhibit them suitably. The Club's present possessions in that line have been distributed along the Club-room walls, but cover them to only a very partial extent, and a few additional frames would greatly improve the appearance of the room.

During the course of its existence the Club has acquired a fair collection of books on mountaineering and cognate subjects, which under the present more convenient conditions, will probably soon be considerably augmented.

All donations of volumes suitable for the library of a mountaineering club will be most welcome, but the Sub-Committee take this opportunity of reminding the members

that they form the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and that a really good collection of books regarding the topography of Scotland is what they in the first place aim at possessing. In particular are they anxious to obtain, as far as possible, copies of the works alluded to in the excellent series of articles entitled the "Rise and Progress of Scottish Mountaineering," contained in Vols. III. and IV. of the *Journal*.

During the last two months the following handsome additions have been made by members to the Library :—

Robson's "Grampians."	Lowther's "Tour."
Smith's "Summer in Skye."	Kirke's "Tour."
Hill Burton's "Cairngorms."	Wordsworth's "Tour."
Hume Brown's "Early Travellers."	Warrender's "Walks Round Edinburgh."
Hume Brown's "Scotland before 1700."	Cockburn's "Circuit Journeys."
Heddle's "Mineralogy," 2 vols.	Grierson's "Autumnal Rambles."
Pennant's "Tour," 3 vols.	Moore's "Alps in 1864."

The Sub-Committee have further to report that they expect shortly to obtain a complete set of photographs of the various gentlemen who have filled the chair as President of the Club. Those photographs they propose hanging on the walls of the Club-room, and in the next number of the *Journal* they hope to be able to intimate that this has been accomplished.

S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

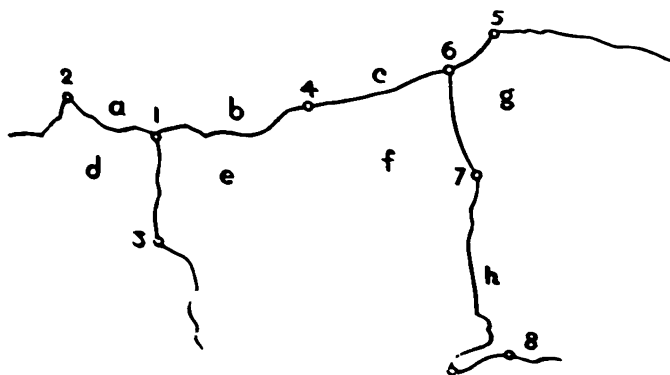


BEN CRUACHAN.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XVIII.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 26'$; W. Lon. $5^{\circ} 8'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 45. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map No. 11.

This group lies to the north of Loch Awe, and from its seven tops and Beinn a Bhuiridh sends its shoulders over about 20 square miles of ground. The hotels from which



it is usually ascended are those of Taynuilt, Loch Awe, and Dalmailly.

Its peaks are —

1. Ben Cruachan, 3000 feet — the stack mountain. Lies 7 miles west of Dalmailly, $\frac{3}{4}$ miles north-west of Loch Awe Hotel, and 4 miles east of Taynuilt.
2. Stob Dearg, 3011 feet, prom. — the red mountain. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of No. 1.
3. Meall Chama, 3014 feet — the summit of the stack. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of No. 1.



From a Photo by W. Inglis Clark.

BEN CRUACHAN FROM BEINN A' CHOCHUILL.



4. Drochaid Ghlas, 3,312 feet—the grey bridge. Lies 1 mile east of No. 1.
5. Sron an Isean, 3,163 feet—the nose of the imps. Lies 2 miles east of No. 1.
6. Stob Diamh, 3,272 feet, pron. *Daff*—the mountain of the stags. Lies $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles east of No. 1.
7. Stob Garbh, 3,215 feet, pron. *Garve*—the rough mountain. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of No. 6.
8. Beinn a Bhuiridh, 2,945 feet, pron. *Vourie*—the hill of bellowing. Lies 2 miles south-east of No. 1.

The corries are :—

(*a*) Coire Chat ; (*b*) Coire Caorach ; (*c*) Coire Lochain ; (*d*) Coire a' Bhachail ; (*e*) Coire Dearg ; (*f*) Coire Cruachan ; (*g*) Coire Creachainn ; (*h*) Coire Ghlais.

The mountain is mainly composed of a coarse diorite, and stretches east and west in one long line of nearly 3 miles, sending out two legs of unequal length to the south. The lower slopes are covered with soil. Towards the tops of all the peaks and connecting ridges, smooth slabs of granite are exposed, except when covered by loose blocks of unstable equilibrium. The finest scenery on the mountain will probably be found on the narrow ridge between peaks 1 and 2, which is deeply cut into on the north side.

Usual Routes.

From TAYNUILT.—The peak that is seen from Taynuilt is Stob Dearg, and this hides the summit lying half-a-mile farther to the east.

(1.) Follow the Dalmally road till the Allt Brander (4 miles) is reached, and ascend by its east side to its source. Continue straight on in the same direction, over coggly granite blocks all the way to the top of Stob Dearg, and then along the narrow and gashed ridge to the summit.

(2.) Is more of a variation on No. 1 than a new route. Follow the Dalmally road for 3 miles, and ascend by the Allt Cruiniche. Where it forks, keep the watershed between the two streams all the way to the top of Stob Dearg.

(3.) A route that ought to be more popular than it is, is by the north face. Ferry over the Awe at Bonawe. Follow the edge of Loch Etive $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Glen Noe. Turn up this glen, and by keeping the south side for 2

miles, passing Coire an t'Sneachd, enter Coire Chat, lying between peaks 1 and 2. From Coire Chat a route can be chosen at pleasure, either up one of the more gently sloping spurs, or straight up the rock buttress of Stob Dearg itself. Or even continue farther up Glen Noe without going into Coire Chat at all, and climb the north ridge of Drochdaid Ghlas. Mr Dewar describes this last (*Journal*, Vol. II., p. 136) as a most interesting route, affording abundance of stiff climbing over huge boulders, from right to left of which the descent is very steep. These routes can be joined from the Dalmally or Loch Awe hotels by the Allt Mhoille and the Larig Noe, 1,832 feet.



BEN CRUACHAN FROM THE NORTH.

1. Ben Cruachan. 2. Stob Dearg.

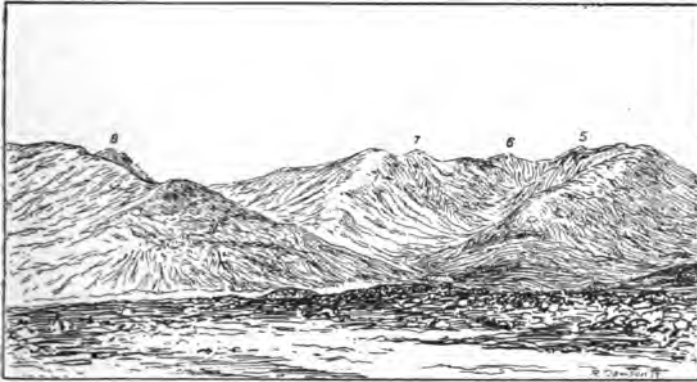
From LOCH AWE HOTEL.—(4.) Follow the Oban road westwards for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the Falls of Cruachan, cross the stream and pass under the railway bridge (recognised by the carved panel of a boar's head), and zig-zag up the hill to Coire Cruachan. This point can also be joined by a high level route, above the trees, from Loch Awe Hotel, round the flanks of Beinn Bhuidh.* Still keep the burn to the right, and turn to the east by the side of arm flowing from the col

* This high level route branches off the main road a little beyond the church. After passing a sheep fank a well-defined path leaves the road to the right and ascends gradually to the corrie, round the flanks of Beinn Bhuidh, and crosses the Allt Cruachan by a plank and turf bridge.

between peaks Nos. 1 and 3. Make for this col (2,700), and then turn to the right up an easy slope to the summit.

(5.) Follow the Dalmally road $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, and turn to the left up the railway to the quarries. When the quarries are reached, it can be decided by which of the three shoulders the ascent is to be made. Either by the one leading to Beinn Bhuidh, or to Stob Garbh, or to Sron an Isean, all are of the nature of a monotonous grind. But the first is the longest if the main summit is to be reached *via* Stob Garbh, Stob Diamh, and Drochaid Ghlas.

(6.) The seven tops and Beinn Bhuidh can be visited in one day by good walkers. It is usual to start from the



COIRE CREACHAINN.

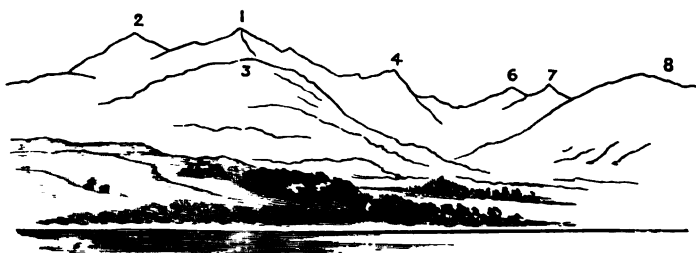
8. Beinn Bhuidh. 7. Stob Garbh. 6. Stob Diamh. 5. Sron an Isean.

Falls of Cruachan, and to take Meall Cuanail first. Then by skirting Coire a Bhachail reach Stob Dearg from the Bealach an Lochain. From there the backbone of the mountain is followed without difficulty all the way to Sron an Isean. Here the route will require to be retraced for half a mile till the southern ridge is joined, and this can be followed all the way to Loch Awe.

Climbs.

Rock-climbing on this mountain is poor, and indeed can only be got on some of the upper cliffs that fringe the north sides of the main ridges, or on the cliffs of Beinn Bhuidh that overhang Coire Ghlais. In spring, however,

when snow and ice have covered its steep scree slopes the sport this mountain affords can hardly be surpassed. All the ordinary routes become interesting, and climbs have been accomplished from every side, involving different degrees of difficulty. For example, in March 1892, when a party ascended the north buttress of Stob Dearg, they found that everything higher than a thousand feet above sea-level was under snow or ice, the high rocks of Meall Riaghain above Glen Noe being heavily festooned with immense icicles, and the rocks of the buttress itself coated with sheets of unmitigated ice. This party encountered unprecedented



BEN CRUACHAN FROM THE SOUTH.

2. Stob Dearg. 1. Ben Cruachan. 3. Meall Dearg. 4. Drochaid Glas. 6. Stob Diambh. 7. Stob Garbh. 8. Beinn Bhuiridh.

difficulties in getting to the top. Eight hours of the 14½ which the expedition occupied were spent in step cutting on the buttress (see *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. II., p. 85). The difficulties of this ascent were, of course, due to the unusual condition of the rocks, and other parties subsequently have found the ascent easy enough.

For a full account of the Ben (see *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. II., 175-185.)

W. D.

BEN EUNAICH GROUP.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XIX.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 27'$; W. Lon. $5^{\circ} 1'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 45. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 11.

1. Beinn Eunaich, 3,242 feet, on the north side of entrance to Glen Strae, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-east of Loch Awe Station, 4 miles north-north-west of Dalmally.
2. Beinn a Chochuill, 3,215 feet, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Ben Eunaich.

These two hills and their shoulders form a small group immediately north-west of the Ben Cruachan Group, from which they are separated by the Larig Noe running between Glen Strae and Loch Etive side. The rock is mainly of the Central Highland schist, though the western shoulder of Eunaich is less than a mile away from the well-known Cruachan granite quarry.

On Ben Eunaich are some extensive outcrops of porphyry, one of which contains what is probably the best climb yet explored in the Cruachan district, and by which the mountain is best known to climbers. This is the "Black Shoot of Ben Eunaich," a continuously steep gully climb of nearly 400 feet with several difficult pitches.

Approaches.—Loch Awe Hotel is the best centre for both Eunaich and Chochuill, though Dalmally is almost equally convenient, and the ascent of the Black Shoot and the traverse of both ridges can be quite easily fitted into a one day expedition from either Edinburgh or Glasgow.

From Loch Awe Station the nearest way is along the Dalmally road, to where the branch railway to the Cruachan granite quarry crosses it. Up this to the quarry, cross the stream (Allt Mhoille) and make for the buttress of Eunaich, called Stob Maol, ascend this and continue along the ridge over the first top, 3,174 feet, to the second and highest top, 3,242 feet.

Better going over the middle portion of this route may be got by keeping the road farther, and taking a branch

track as far as the Castles, a farm below Stob Maol, and from there making for a broad green tongue between two small burns which come out of the corrie above. This leads easily up to the top of the Stob Maol ridge, in the direction of the summit of Eunaich.

Between Eunaich and Chochuill is a considerable dip about 900 feet. The Chochuill ridge rises steeply from the col, and is at first fairly steep—it might give a little trouble if iced. The ridge after that is well defined, but there is no climbing.

From the summit of Ben a Chochuill fine views are obtained to north and north-east, and it is one of the best points from which to view the north and best side of the Cruachan Group.

The return is best made by retracing the former route as far as the Eunaich col, then descending the valley of the Allt Mhoille, and home by the quarry railway and the road.

Rock Climbs.—There is a considerable amount of rock in the north-east corrie of Ben Eunaich, but the gullies are short and the rocks broken. The ridge above here is sharp and very fine. Examples of the "Brocken Spectre" were seen there by a party at New Year, 1901.

The Black Shoot.—This is the only climb of any importance yet discovered. It is situated on the south-east shoulder of the mountain at a height of about 1,500 feet above sea-level. Here a large face of porphyry is exposed cut down the centre by a deep black chimney. It is not always easy in mist to hit the foot of this chimney.

The easiest way to reach it from Loch Awe Station is by keeping the Dalmally road till the bridge over the Strae is reached. Fifty yards short of this a cart-track will be noticed, which leads off on the left, keeping close to the river to a small cottage. Just before reaching the cottage another cart-track should be followed to the left. It leads through a marshy hollow and below a steep little crag. Past this a foot-track branches off to the left again, and

slants up hill, passing right below the Black Shoot on its somewhat ill-defined way over to Glen Kinglas by the Allt na Copagach.

If in mist, the point to leave this track is at its highest on the west side of the Copagach, just before it begins to drop to the crossing of that stream.

The climb begins by a "somewhat ill-defined waterslide, a mossy luzula-bedecked wall of very considerable steepness." This can be avoided by ascending the north buttress till above the "slide," and traversing into the gully again. The gully then cuts deeply into the mountain side, and after surmounting a short but steep mossy pitch, the climber finds himself at the foot of the "twisted chimney." Here what has been described as the "overhanging period" of the climb begins, and some degree of dampness will probably be attained.

The chimney is a fairly tight fit for an average climber in good condition, and at one point, just before getting into it, the holds are not easy to find, especially with ice about. Once in, he may either elect to jam or go on, if rope permits, to the "ledge." Here the "wall on the left breaks away and leads out on to a very considerable ledge, with good hitches and ample standing room for a party of four, if they don't mind crowding a bit."

The route hitherto followed now recrosses to the north wall, the point being to gain a small sloping ledge about eight feet up. This is much facilitated by the leader using the second's back, the latter leaning across the gully.

There are two other routes which appear possible from the ledge, neither have as yet "gone," however. This part of the climb from the "ledge" to the top of the "great pitch" is the most difficult. Holds in the overhanging bank of earth, moss, and loose stones at the exit of the pitch are not easy to find. While the leader is at work here, it is safer for the others to keep as far along the ledge as possible. An accident, which might have had serious consequences, occurred on the occasion of the first ascent through one of the climbers being struck by a dislodged stone.

Above this the gully eases off, and one or two little

grassy pitches and luzula-covered scree slopes lead up to the summit some way below the brow of the shoulder.

REFERENCES.

<i>Journal</i> , Vol.	I.	1890	page 85	First attempt.
"	"	I.	" 238	Second attempt.
"	"	II.	" 70	Third attempt.
"	"	II.	" 117	Success.
"	"	VI.	" 161	

H. R.

THE BLACKMOUNT GROUP.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XX.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 32'$; W. Lon. 5° . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 45 and 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 11.

The deer forest of the Blackmount comprises a fine group of hills, though somewhat difficult of access owing to their distance from any convenient headquarters and the restrictions placed upon forest ground. They are mainly granite hills, with steep grassy slopes on the south and west sides, while the north and east sides are bold and craggy, and sometimes abrupt and precipitous.

Among numerous lesser heights, seven summits rise to over 3,000 feet, and these may be enumerated as follows:—

1. Beinn nan Aighean - - - 3,141 feet.
2. Ben Starav - - - 3,541 feet.
3. Glas Bheinn Mhor - - - 3,258 feet.
4. Stob Coir an Albannaich - - 3,425 feet.
5. Meall nan Eun - - - 3,039 feet.
6. Stob Ghabhar - - - 3,565 feet.
7. Clach Leathad - - - 3,602 feet.

The southern portion of the group is enclosed between the upper part of Loch Etive and the river Kinglass, and thence runs north-eastwards as a broad mountainous belt to the head of Glen Etive and the western margin of the Moor of Rannoch.

1. *Beinn nan Aighean* (the hill of the hinds), 3,141 feet. This hill has probably more interest for sportsmen than for climbers. In form it is a bulky mass without any specially



From a Photo by A. W. Russell.
THE BLACKMOUNT FROM THE CLACHLET.



From a Photo by A. W. Russell.
BUCHAILLE ETIVE FROM THE CLACHLET.

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characteristic feature or any very well defined ridges, though it is slightly elongated in an east and west direction. It is situated between the upper part of Glen Kinglass and the Allt Hallater, and about eight miles west of Inveroran. The summit, which lies near the western end of the mass, is more or less flat and uninteresting, though there are some fine granite crags along the north side overlooking the head of Glen Kinglass.

2. *Ben Starav*, 3,541 feet. This hill has a fine situation overlooking the east side of the head of Loch Etive, and from the pleasing natural symmetry of its form makes an imposing picture to the fortunate individual who may be steaming up the loch from Bonawe. The steep western slopes and spurs of Ben Starav, with the gully-scarred eastern face of Ben Trilleachan opposing it, form as it were a mighty gorge, enclosing the long, narrow, fjord-like termination of the loch. Indeed it is still told how the devil once leapt his fire-breathing steed from Ben Starav to Ben Trilleachan, where the mark of the horse's hoof may be seen to this day.

Ben Starav has been ascended from Inveroran, about ten miles distant, also from the Glen Etive side by some energetic members who walked over from Clachaig, but no good climbs on it have been recorded.

In form the mountain exhibits a good radial symmetry, five well-marked ridges converging towards the somewhat flat roughly-triangular area which forms the summit. The north, north-west, and south-west ridges are short and steep, the east ridge throws out a sharp rocky spur to the north-north-east called Stob Coire Dheirg on the six-inch map, on which a good climb might be obtained, and then slopes gradually to the col separating Ben Starav from Glas Bheinn Mhor on the north-east, and Beinn nan Aighean on the south-east. The south-east ridge is long and gentle, and eventually sweeps round to the west to join Stob an Duine Reaidh (the peak of the red man), 2,624 feet. Besides the north-north-east spur above-mentioned, a good scramble could be had by attacking the west face immediately below the summit, direct from Loch Etive.

3. *Glas Bheinn Mhor* (the big grey hill), 3,258 feet. This

hill lies between Ben Starav and Stob Coir an Albannaich, and forms a prominent feature on the line of watershed connecting these three summits. It has steep slopes on every side except the south-west, and abrupt crags to the north and east. It has a fine sugar-loaf aspect when viewed from Glen Etive. The easiest route is probably from Inveroran, by way of Loch Dochart and the head of Glen Kinglass, or more ambitious top-hunters might include this hill in a day's bag along with two or three of its neighbours.

4. *Stob Coir an Albannaich* (the peak of the Scotsman's corrie), 3,425 feet, is situated about a mile and a half north-east of Glas Bheinn Mhor. The only feature of interest to the climber in this hill consists in the fine precipitous crags immediately below the summit on the north side. These crags are well seen in profile as one approaches the mountain from the south-east, or direction of Inveroran. They bound the head of the corrie on the north side, from which there is no doubt a good climb to be done. The rock has a splendid rough surface, but often forms huge slabs without any handholds for a considerable distance, and pitched at too high an angle for the adhesive capacity of the normal hob-nailer. On the west side the summit slopes gradually away towards Beinn Chaorach (the hill of the sheep), 2,848 feet, and the grassy slopes form a fine deer pasture, while on the south-east side a broad ridge runs to Meall Dubh, 2,239 feet, and thence to Glen Kinglass.

5. *Meall nan Eun* (the hill of the birds), 3,039 feet, stands in a somewhat isolated position, about a mile and a half north-east of Stob Coir an Albannaich, and separated from it by Meall Tarsuinn (2,871 feet). The eastern aspect of this hill somewhat resembles that of an inverted tea-cup. The summit is almost flat, slopes away gradually on all sides, and then descends sharply into steep granite crags, mingled with grass and scree, on every side except the west and north-west. A good scramble could doubtless be obtained on the east crags, otherwise there is little of interest to the climber in this hill.

6. *Stob Ghabhar*, pronounced Stob Gower (the peak of the goats), 3,565 feet. This is one of the most easterly

situated hills of the Blackmount, and the most easy of access from Inveroran. Several ascents have already been recorded in this *Journal*.

The easiest route to the summit, which of course will be avoided by climbers, is to follow the path which passes the forester's house at Clais-gobhair and ascends gradually to the col between Stob Ghabhar and Meall an Araich (2,246 feet), and then to strike northward till the summit of the main ridge is reached, about quarter of a mile west of the cairn. A more direct route might be to make for the south-east ridge before reaching Clais-gobhair. The summit is really the highest point of a high-level ridge extending westwards towards Glen Etive, and another well-marked ridge stretches away from the summit northwards towards the Clach Leathad. On the south side is a fine corrie, the upper crags of which afford some good climbing in both winter and summer conditions.

7. *The Clach Leathad* (the stone of the hillside), 3,602 feet, pronounced Clach-let. This is the highest ground in the Blackmount and the sanctuary of the deer forest. The hill is well known to climbers, though there is but little climbing, worthy of the name, to be found upon the rather extensive area which it embraces. Still, a walk from Inveroran over the Clach Leathad to Kingshouse in a snow-storm will raise a grand appetite. Clach Leathad is the name given to the highest point upon the long north and south ridge, which constitutes the line of watershed extending from Sron Creise, near the head of Glen Etive, to the summit of Stob Ghabhar. The summit of the Clach Leathad proper, however, is not really the highest point in the particular group of hills and ridges which may conveniently be included under the general term of Clach Leathad. About a quarter of a mile north of the 3,602 feet cairn, one may descend sharply to the east to the col, named Mam Coire Easain, and then ascend the fine east and west ridge of Meall a Bhuiridh, the highest point of which is given on the six-inch Ordnance maps as 3,636 feet. This ridge slopes very steeply on the south side into Coire Easain, a branch corrie of the great Coire Bà, from the upper part of which it is separated



by Sron Forsain, the south-east spur of Clach Leathad. The eastern termination of the ridge almost reaches the high road between Kingshouse and Inveroran. From the Clach Leathad summit to Sron Creise the main ridge is well defined and runs due north; it has a rather switch-back character, rising to 3,500 feet at Stob Glas Choire. From Sron Creise the descent is craggy and steep down to Glen Etive, the glen being reached about three miles from Kingshouse. A most enjoyable walk may be made from Kingshouse to the summit of Sron Creise, thence over Stob Glas Choire, and so along the ridge to the Clach Leathad cairn, then descending to Mam Coire Easain and traversing the east and west ridge of Meall a Bhuiridh, returning to Kingshouse by the northern slopes of this ridge to Coire Pollaig, and then following the burn down past Black Rock Cottage.

As regards climbing, certain portions of the east side of the long north and south ridge will be found to give excellent scrambling. There are the steep, almost precipitous crags immediately below the Clach Leathad cairn, and the sharp buttress-like spurs of rock between Sron Creise and Stob Glas Choire. These latter, though shorter and smaller, resemble in many respects some of the easier ridges of Buachaille Etive Mor, being formed of the same kind of rock and of a similar type of structure.

The view from the summit of the Clach Leathad is extensive and magnificent, with the whole of the Blackmount on the south-west stretching away to Ben Cruachan, Mull, Morven, and on clear days the Cuchuillins of Skye. Nearer we have the hills of Glen Etive and Glencoe, with the rugged crest of Bidean towering above them. To the north-west rises the giant mass of Ben Nevis, and the varied outline of the Lochaber groups. Farther east Ben Alder and the hills of Badenoch; the desolate wastes of Rannoch Moor glistening with countless tarns and lochans; Loch Lydoch, Loch Rannoch, Schiehallion; and turning farther south, Ben Achallader, Ben Doran, Ben Laoigh, Ben More, and hosts of lesser hills, the whole forming perhaps the finest panorama in the western Highlands.

H. K.

BUCHAILLE ETIVE.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXI.)

This group has been so lately exhaustively treated by Mr Bell (*Journal*, Vol. V., p. 231), that it is unnecessary to repeat the information here in the meantime.

BIDEAN NAM BIAN.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXII.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 39'$; W. Lon. $5^{\circ} 1'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 11.

Bidean nam Bian is the highest mountain in Argyleshire, and its northern spurs line the southern side of Glencoe from the summit of the pass to Clachaig Inn, while its southern slopes extend to Glen Etive. These northern spurs are four in number, Ben Fhada, Gearr Aonach, Aonach Dubh, and An t' Sron. The first rises precipitously from the floor of the glen, and offers even better climbing than on the cliffs of Bidean itself. The rock of which the mountain is composed is mainly quartzite schist, but a bed of porphyry extends from the Buchailles, and crops out on the faces of Ben Fhada, Gearr Aonach, and on a portion of Aonach Dubh. The porphyry here is almost as good as gabbro as a climbing medium.

High up on the face of Aonach Dubh is the Cave of Ossian—a great black slit, like a gigantic keyhole in the face of a mighty door. Although from below it appears to be a large and deep cave, yet when the adventurous climber wins there, he finds this to be an optical delusion, for it slopes upwards so steeply that practically there is no floor to the cave.

The earliest known climb into the cave was made by Nicol Marquis, a Glencoe shepherd, about 1868, and since then numerous ascents have been recorded.

The highest summit of Bidean lies far back from the

road, and only at one point (about a mile eastward from Clachaig) can it be seen from the glen. It is recognised by two rocky buttresses, divided by a pinnacle of rock. This is well shown in Mr Boyd's picture which is again reproduced here. These rocky buttresses are known to climbers as the upper right-hand and upper left-hand buttresses of Bidean.

The main summit, however, is not nearly so striking in aspect as the subsidiary shoulder, Stob Coire nam Beith, which seems, from Loch Triochatan, to tower above everything.

The peaks of Bidean are as follows :—

1. Bidean nam Bian, 3,766—the pinnacles of the skins—so-called, it has been humorously suggested, by the quantity of epidermis lost on the rocks by a previous generation of climbers. Lies $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Loch Triochatan.
2. Beinn Fhada, 3,046—the long hill. Lies $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Bidean.
3. Stob Coire Sgrenach, 3,497—hill of the rocky corrie. Lies $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south-east of Bidean.
4. Stob Coire an Lochan, 3,657—hill of the corrie of the little loch. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north-east of Bidean.
5. Stob Coire nam Beith, 3,621—hill of the corrie of the birch tree. Lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north-west of Bidean.

Aonach Dubh (2,849) and Gearr Aonach are spurs of Stob Coire an Lochan.

LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE.

From Clachaig, cross the river Coe by a bridge at the back of the inn, ascend the steep slopes of An t' Sron, and so on over the top of Stob Coire nam Beith, and along the sky-line to the summit ;—an easy walk all the way. A descent can be made by Coire nam Beith on the west side of the "upper right-hand buttress." In winter a good glissade can usually be got here. From the bottom of the corrie a wire fence can be followed almost all the way to the road.

CLIMBS.

Ossian's Cave.—All self-respecting climbers, before beginning to devote themselves to the mountain of Bidean will call at Ossian's Cave, in the face of Aonach Dubh.



BIDEAN NAM BIAN.

From a Photo by H. C. Boyd.



The simplest way to get to the foot of the climb (which is about 1,700 feet above the glen) is to ascend the lower slopes of Aonach Dubh on the east side of the ravine that comes down from the cave. The climb of Ossian's ladder, which starts from the grassy terrace that strikes diagonally across the face of the mountain, is not more than 90-100 feet, and consists of a mixture of rock and turf, set at a high angle. At the two steep pitches there are excellent rock hitches, which make an otherwise stiff little climb comparatively easy and free from risk.

Aonach Dubh from the North.—From the terrace below Ossian's Cave Aonach Dubh has been climbed both to the right and left of it, but the routes have been described so vaguely that they cannot well be followed. By keeping up the terrace running to the right, an easy walk—hardly a climb—may be found by leaving it and taking to the next ledge below it, before the former terminates in an overhung and seemingly impossible gully. The rocks to the right of the gully look good, and as if they would afford a nice climb.

Aonach Dubh from the West.—The western cliffs, as seen from Clachaig, extend towards Coire nam Beith for about half a mile, and are divided horizontally in three bands of rock. On the north side of the stream, which divides the hump from the more southern portion of the hill, there is an easy route (A on the accompanying photograph) to the top.

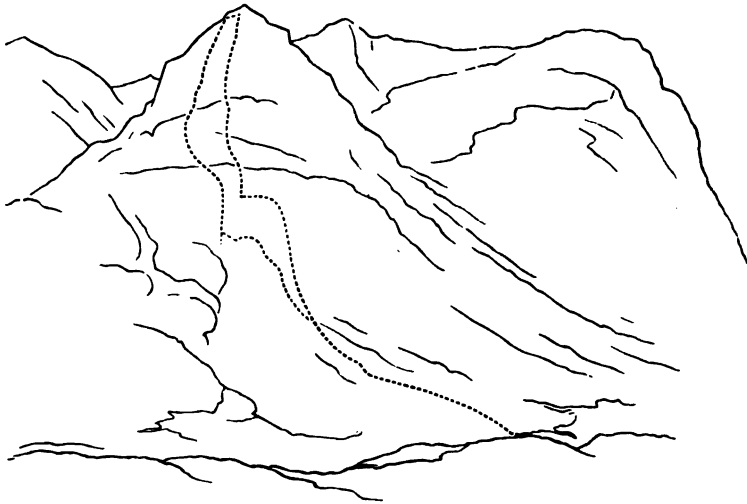
A climb was made on these cliffs by Maclay, Inglis Clark, and Inglis at Easter 1898. Their route is shown on the diagram (B). It began on the north side of third gully from the south. The second band of cliffs was climbed in the gully, and the third band was ascended by a rib between two branches of the central gully. Another climb was made near this by the Messrs Abraham in October 1900, and is described by them on page 111 of the present number.

Gearr Aonach.—The rock on its steep northern end which projects into Glencoe is simply splendid—gritty and good to the hand and foot, and clear of vegetation for the most part.

At Easter 1898 Messrs Naismith, Maclay, and Boyd made an ascent and descent of this face. From a solitary birch tree on a terrace some 500 feet above the river

Coe, they went straight up to the top over rocks, that from the Glencoe road had seemed so steep and smooth as to be hardly feasible, but which proved comparatively easy owing to the excellent holds. The descent followed a course parallel to, and only 30 or 40 yards to the east of, the line of ascent.

Stob Coire an Lochan.—The cliffs on the north-east of this are the highest and steepest on the mountain. They do not look at all nice, but are very steep and slabby, and appear to be well-nigh unclimbable in most places. There



GEARR AONACH, SHOWING ROUTES OF EASTER 1898.

is a small detached pinnacle on the north-east side of the top towards which climbers have cast longing eyes. A note appears in the *Journal*, Vol. III., p. 158: "Messrs Collie, Solly, and Collier . . . scaled the crags of Stob Coire an Lochan." We should like to have had a more minute description of their climb.

Stob Coire nam Beith.—In winter the north face is most beautifully broken up with snow gullies and ridges, and I have no doubt several good climbs will be done there. The face has been climbed, but no record has been kept of



AONACH DUBH.



the route (*Journal*, Vol. III., p. 158 ; see also page 111 in the present number for a climb by the Messrs Abraham).

Bidean, "Upper right-hand Buttress."—Several attempts have been made to climb this, but up to July 1898 the climb had not been done.

On 15th July 1898, a party led by Messrs Bell and Raeburn at last made it to "go." Their route started from the base of the back of Collie's Pinnacle in the central gully, and traversed the face to a crack behind a detached piece of the buttress. From the top of this detached piece an awkward corner to the right was turned before "the ledge" was reached. From the ledge a very difficult chimney was climbed at its east corner, which led to easy ground before the top pitch was tackled. There is a choice of route here, but they all end at the west end of a narrow grassy ledge, where a "long-balance-step" has to be made. Both to reach this ledge and to turn the corner at the end was found to be difficult. The climb is fully described by Mr Bell, Vol. V., p. 135.

Messrs Abraham, of Keswick, have taken several good photographs of this climb as well as of others in Glencoe.

The pinnacle between the two buttresses, known as Collie's Pinnacle, has been climbed from the back, and is quite simple, though somewhat sensational to a novice.

W. D.

BEINN A' BHEITHIR—MOUNTAIN OF LIGHTNING.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXIII.)

Lat. 56° 39' ; W. Lon. 5° 12'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 11.

This is a large mountain situated on the south side of Loch Leven at its junction with Loch Linnhe. It has several fine peaks, the principal of which are grouped round the Allt Gleann a' Chaolais, which flows into Loch Leven near Ballachulish Hotel. It should be ascended by all pedestrians staying in the neighbourhood, as it affords a

XXXVIII. D.

fine walk and magnificent views of the neighbouring mountains, especially those of Ben Nevis and Glencoe being very striking.

1. Creag Ghorm (2,372), (blue rock). A large green and rocky hill at the north-west end of the group. It is very steep, and the lower slopes finely wooded. It is joined to No. 2 by long rough plateau-like ridges with small lochs dotted about it in places.

2. Sgorr Dhonuill (3,284), (Donald's Peak). A fine rugged peak with steep cliffs on its north side facing Gleann a' Chaolais.

3. Sgorr a' Chaolais (about 2,700), (peak of the narrows). A projecting buttress of No. 2, being a conspicuous feature in the view of Gleann a' Chaolais from the north shore of Loch Leven, from whence it appears as a sharp horn in the mountain's side.

4. Sgorr Dhearg (3,362), (red peak), the culminating point of the group. A sharp peak with quartzite screes and a long ridge stretching north, which is very narrow in places.

5. Sgorr Ban (3,104), (white peak). A very sharp peak at east end of the group. It is divided by a deep corrie—Coire Giubhsachain—from No. 4, and has steep cliffs, Coire Riabhach on its east and north-east faces. Ballachulish Hotel, Loch Leven (Temperance), and the hotel, near the pier at Ballachulish, are all quite close to the hill, which can also be fairly easily reached by climbers stopping at Clachaig Inn, Glencoe (comfortable). There is also an inn at Duror, 6 miles south of Ballachulish, on the road to Appin.

Usual Route from Ballachulish.

Follow road to pier for half a mile, then turn up cart-road behind Ballachulish House ; when beyond enclosures, strike up the steep green slopes of No. 1. From the top follow up and down ridge, at first south then east to the summit No. 2. The ridge beyond this point is at first sharp and rather steep, and the dip between it and No. 4 is rather heavy ; an easy climb from col lands pedestrian on No. 4. Here a choice of routes, either by sharp north ridge for a mile, and then

descend into Gleann a' Chaolais, and so back to hotel ; or across No. 5 and down its north ridge to a point about three-quarters of a mile from the top, and then into Corie Giubhsachain on the west, follow stream to road, rough in places.

Climbs.—A deep gully on the south slope affords a good rock scramble. To reach it, leave Appin road near Duror Inn, and pass the farm-house of Achindarroch, slope gradually up the mountain for a long mile in an easterly direction, not getting above 1,000 feet up. It is the gully of the biggest and most easterly burn marked on the one-inch Ordnance Survey map. It has high cliffs on either side, and lands the climber on the plateau under No. 2.

C. B. P.

GARBH BHEINN.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXIV.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 42'$; W. Lon. $5^{\circ} 26'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour (2,903 feet, Heddle's aneroid). This is one of the most delightful little mountains on the mainland of Scotland. It lies hidden away at the head of Coire an Iubhair, and is comparatively unknown to most climbers. About two miles up this corrie the best side of the hill is seen. It shows a fine pointed summit apparently divided by a great gully running up from the corrie. This gulf has been "prospected," but is filled with so many obstructions, that in all probability it will prove impossible save, perhaps, when filled with snow. On the east side of the gully there runs to the summit a ridge that affords the best climb on the mountain. It starts from the lowest point of the highest grassy rake that will be seen from below to partly cross the face of the cliffs. The angle is steep, but the holds on the grand quartzite rock are so good that the climb is not difficult. It was first done by Messrs Bell and Brown in Easter 1897. The ridge on the opposite (west) side of the gully was climbed by Messrs G. Hastings and W. P. Haskett-Smith only two days after the other.

The "Pinnacle" is the prominent top about the middle of the mountain ridge, but lower than the east summit. It is said to have been called "inaccessible" at one time, but it is quite an easy walk—hardly a climb—from behind. The northern ridge, which leads up to it from the valley, gives a fair scramble, as well as a long shallow gully to the south-east of "the ridge."

Ardgour Hotel is the most convenient place to stop at for the ascent. The Loch Sunart road, to the foot of Coire an Iubhair, is a splendid one for cycling, but those who have not got their bikes may, perhaps, wish to save a mile or two by going up Glen Gour and crossing into Coire an Iubhair, between Beinn Bheag and Sgor Mhic Eacharna.

W. D.

AONACH EAGACH—THE NOTCHED HILL.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXV.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 41'$; W. Lon. $5^{\circ} 1'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 11.

This group stretches along the north side of Glencoe for over six miles, from the mouth of the glen up to the Devil's Staircase. From the climber's point of view the main part of the ridge lies between Sgor nam Fiannaidh (3,168 feet), (pron. *Feen*, Fingal's Peak), at the west end, and Meall Dearg (3,118 feet), (pron. *Jerek*, red hill), a mile and a half eastwards. Midway between the two the connecting ridge reaches its highest point (3,080 feet) in Meall Garbh (pron. *Garv*, rough hill). This is the top which is so well seen from all the way down the glen. Sgor nam Fiannaidh rises directly from the Clachaig Inn, so that for those staying there the climb is about the most easily accessible in the country. Instead of leaving the road immediately, by following it a mile towards Loch Triochatan, an easier slope can be found, by which the ridge is struck some way east of the summit of Sgor nam Fiannaidh, but before it begins to get inter-

esting. It is as well, however, not to go too far east before making the ridge or what was intended as a short cut, will be found to lead into steep ground on which both rock and grass holds are decidedly shaky.

As the narrowing ridge is followed one or two steep drops are passed, which require care only on account of the instability of the holds. The lower rocks of the range seem to be sounder than those near the shattered crest. The actual top of Meall Garbh is got at by a scramble from the foot of the last and highest (about fifty feet) of these drops. After this the ridge is for the most part rather wider, and can be followed the whole way without difficulty, except at the end, where there is a straight rise on to the top of Meall Dearg. From this top the route is plain, either following the line of hills, which now retains little of the ridge element, to the Staircase, or what is probably better, down to the road a mile or so below the Study.

The main ridge is very narrow for nearly a mile, and has tremendous cliffs on its north side. Probably it more nearly resembles a Coolin ridge than any other in Scotland. On the Glencoe side several steep ridges of apparently good rock lead up to Meall Garbh and Meall Dearg. One party at Easter 1898 got 1,000 feet of interesting rock climbing on the buttress beyond the great gully leading to Meall Dearg, starting a mile past the shepherd's house (Nicol Marquis, who made the earliest known climb into Ossian's Cave about 1868), and another party in July 1898 had an interesting climb on the narrow ridge on the Clachaig side of the great gully of Meall Dearg. The crest of the ridge was kept the whole way up with the exception of one little pitch above a little cave, with a natural window, which was turned to the left.

Dr Collie records an attempted ascent of the gully cut out by a burn on the face of Sgor nam Fiannaidh, directly opposite the Clachaig Inn. His party got up a considerable way, but were at last stopped by a sixty-foot waterfall, and had to work out to the side.

A. F.

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.—On 24th May 1900, a party, climbing in the following order—Messrs G. D. and A. P. Abraham, J. W. Puttrell and E. A. Baker—ascended the Crowberry ridge of Buchaille Etive direct from bottom to top. Several cairns were built *en route*, which perhaps are scarcely necessary, for the lower part of the ridge allows of little deviation from its crest. The climb begins at the bottom with 80 feet of steep rock, but the abundance of holds makes this part easily negotiable. After surmounting this, a comparatively broad ledge is reached, and the next 60 or 70 feet from here is the crux of the climb. A short upward traverse leads out to some very exposed slabs of which the route goes straight ahead. Another larger ledge is then reached, from which an awkward step in the ridge about 20 feet high has to be climbed. Above this the ridge broadens somewhat, but the climbing is most interesting until the cairn, built by some S.M.C. members, is reached. From here the route is the same as followed and described by previous parties. It may be mentioned that the diagram in the *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. V., p. 235, misled us considerably, as the written descriptions are at variance with the diagrams.

On the 19th of the following October Mr and Mrs G. D. Abraham made the first recorded ascent of a conspicuous gully on the S.E. face of Buchaille Etive between the Chasm and Dr Collie's Climb. The climb begins with a long narrow chimney dominated by some chock-stones, which are somewhat water-worn and difficult to surmount. This pitch will be fully 100 feet in height, and the second pitch looks at first sight more difficult, though not more than 80 feet high. They climbed up to a shallow cave below the big chock-stone, and after clearing much vegetation, found a way up immediately to its left. Above this the gully widens out, but the most interesting route lies up an imposing buttress right ahead for fully 200 feet. The climbing is difficult in places, but by traversing to either right or left much of the serious work can be partly avoided.

From Clachaig on some following days, the same party of two, after climbing into Ossian's Cave and traversing the whole ridge of Aonach Eagach and Meall Garbh, ascended the crags of Aonach Dubh by a new route on the side facing Clachaig. They followed a zigzag route up the gully and buttress immediately to the right of the long waterfall gully which runs down the whole length of the crags, and which is directly to the right of the easy way. This route was found extremely useful in descending, and it is mentioned in the *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. V., p. 132.

Almost at the top of their climb, in a large recess in the crags, stands a very fine pinnacle, which can be seen from above. They ascended this and christened it Winifred's Pinnacle. They found two ways up, one from the neck connecting the rock with the mountain, and the other and more difficult way starts nearly 50 feet lower down the gully on the left, as one faces the pinnacle. The ascent is well worth making, and it may be mentioned that the base of the pinnacle, which much resembles Scawfell Pillar, can be easily reached from the top of the crags by descending a gully on the left (looking downwards).

On 2nd November they ascended a new gully on Stob Corrie nan Beith. The beginning of this climb is, roughly speaking, about 500 yards above where the wire fence abuts against the crags. The first and succeeding small pitches were climbed direct, and the curious rock-bridge part of the way up the lower portion, will help future climbers to recognise the gully. Just below where the gully opens out, not far from the summit of the mountain, a very wet and difficult pitch was encountered. They were compelled to take to the left wall of the gully (looking upwards), and found the climbing very enjoyable. The route can then be varied considerably, but the gully continues more or less indefinitely to within 50 feet of the summit cairn. All the above climbs were made in adverse weather conditions.

A. P. ABRAHAM.

AVALANCHES ON BEN MORE.—The second week of February began and continued in clear, calm, and frosty weather, but ended in a most abominable blizzard from the south-west. In the hope that Saturday the 15th would be a continuation of the glorious clear days immediately preceding, J. W. Drummond, our mutual friend Dr Moorhouse, and I, left Stirling under very doubtful weather conditions, by the 8 A.M. train for Crianlarich. We were fifty minutes late on arrival, so that it was ten minutes to eleven before we left the station for our expedition. We followed the road as far as Ben More Farm, then turned up by the burn of the same name and made for the corrie—if so it may be termed—which forms the sort of north-west face of the Ben. Ominous clouds were rising in the south-west, and fleecy fragments were scudding along overhead, but most unpropitious of all were the white smoky-like clouds of snow-dust that were being driven off the higher slopes and summit in streaks and

whirls and every other shape, suggesting that the upper regions were having a very lively time of it. Going was fairly good for the first 1,500 feet, but after that we began to get our first taste of the wind and the stinging pellets of driven snow. But there is no need to tell of the buffeting and pelting we got during our two hours' fruitless efforts. Four hours and a half failed to find us at the cairn. We were fairly beaten in the struggle; and although under favourable conditions we could have reached the summit in about a quarter of an hour, no one could have told how long it would have taken us facing the raging blizzard that scoured and swept the last hundred feet or so.

In some slight extenuation of our defeat, however, be it said, that time was a cogent consideration. To have persisted would have cost us our train, and that meant a sojourn at Crianlarich till Monday. These remarks, however, are intended to bear more upon one or two incidents in the expedition, than upon a simple record of the ascent. The result of long periods of hard frost had been to produce an endless number of ice-covered slopes, very variable in extent and in declivity. Upon these the wind-driven, dry, powdery snow had settled, and lay to depths varying between an inch or two, to one, two, or more feet. At quite an early period of our ascent we came upon one of these snow-covered slopes. The declivity was very slight, but sufficient when trodden upon to cause the snow over a small area to break away and leave a visible line of separation along the upper border and sides of the sliding mass. Higher up these conditions became more marked and more treacherous as the inclination increased, and at one part it was necessary to clear away the super-imposed layer of snow, and cut steps in the ice beneath. It was, however, in our descent, when unroped, that what may be fairly called an avalanche took place. I was a little ahead, when I suddenly felt myself moving with the whole mass of snow around me. It soon broke up into blocks a foot thick, and as these came tumbling down towards me, I was rapidly pounded on the back with successive thuds, and the momentary sensation produced that I was going to be embedded. The excitement, however, was soon over, and as I gazed up above me with the expectation of at least receiving some commiseration for my untoward expedition, I saw a pair of grinning faces, and was greeted with shouts of regret that the owners thereof had been deprived of the pleasure of digging me out. We computed that the amount of snow moving must have been considerably over a ton.

Avalanches from the breaking off of cornices, is not an infrequent occurrence on our Scotch mountains, but, formed in the way above described, they are certainly less frequent, if not rare. For the two conditions requisite, an ice slope with super-imposed dry snow, the result of wind-swept surfaces, can only accrue from a long dry season, such as has been recently experienced.

A. ERNEST MAYLARD.

ARRAN.—Messrs Lawson, Mackay, and Raeburn were in Arran on 22nd February. They had two objects—an inspection at close hand of the “A” Gully of Cir Mhor, and the exploration of a fine chimney on Chleibhein reported on by Dr Clark.

Mackay and Raeburn left Edinburgh by the 6.10 train on Saturday morning, joining Lawson, who had business in Glasgow the previous day, at the St Enoch Station. The long frost had only broken up two days before, and the weather, dull, calm, and muggy in Edinburgh, was duller and muggier in Glasgow. At Ardrossan it was raining heavily, and quite a heavy sea rolling in before a strong south-west wind.

Arran was totally invisible till we got within a couple of miles of it, and the summits remained wrapped in dense mist all the time of our visit.

We got away from Brodick shortly after eleven, and proceeded steadily up Glen Rosa, the keen strong wind, ever and anon full of heavy rain, fortunately at our backs. Passing round the shoulder of Chleibhein we entered Corrie Daingean, and as we had by now also entered the shrouding mist, we held by the burn practically to its source, then turning to the left gained the ridge of Chleibhein by an easy snow gully. We climbed westwards along this ridge looking for the big chimney.

At length after several false casts, we hit what we thought answered somewhat to the description, a deep black cleft with several huge jammed blocks. Down this we descended, behind two jammed stone pitches, and over a third. This was damp, if interesting work. Mackay acted as pioneer, and Lawson and I, judging that where he could get through we should have no difficulty in following, paid for our presumption at the second jammed stone pitch by getting fairly hung up for several minutes. Mackay's khaki gaberdine suit, though it made him look like a diver without his helmet just ascended from sea bottom, seemed to slither over the rocks where our tweeds caught.

At the foot of the third pitch the chimney opens out into a face-crack, and as the whole place was sheeted with ice and running with water, and time, moreover, getting on, we considered it better to turn upwards again. We did so, varying the last part by a traverse west and ascent of a second deep black cut, which in its icy condition gave a little sport.

As darkness was rapidly approaching and we had no lantern, we then took the unheroic plan, instead of crossing the saddle, of retracing our steps down Glen Rosa and round to Corrie through the Castle grounds. We eventually reached our comfortable headquarters at Corrie to the accompaniment of the loud squelching of our sodden boots, and the incessant rattle of the rain.

The next morning was rather more promising, and in fact it did not begin raining till fully two hours after our start, doing its best, however, to make up for that momentary slip by raining extra heavily

all the rest of the time up to the time of our leaving, and I should think it is probably raining still. Of course, as our route led us past the Corrie boulders, we must needs spend some time and cuticle in making or renewing acquaintance with them, and all the routes on all the stones had fallen to one or other before we could tear ourselves away. Arran climbers can have scarcely failed to observe the clinging qualities of these boulders. They rarely permit an admirer to leave without retaining as a memento something, may be cuticle, may be garment. Were there a Sherlock Holmes in our Club, I have no doubt he would be able to infer for many days after, what particular member had last been on the boulders by the structure and colour of the woolly fragments from his stockings or knickers, or the anthropometrical patterns on the pieces of skin from his fingertips left behind by the climber.

As we entered Glen Sannox we were momentarily favoured by the partial lifting of the mist. It slowly rose till the graceful peak of the Cich na h' Oighe was visible in glimpses, now hid, now partially seen through a semi-transparent veil of mist, and again thrust clear for a minute. Up in the north showed also the deep cut V of the Witches' Step, and the rugged Tors of the "Castles," but almost ere realised, they were gone. A curious effect was here seen as we entered deeper into the hills. The air below was clear as crystal, but a few hundred feet up hung like a roof the solid-looking mass of grey mist extending from bank to bank. In this deep hollow was caught and concentrated, as it were, the light that poured in through the gap where the glen opened eastwards to the sea. Under this deep-toned light the grass and heather took on a most vivid dark green, and the patches of dull burnt heath shone resplendent in rich purple. Climbing up into the upper corrie, Corrie na Uamh, by the long steeply-inclined granite slabs, bared by the burn in its wilder hours, we arrived at the foot of "A" gully. The enormous black cavity of its upper pitch was just visible below the mist, and looked very formidable. The lower pitch, however, was partially covered by a fine icefall, up which it might be possible to cut a way.

We found it advisable to rope for the passage up the sloping ledge that leads, with huge steep slabs above and below, to the foot of the lower pitch. The turf here was frozen hard, partly snow, partly ice covered, and at a fairly steep angle in places. We also observed numerous ominous markings in the snow, of the origin of which we were not long left in doubt, as from the rock above came every now and then whizzing fragments of ice, water thunderbolts, some of quite unpleasant size, loosened from the ice-sheeted upper slabs by the softening hand of Jupiter Pluvius. Running the gauntlet in safety to the foot of the lower pitch, it was soon obvious that cutting up the icefall was quite possible, but we were still comparatively dry, and down the icefall came rushing quite a well-grown river of snow-water, under which the would-be step-cutter must stand while

at work. Coldly, by this time very coldly, declined one and all to take the noble part of that useful animal, the "badger," and dam the river physically, and as to do so mentally and orally was evidently futile, it was not done at all.

On the lower side of the gully a very steep edge runs up, perpendicular towards the gully, and on its outer side sweeping down to the foot of the mountain in the huge, steep, holdless slabs which form this part of the cliff. By descending the gully a little, we were able to get on to this, and up it to nearly the level of the pitch. Here, however, holds practically disappeared. It was still possible to swarm up the narrow edge, but by now rain was falling heavily, the rocks were wet and slippery, and the fingers paralysed with cold, so we all thought it would be much pleasanter as a summer climb, and gave it up for the present.

Traversing along the foot of the cliffs we had a look into gully B₁ and gully B₂. Both of these were solid cataracts of ice from top to bottom, and if possible at all, would have taken many hours' step-cutting.

We then ascended by the "B₁C rib," the buttress between B and C. This was done by a party led by Bell on 7th July 1895 (*Journal*, Vol. IV., p. 63).

It is a capital climb of decidedly over average difficulty. The passage of the cave at the top (*Journal*, Vol. V., p. 31) was now rendered much easier by the large amount of snow which partly filled it up. As no one appeared to long for the "Bell's Groove" finish, we then ascended Cir Mhor by the easy way. A cold wind and dense mist not encouraging any prolonged stay, we descended to the saddle, getting a few short glissades, and so home by Glen Sannox again. (Hotel, six o'clock.) The snow lay at about 1,500 feet, and was very soft and slushy even to the tops. It was melting very fast, a perceptible difference showing in the course of each day. There was an unusual amount of ice about, the larger gullies practically filled with hundreds of tons of solid ice.

We found on comparing notes with Dr Clark on our return, that our Chleibhein chimney is not the one of which we went in search. That is a much larger and more formidable one. It still remains, therefore, to reward the searcher after the beautiful or obscure, who seeks it diligently among the Arran mists.

H. R.

THE HEIGHTS OF THE TARMACHAN PEAKS.—On 21st April, Goggs and the writer, accompanied by a New Zealand friend, Mr W. P. Chrystall, ascended Tarmachan, reaching the top by zigzagging up the broken-up cliffs a quarter of a mile below the summit. Only one bad pitch was encountered, which Goggs surmounted by standing on Chrystall's back; the remainder was of no particular difficulty or interest.

From Tarmachan we went along the ridge westwards over Meall Garbh and Beinn nan Eachan, and the following readings on two aneroids may be of interest as throwing some light on the undetermined heights of Meall Garbh and Eachan. "B" readings should be most accurate, but those of "A" seem nearer those of other observers. The eastern 3,250 contour on Meall Garbh is only a shoulder—assuming that the top is at the east end of the western one, which is just the shape of the final narrow arête.

	Ordnance.	"A."	"B."
Meall nan Tarmachan - -	3,421	—	—
Col west of do. - -	above 3,000	3,171	3,146
Meall Garbh, cairn - -	3,250 cont.	3,391	3,361*
Col west of do. - -	under 3,000	3,026	2,941
Beinn nan Eachan, east top, cairn	3,000 cont.	3,171	3,101
Col west of do. - - -	just over 3,000	—	2,996
Ben nan Eachan, west top, cairn	3,250 cont.	3,311	3,281†

The average of the five observations for Meall Garbh is thus 3,375 feet.

The average of the five observations for Ben nan Eachan is thus 3,305 feet.

The east top of Eachan is not in Munro's tables, there being no indication of it on either 1-inch or 6-inch Survey, but as there is a sharp drop of at least 100 feet on each side of it, it is more worthy of separate recognition than many tops that have been more generously dealt with by the surveyor. Its position is evidently in the centre of the semi-detached 3,000 contour at the east side of Eachan.

J. G. I.

GUIDE BOOK.—The next groups falling to be described are the Mamores, Ben Nevis, Aonachs Mor and Beag, and the Easains. Any photographs or information regarding them will be gladly received by the Editor.

* 3,369 approx., Dr Heddle, Munro's Tables; 3,400, Munro, *Journal*, Vol. I., p. 178; about 3,350, Russell, *Journal*, Vol. V., p. 89.

† 3,265 approx., Dr Heddle, Munro's Tables; 3,350, Munro, *Journal*, Vol. I., p. 178; over 3,300, Russell, *Journal*, Vol. V., p. 89.





W. Douglas.

SCORAN DUBH.

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No. 39.

SGORAN DUBH.

THIS mountain is the culminating peak of the Western Cairngorms, and though somewhat lower than the group of central giants, is nevertheless a grand hill.

In most parts of Scotland its height of 3,658 feet would place it in the position of a dominating peak. It has the great merit from a climber's point of view of possessing a very fine eastern face, where a long range of crags look steeply down on the dark waters of Loch Eunach lying between the Sgoran and the rugged slopes of Braeriach. There is an interesting paper by Munro on the Western Cairngorms (*Journal*, Vol. II., p. 296) which deals very fully with Sgoran Dubh from the topographical point of view, so that in the present paper the writers devote their whole attention to the description of the eastern face and the climbs which were accomplished thereon in the spring and early summer of this year.

This fine face had of course attracted attention, but strange to say, no successful ascent had ever been made prior to this February. In another *Journal* may be read a short but vivid account of an abortive attempt and a hair-breadth escape on these rocks. The tale then of the Club's combined and individual assaults possesses all the dramatic unities of time, place, and action. There are plenty of climbs still to be found, but they will be variation routes. Within about four months all the "main arteries of traffic" have been opened.

Most mountain-lovers know the aspect of this grand rock-screen from the Upper Eunach Bothy. Up from the

delicate sweeping curve of the heather-clad scree springs a wall of rock of most particular blackness, whence, indeed, the name "Black Scaur." The wall is broken into a series of more or less defined buttresses. It is as though four gigantic funnels or wine-fillers had been let into the rock, the splayed-out portion being a high upper corrie, often fringed by rock, and the strop a very steep water-slide. The five rock-masses thus separated take much the same form reversed, a broad and steep buttress narrowing towards the top and breaking away into a spectacular ridge of low angle and no difficulty. Each mass is cut by gullies and chimneys into several arêtes more or less continuous.

These buttresses are numbered 1 to 5 in this paper counting from north to south.

They extend for a distance of fully two miles from somewhat south of Loch Mhic Ghilliechaoile to near the head of Loch Eunach.

Of these divisions the one containing the longest and best defined arête is No. 5, or that farthest south. This was also the first to be climbed. It has been termed the Pinnacle Ridge from a rather remarkable pinnacle which stands out on the ridge about midway of its height. This pinnacle shows up very conspicuously from a good way down the Eunach valley, and is also well seen from the upper path up Braeriach, on the other side of the loch.

The rock on all the climbs is granite (Diorite?), which as a rule is not a good, *i.e.*, an easy climbing rock, but on Sgoran Dubh it appears to the writers to give better holds than usual, except on the slabby, often vegetation-covered portions low down.

At the time most of the climbs were done on this face a large quantity of snow had recently fallen, but in some cases this was rather a help than otherwise, especially on these lower steep slabs. Steps were easily kicked up at an angle where footing would have been impossible on bare rock.

No. 5, or the Pinnacle Ridge, was first ascended by Messrs Lawson and Raeburn, March 1902, and an account of the climb by the former appeared in the *Journal* for May (Vol. VII., p. 57). It gives about 1,200 feet of

interesting climbing, though at no point save the pinnacle itself can it be called difficult. The pinnacle was climbed from the col above after a traverse on the north side, the party judging the lower edge too difficult under the conditions—wind and sleet. This pinnacle is extremely narrow—it is barely 1 foot thick at the top and upper edge, and appears as though a few more winter gales must inevitably bring the greater part of it down in ruin. Its constitution, however, is probably more robust than appearances indicate.

The next buttress in order (No. 4) was the last to be climbed. It covers more space than the others, and in its winter aspect seemed to present a rather indefinite formation, seamed by many snow gullies. These may be easy in winter, but the writer hereof can vouch for their awkwardness in summer conditions. For the reason given or some other, the Club at Easter did not attack this buttress. On 21st June a member with two brothers and a friend were inspired or tempted (which you choose) to its assault. Some of the party have been heard to declare that they dislike two things, playing pendulum on a rope, and being left (morally unsupported) on a narrow ledge, swept by a strong cross-wind. But these were the facetious members. A feature of the climb was certainly the extraordinary length of all the pitches. Deducting minutes spent in tying and untying three men on a poor little 60-foot rope, the time (a little over five hours to summit) was a fast one.

The general character of this buttress varies a little from that of the others. Throughout the five one character runs—a lower division of heather-clad slabs, where neither heath nor rock is so easy as it looks; an upper division presenting a granite wall of very steep angle, but breaking away somewhat to the final ridge. This granite wall recedes higher up as we pass along the buttresses from north to south, and on this No. 4 Buttress takes almost the form of a tower. Three separate efforts were made on this fine mass, all doomed to failure. The routes tried would be fine tests for the Guild of Boulder Climbers. The necessary heather-bed was too many hundred feet below, so the party skirted below the tower and found several

parallel chimneys striking up to the ridge behind. The first was obviously impossible; the second was tackled. It was forced in two parts, of which the facetious member said that the first had no holds in the middle portion, and the second none at all. Each was nicely measured off for 60 feet; in fact, the first safe platform could only be attained by thrusting out the feet backwards, and remaining thus in a prone position till the second man mounted some way up.

This tower is on the true left of the deep-cut gully, very conspicuous in this buttress. It has been described first, because it is thought that by keeping the well-marked arête a fairly simple route up to it would be found. The party actually chose the gully for attack as being less exposed, and perhaps easier. Delusive hope! Of the tribulations there encountered, and the Passage Perilous on to the arête, space lacks to tell.

The gully was more water and ice worn than the writer has seen elsewhere, and he who surmounts the last grand pitch will have done a good climb.

No. 3.—This was climbed on 28th March by a party consisting of Boyd, Gillon, Mackay, and Raeburn.

Along with No. 2, from which it is only separated by a deep fan-shaped gully or small corrie, this constitutes the largest mass of rock on the Sgoran Dubh face. The edge of the buttress forms a fairly well-defined arête after the broad slabs of the lower portion are passed. These slabs were, at the time of the ascent, covered with a layer of good snow, up which it was easy to kick steps and to keep a tolerably steep line. In summer they might prove troublesome.

For about one-third of the height no great difficulty was met with. At this point a wall, formidably steep, and presenting for holds only shaky flakes, offered combat and prevailed. After an ineffectual effort to force a way up a chimney of an uncomfortably open-angled kind, the party traversed a little to the right and gained the ridge above by means of a small snow-paved gully. From thence the climb is a ridge walk, with fine scenery on either hand, the top landing one close under the summit of Sgoran Dubh Mor.

No. 2.—This was attacked on 31st March by two parties simultaneously. The one, consisting of three married members of the S.M.C., Messrs King, Maylard, and Solly, took a shorter but sporting ridge to the north of the main ridge, while the other, or bachelor party, Naismith, Mackay, Squance, and Raeburn, started at the foot of the main ridge just at the bottom of the gully dividing No. 2 from No. 3.

The big wall was soon reached, and proved somewhat difficult, and they were forced to take to a chimney on the right. This contains two interesting pitches, the lower of which is the more difficult. The upper is passed through a cave below a huge jammed block, and is more formidable in appearance than in reality. After this the climb presents little or no difficulty, though interesting and steep until the top is neared, when the angle eases off. This climb was repeated in June, when the absence of snow revealed a third and lower pitch within the gully, requiring back and foot climbing. The next pitch had stretched out to a forty-foot climb, not too easy. It was taken first by the right corner, and then a traverse of the water-worn bluff into the left corner, ending in a severe pull. The whole gives the best defined route on the Sgoran.

The Easter party had good views across a deep gully of the manoeuvres of the Benedicts on their steep and slabby climb (No. 2 Buttress B).

Sensations here seem to have been thickly crowded. At least two separate walls had to be overcome on this route. The usual boilers led up to a ledge on the left of the arête, heavily overhung by slabs. A traverse was necessary to the right side, involving a scramble in an awkward cleft. Soon the knife edge had to be regained, and the one necessary step would come lower for no blandishments. A cairn was then erected to mark the conquest of the First Wall. The ridge was now so easy that the rope was discarded till the Second Wall was reached. The attack here was directed to a chimney on the right bereft of holds. Snow 2 feet deep was plastered therein, and had to serve for foot and hand. The steps for safety were made phenomenally far apart. Eight or nine of these and the leader reached a rock hold, by which and palm friction he escaped

to rock more off the perpendicular, and a long back and knee chimney took him to an anchorage 50 feet above his start. The second man cleared away the snow ladder, and the third missed it in his ascent. The difficulties were now over, and soon the party were glissading down the gully to the true left of the buttress, finding a number of interruptions due to rock and ice.

No. 1.—This was also ascended at the Easter Meet of 1902, on 30th March. Messrs Kynaston, Mounsey, and Raeburn started at the foot of the great gully, traversing on to the main buttress on the left or south. The immense quantity of new snow which had fallen on the previous day rendered the going very slow, and the climb took six hours to accomplish. The buttress is split by what is certainly the finest gully on the whole range of cliffs. The gully was ascended on the first day of the Meet by Messrs Glover, Leathart, and Worsdell, who reported no pitches uncovered. It afforded, three days later, a splendid glissade to the party who climbed the South Buttress.

Attacking the buttress just at the foot of the gully in a small and very snowy chimney, the party soon found it necessary, owing to the deep snow masking all the holds, to traverse out a considerable distance to the left.

Here a small chimney, in which grew a couple of ash stems, was met with. It led, not without difficulty, up to a subsidiary arête which ran up till it abutted against a range of very steep slabs—the feature common to most or all of the ridges—which stretched across the face. A direct attack on these appeared hopeless, but a short traverse to the south opened up a way of attack in a shallow but steep and slabby chimney. The snow here proved probably more of a help than otherwise, and the edge of the main arête was gained at the top of the chimney. Here all difficulty may be said to disappear, though the rock scenery is grand in the extreme, the presence of a fine Golden Eagle lending additional interest to the huge chasm of the No. 1 Gully.

As previously mentioned, the party descended by glissading down the gully.

Owing to the immense quantity of snow this was quite

safe, but all the gullies contain pitches low down which are more or less formidable in summer, and in none is it safe to glissade without a knowledge of what the conditions are in the last few hundred feet.

Lastly, mention should be made of an attempt by Glover and a party on the great bluff to the north of this prominent gully. Seven hours' glorious exertion and defeat were their portion.

And so ends a plain tale from the hills.

W. W. KING.

A. M. MACKAY.

H. RAEBURN.

BEN BUIDHE.

BY SCOTT MONCRIEFF PENNEY.

INVERARAY to the American and the tripper is known only as the residence of the Duke of Argyll and the destination of the "Lord of the Isles." But the Duke is not always there, and the well-known steamer only runs during what are called, often euphemistically, the "summer" months. It has, however, other claims to fame. The beauty of its situation is recognised and admitted by all, while its magnificent beech avenues, known to most people only in their full summer foliage, are possibly even more striking seen laden with snow, or in the freshness of their spring verdure, or dyed with the colouring of autumn. It is one of the smallest and quaintest of our royal burghs, complete with its one cross-shaped street, having the church "facing-both-ways" in the centre, the court-house at the end of one arm, the school-house at the end of the other arm, and an ancient Celtic cross at the foot. In its quiet, its size, and its aloofness it reminds one of the northern royal burgh of Dornoch, and, like it, it is still the capital town of the county.

But I have never seen it included among the climbing centres of Scotland, or chosen for a "Meet" of the S.M.C., and yet it is the best starting point for several most interesting if not precipitous mountains, and within reasonable (cycling) distance of such familiar friends as Ben Cruachan, Ben Lui, Ben Ime, and "The Cobbler." I have climbed Ben Cruachan from Loch Awe—especially on one memorable New Year's Day when our dinner hour was 10.20 P.M.—but it was this summer, starting from and returning to Inveraray, that I first climbed the four highest peaks in one day, and at length obtained a proper view, which included Goatfell to the south, Jura, Scarba, Colonsay, Mull, Rum, and the seas adjacent to those islands, to the west, the mountains of Inverness-shire, including probably Ben Screel and Scour Ouran, to the north-west, Ben Nevis and his neighbours to the north, Stob Ghabhar, Loch Tulla, Ben Alder, and the snow on the Cairngorms, if not the Cairngorms themselves,

to the north-east, and Ben Lawers, Ben Lui, Ben More, Ben Lomond, Ben Ime, &c. &c., to the east and south-east, while the nearer views of Loch Awe and its islands, of Loch Linnhe with Lismore in the centre, and of the upper reach of Loch Etive with its surrounding giants, were not the least attractive.

Undoubtedly, however, the hills most naturally ascended from Inveraray are those to the east, and Ben Buidhe to the north-east. Stob-an-Eas (2,400 feet), Beinn-an-Lochain (3,021 feet), and Ben Ime (3,318 feet) are visible from Inveraray itself across Loch Fyne, while the double-headed Ben Buidhe (3,106 feet) is seen filling in the head of Glen Shira. The first two named form, along with Beinn-an-t-Seilich (2,359 feet), a distinctive outstanding and interesting trio, ringed round by Glen Kinglas on the north and north-east, by Hell's Glen on the south, by Loch Fyne on the west, and by the glen through the road from Rest-and-be-Thankful at the head of Glen Croe to the foot of Hell's Glen and Lochgoilhead passes, on the south-east.

It was this group of three, then thickly covered with snow, that attracted my attention in the end of January and made me send for my ice-axe. The early days of February were devoted to curling; but one cloudless morning I exchanged my broom for my axe and set off alone, the inhabitants of Inveraray apparently thinking I was qualifying for being myself committed, instead of committing others, to the district asylum. I made a lazy start—by steam ferry across the loch, and then in the coach to the highest point on the road to Lochgoilhead, four miles from St Catherine's, and just on the 750 feet contour line. I left the road at mid-day, and reached the top of Stob-an-Eas at half-past one, the snow being somewhat deep and heavy. From there I saw the steamer leaving Lochgoilhead Pier, the chimney stalks of Greenock, Loch Eck, Jura, Mull, Ben Cruachan, and the Clachlet, but not farther north. The whole surrounding country was beautiful under its thick snow mantle. On taking my bearings I saw, at what appeared a considerable distance away, a splendid snow peak, which I thought at first was Ben Ime, but, if so, where was Beinn-an-Lochain, locally known as "The Old Man" or

"The Old Man's Face" from its outline, which somewhat reminds one of Sir William Harcourt or Mr Kruger? After further study of the map I discovered the fine peak was the "Old Man" himself, and I saw that I had no time to lose if I was to reach him before dark, especially as another ridge, Beinn-an-t-Seilich, indistinguishable from Inveraray, intervened. A dip of 500 feet with one short glissade took me into the first hollow, and half-past two saw me on the next hill. From here the "Old Man" looked very steep—steeper than it really was—so I kept well to the south, although by so doing I made the next dip 1,100 feet. The climb up the southern ridge, where the snow was much firmer, did not take long. A good view of Glen Croe and the Cobbler opened up on the right, and by a quarter to five I was on the top of the "Old Man's" brow. All day I regretted that the old gentleman was just under 3,000 feet, although well entitled, notwithstanding the cast of his countenance, to be included among the great ones of the earth, and my joy at night was accordingly great at finding that, although excluded by my map, he is enrolled among the high and mighty "Munros" by the geographer of that select clan himself.

I doubt if even our crack climbers could follow the outline of his profile and step over his nose on to his chin. Perhaps they may try some day when tired of the other grand old man ("The Cobbler") across the way. I at least was content to execute a flank movement to the east. Loch Restil, from which the hill gets its orthodox name of Beinn-an-Lochain, lies immediately below to the east, and that side, especially in winter, is the one on which to get the best climb, but I did not wish to go quite so far as the loch! A really good glissade of about 300 feet from the top took me on to a plateau of snow, and from it I turned due north, and reached the road through Glen Kinglas in thirty-five minutes from the top, a descent of 2,500 feet. I had fully six miles to walk to St Catherine's, but I was ferried across without delay, and reached Inveraray soon after half-past seven after a most enjoyable day. The keenness of the frost may be estimated by the fact that even after I got home frozen snow was still adhering to my knickerbockers.

But after all Ben Buidhe is the mountain which Inveraray may claim as specially its own. Seen from Ben Cruachan it is almost lost in the moor, and one can hardly realise it is an eminence at all, but seen from Inveraray it is both a striking and graceful mountain. Save a few steep but uninteresting bits, mainly on its south side, it is a narrow grassy mass about four miles long coming to a head in Stac-a-Chuirn (2,679 feet), and then, after a slight depression, terminating in the true top which is 3,106 feet above sea level. It stands as a wedge at the head of Glen Shira, and separates the headwaters of that glen into the upper part of the river Shira on the north and the Brannie Burn on the south. Across the Brannie Burn is another even longer slope, called the "Brannie," from which the burn gets its name, separating Glen Shira from the upper end of Loch Fyne and its continuation Glen Fyne. Occupying a somewhat isolated position, its nearest neighbours worthy of mention being Ben Cruachan to the north-west, Ben Lui and Ben Oss to the north-east, and the Arrochar Alps to the east, Ben Buidhe commands an extensive outlook. Mr Munro says it is "best ascended from Dalmally or Cairndow Inn," but with deference I should substitute Inveraray. Doubtless these are the nearest "public places," if only "shank's naggie" is to be used, but even members of the S.M.C. are not above adopting other "resources of civilisation"—at least as far as the foot of the mountain to be ascended. I am also willing to concede that the climb from Glen Fyne—reached on foot from Cairndow, or by bicycle or boat to the head of the loch—is less monotonous and more interesting than the grind up the long shoulder, but none the less Ben Buidhe is *most conveniently* approached from Inveraray by way of Glen Shira.

The glen itself is a charming place for an afternoon's cycle ride, but are not the beauties of the Dubh Loch, of Maam, and of Kilblaan fully and sympathetically set forth in "Gillian the Dreamer"? For five miles there is a fairly good road on both sides of the glen, but beyond the bridge at Ben Buidhe Farm and the little side school the road—still rideable but in worse condition—goes up the south side only, and that for another mile and a half. Just be-

yond where it comes to an end are a summer house, commanding a pleasant view of the glen and of a part of Loch Fyne, and a shepherd's house, and yet a hundred yards farther on the ruined walls of a cottage called "Rob Roy's House," where, according to tradition, that noted freebooter took refuge under the Duke of Argyll after making things exceptionally hot for himself in the country of the Dukes of Atholl and Montrose. A most convenient natural larder for live stock, in the form of a large green basin on the hill-side just behind the house, lends corroboration to the story.

In the summer house, which can easily be reached in fifty minutes from Inveraray, bicycles can be left, and walking sticks can be borrowed from the shepherd. Striking up immediately behind his house, there is a stiffish slope to the nose of the ridge (1,750 feet), where the first top comes into sight. This will take slightly over an hour. Other fifty minutes will suffice to reach the first top, and another half-hour completes the stroll—it can hardly be called a climb—in rather under two hours and a half. The return journey down the hill can be accomplished in about an hour. The charm of the walk is largely due to the way in which the mountains, beginning with Ben Cruachan, gradually assert themselves on all sides, until about half-way up, Ben Nevis, with its unmistakable north-east buttress, is suddenly opened up. "The *vuidhe* [view he] will get from Ben Buidhe"—to quote a well-known poet and geologist—will depend upon the climber's weather; but this summer, for the sake first of myself and afterwards of friends, I climbed the hill three times in a fortnight, and on every occasion received the "bonus" of a view in addition to a capital walk. It includes the Cloch Lighthouse on the Clyde, Arran, the Paps of Jura, Mull, Morven, Ben Cruachan, Beinn-a-Chochuill, Beinn Eunaich, Ben Starav, Ben Nevis and its companions, the Shepherds of Etive, Stob Ghabhar, the Clachlet, Ben Alder, Ben Lawers, Ben Lui, Ben Oss, Ben More, Stobinian, a hill beyond Stobinian probably Ben Vorlich, Ben Ledi, the Ochils, Ben Lomond, Ben Vane, Ben Ime, the Cobbler, the hills between Loch Long and Loch Fyne, and the greater part of Loch Fyne itself, bounded by the high land of Kintyre.

On one of my visits I was accompanied by an enthusiastic botanist, who pronounced the hill very rich in botanical treasures and was chiefly enthusiastic over the *Cerastium alpinum*, which we found in flower in considerable quantities near the cairn.

The whole expedition can easily be done in six hours from Inveraray, and I heartily recommend it to my fellow-Salvationists of the S.M.C. as an excellent way of spending the afternoon, the next time they "tak' a sail down the watter" in the "Lord of the Isles." I would even suggest it as a new attraction for the next Glasgow Fair holidays, but I fear the members from the second city of the empire are all Ultramontanes of the most pronounced type.

S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.



THE MAMORE FOREST GROUP.

(DIVISION L GROUP XXVI.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 45'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 53'$ to $5^{\circ} 4'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

This large group lies between Glen Nevis and Loch Leven. It is about nine miles long from east to west, and about three and a half miles wide. The main ridge or backbone of the group runs due east and west, and only at two places falls below the 2,500 feet contour. There are three important ridges running north from the main ridge, and on two of these the highest summits are found. Nearly all the ridges are well defined.

There are fourteen principal summits in the group, only eight of which are named on the one-inch Ordnance Map, as follows:—

1. Mullach nan Coirean, 3,077 feet, is the western termination of the group, and lies five miles south-south-east from Fort-William.
2. Stob Ban, 3,274 feet, lies on the main ridge, one and a half miles east by south from No. 1.
3. Sgor an Iubhair, about 3,250 feet, is the peak on the main ridge, one mile east from No. 2, and is indicated only on the one-inch Ordnance Map by the small circular 3,250 feet contour. Three-quarters of a mile south of it there is a shoulder 2,424 feet in height to which the name has been wrongly applied on the map.
4. Sgor a' Mhaim, 3,601 feet, lies three-quarters of a mile north of No. 4 on a branch ridge, and is the second highest mountain of the group.
5. Am Bodach, 3,382 feet, lies on the main ridge three-quarters of a mile east by south from No. 3.
6. Stob Coire a' Chairn, 3,219 feet, lies on the main ridge, one mile north-east from No. 5. It is not named on the one-inch Ordnance Map.
7. An Garbhanach, about 3,200 feet, lies about one-third of a mile

orth by east of No. 6, and is the south end of the sharp ridge branching out northwards from the main ridge at that summit.

8. An Gearanach, about 3,200 feet, is the north end of the same branch ridge, and is about one-third of a mile north from No. 7.

9. A Gruagach, north-west summit, 3,404 feet, lies on the main ridge one mile east-south-east from No. 6.

10. A Gruagach, 3,442 feet, lies on the main ridge a quarter of a mile south-east from No. 9.

11. Binnein Mor, 3,700 feet, lies on a branch ridge one mile north-west from No. 10. It is the highest summit in the group.

12. Binnein Beag, 3,083 feet, an outlier of No. 11, and lying one mile north-west therefrom.

13. Sgor na h' Eilde Beag, 3,140 feet, lies on the main ridge one mile east from No. 10.

14. Sgor na h' Eilde, 3,279 feet, lies three-quarters of a mile north-east of No. 13, and is the most easterly summit of the group. It is one mile north-west of Loch Eilt Lodge, at the head of Loch Eilde Mor.

Fort-William is undoubtedly the most convenient place from which to explore this district. From Fort-William there is a good driving road up Glen Nevis as far as the bend in the Glen at Meall Cumhann, about two miles above Achriabhach. Beyond this a good path goes as far as Steall, from whence there is a rough track to Loch Treig head. Accommodation might possibly be had either at Steall or at Loch Treig. From the south the hills are more difficult of access, though accommodation might perhaps be had at the head of Loch Leven.

While none of the mountains of this group afford sufficiently difficult climbing to tempt the adventurous climber, they afford scope for a number of very interesting, though easy, expeditions, of which the following are the best.

Stob Ban is perhaps the most interesting hill of the group. It lies two miles south of Achriabhach, towards which it sends down a long gently inclined ridge. The most usual route of ascent is up this ridge. Three-fourths of the way up there is a little pinnacle which must not in mist be mistaken for the summit, as there is some danger of doing. The east face of the hill consists of a fine precipice which contains two good ridges, only one of which has as yet been climbed. The north ridge terminates at the little peak before mentioned, and was climbed at Easter 1895 (see *Journal*, Vol. III., p. 338). The south ridge, which has

not been climbed, will probably prove to be more difficult. The most interesting descent will be made by walking westwards along the sky line of Corrie Dheirg to the summit of Mullach nan Coirean, a hill of no particular interest, and thence down to Achriabhach, or some other point in Glen Nevis.

Sgor a' Mhain, the second highest hill of the group, is a grand hill as seen from the north in winter, when its north-east corrie is filled with immense masses of snow. Its summit is one and a half miles south-east of Achriabhach, from which point it is best climbed. The climb is one of no particular interest, being up grass slopes and screes of unrelieved steepness. From the summit what is possibly the best view of the entire group is to be had. Instead of descending directly from the summit, it will be found much more repaying to walk right round the head of the corrie to the east keeping to the sky line all the way, a magnificent high level walk of about three and a half miles. The ridge at first leads due south for a mile to Sgor an Iubhair, requiring care at one or two places when covered with snow, and from thence leads east by south to Am Bodach. The east face of this hill is very precipitous, but the direct road to Stob Coire a' Chairn, the next summit on the ridge, leads down an easy though somewhat steep slope. Stob Coire a' Chairn is about a mile to the north-east, and the ridge here divides the main ridge leading east by south towards A Gruagach and the subsidiary ridge along which our route lies going north to An Garbhanach. The dip to the foot of the latter is quite short. From the col the ridge rises steeply in front to the summit of An Garbhanach. At one or two places it is quite narrow, and affords an interesting climb if the edge is adhered to throughout. An Garbhanach is the south end of a narrow ridge of about half a mile in length which is practically level. The north end is called An Gearanach. From the latter the descent should be made in a north-easterly direction to avoid the bluffs of rock overlooking Steall. The Nevis can be crossed by a small footbridge which will be found about a quarter of a mile above the farmhouse. The walk down Glen Nevis from here to Achriabhach is particularly fine, a high

fall on the Allt Coire a' Mhail being passed on the left just before the path enters the magnificent gorge between Meall Cumhann and a spur of Sgor a' Mhaim. At the entrance to the gorge the path divides, the right hand branch which makes a considerable ascent being the better to take. The left hand branch keeps close to the river but is very rough and in darkness would not be safe.

Binnein Mor is the highest of the Mamores and is one of the least accessible. With its outliers *Binnein Beag*, *A Gruagach*, and *Sgor na h' Eilde*, it forms the east end of the group. To reach it the path through *Glen Nevis* should be followed past *Steall* to the bend in the river at the point marked 1056 on the Ordnance Map, where a convenient place for crossing the river will be found fifty yards above the point where the deer fence crosses. Some large blocks of stone are here jammed in the bed of the river, and one can easily jump across. *Binnein Beag* is now directly in front, but it is not inviting, as its rounded dome consists of tiresome screes, and it is much lower than the surrounding hills. The north-east face of *Binnein Mor* is very fine, affording an interesting scramble in summer, and a grand glissade in winter. The north-west face, up which the usual route lies, calls for no special remark. The summit consists of a narrow level ridge a few hundred yards long, with a large cairn at the south end. An interesting descent can be made by continuing along the ridge south and then south-west to the double summit of *A Gruagach*, the two peaks of which present a strikingly different appearance owing to their geological structure being different. In descending from *A Gruagach* to *Glen Nevis* care should be taken to keep to the left bank of the *Allt Coire na Gabhalach*, as difficulty may be found in crossing it in wet weather at any point lower than 1,500 feet contour.

Sgor na h' Eilde is the extreme eastern end of the group, and is exceedingly difficult of access. This, however, is not of much importance, as the hill is very uninteresting, being a long hog-backed mountain rising gradually from the north-east.

J. A. P.

BEN NEVIS.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXVII.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 48'$; W. Lon. $5^{\circ} 0'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

1. Ben Nevis, 4,406 feet, probably Beinn Neamh-bhathais—the sky-touching mountain. Lies 4 miles south-east of Fort-William.
2. Càrn Dearg, 3,348, the south-west spur of Ben Nevis—the red cairn. Lies $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south-west of No. 1.
3. Càrn Dearg, 3,961 feet, the north-west spur of Ben Nevis—the red cairn. Lies $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north-west of No. 1.
4. Meall an t-Suidhe, 2,322 feet—the hill of rest. Lies 2 miles north-west of No. 1.

Ben Nevis, the monarch of British mountains, is not, as will be seen from the list given above, a solitary peak, but groups around him a cluster of stalwart summits. These, however, are so intimately bound together that they practically form one well-defined mountain with outlying buttresses. Unlike most of our Highland hills, Ben Nevis, speaking in the wider sense, is completely isolated on all sides but one, the solitary exception being the long and narrow eastern arête joining Ben Nevis and Càrn Mòr Dearg, and which never falls below 3,478 feet. On the north-west it is bounded by Loch Eil and the Great Glen. On the west and south it is encircled by the profound depression of Glen Nevis, the floor of which rises so gradually that at a distance of about seven miles from the entrance, at a point due south of the Observatory, one is barely 500 feet above the sea. On the south-east it is bounded by a small tributary glen drained by Allt Coire Giubhais, and on the north-east by the deep valley of the Allt a' Mhuilinn (pron. *Voolin*), which runs into the river Lochy.



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BEN NEVIS FROM BANAVIE.



Although thus isolated, it is not easy for the tourist to get any satisfactory impression of its mass and height, for the neighbouring mountains are of considerable altitude, and hem it in so as to prevent effective view points. From Fort-William the slopes of Meall an t-Suidhe (2,322 feet), a low-lying buttress, are more prominent, and even from Banavie or Corpach the summit of Càrn Dearg (3,961 feet) intervenes. On the other hand, from the western shores of Loch Linnhe the true mountain form of the Ben is well seen, and half way along Loch Eil is an excellent point from which to view it towering aloft, snow clad for the greater part of the year, and beckoning to the climber over the intervening leagues of water. It is not, however, necessary to go so far away in order to command a satisfactory view, for by ascending a few hundred feet above the sea level near Kilmallie on Loch Eil side, the relative proportions of the lower slopes resolve themselves.

The usual impression of Ben Nevis is disappointing, and one hears it described as a shapeless, uninteresting mound, which, but for its altitude, its Observatory, and its Hotel, has few attractive features, and yet, save in the wild recesses of the Coolins, Ben Nevis has no rival in the British Isles for the savage grandeur of its rock scenery. From the railway between Spean Bridge and Fort-William glimpses are obtained of a precipitous northern face, but so distant that they fail to produce any impression on the hurrying traveller, who is bewildered by the recurring ridges of Aonach and Càrn Mòr Dearg, near neighbours of the Ben. Far different is it when the climber, intent on doing full justice to our Scottish hills, penetrates into the elevated valley of the Mhuilinn, or breasts the scree-covered slopes of Càrn Mòr Dearg, 4,012 feet. For him there is disclosed a scene of mountain grandeur, such as holds its own with many of the most famous Alpine recesses. From either point of view, but altering in contour with each step, a range of stupendous precipices exposes a frontage of about two miles, and bewilders the eye with corrie and gully and shattered cliff. No mere dead, featureless wall of rock uplifts itself, filling the heart with dulness at the im-

possibility of an ascent, but rather a fascinating, luring succession of steep arêtes, and ridges, and pinnacles, and gullies affording variety to suit the powers of all classes of climbers. In winter and far on into summer these cliffs are generally festooned, not with garlands, but rather with mantles of ice, growing day by day in the frosty atmosphere, till the underlying rock becomes invisible save through the romantic medium of a tracery never designed or overlaid by the hand of man. As has been said, "the vast rugged precipice of Ben Nevis rising some fifteen hundred or two thousand feet above the stream that wanders through the gloom at its base. . . . That dark wall of porphyry can now be seen 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 mountain is so noble a memorial" (Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland"). And yet, so little is this marvellous sight known and appreciated, that while thousands have toiled by the usual track to the summit, only the few, the very few, have turned aside to the more easily reached but infinitely more repaying scenery of this mountain glen.

When seen from the hills of the Mamore Forest, Ben Nevis presents a noble outline. From this side it is more a mountain mass, with dignified and sufficient buttresses of rock, rising some 4,000 feet from the rich valley below, and giving no hint of the perpetual warfare with nature which has carved and chiselled its northern face. More placid, it impresses one with the feeling of the "everlasting hills," and in this way appeals to the instinct of the artist or poet (see sketch, p. 148).

From Glen Nevis the summit is invisible, the lower buttresses completely screening it from view; yet the traveller who penetrates this magnificent and truly Alpine glen, if he perseveres up to and through the famous gorge, will be well rewarded by the noble proportions which the lower slopes everywhere present. The gorge itself, cut



W. Inglis Clark.

THE NORTHERN FACE OF BEN NEVIS.



through the projecting buttress of Meall Cumhann, is well worth a visit, whether for the dashing river boiling below in the potholes, or for the somewhat Tyrolese combination of rock and boulder, pine-tree and stream.

It is interesting to note the references to Ben Nevis in the works of old writers. There seems to have been a rivalry in height at least between the mountains of Great Britain. One says: "As an ancient Briton I lament the disgrace of Snowdon, once esteemed the highest hill in the island, but now must yield the palm to a Caledonian mountain" ("Pennant's Tour," 1769, vol. i., p. 228). At that time the height of the Ben was given at 4,350 feet.

A volunteer in the army of the Duke of Cumberland writes in 1746: "Many foot races were performed by both sexes, which made many droll scenes. It was necessary to entertain life in this manner, otherwise by the constant view of mountains surrounding us we should have been affected with hypochondriacal melancholy" (p. 178).

Contrast this with Cricie ("Scottish Scenery," 1803, p. 334): "Ben Nevis and the surrounding mountains strongly impress on the mind the idea of their being the fragments of a demolished world. The traveller who can behold them and not feel a sense of the greatness and majesty of the Almighty impressed on his heart, must be strangely void of taste and sentiment."

John Hill Burton in 1847 ascended when the Ordnance Survey staff were finally deciding as to the relative merits of Ben Muich Dhui, to the ultimate deposal of the northern peak; and Burt in his letters mentions that in 1726 a party of English officers could not attain the summit for bogs and huge perpendicular rocks. From these notices it is evident that the Ben claimed a good deal of attention even then when so many obscure mountains throughout the Highlands were set forth as rivalling it in height. A fine illustration taken from the upper end of Loch Eil is to be found in "Robson's Sketches" (1814), and it is interesting to note that his opinion coincides with that of the writer, that from this point the most comprehensive general view, from a tourist point of view, is to be

obtained. The reference to ancient writers may be closed by Byron's lines from "Manfred":—

"Ben Nevis is monarch of mountains,
They crowned him long ago,
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow."

Since the opening of the West Highland Railway, Ben Nevis has been the goal of the tourists, who, for the most part, are fired by no greater ambition than to set foot on the loftiest summit in Great Britain. The formation of the pony track by the directors of the Ben Nevis Observatory in 1883 has so simplified the ascent that, unless under severe climatic conditions, no other qualifications save perseverance and strength are required to ensure its accomplishment, while on pony back even the delicate may reach the top. But it was not always so. Prior to 1883 the tourist must either take the track from Banavie, or himself force a path over rocky wastes or up grassy slopes, without the possibility of succour at the top from hotel resources, or the cordial hospitality of the observers.

From a meteorological point of view Ben Nevis is unique among our mountains. Standing as it does in the track of the storm centres which sweep across our islands from the Atlantic, it affords unusual opportunities for the investigation of many atmospheric phenomena. Rising to an altitude of 4,406 feet from the sea which washes its base, it is possible, by simultaneous observations at summit, at base, and at half-way house, to accumulate important records tending to throw light on obscure meteorological problems. Hence it was that Mr Clement Wragge in 1880 conceived the idea of personally taking such continuous observations at a time when the summit offered no protection from the severity of the weather. Only those who have toiled up the snow slopes in winter or spring, or have encountered the hurricanes which sweep across the elevated plateau, can even faintly realise the enthusiasm and marvellous energy which supported Mr Wragge in his self-imposed task, and the S.M.C. may well hold his name in honour as a pioneer who first became acquainted with our beloved Ben in its aspects of storm and stress.

Interesting popular accounts of his experiences are to be found in *Good Words* (1882, pp. 343 and 375 ; 1883, p. 356). Put briefly, his day's task was:—Rise at 4 A.M.—5 A.M., first observation—5.12, start on pony—5.30, observation at the "Moss"—6.15, at "Livingstone's boulder"—7 A.M., at the "Lake"—7.30, at "Brown's Well"—8 A.M., at "Red Burn"—8.30, "Buchan's Well"—9 A.M., summit—2 hours' continuous observation—11.20, return—11.30, observation at "Buchan's Well"—12, at "Red Burn"—12.30, at "Brown's Well"—1, at the "Lake"—1.45, at the "Boulder"—2.30, at the "Moss"—3, at Achintore. From 1st June till 1st November this herculean work was carried on without cessation in two successive years until the Observatory was built. The account of a great storm experienced (*Good Words*, 1883, p. 383) will bring back living memories to most of our members. That an observatory exists on the summit is a matter of importance to the S.M.C., and the proposal to close it in October of this year is one which will bring regret to the hearts of all the members. On more than one occasion, notably at the first ascent of the N.E. Buttress (Vol. III., p. 323), and after the prolonged winter climb (Vol. V., p. 45), members of our Club have received hospitality and support when sorely needing it. It is, however, the common experience of the Club that a visit to the Observatory is the signal for unbounded courtesy from the whole of the observers, and that these visits have contributed in no small degree to the success of our Fort-William meets.

Ben Nevis possesses the double characteristics of a snow mountain and a rock peak. In altitude it does not greatly exceed quite a number of other Scottish mountains, but every additional hundred feet means snow, when lower down it is rain, and so a continuance of snow is ensured into early summer.

It is somewhat surprising to find that the area of Ben Nevis, above 4,000 feet, is not quite so large as the corresponding area of either Ben Macdhui or Braeriach. If, moreover, the 3,000 feet contour line is taken, the contrast is still more startling, for it will be found that at least fifteen of the flat-topped Cairngorms have a larger surface, above

3,000 feet, than Ben Nevis. Owing to the humidity of the atmosphere, the prevalence of fog, and the low temperature, fog crystals grow readily on all objects exposed to the wind, and as the growth is in proportion to the exposure, so the rocks hemming in the sides of a gully, or forming the precipitous face below the plateau, are frequently to be found bristling with spears of ice, all pointing in the direction of the wind. During dense fog these will often grow at the rate of fully two feet a day, and climbers do not need to be reminded that they have a predilection for the hair and clothes, on which they form thick deposits. These, if they are inconvenient, are at least valuable in rendering the clothes almost windproof. The interesting illustration opposite shows the Observatory after silver thaw, rain having fallen while the temperature was below the freezing point.

METEOROLOGY.

A capital description of the mountain, containing much information of value to intelligent mountaineers, regarding atmospheric phenomena, pressure, temperature, snow crystals, rainfall, depth of snow, sunshine, force of wind, &c., is given in the "Guide to Ben Nevis," prepared by the Observatory authorities (price 1s.).

Mr Andrew Watt of the Scottish Meteorological Society has rendered great assistance in obtaining the following particulars. An examination of the observations from 1884 to 1901 shows that the mean temperature for these seventeen years was 31.4° , or about half a degree below the freezing point, and 15.8° below the mean of Fort-William—equal to a fall of 1° for each 274 feet of height. The low mean annual temperature of Ben Nevis would lead one to expect that lower individual temperatures would be recorded there than at places at lower levels. This, however, is not the case, for the lowest reading of the thermometer ever noted on the Ben was 0.7° Fahr., on 6th January 1894, whilst, except in very mild winters, readings below zero occasionally occur at low-lying stations. Thus February 1902 was a very cold month all over the United Kingdom, but the minimum for the month on Ben



Angus Rankin.

THE OBSERVATORY AFTER SILVER THAW.



Nevis was 8.1° Fahr., whilst that at Lairg was 2° below zero Fahr. The highest temperatures recorded on the Ben have been 66.4° on 28th June 1902, and 66.2° on 23rd June 1887.

The mean monthly Temperatures are appended :—

January -	24.1°	May - -	33.3°	September -	38.0°
February -	23.8°	June - -	39.7°	October - -	31.3°
March - -	23.9°	July - -	41.4°	November -	27.9°
April - -	27.8°	August - -	40.7°	December -	25.2°

Barometer.—The Fort-William barometer mean is reduced to sea level, while that for Ben Nevis Observatory gives the mean atmospheric pressure at a height of 4,406 feet. Thus the pressure at Ben Nevis Observatory is, on the average, less by 4.542 inches than that at sea level.

Sunshine.—The Ben Nevis average of “bright sunshine” is only 17 per cent. of the total possible. The reason of this small percentage is found in the fact that the mountain top readily condenses the aqueous vapour of the atmosphere. Thus the summit is often covered with a little cap of mist whilst the country around is bathed in sunshine. On an average there are 756 hours of sunshine annually, an average of about two hours per day.

Rainfall.—The rainfall of Ben Nevis consists, in the winter months, largely of melted snow. The wettest year recorded is 1898 with the huge total of 240.12 inches. The wettest month was December 1900 with a total of 48.34 inches. In that month the daily fall exceeded an inch on no less than eighteen occasions, whilst on the 8th the amount of 5.41 inches was registered. December is the wettest month of the year, and January the next wettest. Only in April, May, and June is the monthly average less than 10 inches.

There are 104 fair days on an average in each year, the month of April being credited with twelve, but January, July, August, October, and December have only six or seven fair days each.

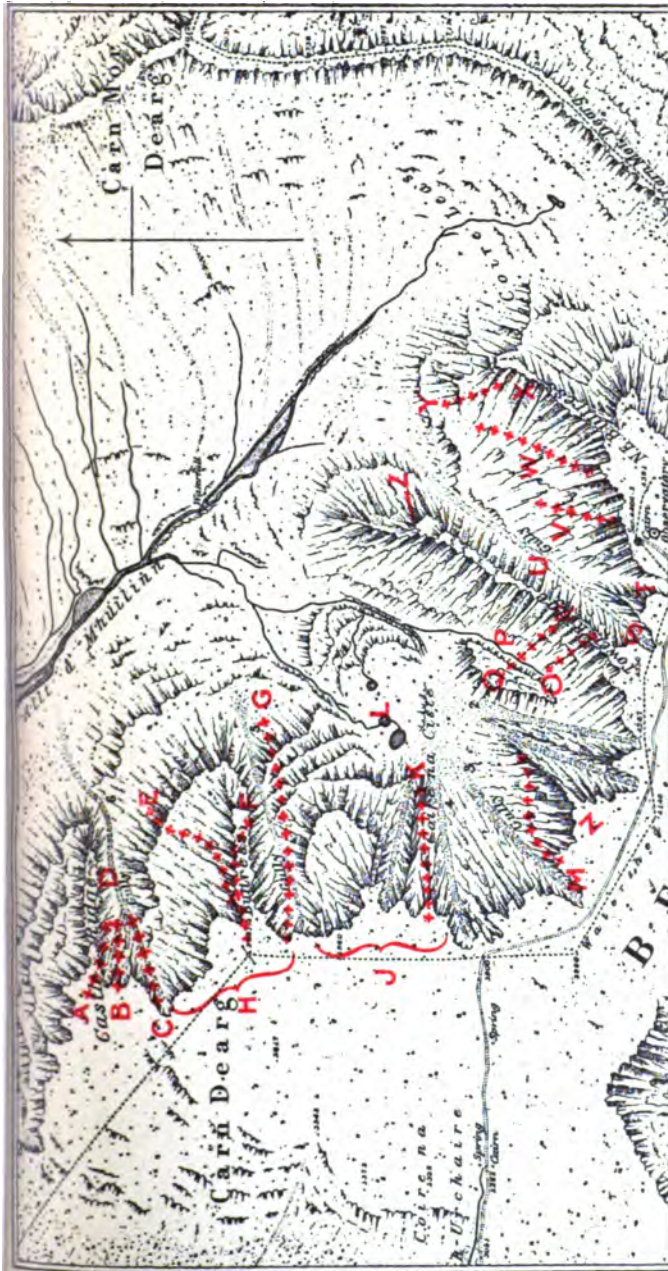
RAINFALL—(1884-1901 = 17 years).

	Mean.	Maximum for Month.	Minimum for Month.
	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.
January - - -	17.062	35.318 in 1900	3.415 in 1897
February - - -	12.811	33.549 ,, 1894	2.845 ,, 1886
March - - -	13.708	27.306 ,, 1890	3.839 ,, 1900
April - - -	8.408	20.217 ,, 1900	2.495 ,, 1891
May - - -	7.510	14.764 ,, 1900	2.912 ,, 1896
June - - -	7.873	14.658 ,, 1890	1.939 ,, 1889
July - - -	10.567	15.225 ,, 1899	4.086 ,, 1889
August - - -	13.134	19.162 ,, 1891	5.584 ,, 1899
September - - -	16.226	43.545 ,, 1891	1.318 ,, 1894
October - - -	15.178	37.300 ,, 1890	4.675 ,, 1894
November - - -	15.685	32.485 ,, 1899	8.994 ,, 1887
December - - -	19.538	48.338 ,, 1900	3.754 ,, 1890
Year - - -	157.700	240.125 ,, 1898	107.855 ,, 1886

Snowfall.—While snow may fall on Ben Nevis on any day of the year, it does not begin to lie on the summit in any quantity till the end of October or beginning of November. At the snow gauge, which is placed on the flat mountain top, the maximum depth is usually registered about April, and by the beginning of July the summit is as a rule clear of snow. In the hollows of the northern face, however, the accumulation is much greater, and the snow remains till the following winter's fall begins. The following table gives the maximum depth of snow at the snow gauge since 1884—

May 28, 1884 - - -	141 in.	March 13, 1894 - - -	127 in.
April 3, 1885 - - -	142 ,,	April 13, 1895 - - -	54 ,,
April 10, 1886 - - -	123 ,,	March 28, 1896 - - -	76 ,,
April 28, 1887 - - -	69 ,,	May 7, 1897 - - -	80 ,,
May 6, 1888 - - -	77 ,,	March 1 and May 15, 1898	77 ,,
April 24, 1889 - - -	57 ,,	April 19 to 23, 1899 - - -	67 ,,
April 25, 1890 - - -	96 ,,	April 15, 1900 - - -	89 ,,
May 4, 1891 - - -	56 ,,	April 16, 1901 - - -	91 ,,
March 9, 1892 - - -	74 ,,	April 3 and 4, 1902 - - -	62 ,,
March 17, 1893 - - -	66 ,,		

Wind.—In winter gales the velocity of some of the gusts is estimated to exceed 150 miles an hour on the



BEN NEVIS

SCALE 4 INCHES = 1 MILE



summit. The observers face most of the gales unroped, and find that even in the most violent gusts safety is got by lying down, but woe betide the climber who is ever caught in a storm such as that on an exposed part of the mountain.

In one hurricane on the night of the 21st February 1885, the wind blew from the south with such terrific force that it was impossible even to crawl to windward.

Annual Means of	Ben Nevis.	Fort-William.
Barometer - - -	25.305 inches	29.847 inches.
Temperature - - -	31.4° Fahr.	47.2° Fahr.
Sunshine - - -	756 hours	1,105 hours.
Rainfall - - -	157.70 inches	77.34 inches.

TOPOGRAPHY AND NOMENCLATURE.

As a preliminary to describing the ascents and climbing possibilities of Ben Nevis, it is desirable briefly to refer to the various parts of the mountain, so that the reader may be able to follow the somewhat bewildering accounts of ridges, and gullies, and corries. (See map.)

Approaching the Ben from Fort-William, the steep slopes of Meall an t-Suidhe, 2,322 feet, are passed on the left, and in misty weather this secondary hill is sometimes supposed to be the Ben itself, especially by those tourists who are satisfied with being "near the top." In the hollow between Meall and Ben Nevis lies the little Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe. The great slopes which rise to the south-east belong to Càrn Dearg, 3,961 feet, which projects in a northerly direction from the north-west end of Ben Nevis. Càrn Dearg possesses four great rock buttresses—the Castle Ridge, the Castle, the Càrn Dearg Buttress, and the Trident Buttress. The Castle Corrie lies at a high elevation between the Castle Ridge and the Càrn Dearg Buttress, all looking due east. In the angle between Càrn Dearg and Ben Nevis lies the Coire na Ciste, with a little lochan, above which rises on the west the Trident Buttress, and on the south-east the rocks of the Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis. Above 3,900 feet the summit of Ben Nevis forms a sloping plateau, gradually steepening towards Glen Nevis, but abruptly

broken on the northern side by a great wall of precipices. Projecting from this in a more or less north-easterly direction are several ridges or buttresses, some of them still unclimbed. In order from Càrn Dearg these are—The “No. 3 Gully Buttress”; “The Comb,” a narrow arête projecting into Coire na Ciste, and yet unclimbed from the valley; the “Tower Ridge,” with a secondary ridge on the west; the “Observatory Buttress”; the “Observatory Ridge”; and the “North-East Buttress.” Farther east lies Coire Leas, headed on the south-east by the shapely Càrn Mòr Dearg arête, 3,475 feet, connecting the Ben with Càrn Mòr Dearg.

Starting from the Castle Ridge and skirting the top of the cliffs in a general way, the distance is a quarter mile to Càrn Dearg (3,961 feet), and another half-mile to No. 3 Gully. Thence it is half a mile to the Observatory, which stands midway between the Tower Ridge and North-East Buttress, which are 250 and 300 yards distant respectively. Three hundred yards beyond the North-East Buttress, the eastern arête leaves Ben Nevis leading to Càrn Mor Dearg. To find the arête in fog, steer south-east by east (true) a quarter mile from the Observatory. On the south-east side of the arête the Coire Guibhais slopes down to Steall in upper Glen Nevis.

From above, the precipices look hopelessly steep and inaccessible, and it is not perhaps to be wondered at that no serious attempts were made to climb them till quite recently. Up till 1892 only one gully, the one marked No. 3 on the map, is believed to have been climbed, and so far as is known, none of the ridges had ever been attempted. So lately as 1894, Mr Whympers, writing to the *Leisure Hour*, spoke of this face thus:—“This great cliff is one of the finest pieces of crag in our country, and it has never been climbed, though every now and then adventurous ones go and look at it with wistful eyes.”

ASCENT OF THE BEN.

The ascent of Ben Nevis by the ordinary route, though fatiguing, is perfectly simple under the usual summer conditions. The pony track constructed for the erection

of the Observatory is easily reached from Fort-William on foot or by driving. Leaving the town by the north road the Nevis bridge is crossed, and turning to the right at the end of the bridge, the road is followed to Achintee, two miles from Fort-William, where the Observatory path begins. Rising along the slopes of Meall an t-Suidhe (the hill of rest), a series of zigzags leads to a point near the Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe, where the path turns back to the right and gradually ascends to the scree-covered plateau at the junction of Càrn Dearg, 3,961 feet, and Ben Nevis. Here it approaches the precipices, and the inexperienced climber would do well not to lose sight of the posts or cairns which direct the way to the Observatory. From October till June, when snow usually covers the path till well down to the lochan, the climber may easily lose the usual route, but should then keep directly upwards, inclining to the left till the line of precipices is reached, and followed (on the left) at a safe distance to the Observatory. As the gullies extend far into the plateau, it is necessary, especially when near the summit, to keep a good look-out in misty weather. In stormy weather even those who know the mountain best may easily be led astray, as when at Easter 1901, a strong party descending from the summit, and in spite of compass observations every fifty yards, failed to strike the true direction, and, in the face of a driving blizzard, eventually reached Glen Nevis near Polldubh, arriving at Fort-William at a late hour (Vol. VI., p. 260).

A pleasant variation of this route is to leave the road at a cottage about half a mile beyond Nevis Bridge, and then steer due east across the moor, mounting the steep grass slope of Meall an t-Suidhe alongside a small watercourse. Or the ascent may be made more gradual by keeping farther to the left round the end of the Meall ridge, eventually striking the old Banavie road near the Allt a' Mhuilinn. The Lochan an t-Suidhe is now passed on the right hand and the Observatory path joined below the half-way hut, or the more agile may strike directly up the scree slopes of Càrn Dearg, reaching the plateau at the junction of that mountain with Ben Nevis.

The old Banavie road is now but little used, more especially since a high deer fence has shut off the lochan from the Mhuilinn glen. It leaves the high road near Lochy Bridge, and gradually ascending joins the alternative route already given in the Mhuilinn glen. The lover of scenery, as has been already hinted, should, however, continue his walk on the north bank of the Allt a' Mhuilinn, and in this way pass in succession the array of ridges so well shown in the panorama from the Allt a' Mhuilinn (see opposite).

Short divergences up the scree slopes should be made to grasp the form of each ridge as it is passed, and when at last Coire Leas at the head of the glen is reached, a fountain that gurgles from the shattered debris is an excellent excuse for a more prolonged rest, in order that the general relation of corrie and ridge may be appreciated. In summer time the scree slopes on either hand lead easily to the ridge above the Càrn Mòr Dearg arête, but in winter conditions the ascent of these icy slopes may be very difficult, one party on 3rd January 1898 (Vol. V., p. 88) taking 6½ hours to reach the ridge. In August 1874, the writer with a friend got into difficulties when in mist by climbing directly up from the tarn, and getting on to the steep rocks near the ridge. The southern corner of the corrie affords a superb glissade under suitable conditions. The ridge is here generally corniced, but avoiding this the glissade should be commenced as far south as possible, where a free course to the valley may be obtained. Once on the arête, which in winter may be difficult, the route lies south-west, then west, and finally north-west, as the fatiguing "big scree" slope is breasted and the Observatory is approached. The arête may also be reached from the head of Glen Nevis, to which point, seven miles from Fort-William, driving is practicable. Those who desire it may climb the Ben from any point on the Glen Nevis side.

When the mountain is snow clad, the easiest and most pleasant way to descend is by a series of sitting glissades. The best point to start from is where the summit ridge of Càrn Dearg bends at a right angle. At first the slope is very gentle, but it increases lower down to 30° or 35°.





W. Inglis Clark



If the proper course is followed the glissader should find himself eventually in a shallow winding gully, down which he may glissade at great speed and with perfect safety till well below the level of the lochan. When the snow is favourable, a magnificent glissade may also be had from near the top of Càrn Dearg right down to the lochan itself. This has the advantage of being direct, and as the whole route is before the eye, there are no sudden pitches to startle the novice.

Climbing Routes.—These practically only exist on the precipitous northern face already described in a general way. It may be safely asserted that upon it, however, there is sufficient scope for climbing to occupy a party for a month. On reaching this happy hunting-ground the pony track is made use of as far as the lochan. At the very last bend of the path before it turns southwards to the "half-way hut," strike across the boggy ground, retaining the same elevation till the deer fence is reached. Now descend either directly to the valley or preferably follow an indistinct sheep-track which runs along the steep slopes of Càrn Dearg, and at the same time gradually descends to the stream. In this way steady walkers may reach the foot of the Castle Ridge in 2½ hours from Fort-William.

In detailing the climbs it is proposed to enumerate them from west to east in the order in which they present themselves in ascending the Mhuilinn glen.

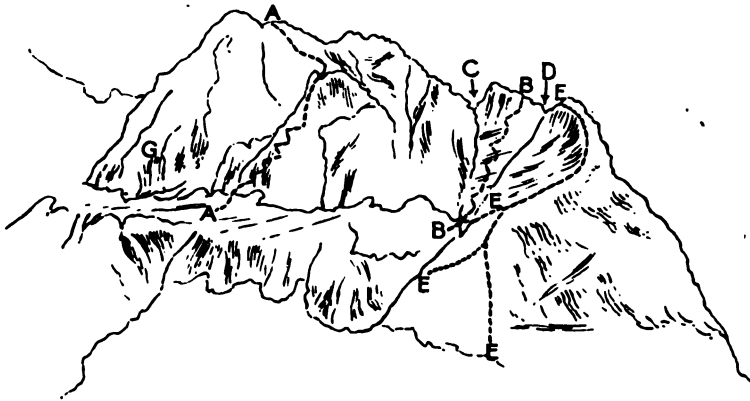
The first one, the *Castle Ridge*, is undoubtedly the most easy of the great climbs, and by this arrangement one would be gradually led along to the summit with its north-east buttress. The chief objection to this plan lies in the numbering of the gullies as depicted in the map reprinted from Vol. III., p. 318. These are numbered from the left, but as they only include a few of the more prominent, this nomenclature must only be regarded as furnishing designations for those gullies which so far possess no distinctive names. Entering the Mhuilinn glen the great face of Càrn Dearg towers up on the right, the rocks at a great angle and with no definite gully or arête to tempt the climber. From the stream below to the summit of the cliff where the Castle Ridge ends is about 1,900 feet, of

which about 1,600 feet consist of rock. The face looks due north, and so far as is known no attempts have been made to climb it. Several ledges or rakes which intersect the face and lead up to the steep rocks near the summit, may afford a means of ascent. About a quarter mile farther on, near the bed of the stream, lies a large "boulder," "The Lurching Stone," which forms a convenient shelter for storm-stayed climbers, and whence a first peep is obtained of the more remote ridges. A few hundred yards farther is the scree slope formed by the debris swept down the main "Castle Gully." The Castle Gully is so named because higher up it forks and encloses the magnificent piece of rock sculpture some 700 feet high, known as the "Castle," the description of which comes later. On the right hand (looking up) of this gully is the *Castle Ridge* pointing due east from a shoulder of Càrn Dearg. On its northern side it falls uncompromisingly to the valley below, a depth of 1,900 feet, while on the south it descends steeply into the "Northern Castle Gully." The ridge may be ascended in its entirety from the foot of the stone shoot, but as the rocks are slabby it is usual to commence the climb from the Castle Corrie, or from the lower end of the Northern Castle Gully. It is also possible to climb from the valley and reach the ridge about the same point, but this is not recommended under wet conditions.

Considerable latitude is possible in the first part of the climb, for numerous chimneys and pitches offer varying sport, but every one should endeavour to ascend the long steep chimney near the edge of the ridge overlooking the valley, both to enjoy the giddy outlook, and to include the best part of the climb in the route.

To those who already know the chimney, a sensational, but perhaps more easy variation is to the right, and partly on the north face of the ridge.

Above, the ridge narrows, and some care is necessary on the slabby rocks under unfavourable conditions, but where the most obvious arête proves too difficult, a careful search will always disclose an escape more within the powers of the climber. The Castle Ridge was first climbed on 12th April 1895, by Messrs Collie, Naismith, Thomson, and



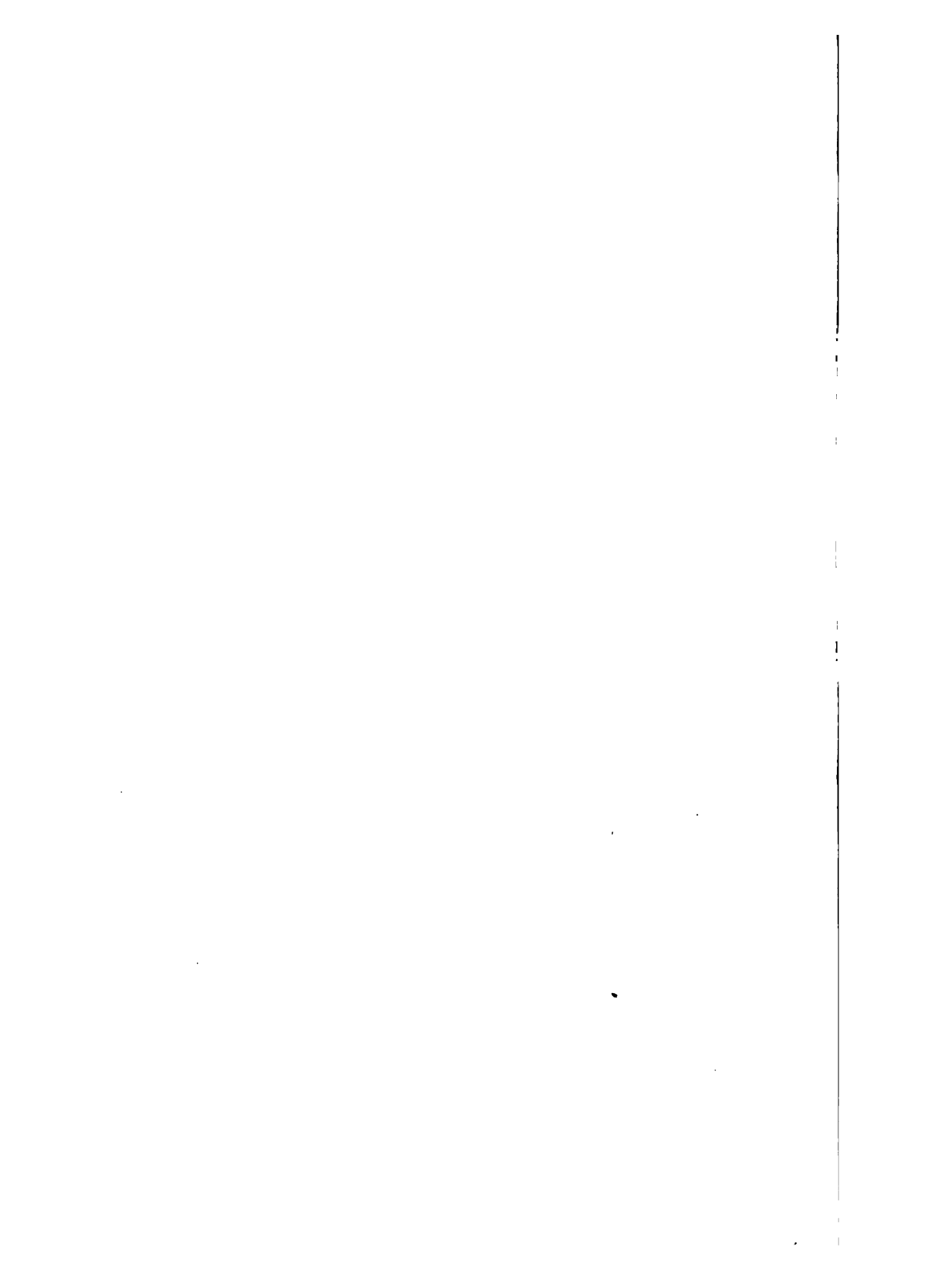
CARN DEARG and THE CASTLE RIDGE

A STAIRCASE OF CARN DEARG
B ASCENT OF "THE CASTLE"
C SOUTH CASTLE GULLY

D NORTH CASTLE GULLY
E ASCENT OF CASTLE RIDGE
G CARN DEARG BUTTRESS



BEN NEVIS from the MAMORE FOREST



Travers, and full details of the route and scenery will be found in Vol. III., p. 316, and Vol. V., p. 296. Even under winter conditions it has been ascended by a solitary climber (Raeburn), and to a well-equipped party should then be usually accessible.

The Castle is a precipitous cliff about 700 feet in height, the summit of which has a castellated appearance. The face looks due east, and is very steep. It is enclosed by the North and South Castle Gullies, from which it rises in steep inaccessible walls. At the base where the gullies join, the rocks for the most part overhang, and access is only possible with difficulty to the expert climber. The first ascent of the Castle was made by Brown, Maclay, Naismith, and Thomson at the Easter Meet of 1896, and is alluded to in Vol. IV., p. 130, and Vol. V., p. 199.

Exact details are wanting, but the leader seems to have overcome the steep pitch at the bottom by standing on some one's shoulder. Thereafter the rocks being heavily coated with snow, the party zigzagged up about the centre, finally reaching the sky line by easy rocks to the north of the summit. The chief difficulties met with were caused by the sliddery condition of the snow.

Far different was the experience of Gibson and Raeburn, who on 11th September 1898 (Vol. V., p. 198) ascended to the summit at a point about thirty yards north of the highest peak. The leader climbed by the very centre of the steep wall, but being unable to find a satisfactory hitch, his companion followed by a small recessed chimney in the wall a little to the left. Once over the bottom pitch, easy rocks follow for some distance, but all attempts to get on to the crest of the buttress overlooking the north gully failed. The route now traverses to the left entering a trap dyke cleaving the porphyry slabs. This terminates at the top in a difficult chimney without satisfactory holds. From this the way leads over holdless sloping slabs where the utmost caution is necessary, and at least 50 feet must be ascended before a satisfactory hitch is obtainable. Above this the climbing is easy to the sky line. The most impressive points for viewing this superb buttress are, in addition to the view from the valley, the lower rocks of

the Castle Ridge, and the very base of the Càrn Dearg precipice.

The *Càrn Dearg Buttress* runs parallel to the Castle Ridge, viz., due east and west, but the main precipices face north-east, while all round the southern side of the Castle Corrie they show a bold and forbidding front. At the north-east corner they are hopelessly steep, and no climber has proposed to tackle the great cliff there. More hopeful is it in the corrie, where certain steep chimneys ascend the cliffs near the South Castle Gully.

On 12th July 1898 (Vol. V., p. 128), Bell, Maclay, and Naismith succeeded in ascending Càrn Dearg at the north-east angle of the great cliff by the "*Staircase Climb*." A small gully terminates here in a waterfall, at the foot of which the climb commences.

Bearing to the right round a sensational corner, a stone shelf with moderate holds is reached, but the novice can always be safeguarded with the rope let over a block at the corner. Thence a grassy shelf leads by giant steps up a rocky staircase. On the left hand rises a sheer wall, while on the right the eye looks down an ever-increasing height. The next difficulty is where the climber must follow a little traverse with good holds on the outside face, thence climbing into a small recess, large enough for two and carpeted with grass. The leader is here protected by passing the rope through a crack between the step and the left hand wall. The rise of the next step is about eight feet and slightly overhung. The roof slopes downwards, and handholds are few. A crack next the left hand wall admits the knee (at the roof), but the assistance of a shoulder is necessary for comfortable and safe progression. Once up, the difficulty is continuous, and another step about five feet high must be reckoned with. For the first man this is the greater difficulty, but for the last man the ascent from the recess is more trying. Once past this bit a broad platform with safe anchorage is reached, above which an easy scramble, finishing with a chimney, leads to the top of the cliffs. Steep grass is now mounted to the foot of the upper rocks at their lowest point, where a col connects an isolated pinnacle with the higher cliffs on the right.



W. Inglis Clark.

CARN DEARG BUTTRESS AND THE CASTLE RIDGE



The low wall, 12 feet high, dividing the climber from the col has not gone, but a descent must be made to the left, and difficult steep ledges with poor holds climbed to the col. Thence a steep chimney, 60 feet high, is ascended, the top of which is close to a cave with two openings, and which marks the head of the Waterfall Gully.

In a few minutes the crest of the buttress is struck about 500 feet below the summit of Càrn Dearg, and the ascent of this involves no serious difficulty.

"*The Ledge Route*" is the only other one which has been worked out on this part of Càrn Dearg, and it starts from the south side of the buttress. In Howie's panorama it will be noticed that a broad band of snow starting in Coire na Ciste slopes gently upwards and across the rocks of the Càrn Dearg Buttress, and terminates above the highest point of the great cliff. On 9th June 1895, J. S. and R. G. Napier and Green made the first ascent of Càrn Dearg involving the use of ledges indicated by this "snow" band (see Vol. III., p. 345). Starting up the prominent gully, they followed first one ledge till it became impracticable on the cliff, and then another higher up but parallel with it. Shortly before its termination a stone shoot is followed upwards to the left, and then to the right, when the crest of the ridge is reached above the precipitous rocks. The crest is now followed direct to the summit, and offers no difficulty. This route is highly to be recommended (Vol. VI., p. 227) from a scenic point of view both in winter and summer, and there still remain tempting variations among the steep rocks above the ledge referred to, which may be found to give good sport.

Passing farther south, the No. 5 Gully divides the "Càrn Dearg Buttress" from the "Trident Buttress of Càrn Dearg," so called from the three ridges which go to form it, each one terminating in a peak, well seen from the foot of the Tower ridge. The two most northerly of these ridges have not been explored, but the last of the three, hemming in the north side of No. 4 Gully, affords a good climb.

This, the "*Pinnacle Arête of Càrn Dearg*," consists of a lower crag rising precipitously from the corrie, and divided from the second portion by a grassy ledge which leads

round to the north edge, overlooking a steep gully. No one has yet climbed the lower portion. On 29th June 1902, Raeburn with Mrs Inglis Clark and the writer ascended from the corner already mentioned. The rocks at first are unpromising, consisting of ledges set at an awkward angle and sloping outwards. After about ten feet of these, an awkward traverse is made to the right round the sharp arête. Twenty feet higher better rocks with good holds lead back to the real arête, which is here narrow and very steep, but with superb holds. Holding a little to the right for some distance, a broad platform is reached at the foot of a very steep pinnacle, previous to which a narrow crack splitting the arête affords a look down into the interior of the rocks. From the platform it might be possible to traverse round into the gully, but the ascent of the pinnacle is so sporting that no one would wish to miss it. It is not a true pinnacle, being really the steep arête, but as it rises at an angle of about 85° , and in parts overhangs, it has all the effect of a genuine gendarme. A vertical chimney about 60 feet high gives exit to the left at the top, or the face itself possessing most marvellous holds may be ascended without danger. A little farther a short steep wall leads slightly left to the now simple arête, and the climber looks down a smooth straight corner running up from the starting ledge. The difficult climbing is over, but interesting rocks lead up to the final peak, with a boulder crowned with a cairn.

Returning now to the Castle Corrie, which as we have seen is hemmed in on the south by the Càrn Dearg Buttress, west by the Castle, and north by the Castle Ridge, the visitor, in spring at least, will notice signs of avalanches, and should not select the track as a possible lurching spot. These chiefly fall from a subsidiary corrie high above the rocks on the south (Vol. V., p. 289), and the stones and other debris may be projected right across to the base of the Castle Ridge; but avalanches are also not infrequent in the South Castle Gully.

The *North Castle Gully* rises steeply on the right (looking up) of the Castle. On 4th April 1896, Bell and R. G. Napier ascended it in snow and met with no difficulty whatever. Later, on 17th May 1899 (Vol. V., p. 289),

another party ascended in a blizzard, and found a deep bergschrund half way up, with overhanging pitch, which was passed on the slippery wall of the Castle Ridge. When free of snow it is possible that other difficulties might be met with. The cornices at the top are not usually heavy.

The *South Castle Gully* was ascended on 4th April 1896 by Brunskill, King, and Naismith. Under the snowy conditions prevailing, no difficulties were met with, but an easy rock pitch which might interfere with a glissade had to be skirted. The upper part offers grand scenery, confined as it is between steep rock walls, and the cornices at the head may at times be inconveniently large. In spring climbers must look out for avalanches. In summer a steep high pitch is visible near the bottom, and this should be borne in mind by those proposing to glissade.

The Waterfall Gully, farther to the east, has already been referred to (pp. 150 and 151).

Rounding the buttress a large prominent gully, the *Càrn Dearg Gully or No. 5* (see map), will be seen leading up to the scree or snow-fields below the summit. This was climbed by Collie, and since by others. The lower part offers a high pitch, it then traverses a broad ledge, and becomes merged in the snow field above, whence it passes between steep rocks to the summit, where it is overhung by heavy cornices. Indeed, from this point along the whole summit of Càrn Dearg southwards a line of immense cornices make the exit of the climber a matter of uncertainty. When filled with snow the Càrn Dearg Gully may be glissaded from top to bottom, the angle not exceeding 40°.

Going southwards from the foot of this gully a steep cliff is passed, and the first crack or recess indicates the commencement of a climb accomplished on 3rd January 1898 by Inglis Clark and Gibson (Vol. V., p. 45). In summer the route up to and passing the great ledge will doubtless be perfectly simple. Above the ledge the gully becomes well defined, and is hemmed in by huge walls of rock, and is terminated on the north ridge of the Trident Buttress by a steep pitch some 500 feet

from the summit. Owing to prevailing conditions the climbers only reached this point by moonlight, and as a distinctive name, "*Moonlight Gully*" is suggested. Emerging on an ice-covered platform, a descent was made down the rocks overhanging the Càrn Dearg Gully, and a ledge followed leading into the great snow field. A direct route was now made to the centre of the great cornice, which was surmounted by the snow-covered rib of rock forming the south wall of the upper part of the Càrn Dearg Gully. The ascent afforded nine hours of constant stepcutting, the expedition lasting sixteen hours.

Rounding southwards into Coire na Ciste (corrie of the chest), the Trident Buttress, with its three heads (well seen from the foot of the Tower Ridge), offers virgin climbs to the explorer, with the exception of the Pinnacle Arête (p. 151), and soon after passing the lonely Lochan na Ciste (about 3,000 feet), an easy gully, known as No. 4 (in the map, p. 143) is reached. The ascent of this usually offers no difficulty, the floor consists of screes or easy snow slopes, but the cornices above are generally heavy and must be reckoned with. At Easter 1895 the angle of snow below the cornice rose from 50° to 60° and 70°, and a small trench had to be cut to get through the cornice.

The last of the gullies on the western side of Coire na Ciste is known as No. 3, and lies at the junction of Càrn Dearg and Ben Nevis. It slopes up steeply at the very head, and on this account the surmounting of the cornices is sometimes a lengthy process. As it lies at the lowest point of the ridge, it is useful as a pass from the great Corrie to Glen Nevis. The scenery of the upper part is wild and repaying. There can be no doubt that this gully was one of the earliest climbed, the writer's knowledge of it going back to 1870.

Dividing No. 3 and No. 4 Gullies is a fine crag, which, from below, offers interesting climbing, but is so far virgin rock. Immediately to the east of No. 3 Gully, and forming its wall, is the "*No. 3 Gully Eastern Buttress*," which offers a climb of great and varied interest. On 29th June 1902, Raeburn, Mrs Inglis Clark, and the writer descended into



Gilbert Thomson.

THE RIDGES OF BEN NEVIS.



Corrie na Ciste with the intention of attacking the buttress still farther east, the "Comb." This is divided from the No. 3 Buttress by a stupendous gully, so far impracticable. The climb was commenced by going up easy steep ledges to a slanting rake of slabs leading to and disappearing at a corner at the right, and immediately below the overhanging arête of the "Comb." The traverse round the corner into the gully was difficult and dangerous owing to rotten rocks, and the gully proved to afford no access to the arête of the "Comb." A steep climb of 100 feet up the left (true) wall of the gully proved abortive, and a descent was made to a snow patch by an easier route to the west. At the west end of the snow patch a gigantic basalt dyke led directly upwards, forming an easy staircase, and terminating in an unclimbable corner. Turning to the right an interesting corner is passed, and steep good rocks ascended, till the final vertical wall is reached. Here an easy route to the top turns to the right, but the true finish is by a 40 foot vertical and exposed chimney, which ends on the upper edge of the buttress. This chimney is of a rare dolomitic character, but the superb holds make the ascent not only interesting but safe, albeit somewhat exacting on the arms.

The next buttress, "*The Comb*," is easily recognised by the exceedingly narrow arête which projects into the corrie. So far as is known, no complete ascent has been made, but Raeburn has descended to near the point reached in the last-mentioned climb, and found the middle and upper parts to be easy.

"THE TOWER RIDGE" is one of the most fascinating buttresses of Ben Nevis. Starting from the glen below at an elevation of about 2,500 feet, it boldly rises in a precipitous pinnacle some 700 feet high. Then after a sudden cleft or gap it compresses into a somewhat tortuous narrow ridge, which soars at a steep angle to where "The Tower," which gives it its name, forces the climber to escape on either side and thus reach its cairn. Narrowing again to a mere wall with sensational cleft, it now joins the main cliff of the summit cliff, which it reaches at the height of 4,360 feet.

From whichever point we regard it, the Tower Ridge

is magnificent, and its outline changes so rapidly that the photographer might fill an album in delineating its chief features. From the "Lunching Stone" below Càrn Dearg its abrupt Tower attracts attention. From the lower slopes of Càrn Mòr Dearg right opposite, the whole ridge rises like a huge pinnacle against the sky line, and seems detached from the general *massif*. Passing farther to the east, the precipitous pinnacle at the foot, sometimes irreverently called "*Douglas's Boulder*," is a striking object in the foreground, behind which the heads of the Trident Buttress of Càrn Dearg show up grandly. Again from the slopes of Càrn Mòr Dearg opposite the Castle Ridge, it shows as a fit companion to the North-East Buttress, while higher up from the summit of that mountain it is seen somewhat dwarfed but still attractive (see Howie's panorama). Again from Càrn Dearg, above No. 4 Gully, it presents itself in profile, and from above where the ridge terminates the Tower is well seen, and shows a curious geological structure.

The Tower Ridge was first ascended as far as the Tower by J. E. and B. Hopkinson on 3rd September 1892. Next day the same party, descending from the summit, reached the point attained previously and completed the descent, including the bottom pinnacle which they descended on its north-east face (*Alpine Journal*, vol. xvii., p. 521).

This feat attracted but little notice, and it was not till Collie, Collier, and Solly, in March 1894, forced a passage to the top under wintry conditions that the Tower Ridge became a recognised route to the summit. This party climbed on to the ridge from the foot of the Observatory Gully, attacking the rocks at the first convenient point above the gap which separates "*Douglas's Boulder*" from the rest of the ridge (Vol. III., pp. 151 and 158), turning the Tower on the right or north-west side.

The complete ascent of the Tower Ridge is, however, a more arduous business, including as it does the pinnacle at the foot.

"*Douglas's Boulder*," the base pinnacle of the Tower Ridge, is not generally included in the ascent, and indeed there is only one published account of a direct climb of this pinnacle from the valley. Rising as it does in for-



W. Ingalls Clark.

THE TOWER RIDGE FROM NO. 4 GULLY.



midable precipices on the north and north-east and north-west faces, it offers little encouragement to the climber.

On 3rd April 1896, Brown, Douglas, Hinxman, and Raeburn made the ascent up the ridge at right angles to the valley (Vol. IV., p. 172). On account of the absence of satisfactory hitches, 160 feet of rope were required. The rocks are excessively steep, and the holds, though secure, invariably slope outwards.

Bell and Napier, on 6th April 1896 (Vol. IV., p. 130), found an easier route to the summit. This party joined the ridge on the east side not far from the lowest point by some easy rocks and screes, and climbed straight up from there, keeping on the east side, but near the top of the ridge the whole way. There were no difficult pitches, and the route terminated within a few yards of Brown's. In the panorama of Ben Nevis, the ledge by which this party went out on to the face is easily seen.


On the upper side the pinnacle may be reached direct from the col. A rather difficult balance climb, in which a shoulder is desirable, leads up the steep crack and so to the top (Vol. VI., p. 228). A more easy way is to descend a short distance down the gully leading from the col to the north-west, where a ledge leads on to the western ridge, and thence by easy rocks to the top.

On 6th September 1892, the Messrs Hopkinson descended on the north-east face, reaching the screes towards the Observatory Gully.

On 23rd June 1901 (Vol. VI., p. 228), Raeburn, with Mrs Inglis Clark and the writer, descended from the summit some distance on the north-east face, thence round an awkward corner, after which a sensational hand traverse with good but small holds gradually led round to the south-east ridge overlooking the gully. Some steep and rotten rocks were now descended, and the snow reached at the foot of the Observatory Gully.

The col itself may be reached by either of the gullies on the east or west sides. The latter when free from snow is steep and has at least one pitch. The stones are loose and awkward.

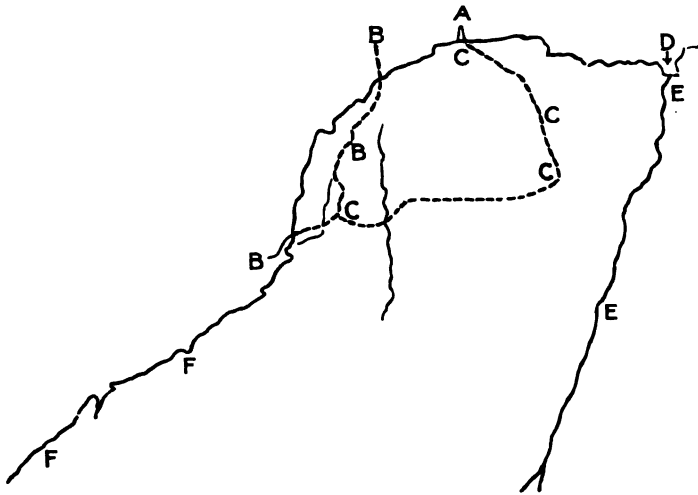
The *Tower Ridge* proper above Douglas's Boulder may



be reached in a variety of ways. The col itself may be approached by either of the gullies running north-west or south-east, and from this point a steep chimney leads direct on to the ridge. The rocks on the south-east near the bottom, and indeed for some distance up, offer many sporting ways of attaining the ridge, and it is possible that some of the steep chimneys running down into the higher regions of the Observatory Gully may yet afford access.

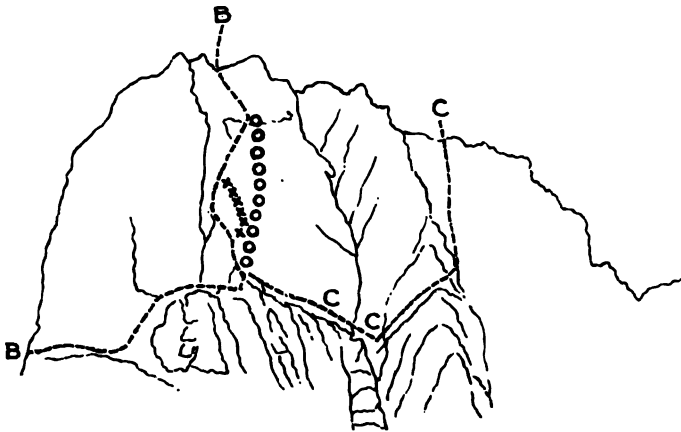
Once on the ridge it is difficult for the climber to lose his way, even in mist, but the different variations present such degrees of difficulty, that an unwilling ascent into some *cul de sac* is not impossible. Some distance up, the Lower Tower is reached, where an awkward ledge and corner on the right require care. From this point up to the Great Tower it is always possible to find an easy track, but when the steep rocks that give the name to the Ridge are reached, the climber must decide whether he belongs to the Salvationist or Ultramontane ranks of the Club. Fortunately for the former, a narrow ledge (*The Eastern Traverse*) leads to the left, then through a cleft bridged by a large block, and straight up broken rocks to the cairn on the top of the Tower (Vol. VI., p. 131). This ledge may also be reached from the snows of the Gardyloo Gully. So far as is known the direct ascent of the Tower has not been made.

The sporting routes, however, turn to the right, where an easy shelf leads to the north-west angle of the Tower. From this a broad platform is reached, from which the rocks are taken to the right as far as a block with a crack behind it affording a good hitch. Two routes are now open, one is to climb up to the left, some eight feet of smooth and almost vertical rock, with not quite satisfactory handholds, and thus gain a recess in the rock. From this, rising to the right, a fallen slab resting against the face is reached, and a short steep chimney on the right ascended, and so to the cairn. The alternative is to climb straight from the block up a slender crack to a narrow ledge, and thence either to the recess or directly up the very steep rocks. Either route is sufficiently difficult in wet weather, and under ice conditions merges into the impossible (see Vol. III., p. 232; Vol.



THE TOWER from "THE COMB"

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| A THE CAIRN | D THE GAP |
| B THE RECESS ROUTE | E TOWER GAP CHIMNEY |
| C THE TRAVERSE | F TOWER PINNACLE BUTTRESS |



THE TOWER from the PINNACLE OF BUTTRESS

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| B THE RECESS ROUTE | X Variation. |
| C THE WESTERN TRAVERSE | O O Cracked Slabs Route. |



IV., pp. 130, 222). The first of these, the *Recess Route*, was accomplished by Naismith and Thomson on 27th September 1894 (Vol. III., p. 231), and it was probably by the same route that the Hopkinsons first descended, as nail marks were noticeable on this occasion. The alternative or *Cracked Slabs Route* is exceedingly difficult, and was climbed by Macgregor in April 1895 under glazed conditions. (See sketch, p. 158.)

The *Western Traverse* is in no way behind those routes already described, and is not often followed. From the block already described an easy ledge with good holds and hitches leads along for 30 feet; but abruptly terminates in a small chimney, which has to be crossed by a rather awkward and wide step to the continuation of the ledge on the other side, which here narrows to about 12 inches in width, sloping downwards and inclining upwards. This ledge is about 12 to 15 feet long, and the holds, which are not too plentiful, are very rotten and dangerous, except when hard frozen. Both this ledge and the step across the chimney are highly sensational, with an almost sheer drop below of about 100 feet or more. Once up the ledge the corner to the left is turned, and a shallow gully climbed for about 30 feet, whence the good rocks on the left are taken and a bee-line made for the cairn on the top. This route was the one taken by Collie's party in March 1894 (Vol. III., pp. 151, 158). (See sketch, p. 158.)

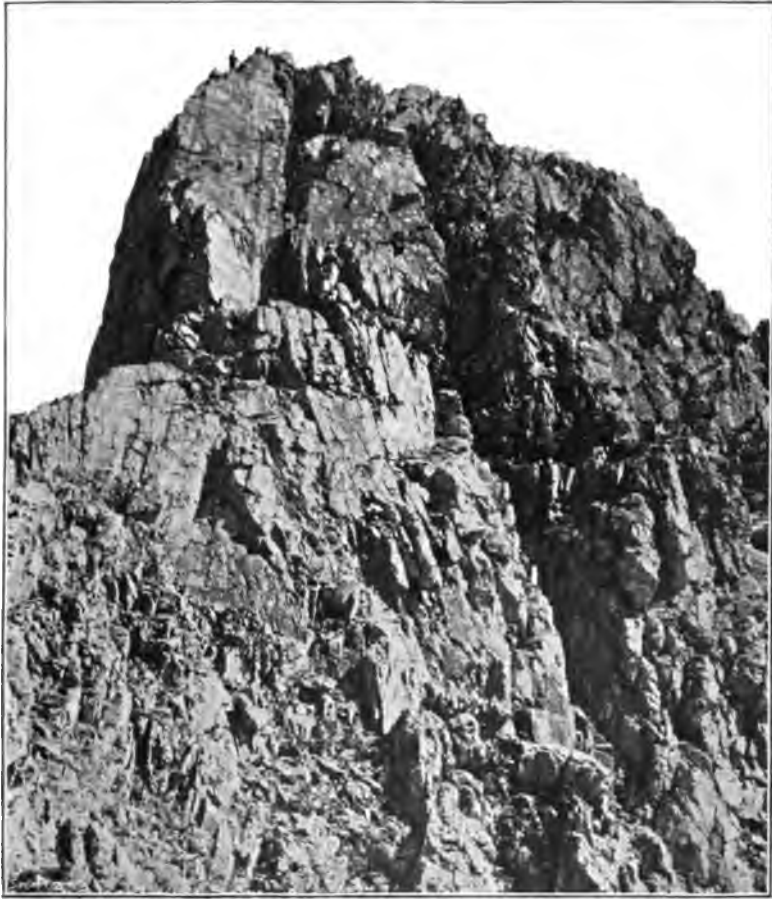
The Tower, crowned by a cairn, is joined to the main cliff by a narrow wall of rock, interrupted by a sudden cleft or "Gap," which at first sight appears forbidding, but offers good holds and hitches. Once on the steep rocks of the cliff no difficulty will be felt in summer conditions in finding a route to the summit, but more than one party has found the final slope tax all their efforts to force a way (Vol. IV., p. 129).

Alongside, and forming a supporting buttress to the Tower Ridge, is the *Secondary Tower Ridge*. Rising from the Coire na Ciste in stupendous cliffs, it has attracted but little attention, and climbers of the Tower Ridge pass along above it without as a rule noticing it. It possesses, however, several weak points, and huge chimneys seem to offer

routes to the top. Where it abuts on the main ridge a shallow depression runs parallel to it throughout its length, and appears to be a mere walk.

At the south-west end, where it approaches the *Tower*, it falls to the valley in a steep rocky buttress, "*The Pinnacle Buttress of the Tower*," well seen from the plateau above the Comb. On 28th June 1902, Glover and Inglis Clark descended to Coire na Ciste, and passing along by the foot of the Comb, crossed the great snowfield, and gradually rose to an isolated mass of rock, the "*Garadh na Ciste*," corresponding to the various *Jardins* of Switzerland. This lies immediately below the *Tower*, and is easily accessible from the upper corrie. From here the *Pinnacle Buttress* rises in huge walls and at a steep angle. Starting to the left, an easy gully runs 100 feet upwards, and the climb commences on the rocks to the right, which though very vertical are rough and possessed of magnificent holds. Several steep chimneys lead to a ledge which traverses to the right, and can be followed into "*The Tower Gap Chimney*" (see later). Climbing straight up, a snow gully is seen (on the left) which terminates in a very smooth holdless chimney. This is crossed by a trying ledge and corner, where an evident small cave with indifferent holds overhangs the chimney. After this, easy grass leads to the right again and on to the face, where a slabby pitch is encountered with holds sloping the wrong way. The arête overlooking what seems to be the upper part of the easy ledge on the *Secondary Tower Ridge* (p. 159) gives interesting climbing till the pinnacle is reached and turned on the west face by a rotten corner, leading to the second pinnacle overhanging the corrie. Thence by the arête direct to the *Recess Route* and to the summit of the *Tower*. It is evident that other routes on this buttress are possible, and by working round by the lower parts of the gullies (to the left) a comparatively easy ascent is possible.

"*The Tower Gap Chimney*" (Glover's Chimney) rises from Coire na Ciste above the "*Garadh*" and ascends direct to the Gap beyond the *Tower*. On 27th June 1902, Glover, Mrs Inglis Clark, and the writer reached the "*Garadh*" (see last climb). Ascending the steep snow to



W. Inglis Clark.

THE TOWER FROM THE PINNACLE BUTTRESS.



the rocks immediately below the chimney, a huge bergschrund prevented an attack immediately in front where the rocks are vertical and with few holds. In a recess to the left where a waterfall descends (the highest point of the snow) a tongue of ice with forked end afforded access to some gravel, and hitching the rope over a small pinnacle, the leader was able to pass through the fall and round a formidable corner overhanging the face. Though drenched with water, the rock proved rough and with wonderful holds. A narrow crack leads very steeply directly up under the main fall, where a comfortable ledge and a bold dash through the water lands one directly below the chimney and on dry rocks. The chimney is here divided into two by a central rock. The left hand (true) branch is drier, and after perhaps 100 feet of steep pitches, lands one in the snow couloir, which now runs directly up till within 200 feet of the cleft, a restricted but interesting climb, with good holds on the rocks (often preferable). A pitch of rock followed by a final snow chimney leads to the highly sensational upper chimney, well known to those who have passed the cleft and looked down. At first the chimney or the north wall were followed, but higher up it was found easier to straddle the gulf and keep well out. Here excellent holds enable the straddler to look vertically down some fifty to seventy feet below where his companions await their turn. Most of the dangerous rocks have been removed, and the climb is now safe. About twenty feet from the "Gap" the bed of the chimney is smooth and slippery, and it is convenient to straddle preparatory to turning on to the left (true) wall, and after climbing up a few feet, make a sensational and not easy traverse on the south side of the cleft, finishing on the wall immediately above the cleft.

On 27th June 1902, Glover and the writer descended the Tower on the east side near the Eastern Traverse and found the rocks not absolutely for novices. Reaching a ledge, an "all fours" traverse or a "balance walk" leads directly below the cleft, and by easy stages into the "Tower Gully." The cleft was easily reached by direct ascent from this point.

In the writer's panorama two gigantic ridges rise from the valley. The farther or most easterly of these is the *North-East Buttress*, which in the photograph appears to include the whole rock wall along to the termination of the Tower Ridge. This is, however, not the case, for the buttress really terminates where the first steep snow chimney leads to the summit wall. Right of this is the "Observatory Ridge," extending far down into the valley, then a steep unclimbed chimney hemmed in on the right by another shorter but very steep buttress, the *Observatory Buttress*, which again forms the eastern wall of the Observatory Gully. These two ridges are, perhaps, better seen in Thomson's photograph (p. 154), where the Observatory Gully is seen rising snow-filled to the sky line and the three ridges extend along to the left.

The first of these, the "*Observatory Buttress*" (Raeburn's Buttress), was the object of at least two assaults before it was conquered. On 8th April 1901 (Vol. VI., p. 214), a strong party, after a three hours' contest with icy rocks, during which they ascended a bare 300 feet, were forced to retreat. Later, on 23rd June 1901 (Vol. VI., p. 228), another party endeavoured to force a way up the steep rocks to the east of the bottom, but were driven back by storm, taking shelter in a huge bergschrund at the foot. It was left to Raeburn, who had been in both attempts, to complete the ascent alone, owing to the failure of his companions to keep their appointment. On 28th June 1902, that climber began the climb exactly opposite the great chimney on the east side of the Tower Ridge. The buttress is very steep in its lower half, and rather slabby just at the foot where the start is made. Ascending a short distance, a traverse is made along a good ledge to the left till just above the bergschrund (Vol. VI., p. 229). Turning slightly to the right, excellent climbing rock is reached. The average angle greatly exceeds most of the climbs on Nevis, yet owing to the excellence and soundness of the holds the ascent cannot really be termed difficult. A series of small ledges with vertical or overhanging walls is overcome by using the "pulling-in handholds" of superlative quality, the character of the climbing being Dolomitic, or perhaps



W. Inglis Clark.

THE TOWER FROM ABOVE.

THE TOWER FROM ABOVE.



rather like the Chamonix Aiguilles. Farther up a traverse is made to a shallow chimney with broken rock and poor holds. Above, a snowy patch indicates a smaller angle, but beyond this the actual arête on the left is very steep, and looks difficult. A steep but not difficult chimney on the right affords an escape, and soon the plateau is reached. Time from the foot including rests and cairns, 1 hour 20 minutes.

"*The Observatory Ridge*" at a first glance looks so steep and unpromising that it is little wonder that it was left severely alone till last year. On 22nd June 1901, Raeburn made the ascent alone (Vol. VI., p. 215). Crossing a small bergschrund, slabby rocks at no great angle, and poor in holds and hitches, were encountered. The ridge almost at once becomes a well-defined arête, which, higher up, is bounded by almost A.P. precipices. A few hundred feet up an excellent hand traverse presents itself. It is begun by getting the hands into a first-rate crack on the left, then toe-scraping along a wall till the body can be hoisted on to a narrow overhung ledge above. This does not permit of standing up, but a short crawl to the right finishes the difficulty, at the top of an open corner chimney, a more direct and possibly preferable route. Rather more than half way up, a very steep tower spans the face. The route followed was round a sensational corner to the right, where there was a direct drop of several hundred feet. This point is a few hundred feet below the termination of the black portion of the ridge as seen in Thomson's photograph (p. 154).

The ridge now eases off, and traverses might possibly be made, either to the North-East Buttress on the left, or to the Observatory Buttress to the right. The climbing is not, however, over, for numerous steep or slabby bits must be overcome ere the crest of the ridge, still holding heavy cornices till midsummer, is attained.

"THE NORTH-EAST BUTTRESS" is the last of the great buttresses of Ben Nevis, and is from all points of view a stately and imposing object. From the lower part of the valley it presents a formidable rock wall looking to the north-

west, while the front view from below or a short distance up the scree slopes opposite, shows it as a lofty peak, its summit hemmed in by slabby rock, and at first sight inaccessible. Running parallel with the Tower Ridge, it projects a less distance into the valley, but as it starts from a higher level, the angle is not so great as might be inferred from this. The rocks begin at about 2,600 feet above the sea and terminate at an elevation of nearly 4,400 feet. The first ascent, like that of the Tower Ridge, was made by J. E. and B. Hopkinson on 6th September 1892 (Vol. III., p. 331; *Alpine Journal*, vol. xvii., p. 521). It is not certain, although one of this party has been communicated with, exactly at what point the ascent was begun. It appears to have been near the lowest point to which the rock projects into the valley and on the north-west face. In any case the climbers seem to have experienced no serious difficulty during the ascent. This interesting event was unrecorded till August 1895, so that when Brown and Tough on 25th May 1895 (Vol. III., p. 323) attacked the buttress, it was under the impression that this ridge had not hitherto been climbed.

Passing round the bottom rocks to the eastern side a broad ledge runs to the right, and attains the ridge at the so-called "first platform." Up to this point it is literally a walk; but when the platform is crossed to the south-west corner the climbing begins. The narrow ridge is followed to a Tower, where a choice of routes is offered. To the right a ledge leads round the corner, from the extremity of which the climb turns upwards to the top of the tower. On the left a stone shoot with chimneys and gullies succeeding one another leads upwards to the "second platform," where the first route is joined. Which is the more difficult route depends on the condition of the rocks and the weather, but it is generally possible to find more easy routes by keeping to the left. The second (small) platform is immediately above the Tower, and leads directly to the narrow ridge which offers interesting sport up to the "gendarme" or "man trap." This is the name applied to a steep wall about ten feet high which blocks the way. On the right the rocks slope steeply down, while to the left the only alternative is an overhanging chimney with rotten holds.

As a rule it is not difficult by the aid of a friendly shoulder to reach a narrow ledge on the wall, and so over the difficulty, but in cold or heavy rain this is not always possible (Vol. VI., p. 230). Brown and Tough descended to the right over some slabby rocks, and eventually reached the foot of a steep "forty foot corner" or chimney, the ascent of which requires some muscular effort (Vol. V., p. 294). Those who have climbed the "man trap" direct follow the ridge, and so are led to the same "corner." Still another alternative is open. Turning to the left some twenty feet or so, the rocks will be found exceedingly rotten. An uninviting rotten chimney opens at this point, which in its upper part, slightly to the right, distinctly overhangs. So long as the holds last, this may be passed, but careful attention to this point is necessary (Vol. VI., p. 230). This overcome, the route is followed as before. At the top of "the forty foot corner" the screes are at hand, and if desired the plateau is reached in a few minutes by a small recess to the left of the last wall of rock terminating the ridge. Unfortunately for the reputation of this buttress an easy route leads up from the second platform to the east, and passing by ledges and grass altogether avoids the "gendarme." The summit is reached by a scree gully to the east of the forty foot corner.

There are four other ways of attaining the ridge at the first platform. On 2nd June 1895 (Vol. III., p. 331), Hastings, Priestman, and Slingsby reached the first platform by "Slingsby's Chimney." This may be recognised in Thomson's photograph as running up to the ridge and joining it about the point where the marked snow ledge (from the left) terminates.

In July 1895 this was again ascended by Bell, Boyd, and M'Gregor. The lower two-thirds were not difficult, but needed care. There are no well-defined pitches, but the floor of the gully is set at a steep angle. The ledges are small and a slip would land one at the bottom. The upper end of the gully opens out into a funnel with slabby rocks and vertical cracks. The direct route in the line of the gully is difficult. This party finished on the left side of the funnel (looking up).

On 23rd June 1901 (Vol. VI., p. 229), Raeburn, Mrs Inglis Clark, and the writer, starting from a point about twenty feet from the foot of "Slingsby's Chimney," gradually climbed to the left up the steep rocks, and then directly upwards to the ridge a little below the first platform. The route, though steep, cannot be called difficult.

On 8th June 1895 (Vol. III., p. 331), Green and Napier started on the rocks about half-way between the actual foot of the buttress and Slingsby's Chimney, and therefore to the left of the last route. The climb for the first fifty feet or so was distinctly difficult, the rocks being very slabby. The complete ascent from the bottom was, however, only made recently.

On 30th June 1902, Raeburn, Mrs Inglis Clark, and the writer started from the very lowest point of the rocks. First, a dolomitic sloping ledge about six feet wide with excellent holds brought one under a black overhanging corner, visible in most photographs of the buttress. Rounding this a grassy ledge overlooking a slabby wall was reached, and the climb commenced close to the corner. The angle was very great, but the rocks were of superb description. After some 80 or 100 feet another smaller ledge was crossed, and above this the absence of hitches rendered a traverse for twenty feet to the right essential. As progress is made upwards, the arête is again reached, and the whole climb consisting of vertical slabs requires careful attention, traversing at times a few feet to the right and returning to the left. Near the finish a very interesting traverse is made to the left, crossing the arête by a sensational corner and for a short time ascending on the north-east or north wall. The arête is now followed over easy rocks and ends at the first platform. From a climbing point of view this ranks among the steepest on Ben Nevis, and would be impossible but for the magnificent nature of the rock. This party took 2 hours 40 minutes from the bottom corner to the first platform, taking no rest during the time.

There still remain to be described the gullies of Ben Nevis. No. 3 Gully, at the south-west corner of Coire na Ciste, lies at the junction of Carn Dearg and Ben



W. Lamond Howie.



Nevis, and from this point to the North-East Buttress, several difficult gullies run up to the plateau level to which some of them afford access.

Gully No. 2 is a narrow gorge between tremendous cliffs immediately to the west of the Tower Ridge. On Good Friday 1896, Collier, Hastings, and Slingsby ascended this gully, the angle of which increased to 60° before the cornice was encountered. An interesting account of their experiences is to be found in *Yorkshire Ramblers' Journal*, vol. i., p. 173. The gully seems to be somewhat more difficult than Nos. 3 and 4, and as it extends to a greater altitude (viz, 4,200 ft.), the cornice at the top is likely to be more troublesome.

Gully No. 1 (Observatory Gully).—Close to the Tower Ridge on its east side, and running parallel with it throughout, is a long straight snow gully—the longest of all. Two-thirds of the way up, it divides into two branches, the route to the right passing under the “Tower” and forming a steep-walled cleft, running into the plateau. This, the “*Tower Gully*,” is comparatively simple in summer, but in common with the others, presents heavy cornices in winter. On 25th April 1897, Hastings, with E. L. W. and W. P. Haskett-Smith, found the exit blocked by a huge cornice some 18 or 20 feet above the highest point they could reach, and projecting many feet. They got through by tunnelling, the only possible way, but which was very hard and cold-work. No record exists of a summer ascent.

The Gardyloo Gully, or eastern branch of No. 1, is more formidable than the “Tower Gully.” It was first ascended on 26th April 1897, by Hastings and Haskett-Smith, who climbed it under snowy conditions. They found the pitch referred to later, the less difficult obstacle. Above it the snow was like flour and very dangerous, and steps 4 to 5 ft. deep had to be made. A double cornice was found, but fortunately the secondary lip was firm, and the top reached by cutting down the upper cornice. On 6th April 1901, the climb was repeated by Lawson and Raeburn, and found to possess peculiar difficulties (Vol. VI., p. 251). About 100 feet below the top, there is a large cave-pitch, which may be very difficult in summer. In winter

this pitch is ordinarily a frozen waterfall. If the snow is sufficiently deep to cover this up entirely, the difficulty of the climb depends on the state of the cornice. The second party found the ice-pitch the harder. After breaking down the ice-door, an entrance was made into the cavern, which affords an excellent position for the second man. Hand-holes cut in the ice afforded a precarious means of overcoming the hanging fringe, and then followed about 18 feet of hard but easier work, till the snow was once more reached. Above, the angle rapidly steepened to the cornice, which is always more or less formidable till far on in the summer.

On 29th June 1902, Raeburn descended to the rock-pitch and found that without snowy conditions, the prospect of making an ascent is very slender. The mediæval name of "Gardyloo Gully" has been applied to this west branch, because owing to the dust-cart being as unknown at Ben Nevis Observatory as in the narrow streets of old-world Edinburgh, this particular gully comes in handy. The name of "Observatory Gully" should be reserved for the main gully before it branches into the "Tower Gully" and the "Gardyloo Gully."

Besides these gullies there are very steep ones on either side of the Observatory Ridge, but so far these have not been climbed.

The granite buttresses which overlook Glen Nevis alternate with steep grass and scree slopes. But for the superior attractions of the northern face these buttresses and their gullies would doubtless receive more attention than they do. On 27th September 1894, Naismith and Thomson descended by Càrn Dearg, 3,348 feet, over a steep rocky buttress west of the cairn, the rope being used at one place (Vol. III., p. 233).

On Meall an t-Suidhe there is a big gully to the left of the pony track. Under wintry conditions this gives a good climb. On Good Friday 1902, a party (Longstaff and Wigner) found the second of two long slabby places rather difficult for about 160 feet.

TIME REQUIRED FOR THE CLIMBS.

Although nothing is more difficult than to say how long a party will take to accomplish any given climb, the following note of average times may be of some assistance. It must be clearly understood that the condition of the rocks mainly defines the time occupied in a climb, and that glazed rocks, powdery snow, wet weather, and the uncertainties of a first ascent may easily render say ten hours necessary, where a subsequent party under favourable conditions will find three hours ample.

Fort-William to Achintee	-	-	About 40 minutes
Achintee to Lochan an t-Suidhe	-	"	65 "
Lochan to Summit	-	-	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours
Lochan to Foot of Castle Ridge	-	"	45 minutes
Castle Ridge from the Corrie	-	-	1 to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours
The Castle from the Corrie	-	-	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 3 "
Staircase of Càrn Dearg (to Summit)	-	"	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 4 "
Ledge Route, Càrn Dearg, from No. 5 Gully	"	1 " 2 "	"
Pinnacle Arête, Trident Buttress (to Summit)	-	-	2 " 4 "
No. 3 Gully Buttress	-	-	2 " 4 "
Tower Pinnacle Buttress	-	-	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 4 "
Tower Gap Chimney	-	-	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 4 "
Douglas' Boulder (from Foot)	-	"	2 " 3 "
Tower Ridge from Col	-	-	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 5 "
Observatory Buttress	-	-	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Observatory Ridge	-	-	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 4 "
N.E. Buttress by the Ledge	-	-	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " 4 "
N.E. First Platform by Bottom Arête	"	2 " 4 "	"
From Fort-William by the Allt a' Mhuilinn and Càrn Mor Dearg			
Arête to Summit	-	-	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 6 "

Although mountaineers are not given to making records of speed in the ascent of Ben Nevis, yet the following notes may be of interest. The up and down record from the Post Office at Fort-William is 2 hours 18 minutes, and the distance covered is about 14 miles, with a rise and descent of 4,400 feet. A novel dynamical experiment was made on

1st October 1901 (Vol. VII., p. 43). Seven competitors started from Achintee, the race being to the summit. In each case the weight was ascertained, and by a simple calculation the effective horse-power developed arrived at. The three first to arrive showed the following results :—

1.	Weight, 174 lbs.	Time, 68 mins. 19 secs.
2.	" 166½ "	" 78 " 44 "
3.	" 144½ "	" 80 " 34 "

the horse-power developed ranging from one-quarter to one-third of a horse-power. Mountaineers who evince a tendency to *embonpoint* must not, however, flatter themselves that they are likely to reach the summit sooner in the future than in the past.

Aneroid Measurements.—It is to be regretted that no measurements are available to determine the exact lengths of the various climbs. The figures that have been given as to the various ridges are therefore only approximate, and it is to be hoped that some member of the S.M.C. will set apart a holiday for the express purpose of giving correct information regarding the start and finish of each climb.

THE GEOLOGY OF BEN NEVIS.

The monarch of British mountains offers geological problems of interest. The metamorphic rocks, which monopolise so much of the Highlands, seem to have here had their arrangements considerably upset, the great mass of the mountain being of igneous origin, and rising high above them.

The mountain itself may be said to consist roughly of two layers, a lower layer of granite, and an upper of andesitic lavas (sometimes known popularly as porphyry) and agglomerates.

The granite, which is of a pink hue, is confined to a roughly triangular area, each side of the triangle being three or four miles in length (see Sir Archibald Geikie's map). This area extends from about Glen Nevis to the west side of Aonach Mòr, and includes not only Ben Nevis himself, but all the Càrn Deargs round about him. The whole of the upper part of the Ben from the base of the north-east

cliffs is composed of the lavas and agglomerates, tough rocks of a dark grey colour, and admirably suited for climbing.

The junction of the granite and the lavas is indicated on several parts of the mountain by the colour of the loose scree changing, as one ascends, from pink to grey.

In the case of similar rocks found among the hills of Glencoe, it has been ascertained that the lavas (or porphyry) were first poured out by volcanic eruptions, and that subsequently the granite was forced up from below and intruded into them. This has not yet been actually demonstrated on Ben Nevis, but it is probable that we have here a repetition of the same phenomena.

THE FLORA OF BEN NEVIS.

The flora, though containing, it is believed, no species not found elsewhere in Scotland, comprises all the common Alpine plants; but these, owing apparently to the comparative hardness of the underlying volcanic rock, fail to exhibit that luxuriance of vegetation so characteristic of districts situated within the mica schist area.

As in all our northern mountains, the most distinctly Alpine feature of plant life is the abundance of low-growing, tufted, or cushion-like perennial forms. Thus the margins of the smaller streams are adorned with clusters of golden *Saxifraga aizoides*, mingled with denser white flowered cushions of *S. hypnoides*, both of which exhibit, at least during summer, markedly hygrophytic characters. The moister and more shaded crannies in the rock face provide a resting-place for such rosette forms as *S. stellaris*, and, though more rarely, *S. nivalis*; the former of which, however, not unfrequently carries on a hydrophytic existence, living almost submerged, and losing in consequence its rosette-like appearance. In early summer the dryer rocks are clothed with trailing evergreen, purple-flowered sheets of the xerophytic *S. oppositifolia*, along with which, and showing a similar mode of growth, *Silene acaulis* may be seen in crimson profusion. Tufts of the succulent leaved *Rhodiola rosea* abound on the cliffs, and associated with it are numerous plants of *Oxyria reniformis*, also as a rule more or less fleshy.

Hairy plants are represented by such forms as *Cerastium saxatile* and *Alchemilla alpina*, the hairs in the latter case being confined to the silvery under surface of the leaf.

All the vegetation exhibits to a greater or less extent a dwarf character, but the plants in which this general feature is most conspicuously noticeable are probably *Sibbaldia procumbens* and the small willow *Salix herbacea*, both of which cover the ground in all directions.

The wetter rocks are in many cases clothed with a slimy film of algæ, the majority of which belong to the Cyanophyceæ, the most characteristic being *Scytonema myochrous* and *Stigonema mamillosum*, accompanied by numerous species of *Nostoc*, &c.

As the top of the hill is reached flowering plants gradually disappear, owing apparently to the dryness of the substratum, and their place is taken by mosses such as *Andreaea nivalis* and lichens like *Umbilicaria* which clothe the otherwise bare rocks, and are all capable of resisting prolonged periods of physiological drought.

The vegetation of the lake floor (Lochan an t-Suidhe) is almost exclusively composed, at least in the shallower parts, of such hydrophytes with awl-like leaves as *Subularia aquatica*, *Littorella lacustris*, *Lobelia dortmanna*, and *Isoetes lacustris*, mingled with taller sedges and grasses.

FAUNA OF BEN NEVIS.

First among the animals to be found on the slopes of the mountain must be placed the Red Deer, the Allt a' Mhuilinn Glen being now within the fence of a deer forest. Foxes abound, and no doubt are especially attracted in winter to the Observatory Gully, where the debris of the Observatory is thrown down.

White Hares are often seen by climbers, and Rabbits are tolerably numerous on Meall an t-Suidhe.

Stoats and Weasels are found right to the very summit even in winter, and the common Rat and Mouse have been captured in the Observatory. A party climbing the Castle on September 1898, found on one of the ledges a newly killed Water Vole of the black or Melanic variety. The

animal could not very well have got to the spot itself, but was no doubt captured on the Allt a' Mhuilinn by a Buzzard or Eagle, and dropped where found.

The Field Vole is abundant in certain seasons, it is seen on the summit, and one was seen by the writer at the foot of Càrn Dearg Buttress this June.

Shrews are frequently caught by the Observatory cat, as is also the common Vole.

Among the birds the most interesting, perhaps, are the Eagles and Snow Buntings. A pair of the former are usually to be seen on the north-east precipices, and at least four or five pairs of the latter are summer residents, the sweet song of the male bird as it floats up from the corrie, adding appropriateness to the rugged grandeur of cliff, and snow gully, and cornice. One or two pairs of Buzzards haunt the lower slopes, where also the Kestrel may sometimes be observed, and the Observatory Gully is usually haunted by a family party of Ravens, who, like the foxes, are there for what they can get.

The Ptarmigan is fairly abundant on or near the summits, and on the lower heathery ground Grouse are met with, though not in great abundance.

The Meadow Pipit, that ubiquitous little mountain lover, is of course abundant, while the Wheatear is common on the lower slopes. Several pairs of Stonechats have also been observed on a certain part of Meall an t-Suidhe.

The Ring-ousel also is found on these lower slopes, and the Wren and Dipper follow up the streams to a considerable height. Perhaps the above list contains all the birds to be commonly met with on the mountain.

The species frequenting the upper 2,000 feet are very few in number, though stragglers of many kinds no doubt occur. Thus the Hooded Crow, common in the surrounding glens, often extends its flight well up towards the summit, and the lochs, such as Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe, attract birds such as the Sandpiper.

VIEW FROM BEN NEVIS.—Every one climbing the Ben is advised to procure the excellent Panorama published by Messrs Shearer & Son of Stirling (on the cover of which, by

the way, will be found a sketch of the upper part of the Tower Ridge). The principal objects of interest given in the "Panorama" may here be mentioned, following the course of the sun.

North.—Ben Wyvis over Loch Lochy, Mealfourvie, the Black Isle, a glimpse of the town of Inverness (55 miles distant and invisible to the naked eye), and the Parallel Roads of Glen Roy, all to be looked for over the top of Càrn Mor Dearg.

North-east.—Monadliath Mountains, Creag Meaghaidh and a bit of Loch Laggan over Aonach Mor; the Cairngorms beyond the col between the Aonachs; Stob Choire an Easan Mhor, with Lochnagar right behind.

East.—Ben Alder right over Aonach Beag, a corner of Loch Treig, with the West Highland Railway skirting its shore, and Ben Vrackie on the far horizon; a glimpse of Loch Ossian; the graceful cone of Schiehallion; Ben Lawers appearing straight over the near Binnein Beag, with a stretch of the Moor of Rannoch, and the depression of Glen Lyon between them; Loch Lydoch, with Meall Ghaordie, and a glimpse of the Ochils beyond.

South-east.—Binnein Mor across Glen Nevis, with Loch Ba seen over its shoulder, and Ben Voirlich and Stùc a Chròin on the sky line; the twin peaks of Ben More and Stobinian, always unmistakable with Ben Ledi just showing to the left; the Ben Doran group on the far side of the valley that holds Loch Tulla, with what is said to be Ben Venue beyond them; Clachlet and Stob Ghabhar seen over Buchaille Etive Mor, with Ben Lomond on the horizon between them, and Ben Lui right over the central conical peak of the Shepherd; Buchaille Etive Bheag, with the Cobbler group beyond.

South.—Sgòr a' Mhaim close at hand, with Bidean nam Bian beyond; to the left of Bidean is Ben Eunaich, and right over the top of Bidean, Ben Starav (though 225 feet lower than it!) while immediately to the right of Ben Starav a bit of Arran should be visible; Ben Cruachan over the nearer Aonach Eagach; Stob Bàn quite near, and the Pap of Glencoe behind; Ben Bheithir, with the Paps of Jura far beyond; to the left of Jura the sea is visible, and in

absolutely clear weather a low line of land "dim to very dreaminess" is the coast of Ireland, 120 miles away.

South-west.—To the right of Jura the islands of Colonsay and Lismore; Mull over Loch Linnhe; Morven hills, with Tiree and Coll behind; Sgòr Domhail.

West.—A little to the right of Sgòr Domhail, Barra in the Outer Hebrides, and a bit of the western ocean; Fross Bheinn; the north end of Eigg and most of Rum, over the dip of Glenfinnan; Ben More and Hecla in South Uist, 93 miles distant, and a stretch of ocean seen over Loch Eil; the Streaps, with the jagged Coolins behind; Gulvain, Sgòr na Ciche and Ladhar Bheinn, all in a straight line over the top of Càrn Dearg.

North-west.—Ben Screel, with the Storr Rock peeping over its southern shoulder; the Saddle, Scour Morar, Ben Bhan of Applecross and Scour Ouran, all apparently close together; Ben Attow; a glimpse of the Torridon Mountains; Garbhleac near Clunie Inn; Mam Soul and Carn Eige; Riabhachan and Sgùrr na Làpaich, with a glimpse of distant mountains beyond, which may be the Fannichs; and so round to Ben Wyvis again.

A skeleton list you say, but nothing to the long array of visions which flit before the mind, as the history of the past is unrolled and invests each mountain peak or sunlit loch with the incidents of one's own experiences, or the stern realities of a nation's life. From here the kingdom lies before us, and the constant atmospheric change precludes the possibility of monotony.

Each outlook under the wizard touch of sunshine or storm possesses a many-sided fascination which must ever appeal to the true mountaineer, and it would be difficult to say whether the mountain looks its best under the deep blue of a June sky, or in the winter costume of March and April. While the ampler ermine mantle commends itself for purity, dignity, and grace, the tracery of snowy gully embosoming the fretted ridges, seems in keeping with a living nature, which under the growing heat of summer throws off the restraint of winter, and expands more fully in the sunlight.

Although unusual in a guide-book article, the writer of

which has generally no conscience, special thanks are due to the following gentlemen for valuable assistance:—

Mr Andrew Watt,			for notes on the Meteorology.
Mr Kynaston,	”	”	Geology.
Mr Terras, B.Sc.,	”	”	Flora.
Mr Raeburn,	”	”	Fauna and for Climbing Notes.

Also to Dr Collie, Messrs Hopkinson, Haskett-Smith, and Slingsby, for information regarding early ascents of the ridges; and to Mr Rankin and the Scottish Meteorological Society for the loan of a block, and much useful information. Many of our members have also given much time and trouble to the clearing up of obscure points, and chief among these are J. H. Bell, W. W. Naismith, and R. G. Napier.

W. I. C.

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.

AVIEMORE, June 1902.

MY DEAR MR EDITOR.—Notes of clubmen's doings being ever dear to your heart, I have made the stern resolve to keep some for you.

June 11.—Ascended CAIRNGORM—a bleak world but clear. The "Gorms" in general chock full of snow and new-fallen white sprinkled down to 3,000 foot line. Last 500 feet through snow one to two feet deep. Cloud on top—on nearer acquaintance proved to be a snow-storm *from the south*. Cold intense, and ladies felt it very much. Cairn beautifully snow-crystalled.

June 18.—Gorms just emerged from a week's thick drizzle. Stripped bare in that time of all new snow. Old snow in corries still abundant. Started for BRAERIACH in glorious summer sun. Biked to Lower Bothy—road steep but wonderfully good. Both the well-known roads here are quite rideable—for a good gymnast. Half-way up grand panorama to Ross-shire and point of Caithness. As height increased, so did heat and haze. Little view from top. At Corrie an Lochan, paused to admire ICEBERGS. Snow pushing down into loch in great quantities, broke off at edge in large masses and floated over to outlet. Never heard this mentioned before. Were to jump on to one, but prodded with ice-axe first. Luckily, for by that time our great "Berg" was the softest of pulp that could hang together, and look white. Slush is firm to it.

One brother and self struck out a new route up the face of the corrie. Foregathered at top and revelled in the view of the Garrachory. Good glissade down.

COIRE AN LOCHAN OF BRAERIACH.—Our climb here was up the highest portion of rocks, just to right of fine waterfall down the middle of corrie. Good rocks first, one difficult pitch of 40 feet, then indiscriminate scrambling, twenty-five steps or so had to be cut up an icefall—more rock work of moderate difficulty and fifteen feet of very hard steep snow at the edge of the corrie. One-and-a-half hours in all.

June 16.—SGORAN DUBH.—With two assistants repeated Naismith's climb on Second Buttress. A very sound and pleasing climb. Two of the pitches were distinctly more difficult owing to absence of snow. The awkward middle pitch doubled in height. Glissaded down some very hard old snow, and the glissade was fain to continue further over grass and rock than we had any liking for.

June 21.—Again on SGORAN DUBH, FOURTH BUTTRESS. As the Club had cleared off four of these buttresses, we couldn't leave the last for a reproach. Attacked it gaily—party of four—60-foot rope—two novices (at least) in party. Took the big obvious gully cutting it in two. Went as merry as a (rather slow) marriage bell, till pulled up by pitch of 120 feet—a chimney, water worn—outside it iceworn. Escaped on to buttress on right by 60-foot climb and a very long and narrow ledge leading backwards. Went better now to final Tower. Several false cries here. Tower eventually surmounted by two pitches immediately succeeding each other, and each requiring whole of 60-foot rope. From hut to top took five hours twenty minutes.

The rock not so good as other buttresses—found our pockets full to brim of granite chips.

On returning no trace of our Jehu. As it proved he had gone to help us find the way down, thinking us wandered on the rock arête.

On supplying a few facts to the local penny-in-the-slot patent poetry producer, this is what we got. It seems to go to the tune of "Ten Little Nigger Boys."

“Five little Buttresses, cliffs of Sgoran Dubh,
Laughing puny man to scorn, and all that he can do.

But Lawson and Raeburn went as pioneers before,
And reticuled the pinnacle, and so there were but four.

Four little Buttresses, but now the S.M.C.
Utilised some fut-resties, and soon there were three.

Three little Buttresses, for some one still to do,
Lost the littlest brother left, and then there were two.

Two little Buttresses, one doubly done
By married men and single men, and so there was but one.

One little Buttress where no foot of man had gone,
But this last

was conquered
by a party of novices
at great expense
of energy, skin,
and shoe leather,

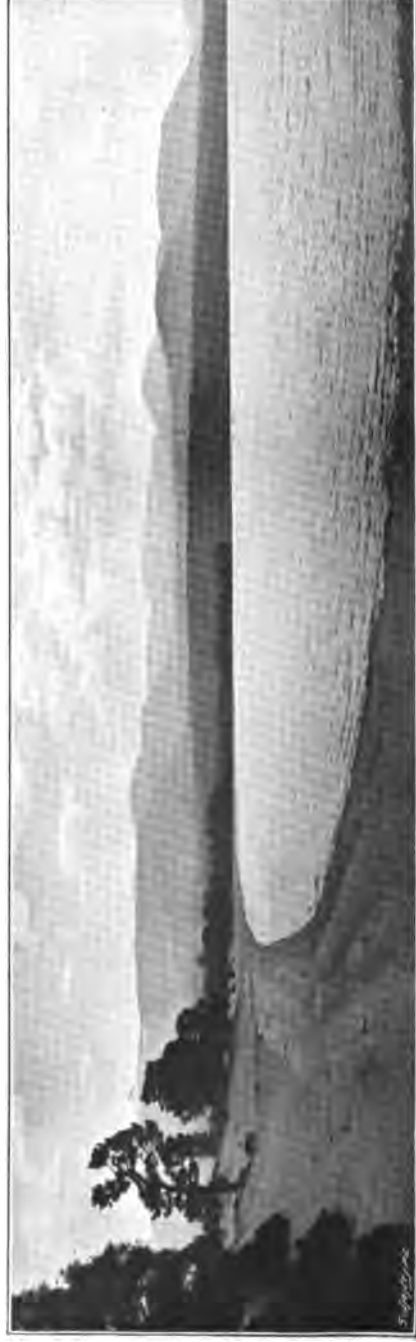
and so there were none.”

The producer here ran down.



THE TORS OF BYNAC.

A. M. Mackay.



CAIRNGORM AND LOCH MORLICH.

A. M. Mackay.



June 19.—BEN MUICH DHUL.—A phenomenon occurred—we were bound for Loch Laggan and Creag Meagaidh, but the Highland train left two minutes too soon, and left us disconsolate. Walked to the old Ben and back in eleven hours—a lady in the party.

June 25.—Climbed A' CHOINNEACH and BEN BYNAC in blistering heat. The "Castles" on Bynac are very graceful specimens of the granite Tor, and one gives a good problem. Amused ourselves on the way with a pair of eagles whose eyrie was on the cliffs of Mam Suim.

WESTERN CORRIE OF BYNAC.—Took an interesting rock-climb up the cliffs on right. About 250 feet, giving two amusing corners. Climb not well defined. Time—six-and-three-quarter hours from Glenmore Lodge and back.

I have the assurance to be, my dear Editor, yours

A. M. MACKAY.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—I had recently the pleasure of spending a few days in Islay. I understand that it is an excellent place for golf, and I can vouch for it as an excellent place to loaf—a float for choice—but climbing is not, I believe, usually regarded as one of its strong features. However, I was conducted one day to a place called Sannaig, which in addition to being well away from the crowd (it is something more than twenty miles from Port Ellen, and not much less from Port Askaig), has a very fine fringe of cliffs. They consist of rocks at a steep angle, rising to the north or north-west, which at that point is the seaward face. They are finely cut by deep recesses, and a cursory run over some of them suggested that climbing of all degrees of difficulty could be got by a judicious selection of direction. I selected to begin with the side which looked most Salvationist, and had no time to try anything else. I should not wonder, however, though climbs could be found almost as good as some of those on Salisbury Crags, or even on the Whangie. They are scarcely enough to suggest Islay as a rival to Skye, but any one who is in the neighbourhood might do worse than visit Sannaig. Apart from climbing, the cliff scenery is very fine.

G. T.

CORRIE SUGACH AND NARNAIN.—On 19th July 1902 the writer, in company with E. J. Gunn, paid a most enjoyable visit to the cliffs of Corrie Sugach, inspired thereto by Mr Gall Inglis' article in the last number of the *Journal*. We first looked at the obvious gully JP, and came to the conclusion that the right hand (north) branch could be climbed, if the first thirty feet went. I climbed the first fifteen feet, and thought the rest would go with a struggle, but as we were not looking for a difficult climb we did not try any further. We then looked into Maclay's Gully, but as it is reported to be distinctly

difficult and the first pitch was very wet, we did not try it. We then descended again, and traversed along the grass slopes below Dr Clark's climb until we came to the deep wall-sided gully some distance below the point O in Dr Clark's photograph. An interesting but unsensational climb then brought us just above the point O, where we encountered the only stiff pitch. This consisted of a slab sloping downwards which had to be traversed to the right. The footholds for the first ten feet were nil, but luckily the handholds were good, as we had to haul ourselves bodily up and along the slab. When fairly on the slab one of the handholds can be used as a hitch for the rope until the first foothold is reached, when it becomes useless. When the slab was passed we climbed straight up for about twenty feet till we came to a grand anchorage. From this point easy scrambling brought us to the top of the "knife arête," and from there we went straight to the summit. We then went on to Narnain, which neither of us had previously visited. We had a grand view from here, especially to the north-west and north, Scarba and Corrievrechan being seen quite clearly as well as Mull, Bidean, and many others. As we had not much time, we only looked into the various chimneys and climbs, and determined that they warranted another and more minute inspection. We were both agreeably surprised with the quality of the climbs on both Sugach and Narnain, and some of the rocks on the former reminded us forcibly of the Coolins. Last but not least of our finds was a most delicious spring on Narnain, a short distance above the col separating it from Sugach.

R. G. N.

THE BEN NEVIS OBSERVATORIES.—The physical history of Ben Nevis goes back through untold ages, but its history otherwise is almost a matter of yesterday. Twenty-five years ago it was known as the highest point of the British Islands, and as such was visited by an occasional climber, who braved the long and monotonous grind up the scree—then the only known method of ascent—for the satisfaction of standing on this pre-eminent summit, and possibly, of enjoying a wonderful view. To the general public it was little more than a name.

But the awakening was at hand which has rendered Ben Nevis a household word. The feeling was gaining ground among meteorologists that in one respect their observations were defective. The great ocean of air has not only length and breadth, but has also depth, and while the observing stations then available were no doubt at many different elevations above sea level, they were all close to the general ground surface, and separated from each other by long easy slopes. The third dimension of space was ignored, and the recorded observations bore much the same relation to the actual condition of the atmosphere as a flat map does to the actual face of the earth. This matter was taken up in 1877 by the Council of the Scottish Meteorological Society, who saw in Ben Nevis, rising high and steep from the very edge of the sea, an ideal position for getting two sets of observa-

tions, separated horizontally by a very short distance, but vertically by the greatest distance possible in Great Britain. Four years later a start was actually made, and in a way which appealed strongly to every one who sympathised either with scientific research or with determined courage and resolution. During the summer of 1881 a daily ascent was made by Mr Clement Wragge, who took observations on the summit while similar observations were simultaneously made below. It is not too much to say that the public interest excited by this splendid performance had much to do with the success which attended the subsequent effort to establish an Observatory on the top. In this respect, indeed, Mr Wragge must share the credit with his "big dog," who accompanied his master, and in whom the public took scarcely less interest. Similar observations were made during the two following summers, during the latter of which (1883) the Summit Observatory was built, and the bridle path constructed. The public subscriptions for this work varied in amount from £200 to one penny. In the following summer an extension, including the well-known tower, was carried out. Hourly observations, throughout day and night, were wanted, and it is hardly necessary to say that while in many positions all that was needed might have been got by self-recording instruments, in such a position as this direct personal observations were essential. Since the opening of the Observatory the only break in these records has been when the wind made it impossible for the observers to visit the instruments, and as this was only when the wind velocity exceeded 100 miles an hour, members of the S.M.C. will readily see that the reason was a sound one.

As a direct result of the opening of the Summit Observatory, Ben Nevis was discovered by the general public, and at once took first place as the tourist mountain of Scotland. Summer after summer a steady stream of tourists has gone up and down the bridle path, and although we may not regard their mountaineering as of a very high order, they were in the way of getting healthy exercise and fresh air, while their payments for the use of the path formed a useful contribution to the Observatory fund. The Observatory telegraph enabled them to inform their friends of the brilliant and sensational nature of their exploits, and thus provided them with an amusement which was at once interesting and (except for its effect on their veracity) innocent. The existence of the Observatory might perhaps be blamed, though very indirectly, for encouraging the modern nuisance of "record" climbing.

It is needless to speak of the discovery of Ben Nevis by mountaineers. With that we are all familiar. Many of us, too, are familiar with the hearty welcome always to be found in the Observatory. Whether our progress up the rocks has been noted for hours, or whether we have dropped into the buried building after almost groping for it in the mist, there has always been the same warm reception. Many a climb has been done on the strength of the Observatory.

which without it would have been foolhardy. The accommodation might not be so spacious, but the safety of the worn-out climber was as secure, as if he had reached Fort-William.

For some years after the opening of the Summit Observatory there was no Observatory at the low level, but sea-level observations were made twice a day. In 1890 the Directors completed the erection of the Fort-William Observatory, and since then have carried on simultaneous hourly observations. Their special desire was to carry on these observations throughout a "sunspot period" (eleven to twelve years), and towards this, and not towards the endowment of a permanent Observatory, all their efforts have been directed. This was not because they considered a permanent Observatory needless, but merely because it was not the special work which they had mapped out for themselves. This special work they have accomplished in the face of great difficulty. Again and again it has appeared certain that lack of funds would prevent its completion, and again and again the situation has been saved by generous liberality. The Directors therefore in making the intimation which they have done, that the funds at their disposal can only carry on the work to the end of this summer, are confessing no failure, but simply intimating the completion of the work which they had undertaken. They stop at a time when they can point to an important piece of completed work, and when they can pay all their liabilities in full.

In doing this nothing is further from their mind than to indicate that the work should now stop. They have expressed in the strongest terms their opinion of the importance of its continuance. But it is not a work whose value gradually grows from year to year. An extra year or two would add little to the value of what has been done, but on the other hand an extra sunspot period would add to it immensely. Much more of course would the permanent continuance of the work. The Directors therefore feel that nothing but a reasonable prospect of being able to carry on the work for another sunspot period, and thereby to make the results valuable, would justify them in appealing further to the public, or even in accepting the assistance which various friends have already generously offered.

It might be supposed that an undertaking like this would not be dependent on private benevolence, but would be carried on at the expense of the State. The fact is that not only were the buildings erected by public subscription, but of the £1,000 a year which the work costs, the only part contributed by the State is £100 for the Summit Observatory, and £250 for that at Fort-William. The latter payment is to cease with the present year. Appeals to the Treasury are met with the reply that the grant for such objects is administered by the Meteorological Council. This Council in its turn says that all the funds at its disposal are otherwise required.

It is a perfectly fair question to ask whether, apart from the sentimental point of view, the results justify the annual expenditure of

£1,000. The Meteorological Council apparently is not of the opinion that they do. It is open to question, however, whether red tape and rule of thumb have not there an undue influence. When one hears that while in return for its contribution to the upkeep of the Summit Observatory that Council has a right to call at any moment for a special report by wire, and that it has not once done so during the last twelve years, one is inclined to admit its undoubted right to speak of the uselessness of the Observatory—to the Meteorological Council. But that is scarcely conclusive. What it might be for the daily purpose of forecasting the weather, were its results properly utilised, is simply an unknown quantity, as the only body who might make this use does not do so. It is at least conceivable that if this were done we would hear less of the man who never carries an umbrella unless when the Meteorological Office foretells fine weather. Many very competent meteorologists are of opinion that the Ben Nevis reports would be of the highest value for weather forecasting, and the opinion of the "practical man" was well illustrated by a colliery fireman, who came from a considerable distance to the last meeting of the Scottish Meteorological Society, for the purpose of protesting against the threatened stoppage, and of suggesting that the miners of Scotland would, if necessary, willingly contribute to avert it. But apart from the ephemeral purpose of forecasting, the observations are of value in providing a store of facts, not otherwise attainable, on which future meteorologists will draw. This fortunately is secure, whatever may be the future of the Observatories, so far as the one sunspot period is concerned. Its value in the eyes of scientists may be best illustrated by the fact that the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh are spending £1,500 in printing the recorded and tabulated results. Further, within the last few years many other countries have established high-level observatories. They apparently are satisfied as to their value.

It will be anything but creditable to the country and the Government if the work is dropped, unless it is clearly shown that the results are not worth the necessary cost. Everything meantime is in full working order, and could be handed over in that condition, or if the Directors were put in possession of sufficient funds, would by them be carried on in that condition. State assistance is not asked on sentimental, "international," or any ground other than scientific. But let it not be *refused* on any other ground. G. T.

THE TOWER RIDGE—A WARNING.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—My friend, P. A. Hillhouse, writes to me as follows:—

"I took an American lady, Miss Howe, of Tokio, Japan, up the Tower Ridge on Ben Nevis. I took the same way as before up the Tower, as I knew it, and didn't care to try anything new. . . ."

“In starting out of the little gully near the top of the Tower, just above the ‘Church door’ place, I fancied that a big boulder moved a little: I was so afraid that I didn’t dare to try it again, as it would have pushed us both out of the gully. I had hold of it but wasn’t looking at it, when I heard some sound, and looking round, saw some small stones behind the boulder moving, just as if the rock had eased a little and allowed them to settle. It may have been only imagination that the rock was loose. I hope so.”

Perhaps the next party on the Tower Ridge, while treating the boulders at this point with great respect while below them, might test them when safely above them, and report the result to the *Journal*.—

Yours,

J. H. BELL.



“do” this mountain get no view of the cliffs as a whole. The huge walls of rock were now lightly covered with snow and ice, which to a considerable extent took away their usual black repellent look, without detracting in the least from their grandeur. A delicate gossamer veil of white seemed to have been thrown over the crags, not altogether hiding their blackness, but transforming it into a silvery grey.

Raeburn and Mackay, having brought me safely so far, took no further trouble to hide their sinister designs, and I soon found that our destination was a gully which, for some ten years, has eluded the grasp of its votaries (*cf. Journal*, Vol. II., p. 246 ; Vol. VI., pp. 231-234). Luckily for me it was now well on in the afternoon, and all that could be done that day was to go to its top and prospect the last 100 feet of the climb. Sticking staunchly to my Salvationist principles, tinged with Munro fervour, I induced my companions to walk over the two tops, knowing that unless we did so before looking down that gully, there was very little likelihood of my “bagging” Lochnagar. We were rewarded with a magnificent view in every direction. The Lomonds in Fife, the Pentlands (probably), the Ochils, Ben More and Stobinian, Schichallion, and many another well-known peak, stood out in the clear light of the fast-closing day, whilst nearer at hand shone the slumbering white masses of the Cairngorms, and far below us were the dark green woods round Balmoral, and the river Dee pursuing its winding course towards Braemar.

Back again we came to the head of the gully, an almost perpendicular shoot of slabs, with tufts of vegetation lightly adhering in places. I found to my relief that I was not expected to hazard my life by going down, but was assigned the safer duty of serving as an anchor, along with Mackay, for our worthy leader, who greedily swallowed two 60-foot ropes to the very last knot. After giving us sufficient time to get quite cool, he came up with the report that he had descended to within 30 feet of the highest point previously reached from below, that he saw his way up these 30 feet, and that we would have a try from the bottom the next day. Having a thorough belief in the maxim not to

squeak before you are hurt, I said nothing, but ruminated on the uncertainty of human plans.

Next day Raeburn woke us at 6 A.M., and insisted on our getting up at once, though it was freezing hard and our bed was warm and comfortable. Ten o'clock found us at the foot of that gully. I looked up and saw a fairly wide couloir, with smooth black sides glistening with ice. The first pitch, some 50 feet from the foot, seemed to overhang, and a healthy-looking stream was tumbling over it. Numberless waterdrops from the side walls made an efficient shower bath, so that as regards getting wet, we should be between Scylla and Charybdis. I fully appreciated what would be my fate as third man in that icy gully, and was meditating some way of honourable escape, when Raeburn suggested that perhaps the conditions were hardly good enough to give much chance of success. I heartily agreed with him, and at once gave his opinion my warmest support. It was then suggested that a ridge climb would better suit the weather conditions than gully work, so, taking the ridge forming the east side of the gully, we roped and started. The ridge was composed, at any rate at the foot, of mixed rock and turf, both somewhat rotten, and if there is one thing I dislike more than another in rock climbing it is this mixture of rock and turf. You are kept in a state of nervousness the whole time; you never know when the turf will give way, and the fact that the first two men have stood on it is no proof whatever that you may do so in safety—in fact they frequently weaken it, and when the poor third man steps on it away it goes, and the first two say he ought not to have trusted it, and so forth. The third man on a rope has my sincere sympathy, the more sincere because I always occupy that position myself. "Fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind." Needless to say I treated my thoughts as strictly private and confidential, braced myself together, and tried to look as though there was nothing I liked better in this world than being on narrow grass ledges which may disappear at any moment, and leave you to the mercy of a rope in the hands of a man standing on probably a not much more secure footing.

Nothing daunted our leader, and after he had, with

calm indifference, hewn down about half a ton of rock, which went tumbling to the ridge's base with a roar that was of itself sufficient to unnerve any one but a hardened Ultramontane, he worked onwards and upwards till at length I found myself 250 feet up the ridge. Above our heads was a mass of sloping rocks, with no apparent holds or route. I vaguely wondered if the Ultramontane genius of our leader would force a way up, but here again my good fortune did not desert me. It was decided, after a consultation between the first two, that the route would not go. I was then carefully lowered, with orders to throw down or kick away anything loose, and when I reached the point where our leader had been quarrying on the upward journey, I proved as successful as he had been, and trusting to the rope I kicked away at an upright pillar of rock with such good effect, that Mackay suggested that if I went on much longer, some one would be sent to ask, "What are you doing with Lochnagar?"

I felt quite happy when *terra firma* was once more reached, but Raeburn launched a fresh thunderbolt by suggesting a new route to cut the Tough-Brown Ridge. I had a hazy idea that the Tough-Brown Ridge was something desperate, but I preserved a quiet outward demeanour, and once again my good fortune prevailed. Raeburn selected for a start some rocks to the west of the two gullies east of the direct line of the ridge, and on the edge of a wall of boiler plates. He went up 40 feet, came down again, and suggested one of us should write an article for the *Journal*, entitled "Failure on Lochnagar."

Earlier in the day we had noticed, to the west of the Black Spout, a deep gully ending at the foot in grass, and to this we now turned our steps. There were three routes to the foot of the rocks—one which the stream from the gully came down; a second, mixed rock and turf, immediately to the east of the first; and a third, still more to the east, formed by a green tongue which cut into the screes. We looked at the first two, but eventually took the third as the easiest. The ascent to the rocks was steep and wet, the vegetation luxuriant. I felt comparatively happy and cheerful in this gully: if we all slipped, there was a satisfaction in knowing

where we should roll to, and the chances were greatly in our favour of stopping somewhere before we reached the bottom, whereas, on a ridge or face, the chances are you would never pull up till you actually arrived at the base. The first difficulty we, or rather I, arrived at was a huge sloping slab, up which the leader cautiously crawled by the aid of friction and vegetation, some of which latter he dislodged. The second man was more destructive still, and left a clean record behind him; neither did he scorn an ice-axe for his feet. As I mentioned before, the third man always gets the worst difficulties. Here was a slimy mass of bare granite at a fairly steep angle with no holds, and there was no one to give me a leg up. I did my best to distribute my weight, and to get all the advantage of friction by spread-eagling myself, but it was of no avail, and I shouted lustily to be hauled up, which I promptly was, to the detriment of my garments. If a novice should read this, he might make a note never to put on new clothes for rock climbing with Ultramontanes—it is absolute waste of good material.


Soon afterwards we came to the first real pitch some 20 feet high. Up 10 feet, and you are in a cave with no outlet behind. Here you wait while your leader disappears round a corner a few feet above you. Round this corner is the bed of the gully, sloping steeply. You can get a good hand-hold for the right hand but none for the left, and the rock at the corner so pushes you out, that if you trusted to your right hand-hold only, you would probably twist round and fall. At length our rope was thrown over a hitch above, and using it as a support for the left hand, the difficulty was overcome. Another scramble of some 150 feet, and the last pitch, also some 20 feet high, looms black before you. An inspection of the sides did not promise well, but on a thorough investigation being made of the direct route, a small hole was found among a number of jammed stones which formed a kind of cave, and the question remained to be solved, Was the hole large enough to let us through? The last two men huddled up in a small recess of the jammed stones, behind another recess, into which the leader had climbed by back and knee work from below.

An aperture, just large enough to put a rucksack through, enabled us to see Raeburn, and to take charge of his coat, which he took off to give himself as good a chance as possible of wriggling through. At the second attempt, we heard the welcome news that our leader was through, though with nothing to spare, and that there were only 25 feet of easy scrambling to the summit. Mackay went next, a little dubious of being able to reduce himself to the required dimensions; but, after trying two positions, he too just pushed through. From my coign of vantage in the interior, I could put my ice-axe in the recess at the top of which was the exit hole, and pushing the axe well up with the right hand, the man above could take the jacket or rucksack off the end of it. Two coats went up in safety, but on sending my own rucksack up, the head of the axe turned over and the sack slipped off, fell through the jammed stones, and, delighted at regaining its freedom, bounded down the gully out of sight. Lochnagar seems a voracious mountain. Our leader lost an ice-axe in its recesses on a previous expedition, and another member of his party a cap. We had already come across a good many feet of rope in the first gully attempted, and now a supply of food and spare woollen articles are added to the list of things lost, stolen, or strayed on that dark height. If any reader is in want of a cheap Alpine outfit, a little patience and good eyesight expended on Lochnagar might be well repaid. Without further misadventure the three of us scrambled up the remaining 25 feet, which were covered with new snow, and then replaced our outer garments. The climb had taken us about two hours from the foot. It was now nearly dark, so the rucksack was left to its fate, and we hurried down the "ladder" to the comparatively level track.

Our last morning arrived and found us leaving Inchnabobart at 7 A.M. in slight rain, which soon afterwards ceased. We made our way to the foot of the new gully we had climbed the previous day, thinking the rucksack might have tumbled to the bottom. No trace of it could be found, so we proceeded up the Black Spout, and here my companions endeavoured to give me the slip. They allowed me to get

some considerable distance in advance, then shouted that I should go to the top of the Spout and there await their arrival. Having in a weak moment determined to come, I was now equally determined to see the matter through, and indignantly repudiating their suggestion I scrambled down and found Raeburn meditating an attack on a ridge route to the Pinnacle, which lies immediately to the north of the cairn on the summit. Half-way up the Black Spout a similar gully branches off to the left, and just at the junction of the two routes, on the left, is a steep green recess carved in the north flank of the Pinnacle. The angle was considerably steeper than anything we had done yet, and, as the climbing was not easy, I had a considerable amount of leisure to spend on turf ledges, whilst our Ultramontane leader revelled in the difficulties presented. Being unable to think of nothing, I began to speculate—supposing Raeburn fell, which under the circumstances I considered a most natural thing for him to do, could Mackay hold him, and if Mackay went also, could I hold the two, or must we all three be precipitated headlong? A glance downward was not encouraging, nor was a similar glance upward, and I said to myself what a fool I was not to have walked quietly up the Spout to the cairn, where I should now be basking in the sun enjoying the glorious view: if I get safely down, I never, never will risk my precious limbs in *this way again.*

I had just come to this sane conclusion when I was called upon to join Raeburn on a ledge some 12 feet up and almost straight above me, which 12 feet had given him a lot of trouble, and over which he had spent a considerable time. Thinking that my previous meditations hardly assisted a safe ascent, I banished them to a more convenient season, and commenced to admire and respect Raeburn's power of getting up a perpendicular pitch without the aid of the rope. Feeling the honour of all the Salvationist members of the Club to be in my hands, I did my best, and after using, as it seemed, every portion of my body, and with the aid of Raeburn's and Mackay's kind instructions, which somehow did not always seem to meet the facts of the case, and with the moral (nothing more



substantial, I assure the reader) support of the rope, I found myself on a fair-sized ledge some 150 feet from where we started, and with plenty of room for us all. From the left of this ledge a narrow chimney invited us on, though the upper portion of it overhung. The entrance to the chimney was some six feet above our ledge, and I now watched Raeburn tackling it. On his left was a rocky face without holds, but he managed to get a hold for his right hand inside the chimney, and by levering his left foot against the rocky face and getting the benefit of its roughnesses, he wedged his body well into the narrow fissure. The efforts necessary to get so far had been very exhausting, and as the next move was not obvious, our leader, with Mackay's help, descended to the platform. My fears had returned on seeing Raeburn's struggles, and directly he came down again to the ledge, I suggested lunch. This, I thought, would at least prevent further dangers for a time, and, like Mr Micawber, I hoped something might turn up in the interval.

After lunch Raeburn surveyed the route again, and thought that, even if he got up a little way, the overhang at the top would not be overcome. I put in a remark that my presence at business on the morrow was absolutely essential, and that we had not time therefore to experiment further. Seeing a chance of returning home in safety, I became quite eloquent on the necessities of descending, and at length I conquered. On the right of our ledge was a leaf of rock a foot from the perpendicular wall; bestriding this and then descending a few more feet, Raeburn reported that he thought we could make an easier descent into the branch of the Spout. I was let down first, but found the descent worse than it looked, owing to the footholds being mostly of moss with slabs underneath. At length one foothold going entirely I was left on the rope, but by means of my axe I pulled myself across an impossible slab into safety. Mackay could have also crossed with the aid of the rope, but no way of escape could be found for the last man, so to save time the Ultramontanes decided to let me scramble down the remainder of the descent, which was comparatively easy, as best I could, whilst they reascended and came down where we had come up. We met at the

top of the branch of the Spout not long afterwards. Finding we had ten minutes to spare, and burning to revenge our defeat at the foot, we rushed down to where the Pinnacle is cut off from the summit by a sharp little col and found its ascent little more than a clamber, though from a short way off it looks quite inaccessible. There were no traces of human habitation, and with jubilant feelings we claimed the summit as our own and built a cairn. Then leaving behind us a record of four defeats, two successes, and a rucksack, we hurried down to catch the last train from Ballater.

FROM SEA TO SUMMIT.

BY HAROLD RAEBURN.

AH! those days in Coronation week, that brilliant oasis of sun and warmth in the Arctic deserts of an almost sunless summer. Those, who like myself, were privileged to spend one or two of them as near to heaven as is possible within the limits of our native land, will never forget that time.

For five days, from the rising of the scarce-set sun, to his sinking behind the purple north-western mountains, floods of golden sunlight flowed around and over the summit. The air was dry and crisp, with a "life" in it that fairly lifted the climber out of himself, and made him feel, as he affectionately grasped the warm rocks of the old Ben, Nothing is impossible to-day.

"He grasps the crag with crooked hands,
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world he stands,
Around him rise the rocky walls"—

But a truce to these transports, is it not a sober account and description of the ascent of a hitherto unclimbed buttress that I have to write?

I have been somewhat amused to observe lately, a tendency in some quarters to try to establish a difference between climbing and mountaineering, such as I believe does not really exist. Mountaineering after all is a sport. *We* believe it to be the noblest of true sports; whether followed on the ether-piercing domes and spires of the Himalaya, or on the crags of Cumberland or Scotland, it is essentially the same, and has its root in essentially the same feeling, love of nature as expressed in its grander manifestations. I admit there may be a combative element in it, a delight in pitting our skill, knowledge, and strength against the rocks, the ice, and the snow.

In the words of one who perhaps has best expressed the mountaineering spirit, "The happy climber, like the aged Ulysses, is one who has 'drunk delight of battle with his peers.' To set one's utmost faculties, physical and mental,

to fight some grim precipice, or force some gaunt ice-clad gully, is work worthy of men."

But after all, these are contests that leave no bitterness in victory, no humiliation in defeat.

Treating mountaineering purely as a sport, it is interesting to reflect on the influence on it, and inter-relations with it, of other sports; whether they lead away from or toward it. I am afraid that in most cases the leading is in the wrong direction, from our point of view.

That insidious epidemic, for instance, which goes under the name of golf, is especially detrimental to Scottish mountaineering. "Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen," the erstwhile wielder of the ice-axe and climber of the hills of snow now merely cuts "steps" with an "iron"—not even of purpose, in the green turf, and climbs no hills, save hills of sand. His bergschrunds are shrunk to bunkers, his "big hobnailers" to shoes, with nails diminished both in number and in size, and his vaulting ambition, which once led him to place his whole desire upon the high places of the earth, is now sunk so low that only depressions, yea, holes, attained by the "easiest route" will satisfy him.

Yachting, however, I claim, stands on another footing, and there is nothing really inconsistent with scaling in sailing. Even the nomenclature of the two sports has much in common. At sea we climb "mountainous waves" with their "snowy crests," and glide down "glassy slopes." There are enough "rocks" and "pitches" to satisfy the most ardent face and gully climber, probably more than enough in fact.

Every yacht has at least one "boot," and does not her mainsail run up to a "lovely sharp peak"? "Hitches" too of superlative quality are to be found in abundance. To beat to windward against a strong wind and heavy sea, has something akin to the feeling of fighting one's way up the ice pitches in a snow gully, or difficult traverse on a steep rock face.

It is true that less depends in sailing upon individual exertion than upon the excellence of the instrument, say a fore and aft rigged cutter yacht—that striking exemplar of the lines of least resistance, that beautiful embodiment

of the phrase, "She stoops to conquer," "that wondrous weapon forged by man to fight the forces of the winds and seas." . . .

But the yacht is keeping us, as is only natural, after all, far away from the rocks. It will explain, however, if not excuse, my failure to respond to Dr Clark's appeal from the Summit, to me on the Sea, till the Saturday. On Friday, our forty mile race on the Firth of Forth had degenerated into a windless drift, so that it was not until 1 A.M. on Saturday morning that we picked up our buoy in Granton Harbour. An hour later the cycle took me up to Edinburgh for an hour in bed, and 4.30 saw me on board the Fort-William train, to keep tryst with Dr Clark's party at the foot of the Observatory Buttress. . . .

It was warm in the valley of the Mhuillin that noon. I have seen the times when semi-paralysed parties of "hardy mountaineers," in all their winter panoply of helmets, wool jerseys, wettermantels, and "flannel lineds," have butted their way up the corrie in the teeth of the mist and sleet-laden blizzard, glad to regain breath by crouching for a few moments in lee of some rock or boulder. "*Autres jours autres mœurs,*" and to-day I covered the greater part of the distance from Meall an t' Suidhe to the foot of the Tower Ridge minus boots and stockings, and with my other garments as loose as was consistent with their remaining *in situ*. Inclination many a time prompted me to pause and plunge into the pellucid depths—or shallows—of the murmuring stream, but duty, in the shape of the inexorable hands of my watch getting nearer and nearer to the trysting hour of 2 P.M., forced me ever "on and up." Nor was I accompanied, as was my prototype in the immortal poem, by waggons with provisions, or bearers with "suitable liqueurs for cup," but looked to the Summit to provide needful sustenance. Duty, therefore, or appetite, perhaps both combined, landed me at the foot of the Observatory Buttress precisely at 2, and as no sign of the others was yet visible, I crossed a snowfield to a rock island, and lay down to rest till they should appear. I am aware that here is the place to introduce a pean or poem in praise of the pipe, to sing the Saga of Smoke, and to generally prostrate oneself

before the shrine of My Lady Nicotine. What an amount of literary capital has been made, is to be made, and will be made, over the simple seeming operation of filling and lighting a pipe! The cigarette—at least on the stage, in combination with evening dress—we know to be the mark of the villain, but the pipe! why, its very name leads our thoughts to peace and repose.

“And the smoke rose slowly, slowly,
Through the tranquil air of morning,
First, a single line of darkness,
Then a denser, bluer vapour,
Then a snow-white cloud unfolding,
Like the tree-tops of the forest,
Ever rising, rising, rising,
Till it touched the top of heaven,
Till it broke against the heaven,
And rolled outward all around it.”

However, all this rich material is barred from me, for the melancholy fact is I do not smoke. . . . Lying in the sun on the warm rocks, I semi-dozed, and steeped myself in the spirit of the rocks and snows of this lonely upper corrie.

Yet it is not lonely after all. From the blue sky overhead comes a deep-toned musical “cronk,” and there float across, with easy strokes of their wide sable pinions, a couple of ravens. The clear sweet notes of the snow bunting, like silver bells, ring fainter from near the summit of the cliffs. The recent tracks of a fox were noted on the sun-softened snows of the lower gully. Higher, the tiny footprints of the wee field vole, that crops the stunted herbage and berries, even on the ledges of the steep cliffs. Every tuft and crevice pulses with the life of the myriad forms of the insect world.

Flowers, too, of the many brilliant-hued Alpine plants, flourish up here in this great mountain rift. The water from the fast melting snowfields and drifts, gushes forth on every side, and wherever a patch of earth is left bare among the rocks and screes, there we can see the newly-opened blossoms. Here is a patch of the yellow clusters of the golden saxifrage, there the rosette-like leaves and white

blossoms of *Saxifraga stellaris*, and there again the flat cushions and abundant pink flowers of *Silene acaulis*.

The creeping jagged-edged shadow of the Tower Ridge, flowing over my feet, at length roused me from my doze, and warned me of the passage of time. A solitary figure now appeared on the summit of the Tower, giving hopes that at length the rest of the party were at hand, but a few minutes dispelled that hope, so I turned my face towards the grim-looking slabs of the Observatory Buttress.

Below, was the fast flowing shadowtide; above, the blaze of sunlight, and oh, blessed thought, perhaps afternoon tea. It was enough, I went up, and, fifteen hours from the Sea, stood upon the Summit.

The orthodox thing now to do, is to begin to praise and describe the scenery, to catalogue the myriad peaks, visible and invisible. As some one has phrased it in these pages, to "dissect the unhappy points of the compass," as well as to "drink in the grandeur and beauty of the surroundings which are apt to be missed by the climber when engaged on the problems that confront him on a new ascent."

But I did none of these things. There, as my clairvoyant vision had seen, was a flat stone near the hotel spread for afternoon tea. There was the sunlight shining on the smiling faces of friends, and glinting on the charming scenery of the teacups, the bread and butter, *and* the jam, and to my hostess's kind bidding, no second invitation was required. Dr Clark's explanation of their failure to keep tryst, was accepted in the sense, entirely complimentary, in which it was expressed, and we were able as a party, to congratulate each other upon two instead of one new ascent. Of the rest of that glorious evening, I shall not write. I for one shall never forget it. How at length we retired to rest on the Summit, the sun still shining on the western Sea.

NEW CLIMBS ON BEN NEVIS.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

NOT long ago the mother of a distinguished official of the Club urged me to give a "Lecture to Mothers of Mountaineers," inferring that the solace and comfort of the same would relieve many a maternal ache. If these notes are not written with this object in view, they may be consolatory to any mothers who read them as exemplifying the methods and practice of mountaineers in restoring to health those who have recovered from illness and who only need encouragement and stimulus to enable them to regain robust health.

After six months' enforced idleness, during which the sunny snow slopes and rugged corries of our land wooed me in vain, some secret prompter suggested that a few days on the exhilarating mountain top of Ben Nevis would sweep away the cobwebs of illness, and inspire the languid muscles with fresh life. Just a restful holiday, with sufficient exercise and photography to promote digestion. So we proposed, but we counted not on the energy of our associates, and hereby hangs the following tale.

Bleak, biting winds and frequent rain had rudely shattered any reputation that June possessed, built up on meteorological statistics. To make matters worse, Raeburn said we might count on bad weather, and that if, perchance, a fair day intervened, our cup of gratitude should indeed run over. Thus it came about that on the 25th June 1902, the day before the expected Coronation, we arrived at Fort-William, with such a bundle of *wettermantels* and jerseys, and Jaeger hats and snow gloves, that we might have been taken for Arctic explorers rather than pleasure seekers on the Ben. My wife felt rather ashamed at our ponderous baggage, the load of a pony, as she compared it with the slender equipment of our companions. The further to shame us, that was the first fine day of the season, and the burning glass had told of fifteen hours' sunshine on the Ben, so that when Glover met us at the station it scarce

seemed decent to speak of cold and wet and the icy blasts we had met with on our previous visit (Vol. VI., p. 225). Raeburn, under the influence of yachting, delayed his arrival, but Glover, fresh from daring exploits on the Cheviots, thirsted for the most difficult rock climbs on the northern face, and taxed my memory, surcharged with the details of a guide-book article, to provide him with new climbs, easy or difficult. In order to temper the ascent for the shorn lamb, the writer, it was decided that he should start at 5.30 A.M. alone, and meet the others at the Carn Dearg Buttress about one o'clock. Even at that early hour ladies were on the road, and one in particular, like the lapwing on the moor, now rested and now flitted on in front, defying all efforts to overtake her. But soon the lonely lochan was past and I was left to my musings as the Allt a' Mhuilinn drew near, and the great precipices stood up naked in the clear morning air. This Mhuilinn glen in spring time gives an impression of bleakness, but in lovely June it is a rich garden of blaeberrys and crow-berry plants, parsley fern and what not, now daring the bright sunshine or anon peering forth from the recesses of boulders and stones as if their delicate green mantles would be injured by unabashed gaze. The babble of the brook coursing down from the dazzling snowfields completed the fancy, and transported me back in time to those bright memories of mountain adventure which are among the sweetest of my life. The mountain photographer is no doubt an intolerable nuisance to his friends, with his frequent delays and his uncertain results, but in himself he is the happiest of mortals (save when the mists obscure the view), and the fleeting hours are all too short for him to drink in the enchanting pictures depicted on the focussing screen. So the hours passed on, till high above the valley I lay on a mossy sward at the base of the Carn Dearg Buttress and watched for the approaching figures of my companions. At my side a light brown vole wandered among the stones, and, high above, a trio of ravens held feast on the ridges. Now and then a rock, loosened from its hold by the winter's frost, was tipped over the precipice and rattled down to commence a new career in the recess

below, and the air hummed with an orchestra of insects busy at their floral repast.

The music of the mountains asserted itself on every hand, contrasting favourably with the silence of frost-bound winter, or the arid dumbness of mountain regions devoid of water. How, I thought, would a great composer, like Beethoven, Schumann, or Wagner, render in music this majesty of silent speech? I have read that the roar of Niagara has been analysed and resolved into octaves of unfathomable depth, with octaves of unattainable height; but here the language is more like a symphony, with the deep echoes forming a bass for understructure. Then, again, solitude, so often attributed to the mountains, was here absent. The corrie became peopled with visions, at first faint, but soon life-like, of Club members and their feats. There, opposite, were Howie and Thomson, in winter garb, taking their famous photographs of the Ben, now public property. Nearer, Hinxman's party, exulting in the sense of victory, are approaching the summit of the Castle Ridge, and one listens for their loud hurrah across the gulf between. On the same ridge the figures of Penney, Mounsey, and another are combating icy slopes and icy chimneys, endeavouring to emulate the solitary Raeburn, who seems to ascend on cliff and slope, where every law of gravity must be defied. In the gully below, a Queen's Birthday party, including Inglis and my better half, are toiling up, 'mid avalanche and driving snow, scarce distinguishable from the frost crystals coating every rock. The Castle again is peopled by a host of warriors—Naismith, Maclay, Bell, Raeburn, Gibson, and the like, and one can almost hear the rub of the Harris tweed on porphyritic slab and in chimney. Yonder to the right our Editor demonstrates synchronous oscillations at the end of a 120 feet rope, and finally christens the Boulder with his name; while from the other side of the Carn Dearg Buttress a faint moon-lit vision of two climbers, weary, cold, but not depressed, beckons me to the cornice high above, where in mid-winter it was to them a question of do or die. On all hands the faces of friends peep from boulder and crag, and the very atmosphere pulses with radiant memory. One vision more

distinct than the others at last persisted, where Bell, Maclay, and Naismith are perched on the cliffs above, and call from the "Staircase Climb" to follow who dare. It was indeed a clear call to duty, and as I turned round and saw the uncompromising rampart above, the question rose in my mind, Can we do it? From where I rested the route was invisible, but the mere contemplation of the scene was inspiring and awesome. Looking back to the valley, a couple of sheep scampering past the "Lunching Stone," led to the Sherlock Holmes deduction that my companions were near, and soon luncheon was served at the foot of the Waterfall Gully, where the staircase begins.

As this splendid climb is minutely but very modestly described in Vol. V., p. 128, I only propose to give the impression it produced on one who has not been expelled from the ranks of the Salvationists, and who appreciates a satisfactory hitch as much as any one. Frankly, when we thought of the only other party who had preceded us, our admiration for their pluck rose with each successive step. Rounding an evident corner, where the first touch of sensation is felt, we were soon at the little recess overhung by the 8-foot step. I know of few similar situations in our native land, and the man who sits or stands in this confined spot, and acts as ladder for the party, has a strange and interesting experience. Burdened by a camera and an ice-axe, we found that the "cosy corner" was a tight fit for two, and that the lift on to the roof was critical and all-absorbing. No thoughts of business or secretarial duties forced themselves on the mind, but a steady stand with muscles braced and a side hold in the crack, were the prelude to the contact of fierce hobnailers with but lightly protected shoulder blades. No unsteady backer for this spot, for the holds above are trying. Yet it is done, and the leader is launched alone on the top to overcome the still difficult pitch ere the safe hold is reached. What a spot for middle-aged folks to be in! My wife came last, and as I waited in the corner with left foot against a convenient ledge, and right pressing the yielding turf, the eye looked out and down to the valley 800 feet below, with naught to see between. The vision of a head below me, and the grasping of my feet for hand-

hold, led quickly to the ascent of the party, and congratulations *in festa loca* above. Little wonder that Naismith (Vol. V., p. 128) suggested the desirability of a railing, for the position is sensational to a degree.

Another incident impressed on me the benefit of an accurate memory if we would make a rapid ascent. Above the staircase part of the climb, steep grass leads to a *cul de sac*; hemmed in on the right by a sheer precipice, above by overhanging rocks and on the left by the appalling gulf of the Waterfall Gully. At the upper left hand corner is an aggravating 12-foot wall which promises a route to the top. No attempt was made on this, and misled by a faulty memory, two of us descended to the gully to view the land. This was not lost time, for the sight of the stupendous wall of rock in front impressed us as nothing else on the Ben has done, and lovers of the immense should not hurry past the spot. We seem to have fairly well followed the route of the first party, and had all the pleasurable uncertainty as to our ultimate escape, until we reached the interesting col overlooking the gully. A defiant pinnacle stands at this point, but was left uncrowned. Here end the difficulties of the climb, and the impression produced was that a new standard had been set for Ben Nevis climbing, one, fortunately, which the experience of the next few days proved to be not impossible of imitation. Throughout, the rock is excellent, and the route classes itself as rather for two than for a solitary climber. From above the col, a peep is had into the least known but perhaps wildest rocks on the mountain, those bordering on the South Castle Gully. In addition to the fantastic Castle, there is a marvellous cauldron bordered in by gigantic grids of rock which look as if they would baffle the boldest climber. If not, then the choicest climbs remain for our Club members.

As we slowly plodded on to the summit, the knowledge that a record day of sunshine was closing, raised strong hopes for the weather, and made Glover still more emphatic in demanding something good for the morrow. A balmy night with starry sky scarce acted as a soporific, and perhaps the arrival of a party at 2 A.M. to witness the sunrise, may have had something to do with it, but the forenoon

was spent in a study of the Tower. Descending to the cleft, an examination was made of the eastern face overlooking the Tower Gully, and Naismith's easy ledge reached. There can be no gainsaying that on this side a party of moderate climbing ability may reach the summit. Descending a little nearer the cleft the rocks were found to be not quite so easy, and an interesting traverse, partly on "all fours," led along to below the cleft itself, which was easily reached by climbing straight up. The ledges running down to the Tower Gully also present no difficulty. Our chief interest, however, centred on the other or west side of the ridge, where a stupendous chimney, and lower down a steep gully, falls to the corrie below. It had been an old ambition to climb to the Tower in this way, and many were the heroic plans upset in the past. Could it be done? An inspection from the top convinced us that, granted a favourable entrance at the bottom, the question would be answered in the affirmative. Just think of this, ye sticklers for a Spartan breed of mountaineers: no allurements of mine would move my companions till afternoon tea had been served, and served it was under the shade of an awning, on the rocks of the summit. Glover, his tongue let loose by the stimulating beverage, discoursed on his pet ideal, hitherto unrealised, to make a difficult and first ascent, in the cool of the evening, and wafted up by the memories of fragrant Assam.

Five o'clock still saw the lingering footsteps, but by 6 P.M. a descent was being made by No. 4 Gully into the Corrie na Ciste, where the air cooled by great snowfields and moistened by a score of waterfalls over the rocks, was refreshing after the heat of the day. Our path led across to the snow below the "Comb," and across to the island rock, standing like a "Jardin" of Switzerland, an oasis for plants. To this we gave the Gaelic equivalent name, Gàradh na Ciste, a convenient starting-point for our climbs. From this, perhaps, the wildest view in the whole corrie is obtained. Above, the buttresses of the Comb stand up like huge aiguilles, cleft by dark rifted chimneys, still holding in their recesses masses of snow. Snow couloirs, down which at times rocks fell with a crash, led upwards to No. 2 and



W. Inglis Clark.

THE TOWER GAP OF BEN NEVIS.

Now crouching under overhanging block or again far out on the steep face, we watched our rolling messengers plunge over pitch and gully and waken the echoes of the night with their reverberations. Once fairly in the upper chimney, the darkness scarce sufficed to show the holds, but the route lay out from the recess, and straddling the gulf below, steady and safe progress was possible. You who like to picture a weird sight, imagine Glover striding the chimney, some 4 feet wide, while vertically 30 feet below another figure loomed up against the sky, and, at the end of the 80-foot rope, the invalid came up under the others. A splendid finish near the top gave *éclat*. Striding out some 10 feet from the recess, the body is turned on to the south wall, and a difficult climb made up and back to the block forming the south side of the cleft. The Tower Gap Chimney (Glover's Chimney) had been climbed and the pet dream of years accomplished. It was 11.15 P.M., and ere dinner was over and the camera retrieved from the arête of the Comb, it was 1.20 A.M., and the sun struggling hard in the throes of a new birth.

No doubt the name Trident Buttress is new to readers of this *Journal*. Every one knows the Carn Dearg Buttress ; but what name has been given to the mass of rock south of No. 5 Gully? It is to this that the name Trident has been given, the name having reference to the three peaks at the sky-line, each of which dominates a ridge ending in steep crags near the Lochan na Ciste. In the struggle to work out the main ridges of Ben Nevis many secondary (in height) but good climbs have been overlooked. One of these is the Pinnacle Arête of Carn Dearg (Trident Buttress). It is the most southerly of three ridges referred to, and forms an ill-defined north wall to No. 4 Gully. The lower part of the buttress is what is usually called impossible ; but after the experiences of this week, who can say what is impossible? Above this a broad ledge leads north, and terminates at a corner overlooking a steep gully (the first one north from No. 4). At first sight the rocks are unsatisfactory, but looked at from a distance the strata are seen to turn at the very corner and promise good holds on the right.



THE COMB FROM GARADH NA CISTE.

W. Inglis Clark.



Our party consisted of Raeburn, with my wife and self. The start was all wrong. Steep ledges shelving outwards made brilliant climbing difficult; but by traversing to the right good rocks at a steep angle were reached, and simultaneously the face of our leader assumed a cheerful aspect. We were on the right side of the rocks, and the angle if steep was easily overcome by the perfect holds. At last a platform overlooking the gully on the right seemed to offer a possible escape; but the magnificent pinnacle in front, and in the true line of progression, was too good to be missed. Though of no great height, it appropriated an 80-foot rope, and afforded as vertical a climb as I can remember in this country. To state an angle in a mountaineering journal is dangerous, but it is safe to assert that a rope in many places hangs parallel with the face. A steep chimney cleaves the centre, or a sensational face climb with perfect holds may be taken, in both cases leading to the summit of the "pinnacle," which to our disappointment proved to be only an integral part of the ridge, though none the less sporting. Above this the arête to the summit follows the character of all the Carn Dearg climbs, *e.g.*, Staircase and Ledge routes, and gives interesting but not difficult rock work all the way. *En route* to this climb we had espied a huge alpine bergschrund at the base of the buttress projecting to the east of No. 3 Gully. Unlike most of the Nevis bergschrunds, it was complicated by intersecting crevasses and at least two narrow and thin bridges above it; but farther east towered the "Comb," the most prominent object in Corrie na Ciste between the Tower Ridge and No. 3 Gully. Its steep face had often been pronounced impossible, and so it still appears to be; but from our outlook on the Pinnacle Arête it seemed at least worth trying to ascend on to it from the steep snow gully dividing it on the west from No. 3 Buttress. A return to the corrie was therefore made, and the easy steep ledges forming the base of the Comb ascended. This led to a slanting rake of slabs leading to a corner at the right. At this point, under a bulging portion of the crag, a rotten chimney ascends vertically; but our leader found sufficient outlet for his energy in gardening operations on the difficult

corner, where but slender holds prevented a summary descent to the valley. At length the party had reached the water-worn gully to the west, and which we hoped would lead back to the arête; but despite every effort, we were forced on to the west wall, and therefore off the Comb. Highly difficult climbing took us up about 100 feet; but an inspection of the head of the gully finally decided us to abandon the Comb on this occasion. An easier descent was made on the right to a snow ledge, and to avoid returning by the difficult corner we held along till right above the beautiful and complicated bergschrund already described. Here a most interesting and easy wide staircase of basalt (?) led up to the face of the cliff, which, above, was very forbidding; but turning to the right a steep climb with easy holds led us to a corner looking into the lower part of No. 3 Gully, and our exit was then certain. A sporting bit brought us to a corner, from which an easy climb can be followed to the plateau; but the sight of a grand chimney, 30 to 40 feet high, roused our leader, and we elected to follow this delightful finish to the climb. The chimney is dolomitic in its character, affords both opportunity to fall out and to hold in, and being close to the plateau may well become a favourite with those who wish to test their nerve and grip. It emerges on the plateau at the extreme face of the No. 3 Buttress.

As on the first day, so throughout our stay on the summit, we were favoured with perfect weather. The highest temperature on record was on 28th June, when 66.4° in the shade was registered, and uninterrupted sunshine, approximating to seventeen hours per day, greeted us from morning till evening. Not till we finally descended to the valley was there a threat of change, and from first to last mere existence on the Ben was delicious. To those who only know it in winter cold or summer storm, it would have been a surprise to have looked in on us about 5 P.M. on Saturday, 28th June. Afternoon tea spread on the rocks, coatless and hatless figures of mountaineers resting on granite blocks at angles indicative of repose, a presiding deity at the teapot, the gentle zephyrs hardly cool enough to satisfy the senses. To such depths may

mountaineers fall when untrammelled by the restraints of Club Meet.

For the third time I appear in the *Journal* to summon the Club to these June meets on Ben Nevis, and he who absents himself does so to his loss. But while there is a time to rest there is a time to work, and ere I close the reader must again descend into Corrie na Ciste with Glover and myself, to foregather at the Gàradh. Above is "Glover's Chimney," sufficient for one holiday; but the worst of mountaineers is that they are never content, and something new is on hand. Above, if you crane your neck, you may see the Tower peeping over an overhanging buttress, the Pinnacle Buttress of the Tower. It looks tremendously steep, yet, as Glover somewhat irreverently remarked, "If you slap Ben Nevis boldly on the jaw he generally collapses." Our project was to climb direct to the Tower by this Pinnacle Buttress.

Probably with our present knowledge of the rocks we would start the climb from the very bottom and facing the Gàradh, trusting to escape the overhanging parts by traverses; but we were engaged to meet Raeburn at the Observatory Buttress at 2 P.M., and had unfortunately started too late. About 200 feet north of the foot of Glover's Chimney, a ledge sloping up easily to the left was chosen as the point of attack. At the first steep rocks we took to the right, and were soon in the enjoyment of steep-rock chimneys, slabs, and faces with the best of holds. Passing a traverse leading across south to Glover's Chimney, we at length found ourselves on the right wall of a snow gully, the upper part of which was prolonged as a smooth slimy chimney, ending on the face at the north-west edge of the buttress. Progress must be across the chimney, or not at all, and one of the most interesting parts of the climb ensued. A small recess, with floor 2 feet by 1 foot, and about 8 feet above the line of the chimney, was easily reached by the hands, but at first refused farther progress. After a first futile attempt to remove rotten footholds, and round the corner to the left, Glover, who was leading, persisted in trying to climb the slippery chimney to reach a hold just 1 foot beyond his

reach. With a party of three the attempt might perhaps have been safe and successful; but as the invalid had the rope over the only safe hitch, all the specious arguments of the leader were ignored.

Indeed, for the benefit of all true Salvationists, I throw out the hint that an Alpine rope securely held over a good hitch, is a powerful means of deterring foolhardy youths from sacrificing the cream of the Club by climbing *up* into dangerous places. In any case, the first route again engaged attention, and soon we were round the corner and on the rib above. So accustomed had we become to easy acute angles, that an interesting slabby portion with holds sloping down the wrong way rather puzzled us for a little. But this over, we looked right up to the Tower, on the summit of which one of the observers, with 80-foot rope, was looking down upon us from an apparently impossible wall. It was at first difficult to realise that this was indeed no other than the formidable west face of the Tower, and Glover had some misgivings as to our chances.

A steep little arête brought us to a small col whence a good view of the Tower was obtained, and subsequently keeping on the very edge of the buttress, an interesting but rotten corner brought us up at the very marked Pinnacle which gives its name to the buttress. From the Pinnacle the photograph (Vol. VII., p. 160) was taken, and easy rocks continued the arête right up to the foot of the Recess Route, giving us excellent views of the traverse on the west face. Although by this time too late to keep our appointment with Raeburn, our consciences (mine at least) pricked us so badly that we could not spare time to follow the traverse, and we elected to reach the Tower cairn by the most direct route. A rope was lowered over the Recess Route, and to the tender mercies of the observer above I committed my photographic rucksack, the contents of which to this day show the marks of repeated impacts with the rock. We eschewed such extraneous aids, and in the dry condition of the rocks simply revelled in the delights of the cliff. The cairn was reached at 4.15 P.M., and eagerly looking down we espied a moving speck on the rocks of the Observatory Buttress (Raeburn's Buttress). It was that solitary

climber, who amid the great immensities of the place seemed to traverse invisible ledges, and to climb where foot and hand holds could not be seen. Our chance of a share in his great enterprise was gone, and the reproachful glance of my wife who had waited for us for two and a half hours at the "Gap" was such as to make us hasten aloft to bury our disappointment and well-merited but silent reproof in the business of afternoon tea. From below came up the reverberations of falling rocks, and we knew that Raeburn drew near. Our cups had hardly been handed in for the fourth time when he appeared in person, and intensified our disappointment by his accounts of "pulling in holds" and "overhanging pitches," and such like mountaineering delicacies. Surely such an S.M.C. meet was never held before on the Ben—its canopy the blue heaven above, its furniture the remains of Titanic convulsion; and to this day, naught but beaming smiles greet the remembrance of these glorious days on the Ben.

In Memoriam.

H. G. S. LAWSON.

BY the sudden death of H. G. S. Lawson, on 25th October 1902, the Club has lost an enthusiastic and devoted member, and those who had the privilege of personal acquaintance, a loyal and staunch comrade.

He was educated at Watson's College, where he took a scholarship, and at Edinburgh University, of which he was a graduate. He was also a Fellow of the Faculty of Actuaries, and was rapidly making his way to the front in his profession, and was looked upon as a rising man. At the time of his death, he held the position of actuary to the Scottish Accident Insurance Company.

An all-round athlete, he was a prominent member of the Watsonian Club, and captained both the cricket and football teams. In other branches of sport, too, he was not behind, and it is characteristic that some eight years ago, he was persuaded to run in a half-mile race at Watson's College Sports, and though quite untrained, he won easily in very good time. He never ran again, however, for his nature shrank from being put in a position of prominence or publicity. The respect and affection in which he was held by his fellow-members, was shown when he was unanimously elected to the position of President.

But it is from his mountaineering exploits that he is best known to us, and here his boundless energy and activity found ample scope. A true lover of the mountains, there were few parts of his native country which he did not know, and summer and winter alike found him exploring new ground or repeating some favourite expedition. He was elected a member of the Club in 1896, and has attended all the Easter meets since then.

When the new Club Room was established last year, he was selected for the post of Librarian, and threw himself into his new duties with characteristic keenness and enthusiasm. A too infrequent contributor to the *Journal*, his articles were marked by freshness and humour, an account

ight spent out in the Fannichs being particularly interesting. On the mountains, he was an admirable comrade; his keen delight and appreciation of the scenery, his cheerfulness under all circumstances, and his complete indifference to fatigue, rendered him a delightful comrade whom to travel.

In the last few years his summer holidays have generally been spent in the Alps, and there the lessons learnt in his country enabled him to carry out many expeditions with great success. A list of the ascents he made during his life will be found on page 237.

He was elected a member of the Alpine Club in 1899. He had conquered most of the peaks in the Oberland and Garmatt districts, including a notable ascent of the Grand Herens last year, when the party was benighted, and spent twenty-seven hours on the rope.

The writer had the privilege of spending a very happy holiday in his company last year, crossing the passes from Garmatt to Chamonix, and again this year in traversing the Grand Blanc, under particularly difficult circumstances, and made the presence of a tried friend eminently desirable.

Under a retiring disposition, he concealed a warm heart and a large-minded charity, which spoke for itself. His manly and thoughtful character, and his modesty, unselfishness, and consideration for others, endeared him to all with whom he came into contact; and we who knew and loved him have lost that most priceless gift, a true friend.

W. N. L.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

GENERAL MEETING.

THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Carlton Hotel, Edinburgh, on the evening of Friday, 5th December 1902, with the President, Mr Maylard, in the chair.

The President referred to the great loss the Club had sustained through the death of Mr H. G. S. Lawson, and it was resolved to convey to his family an expression of the regret and sympathy felt by the members.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr Napier, submitted his statement for the past year, and this showed that the finances of the Club were in a healthy state, the balance at the credit of the Club being £176. 4s. 9d. The accounts and statement were unanimously adopted.

The Hon. Secretary, Dr Inglis Clark, reported that seven new members had been elected to the Club, viz., S. A. Gillon, T. G. Longstaff, R. S. Low, J. Macmillan, W. A. Morrison, W. G. B. Murdoch, and R. K. Parr; that the membership of the Club was now 152. At the beginning of the year the membership had been 154, of whom 4 had resigned, 2 had died, and 3 had fallen out through non-payment of subscription.

Mr Goggs, the *interim* Hon. Librarian, reported on the acquisition of the Club Room, and read a list of gifts of books and pictures that had been presented.

Mr Robertson's report on the Slide Collection, which was read in his absence by Mr Russell, stated that since he took charge of the collection the Club had acquired some 450 slides, and that the number now in the possession of the Club reaches nearly 700. He asked that a vote of thanks be given to the donors of these slides, and this was heartily accorded. He then submitted the following Rules for those who desire to borrow slides for the purpose of lantern demonstrations, and as these have the approval of the Club Room Committee, they will remain in force till the next General Meeting.

S.M.C. LANTERN SLIDE COLLECTION.

EXPENSE OF CARRIAGE.

All expenses for carriage, &c., of the slides to be defrayed by the member using them.

NECESSITY OF CARE IN HANDLING.

As the slides are most valuable, and many of them difficult, if not impossible, to replace, it is most important that the very greatest care be taken of them. Members must therefore not only handle them themselves with the very greatest care and delicacy, but see that the lanternist does so also, and warn him of their value. This is most important.

WARM THE SLIDE.

It is desirable that slides should be slightly warmed before being placed in the lantern, and this is best done by placing the open boxes near a fire.

HEAT IN THE LANTERN.

The slide must not be kept in the lantern beyond a certain time—the prolonged heat of a strong lime light burns the slide and renders it useless. The binding strips, labels, and spots also suffer from undue heat. One or two minutes is quite long enough for a slide to be in the lantern. To ensure this being done, members are recommended to select at least fifty to the hour (*e.g.*, a lecture of one and a half hours will require seventy-five slides at least), and to make a point of showing them all within the specified time of lecturing. This will keep the remarks of the lecturer on any special slide within bounds. The lanternist must be instructed to remove any slide out of the lantern the moment he considers it getting too hot, no matter whether the remarks of the lecturer on it be finished or not.

REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED SLIDES.

Should any slide be burnt or broken, a charge of at least 1s. for each slide so destroyed will be made.

FACILITIES FOR BORROWING.

To facilitate the work of the Custodian in looking out the slides from the cabinet and checking them when returned, a list of the slides wanted should be written out, *all the slides of one hill or group being put together*. This list will be sent in the box along with the slides, and it must be returned with them, the slides being in the same order as on the list. The Custodian will be only too glad to help members to select their slides. If they tell him what hills or climbs they want illustrated he can pick out for them the best slides in question.

RETURN OF THE SLIDES.

Slides are to be packed in the same careful manner as received, and returned carriage paid to the Custodian, Rev. A. E. Robertson,

Room 39, Dowell's Rooms, 18 George Street, Edinburgh, on the morning of the day after the lecture.

All communications to him by letter should be sent to his home address, 3 Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh.

Mr Maylard, in commenting on the report, complimented Mr Robertson on the splendid work he was doing for the Club, and congratulated him on the success his efforts had been met with.

In the room of Mr Maylard, who now retired from the Presidentship, Mr William C. Smith was elected President, and Mr James Maclay was elected Vice-President in room of Mr Hinxman. Mr F. S. Goggs was elected Hon. Librarian, and the Rev. A. E. Robertson and Mr Harry Walker were elected to the two vacancies on the Committee caused by the retiral by rotation of Mr Maclay and Mr Raeburn.

The Club Room Committee was appointed, viz., the Librarian, the Editor, and the Secretary, with the Librarian convener.

A grant of £15 was made to the Club Room Committee for the purpose of the purchase of books and maps.

A grant of £5 was made to the Rev. A. E. Robertson for the purposes of the Slide Collection.

It was decided to hold the New Year Meet at Killin, and the one at Easter at Sligachan with a secondary one at Inveroran.

THE LANTERN DEMONSTRATION.

Previous to the meeting a Reception was held in Dowell's Rooms, when a selection of the Club slides was shown by Dr Inglis Clark and Mr Raeburn. Much sympathy was expressed for the Rev. A. E. Robertson, who had arranged the meeting, and who was unfortunately prevented by a sudden attack of influenza from carrying it out.

THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL DINNER.

At the close of the General Meeting the Annual Dinner was held in the Carlton Hotel, with the newly elected President, Mr William C. Smith, K.C., in the chair. The attendance at this dinner was one of the largest in the history of the Club, there being fifty-one members and twenty guests present. Among the guests we had the pleasure of welcoming the Editors of the *Alpine Journal* and of the *Yorkshire Ramblers' Journal*. The toasts proposed at this dinner were—

The King - - - - Mr W. C. Smith.
Imperial Forces - - - Mr W. C. Smith.

Reply—Captain Mackenzie Stuart.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Mr W. C. Smith.
The Alpine Club - - - Mr A. M. Mackay.

Reply—Mr W. C. Slingsby.

The Visitors - - - Mr F. C. Squance.

Reply—Dr David Christison.

Our Dundee Members - Professor G. G. Ramsay.

Reply—Mr H. Walker.

S.M.C. LIBRARY.

THE keys to the bookcase in the Club-room can be had from the Hon. Librarian (F. S. Goggs), 25 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh (150 yards east from Dowell's Rooms), between the hours of 10 A.M. and 4.30 P.M., on any week-day but Saturday, when the hours will be 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. The one-inch Ordnance Survey map of Scotland is in a separate case (unlocked), and the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's Atlas of Scotland (1895) will be found on the table in the Club-room.

It is hoped that each member will feel it incumbent upon

him to take his part in making the Library one worthy of the S.M.C. Our special aim should be to get together a large and representative collection of Scottish topographical works, and the Librarian will be glad to receive notice of any such works, not at present in the possession of the Club, being offered for sale or auction. At the same time gifts of books dealing with mountaineering in any part of the world will be most welcome.

LIST OF BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY PRIOR TO 1ST JANUARY 1902.

- S.M.C. Journal (2 sets).
 Alpine Club Journal, Nos. 99, 102-106 (incl.), Vol. XV. and onwards.
 Alpine Club Journal Library Catalogue, 1/11/99.
 Cairngorm Club Journal, No. 2 and onwards.
 Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal, No. 1 and onwards.
 Climbers' Club Journal, No. 2.
 New Zealand Alpine Journal, Parts 1, 2, 9.
 Appalachia (The Journal of the Appalachian Mountain Club), Vols. I-IV. incl. and Vol. VIII., No. 1.
 Sierra Club Bulletin, Vol. II., Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6; Vol. III., No. 1; Vol. IV., No. 1.
 Year-book of the German and Austrian Alpine Club, Vol. XXXI. (1900).
 Year-book of the Norwegian Tourist Society, 1891 and onwards.
 Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol I. (1885) to Vol. XVI. (1900) incl.
 Journal of the Scottish Meteorological Society, 3rd Series, Nos. 6-12 incl.
 Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Vol. XL., Part II., No. 12 (Ice-Erosion in the Cuillin Hills, Skye. A. Harker).
 Gentleman's Magazine, July to December, 1830, Vol. C (containing a series of articles entitled, Walk through the Highlands).
 The Keepsake for 1832, containing a Narrative of an Ascent of Mont Blanc in August 1830. Hon. E. B. Wilbraham.
 Mountaineering. Claude Wilson (1893). All England Series.
 Mountaineering. C. T. Dent (1892). 2nd Edition, Badminton Library.
 Climbing in the British Isles. Haskett Smith. Vol. I., England; Vol. II., Wales and Ireland.
 Autumnal Rambles among the Scottish Mountains. Rev. T. Grierson (1850).

- Place-Names of Scotland. Rev. J. B. Johnston (1892).
 Alex. Nicolson. Some Notes on Skye. A Geological Excursion
 in Arran. *Scotsman*. June and July 1872.
 Etudes sur les Glaciers. L. Agassiz (1840).
 The Scenery of Switzerland. Sir John Lubbock. 2nd Edition.
 The Alpine Regions of Switzerland. T. G. Bonney (1868).
 Mountains and Mountain Climbing (1883). T. Nelson & Sons.
 Hours of Exercise in the Alps. J. Tyndall, 1871.
 Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers. John Ball (1860). 5th Edition.
 Scrambles amongst the Alps. Ed. Whymper. 4th Edition.
 The High Alps in Winter. Mrs F. Burnaby (1883).
 Ascent to the Summit of Mont Blanc. H. M. Atkins (1838).
 Mont Blanc. E. Viollet-le-Duc. Translated by R. Bucknall
 (1877).
 My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus. A. F. Mummery (1895).
 Scrambles in the Eastern Graians (1878-1897). Geo. Yeld.
 Climbing in the Himalayas. W. M. Conway (1894).
 Travels amongst the Great Andes. Ed. Whymper. 2nd Edition
 and Supplementary Appendix.
 The Japanese Alps. Rev. W. Weston (1896).

 ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY DURING 1902.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
A Summer in Skye. Alex. Smith. (1866) - -	Win. Douglas.
Cairngorm Mountains. J. Hill Burton. (1864) -	"
The Early Travellers in Scotland. Ed. by P. Hume Brown - - - - -	"
Scotland before 1700. Ed. by P. Hume Brown -	"
Tours in Scotland by Thos. Kirk and Ralph Thoresby. (1677, 1681.) Ed. by P. Hume Brown - - - - -	"
Lowther's Journall into Scotland. (1629.) Ed. by W. Douglas - - - - -	"
Dorothy Wordsworth's Tour in Scotland. (1803.) Ed. by Principal Shairp - - - - -	"
Lord Cockburn's Circuit Journeys. (1837-1854) -	"
Warrender's Walks near Edinburgh. (1895) -	"
Autumnal Rambles among the Scottish Mountains. Rev. T. Grierson. (1850) - - - - -	"
Hedde's Mineralogy. (2 vols.) - - - - -	"
Pennant's Tour in Scotland. (3 vols.) - - - - -	"
The Alps in 1864. A. W. Moore - - - - -	"

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Climbing on the Himalaya and other Mountain Ranges. J. Norman Collie - - - -	Wm. Douglas.
Scenery of the Grampian Mountains. G. F. Robson. (1819) - - - -	J. W. Drummond.
S.M.C. Journal, Vols. I.-VI. incl. - - - -	The Misses Lawson.
Scenery of Scotland. A. Geikie. 2nd Edition -	"
Rock Climbing in the Lake District. O. G. Jones Mountaineering. C. T. Dent. (1892.) 2nd Ed. Badminton Library - - - -	"
Climbs of Norman Neruda - - - -	"
Early Mountaineers. F. Gribble - - - -	"
Alpine Memories. E. Javille - - - -	"
Annals of Mont Blanc. C. E. Mathews - - - -	"
The Alps in 1864. A. W. Moore - - - -	"
The Alps from End to End. Sir W. M. Conway. (1895) - - - -	"
The Geology and Scenery of Sutherland. H. M. Cadell. 2nd Edition - - - -	James Maclay.
Geology of Arran. James Bryce. 4th Edition -	"
Skrine's Tours in the North of England and Great Part of Scotland, 1795 - - - -	"
Kitchin's Map of Scotland, 1/12/1773 - - - -	"
Reprint of Edgar's Map of Stirlingshire, 1745 -	"
Do. Moll's do. Scotland, 1714 - - - -	"
Forms of Water. John Tyndall. International Scientific Series - - - -	"
Ice - Work, Present and Past. T. G. Bonney. International Scientific Series - - - -	"
Volcanoes, Past and Present. E. Hull. Contemporary Science Series - - - -	"
Iceland, Its Scenes and Sagas. S. Baring-Gould Three in Norway. 4th Edition - - - -	"
The Glaciers of the Alps. John Tyndall. (1896)	"
The Regular Swiss Round. Rev. H. Jones. (1868)	"
The Alps from End to End. Sir W. M. Conway. (1900) - - - -	"
The Pyrenees. Hy. Blackburn. (1881) - - - -	"
The Indian Alps by a Lady Pioneer. (1876) -	"
With Axe and Rope in the New Zealand Alps. G. E. Mannering - - - -	"
Gilpin's Scotland. (1789) - - - -	C. W. Nettleton.
Alpine Club Library Catalogue, 1888 - - - -	Adam Smail.
Two Months in the Highlands. C. R. Weld. (1860).	
Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides. (1786.) 3rd Edition.	
Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry. J. Veitch.	
Travels through the Alps. J. D. Forbes. (1900 Edition.)	

LIST OF PICTURES PRESENTED DURING 1902.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Ben Nevis - - - - -	W. Inglis Clark.
Blaven - - - - -	"
Cobbler - - - - -	"
Ben Nevis - - - - -	W. Lamond Howie.
Ben Alder - - - - -	"
Yachting Meet, 1897 - - - - -	H. T. Munro.
Outline Sketch of Cairngorms from Aviemore	- C. G. Cash.

F. S. G.

S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.



THE AONACHS (AONACH MOR AND AONACH BEAG).

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXVIII.)

Lat., Mòr, $56^{\circ} 49'$; Beag, $56^{\circ} 48'$. W. Lon., Mòr, $4^{\circ} 58'$; Beag, $4^{\circ} 57'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 53. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

These two mountains form the north and south points of a long ridge, which runs almost north and south between Glen Spean and Glen Nevis. Aonach Beag is about two miles directly east of the summit of Ben Nevis, and Aonach Mòr is about a mile north of Aonach Beag. Aonach Beag is the higher of the two (4,060 feet as against 3,999 feet), but it is sharper and less massive, and this probably accounts for the allocation of the two names. The mountain is not often ascended, and can scarcely be said to have an ordinary route, but the ascent is very easy from either north or south. From the former, starting from Spean Bridge Station, a walk over moorland for about three miles brings one to the northern toe of the ridge, from which it is an easy slope to the top of the Mòr. A fringe of cliff breaks the lower part, but this can easily be turned, and apparently has not yet been investigated from a climbing point of view. The ascent of the Beag from Glen Nevis, starting at Steall, about nine miles from Fort-William, is equally easy. The ridge between the two peaks is broad and flat, with a dip of only about 400 feet, unbroken by rocks except at one place, where the rocks are a few feet high. On the west the Aonach is connected with Càrn Mòr Dearg by a fine arête, very similar to that which connects the latter with Ben Nevis.

The arête starts about midway between the Mòr and the Beag, and while it is not very clearly marked against the Aonach, it develops into a fine knife edge at its central part. The west side of the Aonach is fairly steep, while the east side is precipitous. The little climbing which has been recorded has been done on this side (*S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. III., p. 332). It had been prospected by Mr Colin Philip, and subsequently by Dr Norman Collie, who from a distant view formed the opinion that there was an interesting ridge. Not being able to verify his supposition himself, he suggested to Maclay, Naismith, and Thomson that they should take up the exploration, which was accordingly done on 13th April 1895. "The north-east ridge of Aonach Beag" proved to be about 1,500 feet in height, with almost continuous climbing. The difficulties, however, are concentrated into two or three hundred feet near the top. The climbing there, in the wintry conditions which then prevailed, was sensational, but except at one place the hitches are excellent. The great rock tower, which comes very suddenly into view when one is apt to think the climb is almost over, was climbed by first traversing along its right side, then ascending a gully, then a narrow but very safe chimney, leading to a narrow ledge with a rock wall in front. This wall was surmounted by working round its outmost angle to the left, and also by getting across a cleft to the right, but above the wall was found a steep slope with precarious footing, and an overhanging cliff some ten or twelve feet high. This was turned by descending a few feet to the left, then working back to the ridge up a steep and loose slope. This was the only part where hitches were not available, and two 60-foot ropes would have been much better than one. In summer it might possibly be easy. The ridge above this is a clean knife edge, but only for a short distance, after which it becomes easy, till it joins the main ridge close by the summit of Aonach Beag. From a climbing point of view, it is at its best part comparable with the main ridges of Ben Nevis.

Another ridge of the Aonach was climbed by the same party on the same day, but was much inferior as a climb

It appears on the map like a horn, starting eastward from the summit of Aonach Mor, with first a dip and then a rise to the summit of An Col Choire, then sweeping round to the north as it falls to the valley. It requires climbing, but is in no way difficult.

In three directions the view from the top of the Aonach is very similar to that from Ben Nevis. To the west, however, the most striking feature is the face of Ben Nevis itself, towering over the intermediate peak of Càrn Mòr Dearg. This view, on a clear day in winter or spring, is a very impressive one, more comprehensive, though scarcely so grand as that from Càrn Mòr Dearg itself.

G. T.

THE EASAINS.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXIX.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 49'$; W. Long. $4^{\circ} 46'$ to $4^{\circ} 55'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 53, 54, 62, and 63. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Under the above title are included the two groups of hills lying between Glen Spean and Glen Nevis, and extending westwards from the shores of Loch Treig to the foot of Aonach Beag. They form in reality the eastern continuation of the Ben Nevis *massif*. The two groups are separated by a deep glen which runs in a north-westerly direction from the head of Loch Treig towards Spean Bridge.

The west group is the more important, and comprises eleven summits of over 3,000 feet altitude. In plan the group is something like an irregular cross, the post of the cross being formed by the main ridge running in a south-westerly direction from Stob Coire nan Ceann, 3,720, to Sgor a Choinnich Beag, 3,175, a length of nearly four miles, practically all of which is above 3,000 feet. The arm of the cross cuts the main ridge half-a-mile from its eastern end, its two extremities being Stob Coire Gaibhre, 3,150, in the north, and Stob Ban, 3,217, in the south. The

point of intersection is Stob Choire Claurigh, 3,858, the highest summit of the group.

Access to these hills being difficult in summer and autumn, they are mostly climbed in spring when under snow, and they certainly look better adapted for snow work than rock climbing, as with the exception of the north face of Caisteal, which is precipitous, there seems little else bounding the ridges than steep slopes. In spring this group certainly offers the opportunity for one magnificent ridge walk of about five miles in length, which should in early spring be entirely over snow. For this excursion Roy Bridge is perhaps the most convenient starting-point; the river Spean being crossed by a footbridge one mile east from the railway station. Arrived at the Allt nan Leacan the climber is confronted by the magnificent snow-lined Coire Gaibhre, up whose steep slopes he will perhaps select a sporting route if he is not pressed for time; if time is important, the ascent of Stob Coire nan Ceann presents no trouble.

From Stob Coire nan Ceann the ridge is somewhat narrow to the base of the peak of Stob Choire Claurigh, after which it widens out and winds onward from one summit to another in a decidedly, commonplace manner, although the descent from Stob Coire an Easain is rather rocky and broken up. The walk along the ridge thus affords no climbing; its features, if taken in this direction, are the magnificent views obtained ahead of the Aonachs and the eastern peaks of the Mamore Forest. Glen Nevis will be reached at Steall, eleven miles from Roy Bridge, where accommodation may possibly be obtained in the keeper's house. Steall is nine miles from Fort-William.

The eastern group is composed of the double-topped Stob Choire an Easain Mhoir, 3,658 feet, which rises steeply from the west shore of Loch Treig. The south summit is the higher, and is about three-quarters of a mile south-west from the lower summit, Stob a' Choire Mheadonaiche, 3,610 feet. The dip between the two peaks is about six hundred feet. The mountain is perhaps best climbed from Tulloch Station. A bridge will be found over the Spean about a mile nearer Roy Bridge, from this there is a road

to Inverlair, from whence there is a path for some distance up the glen on the west bank of the Allt Laire. The north ridge of Stob Choire an Easain Mhoir may be struck at the Meall Cian Dearg and followed over the north summit; or a direct ascent may be made up the north face of the highest peak.

J. A. P.

CNOC DEARG.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXX.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 49'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 40'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch Scale, Sheet 54. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

Cnoc Dearg lies on the east side of Loch Treig, and its tops are—

Crags above Glac Bhàn	-	-	-	-	-	3,132 ap.
Cnoc Dearg	-	-	-	-	-	3,423.
Meall Garbh	-	-	-	-	-	3,197 ap.

The ascent is usually made from Tulloch, on the Fort-William Railway, but we have little information about this hill. An ascent is recorded by Mr Corner in January 1898, Vol. V., p. 66.

SGOR GAIBHRE.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXXI.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 46'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 33'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 54. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

Lies between Lochs Ossian and Ericht. Its height is 3,128 feet. No information.

BEINN EIBHINN.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXXII.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 49'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 33'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 54. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

Lies three miles west-north-west of Ben Alder. Its height is 3,611 feet. No information.

BEINN A' CHLACHAIR.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXXIII.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 52'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 31'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 63. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 15.

Lies four miles north-north-west of Ben Alder. Its height is 3,569 feet. No information.

BEN ALDER.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXXIV.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 49'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 28'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 54 and 63. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Nos. 15 and 16.

This magnificent mountain mass, "Big, burly Ben Alder," lies in the very heart of the Central Highlands. It is bounded on the east by Loch Ericht, on the south and west by the Moor of Rannoch, and on the north by the great corries of Beinn Eibhinn, Geal Charn, and Beinn a Chlachair.

There are two separate mountains and one top in the group:—

1. Ben Alder, 3,757. 12 miles south-west from Dalwhinnie.
2. Beinn Bheoil, 3,333 (pron. *Ben-y-Veool*). $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles east of Ben Alder.
3. Sròn Coire na h-Iolaire, 3,125 (3,000); a top named only on the six-inch map. (Pron. *Sron Coire na Yill-a-ree*=the nose of the eagle's carry.) $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles south-east of Ben Alder.

Ben Alder itself is a granite-capped mountain, the lower slopes being composed of the schistose rocks (chiefly gneiss) of the Central Highlands. The higher parts of the hill consist of a large summit plateau, containing no less than 380 to 400 acres of ground over 3,500 feet. It plunges down in steep, rough corries—the Garracories—to the Loch a Bhealach Bheithe on the east; on the north towards the Bealach Dubh and the headwaters of the Culrea it is fringed by a line of cliffs some 400 or 500 feet high; while to the west and south-west it slopes away easily towards the Uisge Alder. Beinn Bheoil and Sròn Coire na h-Iolaire are separated from Ben Alder by a deep dip, the Bealach Breabach, col. 2,700, and they lie between Ben Alder and Loch Ericht. They form a long ridge running parallel to the loch side, sloping easily towards the west, and more steeply, but seldom precipitously, to the east.

Ben Alder is somewhat difficult to get at. It is most easily reached from Dalwhinnie, where there is a good hotel. There is a driving road from Dalwhinnie for six miles along the north side of the loch to Loch Ericht Lodge. Radiating from the lodge is a series of splendid shooting paths which the climber would do well to note and to avail himself of whenever possible, as the distances are great and the ground rough and heavy. (1.) A path runs right down the north side of the loch to the keeper's house at the west end—Ben Alder Lodge—fifteen miles from Dalwhinnie. It keeps to the water's edge the whole way. (2.) Follow the new road which runs west over the low bealach from Loch Ericht Lodge towards Loch Pat-tack for about a mile; here a path strikes off to the left—the road going on to the right to Ardverikie. This path runs south-west up the side of the Allt a Chaoil Reidhe (the Culrea), over the Bealach Dubh, then keeping about

Sron Bealach Ben Aika,
3,757.

The Long
Leathas.

Bealach Dubh,
3,662. Benet
Bealach Dubh,
3,601.



Beinn
Bheoil
3,333.

Loch
Pattack.

W. Lamont Howie

BEN ALDER FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



the same height it rounds the west shoulder of Ben Alder, down by the Uisge Alder, and terminates a few hundred yards above and short of the keeper's house at Ben Alder Lodge. (3.) A subsidiary path leaves this path about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles on the north-east side of the Bealach Dubh, goes in a southerly direction up to and along the east side of the Loch a' Bhealaich Bheithe, terminating about half-a-mile beyond the south side of the loch and 300 feet above it. It will thus be seen that Ben Alder is practically engirdled with paths, and by utilising them the tediousness of the long distances to and from the hill is greatly minimised.

Another approach to Ben Alder is from Rannoch Station, West Highland Railway. This necessitates walking through the pathless and boggy Moor of Rannoch, and careful attention must be paid to the route as deviation means longer time and greater fatigue. Route A.: Leaving Rannoch Station walk east along the road for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles till you join the Corrour Lodge road, go along this north-west till you reach the Allt Gormag. Cross it, and then leaving the road, hold along past the north side of Lochan Sron Smeur, keeping on the high south-eastern slopes of Beinn Pharlagain. Cross the Cam Chriochan just below the point where the final $\frac{1}{2}$ of the word Sail Clachach is printed on the map, there go straight down to the loch side and keep to it till you reach Ben Alder Lodge. If the day be bad, the burns high, and the moor very wet, this is the route to take. Route B.: This is shorter, but as it necessitates the crossing of two large burns, and keeps more in the low-lying moor it should only be taken if the weather be dry. Leaving Rannoch Station, walk east till you come to the Corrour road, then take to the hillside and go north-east over the southern slopes of Sron Smeur. Cross the Allt Chaldar a full mile below the Lochan Loin nan Dubhach (the burn breaks away here among some rocks, making the crossing possible, above that it is still and wide and deep). Continue along in the same direction (north-east), having Lochan Loin nan Dubhach on your left and Meall Liath dhoire Mor on your right, pass beside Lochan na-h-Aoin Chraobhe, and so to Loch Ericht side. A crossing-place

on the Cam Chriochan will be found about 100 yards from where it enters the loch. *N.B.*—The burns all about here may give trouble when in spate, and the “going” over the moor is very heavy. Ben Alder may also be approached from Loch Rannoch by walking up the west side of the river Ericht. The walking here is good and fairly hard.

Perhaps the easiest way to do the hill would be to walk, drive, bike, or boat from Dalwhinnie to Loch Ericht Lodge. Then take the path up the Culrea to within about three-quarters of a mile of the Bealach Dubh, climb south up the steep slopes of the small corrie, keeping beside the burn marked in the map. This takes you easily out on to the great plateau along which a grand high-level walk leads to the cairn. The descent may be made in a south-east direction to Ben Alder Lodge, from which the path could be taken back to Loch Ericht Lodge, or a boat—should the wind admit of it—could be had in waiting to row one back to Dalwhinnie. This route—which may of course be taken in the reverse way equally well—gives a splendid general idea of the hill and the ground.

By reason of its height and central situation, Ben Alder commands a most extensive view. Looking up towards Dalwhinnie, the Cairngorms are all plainly seen; more to the right the shapely peak of Lochnagar stands out, and then the undulating tops of the Glas Maol range. Due east and much nearer are the three Ben-y-Gloes, then Ben Vräckie, the long rugged ridge of Farragon and the spear-shaped peak of Schichallion, while far down in the horizon, sixty miles away, between Schichallion and Cairn Mairg is the West Lomond in Fife. South-east Ben Chonzie's bun-shaped cap stands out, followed by the fine range of Ben Lawers and the Tarmachans, while over the Tarmachan tops and far beyond them may be descried Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin. Just to the left of Meall Ghaordie is Ben Ledi, then Ben More and Stobinian, Cruach Ardran, Ben Lomond, and the Arrochar hills. Ben Lui and the Cruachan peaks may easily be picked out in the south-west, while just mid-way between them is a very far away hill, probably one of the Paps of Jura. North of Cruachan the fine point of Ben Starav is

seen, farther to the right the Benderloch hills. Then follow the Glencoe peaks, the bare ridges of the Mamore forest ; while dominating over all and manifestly the highest hill in sight, the great lion's head of Ben Nevis is plainly visible, due west from where you stand. North of Ben Nevis you have first the Glen Finnan hills, then the peak of Sgor na h-Aide at the head of Glen Dessarry, followed by the fine sharp top of Sgor na Ciche. To the right of this is Ladhar Bheinn in Knoydart, while far away in the same direction are the dim and distant Coolins. Ben Screel's steep face comes next; farther north, but nearer, are Sgùrr a' Mhoraire and Gleourach, then the Saddle and Scour Ouran, the latter standing out well with its truncated cone-shaped top. More to the right is the double-topped Garbh Leac and Sgùrr nan Ceathramhan at Cluny, while away in the same direction, but much farther off, the high peak of Sgùrr nan Ceathreamhnan stands out in the horizon. Then you have the great long range of Mam Sodhail and Carn Eige, the two dome-shaped tops of the latter rising up close together about the middle of the range. At the right hand end of this range and behind it Sgurr na Lapaich is easily distinguished. The Creag Meaghaidh range in the foreground shuts out the view farther to the north, but on a clear day the far blue cone of Sgùrr Mòr Fannich, seventy miles away, may be made out over Creag Meaghaidh. More to the north and to the right of the "Window" are the Freevater mountains and the great bulky form of Ben Wyvis. It is a wonderful panorama of mountain and moor, the only thing one misses is the sea. That is what always makes the view from any of the west coast hills so particularly complete and beautiful.

Owing to its remoteness, little climbing has been done on Ben Alder, but there is no doubt that such could be obtained were one on the spot to seek for it. On looking at the map a pronounced corrie will be noticed a mile north-east of the cairn. This corrie is bounded on either side by two ridges. The north one is the longest and steepest, its local name being "The Long Leachas" (Gaelic Leth-chas, one foot), the southerly one, "The Short Leachas," being less well defined and not so steep.

It was this north ridge that attracted the attention of Mr Stott and his party (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 72), and which they climbed. Later Messrs Rennie, Gibson, Hinxman, and Munro climbed the southern ridge, but found it easy (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 322). In summer conditions both these ridges are perfectly simple. In hard snow the north ridge would probably give a very fair climb. The line of cliffs facing north towards the headwaters of the Culrea, the Leth-Chas an Fharaidh, await exploration, and there is a buttress of rock which falls away from the south-east end of the summit plateau to the south-west end of the Loch a' Bhealaich Bheithe, the Sron Bealach Beithe, on which some good climbing might be had.

Ben Alder is essentially a winter mountain, *i.e.*, it gives by far the best climbing under winter conditions. Being so distant from the sea and containing so much ground over 3,500 feet, it carries great quantities of snow. The whole east face—the Garracorries—in spring and early summer is a vast steep slope of snow, broken up here and there by short rock pitches, the top fringed with gigantic cornices. On this face grand exercise in snow-craft may be obtained.

A gully which comes out on the plateau about a quarter of a mile south of the cairn was climbed in April 1896 by Messrs Reid and the writer. The snow slope towards the top was 50°, and the large cornice surmounted with difficulty.

On the west and south-west slopes splendid glissading may be had, the writer having many times slid almost from the summit plateau to the path in the glen below.

On Beinn Bheoil and Sron Coire na h-Iolaire no climbing proper is to be obtained. The west side is just a great scree slope. The corrie between them and which faces Loch Ericht—the Coire na h-Iolaire—is rough and broken up with scarps of rock, and some scrambling might possibly be found there.

Ben Alder has some very interesting associations with Prince Charlie. Towards the close of his adventurous wanderings after Culloden, he, along with some followers on 29th August 1746, reached "Corrineuir," *i.e.*, Coire an Iubhair. They then moved on to "Mellaneuir"—*i.e.*,

Meallan Odhar beside Loch Pattock, and after a day to "Uiskchilra," *i.e.*, the Culrea (*Gaelic*, Uisge Chaoil Reidhe), "two miles further into Ben Alder to a little shiel . . . superlatively bad and smokey." There they stayed for two or three nights, when they moved "two miles further into the mountain to Cluny's Cage in the face of a very rough high rocky mountain, which is still a part of Ben Alder." In this Cage along with Cluny, Lochiel, and others he spent a week.* As the Cage was a perishable structure composed of boughs and moss, and built into a holly tree in the face of a cliff, manifestly "Prince Charlie's Cave," just above the keeper's house, cannot be it nor even the site of it. The Cage was probably constructed somewhere in the rocky corrie which faces the loch about half a mile north-east of Alder Bay, and the present "cave" is the concrete embodiment of the tradition of the Cage of old Cluny Macpherson.

In the *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., may be found a charming and characteristic article on Ben Alder by Mr Stott, while an equally entertaining and delightful account of a day on the hill by Professor Ramsay in the same volume should also be read.

As the whole ground is under deer, all walking and climbing on it should be avoided in the shooting season.

A. E. R.

* *Vide* W. B. Blaikie's Itinerary of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, p. 68. Scottish Historical Society : Publication No. 23.

THE DRUMOCHTER HILLS.

(DIVISION I. GROUP XXXV.)

Lat. $56^{\circ} 49'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 18'$. Ordnance Survey Maps, one-inch scale, Sheets 54 and 63. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 16.

The Sow of Athole, 2,500 contour. Lies $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of An Torc.

Sgairneach Mòr, 3,160 feet—the big rocky hill side. Lies 3 miles west of Dalnaspidal Station.

Beinn Udlaman, 3,306 feet. Lies 4 miles west of Dalnaspidal Station.

Marcaonach, 3,185 feet. Lies $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles west of the county march on the Highland Railway at Drumochter.

An Torc, the Boar of Badenoch, 2,432 feet. Lies immediately to the west of the county march as above.

Geal-chàrn, 3,005 feet—the white cairn. Lies $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles S.S.W. of Dalwhinnie.

This group, lying between Loch Ericht to the north-west, Loch Garry to the south-east, and the Highland Railway at Drumochter to the east, forms a horseshoe round the grassy Coire Dobhain, with Geal-chàrn as an outlier to the north. The whole of its smooth-topped summits can be traversed in a fairly easy walk, almost without retracing one's steps at all, and without much intermediate dip. The nearest hotel is at Dalwhinnie, which is seven miles by road from Dalnaspidal Station—it is about a quarter mile from Dalwhinnie Station—and as it is 1,100 feet above the sea, and the summit of the railway at the county march is 1,484 feet, even Beinn Udlaman, the highest of the group, involves less ascent than almost any other mountain of equal height in Scotland.

To the ordinary tourist the group is best known as including two hills called the Sow of Athole and the Boar of Badenoch. Some confusion exists as to these names. An erroneous impression seems to have got about that the Sow of Athole is on the east side of the railway. The one-inch map only marks the Boar of Badenoch, and Bartholomew's Sheet 16 quite incorrectly gives the name of the

Athole Sow to Marcaonach. An Torc, or the Boar of Badenoch, 2,432 feet, rises by a very steep shoulder 950 feet above the railway immediately to the west of the summit level at the county march; while "the Sow of Athole, Meall an Dobhrachan," as it is called on the six-inch map, is the 2,500 feet contour shown on the one-inch map a short one and a half miles south of An Torc and the same side of the railway.

The easiest plan is to take train to Dalnaspidal, whence a line can be taken nearly due west over easy slopes to Sgairneach Mòr, or the road north can be followed for about a mile, and the steep flank of the Sow of Athole tackled, whence a W.S.W. course should be steered for Sgairneach Mòr, 3,160 feet. The mountain is flat-topped, and has no cairn. Hence the course is west for another mile to the col, which is about 2,600 feet; here a sharp turn is made to the north, Càrn Beag an Laoigh (2,739 feet), a mere shoulder, is crossed, and the large cairn of Beinn Udlaman (3,306 feet), the highest summit of the group is reached. The direction is now N.E.; a descent is made to about 2,750 feet, and an easy rise over Bruach nan Iomairean (3,175 feet), which is also only a shoulder to Marcaonach (3,185 feet); the height of this is only given on the six-inch map. Its small cairn cannot be seen from the actual summit, but lies a few yards to the east, and is a prominent object from the railway. From Càrn Beag an Laoigh to Bruach nan Iomairean the county march has been followed. The col between Marcaonach and Geal-chàrn lies three-quarters mile due west of the former, and is 2,426 feet. Geal-chàrn (3,005 feet) is a round-topped, hog-backed hill with a long easy shoulder descending north-east to the railway at Drumochter Lodge, whence it is three miles by road to Dalwhinnie.

None of these mountains offer any attractions to the rock climber. The views, however, especially of the Ben Alder group, are interesting, and as they are not in forest they are accessible when most mountains are rigorously interdicted.

H. T. M.

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 S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1902.

Mr WALTER BRUNSKILL and Mr BARROW had some good climbing in spite of bad weather. They ascended the Rimpfischhorn, Trifthorn, crossed the Furggen-grat, and ascended Mont Blanc from the Dôme Hut. The Messrs Barrow also ascended the Wellenkuppe.

Mr J. W. DRUMMOND was at Arolla, and joined the Maclay-Solly party in several expeditions, including the Za and the crossing to and from Mauvoisin. He also crossed the Col de Collon to Preraye and returned by the Col du Mont Brulé.

Professor COLLIE'S expedition to the Rockies was this year a most successful one. Among high first ascents accomplished were Mounts Freshfield, Forbes, Howsepeak, Murchison, Neptuak (a peak south of the line near Laggan). They also discovered a new low pass over the Divide between Forbes and Freshfield, and explored the Lyell glacier. No doubt we will get some interesting stories of his experiences later on.

Mr WILLIAM GARDEN had a sad experience on the Wetterhorn. An avalanche carried the whole party away, and caused the death of his friend Mr Brown and the guide Saloman Knubel of St Nicholas.

Mr W. W. KING ascended the Aiguille de la Za, Rimpfischhorn, Weisshorn, traversed the Dent Perroc (new descent) and the Pigno d'Arolla.

Professor KENNEDY spent three weeks of September in the Oberland, and had only three wet days during that time. The fortunate few who delayed their holiday till September are much to be envied.

Mr MAYLARD climbed the Piz Pisoc and Piz Sesvenna among the Ofen Pass group in the Lower Engadine, and then proceeded to Pontresina, where an attempt was made upon the Piz Bernina from the Tschierwa hut. After traversing the Piz Bianco he was driven back by a severe thunderstorm.

Mr JAMES MACLAY and Mr SOLLY were at Arolla and made the following ascents:—The Aiguilles Rouges, the Boquetins, Pigno d'Arolla (Maclay only), Aiguille de la Za, Petite Dent de Veisivi (Solly only). They also crossed to Mauvoisin by the Cols de Seilon and du Mont Rouge, and returned by the Gietroz Glacier and the summit of the Luette. Solly also climbed the Wildstrubel on his way home.

The Rev. A. Freeman was usually the third man on the rope. Most of the expeditions were guideless.

Mr JAMES A. PARKER, with Dr INGLIS CLARK, had a successful season in the Combin district, being generally favoured with superb weather. The following expeditions were accomplished:—Aig. d'Argentière, Grand Darrei, Combin de Corbassière, Aig. du Tour, Portalet (traverse), Pointe d'Orny, Grand Tavè, Pointe d'Otemma, Rosa Blanche, Catogne (three peaks by sporting route), Ecandies (presumed new route), Fenêtre de Saleinaz, Cols des Plines, de Gietroz, de Mont Rouge. In most of these expeditions Miss M. or Master C. Clark took part.

Mr H. RAEBURN was, with Mr H. PRIESTMAN, in Norway in August climbing from Turtegro in the Horunger group, Jotunheim. There, as elsewhere in Europe this season, there was an unusual quantity of snow, and bad weather interfered much with climbing. Messrs P. and R. first traversed the Dyrhaugstinder with descent to Rünsbrae. The same two, with Herrer Tandberg and Pauss ascending *via* Rünsbrae went up the face of the highest Soleitind, believed to be new. H. R. then made, with Ole Berge, guide, the first ascent for the season of Store Skagastolstind. H. R. then made, with Herrer Tandberg, Pauss and Lows, a complete traverse of all the five Skagastolstinder from Turtegro. Next day, P. with Ole Berge and Fröken Bertheau and H. R. went up to the Skagastol hut on Bandet, down Maradalsbrae, and ascended Midt Maradalstind. The South Dyrhaugstind from "Bandet" with traverse of ridge to Turtegro, was done by H. R. on 2nd August, with Herrer Tandberg and Pauss. The district is well compared to an enlarged Coolins, with snow and glaciers.

Mr R. A. ROBERTSON was in the Combin district, and during the descent of the Grand Combin had the unpleasant experience of being caught in a severe snowstorm.

Mr R. E. WORKMAN spent about a fortnight at Evolena and Arolla, and climbed the Petite Dent de Veisivi, the Pigno d'Arolla, the Aiguille de la Za, and Mont Collon before the weather broke.

Mr H. G. S. LAWSON came out to Zermatt in the beginning of August but found the more difficult routes at that time impracticable. In the course of a week he was successful in attempts on the Alphubel, the Allalinhorn, Hochbergspitze, and along the ridge to the Stechnadelhorn and Nadelhorn. Snowstorms were encountered on the first two mountains, and a violent thunderstorm broke on his approaching the summit of the Nadelhorn, which caused a projected continuation of the expedition to the Sudlenspitze to be abandoned and a somewhat precipitate descent to the Windjoch, *en route* for St Nicholas, to be substituted. He then left for Montanvers, and joined Messrs Ling and Glover. They made an ascent of the Dent du Requin, a sporting though short climb, and now that the route is better known, perhaps not so difficult as any of them had been led to expect. On an absolutely perfect day he next crossed the Col du Géant to Courmayeur with Ling, and the two traversed Mont Blanc *via* the Dôme Hut, encountering the storm

alluded to below. After his companions returned home he proceeded to Grindelwald and started for the Finsteraarhorn. On reaching the Schwarzegg bad weather again came on, and instead of getting the peak he merely traversed the Strahlegg to the Grimsel. Next day another start for the same peak was made, this time to the Oberaarhut. The same ill luck regarding weather continued, and he returned in mist and light snow showers to Grindelwald, *via* the Rothornsattel, Concordia, and Monchjoch, never having even seen the peak that enticed him to the Oberland.

W. N. LING and G. T. GLOVER went to Montanvers at the beginning of August, and commenced operations with the traverse of the Grands Charmoz. They then ascended the Dent du Géant from the Col, and made an attack on the Dent du Requin, but were driven back by a snowstorm. Ling then ascended the Aiguille du Moine, after which Lawson joined the party and the combined forces successfully negotiated the Petits Charmoz (guideless) and the Dent du Requin. Ling and Lawson then crossed the Col du Géant to Courmayeur, and thence to the hut on the Aiguilles Grises. From there they started for the summit of Mont Blanc, but were overtaken on the Dome du Gouter by the storm, which had such disastrous results on the Wetterhorn. The compasses of the amateurs brought them safely to the Vallot refuge, where they were storm-bound for eight hours, after which the weather moderated and they reached the goal of their ambition at the somewhat late hour of 6.30 P.M. (Italian time). A speedy descent of two hours brought them to the Grands Mulets, where they spent the night, and continued their journey back to Montanvers the next morning. The sunset views on the way down to the Grands Mulets were superb. The following day Ling wound up his holiday with the traverse of the Grépon, Lawson, unfortunately, having to turn back at the Nantillon Glacier owing to severe toothache. Glover preferring the Petit Dru to Mont Blanc, remained behind at Montanvers, and after a cold night at the Charpoua gîte, was turned back when at the shoulder by the severe thunderstorm of 20th August.

Mr SLINGSBY was with some Yorkshire friends in the Alps this year. Among his ascents were Mont Blanc; Grand Combin from Cabane Valsorey descent by Mur de la Côte, and Vilan from Bourg St Pierre, Col du Chardonnet, Hohsand Pass, and New Weissthor. Needless to say these were accomplished *sans guides*.

CAIPLICH AND CAIRNGORM.—Stranded after a grouse drive near Tomatin on Saturday, 22nd November, with no possibility of getting home before Monday, I elected to spend Sunday at Aviemore. Arriving there on Saturday night I found that the big hotel was closed for the season, but that the newly-opened Viewhill "Temperance" Hotel, close to the station, kept by J. A. Maclauchlan, is open all the year round. I may say that it is clean and comfortable, charges moderate and fires good; it has some twenty beds, a bath-room with plenty of hot water and, as the bar of the other hotel is *not* closed it is easy to procure

such other comforts as one may require. A dog-cart or waggonette can be obtained from J. Lawrence, the postmaster close by.

It may not be generally known that from Glenmore Lodge a rough but perfectly driveable track can be followed by Rebhoan, &c., to Nethy Bridge. A few hundred yards short of Rebhoan a rougher, but still driveable track, branches off to the right, *i.e.*, south-east, to a bothy a mile or more higher up the Nethy, or between ten and eleven miles from Aviemore. I drove as far as this in two hours, and, sending the dog-cart back to Glenmore Lodge, rejoined it there in the evening. The charge of 15s. for the whole day cannot be considered exorbitant.

From the above-mentioned bothy a fairly good pony track on the other side of the Nethy—here quite small—strikes up over the short springy heather, and leads in one and a half hours to within a few hundred feet of the top of Ben Bynac. To the north-north-east of this is a shapely little top of some 3,400 feet, with however only a slight depression between it and Caiplich, as the highest summit (3,574 feet) of Ben Bynac is called. The top of the mountain consists of several of the granite tors which are so characteristic of the Eastern Cairngorms, the highest being surmounted by an artificial cairn and a stick. The point to the south marked on the one-inch map 3,296 feet is merely one of these tors on the shoulder of the mountain.

A' Chòinneach is a long flat-topped shoulder with sufficient dip between it and Bynac to constitute it a top, but with certainly none of the characteristics of a distinct mountain. The six-inch map gives a height of 3,345 feet. The views from it, however, of the long tor-topped plateaux of Ben Avon and Beinn Mheadhoin, of the cliffs of Loch Avon and of Ben Macdhui, are very fine.

An easy descent to within a few hundred feet of the loch, and a steep uphill pull of a short hour places one alongside the big cairn of Cairngorm. Thence by the broad northern shoulder to Cnap còire an Spreidhe (3,772 feet) and Sròn a' Chàno, which lies more than a mile north of Cairngorm. The names of both these, and the height of the former, are from the six-inch map, while my aneroid made the height of the latter approximately 3,380 feet. Both of them are very doubtful tops. Speaking of the monotonous character of this shoulder, the stalker at Glenmore Lodge, which I reached in a little over two hours from Cairngorm, remarked that one would not get much education (edification?) by following it.

Both in Glenmore and Rothiemurchus Forests there are now notice boards with the following: "Permission is granted to visitors to use the private roads and to explore the mountains and glens of the Forest, throughout the year except the shooting season, from 12th August to 13th October. Fishing is not allowed and dogs should not be taken into the Forest."

The day was fine throughout, and even in the low country everything was hard after a week's severe frost, although in Forfarshire I had left open weather, and the roses in blossom.

H. T. MUNRO.

ARROCHAR favoured us—Rev. A. E. Robertson, Robert R. Russell, and the writer—with perfect weather on a two days' visit on 17th and 18th October. Travelling through from Edinburgh with the early train, a start was made from Arrochar Hotel by 8.15, and the foot of the south peak of the Cobbler easily reached two hours later. Thereafter the traverse of the peak was made—the first 40 or 50 feet of the ascent to the small plateau where the easy route joins in from the south, being the only really steep portion of the climb—the descent being by route "D." The central peak was gained from the col by the arête, which consists of two main pitches, the first being the steeper. A fine view to the east was obtained, as far as the Forth Bridge. We then strolled along to the summit of the north peak and descended by the face, several yards to the north of the Prominent Gully. The Narnain boulders were visited and well explored on our way back.

The following morning our party was augmented by the welcome addition of Dr Inglis Clark and his son. While the two latter made for the Cobbler we struck up into Corrie Sugach and had an interesting climb. Following the broad gully ending near "P" (Vol. VII., p. 76) for some 30 feet, we then struck up to our left, across steep slabby rock until we reached the arête, a little below the knife-edge portion, which gave a pleasant route to the top, our climb ending with gully "D." The spear-head arête on Narnain next impelled our steps, and this climb, certainly very steep, but with magnificent holds, was greatly enjoyed, the only regret being that it was so short. The route taken was varied (1) up the edge of the arête from the "sensational corner" and (2) straight up the face without going so far as the corner. While resting on the summit we were joined by Dr Clark, and had time to enjoy the grand view to the north, where the horizon was bounded by Ben Nevis, Ben Alder, and other snow-capped summits, while nearer, now standing forth sharp and clear, now hidden with a whiff of driving mist, were many a well-known peak, and around and between all the rich brown and yellow autumn-tinted moorland dappled with sun and shade—a perfect autumn view. Proceeding next to the Jammed Block Chimney, Robertson ascended to the middle floor, and there joining Dr Clark, who had entered from the eastern face, continued the ascent up that face. My brother and I ascended the western face, first on the north of the chimney, and then crossing by a jammed block on the south side. Descending again, my brother and I explored another short climb—a crack or chimney, which, commencing a few yards north of the Jammed Block Chimney, at first presents no real difficulty, but afterwards, bending to the left, becomes more interesting. A return was then made to Arrochar, and later on the whole party left with the evening train for Edinburgh.

ARTHUR W. RUSSELL.

SALISBURY CRAGS, EASTERN BUTTRESS—GREAT QUARRY—FIRST ASCENT, 25TH JULY 1902.—The bold appearance of this buttress renders it a conspicuous feature in the views of Salisbury Crags from the south side of Edinburgh, and the possibility of ascending its slabs had been the subject of much speculation by our party. No attempt, however, was made till this summer, when W. C. Newbigging, L. Briquet, a Swiss friend, and the writer attacked the buttress at a point where a prominent slab, evidently used as an autograph album, faces the west. The easiest route lies up the edge of this slab until the climber is brought to a broken-up ledge twenty to twenty-five feet from the foot. (This ledge may also be gained by a much more difficult route at its eastern extremity.) Following the first route, an awkward stride with somewhat loose holds is made to the right, when the ledge may be followed till it begins to widen, when a recess is entered and climbed for a few feet, exit being made to the left over some rather shaky blocks, which are traversed till an interesting balance corner is passed. This places the climber in a slight recess on a good ledge below the chief difficulty of the climb. Several mornings were spent by Newbigging about this point while the writer anchored himself above with 120 feet of rope to give assistance if required. Above this ledge are three prominent white slabs, the middle one being about eight feet above the ledge; after ascending a short distance in the recess the upper right-hand edge of the middle slab is grasped and the narrow ledge above the right-hand white slab is gained by the timely assistance of a finger hold above. After assuming an upright position, a cautious stride places the climber on another prominent broken-up ledge running to the left about half-way up; following this ledge to its eastern extremity a balance-pull places the climber in the very obvious recess leading to the top of the Crags. This, though fairly easy, should be treated carefully, as the rocks are somewhat loose. The most interesting finish is to gain the arête to the right of the recess, where a rather sensational climb will be enjoyed above the steep slabs leading down to the traverse and almost directly above the start. The climb at present requires to be treated carefully owing to the superfluity of loose and rotten rocks, but no doubt this evil will be mitigated with use. The first twenty feet (quarried) provides firm holds, the next twenty feet to the recess ledge is in a glorious state of primeval rottenness, the half-way ledge is sound, the recess again is rather rotten, but the holds on the arête are reliable. The climb is about ninety feet long.

W. A. MORRISON.

BEN NEVIS.—On 21st August 1902, an attack was made on the north-east buttress, directly from the foot, by a Swiss friend and myself, not knowing that it had been already done. The start was made in the centre of the face, not at the right hand (west) corner, which is undoubtedly the very lowest point, and the point at which, I believe, the

arête route starts. An upward traverse was made to the right by grassy and slabby ledges at the foot of a great vertical cliff of a somewhat triangular shape occupying most of this face. The end of this cliff having been reached, the route turns to the left and traverses back above it, still ascending rapidly. This part of the climb follows one or other of the shallow depressions leading up the great slabs sloping here to the north and west. I chose the uppermost, and I should think easiest, of these, which, as far as I can tell, runs parallel to the *arête* described by Dr Clark, but at the bottom of a vertical wall, perhaps 50 feet high, the latter being at the top. The climb finished directly up 100 feet of easy rocks to the first platform. Time, one hour, twenty minutes.

W. C. NEWBIGGING.

BEN AN LOCHAIN (THE OLD MAN): CLIMBS ON NORTH FACE.—In the September number of the *Journal* Mr Penney has an article on Ben Buidhe (p. 124). He therein incidentally mentions his ascent of Ben an Lochain, and recommends it as new climbing ground for *blasé* Cobbler frequenters. The writer was considerably taken with the view of the said "Old Man" from Glen Kinglas when cycling from Holy Loch to Arrochar this spring, and after Penney's paper appeared, was encouraged to get up an investigation committee to visit and report. Penney found himself unable to join, so the party finally consisted of Dr and Mrs Inglis Clark and Raeburn.

Driving from Arrochar Hotel on the morning of Saturday, 29th November, they left the vehicle at a short distance below Loch Restil at 10.20, and at once struck up on to the north ridge. This ridge is well defined, and in places steep, but involves no climbing. It was followed to within a few hundred feet of the summit. The ridge now forms the upper and east wall of a fair-sized corrie, the south side of which consists of an extensive steep rock face sloping up from west to east. It is a good deal broken up by steep grass ledges, gullies, chimneys, and stretches of smooth slabby rocks. Rather more than half way down a remarkable pinnacle stands out, overhanging enormously on the corrie side, and looking very unstable. The rock scenery from the centre of the corrie is decidedly striking, the cliffs averaging fully 300 feet. The party, after descending the corrie to the west some distance, traversed on to the face by a narrow ledge, some 80 feet from the bottom, and began the climb at 12. The start was made in a slabby gully or chimney a good way to the right (west), and 300 feet below the pinnacle. Then up a short pitch, and out to the right, back to the left again by steep grassy and mossy ledges, and along a narrow overhung ledge to a deep recess. Directly above this a very short, though rather puzzling chimney, much overhung, offers a way of escape. An alternative route goes round a balance corner and along a narrow ledge to left. This is safer for the followers than for the leader, and is fairly entitled to the term sensational, as the rock falls down sheer from the ledge for fully 100 feet. Above this,

another slanting traverse is again made to the left, and a rather remarkable crack then reached. A deep chasm here almost splits off a huge mass of rock from the face. The leader here preferred the inside route, ascending straight up the crack, face out, by straddling across the opposing walls. The others preferred the outside route a little to the right. It is very steep, and holds are not superabundant. Not recommended for climbers with new clothes, as it involves rather a closer approximation to mother earth than is quite desirable, and has a tendency to render the fingers somewhat "democratical."

Above this is an undercut ledge. The direct ascent is possible, but the party turned to the right, and finished the climb by an easy ledge. The top of this climb is close to an upright slab of stone, placed for some purpose near the edge of the cliff.

The "pinnacle" was next visited and climbed from the "land side" with no difficulty. The explorers then descended the eastern arête of the pinnacle's pedestal a short way, and traversed on to the face again to the east by easy ledges. The new climb was begun about one in a short though not easy chimney—many loose stones. Above this they kept slanting up, always to left, till brought up by an impossible drop cutting across the ledge. There appeared a possible way of circumventing this by climbing straight up, traversing a little, and then descending to the continuation of the interrupted ledge. The leader's efforts to do this not meeting with prompt success, the element of time was taken into consideration, and a retreat beaten to the right. Here an easy scramble led up a rotten gully between two prominent beaks of rock, and the summit gained by 2.5, 600 feet above foot of lower climb. The morning though cloudy had frequent intervals of blue sky and sun, and as the wind was south-east the corrie was well sheltered, but up here it began to snow, and the mist and wind made things unpleasant. A very brief visit was paid to the summit cairn about 200 yards south of the cliffs. Then a rapid descent made to the road running between Hell's Glen and Glen Croe, down the latter to meet the trap, and Arrochar was reached in ample time to change wet clothes, take a comfortable meal, and catch the 6.16 for home.

The committee's report on the "Old Man" climbing is decidedly favourable. Though perhaps the vegetation is a trifle luxuriant, the rocks are on almost as large a scale as on the Cobbler, and have a way of not being quite so easy as would at first appear. They can be confidently recommended to those who do not mind taking their rock-climbing "cum grano soli."

HAROLD RÆBURN.

S.M.C. Journal, No. 2 or Vol. I. wanted. Members having either to spare would oblige by stating price to J. W. Drummond, Stirling.

Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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W. J. Neuman, Esq.

CORRIE ARDER

THE SCOTTISH
Mountaineering Club Journal.

VOL. VII.

MAY 1903.

No. 41.

S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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THE first division of the Guide, which was called the Southern Highlands, and which includes all hills south of Glen Spean and Loch Laggan, west of the Highland Railway and north of the Forth and Clyde Canal, was brought to a conclusion with the last issue of the *Journal*. The Editor takes this opportunity of thanking Messrs W. Inglis Clark, Jas. Drummond, A. Fraser, H. Kynaston, J. M. Maclay, H. T. Munro, W. W. Naismith, J. A. Parker, C. B. Phillip, H. Raeburn, Rev. A. E. Robertson, A. W. Russell, and Gilbert Thomson for their contributions, and confidently trusts to receive the willing support of the Club in the portions still to appear.

The second division is called the Eastern Highlands, and this includes all east of the Caledonian Canal from Inverness to Fort-William, north of Glen Spean and Loch Laggan and east of the Highland line from Dalwhinnie to Perth. The groups that come into this division are—

Creag Meaghaidh,
Monadhlaidh,
The Cairngorms,
Lochnagar,
Mayar and Driesh,
Glas Maol,

Carn Bhinnein,
Beinn á Ghlo,
Beinn Dearg and Chlamain,
Ealar and Sgarsoch,
Gaick,

and any members who have photographs or can impart



THE MOUNTAIN

VOL. VII

S.M.C. MEMBERS

THE first division of the Southern Highlands and the Glen Spean and Loch Laggan Railway and north of the

brought to a conclusion. The Editor takes the names of W. Inglis Clark, J. M. MacLay, C. B. Phillips, Russell, and others, and

confidently trusts in the portents and the second division and this includes all the Inverness to Perth. The

- Craig MacLellan
- Morison
- The Carrigorn
- Lochmaga
- Mayr and
- Glas Man.

and any member.

anything of interest regarding these hills should at once communicate with the Editor.

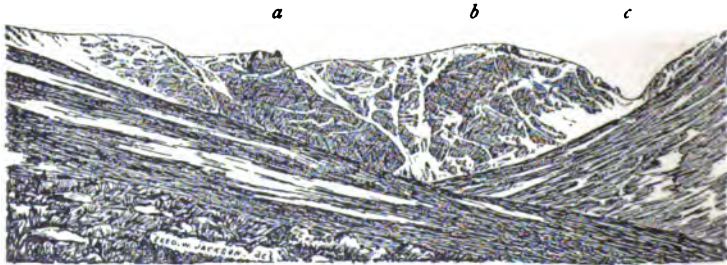
The Editor has prepared an interleaved copy of Division I., and will be glad to receive corrections or additions so that these may be incorporated, and thus keep the information up to date.

GROUP OF CREAG MEAGHAIDH.

DIVISION II. GROUP I.

Lat. $56^{\circ} 57'$; W. Lon. $4^{\circ} 35'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 63. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 15.

The grand group of hills of which Creag Meaghaidh (*Craig Meggie* =) is chief, occupies the space between the upper Spey valley and Glen Roy on the north and west, and Glen Spean and Loch Laggan on the



CORRIE ARDER.

(a) The Pinnacle. (b) Creag Meaghaidh. (c) The Window.

south. The north-east end of the range is nearly uniform in elevation, but gradually becomes more cut up into well-marked summits to the west. The chief characteristics of the hills are deep and precipitous corries, of which the famous Coire Ard Dhoire (*Corryarder* = corry of the high-wood) is the grandest. In its lap lies a dark lochan, reflecting the splendid cliffs of the Posts of Corryarder. A deep notch at the head of the corrie divides the group into two irregular masses. It is called the Window, and is conspicuous in the views of the hills from the north-east.

The principal summits from the west are—

1. Beinn a' Mheirlich (*Ben a Veerlich*=thief's mountain), 2,994 feet.
2. Beinn a' Chaoruinn (*Ben a Hoöran*=sheep's mountain), 3,437 feet, a grand mass north-west of Moy, with steep cliffs over Coire na h-Uarnh (*Corrynahooa*=corrie of the cave) on its east side.
3. Creag na Caillich (*Craig na Kailich*=hag's rock), 2,181 feet, the end of a long ridge projecting to the south from
4. Creag Meaghaidh (*Craig Meggie*=), 3,700 feet, the culminating point of the group. It stands at the head of Moy Corrie, which divides No. 3 from
5. An Cearcallach (*An Kyerkallach*=the circles), 3,250 feet, a rugged mass projecting from the main plateau, as does
6. Meall Coire Coille na Froise (*Myall Corry Coillyaros*=), 3,299 feet.

The main plateau rises in—

7. Creag Mhor (*Craig Vore*=big rock), 3,591 feet, from the top of which the great cliff, the Posts, descends to the shore of the lochan in Corryarder. The plateau terminates on the north-east in
8. Sron a' Ghaohair (*Strone a goier*=), 3,150 feet, (approx.).

Divided from the main mass by the deep nick of the Window is—

9. Creag an Lochan (*Craig an Lochan*=rock of the lochan), 3,460 feet. To the north-west of this summit, lies Corry Roy and its lochan, source of the river of that name. The ridge passes north-east with slight dips.
10. Crom Leathad (*Cromlet*=crooked side), 3,441 feet.
11. Sron Garbh-choire (*Strone Garrachorry*=nose of the rough corry), 3,248 feet.
12. A top over Min-choire (*Minchorry*=smooth corry), 3,180 feet.
13. Carn Liath (*Cairn Lia*=grey cairn), 3,298 feet.
14. Buidh' Aonach (*Bui Unach*=yellow mountain), 3,177 feet, with the deep Coire nan Gall (stranger's corry), on the south slope, and
15. Carn Dubh (*Cairn Dhu*=black cairn), 2,956 feet.

Centres.—Loch Laggan Hotel is the best place for the north-east end, and quarters may be had at Moy—one mile west of Loch Laggan—convenient for the main group. Roy Bridge Hotel can be made use of by taking the early train to Tulloch Station of the West Highland Railway. These places can be reached either by rail to Tulloch, or Kingussie mail-car to Moy and Loch Laggan.

Usual Route.—From Moy cross moor at back of house,

passing a small loch on the left, ascend top of No. 3, follow ridge to No. 4. Grand view in all directions. To reach top of the Posts strike east across plateau for about one mile. These cliffs are about 1,500 feet deep. A return may be made by either No. 5 south-west or No. 6 south, from the cliff edge. No. 7 is also a convenient descent for those going to Loch Laggan Hotel.

Another Route.—Much longer than the first. A rather stiff day, as some of the dips are considerable. From Moy follow the Fort-William road to beyond the picturesque waterfall, An Uamh, on the stream descending from Corrynahooa, about one and a half miles, strike over moor north for No. 2, ascending straight to first top (3,437 feet), follow ridge with steep cliffs on the east to second top (3,422 feet), turn round the head of corrie to col (2,686 feet), ascend Meall a Bharnish (*Myall a Varnish*) to top of No. 4, from hence cross plateau to edge of Posts, and bending due north, slightly west, descend steeply to the Window, about 3,200 feet. Then rise sharply to top No. 9 and follow ridge with general course north-east over Nos. 10, 11, and 12, a sudden turn here to a miniature window south-east, then resume north-east over Nos. 13, 14, and 15, descend south-east in about two and a half hours to Loch Laggan Hotel. In ascending to the Window from Aberarder farm the left or east side of the stream should be kept. There is a good footpath on that side, and on the other the "going" is rough.

Climbs.—There should be grand climbing in and about Corryarder and the Posts. The only climbing expedition recorded is that by Mr Tough in April 1896, when the party was defeated by avalanches, which kept pouring down the gullies (see *Journal*, Vol. IV., p. 141).

East of the Window the ground is under forest, and should be avoided in the stalking season.

Articles on Creag Meaghaidh have appeared in our *Journal*, and will be found in Vol. III., p. 23, by Mr Robertson; Vol. III., p. 236, by Mr Munro; Vol. IV., p. 141, by Mr Tough; Vol. V., p. 126, by Mr Douglas; Vol. VI., p. 22, by Mr Swan; and Vol. VI., p. 37, by Mr Munro.

C. B. P.

THE MONADHLIATH.

(DIVISION II. GROUP II.)

Lat. $57^{\circ} 3'$ to $57^{\circ} 17'$; W. Lon. $3^{\circ} 50'$ to $4^{\circ} 35'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 63, 64, 73, 74. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

The Monadhliath (the grey hills) lie wholly in Inverness-shire and extend eastwards from Corrieyairack (2,922), at the head of Glen Tarff, along the north side of the Upper Spey, forming the watershed between that river and the headwaters of the Tarff, Frechlin, Findhorn, and Dulnan.

The highest portion of the range lies between Geal Charn, three miles north of Crathie in Laggan, and Carn Sgulain, five miles north of Newtonmore. Within this area there are nine more or less distinct tops reaching an elevation of 3,000 feet and upwards. From Carn Sgulain the range falls rapidly towards the east. At the head of the Dulnan it splits into two branches, the one running north-east and north-north-east between the valleys of the Findhorn and Dulnan; the other continuing the trend of the main range east-north-east and forming the watershed between the Dulnan and the Spey. The principal tops from west to east as named on the Ordnance Map are as follows :—

In Laggan—Geal Charn (the white cairn), 2,833; Garbh Bheinn (rough mountain), 2,929; Meall na h-Aisre (hill of the defile?), 2,825; Geal Chàrn, 3,036; Carn Odhar na Criche (dun cairn of the boundary), 2,927; Carn Maìrg, 3,087; Carn Dearg (red cairn), north top 3,093, south top 3,025; Carn Ballach (cairn of the pass), south-west top 3,009, north-east top 3,000; north of Newtonmore and Kingussie—A' Chailleach (the old wife), 3,045; Carn Sgulain, 3,015; Càrn an Fhreiceadain (cairn of watching), 2,861; and above Loch Alvie—Geal Chàrn Mor (great white cairn), 2,702.

The eastern extremity of the spur that separates the Dulnan from the Spey, including Sguabach, Geal Chàrn Mor, and Carn Dearg Mor, is composed of reddish granite similar in character to that of the Cairngorms. The rest

of the Monadhliath are formed of different varieties of mica-schist, quartz-schist, and gneiss, belonging to the Central Highland Metamorphic Series.

General Character.—Considering the extent of the range and the height attained by its central portion, the Monadhliath are, as a whole, singularly devoid of features of interest to the climber. They afford, however, splendid moorland hill-walks, with fine views of the Cairngorm range and the mountains of Central Ross and Inverness.

The summit ridge presents an undulating plateau covered with fringe-moss, peat, or stony *debris*. On the north side smooth peat-covered slopes descend in dreary monotony to the headwaters of the Findhorn, and the rock features are almost wholly confined to the southern corries and the glens that fall southward into Strathspey.

Climbs.—There are at present no recognised "climbs" anywhere in the district, and it would be difficult to make the ascent of any of the hills more than an ordinary hill-walk. Plenty of good practice scrambles could, however, be obtained on the rock faces in Glen Markie, Glen a' Bhealach, and the corries around Lochan a' Choire and Loch Dubh.

Geal Charn (3,036), *Beinn na Sgeith* (mountain of the wing or shelter), 2,845.—The north and south tops respectively of a bulky mountain on the west side of Glen Markie. A deep corrie on the east side in which lies Lochan a' Choire. Steepish rocks in places. One of the numerous "windows" of this district, Uinneag a Choire Lochain, is cut through the rocks at the head of this corrie.

Ordinary Route.—From Crathie up the west side of Glen Markie and over Beinn na Sgeith to summit. A slight dip separates the two tops, which are broad, mossy, and stony. Nearest Hotels—Drumgask, 6 miles; Loch Laggan, 7 miles.

The Red Burn, the head of the Markie Water, flows through a remarkable rocky ravine with waterfalls, worthy of exploration.

Carn Dearg.—This mountain forms a narrow spur projecting south-south-east from the main ridge, and falling with abrupt and often rocky sides into Glen a' Bhealach on the east and Coire Lochain Dubh on the west.

A dip of less than 100 feet separates the north end of the mountain from Carn Mairg (3,087), the highest point on the main plateau, with a small rocky corrie with splendidly glaciated dip slopes on the east side of the cairn.

Route.—From Newtonmore up the Calder to Glen Banchor, thence up the east side of Allt Fionnaridh for about two miles. Cross the burn and turn east over the peaty col north of Creag Liath into the head of Glen a Bhealaich; whence an easy climb leads to the ridge between the north top of Carn Dearg and Carn Mairg.

From the summit cairn (3,093), the culminating point of the Monadliath, precipitous rocks, amongst which grow clumps of the parsley fern, fall to the east into Glen a Bhealaich. The ridge can now be followed southwards to the second top (3,025), and the descent made into Glen Banchor at Dalballoch, whence a road leads down the valley to Newtonmore. Distance from Newtonmore (three hotels) to north top about six miles.

A' Chailleach (3,045).—A smooth-topped mountain at the head of the Allt a Chaoruinn, with a fairly steep rock face on the east, forming the cliffs of Coire na Caillich and Bruthach na Easain (hill-side of the waterfalls). One mile to the north is Carn Sgulain (3,015), merely a stony eminence on the central ridge.

Route.—From Newtonmore up the Glen Banchor road, and then north up the Allt a' Chaoruinn to head, about four miles.

Carn Balloch, Carn Odhar na Criche, Carn na Fhrei-ceadain, and the lesser tops between the Dulnan and the Findhorn, are featureless eminences only slightly raised above the general level of the summit plateau.

Creag Dubh (the black crag, pronounce *Creagoo*), immediately west of Newtonmore, an isolated peak cut off from the main mass by the river Calder, though only 2,400 feet in height, is perhaps the most striking and interesting of the Monadliath hills. The south-east side of the mountain presents an almost continuously steep and rocky face, with fine vertical cliffs at the southern end. The ordinary route follows the sky-line from the farm of

Beallid, and is much frequented by the summer visitors, but plenty of good rock climbing can be had on the precipitous face above the Laggan road.

The rough granite slopes and crags and deep ravines of Sguabach and Creag a Mhuilinn, above Loch Alvie, may also afford some interesting scrambles.

LIONEL HINXMAN.

THE CAIRNGORM MOUNTAINS.

Lat. 57° to $57^{\circ} 10'$; W. Lon. $3^{\circ} 10'$ to $3^{\circ} 50'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 64, 65, 74, 75.

The Cairngorm Mountains is the comparatively modern name given to the lofty mountain range which extends due east and west for twenty miles along the boundaries of Banffshire, Aberdeenshire, and Inverness-shire, and forms the watershed between the southern tributaries of the Spey and the headwaters of the Dee. An older and more appropriate name for this range was the *Monadhruadh* (the red mountains), in contradistinction to the *Monadhliath* (the grey mountains), on the other side of the Spey valley.

Although Ben Nevis, by a matter of 110 feet, overtops Ben Macdhui, and occupies the pride of place as the highest point in the British Isles, the Cairngorms include by far the largest area of continuous high ground (over 3,000 feet) in the country. The whole mountain *massif* forms an elevated tableland, cloven by deep valleys along the principal lines of drainage, but not yet broken up, as in the region of greater rainfall and denudation in the west, into isolated peaks and serrated ridges. The highest summits rise but slightly in comparison above the mean level of the undulating surface plateau, and the intervening depressions between the several "tops" are correspondingly shallow. The structural features are for the most part *interior* to the outline of the mountains, and are found along the sides and in the deep rocky corries at the heads of the glens. The Cairngorms are consequently distinguished by simplicity and dignity of form, and give

an impression of massiveness and strength in repose, in contrast to the wilder and more varied but less restful outlines of the mountains of the west.

The greater part of the range is composed of granite, known to geologists as the "Cairngorm" or "Newer" Granite. It is a pale flesh-coloured or reddish rock, generally coarse in grain, and contains quartz, felspar—often in very large crystals—and a little black mica. Disintegrating freely under atmospheric agencies, the rock crumbles down into a coarse gritty sand, with which the plateau is often covered to a considerable depth. It is in this sand that the "cairngorms"—crystals of quartz coloured with iron—were mostly found when cairngorm digging was a profitable industry.

The harder portions of the granite weather out, forming the "tors" or isolated masses that crown the summits of Ben Avon, Ben Meadhoin, and Ben Bynac. The castellated appearance of these tors is heightened by the weathering of the rock along parallel horizontal joints, giving the effect of piled-up masses of cyclopean masonry. Another set of joints, vertical and parallel to the face of the cliff, produce the great "slabby" surfaces which so often confront the climber in a granite corrie; while a third set, also vertical but at right angles to the last, provide the chimneys and cracks by which he is often able to evade them.

The south-western portion of the plateau is occupied by metamorphic schist and gneiss, a tongue of which extends northward to the head of Glen Eunach. The fine gorges through which the streams flow south into Upper Glen Feshie are cut through these flaggy rocks.

Glacial phenomena in the form of moraines and ice-smoothed surfaces are well displayed in many of the glens and corries. Terminal moraines, laid down at the foot of the retreating glacier, are conspicuous in Glen Derry, Glen Eunach, Glen Feshie, and the high corries of Braeriach. Lateral moraines, formed between the edge of the shrinking ice and the hillside at different levels, are particularly well seen near the head of Strath Nethy, in the Larig Ghruamach, and on the north-east shoulder of Beinn Meadhoin.

The Cairngorm *massif* is traversed from north to south

by two well-marked lines of depression, by which it is separated into three natural divisions of unequal size.

The Larig Ghruamach and its continuation, the upper part of Glen Dee, divides the western area, which includes Braeriach, Carn Toul, Beinn Bhrotain, and the Glen Feshie tops, from the central area of Cairngorm, Macdhuì, and Beinn Meadhoin. This central area is again separated by Glen Nethy and the southward continuation of the Larig an Laoigh from the eastern division, which includes Ben Avon, Beinn a Bhuird, Beinn a Chaoruinn; and on the north side of Glen Avon, the more isolated mass of Ben Bynac and A'Choinneach.

These three divisions will now be described in detail.

LIONEL W. HINXMAN.

THE WESTERN CAIRNGORMS.

(DIVISION II. GROUP III.)

Lat. $57^{\circ} 5'$; W. Lon. $3^{\circ} 44'$. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 64, 74. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 16.

NOTE.—Hotels at Kingussie (nine miles from Achlean in Glen Feshie), Lynwilg, and Aviemore. Small Inn at Insh, and lodgings may be had at Kincaig.

Geal Chàrn, 3,019 feet.
 Meall Buidhe, 3,185.
 Sgòr Dubh Bheag, 3,440.*
 Sgòr Dubh Mhor, 3,635.*
 Sgòr Ghaoith, 3,658.*
 Carn Ban, 3,443.
 Meall Dubh-achaidh, 3,268.
 Druim nam Bo, 3,005.
 Meall Tionail, 3,338.
 Diollaid coire Eindart, 3,184.
 Top above Lochan nan Cnapan, 3,009.

* These points appear to be erroneously marked on the Ordnance Maps, on which Sgòr Ghaoith is called Sgòr Dubh Bheag. The latter is, properly, the point a third of a mile *north* of Sgòr Dubh Mhor.

- Leachd Riach, 3,250.
- Monadh Mor, 3,651.
- Carn Cloich Mhuilinn, 3,087.
- Beinn Bhrotain, 3,795.
- The Devil's Point, 3,303.
- Top of Coire an t-Saighdeir, Cairn Toul, 3,989.
- Cairn Toul, 4,241.
- Sgòr an Lochain Uaine ("The Angel's Peak"), 4,095.
- Braeriach, 4,248.
- Braeriach, Top above L. Coire an Lochan, 4,036.
- Braeriach (Western, or Eunach, Cairn), 4,061.
- Braeriach (March Cairn), South Plateau, 4,149.
- Sron-na-Leirg, 3,839.

"THE Western Cairngorms!" What a wealth of varied and romantic beauty the words recall to one who knows familiarly the wonderful combination of mountain, wood, and valley they imply. The beauties are not all patent to the passing visitor. The jaded eye of the railway tourist may, if he happen to be awake, be refreshed momentarily by the sparkling waters and waving weeping birches of Loch Insh. The Kingussie Monthly Visitor no doubt enjoys his exhilarating drive and picnic in Glen Feshie. But to appreciate to the full the grand massive lines of the mountain, the bold sweep of the valley, the marvellous and ever-changing colour of the forest, of the water, of the heather and the rock, one must live for weeks in close and watchful relationship with them, housed maybe in some convenient cottage nestling in the woods at the base of the hills. Thus you get to know the byeways and the secrets of this lovely land. For instance there is no more wild romantic woodland walk in Britain than the "Thieves' Road" from the head of the exquisitely beautiful Loch an Eilein—with its castellated island, the home of the ospreys, and its birches and grand old fir trees, a fit framework to the vistas of Cairngorm across the blue water (now, alas, a popular resort for picnics and afternoon teas, and therefore requiring no detailed description here!)—to Feshie Bridge; and there is a certain strange, almost uncanny, feeling of remoteness and solitude in the seldom trodden tract of hidden broken country that it traverses. Let it be explored on a summer evening, so that you

meet the sunset as you come west. The stretches of deep heather, as the forest thins, absolutely glow in a purple heat, the groups of old Scottish firs stand red, picturesquely rugged, against the shimmering blue, the bold rocks of Creag Mhigeachaidh blush roseately beyond. The absolute stillness is broken only by a passing deer as he seeks the inner recesses of the wood, or the splash of some wild duck in the little loch among the heathery knowes. But though you be loath to leave this scene of beauty and romance, do not linger too long, for the path, a mile or more beyond Loch Gamhna, becomes irregular and indistinct, and requires care and watchfulness to keep upon. The line of it is shown upon the one-inch Ordnance Map, and I carefully marked the parts of it that "are ill to find" with cairns a few years ago (I hope they are there still!). But it may be noted that having succeeded in reaching the deserted croft of Balnain, recognisable by the bright green little park upon the wooded ridge above the right bank of the Allt na Criche not far beyond its steep turn to the west after emerging from its wooded deep lateral glen, it will be wiser for you, unless you happen to know intimately the devious woodland tracks between Balnain and Feshie Bridge, to keep down the right bank of the Criche to Lagganlia.

The chief base for the mountain excursions referred to in this paper is Glen Feshie; but before proceeding up that long and interesting glen it will now be convenient to refer, very briefly, to the lower portions of two routes to the hills which are occasionally mentioned hereafter. These are the well-known Larig Ghru (Learg Ghrumach—the dark or frowning pass) and Glen Eunach. From Aviemore to the "Cross Roads," in the heart of the great Rothiemurchus Forest, it is nearly five miles by way of Loch an Eilein, and this way serves for either route, although for the "Larig" it is somewhat shorter (though not so beautiful) to take the old direct path from Coylum Bridge as described by me on page 114 of Vol. I. of the *Journal*. From the "Cross Roads" it is one and three-quarter miles east to the foot of the Larig path beyond Aldruie, and some six and a half rough (*very* rough) miles from there to the Pools of Dee. And

again from the "Cross Roads" it is a good six miles (but a fairly good driving road) to the bothy at the foot of Loch Eunach at the head of the glen. The lower part of Glen Eunach (the glen of birds) is most picturesque, one corner especially so, where the road winds up through scattered fir trees above a ravine in which the river dashes down in a rocky bed; and then the upper part commands most impressive and interesting views of the great corries of Braeriach and the cliffs of Sgoran Dubh, of which we shall have much to say presently. There are paths up out of the head of the glen, on both sides of the wild Loch Eunach, leading to the mountains. These paths are both most interesting and picturesque, zigzagging as they do up the wild corries. The one to the right, leading to Carn Ban and Sgoran Dubh, is generally known as "Ross's Path," having been used by a well-known Inverness deer-stalker of that name. But it is probably a very "old used" pass to Glen Feshie. Both paths will be referred to later on; but meantime let us get back to Glen Feshie.

Now Feshie Bridge is at the foot of Glen Feshie. The sweet sylvan beauty of the birch-clad ravine, where the old single-arched bridge so picturesquely spans the rushing river, tempts us to linger in this pleasant "lowland," an indication of whose many charms I have faintly given above; but we must now turn our attention to our particular hills, and consider in the first place how we can get at these from Glen Feshie, whose waters flow round their western base. Our hills are the western portion of "the hundred square miles of savage mountain and corry lying between Glen Feshie and Glen Quoich" which Sir Archibald Geikie states is "certainly the widest region of the wildest scenery in Britain." The first main ridge of them runs for about ten miles from above Loch an Eilein in the Rothiemurchus Forest in the north to near the head of Glen Feshie in the south, its highest point (Sgor Ghaoith) being about the centre of the chain. And along this ridge is a wonderful "high level" walk at an elevation of about 3,000 feet over easily undulating shoulders and levels mostly covered with soft moss and grass. Indeed the southern part spreads out and is lost in a great irregular

tableland (Moine Mhor, the "great moss") of many miles in circumference. There is some ugly-looking bog about the centre of it in which many streams running to all points of the compass find their source, but round the higher ground a chariot race might well take place, so smooth and firm is the ground. Herds of deer browse here in the sunny hollows or trot gracefully along the distant sky-line. The air is crisp and most exhilarating; the views, both near and far, most interesting and varied. Given fine weather one strolls along this delightful level for hours, unwilling to descend. But should there be rain and wind or mist or snow, and there is often one or all, you sorely feel the blast and hurry for shelter to a lower level, or slowly steer in semi-darkness for some known path at the lip of a corrie which may lead you down into sunshine and safety. But here am I wandering about on the "tops" without as yet a word as how to get there! If you want to "walk" this whole range of moss-covered igneous granite, your best plan is to find a path that leaves the road (the one more to the south) running east from Loch an Eilein to the "Cross Roads," about a third of a mile east of the loch, by the side of the stream that comes down through the thick wood (into which the great forest fire of 1899 penetrated) skirting the northern base of Creag Pheacach and Cadha Mor. The path, which is obscured by long heather, almost immediately crosses to the east side of the stream and continues for a short way in that direction, and then climbs nearly straight in a line for the top of Cadha Mor (2,313 feet), which is the northern point of the range. Continuing south we get on the long back of Inchriach, and reach, in turn, the curious Tors of rock known as the Argyll Stone (2,766 feet), and the so-called "Atholl Stone" which has been built up semi-artificially into a sometimes much-needed shelter on this exposed height. At the former the then Duke of Argyll is said to have rested and refreshed the inner man in the year 1594 on his way to Glen Livet to fight the "Popish Lords," as set forth in chapter lx. of Hill Burton's "History of Scotland," although what on the earth the good Duke went up to the top of Inchriach for to eat his breakfast, I cannot well imagine! But you

at any rate can enjoy an early lunch at a spring down the slope a little way to the east here, where a good view of the middle part of Glen Eunach with the bog-encircled Loch Mhic Ghille-Chaoile (the loch of the slim young man) directly beneath you—where some cattle reivers once summarily disposed of one of a party in pursuit of them—and the great wooded basin of Glen More may be obtained. And so refreshed you ascend easily to the *Sgoran Dubh*. These are the great and striking feature of this range. The first and lowest (Sgor Dubh Bheag, 3,440 feet) with its interesting little fortalice of rock jutting out into Glen Eunach, the second (Sgor Dubh Mhor, 3,635 feet) with its imposing rounded head and massive cairn, and then finally, Sgor Ghaoith (the peak of the winds, 3,658 feet), separated from the second by a broad saddle some 250 feet below the two, rival each other in the views they afford down their great cliffs and rocky ribs and “chimneys” to the shores of the dark Loch Eunach, nearly 2,000 feet precipitously beneath, and across to the still greater heights and wild corries of Braeriach. This sight so impressed that enthusiastic Yorkshire sportsman, Colonel Thornton, some hundred years ago, that he naively states that he and his friends were “equally struck with admiration and horror” at the mountain “at least 18,000 feet above them, and a steep precipice of 13,000 feet below.” $18,000 + 13,000 = 31,000$ feet! Not bad for Braeriach!! But as in the same page he refers to champagne, shrub, porter, &c., cooling in a snowdrift, some little allowance must be made for a specially stimulated imagination. And yet in sober earnest it is a grand peak, Sgor Ghaoith, with a great sheer wall of rock dropping precipitously to the east for many hundred feet, lined with rugged knobs and broken pinnacles at its sides and base. The view from it is all the more striking and even startling if the peak be ascended straight from Glen Feshie in the west, when it all bursts suddenly upon you in a moment as you step upon the ridge. I shall tell you directly of five ways up from Glen Feshie, and meantime may refer you to Vol. VII., p. 58, and Vol. VII., p. 118, of our *Journal* for vigorous descriptions of vigorous climbs up these cliffs and ribs and

chimneys from Loch Eunach to the Sgoran Dubh by poor Lawson, and King, Mackay, and Raeburn, and to the special note by Raeburn on the SGORAN DUBH CLIMBS at the end of this paper. For myself, as may be known, I go upon the hills chiefly on "salvationist" principles, and content myself here with looking down these "chimneys." They often smoke with mist as I smoke my pipe at the top of them. This affords me a feeling of superior comfort and safety, which may be weak, but it is satisfying to middle age.

And now about these "five ways" up from Glen Feshie. I referred on page 256 to the deep-wooded glen down which the Allt na Criche rushes down to the quiet little meadow at Balnain. With a little pains you may discover a path which crosses the stream at a point about half a mile east of Balnain, above a picturesque little fall at the foot of the wooded ravine, up the north side of which it climbs steeply through firs and junipers, stones and blaeberrys. Many of the firs higher up are now but dead poles and skeletons, and near the uppermost of them a splashing and refreshing wayside fountain will be found. From this point a peculiarly lovely view of Upper Strathspey and Badenoch is obtained, enriched by the charming wooded foreground at Feshie Bridge and round Loch Insh. A mile or more beyond, at about the 1,750 feet level, the path, descending very slightly, crosses the main stream of the Criche and, turning almost due south, lands you on the hard ground at the foot of the north-east slopes of *Geal Chàrn* (3,019 feet, the bright white cairn). Above the end of the path you can climb to a little green and rocky gallery high up on the ridge connecting this hill with the Sgoran; or if you desire to go to the Argyll Stone, you will leave the path where it descends to cross the Upper Criche and climb well to the left at once, so as to get on the back ridge of Creag Phulach and to keep above the wet green bogs that drain from the north into the Criche. This route to Balnain makes a most delightful evening *descent*. I may here mention I have twice been on the top of *Geal Chàrn*, but found nothing of any special interest there. It commands a good and interesting view no doubt, as all heights in this

neighbourhood do, but you are shut off from Glen Eunach and the greater Cairngorms. The ascent of it from the south, from the Allt Ruadh, is steep and toilsome. And this brings me to the second of my "five ways." For both it and the third the neat farmhouse of Ballachroich on the east side of the Feshie, nearly three miles above Feshie Bridge, may serve as a good landmark to start from. And if you are coming from the Insh or Invereshie direction, you *should* find a footbridge over the Feshie below this farm. (I say you "should," not you "will," because I think it very likely the bridge was washed away by the recent floods, and they generally take a long time to rebuild bridges in these parts!) Here I may mention there is a footbridge at Tolvah, one and a half miles above this; a horse-bridge above the rocky rapids some two and a half miles above Tolvah; and finally the footbridge near the shooting lodge, still another one and a half miles higher up. These are the bridges in Glen Feshie. You may find the information useful, but meantime I want you to come up the Allt Ruadh (the red burn) with me. The path keeps well up above the north side of the stream as soon as you enter its prettily and thickly wooded glen, out of which it rushes to pour its clear waters of sparkling brown into the Feshie. The ruins of an old mill are seen near and within the entrance to the wood. After climbing steeply and rapidly some 500 feet, the path becomes for a short way before leaving the top of the wood a charming terrace walk lined with blaeberreries and wild flowers, and affording delightful cool glimpses of the foaming stream below, and sometimes set pictures, framed by woodland tracery, of the bold hillside above the opposite side of the glen or far-away peeps into the hazy Badenoch distances. At the path side, about half-way up or more to this terrace, will be found a clear cold well under a fir tree, which bears on a rude board a Gaelic invitation to rest "and drink without pay." On a warm morning a few minutes' response to the invitation may be both pleasant and profitable, but we must get on and up these hills again. From above the wood the path, which soon becomes indistinct in rather marshy ground, keeps still farther up and away from the main stream, and skirts to the south round the base of *Meall Buidhe*

(3,185 feet, the yellow lump of hill) at about the 1,800 feet level, and then turns eastwards up the glen of the Allt nam Bo (the stream of the cattle), which flows almost straight down from the "Peak of the Winds." The old pony track crosses this stream, a splendid clear, cold, dashing, crystal torrent at about the 2,200 feet level, and gets on to the hard round shoulders that lead up to the high saddle between the "Peak" and *Carn Ban* (3,443 feet, the white hill) to the south. Now this track is interesting because it connects over the saddle with the better known path that comes up the Corrie Odhar from Loch Eunach on the other side; and indeed the old Feshie keeper will tell you this, the Allt Ruadh track, is *the* proper and original "Ross's path," and not the Corrie Odhar one, which is generally associated with the great deer-slayer's name. Be that as it may, they both lead to the same place, and to come up the one and go down the other is as fine a mountain ramble as can be wished for on a summer day.

The next and third route up from Glen Feshie has always been a favourite one of mine. Striking for half a mile south-east from Ballachroich over the broken ground of the moor, the southern end of the Allt Ruadh wood is entered, and a rough steep track may be discovered leading up in the same direction out into the high and picturesque gully between the south end of this wooded hill and Creag na Leacainn. Here is one of the finest wells of water I know in Scotland; and the vista from this sunny corner right away through the heart of the country, past the dark ridge of Craig Dubh, over the picturesquely rugged Knobs of Crubin, up the Badenoch Glen and Loch Laggan, with the great bold shapes of Creag Meaghaidh and the Corrie Arder to the north of them, and the beautiful crescent of Coire an Iubhair, with the white snow in its breast to the south, until the eye finally rests, amid encircling and nobly-grouped mountains and crags, dim, wonderful, and mysterious in the glorious west, with sunshine, mist, and shadow floating round, and ever-changing light and colour, half-revealing and then half-obscur- ing the magic beauties of the hills, but, maybe, suddenly flash-

ing open like a great window of the purest and the clearest blue into immeasurable space beyond, upon the great forehead of Ben Nevis himself, towering, the giant monarch of the land, is marvellously beautiful. But however lovely it may be, we must turn our back upon it and the sparkling bubbling well, and proceed upon our upward way. The path crosses a curious lateral gully running north and south at the back of the lower hills, and with two or three bold zigzags takes you well on to the western shoulder of the big ridge separating the Corrie Ruadh from the Allt Fhearnachan. Gaining a level of about 2,200 feet, a narrow but fairly well-marked track will be found, running along the northern slope of the ridge well below the top of it, and overlooking the deep heathery glen of the Allt Ruadh down below on the left, which will lead you pleasantly along, with an almost imperceptible upward tendency, to the foot of the big, stony, highest shoulders of Carn Ban, up the sky-line of which you will find excellent walking. Or, if you prefer it, by keeping down slightly to the right at this point you will come on the deer-stalking path up the Allt Fhearnachan (the stream of the alder trees) from Achlean. But I prefer the rough rig of the hill, which is, I think, "the march" between the Glen Feshie and the Rothiemurchus Forests, to the sand and stone of that wearisome path. It, however, is the fourth of the routes out of Glen Feshie I was to tell of, but as it is probably very much better known than any of the others, and is in fact almost painfully obvious from below with its long ugly straight "drain-like" lines and zigzags marking and disfiguring the hillside, it needs no further mention. Its principal attractions are to be found at the top and bottom of it. The latter are the comfortable hospitalities and shelter at the small farmhouse of Achlean with its barking multitude of Scotch terriers and other dogs, and the former are the icy cold springs of water above the Ciste Mhairearaid ("Margaret's coffin"), as the little steep green corrie in which the snow lies late into the summer is called. On the height above the "coffin," our third and fourth routes may be said to meet, and crossing the broad saddle to the south of the round flat top of Carn Ban, the

climber, by either, may now descend slightly to the east and enjoy a well-earned rest and refreshment at the *Breakfast Well* (Fuaran Diotach), in a convenient and comfortable hollow at an altitude of about 3,200 feet, and at the same time he can, if it be clear weather, enjoy the prospect of, and carefully scan his further route to, the still greater heights of either Braeriach or Cairntoul. Because, coming from Glen Feshie, it is only now he can see these great objects of his greater ambition. But leaving him here in the meantime, let us return once more into Glen Feshie, and do so by a most rugged and romantic way.

Turning our faces to the south and skirting the western sky-line along the outer edge of the great tableland described on page 258, rising slightly above 3,250 feet to the top of *Meall Dubh Achaidh* (3,268 feet, the black hill above the cornfield), and then bearing slightly to the left, forty minutes or less should bring us to the edge of the Coire Garbhloch, in my opinion the most *picturesque* of all the many Cairngorm corries. It may be entered either by a lateral gully from the north, or from its upper eastern corner, down the rocks where the Allt Garbhloch plunges in a white foaming waterfall * from the Moine Mhor. The latter descent especially requires some little care, as the rocks and stones are rather loose. At the foot of the fall you find yourself in the circular upper basin of the corrie, surrounded apparently almost on *all* sides by great screes, clefts and cliffs, the sky-line of these last being shattered and broken into strange sharp shapes. The exit from this basin is by a rough track along the southern ledges of a narrow ravine in whose depths the now considerable stream roars down a half-hidden fall into a great black rocky pool. The ravine or lower corrie continues to be remarkably deep and narrow, still with great overhanging cliffs on either side, until at last you escape from its gloomy recesses on to the open ground of Glen Feshie. The track, often faint enough among the stones, keeps close to the clear sparkling stream all the way, and on its lower reaches blaes and other berries may be

* This waterfall may be seen, on the sky-line, from the driving road up Glen Feshie.

plucked. You are at this point still some two or three miles below the loveliest part of Glen Feshie, with its grand wood of old Scotch fir trees which Landseer loved to paint, its wide encircling corries * and graceful waterfalls, and its picturesque castellated shooting lodge. The old public path through to Braemar by the Geldie (over which her late Majesty, Queen Victoria, rode on pony-back in 1860) keeps the west side of the river beyond the lodge and past a ruined shealing in a meadow, and then crosses first the southern nameless tributary of the Feshie and second that river itself, thereafter keeping the right-hand (*i.e.*, the north) side of the stream towards the east. At a point about three miles beyond where the path crosses the Feshie a stream rushes down on the left from the heights of *Druim nam Bo* (3,005 feet, the long hill of the cattle) and *Meall Tionail* (3,338 feet, the gathering hill, *i.e.*, where the cattle or the deer gather together?), through a veritable cleft or "canyon" in the steep hill-side. I have tried to penetrate it, but failed to get more than one hundred yards or so up the stream. The bottom of the ravine is but a few yards wide, and is occupied entirely by the rushing water, and on either side precipitous cliffs rise close to a height apparently of several hundred feet, and shut out all sunshine and warmth. A strange, uncanny, weird, and most mysterious place! Still another mile and a half farther on, the river Eidart, flowing rapidly and strongly down from behind the *Doillaid Coire Eindart* (3,184 feet, the saddle of Corrie Eindart), on whose north-east side are some bold crags which are a well-marked feature in the view from the ridges between Cairntoul and Braeriach, largely augments the Feshie's flood; and up its glen you may approach to the north-east, by its bold western shoulder *Leachd Riach* (3,250 feet, the grey granite hill), the long high ridge of *Monadh Mor* (3,651 feet, the great moor) dividing the Eidart from the Geusachan, which latter flows into the Dee. I believe the view from this big hill is particularly good, and its proximity to Cairntoul and the wild Glen

* This part of Glen Feshie may be reached from Glen Tromie by the Allt Bhran or from Glen Bruar by the Minikaig Pass.

Geusachan gives added interest both to it and its huge blunt neighbour to the east, *Beinn Bhrotain* (3,795 feet, the hill of the fat deer), from which it is separated by a deep saddle of some 800 or 900 feet. I have more than once admired these great masses of rough stone from Glen Geusachan, to which they present most forbidding steep slabs of rock, but have never had an opportunity of going to their tops. And south of *Beinn Bhrotain* again, above the confluence of the Geldie and the Dee, stands the lower but more peaked height of *Carn-Cloich-Mhuilinn* (3,087 feet, the cairn of mill-stones), which terminates the range of the western Cairngorms to the south-east. But these remote heights are more approachable from Deeside than from Speyside.

But we must now return to the heights above Loch Eunach at the "Breakfast Well" (which we can easily do from the head of Glen Eidart), where we may suppose that, since page 258, some sufficient refreshment has been partaken of to start us bravely on our ascent of the two great chieftains of our range, or rather *one* of them at a time. BRAERIACH (the speckled brae, 4,248 feet, the third highest hill in the United Kingdom) is nearer, and naturally attracts our attention first. This prodigious mass of high rocky ground, some fourteen square miles or more in area (you can have an almost level walk of about five miles continuously at or above the 4,000 feet level round its eastern edge!), is partly in Inverness-shire and partly in Aberdeenshire, and is chiefly remarkable for the range of magnificently wild corries which guard its western, northern, and eastern sides. These give it a dignity, a grandeur, and an appearance of rugged inaccessibility, which strongly impress one from Aviemore—the place from which it is much most frequently observed, and whence its big north-eastern buttress is seen to guard the western side of the Larig Pass. It has four summits above the 4,000 feet level, the highest being a narrow ledge of rock to the north end of the main ridge which sweeps west and then south to the March Cairn (4,149 feet) on the south plateau. The chief *main* corries to which I have referred are seven in number, and may be briefly mentioned here, viz.,—beginning at the *western* side,

—(1) The Corrie Goundle or Dhonndail (the giant's corrie) above the south-east side of Loch Eunach, and up which a good path comes from the bothy at the foot of the loch. Numbers (2), (3), and (4) form the great *northern* face of the mountain, and are called the Corrie an Lochain (nearest Glen Eunach) in whose rocky recess lies a small loch at a height of 3,250 feet, the Coire Ruadh (the red corrie) almost directly below the highest summit, and the Coire Beinne (the mountain corrie) out of which flows the highest water of the Allt na Beinne Bige, *i.e.*, the *little* Bennie stream. Passing round the north-east *Sron na Leirg* shoulder (3,839 feet, the peak of devastation—or is it only the “Nose of the Larig”?) and down into the Larig Pass at the Pools of Dee, (5), a shallower and less precipitous corrie opens from the *east* side of the mountain. (A path ascends some distance here from above the lower pools.) And then we come to the great south-eastern corries, the grandest of them all, between Braeriach and Cairntoul, out of which flows the Garachory Burn (the stream of the rough corrie), which is the *real* highest water of the river Dee. This stupendous and magnificent cliff-lined and rock-strewn opening in the hills has been so frequently written about—indeed, so far back as 1814 it was depicted by the artistically geographical pencil of G. F. Robson (see page 249 of Vol. III. of this *Journal*)—that it seems unnecessary to attempt to describe it here. But to make our list of names complete at any rate, we may record that the first large inner corrie on the right, just south of and immediately below the highest summit of Braeriach, is called (6) Coire Brochain (the porridge corrie); and then in the inner north-west corner is (7) the Fuar Garbh Coire (the cold rough corrie) down which dashes the icy water of the infant Dee from its high wells on the ridge above the precipice.

So much regarding the corries; and, reversing our line of survey, we may now conveniently note various routes to the summit. The main ridge may be reached by the left side of the Garachory Burn, through the Fuar Garbh Coire. This is a very rough and steep climb. Probably the earliest recorded ascent of the mountain is approximately by this route, *viz.*, that by Dr Skene Keith in 1810 as described in

his "*Agricultural Survey of Aberdeenshire.*" But only mosses and grasses *grow* here! All else is stones and rock, rock and stones! (Nevertheless the botanist will find these corries rich in Alpine flora.) Then you may climb on to the Sron na Leirg shoulder either by the path above the Pools of Dee referred to on page 267, or from about the 2,500 feet level in the Larig Pass. The final ridge leading to the top by this route narrows to some thirty feet. The other routes are from the west side. The first of these is by the Allt na Beinne Bige from the *lower* bothy in Glen Eunach, which is about four miles from that well-known *rendezvous* for mountaineers, the "Cross Roads" in the Rothiemurchus Forest, east of Loch an Eilein. There are traces of a track from the bothy up the north side of Allt na Beinne Bige, some little height above the stream; but, about a mile and a half up, the burn is crossed, and you climb on to the narrow ridge (north-north-east of the North-Western top) between the Coire an Lochain and the Coire Ruadh which takes you up to the 4,000 feet level about half a mile west-north-west of the summit. Most interesting views of the two corries are obtained on either side of this narrow ridge. Although it is certainly very narrow, yet Mr A. I. M'Connochie, that veteran Cairngorm climber, states it is the only safe way in winter off the top into Glen Eunach. He gives an interesting account of a winter ascent, not exactly—but very nearly—by this route at page 195 of Vol. I. of the *Journal*. But I cannot vouch personally as to this, my only acquaintance with these heights being made in summer and autumn. I believe a pleasant variation of this route is to follow up the eastern source of the stream by the Coire Beinne to the Sron na Leirg shoulder, thus joining the route from the Larig Pass. The second route from Glen Eunach is by a pony path up from a point in the glen opposite Loch Mhic Ghille-Chaoile leading east-south-east on to the shoulder which forms the western side of the Coire an Lochain, and, when you get to the edge of that corrie about the 3,700 feet level, some twenty minutes' walk to the east should bring you to the top. The third, and probably the most generally used, route from Glen Eunach is by the path in Corrie Goundle

mentioned on page 267. At the top of the path at the head of the rocks you follow the upper part of the stream (above which you have climbed in the corrie) to the north-east, and soon get on to the great high southern 4,000 feet plateau, a short way south of the Western (Eunach) Cairn on a rise in the ridge at 4,061 feet, and not far from just above where the Wells of Dee bubble up among the fine granite gravel. Here you will probably be glad to rest before the two-mile walk round to the summit, which affords you a wonderful view of the great corries to the east and across to Ben Muich Dhui as you stroll along. Less than three-quarters of a mile almost due north of the principal wells is the North-Western top of Braeriach (4,036 feet), which is just a mile west of the summit. The view from the top has been described by Munro on page 48 of Vol. II. of the *Journal*. It ranges, in clear weather, from Lochnagar to Ben Cruachan and Ben Nevis, and from Mamsoul and Ben Wyvis to Beinn a' Ghlo. And what more can a man wish to see! Finally, we may again observe that it is an intensely interesting walk of some four or five miles round from Braeriach by the Angel's Peak, more or less by the edge of the great eastern corries all the way, to Cairntoul.

Let us now return once more to that comfortable "Breakfast Well" on the east slope of Carn Ban (from which also Braeriach may be visited by slight obvious deviation from the route now described to Cairntoul), and take a look at CAIRNTOUL (4,241 feet, the "barn"-shaped hill, or, as ingeniously suggested by Mr Alexander Copland in the *Cairngorm Journal* of 1901, it is the same name as "Carrantwohill" at Killarney, the highest mountain in Ireland, which is interpreted in the Celtic tongue as "the reversed reaping-hook"!)* and the more you look at, and climb on, Cairntoul, whatever its name may mean, the more, I think, will you be impressed by its rugged beauty, its picturesqueness, its romantic surroundings, and its true climbing interest. As seen from our present point of view, its double top and short straight ridge stand out effectively above the lower ridge some three miles east of where we

* Still another meaning has been suggested, viz., "*Carn-an-dà-tholl*," the cairn of the two hollows or corries!

sit, and shape the "barn roof" which is the general explanation of its name. The top is four and a half miles due east of the top of Carn Ban. Immediately below us is the rough hummocky ground, a strange mixture of rocks and bogs and little tarns, which lies above the rocky steeps commanding the head of Loch Eunach. Picking our way down, round, and across this broken ground, descending some 250 or 300 feet, keeping to the edge of the height above Loch Eunach at first—to admire the wonderful views, down to the deep water far below on the left, and up behind to the shattered cliffs of the Sgoran Dubh, and across in front to the stormy Coire Dhonndail on Braeriach—and then bearing rather to the right for a while to avoid a farther descent, we cross the Lochan nan Cnapan Burn near its exit from the little round rock-begirt loch which gives it its name and from whence it hurries its way over the moor to take its great plunge of some 700 or 800 feet down into the depths of Loch Eunach; or you may go round the head of the lochan, and reach the highest of the surrounding hummocks a third of a mile to the south of it (3,009 feet), which may be called the *Top of the Lochan nan Cnapan* (the loch of the "lumps"). From the lochan our route is east across the low ridge or "divide" to the upper shallow glen of the Allt Linneach, the north-eastern tributary of the river Eidart. [For Braeriach, one goes straight up the big, broad red brae north-east to the south march cairn, two miles from the lochan.] Easing gently up to the left above the stream to about the 3,500 feet level, and then bearing up to the right, you will soon find yourself on the saddle between the south-east end of the Braeriach ridge and the Sgor an Lochain Uaine (4,095 feet, the scaur of the green tarn), or, as it is often called, *The Angel's Peak*,* and

* If you are in a hurry to get direct to Cairntoul cross the Allt Linneach about the 3,000 feet level, and ascend (by a patch of white quartz rocks, which you can see from the Breakfast Well on Carn Ban) in a bee-line for the top of Cairntoul, over and round the shoulder of the ridge running south-south-west from the Angel's Peak by a sort of terrace thereon at about the 3,700 feet level leading to the final saddle west of Cairntoul. This forms an agreeable alternative route if you are returning *via* Carn Ban.

here a wonderful sight awaits you. Immediately to the north, a *deep* 500 feet straight down below you, is the wild southern upper basin of the great Garachory Corries, with maybe a herd of red deer, looking small and insignificant from so great a height, browsing or resting at the rills and pools among the scattered fallen rocks beneath. Sweeping grandly to the left is the magnificent semicircle of black bold cliff and precipice leading round to the top of Braeriach (a mile and a half across as the eagle flies) above the rough hollows of the Fuar and the Brochain corries. The wind roars or moans in the rugged depths, as if complaining of its imprisonment. The dash of the waterfalls of the Garachory is seen and heard upon the granite slopes. Near still another 1,000 feet lower, the Pools of Dee gleam in the great red trough of the Larig, with the steep scree of Ben Muich Dhui rising grimly up beyond. The mists float and swirl about the clefts and chimneys, and the snow hangs upon the jutting crags, all combining to impress vividly, grandly, almost fiercely, the everlasting strength and magnificence of Nature upon the feebleness of man. It is almost a relief to turn aside again and climb the remaining 300 feet or so to the east, to the top of the Angel's Peak. This projects boldly to the north-east, and directly overlooks, as its proper Gaelic name mentioned above implies, the big corrie (*An Garbh Coire*) on the north face of Cairntoul, in whose stony bosom lie the bright waters of Lochan Uaine at an altitude of about 3,000 feet. We have now to descend nearly 350 feet to the gravel-covered final saddle below the western ridge of Cairntoul. This saddle may be reached, by a vigorous climber, from the Larig by way of Lochan Uaine and the steep scree of crumbled granite above it. From the saddle to the north and highest top of Cairntoul is a stiff rough scramble of 500 feet over great boulders lying at all angles in picturesque and perplexing confusion, some so close to the edge of the cliff above the lochan that one almost shudders to step on them as you turn aside to look down upon it.

A short way up a small rough seat of shelter has been built upon the very brink. The summit is crowned by a large and well-built cairn, behind which you are often glad

to cower for shelter from a biting blast or nipping shower. The view is magnificent. If not so extensive as that from Braeriach, you see from Cairntoul more into the hearts of the hills themselves, and the imposing mass of Ben Muich Dhui (its summit is just two miles across the great intervening gulf, some 2,500 feet deep, of the valley of the Upper Dee) dominates the scene. I remember seeing a wonderful and lovely effect from here one autumn day. Some light mists hung like an upper veil or curtain across the Pass of the Larig under which you saw the stream coming sparkling down from the pools, as if through a long light cavern, to meet the waters of the Garachory. The sun was shining and a shower of rain came on, and a light wind lifting the veil of mist, a brilliant double rainbow was formed directly over the Larig from cliff to cliff, like some glorified and ethereal triumphal arch above the wild roadway to Strathspey. The summit of Cairntoul is much more peaked and Alpine in appearance than any of its 4,000 feet neighbours. Some 200 yards or less along the high stony ridge to the south is its lower top (4,227 feet), also with a cairn upon it, forming the other end of the "barn roof." Below, and to the north-east of the higher top, is the high, curiously shaped "Saucer" corrie, connecting, round beneath the summit, with the great An Garbh Coire itself; and then down under the south-east of the lower top is the Coire an t-Saighdeir (the soldier's corrie), the centre point on the ridge above which stands out at 3,989 feet. History, so far as I know, relates not who the "soldier" was. But his corrie is rich in rare plants and mosses, and above and south of its eastern edge you may skirt round and down into the lower and more southern Coire Odhair (the *dun*-coloured corrie), a frequent resort of deer. At the foot of the stream issuing from this corrie is the "Corrou" bothy, where the Dee may be crossed (if not in spate!), and the path by Glen Lui Beg to Derry Lodge so gained. There is a zigzag track off the 3,000 feet level plateau to the north of the upper part of the Allt a' Coire Odhair, which is of use in ascending or descending here. And from this high plateau the "*Devil's Point*" (3,303 feet), to the east of it and towering above

the south side of the corrie, may also be reached. This remarkable demoniacal point is fully two miles south down along the ridge from the top of Cairntoul, there being a short ascent to it again of 300 feet from the plateau above the source of the Coire Odhair stream. It presents a most formidable and precipitous looking dark rocky pinnacle to a traveller in the Larig down below, and quite belies, in appearance, its comparatively moderate height. It also looks magnificent from the south, jutting boldly up, grim and black, above the junction of the Dee and the Geusachan waters. Both it and Cairntoul may easily be ascended by way of Glen Geusachan, the narrow lower part of which is guarded gloomily by the dark smooth wet cliffs of the Devil's Point on the north and of Beinn Bhrotain on the south. The north side of the stream should be kept. Three and a half miles up the glen, on a high plateau to the west of it, lies the bleak and desolate Lochan Suarach (the shallow(?) loch), nearly two miles south-west of the top of Cairntoul and about three-and-a-half miles east-south-east from our Breakfast Well on Carn Ban, towards which point we seem always, somehow or other, to be gravitating. And here again, as I have often done, you may pause to take a last look at these great hills before descending to the valley. The evening sun may now, with level rays, be lighting up the broad summits with that wonderful glow of deep purple red which is one of the many strong attractions of this wild lone high land we have been traversing. The dark shadows fall upon the Giant's Corrie, and the wind blows chilly over the Moine Mhor. And so we turn our backs upon them all at last, and hastening over the saddle of Carn Ban, descend with all convenient speed into Glen Feshie, the glorious prospect to the west being never more beautiful or more appreciated than under a sunset sky and with the comfortable thoughts of supper in our minds. And—

“Therefore am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains ; and of all that we behold
From this green earth—of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear,—both what they half create
And what perceive !”

W. A. S.

SGORAN DUBH CLIMBS.

THE great eastern face of Sgoran Dubh is split up into five main rock masses or buttresses, on all of which good climbs are to be found.

Previous to 1902 no records exist of any climbs having been accomplished, but at Easter of that year the meet of the Scottish Mountaineering Club was held at Aviemore, and Sgoran Dubh was pretty completely explored. The Pinnacle Buttress, which is No. 5 counting from north to south, was ascended on 8th March 1902 by an advance party for the Easter Meet; and No. 4, the only one left unclimbed at Easter, was explored by Messrs Mackay the following June.

The buttresses are of much the same general character—broad, steep, and slabby at the foot, and narrowing towards the top into sharp ridges of low angle and no difficulty. The rock, Diorite, is of rather better climbing quality than usual, but the lower portions especially of the faces are apt to be smooth and slabby.

Taking the buttresses in order from north to south:—

No. 1.—This is split into two by a remarkably fine gully which can be glissaded in heavy snow. Caution is required, however, in all these gullies, as they invariably steepen towards the foot, and low down usually possess smooth slabby pitches which may be difficult or even impossible in summer conditions or little snow.

The gully was first ascended by Glover, Leathart, and Worsdell, 28th March 1902. The same party also tried the ascent of the ridge on the north of this gully, but were stopped near the foot by slabs.

The South Ridge was ascended by Kynaston, Mounsey, and Raeburn, 30th March 1902. The rocks were covered with fresh snow, and the climb took six hours. The commencement of the route is just at the foot of the large gully above referred to, and at about 100 feet a considerable traverse was made to the left, and a very steep slabby face about one-third of the way up was turned on the south, and the crest of the ridge gained by a steep open chimney in which the snow gave considerable help.

No. 2.—This was attacked on 31st March 1902 by two parties. The first, consisting of King, Maylard, and Solly, took a shorter but steep and sporting ridge to the north of the Main Ridge. "At least two separate walls had to be overcome on this route. The usual boilers led up to a ledge on the left of the arête heavily overhung by slabs. A traverse was necessary to the right involving a scramble in an awkward cleft."

After regaining the Knife Edge, the ridge became easy for a time till the second wall was reached. "The attack here was directed to a chimney on the right devoid of holds. Snow two feet deep was plastered therein, and had to serve for foot and hand." The steps for safety were made phenomenally far apart. Eight or nine of these, and the leader reached a rock-hold by which and palm friction he escaped to rock more off the perpendicular, and a long back and knee chimney took him to an anchorage 50 feet above his start. This was the last of the difficulties encountered, and the party returned by glissading down the gully to the north.

The second party on the same date, Naismith, Mackay, Squance, and Raeburn, started at the foot of the Main Ridge, just at the foot of the great gully dividing No. 2 from No. 3. They were soon forced to take to a chimney on the right. This contains two interesting pitches, the lower the more difficult. The upper is passed through a cave below a huge jammed block. Above this there is little or no difficulty, though the climb is interesting and steep till the top is neared, when the angle eases off.

The Messrs Mackay repeated this climb in June, when the absence of snow made the two pitches in the chimney longer and harder, and revealed a third lower down, requiring back and foot climbing, which was completely buried at Easter.

No. 3.—This was done on 28th March by Boyd, Gillon, Mackay, and Raeburn. Along with No. 2, from which it is only separated by a deep fan-shaped gully or small corrie, this constitutes the largest mass of rock on the Sgoran Dubh face. The edge of the buttress forms a fairly well-defined arête after the broad slabs of the lower portion are

passed. These slabs were, at the time of the ascent, covered with a layer of good snow up which it was possible to kick steps. In summer these might prove troublesome.

For about one-third of the height no great difficulty presents itself. "At this point a wall, formidably steep, and presenting for holds only shaky flakes, offered combat and prevailed. After an ineffectual effort to force a way up a chimney of an uncomfortably open-angled kind, the party traversed a little to the right and gained the ridge above by means of a small snow-paved gully." From thence the climb is a ridge-walk with fine rock scenery on either hand, the top landing one close under the summit of Sgor Dubh Mhor.

No. 4.—This buttress, the only one left unclimbed at Easter, was ascended by the three Messrs Mackay and a friend on 21st June 1902. They had only a 60-foot rope, and the climb took five hours.

"The general character of the buttress varies a little from that of the others." It is rather more indefinite and more cut up into separate ridges by numerous gullies. One feature is common to all five, a steep granite wall, which low down on No. 1 gradually rises higher and higher as we proceed from north to south. On this buttress the wall takes almost the form of a tower. Three separate efforts were made on this, all doomed to failure. "The party then skirted round the tower, and found several parallel chimneys striking up to the ridge behind. The second was tackled. It was forced in two parts, of which the facetious member said that the first had no holds in the middle portion and the second none at all." Each was nicely measured off for 60 feet. This tower is on the true left of the deep-cut gully very conspicuous in this buttress. The gully was also attempted, but found to be dangerously smooth and ice-worn, and the last pitch was avoided by a difficult traverse on to the arête.

No. 5.—The Pinnacle Ridge was the first climbed on 8th March 1902 by Lawson and Raeburn. It is better defined than any of the others, and gives about 1,200 feet of interesting climbing, though no part except the pinnacle itself is particularly difficult. The pinnacle is a remarkable

lancet-edged granite tower about half-way up the ridge. It is well seen against the sky-line from the foot of Loch Mhic Ghille Chaoile. On arriving at the foot of this tower the party considered its lower edge too difficult under the conditions—sleet and wind—and traversing round its north face, ascended it from the col. The pinnacle is very narrow, the top and upper edge not over 1 foot through, and the ascent from the col is accomplished somewhat in the manner of climbing a tree trunk. Above the pinnacle the ridge gives interesting scrambling which, though in places steep, is never particularly difficult.

The above list of climbs, though covering all the main routes on this extensive rock screen, by no means exhausts the possibilities. There are many minor gullies and ridges yet to be climbed, and any number of sporting variations to reward investigation.

H. R.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

KILLIN MEET, NEW YEAR 1903.

THE New Year's Meet of the Club was held as arranged at Killin, and there three and twenty members, with one or two of their relatives and friends, gathered together for the few days' holiday. The proceedings opened on Wednesday, the 31st December 1902, and on that day Munro had a solitary tramp to the top of a hill lying far away at the head of Glen Lochay, of which few of us had ever heard. He was able to report that lots of soft snow lay on the hills, and that the "going" was heavy.

That evening saw most of us assembled. Besides Munro, there were Clark, Raeburn, Douglas, Goggs, Inglis, Robertson, Murdoch, Macmillan, Russell from the ancient city of Edinburgh; Low, Rorie, three Walkers, and a Hill from the royal burgh and city of Dundee; and Rennie, Thomson, Napier, Maclay, Naismith, Drummond, and Bell from the other ancient and royal towns, burghs, cities and capitals of Scotland.

The first day of the year broke dark and lowering, with all the hilltops and lower slopes completely hidden in motionless grey mists. The ground was hard frozen, and the roadway crunched pleasantly underfoot. The snow covered the hill-sides almost to the water's edge, and the spirits of the party were as high as the hills.

We were all under weigh at 8.45 A.M., some for Ben Lawers, and others for Meall Ghaordie, but the greater bulk of the crowd soon soaked together and formed one long line for the base of the Tarmachan cliffs. Two hours' trudge in the footsteps of the man in front, with the snow balling delightfully on the heels of the honest hob-nailer, and with many a backward glance at a grand and ever-changing cloud panorama over Loch Tay, brought us to the base of these cliffs. These were closely hidden in impenetrable mists, and only the black rocks of their foundations let us vaguely guess at what was above. From this point I can only speak of what Munro, Rennie, and I accomplished, for the whole party broke up into little divisions,

which one by one disappeared mysteriously into the mist, and for the rest of the day were lost to our ken.

My party of three then branched off to the left, and after various adventures reached the summit ridge. Here the wind was strong and laden with sleet, and the mist as dense as it could be. After groping around for an hour or so in search of yet higher ground on which to plant our feet, we at length arrived at an uncairned pinnacle with the hill-sides falling away in all directions. Now the crew sung out that this was the top of all the Tarmachans. The skipper replied, "Then make it so" We made it so, and then went home to tea.

The shades of night were falling as we reached our comfortable domicile, for they fall as early as four o'clock in these parts. Being the first to get back, we had the satisfaction of being warmed and filled, boot-laces slackened, and comfortably inclined to assail each individual and party as they one by one returned. The gullies of the Tarmachans seemed, from their accounts, to have been extremely difficult, for few of them had been finished. Ben Lawers had, however, been climbed, and two parties had, unknown to each other, reached the top of Meall Ghaordie; the second fortunately being able to back up the first in their assertion that they had found the summit.

There was, however, an air of mystery about the doings of all the Tarmachan parties, which completely baffled the topographical skill of every one present to unravel, and as evening wore on, the length of the chimneys, the slipperiness of the ice-covered walls, and the herculean powers of the leaders which had enabled the others to reach the summit of their ambitions, waxed tremendous. Soon fearful scepticism got hold on one and all, and even hints were thrown out that the great Munro and his able companions had failed to set foot on the highest summit of the mighty Tarmachan.

Be that as it may, the night wore on and the rains descended in floods. The morning came, and still the rain continued. The icy roads were converted into slush of the slushiest, and the hills were covered with a fresh coating of snow. Some went to the hills, and some indulged in what

they called "a little low level photography." It was a beast of a day. "Wir schlechtes Wetter haben," said one from the depths of an arm-chair. "Ach! nicht so sehr schlecht. It micht hae been waur, for ye micht hae been on a hull," said another from an equally comfortable position.

Towards the close of day the hill parties began to drop in, and the eagerness of the stay-at-homes to learn of the doings of the hardy mountaineers was insatiable. Some had been on the summit of all the Tarmachans, or said they had, and others had crossed the tops of the whole group, which of course was taken with the same reservation, while another mildly reported that "the new snow had increased by six to nine inches" during the night. "Sixty-nine inches! Great Scot! how it can snow here!" exclaimed an incredibly hard-hearing individual—and so the fun rolled on.

Saturday was another of the same, only more so—no doubt the climbs done by the brave, the British boys, on these days will be chronicled elsewhere in the *Journal*—but most of us left by the afternoon train.

W. D.

SLIGACHAN MEET—EASTER, 1903.

THE Easter Meet of the Club was held at Sligachan, Skye, and was attended by twenty-one members and guests, viz., D. S. Campbell, Inglis Clark, Douglas, Goggs, Howie, Inglis, Ling, Mackenzie, Macmillan, Maylard, Meares, Munro, Nettleton, Parker, Raeburn, Rennie, Rev. A. E. Robertson, Ewen Robertson, W. C. Smith, C. W. Walker, Harry Walker, members; and Bennett Smith and Worsdell, guests. If, owing to somewhat severe weather conditions, it did not result in the capture of quite as many peaks as would have satisfied the ravenous appetite of a Ling or a Goggs, it was nevertheless marked by many pleasing features. We had a considerable contingent from London,



From a Photograph by Donald Cameron Swan.

SGURR NAN GILLEAN FROM SLIGACHAN. EASTER 1892.



and Munro claims to have travelled 800 miles in order to be present. The transit from Edinburgh to Portree was accomplished in the smoothest possible manner in about twelve hours, and at a phenomenally low cost. All difficulties disappeared before the organising genius of the Secretary. A saloon carriage served as sleeping, smoke, and map room until Crianlarich, when it began to be used for the purposes of a Highland breakfast, a somewhat lengthy operation. The day was grey as our train plodded over Rannoch, once known as "the abomination of desolation," but now recognised as one of the most beautiful places in Scotland. At Fort-William the appearance of the convalescent Hon. Editor was greeted with loud cheers. We missed the tender hues of spring in the Country of the Rebellion, and it was cold and gusty weather when at Kyle of Lochalsh we shipped a cargo of American and Canadian wheat. Some of the party, with the beautiful enthusiasm of youth, insisted upon landing at Sconser, where the Secretary had some small boats waiting their arrival; the rest proceeded to the picturesque, if slightly dirty, capital of Skye. The whole party was heartily received by the Sharp family, now themselves on the point of leaving Sligachan, and it at once found itself confronted by a strange problem in weather. Probably not the oldest member of the Club ever saw the Coolin range under such acute Alpine conditions. There was a great accumulation of old snow in both corrie and couloir. Much snow fell during our stay. The blizzards of stinging hail were, at least on two days, of extraordinary vehemence, and the temperature was such that a considerable amount of step-cutting was required on several of the expeditions, and here and there the rocks were so glazed that two parties of experienced climbers were stopped on the Pinnacle Route. But while this may be said to have been the predominant feature of the weather, it must not be supposed that there were not many delightful intervals when the sun shone, and the wind ceased to blow, and we had glorious prospects not only over the fascinating range of the Coolins themselves in their mingled gloom and glory, but eastward to the familiar old giants of Ross-shire, and westwards to

"the dim sheallings and the misty islands" of the Outer Hebrides. The Club contains many eminent photographers, but there is something subtle and secretive about the mind of a photographer; he wraps himself in his black mantle and awaits developments, and it is difficult to say what the photographers thought of the Skye weather. At one moment they would be seen proudly planted on every parapet of the bridge and neighbouring hummock of the moor, the next they would be scampering for the inn like rabbits for their scrape. The effects of the weather, however, were greatly mitigated by the admirable arrangements made by the Secretary, which permitted parties of the Club to sleep at Camasunary Lodge and Glenbrittle House. The first of these forms the natural starting point for Blaven on the one hand, and Sgurr Dubh on the other; the latter for Alasdair, Dearg, and Banachdich. The Camasunary House is described as having a very charming interior, though no doubt its utility would be increased by a footbridge over the burn. At Glenbrittle House we were received by our host in person, with overflowing hospitality. This was indeed a table spread in the wilderness—a table, too, tended by a stately Norwegian maid named Ingrid, who is entitled to the thanks of the Club. The formal thanks of the Club have already been conveyed to Mr Morewood and Mr Thomson for their great kindness in receiving us.

Possibly also owing to the weather, there was abundance of animated conversation in that room at Sligachan, which, alas, reeks not with tobacco alone. As usual the Church claimed complete freedom of speech in its native wilds. A brisk commission business was done in gloves and wetter-mantels. The great question of colloids and crystoids was brought one step nearer a solution, and we had an eloquent re-statement of what may be called the Munro doctrine, viz., the strict, almost fanatical recognition of the exclusive rights of private property in land.

On Friday the 10th, perhaps the best expedition of the Meet was done by Raeburn, the Walkers, and Ling. They left Sligachan early and reached the foot of Sgurr Dubh by the long glen, over all the tops of Sgurr

Dubh, crossed the famous gap, over Alasdair and Sgurr Sgumain, and down to Glen Brittle. Other good expeditions were made round the Bhasteir Corrie, when the summits of Bruach na Frithe, Sgurr Fionn Corrie, Sgurr a Bhasteir, Bhasteir Tooth, Bhasteir, and Sgurr nan Gillean were reached, and Messrs Goggs, Nettleton, and E. Robertson vanquished the first four pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gillean.

On Saturday a party from Glen Brittle did Sgurr M'Connich, and reached the foot of the "Inaccessible," but tremendous blizzards of hail drove them off the edge of that delightful place. Another party attempted Clach Glas, but blizzards prevented them from reaching the summit.

On Sunday parties did some high passes between Glen Brittle and Camasunary, and *vice versa*, and found them distinctly difficult. Another party did Sgurr Dearg from Glen Brittle, and tried the "Inaccessible" from the short side, but found the iced rocks and fierce wind again too much for them.

On Monday Bruach na Frithe and Sgurr a Fionn Corrie were climbed by a number of parties, and most of the Club left early the next morning for home.

On Tuesday the 14th, the weather having greatly cleared and become perceptibly milder, an enchanting little climb up Sgurr nan Gillean was made by a party in the following order:—Raeburn, the President, Douglas, Bennett Smith. Out of regard to the age and infirmities of the President, the route chosen was the tourists' route, but under the actual conditions it presented a most interesting walk and climb. The ascent of the shoulder to the ridge was partly by the snow in the second gully after passing the steep rocks below the Pinnacle Ridge, and partly by very easy rocks. Here and there on the actual ridge the snow was unpleasantly deep, and occasionally a rock proved slippery. But under the judicious leadership of Raeburn everything went like one o'clock on Princes Street, the summit was gained in about five hours from the inn, and on the road down the leader gave us a little crawling on the very steep snow slope into Gully No. 1. The view obtained of

sea and mountain was extremely beautiful. The whole expedition occupied nine hours.

On Wednesday Sgurr Alasdair was reached by the Great Stone Shoot, and lovely views were obtained from the summit. The four that were left then contented themselves with the foothills and photography, and the last of the Club left Skye on Monday, the 20th.

W. C. S.

SONG—OCH ! THE COOLIN !

Tune—"The Groves of Blarney."

OCH ! the Coolin, that'll stand no foolin !
The rocks at the bottom are terrible hard ;
The summits fine and airy, and the slopes contrary,
Exhaust the vocabulary of an Irish bard.

Gabbro and Granite, shure an earthquake began it,
They were pitched in wild confusion in these elegant nooks,
Rocks thrown at random, if you can't understand 'em
You will find them all catalogued in the geology books.

There's Scur nan Gillean—one in a million,
Don't you look silly on the western face ;
But if you want double, double toil and trouble,
With a mighty perspiration, then Glamaig's the place.

Och ! the ridge precarious, makes a party serious,
Climbing until midnight without bite or sup ;
And sure the pinnacle makes a bhoys feel cynical,
For it's quite inaccessible to those who can't get up.

There was John Mackenzie in a silent frenzy,
And the Rev. Pilkington climbing high and low ;
High as Chimborazo (*The Alpine Journal* says so),
There was no place short of heaven where they did not go.

Och ! the many corries, Walker (that's Mr Horace)
Thinks that Harta Corrie's named from Mister Hart ;
But the glen's the facer ! it's an awful place, sir !
It's so far that you are tired long before you start.

Then there's Mister Heelis, lively as an eel is,
He's up the mountains before you can say ;
Down at Glen Brittle he only sleeps a little,
While the cuckoo down his chimney passes the time of day.

Speech as sweet as honey—good value for your money,
If you wish for these conveniences, Mister Sharp's the bhoy ;
The owdacious climber, and the casual rhymer
Join to wish our landlord and his family joy.

Then it's Och ! bhoys, the Coolin, that'll stand no foolin !
The rocks along the bottom are terrible hard ;
The summits fine and airy, and the slopes contrairy,
Exhaust the vocabulary of an Irish bard.

SLIGACHAN HOTEL VISITORS' BOOK,
April 1892.

THE INVERORAN MEET—EASTER 1903.

PROBABLY there has lurked hitherto in the minds of most members of the Club a feeling of compassion for those poor fellows who could only go to the alternative meet—a feeling that though they might be getting good porridge, they were missing all the cakes and honey. For the future no such anxiety can be felt, for all who were at Inveroran this year agree that it was one of the best meets ever held, and that no more cheery and friendly party ever gathered together. The members present were Messrs Maclay, Morrison, Naismith, Rohde, Rorie, Walter Smith, Solly, and Thomson, with four visitors, Messrs Burns, Goodeve, Moore, and Waugh—twelve in all.

Six of the party arrived on the Thursday evening, including Rohde and myself, who had left Glasgow early so as to have time to ascend the Cobbler before joining the afternoon train at Arrochar.

On Friday, all six started for the north-east face of Stob Ghabhar. The weather was fine, but there was a keen wind. There was rather more snow on the mountain

than in 1892, when the photograph in Vol. II., p. 127, was taken, and it was very soft. We traversed the great snow-field towards the upper couloir, as far as the foot of the rocky buttress on its southerly side, which Maclay said had not been climbed. There we divided the party, and Maclay, Rohde, and I agreed to try these rocks, while Naismith, Thomson, and Waugh went to a short snow gully on our left. At the foot the buttress is very steep, and we saw no chance of getting on to it; but by ascending on the snow for a few yards to our left, we got an easier place. Maclay was leading. From this we were able to ascend, working our way gradually up and to our right, but we never got far enough to the right to see into the gully. For some time the climbing was very difficult, and the holds, such as we found, were wet. A glove was dropped, and it went clear of the rocks for 200 feet or more on to the snow beneath. After that we got to easier ground, and soon reached the ridge near the summit, where we found Walter Smith, with Burns, Goodeve, and Moore, who had reached Inveroran that morning, and made the ascent by the lower couloir. A little later Naismith's party joined us. He had found that the gully in which he started soon became difficult, and had traversed on to the rocks towards our route, and so gained the ridge a little to our left, thus making a second new route up this face of the peak. The parties descended by various routes, but all reported long glissades.

By Saturday the wind had increased to a gale, and peak-bagging was the order of the day. The bag included Ben Starav, Glas Bheinn Mhor, Stob Coir an Albannaich, Ben Achallader, and Beinn-nan-Aighean.

Serious climbing was out of the question. At times we all had to stoop or lie down till the fury of the squalls passed. I went with Maclay and Rohde to the north face of Achallader, taking a boat on Loch Tulla till we were across the Orchy, so as to save the long trudge round to the bridge. After reaching our mountain we ascended a long snow gully with an interesting bit of cornice at the top, and I think this—except on the steep rocks and snow the south-east end of Stob Coir an Albannaich, ascended

by a party well led by Goodeve—was the only place where the rope was used that day by any of the parties. After descending we visited the ruins of Achallader Castle, and various ascents to loopholes and windows were made, but these are not claimed as new.

On Sunday there was the usual division—some rested, some went to church, while others visited Stob Ghabhar and Ben Doran.

Monday was the beginning of the end, but two parties started for the hills. Goodeve, Moore, Burns, and Morrison went to Beinn an Dothaidh, leaving their luggage at Bridge of Orchy Station on the way. They went to the north face of the mountain, and ascending by a gully, found the snow so hard that they had to cut steps for about an hour and a half before they reached the summit. They then returned to the station in time for the afternoon train. Maclay, Naismith, Rohde, and I started for Ben Doran, going up easy slopes towards the col between that mountain and Beinn an Dothaidh.

On both mountains the rocks are precipitous, and looked grand with their coating of snow and the long icicles hanging from numberless points. We looked for some time at the rocks on our right, that is on Ben Doran, and they seemed at first impracticable, but nearer the col a crack in the rocks was noticed slanting down from east to west which seemed worth trying. Here we roped, and at first the way was not difficult, though care was necessary on account of the ice and snow, then we came to what from below had seemed to be the crucial point. On the left was a wall of rock below a little ledge on to which one must get, and on the right the crack had narrowed to a few inches. This at first stopped us, but eventually by jamming a foot in the crack the leader managed to get up the worst part, and going on a few yards higher, was able to anchor while the others followed. This corner must always be difficult, and there is a sheer drop below, and very little help can be given by the second man. Above this point we stayed to lunch, and built a small cairn, then went on to where there is a steep chimney, distinctly visible from below. The second man can go into the recess

or cave, so as to be on a level with the leader as he climbs, and to pull him in if needed, but the chimney, though steep, is not very difficult. After this we soon came out on the northerly end of the lower plateau of the mountain, and our actual climbing was over. We went on to the summit, and had some grand glissades on our descent towards Tyndrum, which we reached by 4.30 P.M.

The next day (Tuesday) Rohde and I went up Ben Lui from Tyndrum, and saw that noble mountain perhaps at its best. A perfectly clear day, the mountain sheeted in white for nearly 2,000 feet, and all the crystals of ice and snow glittering in the morning sun. One such view makes up for many a day of mists and clouds.

So ended a most successful meet. We had not the *éclat* of the presence of the President, but we had his brother and his Vices, so we felt that he had done his best to be in two places at once.

On Friday we were alarmed by a telegram from Sligachan that parties were still out, and peaks falling in all directions as though there had been a new volcanic eruption. We at once wired to the poor fellows there, asking whether any of the parties were injured, and telling how much the remnant of the Club at Inveroran was enjoying itself. No answer came, and owing to the weather there, we believe no more peaks fell near Sligachan for the next few days.

This paper has become longer than I intended, and I will only add that we were made most comfortable at the hotel, and the attention was all that could be desired.

GODFREY A. SOLLY.

LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

SINCE the 1st January 1903 the Library has received considerable additions, details of which will be found below, and exchanges have been arranged with several other Clubs at home and abroad.

Mention must be specially made of Mr W. A. Brown's extremely generous gift of over sixty volumes, and a solid alto-relievo model map of Scotland.

Referring to the decision come to at the last annual meeting to gradually purchase the 6-inch and the new 1-inch Ordnance Survey Maps of Scotland, it has been decided to buy each year those for the district where the Meets for that year are to take place, and in this way the above-mentioned maps will in time be obtained for the greater part of Scotland. This year therefore the 6 and 1 inch (new) maps of the district round Inveroran have been purchased, and the 1-inch (new) map of Skye. The 6-inch maps of the Cuillins have been presented to the Club by Mr W. Douglas. The local 6 and 1 inch (new) maps will in future be sent to every Meet, and Mr J. G. Inglis has kindly provided the Club with the necessary cases for their despatch.

A book-plate for the Library has been obtained, and a card-index of the books is in course of preparation.

The photographs in the Club-room which bore no subject-name, have now been duly inscribed.

A single book-shelf has been placed on the mantelpiece of the Club-room: it contains a set of the Club's *Journal*, and a few duplicate books; it is unlocked, so that members may have access to a few books when at the Club-room without being put to the trouble of obtaining the keys to the main bookcase from the Librarian. The books must not, of course, be taken away without the Librarian's consent.



ADDITIONS TO LIBRARY.

JOURNALS, YEAR-BOOKS, &C., OF OTHER CLUBS.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Cairngorm Club Journal, No. 1 - - - -	Purchased.
Climbers' Club Journal, No. 1 and onwards -	{ Part purchased, part exchanged.
L'Echo des Alpes, January 1903 and onwards -	Exchanged.
German and Austrian Alpine Club Year-book— Vol. XXX. (1899), Vol. XXXII. (1901) -	F. C. Squance.
Vol. XXXIII. - - - -	Exchanged.
Italian Alpine Club Year-book, 1902 - - -	" .
Do. Monthly Review, January 1901 and onwards - - - -	"
Do. (Naples Section) Journal, January 1899 and onwards - - -	"
Bulletin Pyrénéen, March 1899 and onwards -	"
Scottish Geographical Society's Magazine, Vol. XVII. (1901) and XVIII (1902) - - - -	J. Rennie.
Sierra Club Bulletin, Vol. IV., No. 3, February 1903	Exchanged.
Swedish Tourist Society Annual, 1898 and onwards	"
Swiss Alpine Club Year-book, Vol. XXXVII. (1901-2)	"
Société des Touristes du Dauphiné Year-book, 1901	"

BROCHURES, MONOGRAPHS, &C.

The Ancient Camps near Callander. Rev. Geo. Walker. (1898) - - - -	J. G. Inglis.
Heraldry in some of the Old Churchyards between Tain and Inverness. W. Rae Macdonald, F.S.A. Scot. - - - -	The Author.
How to Use the Aneroid Barometer. Ed. Whymper. (1891) - - - -	—
Brocken Spectres. Hy. Sharpe. (Ex Royal Meteorological Society's Quarterly Journal, Vol. XIII., No. 64. October 1887) - - - -	—
Braeriach and Cairn Toul, Glen and Loch Eunach, Loch an Eilean, &c. Cairngorm Club, 1890. Monograph - - - -	—
Ben a' Bhuid and Ben Avon. Cairngorm Club, 1891. Monograph - - - -	—
Morven. Cairngorm Club, 1891. Monograph -	—
Ben Rinnes. Do. do. -	—
Ben Muich Dhui and his Neighbours. A. I. M'Connochie. (1885) - - - -	—
Lochnagar. A. I. M'Connochie. (1891) - - -	—
Bulletin de l'Association pour la Protection des Plantes. Geneva, 1889, No. 7 - - - -	—

BOOKS.	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland, 1754. (2 vols.) (1876 Edition) - - - -	J. W. Drummond.
The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland. John Macculloch. (4 vols.) (1824) - - -	Purchased.
Promenade from Dieppe to the Mountains of Scot- land. Chas. Nodier. (1822) - - - -	C. W. Nettleton.
Text-book of Petrology. F. H. Hatch. (1892) -	Jas. Maclay.
Do. Descriptive Mineralogy. H. Bauer- man. (1884) - - - -	"
Do. Systematic Mineralogy. H. Bauerman. (1881) - - - -	"
Abridged Statistical History of Scotland. J. H. Dawson. (1854) - - - -	"
Among the Rocks around Glasgow. D. Bell. (1881)	"
Edinburgh and its Neighbourhood. Hugh Miller. (1864) - - - -	"
Letters from the Mountains. (3 vols.) Mrs Grant of Laggan. (1809) - - - -	W. A. Brown.
Handbook of Deer-Stalking. Alex. Macrae. (1880)	"
Maxwell's Guide-book to the Stewartry of Kirkcud- bright. 4th Edition. (1884) - - - -	"
Taylor & Skinner's Survey and Maps of the Roads of North Britain or Scotland. 20/3/1776 -	"
The Children of the Mist. Lord Archibald Campbell. (1890) - - - -	"
Map of Strathern, &c. (reprint), by John Adair. (Circa 1745) - - - -	"
Moidart, or Among the Clanranalds. Rev. Charles Macdonald. (1889) - - - -	"
Loch Creran. W. Anderson Smith. (1887) - -	"
A Historical Account of the Ancient Culdees of Iona. John Jamieson. (1890) - - - -	"
Our Journey to the Hebrides. Jos. and Elizabeth Pennell. (1890) - - - -	"
Manners, Customs, and History of the Highlanders of Scotland. Historical Account of the Clan MacGregor. Sir Walter Scott. (1893) - -	"
The Land o' Cakes and Brither Scots. T. B. John- stone. (1897) - - - -	"
The Great Floods of August 1829, in the Province of Moray and adjoining districts. Sir Thomas Dick Lauder. 3rd Edition. (1873) - - -	"
Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides. (Re- print of a new edition by R. Carruthers.) (1859)	"
Old-World Scotland. T. F. Henderson. (1893) -	"

By whom presented
(when not purchased).

A Tour in England and Scotland in 1785. By an English Gentleman. (1788) - - - -	W. A. Brown.
First Sketch of a new Geological Map of Scotland, with explanatory notes. Sir R. I. Murchison and A. Geikie. (1862) - - - -	"
Scottish Highlanders and the Land Laws. J. S. Blackie. (1885) - - - -	"
History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland from 1493-1625, &c. By D. Gregory. (1836)	"
A Season in Switzerland. J. E. Edwards-Moss. (1888) - - - -	"
Mountain Climbing, 1897. Out-of-Door Library -	"
Days of Deer-Stalking. Wm. Scrope. (1883) -	"
Memorials of Angus and Mearns. Andrew Jervise. (2 vols.) (1885) - - - -	"
Outer Isles. A. Goodrich-Freer. (1902) - -	"
Culture in Early Scotland. Jas. Mackinnon. (1892)	"
Loch Etive, and the Sons of Uisnach. R. Angus Smith. (1885) - - - -	"
Entomological Notes on some of the Islands of Scotland. T. S. Muir. (1885) - - -	"
History of the Highlands and Gaelic Scotland. D. Mitchell. (1900) - - - -	"
Scotland before 1700. Ed. P. Hume Brown. (1893)	"
Crag and Hound in Lakeland. C. E. Benson. (1902)	"
Bygone Scotland. D. Maxwell. (1894) - -	"
Studies in the Topography of Galloway. Sir H. E. Maxwell. (1887) - - - -	"
History of Aberdeenshire. Ed. by Alex. Smith. (2 vols.) (1875) - - - -	"
The Kelt or Gael. T. de C. Atkins. (1892) - -	"
Sketches of the Character, Institutions, and Customs of the Highlanders of Scotland. Major-Gen. David Stewart. (1885) - - - -	"
Braemar. Hon. Stuart Erskine. (1898) - -	"
History of Loch Kinnord. Rev. J. G. Michie. (1877)	"
A Summer Ramble in the North Highlands. (1825)	"
Popular Tales of the West Highlands. J. F. Campbell. Vol. I. (1898 Edition) - - -	"
The Crofter in History. Dalriad. (1885) - -	"
Galloway. P. H. M'Kerlie. (1891) - - -	"
Statistical Account of Sutherlandshire. (1841) -	"
Do. do. Shetland Islands. (1841) -	"
Gloomy Memories in the Highlands of Scotland. Donald M'Leod. (1892 Edition) - - -	"

		By whom presented (when not purchased).
History of the Highlands.	Jas. Browne. (4 vols.)	
(1840)	- - - - -	W. A. Brown.
The Highland Tay.	Hugh Macmillan. (1901)	"
The Vale of Anwoth, and other Essays.	D. Brown	
Anderson. (1899)	- - - - -	"
Life of James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell.	Frederik	
Schiern. (1880)	- - - - -	"
The History and Traditions of the Land of the	Lindsays. Andrew Jervise. (2nd Ed.) (1882)	"
Loyal Lochaber.	Wm. Drummond-Norie. (1898)	"
The Alps from End to End.	Sir W. M. Conway.	
(1900 Edition)	- - - - -	"
Climbing in the Dolomites.	Leone Sinigaglia.	
(1896)	- - - - -	"
Aberdour and Inchcolme.	Rev. Wm. Ross. (1885)	"
Celtic Scotland.	Wm. F. Skene. (2nd Edition.)	
(3 vols.) (1886)	- - - - -	"
History of the Scottish Highlands, Highland Clans,	and Highland Regiments. Ed. by John S.	
Keltie. (5 vols.)	- - - - -	"
Historical Geography of the Clans of Scotland.	T. B. Johnstone and others. (1899)	"
Caledonia.	Geo. Chalmers. (1887 Ed.) (7 vols.)	"
Black's Guide to the Highlands. Part II.—Central,	Southern, and Eastern Highlands. G. and P.	
Anderson. (4th Edition.) (1863)	- - - - -	"
Black's Guide to the Highlands. Part III.—Northern	Highlands. G. and P. Anderson. (4th Edition.)	
(1863)	- - - - -	"
A Tour through Scotland.	—, Botfield. (1830)	Purchased.
Excursions through the Highlands and Isles of	Scotland in 1835 and 1836. Rev. C. Lesingham	
Smith. (1837)	- - - - -	"

NOTES AND QUERIES.



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 NEW ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS.

The following notes may prove of interest in connection with the recent acquisition of new Ordnance maps for the Club-room and Meets. One series of these maps, formed by printing the hill-shaded survey in brown ink on the ordinary contoured edition, is the *ne plus ultra* for mountaineering, and, as will be shown later, may possibly lead to additions being made to the list of summits over 3,000 feet, which have been ignored by the Ordnance cartographers. The rather puzzling question is also raised of what the standard nomenclature is to be for the future, as changes—some slight, others considerable—have been made in the spelling of some of the hill names, and some hills have been re-named.

The old one-inch Survey maps were based on surveys made between the years 1850 to 1880, or thereabouts, and once the sheets had been issued little was done in the way of bringing them up to date, or of correcting errors, beyond inserting new railways from time to time. About 1890, however, a re-survey was begun, the results of which have been incorporated in the revised sheets recently issued.

All users of the old one-inch Survey maps probably know from sad experience that there was nothing to distinguish footpaths—often mere tracks in the heather—from ordinary roads. Many of these old paths have now ceased to exist, and have been deleted from the new maps, and the defects of the earlier issues have now been remedied by showing footpaths as single dotted lines, so that there is no dubiety as to their true character. The surveyors, however, have probably found it very difficult where to draw the line between footpaths and unmetalled roads; at the Killin Meet it was found almost impossible to find the course of a "cart-track" shown on both the new and the old maps, near the farm of Tirarthur.

Another improvement is that the roads have been classified according as they are metalled or unmetalled, the former in their turn

being divided into first, second, and third class roads, shown by lines of varying width. Along many of the principal roads, also, the mile-stones are shown, which is very convenient for ascertaining the distance between points. Post and telegraph offices and letter-boxes are also indicated. Windmills, an unusual sight on this side of the Border, have a special sign of their own, while there are also signs, evidently borrowed from English practice, distinguishing "churches or chapels with spires or towers" from less pretentious edifices.

New roads, railways, and footpaths have of course been inserted, and it is specially interesting to compare the new maps with the old, and note the enormous addition that has been made to the forests of the country, in some districts, in the course of the past half-century. A valuable feature to the mountaineer is the prominent insertion of new foot-bridges across the rivers, which will save him long detours when he knows where to find a dry crossing. County boundaries have also been altered considerably in some districts.

Coming to the names, what with the insertion of new buildings, alterations in names of farms, and, alas, the deletion of many a name that is now represented by a ruined homestead, many alterations have been made. Some attempt was made to remedy the inconsistency of the spelling of Gaelic names in different sheets by referring them to a Committee, of which Dr James Burgess, C.I.E., was Convener. This Committee had thousands of names submitted to it by the Survey authorities, and where they had difficulty in coming to a decision they had recourse to local experts. A great deal of valuable material was collected, but unfortunately there is no means of judging to what extent it has been incorporated in the new maps. As it is exceedingly expensive to make alterations on copper map-plates, the probability is that a "judeicious" selection was made, with the result that names of hills have been altered, sometimes, leaving untouched rivers and lochs bearing the same name. Sometimes, too, quasi-Gaelic spellings have been turned into genuine ones, others have been anglicised altogether, while on the other hand anglicised spellings have been put into Gaelic spelling—why, it is difficult to say. To further complicate matters, spellings have been altered in the new six-inch map, but left unchanged in the one-inch; and at least one case has been noticed where the new six-inch has been altered in one way, and the new one-inch in another, though this may be merely an engraver's error. Taken as a whole, however, for ordinary purposes, the new one-inch map leaves little to be desired, though mountaineers cannot help wishing that something had been done to remedy their grievance as to the names and heights given only in the six-inch map. Practically nothing has been done in this way, so far as the writer has been able to find.

As already mentioned, on comparing Munro's Tables with the new maps, the spellings of the names have occasionally been changed. In Section I., Beinn Oss is now Os; Beinn Dubh-craige is Dubh-craige; Stob Coire an Lochan is now an Lochain. In Section II., Ben

Chonzie is now Beinn a' Choinnaich. In Section III., there are many changes; Meall Gruaidh is now Graidhe; Meall Ghaordie, Ghaordaidh; and Beinn Heasgarnich is Theasgarnaich. Beinn Dheiceach has become the even more puzzling Cheathaich; Beinn Doireann is Dòrain, and Beinn Creachan is spelt Creachain on the one-inch, and Chreachain on the six-inch; Ben Vannoch and Beinn Achallader remain unchanged on the one-inch map, but are Mhanach and Achaladair on the six-inch.

In Section IV. there are few changes in the one-inch, but in the six-inch the Buchaille Etives are now spelt Buachaille. Stob Glas Choire, Clach Leathad, is now Stob a' Ghlais Coire; Stob a' Bruaich Leith is now S. a' Bhruaich Léith. Stob Coire nam Beith would now be Beitheach, according to the spelling of the corrie name; Stob Coire an Lochan is now S. Coire nan Lochan.

In Section VII., Sgùrr Mòr is now Sgòr. In Section VIII., Tigh Mòr now appears as Tom Mòr na Seilge. The spelling of Loch Clunie has been altered to Cluanie.

In Section IX., the name Meall Mòr is one mile to the east of the 3,000 contour, while in An Riabhachan, the new hill-shaded edition indicates that the hill rises considerably for half a mile to the north-east of the 3,696 point.

In Sections XIV. and XV., Beinn Mheadhoin is now Mheadoin; Beinns Iutharn Mhòr and Bheag have been anglicised into Bens Marn More and Marn Beg—the actual top of the latter, by the way, is 3,121 feet, the height (in Aberdeenshire) of a point about 700 feet to the north of the 3,011 in the Tables. Meall Dubh-Achaidh is now Meall Dubhag, and Carn an Fhidleir is now Carn Ealar.

In Section XVI., Cairn na Glasha is now Carn na Claise; Tolmont is Tolmount; and Cac Carn Beag of Lochnagar, Ca' Carn Beag. No alterations have been made in Section XVII.

The above are the alterations in the one-inch sheets and few six-inch sheets available to the writer, and in other districts similar alterations will have been made, especially in the regions first surveyed. So far as he has been able to find there has been little attempt made to remedy the discrepancies in heights and name positions between the six and one inch editions, occasionally noted in Munro's Tables. The names in the new six-inch, however, are not always in exactly the same place as in the old, though there has not been enough evidence collected yet to show whether this has been done intentionally, or whether it is simply due to the cartographer's taste in the manner of writing in the name. The name Meall Buidhe in Section III., for instance, is now three-eighths of a mile to the north-east of the 3,193 point, and the nearest name to it is now Garbh Meall, a quarter of a mile to the south.

Sections VI., XI., XII., and XIII. have not been examined for lack of the maps; perhaps the Librarian will take the hint!

Some of the heights of the hills have also been altered. A foot has been added to Beinn Doireann, making it 3,524 feet. Stobinain,

on the other hand, has been reduced by six feet, being now given as 3,821 instead of 3,827. Stob Dubh of Buchaille Etive Bheag is now 3,130, the height of a point a short distance to the north of the 3,129 point. Creag Mhor (Section III.), which was 3,305 on the old one-inch Survey, has now been altered to the six-inch level 3,387. Beinn an Dòthaidh, for which there was only a 3,250 contour, has been made 3,267, at its west end; south-west of Cairngorm, the top of Coire an Lochain, for which there was only a 3,750 contour, has now the height inserted 3,983. Beinn Sguliaird is now 3,059, the height given on the old six-inch. The vagaries of the Survey editors are shown by the omission to insert the height of a large loch like Loch Tulla, whereas the heights of many small and unimportant lochans have been given, together with the date of observation.

Coming to the combination map with the hill-shading and contours—which costs 1s. 6d. per sheet only (the ordinary contoured edition, revised, is still issued at 1s. 9d. per sheet)—a short examination shows that the contours and shading have not always been accurately adjusted to one another, and further examination shows that occasionally the apparent tops, as shown by the altitude given, are really some distance away from it. Many instances of this have already been noted in Munro's Tables, but this combined map opens up a new field for investigation, and it will not be surprising if a careful investigation of the 2,750 contours may result in additions being made to the Tables. In the Killin district, for instance, near Meall Ghaordie is Beinn Oighreag, 2,978 feet, but the hill-shading to the north of the 2,978 point would seem to indicate very decidedly that the hill rises more than the 22 feet required to raise it to the dignity of a "Munro"—unless a dark line just to the north of 2,978 indicates a very sudden and considerable drop in the ridge. And in Sgairneach Mòr (Section V.), the hitherto accepted altitude of 3,160 feet is apparently merely that of a point on the ridge, as the shading indicates that the ridge rises steadily for nearly half a mile further, to the north-east.—J. G. I.

NOTE.—Since the above was put in type, additional alterations have been noticed on a contoured copy of one-inch sheet 64. Carn an Fhidleir appears thereon as "Carn an Fhidhleir or Carn Ealar." Sgoran Dubh, north (3,635 feet), formerly nameless on the Survey, is now named Sgoran Dubh Mòr, in accordance with the note in Munro's Tables, while the former Sgoran Dubh (3,658 feet) has been altered to Sgor Gaoith. Loch Eunach has also been altered, now appearing as Einich. Meall Tionail is now Mullach Clach a Bhlair, and Càrn Bàn, Carn Bàn Mòr.

Creagan a' Choire Etchachan, three-quarters of a mile south of Loch Etchachan, named only on the six-inch map without height, 3,500 contour one-inch map, is now given as being 3,629 feet, and Sron na Leirg (3,875 feet), Braeriach, formerly contour only on one-inch map, has now a height 3,860 inserted.

EXCURSIONS.

THE DROCHAID GLAS.—More than one party has gone astray in mist on the Drochaid Glas of Ben Cruachan (see Vol. IV., pp. 285, 286). This peak lies somewhat back, *i.e.*, north from the main ridge, which, however, bends so imperceptibly to the right or left, according as it is approached from the east or west, that unless care is exercised, and the compass consulted, one is apt to proceed down its northern shoulder into Glen Noe, under the impression that one is still on the main ridge.

I was recently on it in fine weather, and noted the following for the benefit of those who may ascend it in mist. On leaving the summit of the Drochaid Glas, those bound for Ben Cruachan should at first steer a (true) south-west course, gradually bearing round to the right; while for the Dalmally peaks the course should at first be south-south-east.

Although the dip between the Drochaid Glas and Stob Diamh is not very great (436 feet), I am still of opinion that the latter summit is worthy to be reckoned a separate mountain, not only on account of its distance from the main peak of Cruachan, but because it forms a distinct centre from which three ridges radiate, two of which constitute the well-known Dalmally Horse-shoe.

The "Nameless Top," 3,091 feet (see Vol. II., pp. 174 and 176), is a mere shoulder of Stob Garbh, with practically no dip between them, although, as is often the case with shoulders when viewed from below, it appears to be a very decided top as seen from Dalmally.

H. T. MUNRO.

A CLIMB ON THE TARMACHANS.—On New Year's Day 1903 about a dozen of the S.M.C., including Mrs Inglis Clark, drove from Killin Hotel three miles along Loch Tay side, then left the conveyances and started uphill to do work on the Tarmachans. The heather was covered to the depth of a foot or more with soft snow, and the walking was therefore toilsome. On the way up Dr Inglis Clark took several photographs, but the light was bad, and they were unsatisfactory. At last the foot of the crags was reached, the part marked Cham-a-Creag on the O.S. map. Here we lunched, the Glasgow men very generously giving us some of the good things they had brought with them. After lunch the party separated, each section going its own way to do its own climb. Dr Inglis Clark and his party went along the foot of the crags till an ice-clad Alpine gully was reached. It was resolved to go up. The party roped up: first the Doctor, then Mrs Inglis Clark, then A. E. R., then Charlie Clark, a Watsonian, with all his father's and mother's pluck—more could be said of no one. Last of all came Ben Alder. Ben had had a great struggle to get in a sufficient number of snow-ascents to qualify him for the S.M.C., and would not

have succeeded in doing so had not Mrs Inglis Clark very kindly come to his rescue by taking him up Ben Lomond in snow, then up Narnain and then Ben Ime, Edendarroch meanwhile opening its hospitable doors to him. Happier five were never roped together. The snow was very soft, and afforded no footing. When dug away, the ground below was sometimes not frozen, and so no steps could be cut in it. Hanging from the sides of the gully were long icicles, often massed together, and rendering the passage so narrow that a climber with a rucksack could scarcely get up. The first ledge was reached by the leader's standing on A. E. R.'s shoulders, and then cutting steps. All got up safely: Charlie going up like a cat, Ben requiring a fair amount of moral support from the rope. Then followed more scraping away of the soft snow, more step-cutting among the massed icicles, and with much exertion and skill on the part of the leader another halting-place was reached. Now came the tug-of-war. The gully narrowed so much that the leader could with difficulty fight his way up. Thirty feet above was a projecting ice-covered rock which seemed to bar further progress. The rocks leading to this were thinly covered with ice, and foothold could scarcely be got in the shallow steps. Whoever saw Inglis Clark beaten? The man who climbed the Winkler Thurm and took his sweetheart with him wasn't going to be beaten by a stiff gully on Cham-a-Creag, so with much vigorous step-cutting the *mauvais pas* was reached. This was found to consist of an ice-clad projecting rock with an exceedingly narrow ledge at its base which barely gave foothold—the projection of the rock pushing the climber off the perpendicular. The ice-axe vigorously dug into it just kept him from falling down one hundred feet sheer. Our leader happily made his way round this, and then the others followed, the last man having a good deal of difficulty on account of his two rucksacks, one of them having slewed round and become a *foresack*, thus much impeding his passage of the projecting part. However, the moral support of the rope was again available, A. E. R. and Charlie hauling vigorously. And now it was comparatively easy going to the top of the ridge, where the quintette arrived safely, deeply grateful to their excellent leader, and very happy to find themselves safe after a three hours' climb.

After a short rest it was resolved to descend. This could be done by either of two gullies. As one of these ended in a precipice of sixty feet or more covered with soft snow, it was judged wiser to take the other and easier one. The five had not gone far down when cooees were heard, and soon through the mist appeared several of the party who had just returned from their climbs. Here the five unroped, not very wisely as it turned out, for the snow in the gully was very soft and rested on smooth ice. The snow moved away *en masse* with Mrs Inglis Clark, who sailed gracefully down like a bird, and landed at the foot of an ice-fall unhurt. Ben Alder was not so fortunate, for, coming last, the trodden snow gave way with him, and notwithstanding his utmost exertions driving in his ice-axe and digging in his feet, he was

carried more and more quickly down the gully, and swept over the ice-fall, landing safely among the soft snow at the bottom. He carried Dr Clark's camera in his rucksack and a bottle of wine in his foresack, both of which came down in safety. The only damage done was a slight loss of epithelium from Ben's cheek, which came in violent collision with an ice-covered rock projecting from the middle of the fall. The epithelium was soon restored, but what can restore the broken rock? Clearly the action of man in modifying nature has not been sufficiently taken into account by geologists, and I respectfully bring this fact under the notice of our esteemed member Mr Peach. The incident was not without its ludicrous side, for our good Treasurer, seeing a man sailing down with a rucksack in *front* of him, ran up in great anxiety, fearing that some dreadful anatomical transposition had taken place in the unhappy member, and was much pleased to find that his sad forebodings had not been realised! The journey down was uneventful and happy, and at dinner we climbed our climbs over again, feeling that we had had a delightful day, and that of the pleasures allotted to mankind, mountaineering is second to none.

J. MACMILLAN.







W. L. Loomis, Alaska.

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EASTER (1903) IN SKYE.

(1.) SLIGACHAN TO GLEN BRITTLE BY THE DUBH RIDGES.

BY W. N. LING.

THE Editor is inexorable, and the spin of the coin is against me, so I must needs take pen and put down a few remarks about a day's wandering over ridges and peaks.

A large party of mountaineers had arrived at Sligachan the day before, and it had fallen to the lot of H. Walker, C. W. Walker, H. Raeburn, and myself to spend the night at Glenbrittle House. An excellent spirit of enthusiasm induced a large number of members to breakfast at six, and a few minutes after seven we started. The weather was propitious, and the views as we marched along Glen Sligachan were superb. Blaven and Clach Glas towered away to the left, wreathed in mist, which gradually cleared, while to the right Sgurr nan Gillean raised its head proudly above us.

Two and a quarter hours took us to the crest of the Drumhain ridge, half an hour more to the foot of wild Loch Coruisk and across the stream. Then skirting round Scavaig—where we found a solitary primrose, surely an alien in this inhospitable spot—the sight of the Mad Burn caused inward cravings to assert themselves, and scrambling up about 400 feet, we found an airy platform, where we sat down for a second breakfast. Scavaig and

the islands lay below us, a charming spectacle, while Blaven, now clear of mist, presented a fine appearance. Twenty minutes sufficed us, and we proceeded on our way, crossed the plateau, and followed a scree gully and slabs to the summit of Sgurr Dubh Bheag, six hours from the start.

We went along the ridge and put on the rope for the drop which occurs here. This afforded a sporting climb. The holds were not superabundant, and of the fingertip order, and the position was sensational; but we got down all right and proceeded to Sgurr Dubh Mhor, the top of which we reached at 2.10. The weather had now degenerated, and it was rather cold on the ridge. We found a sheltered spot, however, and had lunch.

Then on to Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn and to the top of the Gap, 2.50. It was very cold here, and the snow was being blown through the Gap, plastering the rocks and obscuring the holds. The three of us descended, Raeburn acting as guardian angel above, and he then descended with the rope hitched. We endeavoured to throw the rope over the hitch on the other side, but as it would not remain in position satisfactorily, our leader solved the difficulty by climbing without it, and soon had us up beside him. The climb was thoroughly interesting, and took the party just one hour.

We proceeded and scrambled to the top of Tearlach, descending direct to the col, which was elevated by the snow. Our view was strictly limited, owing to the mist.

Fifteen minutes more saw us on the top of Alasdair, 4.20—the peaks were falling almost as fast as the rain—then on to Sgurr Sgumain. Our leader had recollections of an easy rake leading down from here into Coire Labain, and we followed for some distance what we thought was this same highway, but presently we came to an exceedingly perpendicular place, and decided to try elsewhere. We found a stone-strewn gully which led us down below the slabs, and proved the next day by daylight to have been the best line we could have taken. Our difficulties were now over, and fifty minutes took us down to Glenbrittle House, twelve hours and ten minutes from the start, to be welcomed by our hospitable host, who had spied us on

the sky-line and came out to meet us, glass in hand. Our thanks are due to him for a pleasant ending to a most enjoyable day.

(2.) BEALLACH COIRE LABAIN.

BY J. A. PARKER.

CLARK, A. E. ROBERTSON, and the writer went to the Easter Meet at Skye with the pre-arranged programme of crossing from Sligachan to Glen Brittle on the Saturday, and from thence, on the Sunday, to cross to Camasunary.

Peaks were, of course, to be climbed on both days, it being understood that on one of the days a "desperate climb" was to be attempted. The weather on the Saturday, combined with a late start from Sligachan, due to the failure of the drying arrangements, at once decided that not even the peaks would be climbed on the way over to Glen Brittle, and we had consequently to content ourselves on that day with a simple walk over the Beallach a Mhaim. High winds prevailed all the time, with brilliant bursts of sunshine alternating with blinding snow squalls. During the former we had magnificent views of the peaks which made us wish that we were up amongst them, and during the latter we took what shelter offered, and wished we were back in the hotel. One particularly brilliant view that we had of Coire na Creiche just before we struck the Glen Brittle road nearly led to an attack being made on the peaks forthwith. Discretion, however, prevailed, and we kept straight on for Glenbrittle House, where an hour later we were comfortably ensconced in front of a big fire watching a howling snowstorm raging outside, and thinking that we might have been in worse places. Raeburn's arrival from Sgurr Dearg some hours later with the report that difficult rock climbing on the peaks was quite out of the question on account of the snow and high wind was consoling for the time being, but created fears that our desperate climb on the morrow would have to be abandoned.

Sunday opened not much better, and promised strong north-west winds with heavy snow squalls at intervals. It

was therefore decided that it would be impracticable to include a peak in our day's journey, and that we would require to confine ourselves to a pass or go round by the coast. There were two cameras in the party, on the same principle, I suppose, as the two holes which Newton is alleged to have made in his study door for his cat and her kitten, and in their interests it was decided that the Beallach Coire Labain should be crossed, as being probably the most picturesque route. But none of us could remember what the authorities said about the nature of the descent from that pass down to Coruisk. True, we had re-read all the articles in the *Journal* on the Coolins before coming north, but now our minds regarding this particular pass were a complete blank. Was it a "Harker" or otherwise? We could not tell. Its final selection was, I think, due to a suspicion that it was not.

The day was certainly not tempting, and after dallying over breakfast as long as possible, it was with some degree of reluctance that we turned out in one of the dry intervals. This lasted only for about half an hour, when a very heavy snowstorm came on which blotted out everything, and rendered it necessary to set a compass course for the entrance to Corrie Labain. The storm lasted till we reached the corrie, and by that time we had got so accustomed to it that we did not mind what the weather was like afterwards, and took all that came as being part of the day's work.

But what the non-photographer of the party did object to most strongly was that all the good weather, of which there was not overmuch, was used for photographic purposes. Being in the minority, he was powerless to prevent this, and, being wise, said nothing. It was done somewhat as follows. If the storm was very bad indeed, we took shelter if possible; if the storm was medium to fine, we pounded on as fast as we could; but if the sun came out, and we could see where we were or rather ought to be going, a halt was at once called, and photographs were taken, the number of plates—I beg their pardon, Cristoid films—exposed depending only on the length of the good weather. In spite of this, however, we made good progress,





A. E. Robertson.

SEURR DEARG FROM SEURR ALANDAIR. EASTERN 1914.

and were soon well up the north slopes of Corrie Labain, half-way from the loch to the Beallach. Plenty of old snow abounded at the foot of the Sgurr Dearg rocks, and by keeping to it we avoided the usual grind up the moving screes which cover this side of the corrie. This route was also the most direct to the pass, and commanded the finest views.

The views across the corrie were superb, and the rocky face of Sgumain, Alasdair, and Mhic Coinnich streaked with snow couloirs and silvered with fresh snow was voted one of the most magnificent winter scenes we had ever beheld in the Highlands. We reached the pass about noon, and there fresh splendours burst upon us. To the right the pass was guarded by the rocky end of Mhic Coinnich, and to the left by the apparently impossible buttress of Sgurr Dearg, while beyond the pass the black rocky masses of Banachdich towered majestically above the immense snow slopes that swathed the sides of the inner recesses of Coruisk. Greadaidh was hidden in the dark clouds of the next advancing storm.

We were most interested in the buttress of Sgurr Dearg, which we had climbed from this pass five years ago in a mist so dense that we could never see much further than 100 feet in any direction. It is one of the longest continuous pieces of steep rock climbing to be found in the Coolins. At the foot there were some very rotten rocks, but on the steep face everything was firm with good holds and no difficulty. Being a face climb, it is of course very exposed and sensational.

Lunch and photos were now finished, and it was time to think of the "Harker" or otherwise. The col that we were on was that at the foot of the lower rocks of the Sgurr Dearg buttress. An inspection of the snow slopes on the Coruisk side of the pass showed that they were very steep, and had evidently several vertical drops, the precise nature of which we could not see. The route looked as if it would go, but there might be an easier way. We therefore went along the ridge to the gap at the foot of the Mhic Coinnich rocks, which is the lowest point on the ridge. This proved, however, to be at the head of a tremendous gully which

front, and by so doing we managed to steer an easy though at times very rough route to Coruisk. It had also the merit of being the most direct way, a feature which was not altogether lost sight of by the member of the party who was due in London *via* Sligachan in thirty-seven hours. Rocks soon gave place to grass and heather, and we finally reached the silted-up ancient lake which fills the upper part of the Coruisk Glen about half-past five. Rather late for a stormy evening at the beginning of April, but we could not improve matters now. Robertson and Clark having only to go to Camasunary, would not be hurried, as there was still, so they thought, plenty of daylight, and they had an unexposed reserve of films, and it was gently hinted to me that if I wished to hurry on they would have no objections to my doing so. I therefore left them, and pushed on ahead as fast as possible, and being alone, adopted the Drumhain route in preference to the more direct route across Druim nan Ramh.

It was evidently impossible to reach Sligachan before nightfall, but I flattered myself I would be there soon after, if snowstorms did not interfere. It was only when mounting up to Drumhain that the peculiar difficulties of the journey impressed themselves upon me, as I found that owing to the new snow I never once succeeded in hitting off the path. The cairns on the summit were fortunately visible in the distance, though it was evident that they would soon be blotted out by a storm which was rapidly approaching. It was a close race to get there, and I only managed to reach the cairns at 6.40, a few minutes after the onset of the storm, and too late to mark the correct route down from the pass. Every vestige of the path was hidden by the snow, and I did not know what was the correct compass course, as I found that the pass had conveniently been omitted from the Club Map of the Coolins.

There being no time to wait, I set out a course rather east of north, and plunged down the first slope that I came to, well satisfied to be getting down at last. Presently a thinning of the storm revealed the fact that I was in a strange land and steering straight across a valley towards

a hill which had no business to be there. There was nothing for it but to turn to the right down the valley, although the course was now almost south of east, and pointing to anywhere but Sligachan. When the storm finally cleared off, I found myself at the head of Loch na Creitheach, about a mile and a half out of my way, but thankful that it was not Camasunary. The river was waded knee deep, and it was with some degree of relief that the Sligachan path was at last reached. Why, dinner would be served in less than half an hour! The thought suggested refreshment, and the remaining reserve of sandwiches was at once cleared off. There were not many. A rest was, however, quite out of the question, as visions of the marshy place at Marsco arose, and haste was essential if it was to be passed before nightfall.

For the next hour surprisingly good progress was made, though the path was followed with greater and greater difficulty in the gathering darkness. Then a second snow-storm came on, worse than the previous one, and in a moment the path was gone, and there was nothing for it but to steer the best course that I could. The shepherd's house at Marsco had, however, not yet been passed, and perhaps they might put me on the path again, if the house could be found. Joy! what was that black object looming up in front—it must be the house. It was, and I hastened on with glee, only to find, alas! that the roof was off, and the house as complete a wreck as were my hopes.

My last hope of regaining the path was the wire fence which I was bound to reach shortly. The last time I had been here, five years ago, there was a gate at it where the path went through. Surely it would be simplicity itself to find that. In ten minutes or so the fence suddenly appeared out of the darkness. Problem, was the gate to the right or to the left? And if I tried first to the right, how far was I to go before the non-appearance of the gate was to be taken as evidence that it was not in that direction? And when I turned, how was I to recognise the point where I had joined the fence? Also in wandering up and down the fence there seemed to be a possible danger of forgetting which side of the fence I was on, because the

snow which was still falling thickly in the darkness made it impossible to determine any direction other than that of the fence ; indeed the latter was invisible from a distance of 20 feet.

I turned to the right mainly because I had an intuition that the gate was not there, and soon came to a bend, which was useful as being a fixed point, and went on some distance beyond it, but without finding the gate. All as I had expected. The ground was getting steeper, and realising that I was getting too high, I turned and went back, greeting the familiar bend in passing, and going on confidently, or comparatively so at least. My exploration to the left was prolonged and exhaustive, but failed to reveal the gate. Had it been removed at the same time as the roof of the shepherd's house, or was my memory at fault and was the gate a myth? Anyhow it could not be found, and that being so, I came to the conclusion that it was time to be getting on. So I crossed the fence, and, parting from it as from a faithful friend, set out into the unknown. This proved to be very boggy and unpleasant, but being whitened by the snow, it was possible to prevent a serious immersion. The storm was not now so thick, and enough of the shoulder of the Red Hills was discernible to take the right direction from. By gradually working up to the right I soon got clear of the bogs, and could steer a level course along the hillside. Then it began to lighten, the moon was evidently going to rise, and presently the hills assumed their well-known forms as seen from Sligachan. I must be nearing the hotel, but where was its light, "welcome as solitary"? Alas, the heavy curtains that Mrs Sharp had drawn across the smoking-room windows were responsible for its eclipse, and the house was utterly invisible. At last I struck the burn from the Red Hills, about 500 feet up, such had been the moral effect of the bogs ; and a quarter of an hour afterwards was on the road within a minute's walk of the hotel. It was half-past nine, which left me $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours before I had to leave for the south.

Communication with Clark and Robertson was not resumed till a week later, when I was greatly consoled to hear that they had not escaped altogether scot free, as they

did not arrive at Camasunary till well after eight. They admit to having found the "Bad Step" rather sporting in the twilight with fresh snow on it, and I have a shrewd suspicion that they roped for it, though on this point they maintain a discreet silence. Their efforts to keep themselves dry were, however, baffled at the last minute by their having to boldly wade across the river at Camasunary.

(3.) A SPRING DAY ON BLAVEN.

BY CHARLES WALKER.

ON the Sunday of the Easter Meet H. Walker and I walked across from Sligachan to Camasunary Lodge to meet Dr Clark and A. E. Robertson, who were coming over that day from Glen Brittle. It was a lovely day when we left the hotel, and as we walked up that stony track through Glen Sligachan we envied the men who were on the hills, but towards evening we did so no longer. The way the wind howled and the hail rattled round the corners of that cosy lodge reminded us most forcibly of the pelting we had had two days previously on the Inaccessible, when it was all one could do to stick on to the rocks. Clark and Robertson arrived at the lodge about eight o'clock in a sappy condition, having forded the river near Camasunary. They left Glenbrittle Lodge in the morning, walked up Coire Labain to the col between Sgur Dearg and Mhic Coinnich, and had three hours step-cutting before they got down to Coire Ruadha.

That evening, after the storm had passed and the moon had risen, the view from Camasunary, with Eigg in the distance just filling up the opening of the bay, was indeed grand. How we chuckled that night at the men who had not filled in Clark's card on account of the roughing one would have to undergo! But it were too bad to rub it in, where ignorance is bliss.

Next morning we breakfasted at half-past six, and were on our way by eight o'clock—the photographers and not the appetites wholly being the cause of the delay. Striking



BETWEEN THE STORMS.
A BOAT'S VIEW THROUGH THE CHANNEL OF SAN JUAN.

H. J. J. J. J.



across by the few cultivated fields of Camasunary Farm, we made our way up the long shoulder of Blaven, keeping out of reach of the cold wind. We had some lovely glimpses of the islands, the mainland, and the beautiful Sound of Sleat, which was lit up by the most brilliant lights. All the effects during the day were greatly enhanced by the fine cloud formation. It was a day of views rather than of climbing; every few yards we stopped to feast our eyes on the splendid panorama, and to watch the light and shade chasing each other across the water. We were specially fortunate with the weather it seemed, for nearly the whole day the tops of the other Coolins were covered with mist while we were in sunshine. The peaks on the mainland—Ben Screel and all the giants round Loch Hourn—were as usual the subject of discussion. Blaven seemed to be simply smothered in snow or rather hail, for during the Meet of all the moisture that fell a very large proportion of it came as hail. The result of this being that whenever the wind was at all high, the effect on one's face was most painful.

Not far from the top we spent some time in an unsuccessful attempt to get a photo of Sgur nan Gillean free from cloud, but from here to the top the weather conditions offered no inducement to us to linger. After crossing the summit we descended some 400 feet or so, and keeping the cliffs on our left hand, we chose a wide gully with a pinnacle in a centre at the top which seemed to offer an easy way round to the col between Blaven and Clach Glas. It was a relief to get into the shelter of this gully after the howling storm. The going was good on hard snow to begin with, and only a few steps had to be cut. After about 200 feet a ledge on the right hand was taken, but after some little prospecting, was given up; returning to the gully again we continued down it, but found the snow in much worse condition than at the top. There was a coating of about 6 inches of soft new snow on the old, which had to be scraped off before steps could be cut. The scenery of the gully was superb, and this north side of Blaven looks as if it would be well worth exploring. About two-thirds down we crossed a most

perfect little bergschrund with a snow bridge. The depth seemed to be about 10 or 12 feet, and the bridge about a foot wide at the narrowest part. It was hailing heavily at this time, and as the gully seemed to drain all this face, there was a perfect avalanche pouring down into and over the crevasse. The leader having safely crossed this *mauvais pas*, showed a most unholy desire to see that bridge break, but haply his "reverence" was disappointed. Clark, doubting that the stability of the bridge was up to his requirements of strength, jumped it, and was fielded on the other side.

The descent of the gully took about two hours, which included the taking of some photographs.

The scheme for the day had included the traverse of Clach Glas, &c. It was one of those easy, delightfully full programmes made out the previous night by the fireside, and at Camasunary one is loath to leave it, of how one intends to do perhaps the Mhic Coinnich ridge and bag the Inaccessible—quite irrespective of weather conditions—or something of that sort; but when the time comes first one and then another peak is dropped, until what seemed a ridiculously short day at first turns out to be quite enough. So when we came to the foot of the gully, and got on to the vile screes of Lonely Corrie, there was no mention of Clach Glas.

Such walking! Surely even Bidean nam Bian must take a back seat. In the midst of this, however, the storm clouds suddenly lifted, and for five minutes we had a view such as one seldom gets. The Coolins from Sgur Dubh to Sgur nan Gillean stood out with only a few wisps of cloud on their rocky faces. The afternoon sun just lighting up the snow on the summit of Sgur nan Gillean made the most exquisite picture. Nowhere in Scotland, we agreed, had we seen anything that looked nearly so high or so shapely. But the effect soon passed, and as the hour was getting late, for we had slacked all day, we descended the screes, had a second lunch by the side of a small stream, and shortly afterwards were on the track to Sligachan. So ended a most charming day, the last for us of an ideal Meet.



1



WUCHUHLIE FÜR DEN MÖR

W. Anglis Clark

THE MOTOR IN MOUNTAINEERING—A VISIT
TO BUCHAILLE ETIVE MÒR.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

FOR several years my wife and I have visited Ben Nevis in June, and the accounts of these visits have already occupied perhaps too large a proportion of the *Journal's* pages. Many a time we looked across the gulf of Glen Nevis and across the Mamore Forest, to where conspicuous Bidean formed a rallying point for the various Glencoe peaks ; or to Buchaille Etive, with its frowning buttresses merged in its rocky face. But while these Glencoe mountains held out high hopes of virgin routes and scenic effects, our old love held us back to explore further the fascinating ridges and gullies of its northern face. And so the balance remained equal ; and the facility of railway and hotel carried the day in favour of Fort William. But "a nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse," and the casual remark overheard at the Club room, "What ! more about Ben Nevis, whatever can he have to say ?" decided that the camp must be shifted to pastures new. Hailing as I do from Edinburgh, I have imbibed with its east wind an intense dislike of wasting my not too superabundant energy on the mere walk to or from a mountain, and the advent of a motor car into my peaceful home seemed to open up a new era, when we would drive to the foot of our climb and count the miles between Clachaig and Kingshouse as but dust in the balance. If we except the too short visit of the Club to Ballachulish some years ago, the Glencoe Mountains were unknown to me, and Buchaille Etive only lingered as a faint vision from thirty years ago, when, rucksack on back, I had wandered from John o' Groat's to Cape Wrath, thence through Sutherland and Ross-shire to Fort William, and back to Arrochar by way of Glencoe. In these days sturdy mountaineering boots were not so common as at present, and I can recall the following incident on the steamer from Fort William to Ballachulish. A few days' climbing in the Mamore Forest had reduced my boots to the condition of sandals, and as

the steamer started at an early hour, I had to continue my journey with the uppers tied on to the soles with stout cord. The better to suit my appearance, I sought shelter in the steerage, where in due course the treasurer of a German band came, cap in hand, for a donation. Before responding, I pointed significantly to my feet; and the noble Teuton, realising that so ill-shod a creature must be in dire straits indeed, held up his hands, groaned, and refused to accept even a humble coin of the realm.

After much heart-searching regarding the reliability of a motor car for mountaineering, we decided to chance it and make primarily for Kingshouse Inn, later on moving to Clachaig if the roads seemed practicable. But lest any may consider that motor-driving will cause a degenerate race of mountaineers to arise, I would warn them that I have distinctly lost weight as the result of my enterprise. What with dangerous corners and alarmed horses, and the physical exertion of starting the car as often as, through carelessness, one lets it stop on a hill, motor-driving may be recommended for those troubled with *embonpoint*. Then, perhaps, one of the greatest risks the mountaineer runs is when his petrol won't flow, and the precious hours are lost in trying to find the obnoxious particle of dust which lies low when you are looking for it, and emerges as soon as you start again to shut off your motive power with a malicious cackle. One terrible experience I had, the memory of which well-nigh eclipses the dangers of purely climbing experiences, and which nearly brought the credit of the S.M.C. to naught, and the honorary office of Secretary to shame and confusion. I had fortunately narrowly escaped taking our Editor for a drive in the country, and was hurrying home for dinner by a short detour of 25 miles, when "the beastie" struck work and refused to go up the slightest hill. It was dour, and no coaxing or drinks of water from a cottage near by would induce it to move. My experience being but limited, the "deevil" in the petrol was undetected, and when the shades of night came down a sorry nag was procured, harnessed to the car with ropes, and amid the jeers of passers-by I rode into Edinburgh in state. It was past 11 P.M. as we slowly paced through Princes Street,

and suggestions to send for the officers of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals received no countenance from me. Fortunately a Secretary is never without resource, and with the aid of chauffeur's leather cap and prominent goggles, the writer passed off as Count Sokoloffski, the eminent chauffeur. Besides such nerve strains as these, the terrors of the Crowberry Ridge and Chasm seem trifling.

The 12th of June came at last, the east wind holding a haar in its hand, and at 5 A.M. as we moved out of Edinburgh the distant mountains were shrouded in a pall. True to Salvationist principles, safety before speed, we passed through Stirling at 7 A.M., and soon after 8.30 were enjoying breakfast at Strathyre near Loch Lubnaig. Ben Ledi had looked down on us as we passed, the shreds of easterly haar enhancing its height, and the loch mirroring the cliffs in its bosom, till one was in doubt as to reflection and solid ground. The fresh green of youthful bracken and lady fern mingled with the anachronous primrose, which still held spring revelries in some belated spot. It was a morning to raise the brightest hopes, and the rough new-made road near Balquhidder, where Stobinian, snow-crested, cheered us on, or the arduous steep of Glen Ogle, giving us time to look back to Ben Voirlich and Stuc a Chroin, cast no dampness on our spirits. On past Crianlarich, the while waving a salute to Ben Lawers, bereft of snow and clad in soberer hue, and then Tyndrum with its steep stony pass to Inveroran. Now, for the first time (to my shame be it said), did I take in the mountain proportions of Ben Doreann, Stob Ghabhar, and the distant Clachlet, and in this great playground of mountains could realise the charm of form and colouring which have inspired so many to speak of Rannoch as a sacred sanctuary, full of nobility and beauty to the initiated, though bleak and featureless to the commonplace. The Baa Pass, nearly 1,500 feet, with its stony pitches made one feel quite anxious, but at last the puffing "beastie" landed us on the summit, and as we ran down to Kingshouse, grand views of Buchaille Etive greeted us in front. Whispers of starving mountaineers in former years had prepared us for poor fare, but under the

new excellent management we found Kingshouse Inn comfortable, cosy, and with a table fully furnished. Looking round, Buchaille we knew, but what shapely peak with twin buttresses was that which guarded Glen Etive on the left hand—Sron Creise, a name practically unknown amid the challenging claims of Clachlet and Buchailles and Stobs. As we saw it in the afternoon light the corrie seemed to consist of huge precipices rising unbroken for 1,000 feet or more, and it was difficult to understand how so sporting a peak could receive such meagre treatment in the Guide Book article. Suffice to say we decided to attack it next morning, and to this end, from a heathery seat, we discussed the merits of snow gullies and rocky buttresses. The angle looked severe, and the buttresses seemed well defined. Later experiences, and a morning light greatly reduced the fighting value of our peak, but left at least three buttresses worthy of a morning's work.

Possibly all of these may have already been climbed, but to us they possessed the charm of the unknown, and many a time did we change our minds as to which we should attack. From a letter just received I learn that J. S. Napier climbed the central buttress, so that our good fairy did well in directing our steps to the more easterly rocks. It was a cold but bright morning, and passing showers of hail warned us to be provided with wraps, though the hot sun would have beguiled us to wear light attire. The walk across the moor to our peak occupied less than an hour, and was full of interest to the lover of nature. Our feet trod on a garden of flowers, where the blue and white lobelia jostled each other, and brilliant patches of crowfoot blazed in the early light. On mossy spots the glittering drosera displayed its crystal fringe and decoyed the unwary fly to its doom. Here a grouse's egg, empty, told of a sportsman's hope, and there, on the heather, hung, in deep sleep, the large tawny night hawks, the now useless cocoons, like leather pouches, littering the peat. One of these moths we carried for over a mile ere it was wakened by a sudden stumble. Even then the rays of the sun put it to sleep, and only when shaded in the hollow of the hand did it evince activity. But no lark's song greeted

us from above, and save a ringouzel and a rare grouse, the bird creation was absent. Higher in the corrie, saxifrages and crassulas bedecked every oasis, and deer scampered over the rocks. The rocks of the corrie give three or four well-defined climbs, though sadly shrunken from the promise of the night before. Looking from Kingshouse, a well-marked snowy gully, ending in a deep black chimney, hems in, on the right, the buttress we selected. The rocks at the commencement rise very steeply, but with such superb holds as to make this an ideal climb for an easy day. Later, the slope eases and somewhat resembles the North-east Buttress, and then finally steepens into large slabs rising to the east of the Black Chimney, and giving excellent sport. Our only regret was its shortness; but the advance of a heavy hailstorm and dense clouds from the east consoled us, forcing us to run for shelter on the other side of the ridge. Hence the outlook over Buchaille and Bidean was superb, and the grouping of the Mamore Forest and Ben Nevis, alpine in the extreme. After climbing one of the peaks of Clachlet, a fine glissade of 450 feet led us on to snow, too hard for glissading, and with regret we had to stepkick into the valley. The available snow, had it been in condition, was not less than 1,000 feet.

That night was an anxious one. Raeburn, who had been yacht-racing that afternoon, was to catch the night train for Tyndrum, and cycling thence to Kingshouse, join us at 6 A.M. The weather improved, the clouds cleared away, and at 5.45 A.M. he appeared after his arduous journey to attack the famous Crowberry Ridge of Buchaille Etive. A few hours of sleep, and shortly after 10 A.M. we sallied forth in the motor to shorten by a couple of miles our distance from the peak. As all members of the Club know, the Crowberry Ridge is a very aristocrat of climbs. That prince of writers, Naismith, has given us in his "Pinnacle Ridge of Sguir nan Gillean" and "Crowberry Ridge" two of the choicest mountaineering papers in the *Journal*, and I have many a time re-read the latter (Vol. IV., p. 149), and wondered if I could ever hope to tread that fascinating route. But my boldest hope was to repeat his climb. The more recent ascent of the appalling cliff at the bottom of

the Crowberry Ridge by the Messrs Abraham and party seemed something quite beyond the powers of my wife or self. Yet even the sparrow may soar above the clouds, if borne up on the mighty pinions of an eagle, and so it has happened to me time and again to conquer mighty climbs under the ægis of a Raeburn or a Glover. It is hardly necessary to remind readers that on the first ascent Naismith and Douglas attained access to the ridge by a sporting route of chimneys and traverse on the western side, leading to the true ridge about 300 feet from the bottom. Up till 1900 no one had attempted the direct ascent from the bottom, but in May of that year the party of English climbers already mentioned carefully reconnoitred the route, and finally accomplished the climb, and pronounced it the most difficult climb in Britain. Little wonder then that as we wound our way up the steep hillside amid rock scenery, impressive and beautiful, I had my misgivings as to the advisability of venturing to be one of the second party to attack this climb. As soon, however, as fingers gripped the splendid rough rock at the bottom, and "Tiroler" boots felt the excellent footholds, I was reassured. Entering the gully to the right of the ridge, a low projecting buttress rises acutely from the snow, and on the west side shows a tendency to overhang, which becomes more marked the higher up you go. As our object was to get on to the median line of the ridge as soon as possible, we climbed up the steep side and were soon on the comparatively easy roof of the bottom rocks. The sport commences immediately, and at a very high angle (70° to 80° I imagine) the route leads directly up from tiny ledge to ledge, reminding one strongly of the best rock in the Dolomites. But we knew the chief difficulty had not come yet, although our knowledge of the route was confined to a hazy recollection of a popular article in *Pearson's Monthly* of a year ago, and a short note in the *Journal* (Vol. VII., p.110). At length, after a vertical wall, the three of us were perched on a narrow ledge, the upper margin of a sheaf of rock lying against the face. We recognised the spot as appearing in a photograph in *Pearson's*. To our left the ridge fell in an appalling vertical cliff for about 100 to 150 feet. On our

right the deep cleft gully was walled in by formidable cliffs, but we could imagine a route leading down and then up by steep and apparently rotten chimney, and then rejoining the cliff 70 feet above. But this would not be the direct ascent, and we therefore turned to the left and braved the dangers of that awful precipice. Down below and behind the ledge is a reliable hitch, the safety afforded by which is somewhat problematical, and while Raeburn replaced his boots with Kletterschuen, I endeavoured to stand on my head and focus the camera on a 12-inch tripod. The photograph only failed because the nearness of the chief actor, Raeburn, resulted in a headless body climbing the vertical corner. A few words will suffice to describe the nature of this formidable pitch. Stepping off the ledge, the left foot seeks for a 2-inch foothold round the corner. This consists of a narrowing ledge sloping steeply upwards and outwards, and affording further out grip for the nails only. The right hand retains a rough grip, while the left is rested on a slender pinnacle projecting some $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the face. Having fairly balanced on these slender supports, the body is taken round the corner, and the fun begins. The nearest available hold was some distance from our leader's reach, and he had to forego the little pinnacle and trust to mere hollows for support. An anxious and silent interval was only broken by the slow movement of the rope, but soon it moved more rapidly, and after 35 feet were out my wife followed out of sight to take her turn. With the confidence of the rope I was able to balance myself with the right hand on the trifling pinnacle, and standing on the meagre extremity of the ledge, to reach sufficient holds to prevent falling backward; but for some 8 or 10 feet higher I was not ashamed to call out, "Hold me firm," and to feel gratified at the response from above. The climbing is not over even then, but pales into insignificance before this momentous corner. Higher up we joined Naismith's route, the chief difficulties of which, as in our case, were lower down, and very soon the Tower of the Crowberry Ridge rose above us. We were sorely tempted to ascend this by a difficult chimney named after J. S. Napier; but satisfied with our doings, stuck to the ridge, reached the top, and

joined the main body of the mountain by the little col. On the summit the view was most repaying, the snowy mass of Bidean showing large cornices on the sky-line.

Photography has much to answer for. Sometimes it prevents the accomplishment and sometimes it is the cause of a climb. It was the latter in this case. As we ran down the scree slopes to the south of the Chasm, an aching void about my breast pocket told me that my Dallmeyer lens had been left on the summit, and a second ascent was planned to recover it. It is just on such occasions that mountaineers seem such strange beings to outsiders. Next day, instead of going up by the easiest way, what should Raeburn suggest but that we should endeavour to ascend by the Chasm, a huge gully on the east side of the mountain, and one, moreover, which had already baffled a strong party. But we had looked into it during our descent, and seen a 100 feet pitch apparently impossible, and which we believed to be the "ultima thule" of former expeditions. With commendable prudence we decided to start our climb above this pitch, as the most casual glance revealed sufficient difficulties remaining to satisfy even an ardent Ultramontist. As many doubtless have no idea what the "Chasm" is, I may be pardoned being a little more prolix than connoisseurs may think necessary. On the side facing the south-east, Buchaille descends in scree slopes for about 500 feet. It then suddenly falls in precipices ranged in a somewhat funnel shape, as if a section had been made and half had been sunk into the mountain. The northern margin of the funnel is terminated by the great "Four Days' Ridge" (see *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IV., p. 104), and from this the rock descends steeply into the Chasm proper. This name is applied to the deep sunk gully which drains the whole of the funnel. In the lower part, starting at an elevation of about 1,100 feet, it is hemmed in closely by vertical walls, and for 600 feet affords a succession of difficult pitches which took a strong party six hours to overcome. At this point a vertical pitch of about 100 feet barred all progress, although experts still hope to force a way up. Above this the bordering walls are higher, and about six steep pitches are encountered before the Chasm

The Grand Coulee from Hucaville City.

U.S. Geol. Surv.





branches. The direct route leads into a stupendous, hitherto inaccessible cauldron, while the left hand gradually becomes opener and leads to the upper screes. The rocks terminate about 2,900 feet. On the right a sloping couloir with vertical walls forms the "50-foot gap" which cuts off the pinnacle of the "Four Days' Ridge" from the upper crags.

Climbing up past the impregnable pitch referred to, we descended by the northern wall into the Chasm, and were immediately introduced to a succession of water-worn difficult pitches, alternating with snow bridges, snow seracs, and many of the characteristics of an Alpine ascent. The left branch of the Chasm held a prodigious quantity of snow, the thickness possibly at parts being 50 feet. To detail the various pitches and difficulties encountered would be impossible and wearisome, but the climb up to the branching of the Chasm was extraordinary and weird in the extreme. Now we were cutting steps or treading cautiously the sharp seracs, or crossing by tottering snow bridge. Anon hemmed in by vertical walls, we traversed in a crouching position perhaps 50 feet through a snow tunnel. Above, the roof was moulded into numerous arches, and a constant rain of water falling cooled the air. Emerging, a forbidding pitch confronted us, and often only succumbed after a severe struggle. It was indeed a most strenuous climb, and demanded constant strain. Our time was already far spent, for Raeburn had perforce to catch the evening train at Tyndrum. When, therefore, we came to the two last severe pitches, leading into the cauldron, and saw a final triple pitch of at least 150 feet, well decorated with waterfalls, we decided that an escape must be made on the left. Here at the forking of the Chasm rises a magnificent 200 feet pinnacle, the angle very steep. A huge snow mass below left sufficient space for foothold, and with back against the rock, we were able to reach the bottom of a severe but splendid chimney, leading up some 40 feet. Above this the difficulties do not slacken till a grass ledge is reached overhung by a difficult and dangerous wall, resembling strongly the Pinnacle Arête of the Trident Buttress of Ben Nevis. The ascent of this very slightly overhanging portion proved difficult, the numerous

holds being unreliable for a leader. Above this another wonderful chimney led to the top (2,500 feet), which is separated by a neat little col from the mountain. We raised a small cairn, christened the pinnacle the "Lady's Pinnacle," and were glad to relax our muscles, which for four hours had been put to so hard a test. Looking back on this climb, I regard it as the most prolonged piece of difficult climbing in my British experience. Moreover, in variety, in beauty, and charm, it has few rivals. Bidding farewell to Raeburn, we watched him scamper down the screes like a chamois, and hastened to the summit, where, being "deil's bairns," we found the missing lens intact. There on a sheltered ledge we watched the motor, like an uncanny spirit, emerge from Kingshouse, and pick up our friend at Etive Bridge to speed him on his lonely journey to Edinburgh. We ourselves were bound for Clachaig, and after unsuccessful attempts to glissade down the too hard snow of Corrie Tulachan, joined the motor at Altnafeadh, and enjoyed by the roadside the luxury of afternoon tea.

Our stay at Clachaig lasted but two days, during which we seized various excuses for doing nothing striking. The weather, however, was unpropitious, and an attempt on the Stob Coire an Lochan cliffs was cut short by mist and rain after we had ascended Aonach Dubh by the easy gully. The ferry at Ballachulish proved too small for our motor, and we had perforce to return up Glencoe. As evidence of the mountaineering ability of the motor, we climbed about 3,000 feet on the road home, and covered 125 miles on the one day, our route including Tyndrum, Crianlarich, Glen Falloch, Tarbet, Balloch, Buchlyvie, and Stirling.

S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

THE CENTRAL CAIRNGORMS.

(DIVISION II. GROUP IV.)

Lat. 57°; W. Lon. 3° 40'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 64, 74. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

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A. BEN MUICH DHUI (4,296 feet)

(The Mountain of the Black Sow),

though the second peak in height in Great Britain, cannot, as its name suggests, claim to be an artistic mountain, when viewed as a whole. It has been suggested that it was so named either from its shapeless mass or from the fact that, in days long past, its wastes formed the happy hunting ground of the wild boar, with which Caledonia was at one time said to abound. Be this as it may, though the general

mass of the mountain may not appeal to the eye, it may well be questioned whether the view from its summit can, for grandeur and expanse, be anywhere surpassed in this country. It is certainly beyond dispute that its weird black corries, and bleak desolate tarns, are objects of admiration, inspiring with awe and amazement the most casual observer. Burton has well expressed it when he says :* "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 black 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."

The mountain and his satellites lie between the valleys of the Dee and Spey, and they form the principal watershed between these two rivers. Ben Muich Dhui is situated partly in the united parish of Crathie and Braemar and county of Aberdeen, and partly in the parish of Kirk-michael and county of Banff, the latter county taking the form of a boot at its extreme western end, in the "toe" of which the highest point of Ben Muich Dhui may be said to be contained.

So far back as in the year 1847 we find that Ben Muich Dhui was used as a trigonometrical station by the Ordnance surveyors, who, much to Burton's disappointment apparently, "found" in favour of Ben Nevis by 110 feet, for he remarks :† "It is curious to observe how, in the world of inanimate existences, as in that of mankind, a little difference in height becomes a vast difference in position when it determines who is highest. In many arenas of human struggle, he who is just perceptibly above the second in strength is the illustrious leader, of whom all others are massed together as mere followers. So comes it with hills that might be illustrious elsewhere, but in the group where they happen to be there is one a little higher which gets all the honours. Should this be the fate of Ben Muich Dhui, it should but stimulate an old adherent to stand up

* Appendix No. 1.

† Appendix No. 2.

for him. But he is so far off from his rival as to be the independent monarch of his own district, and he will suffer very little in real estimation by the conclusion of the dispute." The trigonometrical station was marked by a huge boulder, into which a hole some 6 inches deep was made, and upon the boulder a cairn 22 feet high was built. This cairn is still a considerable height, and there is a series of smaller cairns around it. The Rev. T. Grierson, when he visited the cairn in 1851, remarked that it was then the largest he had seen. Its erection was locally attributed to the then Earl of Fife. At the beginning of last century, however, an edifice of no ordinary dimensions was evidently contemplated,* but, from its description, we are glad to know that the scheme was not carried out.

When Ben Muich Dhui was actually first ascended we cannot say, but we do know that on 13th August 1847 an Edinburgh Professor, accompanied by a botanising party, reached the summit *via* Glen Lui Beg. The object of his visit is (at any rate partially) set forth in the following :—

" They cam' to poo
Some girss that grew
On Ben Muich Dhu,
Whar ne'er a coo
Had set her moo.
If a' be true,
'Tween me an' you,
They sair did rue
They e'er did view
The big black soo
Or Larig Ghru.
For not a few
Got roarin' fou
On mountain dew." †

* * *

And again, it would appear that the Professor's name was Balfour, and that the objects of his expedition were looked upon with more or less suspicion.

* Appendix No. 3.

† Appendix No. 4.

I.

“The Sassenach chap they ca’ Balfour,
Wi’ ither five or sax, man,
Frae ’yont the Braes o’ Mar cam’ o’er,
Wi’ boxes on their backs, man.
Some thocht he was a chapman chiel,
Some thocht they cam’ the deer to steal;
But nae ane saw
Them, after a’,
Do ocht ava’
Against the law,
Among the Hielan’ hills, man.

2.

Some folk’ll tak’ a heap o’ fash
For unco little en’, man;
An’ meikle time an’ meikle cash
For nocht ava’ they’ll spen’, man.
Thae chaps had come a hunder’ mile
For what was hardly worth their while:
’Twas a’ to poo
Some girss that grew
On Ben Muich Dhu,
That ne’er a coo
Would care to pit her mouth till.”*

I. ROUTES OF ASCENT.

1. *From Deeside.*

(1.) *By Glen Derry.*—It must here, I think, be assumed that the way to the Linn of Dee is known. It would be out of place in a paper of this kind to go into details of the journey from Aberdeen, Blairgowrie, or the Spittal of Glen Shee, as the case may be, or to describe the various places of interest which are to be seen by these routes. For those not familiar with the district, just let me say that, from Aberdeen, the journey is commenced by rail for 43½ miles to Ballater, then a drive to Braemar of 16½ miles, and finally another 6-mile drive to the Linn of Dee. Arrived at the south side of the Linn, the bridge is crossed and the road to the right (east) is taken for about half a mile, when

* Appendix No. 5.

a sharp turn to the left is made just before reaching the Lui Water. We are now in Glen Lui, and we follow the right bank of the Lui for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, where we cross to the left bank by a bridge, locally known as the "Black Bridge." Here a road is joined which comes along the left bank of the Lui. This road is the shortest one from Braemar to Derry Lodge, being about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles shorter than the road round by the Linn. But to use it permission must be obtained, in the first place, to cross the Victoria Bridge (which will have already been observed shortly before passing the small village of Inverey), and also to pass through the grounds of what was formerly known as Old Mar Lodge,* and is now called Mar Lodge, the property of the Duke of Fife. From Black Bridge the left bank of the Lui is followed, by a good road for another couple of miles, which brings us to Derry Lodge, which is just about 4 miles from the Linn of Dee. As one proceeds up Glen Lui, it is very noticeable how the scenery becomes rapidly more rugged, the trees become fewer, the birch and spruce giving place to the more sturdy fir. Between the point where the sharp turn to the left is made after crossing the Dee and the Black Bridge there are some fine falls on the Lui, but these are only seen by getting off the road and following close the bank of the stream, so that they are only known to a very few of the tourists who pass. If the immediate hills are undulating and uninteresting to the mountaineer, we now get continual and varied views of the higher peaks, such as Cairngorm of Derry, Beinn Bhrotain, and the flanks of the great Ben himself. The hilly ground between Glen Lui and Glen Dee, it is true, contains no mountains of any interest to the climber, the chief heights being Sgòr Mòr (2,666 feet), Carn Mor (2,057 feet), and Leachd nan Uidhean (2,000 feet).

Derry Lodge and Lui Beg Cottage are situated at the junction of the Lui Beg and Derry streams, and are separate from each other about a quarter of a mile. They are occupied by Donald Fraser and John Mackintosh respectively, foresters of the Duke of Fife. These men are very

* Appendix No. 6.

obliging, and always most ready to give any information about the hills.

At Derry Lodge, the road by which we have come degenerates from a driving road to a path. After passing the lodge, the Derry is crossed by a small wooden foot-bridge, and then immediately the path branches. The left branch follows the Lui Beg Burn and leads to Glen Lui Beg and the Learg Ghruamach for Aviemore and Speyside, but with this branch we shall deal later. At present the right branch is taken, which turns northwards and follows the Derry's left bank. Along the path there are some fine old pines, and especially so near the lodge. As we proceed up the glen the trees become less plentiful and more stunted. Everywhere there are traces of the primeval forest which once covered these mountains. Here a burnt root, there the white bleached trunk of some hoary monarch lies, where it fell, at the feet of the members of a younger generation slowly springing up to take his place. He still lies there, a witness of former days and an emblem of strength, but you have but to plant your boot or ice-axe in his outer shell to reveal an interior of dust and decay. On our right we have views of Meall na Guaille (2,550 feet) and Beinn Bhreac (3,051 feet) (Ben Vrack); and, on the left, Carn Crom (2,847 feet), and farther on and up the glen, the slopes of Cairngorm of Derry. The trees now practically end, and we cross to the left bank of the Derry by a small wooden foot-bridge. Here was the outlet of the Derry Dam, made in the end of the eighteenth century, and used for floating down timber to the lower valleys. For a little the centre of the valley is flat, and the stream winds about among the grassy haughs, more suggestive of an English landscape. An occasional tree or blasted trunk standing out against the sky is all that now breaks the continuity of the mountains after crossing the foot-bridge. The path loses the stream for a time to find it again farther up the glen. Two miles beyond the bridge we cross the Glas Allt, a stream rising on the slopes of Beinn a' Chaor-uinn, and we then follow closely the Derry for about a mile, still by its left bank, and then we cross it at a ford, and thereafter the opposite bank is followed, when the true

ascent begins. Now we are in Corrie Etchachan. On the left, and in front of us, rise the black precipitous walls of Creagan a' Choire Etchachan, and on the right, beyond the burn, the steep slopes of Beinn Mheadhoin. At length, after a pull over steep but good ground, we reach the plateau with Loch Etchachan (3,100 feet). The loch will be described later. The last 300 or 400 feet have been rapidly made, and, looking back, the Eastern Cairngorms will now be seen between the heights of Beinn a' Chaoruinn and Beinn Bhreac. At the loch we are just about 2 miles from the summit, and some 1,196 feet lower. The gradient now eases off, for within the next $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles there is only a rise of 900 feet, and so we have three-quarters of a mile for the remaining 296 feet, and the going is by no means hard.

From the loch the path turns south-west, and on the left, as we rise, magnificent views will be had of the Coire an Sput Dheirg, with its corrie and small tarn, and on the right Cairn Etchachan, and its loch are left behind us. The path, up till now in Aberdeenshire, strikes into Banffshire just at the "toe" of the imaginary "boot" which the latter county here forms. A vast plateau, on every side covered with boulders, surrounds us, which traversed, we find ourselves approaching the so-called "Kitchen" of the Royal Engineers, and just beyond it the summit cairn, which is distant from Derry Lodge, as near as may be, 8 miles. The route just described, if not the shortest, is undoubtedly the easiest; indeed ponies may be used all the way, and it has been named the "Royal Route," because Her late Majesty, Queen Victoria, ascended by this way on 7th October 1859.*

Now as to the view when the summit is reached. In a word, it is unique, provided the weather is propitious; but, alas, how often has one to return without having seen farther (or so far) than the breadth of the streets of his native city. But let us choose a day when the weather conditions are perfect, and the view has practically no limit. Hills rise behind hills, and one begins to have very

* Appendix No. 7.

serious doubts if there be anything but hills throughout the length and breadth of Scotland. On all sides, except perhaps to the east and north-east, where the long ridges of Beinn a Bhuird and the cone of Cairngorm interrupt the horizon, the expanse of the view is great. The most distant tops seen are—South-south-east, Says Law (1,739 feet), in the Lammermuirs, East Lothian, 93 miles distant; north-north-east (to the left of the top of Cairngorm), Ben-a-chielt (940 feet), in Caithness, 87 miles distant; east (to the left of Cairn Etchachan), Hill of Dudwick (562 feet), in East Aberdeenshire, 66 miles distant; south-west-west (just to left of Sgor an Lochain Uaine—Angel's Peak), Ben Nevis (4,406 feet), 54 miles distant.

The more outstanding peaks and ranges which can be seen are—Between 0° and 90° south to west, Beinn a Ghlo, Ben Vorlich, Ben Lawers, Ben Lomond, Ben More, and Ben Cruachan; between 90° and 180° west to north, Glen Quoich and Glen Garry Mountains (to the left of the Coire Brochain of Braeriach), Mam Sodhail and Fannich Mountains; between 180° and 270° north to east, Scaraben, Cairngorm, Cromdale Hills, Ben Rinnes, Bin of Cullen, Ben Bynac, Cook's Cairn, Beinn Mheadhoin, Tap o' Noth, Buck of Cabrach, Beinn Chaoruinn, Cairn Etchachan, Ben-nachie, and Avon; and between 270° and 360° east to south, Beinn a' Bhuird, Kerloch, Mount Battock, Mount Keen, Lochnagar, Clova Hills, Cairn Taggart, Cairn Bannock, Dreish, Mayar, Glas Maol, The Cairnwell, Sidlaw Hills, Lammermuir range, Glas Thualachan, West Lomond, Carn an Righ, and Ochils.*

(2.) *By Glen Lui Beg.*—To Derry Lodge the route is the same as that just described, up to the point where the path branches immediately beyond the foot-bridge at Derry Lodge. The left, instead of the right, branch is now taken. We keep close to the left side of the Lui; and just after leaving Derry Lodge, we see on the opposite side of the stream Lui Beg Cottage, surrounded by stately pines. The back of the cottage is towards us, having been built facing

* Appendix No. 8.

and under the shadow of the wooded eminence of Sgoran Dubh for some unaccountable reason. The result is that, during many months of the year, the sun never reaches the cottage, and the cold must be intense. The path, well defined, continues westward, passing through clumps of pines, which are shortly left behind, and we get into bare moorland with the steep heathery slopes of Carn Crom on our right, while facing us are views of Beinn Bhrotain and Carn à Mhaim. Two miles or so from Derry, the path crosses the Lui Beg by a dilapidated wooden plank bridge (near to which an excellent view of Ben Muich Dhui is obtained*), and then continues on its way westward towards the Learg Ghruamach to Speyside. But we do not cross the Lui Beg, but keeping to the right (north), we follow a small path a little higher up than the stream, and we presently reach a point where the Lui branches. The right-hand branch has its origin, partly in Coire an Sput Dheirg, and partly from the small tributary flowing out of Lochan Uaine. The branch on the left, called Allt Carn à Mhaim, rises on the Sron Riach, and flows down the valley separating Ben Muich Dhui from Carn à Mhaim. The point where the Lui Beg branches is some $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the summit of Ben Muich Dhui, and it is from this point that steep climbing really begins. A well-defined green ridge (afterwards becoming red), and known as Sron Riach, is here quite obvious, and should be carefully followed. Higher up, large boulders are met with, and the going is rough. Presently a very prominent rock, with huge pot-holes, is passed, which give one some kind of idea of the work wrought by the force of the wind here at times. A little farther on, a good view of Lochan Uaine may be had, nestling in its corrie; and then, passing along the top of Coire Clach nan Taillear, we join the first route, and so gain the summit. The Lui Beg route is about 2 miles shorter than that by Glen Derry—that is, the summit cairn is about 6 miles distant from Derry Lodge, but, though there is a saving in mileage, the Lui Beg climb is the more severe.

* Appendix No. 9.

(3.) *By Glen Dee—(a.) By Allt Clach nan Taillear.*—It may be desirable, in the first place, to define Glen Dee. It commences at its south end, at its junction with the Geldie Burn, and terminates at its north end, at the watershed on the boundary between Aberdeenshire and Banffshire, a distance of over 9 miles. The glen may be entered either from the Linn of Dee or from Glen Lui Beg—more usually by the latter—but, if by the former, the Linn is crossed, we immediately turn to the left (west), and follow a driving road, which ends and becomes a path some 3 miles up the river, at its junction with the Geldie (White Bridge). This portion is by some called Glen Dee, but it is more properly called Strath Dee. So far, there is nothing of particular interest, except the river which now rushes narrow within its rocky bed, and now broadens out on sandy shores. As we go up the glen, however, the views of Beinn Bhrotain on the left are excellent, and Glen Geusachan is also interesting, but probably what attracts most attention is the huge forbidding mass of boiler-plate rocks forming the Devil's Point. All the time we have been keeping the left bank of the Dee, and we now join a path coming down from the right. This is the Glen Lui Beg path, which we have already described up to the foot-bridge over the Lui. This bridge we now cross, keeping the slope of Carn à Mhaim on our right. Some 3 miles on, we join the Glen Dee path, nearly opposite the Devil's Point. Here, on the west side of the Dee, is a small shealing, unoccupied. Another quarter of a mile on the Allt a' Choire Odhar (the stream of the dun or drab-coloured corrie), from the corrie between Cairn Toul and the Devil's Point, joins the Dee; and, a quarter of a mile beyond their junction, we come to Clach nan Taillear (the tailor's stone), on the right hand of the path, marked by three huge stones said to commemorate the place where three tailors perished who started from Rothiemurchus for a wager to attempt to cross by the Learg to attend a ball at Braemar. Finally, some three-quarters of a mile farther on we come to the Allt Clach nan Taillear itself, which springs from the summit plateau of Ben Muich Dhui.

The path crosses the Allt Clach nan Taillear, and we can select either side of the stream for our ascent, the left-hand side (true right) being the steeper, for we rise from the 2,000 to the 4,000 line within a mile. The climb is steep but short, and more sporting than either of the previous routes. By this way we get magnificent views of the majestic Cairn Toul with his Coire an-t Saighdear (soldier's corrie) and Garbh Coire (rough corrie). The plateau reached, we are within a few minutes of the summit cairn.

(b.) *From Pools of Dee.*—It is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the point where we left the path to ascend by the Allt Clach nan Taillear (the immediately preceding route) to the top of Glen Dee, and a heavy $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles it is! As we mount up the going becomes harder and harder, and towards the watershed and in the vicinity of the Pools the so-called path would be entirely lost, were it not for the occasional "stone man," and the numerous scratches of "hob-nailers" upon the boulders. The ordinary pedestrian who expects to find a highroad by the Learg Ghruamach must be woefully bewildered here!

At this stage a very short account of the Pools may not be inappropriate. In Bartholomew's 2-inch map the Wells of Dee are erroneously marked as at the source of the Allt à Gharbhchoire on Braeriach. The true origin of the Dee is at the Pools, which are situated about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the confluence of the Allt à Gharbhchoire and the Dee. But this is not without dispute,* though Burton, whom I have already quoted, says: "As we shall presently find, the right of the Garchary to that distinction is strongly maintained by pretty high authority, but I am inclined to adopt the Larig, not only because it appears to contain a greater volume of water, but because it is more in the line of the glen, and, though rough enough, is not so desperately flighty as the Garchary, and does not join it in those great leaps which, however surprising and worthy of admiration they may be in themselves, are not quite consistent with the calm dignity of a river destined to pass close to a university town." †

* Appendix No. 10.

† Appendix No. 11.

The Pools consist of several lochans among the huge boulders which lie everywhere around, some of which are many tons weight. There are several pools, but attention need only be given to two. The clearness, coldness, and greenness of the water will at once be remarked. The pools are not deep, and the enormous stones with which they seem to be laid are clearly visible at the bottom. One is indeed surprised that the water does not percolate out among the boulders and leave them dry, but there are doubtless large springs beneath to replenish them. They would not appear to be connected, but the noise of rushing water under the boulders between them shows at once that they are. The Dee apparently springs from the lowest pool, but for some distance below it, as between the pools themselves, the valley is jammed with mighty boulders under which the new-born stream fights a precarious way.

An almost cruel desolation pervades the scene. On all sides are the steep stone-covered slopes of the mountains. Nought breaks the grave-like silence here save the gurgle of the waters under the boulders, or it may be, the howl of the tempest, as it whistles round the shattered spires on the crests of the slopes above. The Ettrick Shepherd says of this bleak scene :—

“ Beyond the grizzly cliffs which guard
The infant rills of Highland Dee,
Where hunter's horn was never heard,
Nor bugle of the forest bee ;
Mid wastes that dorn and dreary lie,
One mountain rears its mighty form,
Disturbs the moon in passing by,
And smiles above the thunderstorm.”

The ascent of Ben Muich Dhui may be conveniently made then from the Pools of Dee. Probably the best line is to make for the point on the borders of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire, marked 3,862 feet on the 2-inch map. From this point the direction taken is practically south, and a gradual ascent for a little over a mile brings us to the summit cairn. The going along the top is good, the texture of the boulders being somewhat finer than that met with in the Lerg! Going along the ridge the views down

into the Learg and into the Garbhchoire corries are very fine.

2. *From Speyside.*

(1.) (a.) *Vid Creag na Leacainn.*—This is not a usual, but an interesting route, though it involves a good day's walk.

The usual starting-place for the Learg Ghruamach, by which we proceed for this route, is from Aviemore. We cross the Spey by the Aviemore Bridge, and immediately after passing through the clachan of Inverdrue, we meet other two roads. We keep to the one on the left. Just before reaching Coylum Bridge (about 1 mile on from the meeting of the roads), we observe an iron gate on the right-hand side of the road, and a finger-post indicating the public road to Braemar. At this gate we enter Rothiemurchus Forest, and our difficulties begin. Great care must be taken to follow the proper path of the many which we now meet. It may safely be laid down that whenever we meet another path we are to keep to the left one (the first one we meet is marked by a heap of stones on its right-hand side and is about a quarter of a mile from Coylum Bridge). In short, we must never leave the Allt na Beinne Moire (the Druie below Coylum Bridge), and after following it from Coylum Bridge for 2 miles, we reach its junction with the Allt na Leirg Ghruamach; but a few hundred yards before reaching the junction, we cross to the right bank by a small foot-bridge, and we follow the stream for about a quarter of a mile, when we pass an uninhabited keeper's shealing situated on a grassy lawn, and nearly opposite to which is a dilapidated bridge which must *not* be crossed. The path now develops into a carriage road, and immediately we come to an indifferent sign-post marked "To Braemar." Here the path branches into three, the left branch leads back towards Coylum Bridge, the middle branch leads to Loch Morlich, and the right-hand branch goes through the Learg. The latter branch we take, and our way now lies clear, there being no more paths to confuse us. The heather is long, and the path in parts almost lost, but we keep along the top of what had obviously

at one time been a moraine. The stream is now below us on our right. At length we get out of the forest into open moorland, and looking back, we see the vast stretch of the Rothiemurchus Forest through which we have just passed. In front of us, on the right and left, are Carn Elrick (the sugar-loaf) and Castle Hill—the guardians of the Learg Ghruamach. The way is along the dreary side of Castle Hill. Here and there a hardy pine may still be seen fighting with the storms for an uncertain existence. The pass opens up and the path becomes less distinct, though marked from time to time by “the stone man.” Two-and-a-half miles on from the sign-post the path descends to and crosses the Allt na Leirg Ghruamach, but we leave it here and turn up the slopes of Creag na Leacainn on our left. Now Creag na Leacainn, which will be dealt with in detail under the dependencies of Cairngorm, is a long narrow ridge between Creag a’ Chalamain and Ben Muich Dhui. Its Learg side is steep and stony, topped with crumbling crags, where the rock-climber may practise his art to his heart’s content. The rocks negotiated, we visit the twin tops, from the more southern of which we get a capital view of the pass below, and the north corries of Braeriach. We turn south, and make for the spot where the three counties meet, marked by a small cairn, Carn a Criche (3,931 feet), from which good views are to be had of Beinn Bhrotain, Derry Cairngorm, Beinn à Bhuid, Beinn Mheadhoin, and Ben Avon. We next pass along to the Feith Buidhe (yellow morass), a burn rising from the small tarn, Lochan Buidhe, on the borders of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire. If we followed the burn eastwards, it is found to widen out upon the yellow gravel from which it derives its name, but again towards the rocks at the head of Loch Avon it narrows. We go on southwards meantime, however, practically following the Aberdeenshire and Banffshire boundaries, and so the route from the Pools already described is joined.

(1.) (b.) *From Pools of Dee.*—This only leaves for description that part of the Learg Ghruamach from where we left it to ascend Creag na Leacainn to the Pools of Dee,

which completes the journey from Aviemore to Braemar, a distance of 29 miles, which, it may be convenient to mention, is made up as follows:—Aviemore Station to Coylum Bridge, 2 miles; Coylum Bridge to Dee watershed, $7\frac{1}{4}$ miles; watershed to Derry Lodge, $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles; Derry Lodge to Braemar, 10 miles—making, say, 29 miles.

We now cross the Allt na Leirg Ghruamach, where we left it to ascend Creag na Leacainn, and at a point where an enormous avalanche of debris has come down the slopes of that mountain, hiding the stream from view practically, though it again appears higher up. We are in a desolation of granite boulders, and also at the summit of the Pass (2,750 feet). So rough is the walking here that it is almost impossible to take the eye off one's feet to view the surroundings. It is a case of leaping from stone to stone, and these are so huge and sharp in many cases that a fall between them might quite well mean a broken leg. Just before descending into the Dee watershed, it is well worth our while to pause a moment, and look back whence we came. The picture is surely varied enough. The Monadliaths form the "distance," the Spey valley, with stretches of Rothiemurchus woods, the "middle distance," and the rough red boulders of the Learg the "foreground" of our scene, and the whole is framed by the steep rugged slopes of Braeriach on the left and those of Ben Muich Dhui on the right. Could the composition of any picture be more unique among our Scottish mountains? We descend into the Dee watershed and reach the Pools, whence we proceed to ascend Ben Muich Dhui, as already described.

(2.) *By Cairngorm.*—The various routes to the summit of Cairngorm will be described at the appropriate place. We shall here assume that we are starting from the summit cairn of Cairngorm.

The distance between the summit cairns of Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui is about $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles, and it can be covered with comfort in two hours. The two mountains are separated by the Feith Buidhe Burn, the Garbh Uisge (where it joins the former), and Loch Avon. From the cairn we hold south-west, and, descending a little, we cross over the cup-shaped watershed of the Allt na Coire Raibert,

a stream flowing into Loch Avon about a third of a mile from the head of the loch. Keeping now a little more west, we strike the Banff-Inverness boundary at the head of Coire an-t Sneachda (on our right), a very fine corrie with its small tarn. Bending somewhat more to the left again (south), we cross the sources of the Allt na Coire Domhain, keeping Cairn-an-Lochainn to the front and right of us. Holding south, over crumbled granite and small boulders, we cross the Feith Buidhe, considerably to the right of the cliffs which descend upon the top of Loch Avon. Crossing a ridge, we ascend gradually, and, half a mile or so farther on, we pass over the Garbh Uisge Beag, the left-hand tributary of the Garbh Uisge, just above their confluence. Here the view down upon Loch Avon is really magnificent. All around is a scene of the wildest grandeur. Still ascending gently, we keep on the ridge midway between the Garbh Uisge Beag and the Garbh Uisge for almost a mile, which brings us to the altitude marked 4,244 feet on the one-inch map, and in ten minutes we are on the top of Ben Muich Dhui.

It makes by far the most interesting excursion to go from Ben Muich Dhui to Cairngorm or *vice versa*, for the additional trouble is slight, and it is more than rewarded.

(3.) *From Nethy Bridge, vid Strath Nethy, Learg an Laoigh, Loch Avon, and Shelter Stone.*—From the village of Nethy Bridge to the summit of Ben Muich Dhui it is just about 20 miles, making a big day's work, only to be attempted by strong walkers. The distance is made up as follows:—Nethy Bridge to Rebhoan, about 7 miles; Rebhoan to Nethy foot-bridge, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Nethy foot-bridge to Avon Ford, $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Avon Ford to Shelter Stone, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles; and Shelter Stone to summit of Ben Muich Dhui, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. But of this distance one can drive $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Nethy Bridge to Nethy foot-bridge.

Starting from Nethy village, we go west, cross the bridge over the Nethy, immediately turn left, and follow the road by the left bank of the river. The walk along the stream is charming, and the strath is a particularly beautiful one. We pass Lower Dell, and Lower Dell Lodge, where the

road branches. We take the left branch, but half a mile farther on, where the road again forks, we take the right one, going practically due south till, when some 3 miles from Nethy Bridge, we join another road at right angles to our own. If walking we go straight on (south), if driving we go (east) left, and half a mile farther on (at Lyngarrie) we turn sharply to the south. Whichever way selected, Lynemacgilbert is eventually reached, and later on Rynettin, a forester's house on the slopes of Carn Rynettin, and the uppermost inhabited house in the strath. Beyond Rynettin the road passes through a field, and presently meets other two roads upon the left, but we hold straight on (south) for Rebhoan. Rebhoan was once a farm on the east side of Meall a' Buachaille (2,654 feet), but it is only now occupied in summer as a shealing. East of Rebhoan is Loch a Gharbchoire, used as one of the "floating dams" where water was stored to flood the Nethy for floating down timber to the Spey in 1730, when the Forest of Abernethy was sold for £7,000 to a Yorkshire company. Following the road south of Loch a Gharbchoire, we cross the Nethy at a foot-bridge, and here the driving road ends. This foot-bridge is about three-quarters of a mile north of Mam Suim (2,374 feet), a small eminence now prominent on our right. Half a mile on from the foot-bridge we join a very indistinct path on the left which would lead us back—by a somewhat shorter route than we have come—to Lynemacgilbert, passing the ruins of Boglechynack and Inchtomach, and crossing the Nethy at Lynemacgilbert. This way cannot be recommended, however, for there is considerable difficulty in finding the path. A short distance on from the junction of these paths, then, we come on the left to a memorial cairn (2,275 feet), with a stone inscribed with the letters "I. G.," and we are now on the Learg an Laoigh track—the pass which divides the Central from the Eastern Cairngorms. This pass, sometimes called the East Larig, was, and still is, to a limited extent, used as a drove road between Spey-side and Deeside, and, pass though it is, we learn that it has not been without its victims, for on 4th January 1805, five out of seven privates of Inverness-shire Militia perished in a snowstorm. They were on their way through the Learg

to Abernethy on furlough, and in their memory a song was composed, of which the following is a verse :—

“ Eighteen months passed away ere the last lad, they say,
Was found by his friends broken-hearted ;
Down in a low green his red coat was seen,
But his head from his body was parted.” *

We now cross a ridge, the summit being 2,586 feet, and descending a little, we traverse the headwaters of the Caiplich, and cross the Banff-Inverness border. Next we cross the Glas-ath, another Caiplich head stream, and, passing Lochan à Bhainne, the path descends to the Avon, which is forded (not always an easy matter). We now leave the path and follow the right bank of the Avon to Loch Avon, a distance of about a mile. Then following the south shore of the loch, over boulders of various sizes and shapes, we come to the Shelter Stone (the culminating boulder weighing some 1,700 tons!), which must one time have fallen, along with its many neighbours, from the rocky northern side of Cairn Etchachan, but of Loch Avon and the Shelter Stone we shall deal later on. From the latter our climb begins, and we proceed to pull ourselves up the rocky slabs over which the Feith Buidhe casts its waters. We can either follow the right or left side of the stream to its confluence with the Garbh Uisge. From the confluence we keep by the Garbh Uisge till we reach its junction with Garbh Uisge Beag, when we strike the ridge midway between these two tarns, and finally we join the route taken between Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm.

Though this is a long route to Ben Muich Dhui, the variety of scenery makes it particularly interesting, but, owing to the distance, it is feared that it will not become popular.

II. DEPENDENCIES OF BEN MUICH DHUI.

1. *Beinn Mheadhoin* (3,883 feet).

In height *Beinn Mheadhoin* (Ben Vain) is the principal dependency of Ben Muich Dhui. It is not often visited, though its ascent is easy enough. It may be climbed from

* Appendix No. 12.

the north side of Loch Etchachan, Corrie Etchachan, the Lairg an Laoigh, or from the south-east side of Loch Avon.

From Loch Etchachan the ascent is obvious and easy, the top being only about a mile distant. The mountain runs practically north and south, and the summit is covered with a series of rocky protuberances familiarly known as the "barns," which at once attract attention and give the mountain a distinctive character. There are three tops—two on the Aberdeen-Banff boundary, and the main top, wholly in Banff.

Ascending from Corrie Etchachan, we may conveniently make for the south top (3,551 feet), which is marked by an O.S. cairn on the top of rocks, and is about a mile south of the north or main top. The ascent is fairly steep, first over heather, then scree. From the south top there is a capital view of Corrie Etchachan, Derry Cairngorm, and Glen Derry. We may now make a straight line for the main or north top. As we go along, we observe quantities of protruding masses of red granite split and worn by the action of frost and water. The main top is a huge "barn" of rock with lower "barns" on either side, and the whole is surmounted by an O.S. cairn. The north side of the barn is some 20 feet high, but the south side is considerably higher.

Ascending from the Lairg an Laoigh (east side) is the hardest ascent. We start from where the Allt an t-Seallaidh (the burn of the "view" or "vision") meets its first feeder, Coire nan Saibhlean (the corry of the barns), and so we reach the summit after a very steep pull over huge stones and through long heather.

Ascending from Loch Avon, we may choose a variety of routes, easy and difficult. For example, by the Coire Buidhe the ascent is easy, but again by Sron Gorm it is very steep and toilsome.

The view from Beinn Mheadhoin of the nearer mountains is good, though, owing to its being surrounded by higher mountains, the distant prospect is not so extensive as from Cairngorm or Ben Muich Dhui. We get distant glimpses, however, here and there. Towards the north, the Caithness

and Sutherland mountains may be seen, the Moray Firth, Grantown, and Nethy Bridge; southwards, the heights of Athole and Ben Lawers; to the eastward, Tap o' Noth, the Buck, and Bennachie; but, in the west, Ben Muich Dhui shuts off the distant horizon. The view, however, of the black southern corries of Cairngorm is very excellent seen from here as from no other point.

2. *Cairngorm of Derry (3,788 feet).*

"Give a dog a bad name," &c. &c. Whether it is that Derry Cairngorm has not yet recovered from the days when unscrupulous "guides" used to pilot the unwary tourist up this mountain, and take him home making him fondly imagine that he had conquered the true Cairngorm,* I cannot say, but from whatever cause, the fact assuredly remains that Derry Cairngorm is, in these later days, neglected. Let us hope that, as mountaineers (in Scotland at any rate) are now guides unto themselves, Derry Cairngorm may yet receive that proportion of mountain-callers to which it is justly entitled, for it is a handsome hill, and well deserves attention.

From Inverey one is at once attracted by its majestic cone, and from there I have more than once heard it called Ben Muich Dhui, and "the" Cairngorm by persons professing a fair knowledge of these mountains.

Nothing is easier than its ascent on the return journey from Ben Muich Dhui. From the east end of Loch Etchachan it is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant, with a rise of some 700 feet, and the going is easy over a stony saddle. It may be also climbed from Glen Lui Beg, Glen Derry, and Corrie Etchachan, the latter being a steep ascent. There is yet another way which is probably the most sporting. It is really a variation of the Glen Lui Beg route. From top of Ben Muich Dhui make for a point at the top of Coire an Sput Dheirg on the south-east precipice. There a gully will be found by which a descent can be made into the corrie, keeping Lochan Uaine on our right. The entrance to the top of this gully is just east of the highest

* Appendix No. 13.

rocks. At the foot of the gully we find ourselves at the very top of Glen Lui Beg, and from here the ascent of Cairngorm of Derry can be made under half an hour. The west side is steep and rough but short. The return to Derry Lodge may then be conveniently made right along the ridge by Carn Crom. There is a corrie on the north-east side of Derry Cairngorm with a small tarn called Lochan Uaine having Allt an Lochan Uaine for its outlet, which flows east to join the Derry Burn. From the summit beautiful views of Glens Lui and Derry are to be had; and, if for nothing but the pleasing variety of route, the return from Ben Muich Dhui by this way is to be highly recommended.

3. *Cairn Etchachan (3,673 feet).*

Cairn Etchachan may be conveniently visited, when descending from Ben Muich Dhui by the Garbh Uisge to Loch Avon, by crossing to the right side of Garbh Uisge, shortly below its source, and following the Aberdeen-Banff border upon which the cairn is situated. Another ascent would be from the Shelter Stone, which, judging from appearance, would give a good sporting climb part of the way. The view from the summit is similar to that from Beinn Mheadhoin.

4. *Carn à Mhaim (3,329 feet).*

Carn à Mhaim is a spur on the south side of Ben Muich Dhui, separated from it by Allt Carn à Mhaim and Allt Clach nan Taillear. Its ascent from any point on its south side is easy, and on the summit there is a 6-foot cairn built on rock. It is bounded on the south by Allt Preas à Mheirlich, which rises in a small tarn on the left of the Larig path, and joins the Lui Beg Burn.

5. *Carn Crom (2,847 feet).*

Carn Crom, as already explained, is the termination of the south spur of Derry Cairngorm, and lies about 1 mile north-west of Derry Lodge. If Derry Cairngorm is to be climbed from Derry Lodge, it will be found convenient to

proceed *vid* Carn Crom. The view from its summit is not sufficient to warrant its ascent for that alone. On the north-west there is a dip between it and Cairngorm of Derry where the Allt Caochan na Spald has its source and flows down to join the Lui.

III. LOCHS.

1. Loch Avon (and Shelter Stone).

Loch Avon, situated at an altitude of 2,500 feet, and compressed on its north, west, and south sides by the huge precipices of Cairngorm, Ben Muich Dhui, and Beinn Mheadhoin, is perhaps the most weird and solitary loch in Scotland, if not so picturesque as Coruisk. Its outlet is at the east end, where—

“The water of A’an it rins sae clear,
'Twould beguile a man o’ a hunder’ year.”

Burton says of it: “Loch Avon is like a fragment of the Alps imported and set down in Scotland. One’s recollections of it invariably become intertwined and confused with the features of the upper passes. An Alpine devotee . . . might console himself here, and in a few other recesses of the Cairngorm range, by recalling the distant objects of his worship. . . . When we came within sight of Loch Avon, the interstices in the tempest-driven clouds only showed us a dreary winter, Greenland-like chaos of snow and rocks and torrent.”*

The loch is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in breadth. It abounds in slim black trout, and in parts it is a great depth. It may be reached by Strath Nethy, Lairg an Laoigh, Glen Avon, Glen Derry, or by descending from Ben Muich Dhui or Cairngorm. It was visited by Her late Majesty on 28th September 1861, and she says of it: “Nothing could be grander and wilder; the rocks are so grand and precipitous, and the snow on Ben Muich Dhui had such a fine effect.”†

Besides the Feith Buidhe, several burns flow into it,

* Appendix No. 14.

† Appendix No. 15.

and the cataracts falling over the steep cliffs of Cairngorm are very beautiful.

The Shelter Stone (Clach Dhian) is a huge boulder at the south-west end of Loch Avon, some ten minutes' walk from the shore. It is the largest of many boulders (each "about the size of a parish church") which have fallen from time to time from the northern spur of Cairn Etchachan. It can be quickly recognised from the signs of civilisation in the shape of meat-tins (empty!), &c., which are usually found strewn around. As a shelter it is very indifferent, and the writer's only (and last!) attempt to sleep under its inhospitable roof was an absolute failure, but it is comforting to him to know that he is not the exception! The Shelter Stone, with the aid of a little lime (and smaller stones?) might well be made habitable enough. As it is, however, it is distinctly draughty, and the floor is usually damp. The occasional visit of a charwoman, too, might not be a disadvantage! I merely make these suggestions for the consideration of the members of the S.M.C. and Cairngorm Club.

2. *Loch Etchachan.*

Loch Etchachan (3,100 feet), at the top of Corrie Etchachan, is 600 feet higher than Loch Avon, but much smaller, being only about a mile in circumference and circular in shape. At its east end there is a little "bay," sometimes detached from the main sheet of water, and known as Little Loch Etchachan, from which the Derry Burn rises and flows over the brink into Corrie Etchachan. Though the loch is, on an average, frozen seven months in the year, there are trout in it. Its western side is lined with the rocky southern buttresses of Cairn Etchachan, which would doubtless offer endless sport to the cragsman.

3. *Lochan Uaine (of Ben Muich Dhui).*

Lochan Uaine, 42 feet higher than Loch Etchachan, is a small tarn nestling at the base of a series of cliffs which form the south-east face of Ben Muich Dhui. The cliffs rise above its north side some 1,000 feet, and its outlet joins the

left tributary of the Lui Beg in Coire an Sput Dheirg below. A little to the east of this lochan a gully will be found by which a descent may be made into Coire an Sput Dheirg (*vide* under Derry Cairngorm above).

4. *Lochan Uaine (of Derry Cairngorm).*

Lochan Uaine, situated about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north-east of Derry Cairngorm, is an insignificant lochan. Its outlet is Allt an Lochan Uaine, which joins the Derry.

5. *Dubh Lochan.*

The Dubh Lochan are two small lakelets, lying in the stony gorge at the foot of the east slope of Beinn Mheadhoin, and on the left of the Lairg an Laoigh. In Her Majesty's visit to Loch Avon, quoted above, she refers to the "Dhoo-lochans" (phonetic spelling) as "two little lakes opposite to where the glen runs down to Inchrory."

6. *Lochan Feith Buidhe.*

Lochan Feith Buidhe, situated, at its west end, on the Aberdeen Banff border, at an altitude of 3,600 feet, and about a mile west from Loch Avon, is the reservoir of the Feith Buidhe (yellow morass). The name is partly misleading, because there is no morass at all—simply a slight depression on the north side of Ben Muich Dhui, but, as already explained, the lochan is surrounded by yellowish shingle, and that fact may account for the name. Cairngorm stones, it may be mentioned, have been found in the neighbourhood of Lochan Feith Buidhe.

B. CAIRNGORM (4,084 feet)

(The Blue Mountain)

is the fifth mountain in height in Britain, and the fourth of the Cairngorm group. But, though the lowest of the well-known quartette, it alone can claim to itself the name of the famous range. Yet the name Cairngorm cannot be said to be appropriate either to the mountain or to the

range to which it belongs. Monadh Ruadh (the red mountain) would more aptly depict the general colour of the range, and this, we believe, was the original name, of which we still possess a remnant in the Monadh Liath Mountains (the grey mountains) on the other side of the Spey valley. The name Cairngorm then is, we take it, one of a moderately recent date. That being so, the next question which we naturally ask is—Why is the name Cairngorm not given to the highest mountain of the range? We have not far to go to find satisfactory explanations for this. When we remember that for generations the great thoroughfare between the Highland capital and the south has followed the Spey valley opposite the Cairngorms, whereas in the Dee Valley traffic has practically always ceased at Braemar, we come to the very natural conclusion that the range has been oftenest observed and always best known from the Speyside; and from Speyside the one point which must attract attention is the summit of Cairngorm, for from that side Braeriach and Ben Muich Dhui are flat and shapeless, and Cairn Toul cannot be seen at all. On these grounds, then, Cairngorm has, we presume, carried off the palm at the expense of his loftier neighbours; and, when all is said and done, why not?

Cairngorm lies in the united parishes of Abernethy-Kincardine and Duthil-Rothiemurchus, and is situated on the boundary between the counties of Inverness and Banff. It drains into the Spey by the Luineag (Druie), Nethy, and Avon, and on the south it is separated from Ben Muich Dhui by Loch Avon, Garbh Uisge, and Feith Buidhe.

We have a record of an ascent of Cairngorm in 1801, made by a lady, of which the following is an extract: *—

“The 7th September, the day of the earthquake, we left the Doune (Rothiemurchus) at a very early hour, and went to Mr Osborne's † house in Glenmore to breakfast. Mr Grant (of Rothiemurchus), Mr Osborne's two sons, with another gentleman and myself, were bound for the top of Cairngorm. I rode on Mr Grant's pony to nearly the summit of it; the gentlemen walked. The view from its

* Appendix No. 16.

† Appendix No. 17.

summit is very extensive, and the sublimity and terrific grandeur of the prospect on the side towards Braemar cannot be described ; but those who mount that eminence should walk to the edge of the precipices hanging over the hollow towards Loch Avon and to the Snow House. The Snow House is not far from the cairn or heap of stones on the highest part of Cairngorm, and is a hollow, in extent an acre or two. This hollow is filled with snow, and although it faces the south (*sic*), it is never melted either by the sun or rain. Near its boundary on the south side runs a stream of the purest water ; in its bed are large stones standing high and thick, serving for supporters to the roof of snow which seems to be in some degree petrified. There was little water in this stream the day I was at it. I therefore by bending my body walked up the bed of this rivulet for three or four yards without getting very wet, but it was so intensely cold under snow and in water, that I was obliged quickly to return, though not before I had collected some fine specimens of rock and feldspar crystallisations. Near the pinnacle of Cairngorm is a well of the finest spring water I ever tasted, and it is also the coldest I ever touched. . . . To ride up Cairngorm is an arduous task, and to walk down it a very arduous one."

I. ROUTES OF ASCENT.

1. From Nethy Bridge.

(1.) *By Strath Nethy, Rebhoan, and Glenmore Lodge* (*vide* Ben Muich Dhui, Speyside route No. 3, as far as Rebhoan shealing).—Arrived at Rebhoan, instead of turning to the left (east) and following the road south of Loch a Gharbhchoire into the Learg an Laoigh, we hold straight on (south-west) through the narrow valley called the Rebhoan Pass or Thieves' Pass, which forms the head of Glen More. This pass is a narrow gorge between Craig Loisgte (the burnt hill) and Craig na Gall (the lowlanders' hill). Shortly after we leave Rebhoan, which is at the watershed of the Nethy and the Allt na Feithe Duibhe (which flows

down Glen More into Loch Morlich), we enter again among the trees, and on our left we pass a small tarn called An Lochan Uaine (the green lochan). This is an oval-shaped sheet of water, beautifully situated, some 600 yards in circumference. It has no inlet or outlet, the water is greenish in colour and very clear—a veritable mirror in a calm day, reflecting the pines, the heather, and the waving grass. As we go on the glen widens, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles on from Rebhoan we arrive at Glenmore Lodge, which is really the point of concentration or base for all ascents of Cairngorm from Speyside.

From Glenmore Lodge an excellent view of Cairngorm is obtained. The stranger cannot fail to mark the summit at the east end of the fine series of corries facing the north. The summit of Cairngorm is 4 miles from the lodge as the crow flies, but by the path $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and the time required is about two hours. The ascent is easy, and the going exceedingly good. Any one with the slightest bump of locality can find his way from the lodge to the summit if the weather be clear, and the ascent is absolutely without danger.

From the lodge a road leads south to the Allt Mor, which we cross by a good wooden bridge (1,060 feet), and presently an old building (Rieaonachan) is passed on the right. This house was the original site of Glenmore Lodge. The road now becomes a mere footpath, which follows the left bank of the Allt Mor, which we recross immediately, and, a few hundred yards on from the crossing point, we find the path branches ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from foot-bridge). The left branch follows the stream, but we leave it and take the one on the left, which rises from the stream rapidly and leads us to An t-Aonach (2,117 feet). From An t-Aonach we turn a little to the right, and so follow the saddle to the summit by an easy incline for a couple of miles. As we ascend the going becomes easier, over luxuriant mosses and gravel. We have excellent views of Choire Cas (or Chais), with Allt a' Choire Cas on our right. The corrie is generally remarkable for the snowfield which lies in it usually well into the summer. On the saddle we pass, on the left, a huge boulder (Clach Parraig) which is seen from Glenmore

Lodge ; and, on the right a few yards farther on, a smaller boulder, immediately below which is M'Connachie's Well, the last reliable spring we meet till we reach the summit. The original name of the well has been lost, and so it has been appropriately named after the Secretary of the Cairngorm Club, the well-known authority on the Cairngorms. On our left (east) is the deep Coire na Ciste, with the Allt a' Coire Ciste. Some 3,150 feet up the saddle we pass a large granite spire called "Black Castle" on our left. The final incline (Sron an Aonaich) is next negotiated, and, crossing a few flat boulders, we reach the summit cairn, built on an outcrop of rock which one might at first think was not quite the highest point. As one ascends the saddle an occasional halt to turn round and view the northern landscape will well repay the mountaineer. Away in the farthest distance are the Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness mountains ; then the Moray Firth, with its golden band of sand sparkling in the sunlight ; and, at our feet, Loch Morlich and the Rothiemurchus woods, like some priceless jewel set in a boundless wealth of emeralds, reflecting in its calm surface every mountain and tree around.

The view from the summit of Cairngorm has been well described in the following : "To the north-west the ample form of Ben Wyvis towered dimly through the cloud, and what we judged from the shadowy outline in the distance, due north, the Caithness hills. The coast-line of Ross, Cromarty, and Sutherland stretched northwards facing into, or blending with, the haze in that direction. The Moray Firth, extending eastward and westward of our position, marked off its coast-line by its lighter colour, which became brighter and clearer as the blurring rain-showers swept south-easterly in constant procession. To the north-east Ben Rinnnes reared his conspicuous cairn, and the Buch of the Cabrach and his neighbour, the Tap o' Noth, showed their well-known forms. In the far north-east, Bennachie projects his picturesque outline of Mither Tap and Oxen Craig. . . . Almost due east, Morven, by its proximity, shuts out the view beyond and looms grandly in the distance. Eastwards also are Beinn Mheadhoin, Beinn a' Chaoruinn, Stob an t-Sluichd, Ben Avon, and Beinn a' Bhuid. Loch-

nagar is in grand form in the south-east, and over his lofty neighbour, Cairn Taggart, Cairn Bannoch asserts itself, and Tolmount and Cairn na Glasha trend south-westwards towards Glas Maol. The mountains of Glen Ey continue the southern zone to Beinn a' Ghlo, beyond which, and far, far to the south and south-west heaven-kissed hills rivet our admiring gaze. In the south-west the Sow of Athole dominates the Boar of Badenoch, and the mighty Ben Alder frowns upon both. A little south of west, through the depression between Braeriach and Cairn Toul, the lofty massive outline of Ben Nevis lifts his proud crest to the clouds. Northwards and westwards the everlasting hills of Inverness, Ross, and Skye show more or less distinctly as distance or cloud limits the view. In the near foreground, across the smiling valley of the Spey through which the river winds in graceful curves, the lofty range of the Monadh Liath stretches from Lochindorb to Loch Lochy. Nearer, among the dark-wooded grounds in the wide valley, Loch Morlich, Loch an Eilein, and Loch Alvie shine like molten silver, and on Airgiod-meall, the left foot, and Mam Suim, the right foot, of Cairngorm, are silver buckles in the shape of two small lochans, both placed about the 1,800 feet contour line. The grandeur and beauty of the corries to the right and left, and on the neighbouring mountains of Braeriach, Cairn Toul, Ben Muich Dhui, Beinn a' Bhuid, and Ben Avon, we humbly confess our inability to describe."

The summit cairn is some 8 feet in height, a substantial mass of boulders of all shapes and sizes. The mountain top is cone-shaped, and so slopes more or less steeply on all sides. East north-east from the cairn, and descending the northern face some 150 feet, we come to probably the highest well in Scotland, Fuaran a' Mharcuis (the Marquis' Well), marked by a small cairn, at an altitude of about 3,950 feet. The well is the source of the Allt na Ciste, but when there is an abundance of moisture it is said to drain into the Ciste Mhairearaid as well (Margaret's chest or coffin). This corrie is a small one, and overlooks the Nethy sources on the north-east shoulder of the hill. Here the snow lingers longest, not even disappearing in

summer.* A small stream (probably originating from the overflow from the Marquis' Well) runs into the corrie, and forms by its action a tunnel underneath the snow bed, which has been known to extend for over 100 feet in length, and is at places 10 feet in height. Hence this snow cavern came to give the name "Margaret's Coffin." "Margaret," say some, was a wretched hag who had been driven from society for her crimes, and afterwards tended goats in this corrie.† The south and south-east sides of the mountain are very steep, abounding in deep gorges that descend precipitously for nearly 1,000 feet towards Loch Avon, so that the stranger must be careful here in mists.‡ The south-west side slopes at first more gently, forming the cup-shaped basin containing the sources of the Coire Raibert Burn, by which a descent is often made to Loch Avon, the latter part being very steep. As we descend, we are attracted by the Stac an Fharaidh, a huge mass of rock on our left, and on our right are the well-known Stag Rocks. In descending, the burn should be kept on its left below its branching point, though both sides are quite practicable to climbers. To the north-west the mountain slopes down to the saddle by which we have just ascended.

(2.) *By Kincardine Church, Slugan, and Glenmore Lodge.*—From Nethy Bridge to Glenmore Lodge by this route is just 11½ miles. From Nethy Bridge we follow the Speyside road for 6½ miles to a point half a mile beyond Kincardine Church, where we turn to the left and south by a road which follows the left bank of the Milton Burn. The road is beautifully shaded as we go through the Rothiemurchus woods (here called the Slugan), and, arrived at Loch Morlich, we keep to the north shore of the loch, from which we have beautiful views of Cairngorm and the corries on his right. At the loch we join the road from Coylum Bridge, and we reach the lodge 1½ miles farther on. From the lodge we proceed as already described.

(3.) *By Strath Nethy, Rebhoan, and Mám Suim Ridge.*—This is the shortest route to Cairngorm from Nethy Bridge

* Appendix No. 18. † Appendix No. 19. ‡ Appendix No. 20.

(*vide* Ben Muich Dhui, Speyside route No. 3, to south side of Loch à Gharbhchoire). From Nethy Bridge to Rebhoan it is about 7 miles, as we have already seen, and the road is quite a good driving one to Rebhoan. From Rebhoan to the summit is just over 5 miles. At the south side of Loch à Gharbhchoire we find that the path crosses a small burn coming down from the north-west side of Mám Suim. We follow this stream to its source. We can then either make for the summit of Mám Suim, or we can keep it a little to our left, and so we get on to the main north-east ridge of Cairngorm, which we follow religiously to the top. The ridge soon drops very rapidly on the left into Strath Nethy, and opposite Ben Bynac, and towards the top of the strath (where the Nethy is called the Garbh Allt), it is quite precipitous. Viewed from the east this ridge would appear to be a mighty staircase, with three prominent "steps," the first being Sron a' Chano (3,200 feet), just about 800 feet higher than Mám Suim; the second is called Cnap Coire na Spreidhe (3,750 feet), three-quarters of a mile from the summit, and the summit itself forms the third or top "step." From the middle "step," which consists of several rocky protuberances, the view into the gorge of Garbh Allt and Strath Nethy is very fine; and, on the right, we have Coire na Ciste sloping gently down to Glen More.

2. *From Boat of Garten viâ Glenmore Lodge.*

Boat of Garten is situated on the north side of the Spey, at the terminus of the Great North of Scotland Railway (Strathspey Section). It has a very excellent hotel, where climbers will find themselves very well attended to, and the charges moderate. There is a carriage ferry connecting with the south Speyside road, which leads us to Kincardine Church, and so to Glenmore Lodge (*vide* 1 (2)). From Boat of Garten to Glenmore Lodge it is 8½ miles by this route.

3. *From Aviemore viâ Glenmore Lodge.*

From Aviemore Hotel to Glenmore Lodge is about 7 miles. From the hotel a magnificent view is to be had of the Cairngorms, with their corries, and V-shaped Learg

Ghruamach, which, from this point, is very conspicuous. Behind the hotel is Craigellachie Rock, the origin of "Stand Fast, Craigellachie," the slogan of the Grants. When I first visited Aviemore the nearest inn was Lynwilg. Now Lynwilg is a very excellent little inn, no doubt, but the disadvantage of residing there is, that it involves an extra walk to and from Aviemore Bridge of 5 miles, and we all know what an extra $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles is at the end of a heavy day! Indeed, the writer has to confess to having waded the Spey on one occasion to avoid this detour; and having more regard for his "hob-nailers" than himself, he first slung these round his neck, with the result that he and they, and other paraphernalia, were very nearly lost. Let me say, therefore, to him who will ford these waters—"Don't, unless you can swim; keep on your boots; and remember that the river runs 'deep and clear.'" But there is no longer any necessity for doing so, now that the new hotel at Aviemore is open.

From the hotel we proceed to Coylum Bridge (*vide* Ben Muich Dhui, Speyside route No. (1) (a)). Coylum Bridge is a charming spot. There is a small "clachan" around the bridge, where one can arrange for primitive summer quarters, and a more secluded retreat could not be found. The bridge spans the Druie, which meets the Luineag just above the bridge. The Luineag flows from Loch Morlich. The bridge crossed, we follow the road on the right (the left road leading to Kincardine and Nethy Bridge), and, ascending somewhat, we pass on the right the small house called Aultnancaber (a forester's residence), and another mile or so farther on we come near to the Luineag again, and follow it at times on a high bank on its right side till we reach the Slugan road at Loch Morlich, and so on to Glenmore Lodge.

II. DEPENDENCIES OF CAIRNGORM.

1. *Cairn an Lochainn* (3,983 feet).

Cairn an Lochainn may be approached either from Creag na Leacainn, or from the route between Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm, or *vice versa*.

Here, allow me, for clearness, to point out generally the features of the northern face between Cairngorm and Creag na Leacainn or Lurcher's Rock, *i.e.*, from east to west. We have (1) the cone of Cairngorm; (2) Coire Càs (the corrie of the crooked wreath) to the right (west) and below the summit, generally marked by a large patch of snow shaped like an inverted V (hence the name); (3) Fiacail à Choire Chais, the ridge between Coire Cas and Coire an t-Sneachda; (4) Coire an t-Sneachda (the corrie of the snow) lower, but more precipitous than Coire Cas, and having a small tarn and outlet, *viz.*, Allt Coire an t-Sneachda; (5) Fiacail Coire an t-Sneachda, the ridge between Coire an t-Sneachda and Coire an Lochainn; (6) Cairn an Lochainn (3,983 feet), the summit at the edge of the precipice of Coire an Lochainn; (7) Coire an Lochainn, with its precipitous edges and shattered cliffs and three small tarns, which feed the Allt Creag na Leacainn; (8) Carn a Criche (3,931 feet), at junction of Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, and Inverness-shire, and farther back from the precipices than Cairn an Lochainn; (9) Miadan Creag na Leacainn (the plateau of Creag na Leacainn); and (10) Creag na Leacainn.

From Creag na Leacainn to Cairn an Lochainn is an easy walk of scarcely 2 miles, with a rise of about 600 feet. The south top of Creag na Leacainn is passed, and the parish march between Duthil-Rothiemurchus and Abernethy-Kincardine is followed to a point marked 3,500 feet on the one-inch map, on the Miadan Creag na Leacainn, which, as its name indicates, is a broad flat saddle. From this point, by holding due east, the cairn is reached, which is unmistakable by the stone ring round it.

From Ben Muich Dhui or Cairngorm, Cairn an Lochainn is also easily visited by making a slightly wider detour than one would do if merely going between the two former summits. Going from Cairngorm to Ben Muich Dhui *via* Cairn an Lochainn, we keep close to the top of Coire Càs and Coire an t-Sneachda. The latter will be found to be a particularly grand corrie.

The summit of Cairn an Lochainn has an O.S. cairn, from which you look right down into the wild Coire an Lochainn,

with its black tarns, by far the wildest corrie on the north face. All round the corrie the rocks present a terribly shattered appearance, and seem to be constantly falling off and rolling into the abyss below. On the right, on the dividing ridge between Coire an t-Sneachda and Coire an Lochain, is the Fiacail Coire an t-Sneachda, with a very noticeable bent prong of rock. From the cairn the view of Glenmore and Loch Morlich is very beautiful.

2. *Carn a Criche* (3,931 feet).

A small cairn at junction of Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, and Inverness-shire, about half a mile south-west from Cairn an Lochainn.

3. *Creag na Leacainn* (3,448 feet).

Creag na Leacainn is more commonly known as the "Lurcher's Rock." It is the summit so well seen from Aviemore at the left-hand side of the Learg Ghruamach. We have already described how its summit may be reached from the Learg (*vide* Ben Muich Dhui, Speyside route No. (1) (a)). It may be also visited from Cairn an Lochainn (*vide* under Cairn an Lochainn).

Creag na Leacainn runs north and south. On the west it dips precipitously down into the Learg, but, on the east, it slopes gently into Coire an Lochainn. Creag na Leacainn has two tops, about a quarter of a mile apart—the north top (3,365 feet), and the south top (3,448 feet). The north top has an O.S. cairn. The main or south top is on a natural eminence, and has but a few stones to mark its position. It stands on the edge of the eastern precipice. From the summit cairn there are capital views of the north corries of Braeriach, Sgoran Dubh, and Loch an Eilein on the west, Cairngorm and its north corries on the east; to the south-east Miadan Creag na Leacainn, and beyond Ben Muich Dhui slopes into the Learg below, and opposite to him the Devil's Point towers up dark and forbidding.

4. *Meall a' Buachaille* (2,654 feet).

Meall a' Buachaille, Creag an Gorm, and Craig Gowrie are the principal tops of the subsidiary chain running north-

west and south-east from the Pass of Rebhoan to the Spey, and known as the Kincardine Hills.

Meall a' Buachaille (the cow-herd's hill), though seldom visited, is an excellent view-point for the entire north side of the Cairngorms from Ben Bynac to Sgoran Dubh. In addition, a large stretch of the Spey valley, with its lochans and woods, is at our feet. Its south shoulder, called Creag Loisgte, makes with Creag nan Gall (the north-west shoulder of Mám Suim) the narrow glen at the top of Glenmore called the Thieves' Pass, or Pass of Rebhoan. The summit is marked by a large cairn. From Rebhoan over Meall a' Buachaille, Creag an Gorm, and Craig Gowrie to the Speyside road (half a mile west of the Church of Kincardine) is $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and it makes a very delightful "off-day."

5. *Mám Suim (2,394 feet).*

Mám Suim, with its north-west shoulder, Creag nan Gall, may be regarded as the extremity of the long north-east ridge of Cairngorm. There is nothing noteworthy except Stac na h-Ioliare (the eagle's cliff), a large rock-tower on the south side of Mám Suim facing Cairngorm, where eagles have nested for many years.

6. *Castle Hill (2,366 feet).*

Castle Hill is the first eminence of importance which we pass on the left as we enter the Learg Ghruamach from the north end. The summit is on the march between the parishes of Duthil-Rothiemurchus and Abernethy-Kincardine. It acts as a guardian of the pass along with Càrn Elrick (locally called the Sugar-loaf) on the right. It is conical-shaped, covered with short heather, and flat-topped. From it an excellent view of Rothiemurchus Forest and Loch Morlich is obtained. The origin of the name is unknown.

7. *Creag a' Chalamain (2,340 feet).*

Creag a' Chalamain, immediately south of Castle Hill, is another eminence on the parish march nearer Creag na Leacainn. It has a rocky summit, with a small cairn, and

there is on it a corrie called Eag Coire a' Choinneachaidh, which is well known for its echo.

8. *Airgiod-meall* (2,118 feet).

Airgiod-meall (the silver hill) lies $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles south of Loch Morlich, at the outskirts of Rothiemurchus Forest, with Lochan Dubh à Cadha, a small lochan, on its eastern side.

9. *An t-Aonach* (2,217 feet).

An t-Aonach is passed on the left of the path from Glenmore Lodge to Cairngorm, and may be visited in making the ascent of Cairngorm (*vide* Cairngorm routes of ascent, Nethy Bridge (1)).

III. LOCHS.

1. *Lochan Allt Coire an t-Sneachda.*

Loch Allt Coire an t-Sneachda (about 3,230 feet) is a small tarn lying in Coire an t-Sneachda. It feeds the burn Allt Coire an t-Sneachda.

2. *Lochan Coire an Lochainn.*

Three small tarns, one rather larger than the others, lie in Coire an Lochainn, which is the wildest of the Cairngorm corries. The corrie is full of huge boulders fallen from the cliffs above. Both Coire an Lochainn and Coire an t-Sneachda repay a visit, and this can be easily accomplished by crossing from the one into the other over the Fiacail à Coire an t-Sneachda.

3. *Loch à Gharbhchoire.*

Loch à Gharbhchoire, a picturesque little loch lying south-east of Rebhoan, is passed by those who take the Learg an Laoigh route.

4. *Loch Morlich.*

Loch Morlich, the largest of the Cairngorm lochs, is a mile in length, and three-quarters of a mile in breadth, and its altitude is 1,046 feet. The Allt Mor flows into it, and

the Luineag flows out at its west end, where there are sluices used in the days when the loch was dammed up for floating down trees.

One of the finest pictures of mountain and loch to be had throughout the length and breadth of Scotland may be had from the north side of Loch Morlich on a calm summer evening. The loch, with its sandy eastern shore, as that of some mighty ocean, reflects on its mirror-like bosom the storm-twisted pines of its southern coast ; and then again, beyond those hoary monarchs of the forest, rises the dome of Cairngorm, glowing pink with the golden rays of the sun as he sinks to rest in his western bed behind the Monadhliaths. A vast silence reigns, broken for an instant perchance by the hum of a passing bee, laden with a wealth of honey, hastening to its home, the day's work done. And now the shadow steals up Cairngorm, already the cairn stands out cold and grey against the indigo vault of heaven. Is that the yet dim flicker of a star above the Thieves' Pass? Yes. It is night. Let us descend from the high pinnacle of imagination now rife within us, and hasten westward, our thoughts surging the while with the rich impressions of another day on the mountains that is gone, alas, never to return.

5. *Lochan na Beinne.*

A small loch midway between An t-Aonach and Màm Suim, has an outlet at its south end feeding the Allt Bàn, one of the right-hand tributaries of the Allt Mor.

6. *Lochan Dubh à Cadha.*

Lochan Dubh à Cadha is a small lochan situated at the east side of Airgiod-meall. The lochan is surrounded by moor, and has no special interest.

C. APPENDIX—REFERENCES.

No. 1. "The Cairngorm Mountains," by John Hill Burton. Messrs Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1864, p. 15.

No. 2. *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

No. 3. "The Caledonian Itinerary," by Alexander Laing (1819), dedicated to James, Earl of Fife, "and Bhina-machon-daidh, now Bhin Macduff, 4,300 feet above the level; belonging to the Right Hon. the Earl of Fife, who is building on the summit a sepulchral pyramid 100 feet high; burial vault, 17 feet by 7; the whole to be surrounded by a dwarf stone wall and cast-iron balustrade. Plans are to be lodged with Mr Cumming, Braemar."

No. 4. "Autumnal Rambles among the Scottish Mountains," by the Rev. Thomas Grierson. James Hogg, Edinburgh, 1851, p. 190.

No. 5. MacLagan's "Nugae Canorae Medicae." Second Edition, 1873.

No. 6. In 1895 New Mar Lodge was burned to the ground, and the present Duke of Fife subsequently erected a fine new mansion house on the north side of the Dee, within the grounds of Old Mar Lodge, which was then pulled down.

No. 7. "Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands." Smith, Elder, & Co., London, 1868, p. 184.

No. 8. A great deal of the information given about the view from the summit of Ben Muich Dhui has been got from the very admirable and unique series of articles dealing with the subject and Tables prepared by Mr Alexander Copland, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Cairngorm Club. Mr Copland has, after countless disappointments, owing to weather conditions, and consequently with untiring energy and great labour, made complete sketch maps of the horizon from Ben Muich Dhui, for which all interested in the mountains of Scotland must ever be indebted to him. For those who wish fuller information upon the subject I cannot do better than give the references here to Mr Copland's descriptions and Tables, contained in the *Cairngorm Club Journal*. These are—

Descriptions of the view. Vol. II., pp. 82, 83, 84, 85, 246, 247; Vol. III., pp. 119, 120.

Table No. 1 (0° to 90°), S. to W. Vol. II., p. 314.

Table No. 2 (90° to 180°), W. to N. Vol. II., p. 248.

Table No. 3 (180° to 270°), N. to E. Vol. III., p. 121.

Table No. 4 (270° to 360°), E. to S. Vol. II., p. 395.

No. 9. *Cairngorm Club Journal*, Vol. I., plate to face p. 57.

No. 10. Dr Skene Keith's "Survey of Aberdeenshire," p. 644.

No. 11. "The Cairngorm Mountains," J. H. Burton, pp. 65, 66.

No. 12. *Scots Magazine*, Vol. LXV., p. 70.

No. 13. Anderson's "Guide to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland" (1842).

1. The first part of the document
discusses the general principles
of the proposed system.

2. The second part of the document
describes the detailed structure
of the proposed system.

3. The third part of the document
describes the implementation
of the proposed system.

4. The fourth part of the document
describes the evaluation
of the proposed system.



LIBRARY.

A CARD index of the books in the Library has now been completed, and the following additions received subsequent to the appearance of the May number of the *Journal* are recorded below with thanks to the respective donors.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
S.M.C. Journal, Vols. IV., V., and VI. - - -	R. G. Napier.
S.M.C. Guide Book. Division I. - - -	—
Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands from 1848-1861. Queen Victoria. (1868.) 2nd Edition - - - - -	Purchased.
More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands from 1862-1882. (1884) - -	"
A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland. M. Martin. 2nd Edition. (1716) - - -	"
Glen Desseray and other Poems. J. C. Shairp -	"
The History and Poetry of the Scottish Border. 2 vols. Professor Veitch. (1893) - -	"
Hillside Rhymes. Professor Veitch - - -	"
Days at the Coast. Hugh Macdonald. (1874) -	"
The Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom. Colonel Pilkington White - - - - -	"
Place-Names in Glengarry and Glenquoich and their Origin. E. C. Ellice. (1898) - -	"
Baddeley's Guide to the Northern Highlands and Islands. 2nd Edition. (1884) - - -	Wm. Douglas.
Baddeley's Guide to Scotland. Part I. 7th Edition. (1892) - - - - -	"
Baddeley's Guide to Scotland. Part III. (1886)	"
Murray's Handbook for Travellers in Scotland. 5th Edition. (1884) - - - - -	"
Mountain, Moor, and Loch. (1894) - - -	"
A Tour in the Highlands in 1803. James Hogg. Reprint 1888 - - - - -	D. S. Campbell.
Sketches of the Coasts and Islands of Scotland and of the Isle of Man. Lord Teignmouth. (1836.) 2 vols. - - - - -	"

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland, including the Isle of Man (Geological). John Macculloch, M.D. (1819.) 3 vols. - - -	D. S. Campbell.
A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland. Dr Johnson. (1775) - - - - -	"
Mineralogical Travels through the Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland Islands, and Mainland of Scotland. Robert Jameson. (1813) -	"
Parallel Roads of Lochaber. D. M. Home. (1876.) Ex. Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Vol. XXVII. - - - - -	"
Swan's Views of the Lakes of Scotland, and Remarks on the Scenery of the Highlands, by Professor Wilson. 2nd Edition. (1836)	Purchased.
Crieff: Its Traditions and Characters. 2nd Series. (1896) - - - - -	"
Arran: A Poem in Six Cantos; and Excursions to Arran. Rev. David Landsborough. (1847) -	"
The Bass Rock. (1847) - - - - -	"
Remarks on Local Scenery and Manners in Scotland during the years 1799 and 1800. John Stoddart, LL.B. 2 vols. - - - - -	"
A Voyage round the Coasts of Scotland and the Isles. James Wilson. (1842.) 2 vols. -	"
Letters on a Tour through various parts of Scotland in the year 1792. I. Lettice, B.D. (1794)	"
Anthroplanomenos, or a Pedestrian Tour through part of the Highlands of Scotland in 1801. John Bristed. (1803.) 2 vols. - - - - -	"
A Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain. Defoe. 4 vols. (1742.) 3rd Edition - -	"
Mineralogy of the Scottish Isles. Robt. Jameson. 2 vols. (1800) - - - - -	"

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.

A WINTER CLIMB ON CREAG NA CAILLICH.—The three days of snow and wind had caused an exodus of the S.M.C. members from Killin on the Saturday afternoon of the New Year Meet, and the party at breakfast on Sunday was reduced to seven.

A patch of blue sky had been sighted, and the barometer was rising, so when Raeburn proposed a visit to Creag na Caillich to see how the chimney on the south-east face looked under winter conditions, C. W. Walker and H. Walker readily agreed to the proposal.

Starting from Killin at 10 A.M., we followed the Glen Lochay road for about half a mile beyond the bridge, where we struck a path which slants upwards and westwards through the larch wood. Half an hour from the hotel found us clear of the wood. The sun, which had been struggling all the morning to pierce the clouds, now triumphed, and for the first time since our arrival we got a view of the whole Tarmachan range.

The tramp across the 2 miles of moor through snow 18 inches to 2 feet deep was toilsome in the extreme, and it was not until the sun had topped the meridian that we arrived at the base of the Crag.

The contrast between the black rocks and the newly fallen snow was so marked as to cause the photographer of the party to deplore the absence of his camera.

The Crag looked at from the south shows three well-defined routes of ascent—a broad ledge which traverses the face from left to right; a wide chimney running straight from top to bottom of the Crag, which had already been partly climbed by Lawson and Raeburn in February 1898, and again visited and the last pitch climbed straight up by Mackay's party on January 1902; lastly, to the right of this chimney an arête which forms the right wall of the chimney.

A few minutes' discussion as to the respective merits of chimney *versus* arête ended in a unanimous vote for the latter, which had the additional attraction of being something new. A sheltering rock at the foot of the chimney suggested luncheon, and whilst enjoying it we

congratulated ourselves on being on the lee side of the hill, for the long line of "smoke" trailing eastward from the top of Meall Garbh indicated what was to be expected to windward. Half an hour sufficed for luncheon, and the rope having been put on, we started on the arête at 12.45 P.M. The first 200 feet consisted of a series of snow couloirs, where much cleaning and beating down had to be done ere progress was possible. A change round on the rope was now made, and under Raeburn's guidance a series of steep faces were successfully tackled, on one of which the clinometer showed the angle of slope to be 73 degrees. This brought us to the top of the chimney, and after a short scramble the cairn was reached at 2.45 P.M.

The climb does not exceed 500 feet, but throughout the angle is steep, at least 57 degrees, and under winter conditions it is decidedly interesting. We were fortunate in obtaining excellent hitches, which enabled us to venture on snow which it would otherwise have been foolhardy to have attempted.

The view from the top was magnificent, all the big Munros in the neighbourhood showing up clear and resplendent in their New Year garment of glistening snow. A few minutes on the top in the biting wind were sufficient to send us hurrying homewards along the ridge. The tracks of a party who had visited the real top of Creag na Caillich on the previous day were of great assistance in facilitating the crossing of the moor, and we arrived at the hotel at 4 P.M. H. W.

BEINN HEASGARNICH, CREAG MHOR, BEINN CHALUIM.—On page 28, Vol. VII. of the *Journal*, it is stated that the Editor is open to receive further information about the first and third of the above peaks. Concerning the second peak, a duly accredited Munro, 3,387 feet in height, the Guide Book is silent. Can the Editor be ignorant of its existence? No, he ascended it himself on the 2nd August 1891 (see page 325, Vol. I., *Journal*). The Editor perhaps will admit that his memory has been caught napping.

The following time-table and notes may be useful as supplementing the information in the Guide Book. Tyndrum Station (West Highland) was left at 8.15 on the 19th May 1903, and partly by the railway line and partly by the road the railway viaduct over Allt Choillean was reached at 9.10. I kept the south side of the stream, but should advise any future explorer to cross the viaduct and keep the north side of the stream. From the top of the glen I turned north, skirting Cam Chreag, and gradually worked diagonally up till the 1,750 foot contour was crossed in Allt Learg Macbheattie. A small waterfall nearly at the top of the last-named glen was reached at 10.48. The ascent of Stob nan Clach (3,146) took twenty-eight minutes more, and from its summit, marked by two or three stones, the horse-shoe formation of Creag Mhor was well seen. Stob nan Clach forms the south end of the

shoe, and Creag Mhor itself the northern. Keeping along the curved ridge, half an hour found me on Creag Mhor (3,387), no cairn. The distance is about 1 mile. Twenty minutes was sufficient for the 1,364 feet to the col between the last-named peak and Beinn Heasgarnich, as I was able to glissade three-quarters of the descent in some four sections. This was the first snow of any importance I had come across. Up Sron Tairbh to Stob an Fhir-Bhogha (3,381), cairn, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile along the straight broad ridge, and the summit of Heasgarnich (3,530), cairn, was gained in exactly one hour from the col. The view to the south-west and south was distinctly fine: the four ridges—(1) Sron Tairbh, (2) Sron nan Eun, (3) Stob nan Clach, (4) Cam Chreag—rose snow-tipped one behind the other; at the west end of Sron nan Eun rose the north-east face of Creag Mhor, down whose snow walls I had just glissaded; from the east end of Stob nan Clach towered the twin peaks of Beinn Chaluum, whose north top was a glistening triangle of snow unrelieved by a single rock. This harmonious grouping of ridge and peak in the near distance was backed by Ben Lui, An Caisteal, Cruach Ardran, Ben More, Stobinian, &c., which still retained the greater portion of their winter garb. Retracing my steps to Stob an Fhir-Bhogha, crossing on the way a few isolated snow patches, I dropped rapidly down due south into Allt Badamhaim to the 1,750 contour. Keeping at about this level, skirting Sron nan Eun and Stob nan Clach, I crossed Allt Chaluum, striking the Beinn of that name, where a stream leads up to a nick in the ridge immediately at the foot of the cap-like summit. I could have had 1,000 feet of snow plug here had I wished, but as time was going rapidly I avoided snow as much as possible, and gained the summit (cairn) in $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours after leaving Heasgarnich. It was now 4.10 P.M., and as my train left Crianlarich at 5.35, a race ensued between lung and steam power, ending in a victory for lungs by the narrow margin of five minutes. A bee-line was taken for the railway bridge over the river, but to do the distance in any comfort requires at least $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours.—F. S. G.

CARN AN FHIDLEIR AND AN SGARSOCH.—To enclose these hills in a one-day excursion is rather a big undertaking, situated as they are among the headstreams of the Tarf, the Feshie, and the Geldie, far from any habitation, except shooting lodges, among the most sacred of sacred ground, where only the deer are allowed to roam. The man who aims at conquering these hills must be prepared to tramp many a weary mile, o'er heath and bog, ere he even gets a glimpse of them; and yet it is possible to include these outcasts, distant though they be, in a rather longish day from Blair Atholl. Indeed, to a strong walker, it is difficult to limit the possibilities of a single-day excursion.

In company with a friend I left Blair Atholl at 2.30 A.M. on the 13th June 1903, just as it was beginning to get grey, and although we had a

few spots of rain, it still looked very promising. By the time we had climbed to the entrance proper of Glen Tilt, it was sufficiently clear for us to have a look around. The sky was a bit cloudy, and the mist, just touching the tops of the hills, appeared to be lifting, and we felt confident that with the rising of the sun the last remnants would disappear.

Proceeding up the glen we experienced a rather cold wind, but we bore it patiently, and trusted that the sun would take off its keen edge. In the vicinity of Marble Lodge the glen was found to be thickly populated with deer, and beyond the lodge they were feeding by the roadside in scores. To avoid the long tramp round by the Falls of Tarf, I had suggested crossing over by the Kite's Cairn (Càrn a' Chlamhain), and striking the Tarf near the base of Sgarsoch. So when the Allt Cruinnich was reached, we left the road and followed the course of that stream up its pretty little glen to near the base of Càrn a' Chlamhain, taking advantage, of course, of the rough track which runs up its left bank.

At the junction of the two headstreams (1,750) we struck up the slope on the right and gained the ridge just below the summit.

The remaining distance was an easy walk over a great snow patch and the cairn (3,159) reached at 5.50.

This hill presents a very steep and stony front to the south, but on all other sides it eases gradually off in long peaty slopes, bearing grass and heather.

Our stay on the summit was anything but pleasant; enveloped in a continual succession of mist clouds, with a piercing cold wind, and an occasional shower of hail by way of variety. We wasted a good hour here waiting for the view, but none came, so we had to bundle up and go. The next part of our programme, the descent to the Feith Uaine Mhòr, was done in the teeth of a perfect blizzard; a cold, cold wind, straight from the Cairngorms, dashed the snow in our faces at a terrific pace, and as there was no shelter of any kind, we had just to face the music. Luckily it only lasted twenty minutes, so we brushed the snow off one another and proceeded. By-and-by the sun came out, and as we followed the Feith Uaine Mhòr towards the Tarf, it was actually warm. Great numbers of deer were noticed here, and a plate was spoilt in trying to get a snapshot of some.

Crossing the shoulder of Braigh Sron Ghorm near the 2,000 feet contour, we joined the Tarf about half a mile above the shooting lodge, which stands at the confluence of the Feith Uaine Mhòr with that stream. The Tarf at this point is about 20 feet broad, and flows gently along over a bouldery bed; this is one of the loneliest glens in Scotland, and also one of the prettiest. The whole length of the glen is clothed in green, and affords excellent pasturage for its numerous inhabitants—the deer. Though we had no difficulty in crossing the stream on this occasion, it will be quite a different matter when it is in flood; under these circumstances the bridge down beside the lodge will come in handy.

We lay here for forty minutes basking in the sun, had lunch, and successfully recharged some photographic slides under our jackets.

When descending by the Feith Uaine Mhòr we had an opportunity of studying the shape and lie of An Sgarsoch, as it was then free of mist.

We now crossed the shoulder of a hill (2,250), joined the Allt a' Chaorruinn, and ascended the slopes of Sròn na Marcranach. This on the present occasion proved a fine easy walk over grass, short heather, and dried peat bogs, though what it will be in wet weather I shouldn't care to say. Had it not been for the previous two or three weeks of dry weather, I'm afraid our whole tramp this day would have been an utter impossibility, as nearly all the ground traversed consisted of dried peat bogs.

The shoulder of the hill was topped at 9.35, beside a dilapidated cairn; here we rested to take advantage of the view, such as it was. The Ben Uarns and neighbours looked fine, and so did the Beinn a Ghlo group, but we had barely sat down when whiff came the mist and snow. We sheltered behind this heap of stones for a little, and then, during a break in the storm, set off along the great round haunch of the hill, and up the remaining slope to the summit (3,300). This, the Perth-Inverness county march, is a large grassy plateau, sprinkled with small stones and gravel, in the centre of which stands the cairn, a really elegant structure, well built, well shaped, and encircled by a ring of stones round its base.

But it was too cold to stay here for any time, especially when there was nothing to be seen—the mist had all the hills again. Of the Cairngorms only odd corners were seen occasionally, or great patches of white through a rend in the veil; none of them could be recognised. Geldie Lodge lies at the base of the hill on the north, but is not visible from the summit.

There is a dip of 1,050 feet between this hill and its neighbour Carn an Fhidleir. Towards this we now turned.

On descending we found this side of Sgarsoch much steeper than the one we had come up by, presenting large beds of stones above and the usual peat below. The latter, which was dry and powdery, greatly facilitating our descent.

The dip gives origin to two burns of the same name—Allt a' Chaorruinn—one flowing north to the Geldie, the other south to the Tarf.

The upper half of the slope of Carn an Fhidleir confronting us was covered with a great snow-field, and when that was reached it was found to be lying at a fairly steep angle, and to be soft on the surface. When on it we were attacked by a fusilade of hail, forerunner of the storm.

On topping the ridge—once again in mist—we found ourselves on a great grassy plateau, sloping towards the north, so we turned southwards and groped our way to the cairn (3,276), a very insignificant affair, marking the highest point of this large, rounded, and uninter-

esting mass. Three counties—Perth, Aberdeen, and Inverness—meet on the summit, which is of the same nature as Sgarsoch—grassy.

The walk along the summit had been done in the brewing of the storm, which now broke forth in all its fury. The air darkened, down came the mist, and on came the snow, hurried along by an angry wind at nearly 60 miles an hour. A summit plateau is not a very comfortable place in such a gale, so we hurried down the south-western slopes, crossed a great wreath of snow occupying the bed of the Glas Feith Bheag in its upper part, then we made straight for Sron Gharbh (2,750), traversed it from end to end, and dropped down into the Tarf valley about a mile higher up than where we crossed in the morning. By this time (12.50) the storm had passed off, and the sun was out, so we had another look at our provisions.

The question now arose, would we have time to do Beinn Dearg? We decided to try it, so set off over Sròn Dubh. When we had crossed this projection the mist lifted and revealed to us Beinn Dearg, rising due west, but separated by another ridge.

Our intention had been to pass by Loch Mhaire, and so skirt this intervening height, but we had kept too far to the south, and so were compelled, though somewhat reluctantly, to give up the idea of this mountain, which would have formed a fitting termination to such a glorious day.

There was nothing for it now but to continue down to Glen Tilt, so we dropped down to the burn—Feith an Lochain—and followed it through the long, narrow, and picturesque Gleann Mhaire to where it empties itself into the Tilt.

In our journey down this glen we had two more heavy showers of snow, and on the steep side of Braigh nan Cragan Breac we noticed a large herd of deer, considerably over one hundred; indeed, throughout the day we must have passed thousands of these animals. The west side of the glen was followed till about a mile from Glen Tilt, when we crossed the stream—stone bridge—and joined a path running along the left bank. By crossing we avoided the dip of the Allt Diridh, and also found that this path led us on to the driving road—private—on the north side of Glen Tilt.

Blair Atholl was reached at 5.30, exactly fifteen hours after we left it. I append a list of our times, not for any record-breaking purpose, but simply that they may serve as a guide to any future visitor.

Blair Atholl to summit of Kite's Cairn	-	3	hours	20	minutes.
Kite's Cairn to Tarf	- - - -	1	"	10	"
Tarf to Summit of An Sgarsoch	- - - -	1	"	30	"
An Sgarsoch to Summit of Carn an Fhidleir	1	"		7	,
Carn an Fhidleir to Tarf	- - - -	1	"	10	"
Tarf to Blair Atholl	- - - -	4	"	20	"

WILLIAM BARCLAY.

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(1)
OF
MICH.

Ascents.

		<u>Feet.</u>
<u>1902</u>		
May 3	Neilston Pad	854.
" 22	Ben Lomond	3192.
July 6	Morrone (Braemar)	2819.
" 13	Do Do	2819.
<u>1903</u>		
April 5	Top above Row/Glenfruin - about	1000
July 7	Cairn Taggart	3430.
" "	Cac Carn (Mhor) } Lochnagar	3768.
" "	Cac Carn Beag } Lochnagar	3786.
" 11	Top between the Baddoch and Loch nan Eun	2742
" 12.	Morrone	2819.
" 13.	Ben Avon	
	Clack a Chuitseach	3605
	" ant Saighdeir	3843
" "	Beinn a Bhuidh	
	North Top	3942
	A. Chioch about	3700
" 19	Carn nan Sgliat	2260