

THE SCOTTISH
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
JOURNAL.

EDITED BY
WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

VOL. II.



EDINBURGH:
THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.

1893.

PRINTED BY THE DARIEN PRESS, EDINBURGH,
AND SOLD BY
DOUGLAS & FOULIS, EDINBURGH ;
JAMES MACLEHOSE & SONS, GLASGOW ;
D. WYLLIE & SONS, ABERDEEN.



Geography
Grant
1-19-28
16080

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Editor's Farewell	I
A Day in the Cuillins A. Ernest Maylard	3
Practice Scrambles Gilbert Thomson	8
Beinn Bhan of Applecross Lionel W. Hinxman	13
Cir Mhor from Glen Sannox W. W. Naismith	17
The Moorfoots William Douglas	25
Andrewhinnie Professor Veitch	41
The Cairngorms H. T. Munro	45
Assynt Hills J. A. Harvie-Brown	51
Cairngorm on 2nd January 1892 William Brown	56
Corrie Vassie Charles Stuart, M.D.	64
Skye and Sgurr nan Gillean in 1865 Alex. Nicolson, LL.D.	99
Ben Starav Francis J. Dewar	109
Deep Glen Lyon Joseph Gibson Stott	113
The Black Shoot of Stob Maol W. R. Lester	117
Snowcraft in Scotland W. W. Naismith	157
On the Heights of some of the Black Cuillins J. Norman Collie	168
Ben Cruachan William Douglas	174
Dun-da-Gu T. Craig Brown	186
Dark Lochnagar H. T. Munro	190
Easter in the Cuillins J. H. Gibson	213
Ben Avon Professor Heddle	225
Ben-y-Gloe on Christmas Day Hely H. Almond	235
Do. do. Supplementary Note H. T. Munro	239
Lochnagar Corrie William Douglas	246
Mountain Photography W. Lamond Howie	249
In Memoriam—Alex. Nicolson Professor Veitch	254
The Pinnacle Route W. W. Naismith	285
Diary of a Week's Ridge Walking J. Rennie	291
Loch Eunach, Sgoran Dubh, and the Western Cairngorms H. T. Munro	296
Stob Coir an Albannaich, and Glas Bheinn Mhor Francis J. Dewar	301
A Walk Across the Fannichs Gilbert Thomson	307
Sgurr Ban and Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair W. Douglas	311
Depth of Snow at Ben Nevis Observatory	317

CLUB PROCEEDINGS.

Third Annual General Meeting and Dinner	82 76.
Loch Awe Meet, January 1892	68
Arran Meet, January 1892	75
Inveroran Meet, April 1892	121
Fourth Annual General Meeting and Dinner	201
Tyndrum Meet, January 1893	259
Lochearnhead Meet, February 1893	265
Loch Awe Meet, April 1893	269
Lant ern Exhibition of Mountaineering Views, February 1893	271

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Glen Dochart Hills, *J. G. Stott*, 31; Ben Lomond, *H. T. Munro*, 31; Spectre of Tarduff, *J. H. Harvie-Brown*, 32; Craigowl, *H. T. Munro*, 33; "Lochnagar," by *A. I. M'Connochie, J. G. Stott*, 35; "Ben a' Buird and Ben Avon," "Ben Rinnes," *J. G. Stott*, 37; Cairns on Mountain Tops, *H. T. Munro*, 38; Photography, 38; Club Meets, *H. T. Munro*, 38; Ben More, Mull, *Horace Walker*, 82; Round Tyndrum, *T. H. Smith*, 82; Ben Lui by the North-East Face, *J. H. Gibson*, 83; Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin, *W. Douglas*, 83; Ben Vane and Ben Ledi, *W. Douglas*, 84; Ascent of Ben Nevis, *Scotsman*, 84; Ben Cruachan's North Face, *W. Douglas*, 85; Scafell Pike, *H. B. Watt*, 88; Ben Lomond, *T. F. S. Campbell*, 89; On the Campsie Fells with Norwegian "Skis," *W. W. Naismith*, 89; Scottish Alpine Botanical Club, *Charles Stuart, M.D.*, 91; Clinometer, or Slope Measurer, *J. Rennie*, 91; Presentation to Mr Stott, 92; Silver Thaw at the Ben Nevis Observatory, 93; "Travels Among the Great Andes," by *E. Whymper, C. T. Dent*, 94; "How to Use the Aneroid," by *E. Whymper, J. Rennie*, 95; "My Home in the Alps," by *Mrs E. Main, J. H. Gibson*, 97; Lochnagar Range, *H. T. Munro*, 133; Sgurr Dearg Pinnacle, Skye, *W. Brunskill*, 135; Cruach Ardran, Stobinian, and Ben More, *W. W. Naismith*, 135; Ben Cruachan, *F. J. Dewar*, 136; Ben Lui, *F. J. Dewar*, 136; Killin Hills, *H. B. Watt*, 137; Galloway and Ayrshire Hills, *H. B. Watt*, 138; A Night on A' Cir, *W. W. Naismith*, 139; The Whangie, *Gilbert Thomson*, 139; Lochnagar, *A. I. M'Connochie*, 140; Crossing the Capel Mounth, *A. I. M'Connochie*, 140; Braeriach, *W. Douglas*, 141; Diary of a Week's Walk from Glenshee, *J. Rennie*, 141; Rock Climbing round Wasdale, 144; Equipment, *Gilbert Thomson*, "Mountaineering," by *C. T. Dent*, 146; "Our Western Hills," *H. B. Watt*, 147; "Place-Names of Scotland," by *James B. Johnstone, H. B. Watt*, 148; Geological Map of Scotland, *H. T. Munro*, 155; Accident on the Whangie, *T. F. S. Campbell*, 205; Notes on the Hills near Glasgow, *H. B. Watt*, 206; What our Members did in the Alps this Season, 209; Bartholomew's Maps, Nos. 19 and 25; *H. T. Munro*, 210; "New Zealand Alpine Journal," *A. E. Maylard*, 211; "Some Rambles round Edinburgh," 212; Beinn Mhor, Cowal, *H. B. Watt*, 273; Ben Avon and Lochnagar on the First Days of the Year, *W. Tough*, 273; Ben Lawers, *W. Brown*, 276; Ben Vorlich, *W. Douglas*, 277; Ben Venue in a Snowstorm, *W. Douglas*, 278; Snowcraft in Scotland, *J. G. Stott*, 279; Ben Cruachan's North Face, *T. F. S. Campbell*, 280; "The Ordnance Survey of Scotland," by *T. Pilkington White, J. Rennie*, 281; Note on Old Scottish Maps, *W. Douglas*, 283; Ben Wyvis, *W. W. Naismith*, 319; Sgurr Ban of Ben Eighe, *W. Douglas*, 319; Leagach, *W. Douglas*, 320; The Coolins, *W. W. Naismith*, 320; Ben Sguliaird, *F. J. Dewar*, 321; Letter from *J. H. Gibson* on Snowcraft in Scotland, 322; Reply by *W. W. Naismith*, 323; "The Cairngorm Journal," *A. E. Maylard*, 324; "Fragments of Earth Lore," 326; Solid Alto-Relievo Model of Scotland, *H. T. Munro*, 327; Saddleback, *D. D. Dewar*, 328.

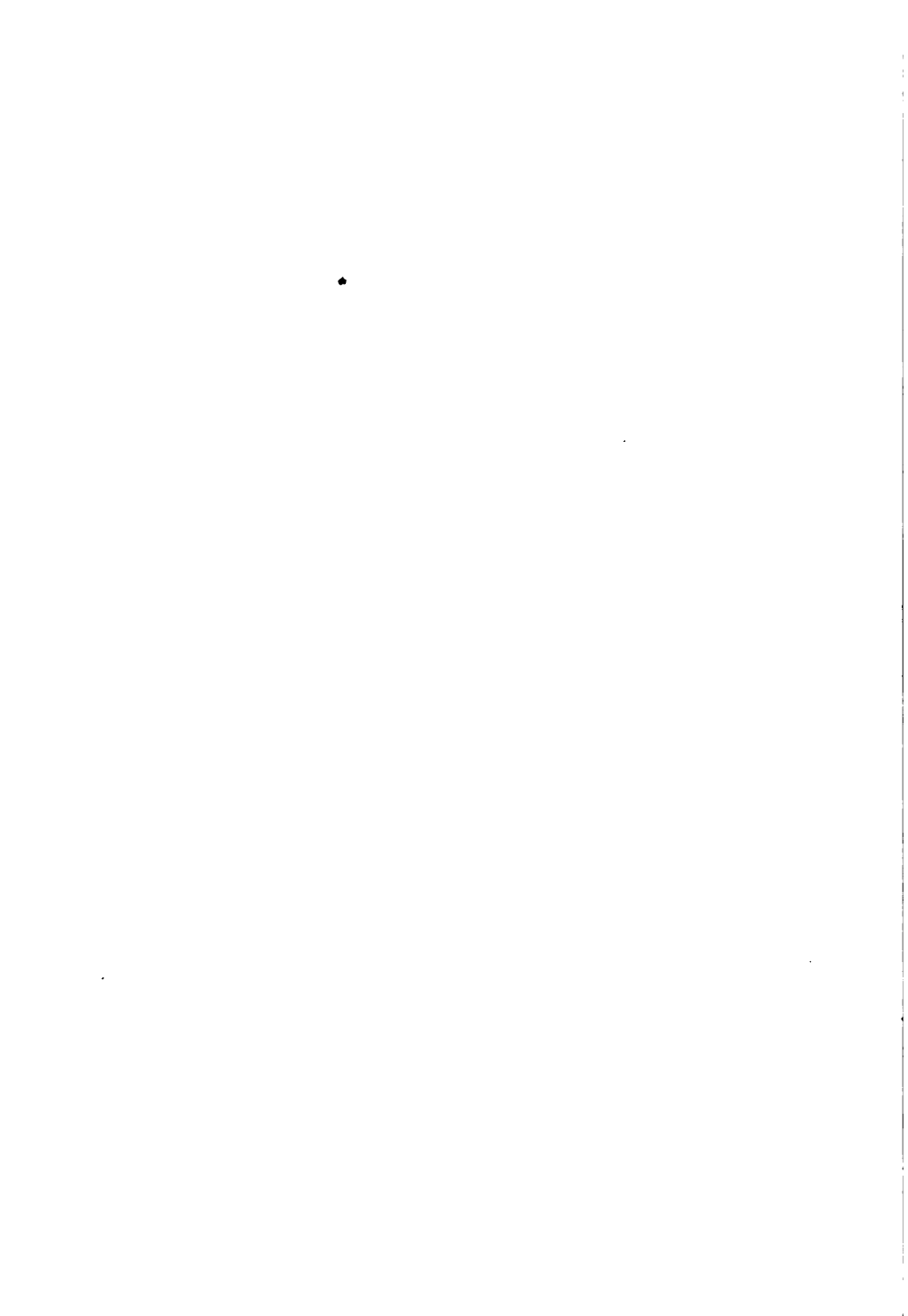
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS.

Bruach na Frithe	<i>face p.</i>	5 ✓
North Face of Cruachan's Taynuilt Peak	"	85 ✓
North-East Face of Stob Ghabhar	"	127
South-East End of the Pinnacle of Sgurr Dearg, Skye	"	134
Corrie Labain, Skye	"	218
Lochnagar Corrie	"	246
The Pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gillean	"	285

ILLUSTRATIONS IN TEXT.

Outline of North Face of Cir Mhor	19
Clinometer and Measuring Snow Gully	92
Icicles on Ben Doireann	131
The Whangie	139
View of Cruachan from Ben Eunaich	174
Horse Shoe of Cruachan	176
The Twin Peaks from Drochaid Ghlas	177
View from Beinn-a-Bhuiridh	179
View from the North	180
"Oh! my big hob-nailers"	204
Bhasteir and Sgurr nan Gillean	214
Diagram of Coire na Creiche	216
North-East face of Ben Lui	260
The Tooth of Sgurr nan Gillean	289



Scottish Mountaineering Club.

Honorary President.

THE MARQUIS OF BREADALBANE.

President.

Professor JOHN VEITCH, LL.D.

Vice-Presidents.

Professor G. G. RAMSAY, LL.D., *A.C.*

J. PARKER SMITH, Esq., M.P.

Honorary Treasurer.

W. W. NAISMITH, Esq., C.A., *A.C.*

175 West George Street, Glasgow.

Honorary Secretary.

A. ERNEST MAYLARD, Esq., B.S., M.B.,

10 Blythswood Square, Glasgow.

Honorary Librarian.

GILBERT THOMSON, Esq., M.A., C.E.,

75 Bath Street, Glasgow.

Honorary Editor.

WILLIAM DOUGLAS, Esq.,

10 Castle Street, Edinburgh.

Members of Committee.

HUGH T. MUNRO, Esq.,
F.R.G.S., *A.C.*

Rev. JOHN STEEL

Rev. COLIN CAMPBELL, D.D.

W. R. LESTER, Esq., *A.C.*

ROBERT A. ROBERTSON, Esq.,
A.C.

ALEX. I. M'CONNOCHIE, Esq.

T. FRASER S. CAMPBELL, Esq.

FRANCIS J. DEWAR, Esq.

Bankers.

THE UNION BANK OF SCOTLAND LIMITED.

EXTRACTS FROM RULES.



OBJECTS OF THE CLUB.

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

PROPRIETARY AND SPORTING RIGHTS.

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

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

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

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP.

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

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

the proposer and seconder, shall be posted in the Club-room upon a card, a fortnight before the day of ballot, and members who wish to support the candidature may inscribe their names thereon.

[Members of the Alpine Club, as also others who have made ascents or supplied valuable contributions, as indicated above, elsewhere than in Scotland, will be *ipso facto* eligible for election.]

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

FEEs.

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

THE CLUB-ROOM.

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

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

THE JOURNAL,

Published three times a year.

January 1890.—CONTENTS—The President's Address, Prof. G. G. Ramsay; The Cairngorms in Winter, A. I. M'Connochie; Winter Ascents, H. T. Munro; Buchaille Etive, J. G. Stott; Glen Sannox Hills, T. F. S. Campbell; &c. &c.

This number has been reprinted, and is for sale at 2s. 6d.

May 1890.—CONTENTS—Suilven, L. W. Hinxman; Three Days among the Cuchullins, W. W. Naismith; The Arrochar Mountains, Gilbert Thomson; Ben Alder, J. G. Stott; The Mountain Scenery of the N.W. Highlands, H. M. Cadell; &c. &c.

A few copies are for sale at 1s.

September 1890.—CONTENTS—Bidean and the Buchailles, Gilbert Thomson; Winter Ascents, No. 2, H. T. Munro; The Cairngorms in Summer, Walter A. Smith; Adventure on Sgor-na-h-Ullaidh, C. B. Phillip; The Braes of Balquhider, F. J. Dewar; Ben Lomond in 1822, Howitt; &c. &c.

A few copies are for sale at 1s.

January 1891.—CONTENTS—Ben Alder, Prof. Ramsay; Sgurr Alaisdair, Chas. Pilkington; The Blackmount, J. Coats, M.D.; The Ben More Trio, J. G. Stott; Ben Ghlas and Ben Lawers, J. M. Macharg; Highlands of Galloway, C. B. Phillip; Pass of Corryarrick, H. B. Watt; &c. &c.

A few copies are for sale at 1s.

May 1891.—CONTENTS—Ben Eighe and the Torridon Hills, L. W. Hinxman; Braeriach and Cairn Toul, A. I. M'Connochie; Ben Screel, W. Douglas; Ben Lui, T. F. S. Campbell; Ben Nevis, W. W. Naismith; Winter Ascents, A. E. Maylard; &c. &c.

A few copies are for sale at 1s.

September 1891.—CONTENTS—Through the Mountains, Walter A. Smith; Winter Ascents, No. 3, H. T. Munro; Knoydart, C. B. Phillip; The Killin Hills, J. G. Stott; Tables giving all the Scottish Mountains exceeding 3,000 feet in height, H. T. Munro; &c. &c.

A few copies are for sale at 1s.

January 1892.—CONTENTS—The Cuchullins, A. E. Maylard; Practice Scrambles, Gilbert Thomson; Bein Bhan of Applecross, L. W. Hinxman; Cir Mhor from Glen Sannox, W. W. Naismith; The Moorfoots, W. Douglas; &c. &c.

A few copies are for sale at 1s.

These can be purchased from DOUGLAS & FOULIS, Edinburgh; JAS. MACLEHOSE & SONS, Glasgow; and D. WYLLIE & SON, Aberdeen.

THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

VOL. II.

JANUARY 1892.

No. 1.

INTRODUCTORY AND VALEDICTORY.

A PREFACE to our second volume might well be deemed unnecessary, but for the fact that the *Journal* is henceforth to come out under altered conditions. Instead of appearing tri-annually, it is now to be published twice a year.

It is not too much to say that our little periodical has more than fulfilled the most sanguine anticipations of its promoters. It has contained much valuable information—communicated in many instances in papers of high literary excellence—and it has increased the knowledge and stimulated the love of the Scottish hills throughout a much wider circle than is represented by the Club membership. Thoroughly alive to this, the Committee believe that a bi-annual issue will still further increase its efficiency, by permitting the amount that is now spent on the production of three numbers to be devoted to two. The publication of maps and diagrams—hitherto much restricted for financial reasons—will thereby be made possible; and a want will be met that grows more and more clamant.

The second change is of a personal nature. Among the many farewells on my approaching departure for New Zealand, few move me more deeply than saying good-bye to the Club and the *Journal*. My editorship has been a task of love. Whatever of the nature of labour has entered into it has been more than paid for by the friendships it has brought me. That the phrasing of the old Gaelic toast, "The Bens, the Glens, and the *good fellows*," is wise

indeed, I can bear witness to ; for my work as Editor of a publication concerning itself altogether with the Bens and Glens has given me ample opportunity of judging of their votaries ; and I would claim for my successor in my honourable post the kindness and consideration I have myself invariably received.

I have no fear for the *Journal*. It will prosper, it will improve ; and, far from "the Bens and the Glens," I shall hungrily peruse in each number the record of the doings of my friends the "good fellows" ; for although

" Lands may be fair ayont the sea,
Yet Hieland hills and lochs for me."

J. G. S.

A DAY IN THE CUCHULLINS.

(*From Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh by the ridge to Sgurr-nan-Gillean.*)

BY A. ERNEST MAYLARD, B.S., M.B., Lond.

PRIOR to Mr Pilkington's paper in the *Alpine Club Journal* of 1889, comparatively little was known of the Cuchullins as a practicable field for climbers. Since that publication, however, many have been attracted thither; and it is not too much to say that the comfortable little Inn at Sligachan, with its genial and hospitable host, is rapidly becoming a favourite resort for all true lovers of rock climbing.

I have no intention in this short article of doing more than to describe a day which, I venture to think, is for many reasons worthy of record. In the first place, it will serve to keep alive and increase the interest which attaches to rambles in these grand black rocky mountains; and, secondly, it may give some idea of what it is possible to accomplish in a reasonably good day's outing. Two papers have already appeared in our journal,* and a third will far from exhaust all that may be written about these rugged tops.

My visit to Sligachan extended from the 1st to the 15th August 1891, and of these fourteen days four only were really fine. From all I could learn August is not a good month for a visit; June appears to be the driest month, but rain in Skye, as is proverbially known, may be expected pretty abundantly at all seasons of the year.

I have headed my paper with the title, "From Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh by the ridge to Sgurr-nan-Gillean," but the whole interest of the day's climb centres upon the passage of the "ridge." Neither Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh nor Sgurr-nan-Gillean are anything special of themselves to ascend, but to walk from the top of one to the top of the other is a totally different matter. To look at Mr Charles Pilkington's

* "Three Days among the Cuchullins," by W. W. Naismith, May 1890, No. 2; "Sgurr Alasdair," by Charles Pilkington, January 1891, No. 4.

admirable map, one might justly conclude that such a walk was of easy accomplishment, for there is little upon it to indicate the real ruggedness of the road. The 6-inch Ordnance Survey, however, gives a much more vivid picture of the difficulties to be met with, and shows at a glance that this ridge is beset with innumerable obstacles in the shape of broken pinnacles and deep clefts.

It was on the 13th August, at 10 A.M., that we left our quarters at Sligachan Inn. I say *we*, for I was accompanied by two friends, Dr Norman Collie, of London, and Mr Wickham King, of Stourbridge, both of whom I hope by the time this paper appears in the *Journal* will be members of the Club. The day promised well; and although the mists still hung somewhat densely over the hills, we felt there was every chance of their lifting later.

Our route at first was by the track which leads to Glen Brittle. In a little under an hour we reached the top of Bealach-a'-Mhaim, and then by an easy sloping descent dipped into Coire-na-creiche. From this corrie we entered that of Tairneilear, and then ascended over rock and scree to the centre of the ridge which leads westerly to Sgurr Thuilm and easterly to Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh. About two hours and a half from our start brought us to the top of the southernmost of the four pinnacles which go to form Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh. The ascents and descents of these four pinnacles give about 500 feet of good rock climbing. After descending from the last, and commencing an ascent of the first of the three pinnacles which go to form Bidein-druim-nan-Ramh, the mist lifted a little to the south-east, and gave us a view of Loch Coruisk. As seen from here it is disappointing, and bears no comparison with its grand wild aspect when viewed from the south-eastern extremity. The loch appears in the distance with a long strip of barren scree and rock leading to it, and lacks that gorgeous background of black mountain which lends it all its charm, and renders it, when seen from the foot of Drumhain, one of the wildest, most weird, and grandest lochs in Scotland.

An ascent of between two and three hundred feet brought us to the top of the first pinnacle of Bidein-druim-nan-Ramh. In scaling these pinnacles the mist again





From a Photograph by Cameron Swan.

BRUACH NA FRITHE (PEAK OF THE FOREST).

In the Cuchullins, Isle of Skye, 22nd April 1889.

enveloped us, and it was not without some little care that we did not mistake the S.E. ridge of Druim-nan-Ramh for the N.E. one leading to Bruach-na-Frithe. I may parenthetically remark here that the compass is frequently most unreliable. We found many of the rocks so highly magnetic that the needle was strongly deflected from its true N. and S.

After reaching the lowest dip between the last pinnacle of Bidein-druim-nan-Ramh and Bruach-na-Frithe, we commenced the ascent of the somewhat long and rugged ridge leading to the top of the latter—a gradual rise of a little over 600 feet. In this dip there is an unnamed peak, which has resting upon it a huge mass of rock. So unstable does this appear that it seems impossible it could maintain its position for another year. From the top of Bruach-na-Frithe we descended some 500 feet towards Lota Corrie. Our object in so doing was to enable us to make the ascent of the Bhashtier Tooth. Dr Collie, with the guide, John Mackenzie, had spent about five hours one afternoon seeking some accessible route to this hitherto unconquered pinnacle. He at last accomplished it by making a considerable descent into Lota Corrie, and then ascending a steep gully on the S.E. side. This previous accomplishment of Dr Collie's enabled us without delay to reach the top of the "Tooth," and to find there the small "stone man" which he had built on his first ascent. We then slightly descended, and rose again up over Bhashtier to descend once again to the Bealach-a'-Bhashtier, whence we started for the final ascent of Sgurr-nan-Gillean. Our route lay in the course of the "Tooth" of Sgurr-nan-Gillean, which may be justly said to possess more than one "mauvais pas" in its transit. The ascent is not more than about 400 feet, and this particular approach is known as the western ridge. Of this ridge Mr Pilkington writes, "The western ridge is broken into all kinds of graceful pinnacles, and affords a most interesting climb." We were doing it at the end of an already long day, and so perhaps lost much of the interest we should certainly have attached to it had it lain in our course earlier. We reached the top at 6.30, to find the mists lifting all around us, and unfolding to us both far and near the most beautiful effects of an evening sun. Needless to

say we lingered here, enjoying our rest in the calm of the evening, and equally enjoying the feast of scenery which delighted our eyes. After half-an-hour's sojourn we started, descended by the ridge almost to Bealach-a'-Bhastier, and thence by a chimney,* and rapidly over rock and scree into Bhastier Corrie. By about 8.45 we had reached the Inn, having had ten hours and three-quarters' work, with little less than 6,000 feet of climbing. Of this distance 4,000 feet was rock work, and embraced something of all sorts. We carried a rope, which was needed once, and we found ourselves in not a few places where a steady head as much as a strong hold was requisite.

Although I have indicated that this expedition may serve to show what it is possible to accomplish in one day in the Cuchullins, I must say that without a previous knowledge of the "ridge" such an accomplishment would be impossible. No man, perhaps, knows the Cuchullins better than Dr Norman Collie, and it was solely due to his unflinching guidance that we were enabled to continue almost without interruption from our point of attack to our subsequent final descent. Dr Collie has for some two or three years been measuring the various heights of the many pinnacles on this broken ridge, and as but few are to be found on the Ordnance Survey maps of either 6-inch or the 1-inch, it is much to be hoped our journal may be the medium for the circulation of this instructive information.

Climbing in the Cuchullins is not difficult, although in many places unquestionably dangerous. The question of difficulty, however, is one of degree, for there are places enough where either ascent or descent is impossible. The weather-worn surface of the gabbro gives a splendid foot- and hand-hold, but is merciless upon one's shoe-leather and garments, not to mention the tips of one's fingers. I should shock our worthy editor did I attempt even in the most euphemistical language to graphically depict the pitiable spectacle one of us presented at our day's end. To speak of "breech-splitting strides," is only to modestly suggest a "line" in the direction of cleavage; but when it is

* This chimney is situated just to the east of the "Tooth," and renders the descent a little easier than when made directly from the "Tooth."

remembered that much of one's sure progress is, for obvious mechanical reasons, upon as broad a surface as possible, the nature of the lesion likely to ensue is not difficult to conjecture. I regret to say that not one of us left the Cuchullins without irreparable damage to our knickerbockers ; and possibly this reference to the matter may suggest to future rambles in these ruinous regions a more suitable material for this otherwise most convenient and indispensable garb.

PRACTICE SCRAMBLES.

BY GILBERT THOMSON.

THERE may be some members of the Club who are in the happy position of getting away for a climb as often as they have a mind to, and who have no need to consider carefully how to make the most of their chances. But there are doubtless more who find that their desire for climbing and their opportunities for doing so are in a sort of inverse ratio, and that often a most desirable expedition—even a Club meet sometimes—has to be given up for want of the necessary time. Mountaineering in some respects compares unfavourably with other amusements. The enthusiastic cyclist does not require much preparation before mounting his machine, and finds a road to ride on (good or bad) at his very door; the lover of football can indulge his desire for yelling over the progress of a match without much difficulty; while the loafer pure and simple has his amusement always at hand. But the climber, even with a day to spend, has some difficulty in finding pastures new; and with half a day, he may have trouble to find any at all. As a natural consequence, when he does get off for a few days or weeks, and hurries to his beloved rocks or snow, he finds himself thoroughly “rusty”; and wind, muscle, and nerve have all to be got into order before anything tough is tackled; or, still more disgusting, when on an odd day stolen from business he sets his heart on making a good “bag” of hills, he finds himself, before the day is nearly done, in a condition of something like collapse.

The writer and his trusty ally Naismith, pondering over these sad facts, came to the conclusion that if large game could not be had, there was at least small game to be got at, and that half a loaf was better than no bread. Some Saturday afternoons and summer evenings (or mornings, sometimes) might be well spent, not in roaming over roads or even moorland, but in hunting up dainty bits of rock climbing and the like where there was sufficient difficulty to keep the faculties up to the mark. A precipice 20 feet high does not sound very serious, but there may be more

fun and real climbing in getting up or down such a place than there is in ascending the 4,406 feet of Ben Nevis.

Keeping our eyes open, and occasionally making a special exploration, we have found many places where good scrambling can be done, these varying from the prosaic quarry face to some of our most romantic glens. A quarry face is by no means bad fun, if one can either find a place free from onlookers, or can turn a deaf ear to their somewhat personal remarks about the sundry coppers missing from the shilling, or the apiary concealed in the headgear. Still, surroundings do count for something, and one might easily find surroundings more in keeping with a climb than steam cranes, tramway rails, and "jumpers"; so, although in default of anything better a quarry need not be despised, a natural rock face is certainly to be preferred to an artificial one. Nor is a good rock face generally ill to find. The beautiful glens with which the lowlands are intersected are rough and rocky as well as beautiful; on our rough hillsides the rock crops out with a frequency more pleasing to the climber than to the agriculturist, and our coast-line seldom runs far without some bold line of cliffs. Take Cartland Crags as an example of the glens. Let any one attempt to go through the gorge alongside the stream,—wading being barred,—and he will have no lack of opportunities to test the accuracy of his springing, his skill in discriminating between fixed and shaky, and the grip of his hand and foot. Should he wish to get out of the gorge before reaching the other end, he can choose between precipitous cliffs, stone shoots, and vegetation-clad slopes of very moderate tenacity. Spectators there will probably be none, unless possibly a fisher may be encountered, or, in a warm evening, a few boys enjoying a "dook" in one of the pools. A few miles up the stream the Devil's Den is equally impressive. On the Avon, again, there are various places with cliffs above and steep scaurs below, the latter forming not a bad imitation of snow slopes, as the crust is sometimes hard enough to make step-cutting (with a geological hammer) a convenient means of progression. Carelessness in cutting or using the steps will probably lead to the discovery that the scaur also resembles a launching way with the water very

convenient. It is needless to enumerate such places in any detail, as they are to be found in all directions, Edinburgh being particularly well off in Arthur Seat, Salisbury Crags, and Blackford ; while Glasgow has the above-mentioned glens readily accessible, together with various places such as the broken ground of the Campsie and Kilpatrick hills. Among the latter is one of the latest discoveries we have made, and it may perhaps deserve a more minute description. Readers of MacDonald's "Rambles Round Glasgow" will remember his account of "The Whangie," but it is comparatively unknown even among those who know it well by name. In fact, our preliminary inquiries failed to find any one who knew it, though we have since met several, and we had to find it from MacDonald's description. This was easy enough. Passing through "the gate of the Highlands"—the gateposts being Dumgoyn on the one side and Auchineden Hill on the other—we circled round the latter to its summit. There are two apparent tops, and from the higher and more southerly of the two (1,171 feet) we saw a spur of the hill to the westward. We had looked in vain so far, but on going round this spur we found our goal on the western face. MacDonald's description is not underdone, and striking as the Whangie no doubt is, any one accustomed to wild natural scenery would probably call the language a little strong, although a telling piece of writing. From the precipitous edge of the hill a slice has been shaved off, and this slice, instead of falling in ruin, stands out as a thin wall of rock. It is curious to observe how faithfully the projections on one side of the cleft fit the recesses on the other ; and one might fancy that if force sufficient could be applied, the wall might be shoved back to its original position, and leave scarcely a perceptible crack. As given by MacDonald, the width of the "chasm" varies from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 feet, while the length is 346 feet, and its medium depth 40. After exploring the various features of this extraordinary place, which is said at one time to have formed a refuge for some of Prince Charlie's adherents, our attention turned to the top of the thin wall. Two great breaks divide it into three parts, and we proceeded to make our way along each of them. The northern one was the only

one that presented any difficulty, but its ridge was gained by one climbing on the shoulders of the other, scrambling up to a firm place, and then hauling his companion after him at the end of the rope which we had fortunately brought. On reaching the ridge we got astride of it, and hitched ourselves up to the highest point, but for two or three yards farther on the edge looked so precarious that we abandoned the attempt and retreated, as we thought it might break away under our weight. After finishing the other ridges another inspection was made, with the result that we climbed up again; and although we could not descend from the south end of the thin wall (a sheer drop without any hold whatever), we at least got to its extreme point, and returned the way we came. The highest point of all is just a little broader, and covered with thick grass, on which we enjoyed a lounge in the sun for a few minutes. Having completed our exploration of the wall, going up and down by several "variations," we scrambled up the face of the hill itself by a tolerably steep bit, and made our way to Duncomb Hill (1,313 feet), and got up the rocky fringe of its steepest face without difficulty. The view even from such little hills was wonderfully extensive and fine. At one time and another during the afternoon we picked out Ben Ledi, Ben Venue, Ben Voirlich (Dumbartonshire), Ben Ime, The Cobbler, all the nearer hills round Loch Lomond, the Arran hills peeping over the intervening ridges, Ailsa Craig, Merrick, and Tinto; while the foreground of moorland and loch, basking in the summer sun, made an attractive scene. Going on to Fynloch Hill, the same as Duncomb in height,—these being the highest of the Kilpatricks,—we made our way over the Slacks (1,199 feet), and down through Duntocher to Kilbowie. Thence we got train to Glasgow, and although we travelled by the much-maligned North British Railway, we reached Queen Street only three-quarters of an hour late.

There is no doubt a pleasure in getting up our higher hills such as the small ones do not afford, but it must not be forgotten on the other hand that views of extreme beauty, an acquaintance with many picturesque bits of scenery, and delightful exercise, may be readily had without

Voirlich
Ben Ime

going far afield; and that for those of us—presumably a large proportion of our membership—who look upon a little rough scrambling as a great attraction, that too can be found in the Lowlands in sufficient extent and variety to brace the muscles and try the skill of the mountaineer.

[Since the visit above described, the Whangie has, on at least two occasions, been visited by Club members. The first of these visits was by Fraser Campbell, Lester, and Naismith, who found a variety of “sporting variations”; while the other was by a larger party, organised at the Club dinner, and consisting of Mr Horace Walker, President of the Alpine Club; Professors Ramsay, Veitch; Messrs Maylard, Munro, Naismith, W. A. Ramsay, and Gilbert Thomson, all members of the Club, along with Mr Sutton, a visitor. Leaving Queen Street at 10.35 on the day after the dinner, Blanefield was reached shortly before 12 (another feather in the cap of the N.B.R.), and the route was taken as above described. The whole hill and moor was covered with a coating of soft snow, and the rocks themselves presented a very wintry appearance, which the sense of touch fully confirmed. The crevices were filled with snow and ice, many parts were festooned with icicles, and the difficulty of scrambling was considerably increased. An hour or two, however, was very enjoyably spent in various pieces of fancy climbing, the concluding part being done to the accompaniment of a fierce snowstorm, which pelted us well as we made our way back over the moor.—G. T.]

BEINN BHAN OF APPLECROSS.

BY LIONEL W. HINXMAN.

"It has every attribute of hell except its warmth," was the verdict passed on Beinn Bhan by one seeing it for the first time on a wild day of wind and rain in early spring. And savage grandeur is indeed the characteristic of the long line of precipice and corrie that forms the eastern face of the mountain, and frowns above the soft green slopes and hanging birchwoods of Glen Kishorn.

It was a glorious July morning when I left Shildaig by the mail-gig at 7 A.M., with the intention of surveying the corries, and, if possible, getting to the top of the central ridge of Beinn Bhan.

The sun, even at that early hour, was already powerful; the "clegs" were rampant, and everything promised an exceptionally fine, hot day. Leaving the "machine" and the road at the Allt Coultrie, I struck across the lower slopes of Beinn a' Chait, and, crossing the deep gorge of the Allt Meall na Gobhar, soon reached Allt Lochan na Ganeimh, a large burn flowing out of a troutful loch, and fed by the numerous streams that fall from the eastern corries of Beinn Bhan. Following the course of the largest of these, a climb of 700 feet brought me to the shores of Loch Coire na Poite, at the mouth of the corrie of that name.

The scene from the shore of this lonely loch is very impressive. On either hand two great spurs run out at right angles to the mountain face. These terminate in huge rounded masses of rock, known as a' Chioch and a' Phoit, whose perpendicular sides and horizontal lines of stratification—like courses of Cyclopæan masonry—suggest the idea of Titanic castles, habitations for the giants of whom the legend survives in the name of the next corrie to the north—Coire nan Fheamhair (the giants' corrie). Some little way above the loch a rock terrace, over which the burn tumbles in a series of cascades, connects the two spurs, and forms the lip of the inner corrie on whose ice-worn floor lie two little Alpine tarns

of green water, crystal-clear. Immediately behind the highest of these rises the mountain wall,—1,200 feet of purple sandstone,—broken here and there by narrow green ledges, and seamed with dark rifts, out of which pour streams of stony *débris*. The talus slopes are carpeted with a luxuriant growth of parsley-fern, to which succeeds a zone of delicate-fronded oak-fern; while the lower ledges, dark with dripping moisture, are lit up by the bright blossoms of the globe-flower and the sea-green fleshy leaves of the rose-root.

My work in the corrie finished, I turned to consider the best way to the top. The wall in front was quite impossible. The grassy ridge running out to a' Phoit on the right was easy enough, but from it the cliff rose sheer to the mountain top. Evidently a' Chioch, on the left, was the only chance. I could at least gain the ridge, and chance that the *arête* would "go." A rough scramble over the talus slope, and up the side of a stone shoot hardly steep enough to be called a *couloir*, soon brought me to the narrow *col*, almost a knife edge, that joins a' Chioch to the main ridge, and separates Coire a' Phoit from Coire a' Fheola on the south.

Intent on the climb, it was not until I reached this point that I noticed the changed aspect of the day. The sunshine was gone; dense black clouds were rolling up from the sea; and the closeness of the air, and the heavy drops that were already falling, made me unpleasantly aware that a thunderstorm was fast coming up. It now became important to get to the top while I could still see the way; and, turning to the rocky *arête* that leads from the col to the highest point of the mountain, I lost no time in beginning to ascend. This *arête* is very steep. The general angle of slope, taken from a distance by clinometer, was found to be at least 60°, while several bits are perpendicular, and had to be negotiated with the aid of friendly cracks and projections in the rock.

While at about the most difficult bit of the climb, the storm broke, almost overhead, and it seemed prudent to lie low till the worst of it had passed; so, crawling along a narrow ledge to a place where the shelf above projected

sufficiently to keep off some of the rain, I lay curled up against the rock, watching the white sheet of rain rushing down past me for a thousand feet into the corrie below. The flashes were unpleasantly near ; but the reverberations of the thunder, as the echoes flapped from cliff to cliff, and the intense purple gloom in the corries, where the mist was beginning to form in ragged wreaths about the crags, were grand and impressive enough to make one feel that the experience of a thunderstorm among the mountains was well worth a certain amount of risk and discomfort.

The worst of the storm being over, I found I could only get out of my present position by crawling cautiously backwards, the ledge below being too narrow, and that above too low, to admit of my turning round or standing up. The mist was now covering the highest part of the *arête*, and what lay before me was an unknown quantity,—there might be an impassable bit. Anyhow I felt I must go on, and hope for the best, for it was very doubtful if I could get down again by the way I had come up. However, after a nasty bit or two, the slope eased off, and I was soon standing on the main ridge close to the highest point of the mountain (2,936 feet).

The top of Beinn Bhan is an extensive plateau, covered with grass and weathered slabs of sandstone, and sloping away from the crest westwards to the sea. The clouds were so thickly down that little could be seen beyond fifty yards' distance, so, taking a hasty glance at the map—now rapidly being reduced to a pulp,—I steered a compass course along the ridge, giving the precipices as wide a berth as possible.

At the head of the Giants' Corrie I came upon two shepherds, from Applecross, sitting waiting for the mist to clear. They were up gathering sheep, had little English, and seemed much surprised at seeing any one on the hill on such a day.

The clouds now lifted a little, enabling me to see where I was ; but ominous grumblings all round warned me that it would be well to get off the mountain before the storm—which was evidently circling the hills—came round again. In the next corrie to the north I found a fairly easy way

down by a long scree slope, and, following the course of the corrie burn to the head of Loch Lundie, crossed Beinn a' Chait, and reached Shildaig just as the second edition of the storm came up.

Of course I saw nothing from the top. The view must, however, be particularly fine, as Beinn Bhann stands farther out to the westward than any hill on the mainland north of the Sound of Sleat.

CIR MHOR FROM GLEN SANNOX.

BY W. W. NAISMITH.

THE circuit of Glen Sannox, by Messrs Campbell and Lester, as described in an interesting paper (*Journal*, vol. i., p. 31), fired at least two of their fellow-clubmen with the ambition to follow their example.

On the last day of September, accordingly, Mr Gilbert Thomson and the writer arrived at the snug hotel at Corrie, after crossing from Ardrossan in a southerly gale, which caused our steamer, the "Marchioness of Lorne," to ship a good deal of water. During the evening rain fell in torrents. We wanted a good sleep in preparation for a hard day's work, and retired early, one of us being provided by our hostess with an alarm-clock, warranted to "go off" at 3.45 A.M.

Tyndall remarks, in connection with his historic ascent of the Weisshorn, that the goddess of sleep flies most shyly when most intensely wooed; and all climbers have doubtless proved the truth of this for themselves, and wished they were Swiss guides with no nervous systems to speak of. On such occasions all sorts of expedients are tried in the hope of inducing slumber,—such as the time-honoured dodge of counting sheep passing through a hole in a wall; or, again, endeavouring strenuously to think of nothing at all. Those plans being unsuccessful, you try to delude yourself with the idea that you are not going to climb to-morrow, because the weather will likely put climbing out of the question, and therefore you may as well take your usual night's sleep, it being of no consequence whether you awake early or not! To give this device a chance of success, it is essential to keep the eyes tightly closed; for if you unwittingly catch a glimpse of a stray moonbeam, or a bit of starlit sky, the fraud is at once detected, with the result that a rush of hopes and fears for the success of the coming expedition, mixed up with memories of past adventure on snow and rock, effectually banish sleep for hours to come. One grand consolation is, that a sleepless night does not appear to make the slightest difference in one's ability to stand fatigue on the following day.

On the present occasion, the efforts of the custodian of the clock to fall asleep were more than ordinarily abortive ; and thus it happened that, instead of its wakening him, he was up waiting for the alarm to show symptoms of going off, when it was pounced on and smothered, so as not to arouse the household.

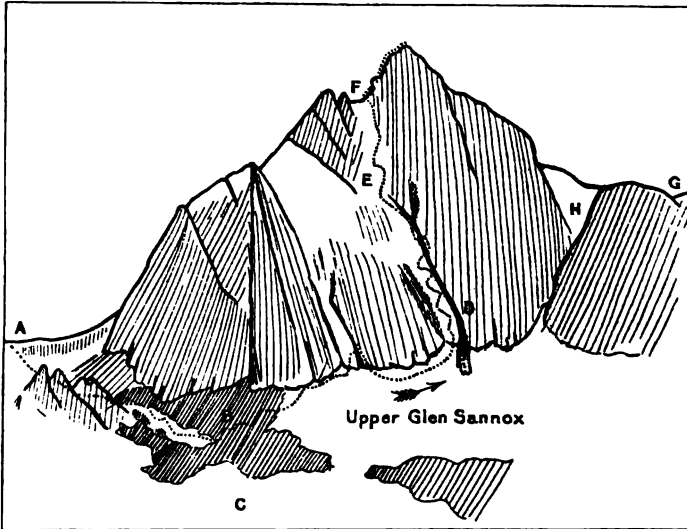
We set off at 4.45. The morning was fine and starry, but everything was soaking after the recent rain, and the hill-tops were hidden in mist. Taking the road to Glen Sannox, we soon passed the old Barytes Mill, and, keeping the south side of the burn for another half-mile through wet bog, reached the base of the northern ridge of Cioch-na-h'oighe at 5.30, in fast disappearing darkness. We stuck to the ridge all the way to the top, which was attained at 6.20. The ridge is steep—quite 45°—and covered with long heather, with occasional outcrops of granite. Its ascent is easy ; but a man descending, and unable to see ahead, might readily get into difficulties among smooth rocks on either side.

Speaking generally, we followed the crest of the main ridge—except at one place to be presently referred to—from Cioch-na-h'oighe right round Glen Sannox to Suidhe Feargus. Since our route almost coincided with that of our two friends, though in the reverse direction, I shall pass rapidly over the greater part of the distance covered.

We topped Malloch Buie at 7.25, the North Top of Goat-fell at 7.40, and descended to the Saddle at 7.50. From that point we might have ascended Cir Mhor by the usual (Saddle) route in little over half-an-hour, but we had a more interesting scramble in view.

Cir Mhor (2,618 feet) is in more ways than one the finest of all the Arran peaks. From its peculiar position in the centre of the granitic region, it commands very striking views of the surrounding glens and ridges ; while, from a climber's standpoint, it is *facile princeps* among the peaks. The ground plan of the mountain is an irregular triangle, with its sides facing N., W., and S.E. respectively, the S.E. side being longer than either of the others. To the west the hill slopes comparatively gently towards Glen Iorsa ; the south-east face is more or less craggy, especially its upper

half; but the northern face is the steepest of the three, being chiefly naked rock, too precipitous to support much vegetation. This side of Cir Mhor terminates towards the west in the ridge that sweeps round to Caisteal Abhail, and at its eastern angle the mountain projects into Glen Sannox, in the shape of a mighty headland a thousand feet in height, and only a few degrees short of the perpendicular.



CIR MHOR.

Outline of Northern Face (from near Caim-na-Cailliach).*

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| A—The Saddle. | F—Col. |
| B—"The Slabs." | G—Ridge joining CirMhor to Caisteal Abhail. |
| C—Grass Slopes. | H—Pass leading to Glen Iorsa. |
| D—Stone Shoot. | |
| E—Our Cairn. | |

The cliffs go sheer down some distance below the level of the Saddle, and then the bare rock continues to shelve smoothly at a more moderate inclination for a few hundreds of feet farther, and below that again are some slopes of bright green grass, and lastly, the Sannox Burn. The smoothly shelving rocks, which we named the "Slabs," appear to belong to the same geological formation that

* The above outline was sketched very rapidly, and afterwards finished from memory, so that it may not be quite accurate in some details. The shaded portions represent for the most part naked rock.

crosses Glen Sannox from the base of Caisteal Abhail to the end of the Saddle, and divides the Upper from the Lower Glen. Down this rocky barrier, composed of rounded bosses of light-coloured granite, the Sannox Burn tumbles in a picturesque cascade.

We had carefully surveyed Cir Mhor when following the ridge of Malloch Buie, and had decided to aim at rounding the "headland" as high up as possible, and to ascend the peak at the first feasible place on the other side.

It was absolutely necessary to descend *some* distance below the Saddle, so, skirting the base of the cliffs on our left, we crossed three gullies obliquely, and struck the first of the Slabs. There the rocks themselves were impracticable, but we found some heathery ledges running into them that promised to take us well across. We were encouraged to try the ledges by observing the marks of deer, and we concluded that we could go wherever a stag could, to say nothing of many places where he could not!

For some distance we had been moving horizontally when we came to a spot, after getting round a projecting knob, where we had to decide whether to ascend obliquely across the Slabs, or to descend ignominiously to the grass slopes before mentioned. The rocks in front were by no means steep, the general angle 40° (measured). They looked simple enough, but we had some experience of similar granite ledges elsewhere, and were pretty sure the passage of the Slabs would be no child's play. The ledges dipped the wrong way, namely, to the north. Water trickled down the slope and covered the rocks in places with a black slime that was very slippery. In the event of a fall a man would have slid downwards a couple of hundred feet, but there was a *possibility* of his escaping serious injury. Supposing, instead of a slope there had been a precipice beneath, so much does the imagination influence the judgment that it is not unlikely we might have pronounced the Slabs impossible.

We put on the rope, and Thomson ran straight up the first bit, as nimbly as the proverbial lamplighter, to a sort of landing-place above a flat block resting insecurely on the slope. For the second stage, after trying and deciding

against a route across wet rocks to the left, we traversed horizontally a smooth slab by supporting our weight chiefly on the palms of our hands planted on the most level bits. Next we were confronted by an excessively smooth rock, possessing neither projections nor crevices of any kind, and in such a position that we could give each other no assistance.

One of the most obvious mountaineering maxims is, I imagine, not to take an irrevocable step—not to ascend any place that one cannot descend again. We could manage the ascent, but the question was, could we come down that rock in the event of our progress being barred farther on?—not a remote contingency. Often the passage of a stiff place like this in safety is very much a question of time. I mean that what strikes one at first sight as hazardous, and what would really be attended with peril if gone about hurriedly or at haphazard, frequently rewards a cool deliberate survey by disclosing various methods of increasing the “margin of safety,” so that the passage, in place of being foolhardy, becomes perfectly justifiable.

After slight hesitation, that particular difficulty was surmounted, and then we had fifty feet of easy work to reach a ledge where we could draw breath and look about us. From our present situation we saw that there lay only one more difficult piece between us and a heathery bank on the far side of the Slabs. To a cursory glance it looked as if, after coming so far, we were to be cut off from our goal by twenty feet of intervening rock—quite unbroken, slippery, and inclined at a considerable angle. Straight above us, however, was a crack with tufts of grass growing in it. Up that we made our way, as far as a point opposite which the formidable slope to the right narrowed to ten or twelve feet. Thomson continued up the crack to a place where, by good-naturedly seating himself in a spring of cold water, he was able to put some purchase on the rope, while his chum sprawled across the polished surface and secured himself on the other side, whence he could return the compliment.

My apology for saying so much about those rock slopes is, they are a typical example of a kind of work that a

climber among granite peaks in Arran or elsewhere is tolerably sure to meet. The distance traversed had probably not exceeded 150 feet, but it had occupied three-quarters of an hour, most of which would have been saved by making a detour by the burn.

Beyond the "Slabs" we kept close to the perpendicular cliffs, which continued to guard the mountain from assault, and ascended rapidly over easy rocks and *talus* slopes, until we passed a projecting spur and found ourselves in the heart of the wild corrie that forms Upper Glen Sannox. There we got for the first time a view of the whole north side of the mountain. The greater part of it was manifestly inaccessible, but there were three places where we thought the ascent might be attempted. The first, which was not far away, was where a dyke or rib of rock jutted out between two cracks. We tried the dyke itself, and also climbed to the head of the crack on the right, but soon decided that, if possible at all, an ascent there would have been too tedious for the time at our disposal. The second route that offered a prospect of success, was by a ridge beside a well-marked gully that ran up and across the mountain face, pointing to the left of the summit. Down the gully there had been a recent avalanche of rocks, the slope below being strewn with rectangular blocks of yellow granite, some of them as big as an ordinary harmonium. The third route, seemingly quite manageable, was by means of a great *couloir*, which, starting only a short distance west of the stone-shoot just mentioned, ascended to the right and struck the ridge between Cir Mhor and Caisteal Abhail four or five hundred feet below the summit of the former. Strictly speaking, it should not be ranked as a way up the face of Cir Mhor, but rather as a pass between Glens Sannox and Iorsa.

After a hurried repast, we again roped, and attacked the ridge beside the stone-shoot. The rocks were steep, and covered with gravel and loose chips with no cohesion. Although the ascent offered no real difficulty, we remarked at the time that a descent by this "road" would need a little care. The mountain was so directly overhead, and in consequence foreshortened, that it was hard to determine which

of several pinnacles was the top, or indeed whether the actual top was visible or not, and some mist which still lingered about made it all the harder. In case we required to retrace our steps in fog, one or two stone-marks were laid down. The ridge, which was followed for a considerable way, fell abruptly on our left. On the other side the shoot became shallower as we rose, so that by way of variety we diverted our course into its channel for a short distance, close to a corner where some large blocks were jammed. We were glad to get out again. Apart from the risk of falling stones, everything was terribly unstable,—our own footing included,—the disintegrated granite that covered the smoothly ground rocks acting much in the same way as “ball-bearings”! At one point the party nearly had an unpremeditated slide down the shoot.

Immediately below the spot where, judging from a fresh scar, the “harmoniums” had come from, the gully divided into two branches. We kept to the left, scaled a stiffish chimney, and emerged upon a narrow grass slope. There we erected a (very) small cairn, and then ascended over steep grass and *débris* to a notch we had had in sight for some time. The mountain was now free of cloud, and we were delighted to discover that we had gained the eastern shoulder, at the *col* between the summit and the next pile of granite masonry, and only a hundred feet or so below the summit. It may help to identify the positions if I state that the *col*, the cairn, the cascade, and Caim-na-Caillach are all approximately in a straight line (pointing N. by E. and S. by W.). As we were now upon the ordinary route from the Saddle, we followed the track until it slightly descends to the left to get round a corner. There we abandoned it, and climbed straight up the rocks to the top—an interesting and too short scramble. Time, 10.10. It had taken two hours and twenty minutes from the Saddle.

From Cir Mhor we kept by the ridge to Caisteal Abhail, and ascended the rock mass that forms the culminating point of the latter from the west side, where it is all but perpendicular. Leaving the “Castles” at 11 o'clock, we followed the rugged *arête* which leads to Caim-na-Caillach.

On our way, when crossing a col, the Spectre of the Brocken, in his glorious rainbow mantle, appeared in mid-air below us in North Glen Sannox, and politely escorted us along the ridge for ten or fifteen minutes,—until the sun, which had been shining brightly, was hidden by a cloud. The sun and wind were both about south at the time; the ridge ran east and west; its lee (north) side had mist clinging to it, while to windward it was clear.

On reaching the west side of the Witch's Step we descended to the bottom of the gap, and after a short halt, to impress on our memories the savage grandeur of that uncanny ravine, began the ascent of the east side. At the smooth rock near the foot the first man wriggled up as best he could, and then lowered the rope to his companion. The chasm, in which Campbell was nearly left last year to become a bleaching skeleton, proved fairly easy from this direction. On emerging from it we mounted the topmost pinnacle, close at hand, and left our names in a bottle lying there. Time, 11.50. The descent of the pinnacle involves one awkward step across the said chasm.

We trotted down to Suidhe Feargus, and there enjoyed a splendid distant view. The air by that time was wonderfully clear, the sky cloudless, and the sea as blue as an Italian lake.

Leaving Suidhe Feargus at 12.20, a rapid descent by the Barytes Mill brought us back to Corrie at 1.30, after one of the most delightful expeditions we had ever had.

Oh, the fascination of those everlasting hills! How the very thought of them drives away the petty commonplace worries of the lower world! Black Care is said to mount behind the fleetest horseman, but she does not relish breezy uplands, rarely ventures a thousand feet from the sea-level, and has *never*, I believe, been seen above the snowline.

THE MOORFOOTS.

BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

“Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake, is there ;

There's nothing left to fancy's guess,
You see that all is loneliness.”—*Marmion*.

IT is strange that the citizens of Edinburgh, famed as they are for their love of the beauties in nature, should leave such scenes as are to be found among the grand old Moorfoot hills unvisited. Often as I have tramped their lonely valleys, or over their mossy summits, the outline of the itinerant pleasure-seeker has never obtruded on the scene to mar the peaceful solitude of these hills. Silence reigns supreme, save when the song of the lark, far away in the blue sky overhead, fills the air with music, or the bleat of the lamb, the hum of the bee, the pipe of plover and curlew, strike sweetly upon the ear.

Easy of access are they ; and from the railway stations of Leadburn, Eddleston, Peebles, Innerleithen, Fountainhall, and Heriot, 'tis but a few minutes' walk before the fine undulating turf is underfoot, and you are breasting the steep grassy braes, inhaling great draughts of the exhilarating air of the hills.

There are no sharp outlines there, all is beautifully rounded off in the peaceful harmony of Lowland scenery, and forms a charming contrast to the wild and rugged character of the Highlands ; yet they remain in their glorious retirement as though the human race had passed away. The ruined castle of Hirendean and Woolandslee Tower, nestling in their sheltered dales, enshrouded by the impenetrable mystery of an unrecorded past, add to this feeling of solitude.

Few mountain ranges in the Lowlands can claim more peacefully picturesque valleys than the Leithen or Horsburgh. “The Leithen,” winding amidst pastoral hills for eight or nine miles, fed during its course to the Tweed by many swiftly flowing tributaries, rises in a rugged gorge of impressive grandeur. Horsburgh valley extends

for little more than two miles, and when seen from the Dunslair Heights, after the long climb up from Peebles, by the edge of the Glentress forest, the view which suddenly bursts upon the eye is one that will ever remain in the memory as a vision of loveliness.

I do not apologise to the members for taking up the *Journal's* space in recommending the following routes, for who is there among them that does not love a *hill walk* as well as a *mountain climb*, with all the delightful accompaniments which remoteness and silence alone can confer?

The routes are given in outline only, further description being quite unnecessary, as they can be easily followed on Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 9.

1. From Leadburn; leave the road at Craighburn; strike S.E. over moor, crossing three roads; climb Jeffries Corse (2,004 feet), getting a view of Gladhouse reservoir, and the spot where Hirendeane stands. From there make for Dundreich (1,954 feet), above the Portmore estate, then to Hogs Knowe, whence a fine view of the headwaters of the Leithen is obtained. Cardon Law is the next point, and if time permits the Makeness Kipps (1,839 feet) should not be omitted, and down the valley of Soonhope to Peebles. Distance, about twelve miles; time, four to five hours.

2. From Peebles to Dunslair Heights (1,975 feet), skirting the forest of Glentress (the trees of which are fast disappearing), getting a view of the Horsburgh valley; then descend to the junction of the Leithen and Woolandslee Waters, cross both, and climb Whitehope Law (2,038 feet). Return by the Leithen Water to Innerleithen, and back by road to Peebles. Eighteen to twenty miles; time, six to seven hours.

3. From Peebles up Horsburgh; and cross to the Leithen valley between Black Law and Black Knowe; climb Totto (1,970 feet), continue north along the high ground to Blackhope Scar (2,136 feet), the highest hill in Midlothian, and round by Dundreich to Eddleston, and back to Peebles by road. Eighteen to twenty miles; time, six to seven hours.

4. From Auchindinny; follow old Peebles road by Howgate, take first road to left after crossing railway; pass below Gladhouse, and cross moor; climb hills at lowest

point, descend Blackhope Burn, and then down Heriot Water to Heriot Station,—time, six or seven hours;—or, from Blackhope Burn, walk in by road to Edinburgh, across Middleton Moor, to Gorebridge. A good day's work.

5. From Fountainhall ; walk past Pirntaton and Howliston to Overshiels, cross Lugate Water, and keep in S.W. direction ; climb Windlestraw Law (2,161 feet), descend to the Leithen Water, and thence by road to Innerleithen. Fourteen miles ; time, four to five hours.

To those who have never visited these hills, any one of the routes will amply repay them for the day's tramp. Although some, accustomed to the nobler hills of the north, may perhaps view these excursions askance as being commonplace and void of adventure, yet the Moorfoots have a solemn grandeur of their own which appeals to certain natures, and calls for repeated visits from all who have once been bitten with the ever-present fascination that overhangs their round-backed hills, smiling vales, and murmuring streams.

THIRD GENERAL ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER.

THE third General Annual Meeting of the Club was held in the St Enoch's Station Hotel, Glasgow, on Friday, the 11th December,—the President, Prof. G. G. Ramsay, in the chair. About twenty-five members were present. The President intimated that the Marquis of Breadalbane had accepted the Honorary Presidency of the Club.

The present office-bearers were re-elected. The new Members of Committee—Mr Robert A. Robertson and Mr W. R. Lester—were elected to fill the places of Mr Colin B. Phillip and Mr J. H. W. Rolland, whose turn it was to retire.

The Meeting approved of a proposal to raise the number of members to be elected by the Committee to 110.

Some discussion arose regarding the election of honorary members. The meeting finally agreed to elect as such only those who possessed some outstanding qualifications, and to limit the number to ten.

The Honorary Treasurer's Statement was submitted, and showed a balance to the Club's credit of £40, 18s. 5d.

The following places and dates were approved of for Club meets :—

1. Thursday, 31st December, to Monday, January 4th
—Dalmally.
2. Friday, 29th January, to Tuesday, 2d February—
Brodick.
3. Thursday, 14th April, to Monday, 18th April—
Inveroran.
4. Friday, 29th April, to Tuesday, May 3rd—Spittal of
Glenshee.

Regarding the proposal made at the last General Meeting that there should be a Club-room in Edinburgh, the Committee to whom the proposal was referred reported that, in consideration of the request specially made by members residing in Edinburgh against such a proposal, a Club-room in Edinburgh would not be advisable.

Mr Gilbert Thomson was awarded a very hearty vote of

Account of Receipts and Expenditure by the Honorary Treasurer of "The Scottish Mountaineering Club," 1890-91.

RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.
Balance from last Statement,	John Paterson's Account (for Map Case),
Subscriptions received from 83 Members,	Robert MacLehose's Account (for Club Rules, Notices, &c.),
Subscription Arrears from 1889 (2 Members),	Do. do.,
Subscription Arrears from 1890 (4 Members),	Edinburgh Co-operative Printing Co.'s Account (for printing <i>Journal</i> , Nos. 3, 4, and 5, less £2. 5s. sale of copies by Printer),
Subscriptions prepaid (1892) (2 Members),	Do. do.,
Entry Money from 8 Members,	Honorary Secretary's Expenses,
Interest on Bank Account,	Balance in Union Bank of Scotland Limited,
£37 8 2	£3 5 0
£43 11 6	£6 3 6
1 1 0	2 7 0
2 2 0	8 10 6
1 1 0	£21 10 7
47 15 6	18 13 6
8 8 0	40 4 1
0 6 4	1 0 0
£93 18 0	40 18 5
	£93 18 0

GLASGOW, 11th November 1891.—We have examined the above Statement, and find it correct.

WM. W. NAISMITH.
GILBERT THOMSON.

thanks for the room which he continued very kindly to place at the disposal of the Club for an *interim* Club-room.

The Hon. Librarian placed on the table for the inspection of members a handsome album which, under the sanction of the Committee, had been acquired for the insertion of photographs taken by members of the Club. It already contained some excellent photos of snow-capped hills taken by Mr Douglas and Mr Rennie. The first bound volume of the Club Journal was placed on the table, and also the last volume of the *Alpine Club Journal*. The Librarian had received two or three pamphlets sent to the Club-room.

The following gentlemen were elected members of the Club :—John Henry Gibson, Norman Collie, W. Wickham King, William Brown, P. D. Robert Davies, Charles Ruxton, T. H. Smith, R. J. Mackenzie, J. A. Harvie-Brown, Hugh Colquhoun Hamilton, Sir Alex. Mackenzie of Delvine, Bart., and Sir Archibald Geikie.

The Annual Dinner was subsequently held in the St Enoch's Station Hotel—about thirty-five members and guests being present. The President, Professor Ramsay, occupied the chair, and in a clever and amusing speech gave the toast "Prosperity to the Club," which was enthusiastically received. The toast of the "Alpine Club" was proposed by the Rev. Colin Campbell, and replied to by Mr Horace Walker, President of the A.C. The other toasts were "The Bens and Glens," by Mr Parker Smith, M.P., replied to by Sir Archibald Geikie; "The *Journal*," by Professor Veitch, replied to by Mr Stott, the Editor; "The Guests," by Professor Jack, replied to by Mr Renny Watson, C.E.; and the "Office-bearers of the Club, coupled with the name of the Hon. Secretary." Some good songs and recitations were contributed, and a most enjoyable evening was spent.

NOTES AND QUERIES.



EXCURSIONS.

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

THE GLEN DOCHART HILLS.—Messrs F. J. Dewar, D. Dewar, J. H. Gibson, H. T. Munro, and J. G. Stott, left Tyndrum at 9.25 on the 1st November, Gibson having made a daring descent on ladders from his bedroom window!! The morning was fine and sunny, and wonderfully warm for the time of year, but the mist was rolling over all the high hills at a level of about 2,500 feet. We left the road at the farm of Auchtertyre, a couple of miles from the hotel, and after an easy ascent reached the south top of Ben Chaluim (3,236 feet) at 11.25. The north top (3,354 feet), with a cairn—dip between slight—was reached at 11.40. A long descent eastwards, steep at first, took us to the burn flowing N. from Loch Chailein, which we crossed at a height of about 1,100 feet, at 12.30. Thence a long hot climb to top of Meall Glas (3,139 feet—name and height from 6-inch O.S.), small cairn; thence fairly level to Ben Dheiceach (3,074 feet) cairn, at 2.10. On its S.E. face we halted forty minutes for luncheon and a smoke; crossed the *col*, at a height of about 1,800 feet, at 3.15; and after a steep grind, landed on top of Sgiath Chuil (name from 6-inch O.S., 3,050 feet approximate) at 3.45. Meall Chuirn cairn (3,007 feet), rather a fine top, saw us at 4 o'clock. At 5 we reached Glen Lochay, at the farm of Kenknock; and at 7.7 the rear-guard arrived at Lochay Bridge Hotel. It is difficult to estimate this hill walking, but probably our distance was not less than twenty-five miles, with 6,000 or 7,000 feet of climbing. No distant views were had, but we saw the Brocken Spectre frequently in its various forms, and occasionally the dense white mist allowed us a glorious peep of Ben More,—to the S. of us,—his dark peak powdered with snow rising like an island into the blue sky far above our position.—J. G. STOTT

BEN LOMOND, &c.—On 13th December, Messrs Munro and Sutton started from Aberfoyle, in thick mist, at 9.30. In consequence of the deep slush it was 1.20 before we reached Comer, and 4 when we reached the summit of Ben Lomond, only twenty minutes' halt having been taken for luncheon. The day was quite still and not cold, the fog thick, view nil, the snow very deep and soft, and the walking very heavy. It was 8 o'clock before we reached Inversnaid, and we were

neither of us sorry to stop there instead of pushing on to Ardlui. Next day was fine and bright, and having ferried across the loch, we walked up some two miles towards Loch Sloy, intending to cross Ben Vorlich. The walking however was, if possible, worse than the day before, the snow was drifting badly on the hills, and heavy snow showers pretty frequent. It was clear if we went on we should not be in time to catch our train at 6 P.M. at Crianlarich, so we just returned to Loch Lomond, and on by road to Crianlarich. I regretted this as it turned out a finer day than I expected.—H. T. MUNRO.

THE SPECTRE OF TARDUFF HILL, Stirlingshire.—Tarduff Hill is an outspur to the north of the Darrach Hill and the Denny Moors (see Ord. Sur., 1st scale, sheet 31). It is only 965 feet above the sea. Between Darrach Hill proper and Tarduff Hill there is a deep gully or *bhalloch*. The north slope of Tarduff Hill slopes very suddenly, almost precipitously, to a second hollow, locally known as the "Belly of Tarduff." On the O.S. sheet is marked the line of a stone wall which passes between the two words "Tarduff" and "Hill," and it was at or near this point the spectre was seen, by a party of grouse-driving sportsmen, between 11 A.M. and noon of the 24th November 1891. The writer of this note was the first to see it, as he was stationed on the line of the stone wall on the ridge of the hill, just where the steep declivity commences to the north. It was visible to him for nearly half-an-hour from first to last. Thick black fog hung from the crest of the ridge down into the profound of the hollow. Mist had obscured all the range before 11 o'clock, but a south wind had rolled it onward till it dipped beneath the sheltering shoulder of Tarduff. The atmosphere, however, which was left behind, was charged still with moisture, and water-drops hung heavily on the lings and grasses. About 11.30, an indistinct vision first appeared and disappeared, and reappeared. Then, as the sun-rays strengthened, the south wind drove the disordered mist-rack over the steep place into the gulf, and at last the sun "shot flaming forth." Then the vividness of the rainbow colours became brilliantly intensified from the inner "glory" to the wide outer "halo." Later on, our first drive being over, five or six men—keepers, beaters, and sportsmen—met on the ridge. Standing close together, all five or six images were visible, all within the wide outer halo, but of course no one of us saw more than one set of concentric rainbow bands or circles. The colours were the usual rainbow series, and as nearly as possible occurred in the following order, reading from the centre :—

R. O. Y. G. B. I. V.

The reflected figures were never so outlined and distinct as the one shown at page 326 of this journal. If a hand were raised, or one put himself in a position of a signalman on a railway at "stop," the shadows rushed out even to the farthest halo, quite 15 feet on either side of the centre. At the lower limbs of the halos nothing of our reflections could be seen, because we were standing slightly below the

dip of the ridge. From our knees downward we were "behind the sun." The spectre, as I have said, favoured us with his presence as long as we chose, but the interview was cut short by the grouse-driving necessities of a winter's day. We left him to reflect upon himself.

I send you the record as I think it may prove of some interest, because—*First*—The vision occurred at a comparatively low altitude; *Second*—As *photoing* the figures of five or six people standing together; *Third*—As an experience in "visitation" totally different from another visitation which the writer once experienced at the top of the eastern precipice of Braebag in Sutherland, which I will now describe in as few words as I can.

Writing from very distinct memories, the atmospheric conditions were totally different from those just described under our Spectre of Tarduff. For days and days—I think weeks—in June, there had been no rain nor even a shred of mist anywhere on the western slopes of the Assynt mountains; the ground was dry, the air was clear and moistureless. But at last an easterly wind rolled up vast masses of black fog one lovely day in June, which, rebuffed by the edges of the great eagle-haunted cliffs of Braebag, stood up high above the summit of the cliff "like a wall," or like a dark grey curtain at a magic-lantern seance. In this case the shadow was gigantic,—the Tarduff spectre was not much more than life-size,—yet every finger of the hand, every motion of the "haunted one," was faithfully reproduced or photo'd on the screen of cloud. Writing still from vivid memory, we saw nothing of the inner halos, only one huge wide halo, with scarcely a single rainbow tint. There was no vague outstretching filaments of shadow, as if one's finger tips and nails were drawn out to the limits of the spheres, but downright hard clean-cut outlines and black dark body shadow, as represented in the previous page of this journal. But, not like the shadow referred to, this Braebag spectre had no "glory" round his head—no colour, only downright black and white fact. This spectre—localised on Braebag—was met with almost directly opposite the opening of the place called the "Devil's Gate," where a slack in hill runs out on the upper plateau of Braebag, above Muloch Corrie, on the western ridge of the hill, and is localised on the eastern summit of the precipices of the east ridge (see top corner of O.S. map, sheet 102, on the 1,750 feet contour line).—J. A. HARVIE BROWN.

CRAIGOWE. ^ ^ ^

As every one knows, some of the finest views in Scotland are obtainable from the frontier heights. Notable among these is Craigowe (1,493 feet), the highest point of the Sidlaw Hills, which, rising a few miles to the N.E. of Perth, stretch very nearly to the sea at Montrose, and separate the Carse of Gowrie and the low fertile tract between Dundee and Arbroath from the broad "Vale of Strathmore," or more correctly, "Strathmore."

Craigowe is some six miles N. by W. from Dundee, and nearly as

much due S. from Glamis Station, on the main Caledonian line from Perth to Aberdeen, driving being practicable, in the former case, to the farm of Newlandhead, and in the latter to that of Dryburn, three-quarter and one and a quarter mile from the top, which is reached from either in half an hour. As the hill forms a part of a small but valuable grouse moor, it should not be ascended—especially from the north side—for about a month after the 12th.

The view is more striking when the hill is ascended from the south, as the whole range of the Highland hills bursts suddenly on the view as the summit is reached. Immediately in front, *i.e.*, N.N.E., across the head of the little Glen Ogilvie, rather more than two miles away, is Carlunie Hill (1,115). Right over this, eight miles off, standing among extensive woods, is the large red stone house of Lindertis, behind and rather to the right of which is the massive round-topped, broad-shouldered Catlaw (2,196). Just to the right of the summit of Catlaw the horizon is bounded by Lochnagar (3,786). The fine crags to the right, and somewhat nearer, overhang the little lochs of Brandy and Whurral, above Clova, a shade to the W. of N. Straight over Lindertis House, twenty-two miles off, is the Driesh (3,105), and two miles west of it, the Mayar (3,045), rather more pointed. Over the shoulder between these two can be seen the Broad Cairn (3,268), and one and a quarter mile N.W. of it Cairn Bannoch (3,314), both about twenty-seven miles away. Next to the left, and twenty-six miles away, is Cairn na Glasha (3,484), then the great flat-topped Glas Maol (3,502) at the meeting-point of the counties of Forfar, Aberdeen, and Perth. In front and to the right of the summit is the depression of the Caenlochan Glen. To the left of Glas Maol, and somewhat nearer, is the fine craggy ridge of Creag Leacach (3,238), with Carn Aighe (2,824) rather nearer. Very nearly N.W., and nineteen miles away, Mount Blair (2,441) tapers up. Right over it is Glas Thulachan (3,445), with the other hills which lie to the west of the Cairnwell road. Then the two peaks of Beinn a' Ghlo (3,671) stand boldly out. Still turning to the left, directly over the little town of Alyth, which is ten miles off, and W.N.W. by N., is Carn Liath (3,193). Considerably nearer, Ben Vrackie, above Pitlochry, is unmistakable, the large humpy hill between it and Carn Liath being Ben Vuroch (2,961). The tower, three miles N.N.W., is on Kinpurney Hill (1,134), and was built for an observatory, but never used. Over its left shoulder can be seen the town of Blairgowrie, at the base of the hills, while still a little to the left the sugar-loaf cone of Schichallion (3,547) is the most striking feature in the whole view. To the right of Schichallion, far away in Inverness-shire, a hill is seen which is probably Ben Alder, but which is said to be Ben Nevis. To the left of Schichallion rises the mass of the Carn Maing Hills; then Meall Garbh and An Stuc, with a very marked V-shaped depression between them; and due W., over the wooded hill of Auchterhouse, which is one mile away, Ben Lawers (3,984, and probably the highest hill in sight). Much nearer, and rather to the right, can be seen the gap in the hills, through which the

Tay forces its way at Dunkeld, with the little humpy Birnam Hill (1,324) above it. To the left of Ben Lawers, rising slightly from the long line of heathery hills, is Ben Chonzie (3,048), at the head of Glen Turret, above Crieff. W. by S., and fifty miles away, Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin are unmistakable; next Ben Ledi, and then the Braes of Doune fall away to Strathallan. S.W. the rolling grassy hill tops of the Ochils may be seen. S. by E., across the broad Tay estuary, are the West and East Lomonds in Fife. The tower on a nearer hill is a monument to a Lord Hopetoun. In clear weather Edinburgh Castle, the Calton Hill, with its monuments, and the Pentlands, are easily distinguishable. At our feet lies Dundee, with its many chimneys, its Law (572), and the Tay Bridge. Broughty Ferry, with its trim villas and old castle, lies S.E. Newport and Tayport are seen facing us from the south side of the river. Across the low Tents Moor are the bay and town of St Andrews. East of Broughty Ferry, at the mouth of the Tay, the sandy links of Barry run out to the Buddon Ness, with its two white lighthouses; while E. by S., twelve miles out to sea from the village of Carnoustie, stands the Inchcape or Bell Rock Lighthouse. To the left of Carnoustie, and four miles nearer us, is the Monikie Reservoir, with a monument to Lord Panmure behind it. Nearly due E. is the town of Arbroath, while a shade to the N. of E.N.E. is Montrose Basin, the town itself being hidden by an intermediate hill. N.E. by N., eight miles away, lies the town of Forfar. N.N.E. is Mount Battock (2,555), on the Forfarshire and Kincardine border. At the foot of Glen Ogilvie, five miles from us, in a well-wooded park, is Glamis Castle; and some five miles farther, and a little to the left, at the base of a wooded hill, stands Kirriemuir. Mount Keen, which is right over Kirriemuir, is hidden by intervening hills.

It is said that the view embraces portions of thirteen counties. Enough has been written to show that it is at any rate very extensive and very varied, the special features being, in the opinion of the writer, the contrast between the dioramic view of the Highland hills across Strathmore, on the one side, and the abrupt descent to the fertile plains, and the broad expanse of sea and river, on the other.

H. T. MUNRO.

MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

“LOCHNAGAR.” BY A. J. M'CONNOCHIE.

MR M'CONNOCHIE is to be congratulated upon his latest literary effort, his guide-book to Lochnagar and its neighbourhood. It is all that such a book should be, short and to the point, clear in its directions, and full of the information—traditional, legendary, and scientific—that is likely to be of interest. Members of the Club who know the country will have their knowledge extended by its perusal; while those of us to whom such exploration is a pleasure still in store

cannot do better than place themselves under Mr M'Connochie's guidance.

Lochnagar is not, or at any rate used not to be, the name of the mountain, but is a designation which, though strictly applying only to one of the dark tarns embosomed in its recesses, has, since Byron's famous poem was written, been given to the whole mass. Its ancient name was the White Mounth. In regard to the expression, "on the top of Lochnagar," an old native told the author that he could only be on the top of *Lochnagar* in a boat, or during very frosty weather! Two derivations are given of the name, viz., "the Loch of the Goat," and "the Loch of Wailing"—when the winds howl across it. But in this connection it is interesting—in the light of much that has been said about place-names in the pages of the *Journal*—to note the opinion of Professor MacKinnon, the learned occupant of the Celtic Chair in Edinburgh University. "With all the aids available," he says, "many of our Gaelic names are as yet unexplainable. I would not myself hazard even a guess as to the meaning of the *gar* in Lochnagar, without obtaining (first) all the old forms that can be got, and (second) the exact pronunciation by the people of the district. With such help the vocable may remain still obscure; without it, any suggested derivation must remain at best a guess more or less happy, but of no scientific value. The language has undergone great change, and the place-names frequently preserve the most reliable evidence we, in Scotland, in the absence of many written documents, possess."

Mr M'Connochie treats at some length of the bulk and base extent of Lochnagar, crediting it with eleven "tops" of 3,000 feet and upwards, and giving its mass an extent of about sixty-three square miles of country elevated more than 1,250 feet above sea-level.

Many of us will learn with surprise that "Spitals"—not an uncommon name among our hills, to wit, Spital of Glen Muick, Spital of Glemshee, &c.—"were planted in almost all the mountain passes of Scotland, as well as in other places, being occupied by churchmen, and managed in pretty much the same manner as the famous hospice of St Bernard on the Alps."

The book contains a long and exhaustive list of the plants and ferns found on the mountain, compiled by Dr John Roy of Aberdeen, as well as an interesting sketch of its geology. Regarding its fauna, we are told that about a hundred years ago the destruction of sheep by vermin was so great in the Lochnagar parishes that the loss was estimated at nearly equal to half the rent paid to the proprietors. Within a period of ten years, during which rewards were offered for their slaughter, there were killed 634 foxes, 44 wild cats, 57 pole-cats, 70 eagles, 2,520 hawks and kites, and 1,347 ravens and hooded crows. One of the famous fox-hunters of the district was known to have killed over 700 foxes in about eleven years.

Mr M'Connochie is a lover of nature, and a hillman of the best type; and most of us will no doubt agree with his dictum when he says, "I

number of peaks he has placed to his credit ; the ideal hillman is one who thoroughly enjoys a day 'on' the mountains, not hurrying and toiling up a Ben with the single purpose of rushing down again."

It only remains to add, that the book, which is published by D. Wyllie & Son of Aberdeen, contains some fair woodcuts, a good index, and an excellent map on the scale of an inch to the mile.—J. G. S.

"BEN A' BHUIRD AND BEN AVON." "BEN RINNES."

THERE are two of the interesting little pamphlets prepared by Mr M'Connachie in anticipation of excursions of the Cairngorm Club. In a brief fashion they embody much that the visitor would like to know. From the former we may extract the following quotation descriptive of the summit of Ben a' Bhuid, and the prospect it commands :— "Shortly, Lochnagar appears in all its magnificent proportions ; and, as we reach the summit, above Coire nan Clach, . . . the valley of the Dee, and the noble mansion of Invercauld, with all its beautiful surroundings of diversified woodlands, intermingled clumps of birch and pine, its lawns and meadows, the winding Dee, Craigs Cluny and Coninich, and the higher hills in the background—a picture of grandeur, magnificence, and beauty is spread before and around the beholder that cannot be surpassed, turn where he may. In the far N.E., Ben Rinnes is plainly descried, while sweeping round eastwardly, the Buck of Cabrach, and other local magnates, have plainly sunk into comparative insignificance. Morven shows better in the east, shutting off the view in that direction, so do Mount Keen and Lochnagar, as we box the compass ; and our old acquaintances—Cairn Toul and the mightier Ben—confine our prospects to their gigantic proportions in the W. and N.W. But what shall we say of the Coire nan Clach and the Coire an Dubh Lochan, upon whose edges we stand, with their two little lakes—Dubh Lochan and Dubh Lochain—in their bosom, 800 feet below us ? Simply this, if you wish to see corries in perfection try Ben a' Bhuid. Dubh Lochan rests at an elevation of 3,088 feet. The ridge of precipice above and surrounding it stands from 3,800 to 3,900 feet above sea-level—a huge wall of serrated precipice scooped into the mountain, culminating in the grand rocky pinnacle bearing the Gaelic name, Chioch—the breast. These corries are wealthy fields for the botanist."

The same author thus describes one of the granite pinnacles that are such distinguishing features of Ben Avon :—"This largest granite protuberance presents a marvellous yet majestic spectacle. It looks like the blackened ruined wall of a vast fortress. Fancy a gigantic wall of granite, partially disintegrated, having its face divided horizontally into tabular segments, and intersected perpendicularly by fissures, the mass presenting a Titanic dyke longer than, and nearly the height of, the Castle Street elevation of the Union Bank (Aberdeen), and you will have some idea of the protruding stacks of the backbone of Ben Avon. With some difficulty one might think that

wa.' Not a vestige of plant life clings to it: The struggle with frosty winds, hail, and snow is too severe here, and the battering shower during many centuries slowly but surely wears down and disintegrates even the sempiternal granite."

There are some geological notes by Mr Lionel Hinxman, a list of the rarer plant forms by Dr Roy, and a couple of fair illustrations from Messrs Morgan's excellent series of Cairngorm photographs. The pamphlets may be had from the Cairngorm Club.—J. G. S.

CAIRNS ON MOUNTAIN TOPS.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—In foggy weather, when one hill top looks much like another, it is often of the greatest assistance to the climber to know whether his mountain has a cairn on the summit. May I, therefore, be allowed to suggest to future contributors, whether of articles or of notes, that they should in all cases be careful to mention this.—Yours faithfully,

H. T. MUNRO.

PHOTOGRAPHY.—A correspondent writes:—"It is greatly to be desired that some climbing photographer would do for Scotland what Donkin did for Switzerland, and give us a set of views of the most interesting peaks taken *from a high level*, to supersede the ordinary photograph of a Scottish hill taken from underneath, which makes it a squat tame-looking object."

If we mistake not, Messrs Valentine of Dundee have brought out a few—too few—good views of some of the Arran peaks; but they say that it would not pay them to go into the business extensively. Messrs Morgan of Aberdeen also publish some capital Cairngorm photographs. But at present, at all events, the field is in possession of amateurs, and we must live in the hope that some great genius will arise in our own ranks, and enable us to decorate our walls with pictures of the class desiderated by our correspondent.

CLUB MEETS.

IN connection with the proposed meet of the Club at Spittal of Glenshee, in May next, Mr Munro sends the following list of tops accessible from the hotel:—

List of Tops exceeding 3,000 feet accessible from the Spittal of Glenshee, the distances being measured in a straight line on the map.

Creag Leacach	...	3,232 feet	...	4 miles.
Meall Odhar	...	3,019 "	...	5½ "
Glas Maol	...	3,502 "	...	5½ "
Little Glas Maol	...	3,184 "	...	5½ "
Druim Mòr	...	3,114 "	...	6¼ "
Cairn na Glasha	...	3,484 "	...	7 "
Carn Tuirc	...	2,240 "	...	7½ "

These hills all lie to the N.E. of the hotel, and most of them lie within two and a half miles of the carriage road.

Càrn Bhinnein	...	...	3,006 feet.
Càrn Geoidhe	...	...	3,194 "
Càrn nan Sac	...	...	3,000 "
The Cairnwell	...	...	3,059 "
Càrn Aosda	...	...	3,003 "

These hills all lie to the N. of the hotel, from four to six miles from it, and all are within two and a half miles from the carriage road.

Glas Thulachan	...	3,445 feet	...	5 miles.
Carn an Rìgh	...	3,377 "	...	6½ "
Mam nan Càrn	...	3,224 "	...	6 "
Beinn Iutharn Mhor		3,424 "	...	7 "
Beinn Iutharn Bheag		3,011 "	...	6 "
An Socach (West End)		3,059 "	...	6½ "
" (East End)		3,073 "	...	6½ "

All these lie N.W. of the hotel.

Several of the above hills, and especially Glas Thulachan, have some fine rocky corries and cliffs.

In addition to the above, any of the Forfarshire and Deeside hills (Tom Buidhe, Tolmont, Fafernie, Cairn Bannock, Broad Cairn, Càrn an-t Sagairt, Lochnagar, &c.) can be crossed, descending to Braemar, Balmoral, or Clova; or the Beinn a' Ghlo range may be crossed, descending to Blair Athole. And several more can be done returning to the Spittal.

Referring to the above, the Glenshee hotel-keeper writes as follows:—"There is a mail car leaving Blairgowrie daily for here at 10.45 forenoon, and reaching this at 3.30 P.M. There is also one daily, leaving the hotel at 8 A.M., reaching Blairgowrie at 11.40, connecting with the 12.30 train. By giving us a day or two's notice, a waggonette and pair, to carry six or eight, will be substituted for the mail car. We will do our very best to make you and your friends comfortable when you come."

THE SCOTTISH
Mountaineering Club Journal.

Vol. II.

MAY 1892.

No. 2.

ANDROWHINNIE.

BY PROFESSOR VEITCH.

WHO even of the readers of the *Mountaineering Club Journal* ever heard of Androwhinnie? Andro is not a person, but he has a very charming personality; having the art of letting you into the sight and the secret, from his own point of view, of a portion of the Borderland, unsurpassed for wildness, solitude, and grandeur. Androwhinnie, like Blackandro, is not a lofty mountain, and is not famous,—well known only probably to the shepherds, and to one of the lairds of ancient Border blood, whose ancestral lands are adjoining, and on whose memory there gleam picturesque traits of the old story of the Borderland. Androwhinnie, moreover, has no pretensions to what is known as grandeur; he is of the broad-browed, spreading, soft grassy type, with a fine monotone of green—pastoral and pathetic. He is fixed permanently well up in Ettrickdale, near the head indeed,—has been there since the ice-sea and the glaciers carved out Upper Ettrickdale in sculpturesque forms,—and he looks across the vale on the south-west to Ettrick Pen, and up the Dale to where it narrows and passes into a deep semicircle of verdure and gleaming waters, which the high westward hills—The Pen, Wind Fell, and Capel Fell—enclose on both sides, watch and keep for themselves. Into that secluded den, with only the occasional bleat of a sheep to tell of living thing, there pours down the Entertrona Burn, its waters musical as its name, through a Hope sacred to the mythical imagination, from the circumstance

that there a not remote ancestor of the Etrick Shepherd had a vision on a glimpsing moonlit night of the last dance of the fairies in Etrickdale!

But it is past noon, and we must look for our point of ascent of Androwhinnie. We have got to near Over Kirkhope, on the road in the valley, and we have to make our way up northwards between Brockhope Burn on the east and Kirkhope Burn on the west. The ascent is about three miles—gradual, grassy, benty. The day is the 29th July 1891, one of the few days on which the sun asserted its supremacy through the dark mist and rain of that tiresome summer. In the old Border speech, the day is a “wether-gaw,” or glimpse of light and beauty between preceding and following days of gloom and unloveliness. But who, save the familiar walker of the hills, knows on such a day in July “the splendour in the grass” at this its temporary prime, lush and fresh, without sign of decay? “Glory in the flower” there is none; perhaps the glint of a tiny yellow-eyed tormentil peering here and there—but the grass is too deep even for this, as a rule. Glow of flower, however, we do not need to seek, for around us is that waving sea of the benty forest, resplendent in its sheen and lifelike in its motion, answering to the gentle call of the soft wind, and darting across the hillside silvery gleams of spear-like shoots, as the westering sun peers on us from the heights of Moffatdale. Plodding, talking, stopping, mingling something of old story and modern incident, zigzagging now and again on account of a hill-drain, once cut bare into the peat but now grass-mantled,—which, if one chanced to drop into it, shows a curious tenacity for one’s boot,—we reach sloping platform one, two, three. Now comes our reward. We are on the summit, only 2,220 feet above sea-level, yet there fronting us is what can be seen from this point alone—the great dip from sky-line to valley of the southernmost flank of that wild and grand portion of the Border hills which stretches, ravine-cloven, from Moffatdale on the south to Tweedsmuir Bridge on the north. The hill-slope almost immediately below us—Mirkside—falls 1,500 feet to the headstream of the Moffat Water; and right across the somewhat shadowy valley you see, high up fronting you, revealed

in all its stretch, in its secret hollow of the hills, Loch Skene, this day lying quiet, in a still greysome glimmer. I have sat by it of an afternoon more than once when it rose restlessly, and dashed its waves against its bleak stony shore, like a wild and unconquered spirit of the hills. Then it is true that—

“O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infect the summer heaven.”

But to-day it accepts the calm overhead, and is peaceful as the sky that looks down into its secluded depths. You can sketch the whole line of the Tail Burn coming out of it, right onwards among its rough rounded boulders, until suddenly it passes to its fall, and foams down the Grey Mare's Tail; and the dark grey rocks, all at once becoming bright-browed, are a glory to look upon in this westering sunlight. All—Loch, Burn, and Tail—are fully seen and possessed by you; and calm and flow, and rush and fall, mutually enhance each other in the one strong picture. And now you have time to note the guardians of the loch and burn—the black, beetling cliff of Loch Craig Head (2,625) to the right; the Mid-Law, separating Loch Skene from its exhausted sister lochan; and Donald's Cleuch, now softly shadowed, but often sounding wildly in the winter nights; and the White Coomb (2,695), rising in its dome to the left, shadowing itself as all grand hills do. Beyond the Coomb, all down the north side of Moffatdale, top after top stands out, still blessed by the sun, especially Carrifran and Saddle Yoke; and the eye is carried down the Water, until vision is lost in the misty distance of Annandale and the ridges of Nithsdale, lying in a limitless, far-receding dream-land.

This is the vision of Androwhinnie,—one of those intermediate hills which often enable you to take in a mountainous country better than the highest ascent. But he has still something more to show you, for as we turn to go homewards we have before us nearly the whole southern Lowlands of Scotland. There is the Great Moor of Hermitage, the hills towards the head of the Teviot, the long, varied line of Teviotdale itself, and, to the east and south-east, Ruberslaw, the Dunion, and the Eildons. Behind all, as an

encircling line keeping the land in watchful fold, run the Cheviots—the Carter Fell, massive and dim, in the centre ; while the bounding sky shows a winding but calm belt of blue, and over it soft white clouds are passing in gentle motion in the peace of evening. We make our way down Androwhinnie amid the quiet-falling gloaming, and, passing Ettrick Kirk and the inflow of the Timah, are soon under the roof-tree of Thirlestane.

WINTER ASCENTS—NO. 4.—THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY HUGH T. MUNRO.

ALREADY more than one interesting article on the Cairngorms has appeared in the pages of the *Journal*, and I should hesitate to trespass on grounds so well described by Mr M'Connochie, had I not been reminded by the Editor of a promise made in a previous paper (Vol. I., p. 105) that I would, at some future date, give my first experience of this district. The perusal, moreover, of the following account may serve as yet another warning that an ample margin of time should invariably be allowed, especially in solitary winter climbing, and that the half-hour lost in the morning will most infallibly be regretted before the day is over.

As recorded in the paper referred to above, I had, on the 6th February, crossed the Braes of Angus to Braemar. The weather had been glorious, so on the morning of the 7th I was rather disappointed to find the clouds hanging low on the hills. Having abandoned all idea of the mountains, I dawdled away some time in a cottage by the Linn of Dee, and some more at Derry Lodge. In Glen Luibeg the mist was reached, but as the low bealach between it and Glen Dee was topped, suddenly, floating apparently in mid air, and seemingly 10,000 feet high, the grand crag of the Devil's Point stood out, framed in cloud, with its snows dazzlingly white in the mid-day sun, and then the mist rolled down from the hills, shrinking back into the valley to the south, and all in a few moments—disappeared. The temptation to ascend Cairntoul or Braeriach was great, but it was too late in the day, and prudence, combined with a wish to see the Learg* Ghrumach, prevailed. This celebrated pass, the meaning of which is "the gruesome" or "misshapen pass," is a narrow cleft, which, for upwards of seven miles, divides Cairntoul and Braeriach on the west from Càrn à Mhaim, Ben Macdhuì, and Creag na Leacainn on the east. Frowning cliffs tower

* A *Learg*, or *Larig*, is a long narrow pass—the whole length of a

sometimes as much as 2,400 feet above the pass, and although in most places they are not so steep as to be inaccessible, the two sides approach so closely to one another that the track in the upper portions of the pass is lost among a chaos of huge granite boulders, which winter frosts have disintegrated from the crags above. A little south of the summit the "Wells of Dee"—tiny tarns of crystal-clear water—have been formed by these fallen granite blocks. They have no visible outlet, but the water percolates through the rocks and forms one of the principal sources of the Dee. The walking on this occasion was much facilitated, as the glen in its upper and rougher parts was full of hard frozen snow, as smooth and as good to walk on as a turnpike road. At 2.30 a halt of half an hour for luncheon at the Wells. The sun almost too hot, though all around was snow and ice; the stillness only broken by the incessant calling of the ptarmigan, already pairing, very tame, and every few minutes by the sound of falling rocks—some of them of considerable size—from the slopes of Ben Macdhui; indeed, a look-out had to be kept to avoid them. None fell from the western side, as it was not exposed to the sun.

The Beallach, only a little way beyond the Wells, is some 2,700 feet above the sea, and consists of a chaotic heap of boulders. The northern side of the pass is even wilder than the southern, and the view from it, in the sensuous evening light, surpassingly lovely. The sun set in a soft pink haze, graduating through many tints of yellow to an ethereal blue,—a sunset of that peculiar type, rare in Scotland, rarer still in England, which always recalls to my memory Egypt and the desert. It was already nearly five when the first trees of Rothiemurchus Forest were reached, and one by one the stars were peeping out; then, when darkness had closed in, one, bigger and ruddier than the rest, blazed from the brow of Craigellachie, above Aviemore. It is to this rock, and not to the village near Dufftown, that the slogan of the Grant's, "Stand fast, Craigellachie!" refers. Immediately it was answered from a neighbouring cairn, and in a few minutes beacon fires from a score of heights were celebrating the election of Grant of Rothiemurchus to the first Inverness-shire County Council.

Finding on reaching Aviemore station at 6.30 that a train was leaving in a few minutes, I decided to go to Kingussie.

8th February.

The following morning I returned to Kincaig station, which I reached at 8.30. A hard white frost and an intensely cold morning made a quick walk of three or four miles up Glen Feshie agreeable. The glen in its lower parts is flat and uninteresting. A good bridal path strikes off up the Allt Ruadh (Red Burn), through a wood, on to the moor, where it ceases. By this time it was 10.15, and the sun very hot, though still a hard frost. An easy ascent of another hour and three-quarters over heather, grass, and club moss, and the top of Sgòran Dubh (3,658 feet) is reached at twelve. Some way below the summit two eagles were seen, one of which had just killed a grouse. Here one is surprised to find oneself at the edge of a precipice of 2,000 feet, descending to Loch Eunach, grandly situated in an amphitheatre of cliffs. The north summit, some three-quarters of a mile to the north, although locally called Sgòran Dubh Mhòr, is in reality twenty-three feet lower than the south top. From almost every other point of view, however, it looks the higher. On the edge of the cliffs between the two summits is a semaphore, doubtless to signal to the bothy at the foot of the loch the position of the deer. To the south and west stretches away a vast and comparatively level tableland, with the deep clefts of different glens—Feshie, Dee, Geldie, &c.—opening from it. Here I suddenly changed my plans, and instead of ascending Braeriach first and descending to Braemar, I reversed the direction, so as to return to Speyside. Striking S.E., to round the cliffs at the head of Loch Eunach, a descent to about 2,800 feet has to be made, and after half an hour for luncheon, another hour and a half placed me at the top of Cairn Toul (4,241 feet) at 2.45. A quarter of an hour here for the view, and another twenty minutes more to the top of Sgòr an Lochan Uaine (“The mountain of the little green loch”). This, although only named on the 6-inch O.S. map, is a fine peak. No height is given, but a considerable 4,000 feet contour on the 1-inch map, and, according to Mr Hinxman’s aneroid,

its approximate height is 4,095 feet. Hence along the tops of the great flat tableland, on which cricket, football, or even polo might almost be played, to Braeriach (the "greyish" or "speckled brae"), 4,284 feet, the third highest summit in Britain, at 4.20.

The views from Cairntoul and Braeriach are very similar. From the former the view down Glen Geusachan and Glen Dee, with the Devil's Point looking quite small below, is rather finer; while from the latter the foreground to the north, over Rothiemurchus Forest, is better, as is also the view of Ben Macdhuì and Cairngorm over the narrow chasm of the Learg Ghruamach. The evening was absolutely perfect, and the view most extensive. S.E., Lochnagar shows its graceful N.W. outline; then turning to the right, the Braes of Angus, Glas Maol, &c.; Beinn Iutharn (B. Narn) and Glas Thulachan, with the black cone of Mount Blair, between them and Glas Maol. Due S., and very prominent, the several peaks of Beinn a' Ghlo. Next, Ben Chonzie, then Ben Lawers, looking very massive. Schiehallion from Cairntoul shows no sky line, being entirely backed by Ben Lawers; from Braeriach, however, a small piece of him shows against the sky. The twin peaks of Am Binnein and Ben More. Beinn Laoigh next, and in shape very like the last two. Ben Cruachan S.W. and 70 miles away; and over his right shoulder, and much further away, a hill which, if not Ben More, is some other of the Mull hills. The Blackmount and Glencoe hills, the mountains of Rum nearly due west, Ben Nevis, &c., and range upon range of Inverness and Ross-shire hills, Mam Sodhail (Mamsoul); the hills round Loch Maree, Scour Vuillin; and the big bulky mass of Ben Wyvis to the N.W., very unmistakable; the valley of the Spey in front, and Ben Rinnes away to the N.E.

It was 4.30 before the summit of Braeriach was left. A N.W. course was shaped, and a descent made by an easy *arête*, with cliffs on each side, which at first required a little care owing to the ice on the rocks. Leaving Loch Coire an Lochan on the left, and keeping to the hard frozen snow in the bed of the Allt na Beinne Bige, the road in Glen Eunach was reached at six and Lynwilg Inn at nine.

9th February.

The following day Lynwilg was not left till 8.45, and bitterly the lost hour was regretted before the day was over. I failed to find the bridge over the Morlich, and stripped to ford it, having to break the ice at the edges.

There are few more beautiful places than Rothiemurchus Forest, with its fine old Scotch firs and luxuriant heather, its herds of red deer—at this season of the year very tame—its open glades and glistening tarns, its views across Loch Morlich and Glen More to the Cromdale hills, and over Strath Spey to the Monadhliaths; but that same luxuriant heather is uncommonly troublesome walking, every rise seems to have a corresponding dip on the other side, the distances in the clear air are most deceptive, and the numerous tracks are all shaped like corkscrews, and all of them lead to nowhere. Added to this a blazing hot sun without a breath of wind, although the frost was keen, and it was 2.40 before Cairn Gorm (4,084 feet) was reached, the ascent being made by the shoulder, which terminates to the north in An t-Aonach. The day hitherto had been lovely, but by this time the mist was rolling over the top of Braeriach, and creeping up the valleys to the S.W. Prudence certainly dictated a return to Speyside, but I was well accustomed to finding my way among the mountains alone, in winter and in all weathers, and I started for Ben Macdhui without misgivings. I hurried down the three or four hundred feet to the foot of the peak, and then over the extensive snow and ice fields round the crescent-shaped ridge. I was soon in dense mist, which froze to one's hair, clothes, and beard. I had no difficulty in reaching the summit of Ben Macdhui (4,296 feet), but the necessity of continually consulting the map, compass, and aneroid, had wasted time, and it was already 4.30. I dashed off down the snow, in what I believed to be the direction of Loch Etchachan, but whether I had omitted to reckon the deviation, or whether a slight change of wind, which I afterwards found had taken place, had put me wrong, I found myself at five P.M. having descended about one thousand feet, just at the bottom margin of the mist on the

top of the precipices overhanging Loch Avon. Here was a balmy place to be in! dangerous cliffs all round, the cold so intense that one could scarcely have lived an hour without moving. It was long after sunset, and the chances of getting out of difficulties before it became quite dark seemed slight. I had no flask, little food, and there was not enough safe ground to make it possible to walk up and down through the long night. Dashed up a steep hard snow slope—no time to cut steps, but hauling myself up by the point of my axe, crossed an intervening ridge, and again descended, only to find myself among even worse cliffs still above Loch Avon. For a moment I hesitated whether to attempt to cut down a dangerously steep *cou-loir* of hard snow, which seemed to descend to the loch, but even if practicable at all for one man without rope, which is very doubtful, it would certainly have taken far too long. One last look at the map and compass in the dim light, and then another race up a long steep slope with the help of the axe. I thought I should have burst, but time was too precious to stop to take breath even for a minute. A wide sweep round, and then, bearing left, an easy descent over snow that evidently filled the bed of a burn, and I was deeply thankful to find myself at 5.45, on a dark night early in February, 3,100 feet above the sea, on the shores of the frozen Loch Etchachan. A tedious walk in the dark—brought me at 8.30 to Derry Lodge, where I was hospitably entertained by Fraser, the head stalker, and his wife.

In spite of the undoubted danger I ran on this occasion, I still hold that solitary winter climbing, with proper precautions, is perfectly safe. This is the only time I have run any serious risk, although I have been on the mountains alone in winter many scores of times. The one inexcusable fault is to allow oneself to get benighted. With an hour more daylight—and I might easily have started two hours earlier—the mistake in the mist, even if it had been made at all, would have been easily retrieved.

ONE DAY OF MANY AMONGST ASSYNT HILLS.

BY J. A. HARVIE-BROWN, F.R.S.E.,

Member of the British Ornithologists' Union, &c.

THOSE of the Club who are acquainted with the wilds of Assynt and the north-west coast of Scotland, may find much to cavil at in the following notes, for the very good and sufficient reasons that the writer is not a mountaineer, and that he writes greatly from memory—a practice which, as a naturalist, he is little in sympathy with. When we had occasion to scale the steep sides of Ben More or Braebag, Ben Uidh or Glashven, Quinaig, or others of the Sutherland hills, it was usually with either sporting instincts aroused, or with an eye for the main chance as a collector of the species of birds known to breed high up upon these hillsides or on the higher plateaux. We fear, therefore, there was little time devoted by the eye to the devious courses of the upward track; and, from shortness of breath, and a natural disposition to view the scenery behind one, frequent pauses to draw the attention of others to these beauties, as well as to satisfy one's own taste for the picturesque, intervened. It is only by memory now, however, these pauses and journeyings can be recalled—save when, under such and such a date, the long-coveted nest and eggs of a rare species were procured, and jotted down in our journals or egg-books.

It was on a lovely day in May 1869 that, accompanied by a faithful ghillie—now passed away to the great majority—we started to ascend the slopes of Ben Harran, Huarran, or Chaorin—"the hill of the cloud-berry"—behind Inchnadamph Inn, which, as you all know, is situated near the shores of Loch Assynt. Ben Chaorin is a long ridge, part of the general mass of the Ben More and Braebag range of mountains, which stretches from the main summit in a general N.W. by W. direction. It is separated from Ben More by a deep and abrupt balloch, but the other "haunch" to the N.W. almost imperceptibly dips till the balloch between it and Ben Uidh is reached at the lower elevation of 2,000 feet. It presents in general contour a long hog-backed mass, if viewed from Loch Assynt, with

a perceptible bend from an east to west direction from the balloch of Ben More, to a direction almost N.W. to the balloch of Ben Uidh. Ben Uidh preserves an equal or greater height, but encircles along with Glashven the mountain valley of the northern tributary of the Trailigill Burn, forming with these hills, in fact, a wide sweeping horseshoe-shaped corrie.

We followed the course, first of the Trailigill Burn—dear to the dabbler of a brace of flies upon a mountain stream—as far as its junction with its tributary the Allt Poll nan Droighain. To our left, and somewhat higher up the slope, we had left the track which leads along the latter burn and crosses the balloch at Loch nan Chaoran, and which is the shortest acknowledged route to Overscaig upon Loch Shin.

On this occasion we started up the right bank of the main stream, till we arrived at the shepherd's house and sheep fank at Glenbain. Here our true ascent began, and, shortly and sharply, we turned upwards to our left, till we reached an elevation of about 2,000 feet. At this point, and visible from Inchnadamph, is a good guide for the eye in clear weather, viz., a dark projecting rock which juts out from the surrounding loose granite blocks, of which the whole hillside is composed; and *from* it, is also a magnificent view looking westward to the distant Hebrides, with Loch Assynt and Loch Inverin in the nearer distance, and to the south-west far over the intervening country of Assynt and West Cromarty, with Canisp, Suilven, Coul More, and Coul Beg, and the serrated ridge of Ben More Coigeach as middle distance. Close beneath us, as it were, is the grim dark Muloch Corrie Loch, and around it the pitted limestone moor of Blar-nam-Fiadhag, the favourite haunt of the golden plover, as its name—as many Gaelic place-names do—distinctly indicates, *the great moss of the golden plover*. All over this moor are treacherous “swallows,” circular at the lip, and descending to a point or small flat sward at the bottom—an inverted fool's cap, in which many a storm-driven sheep is lost, and shepherds' lives are often endangered. These penetrate the deep moss and heather which is superimposed upon the limestone, the great section of which is

best illustrated by the cliffs of Stronchrubie, above the high road to the south of Inchnadamph. Close beneath us also are the sinuous sparkling courses of the Trailigill and its tributary in Glen Dubh, and the subterranean upper courses between Loch Muloch Corrie and the Caves. The old dried-up bed of the former river Trailigill is distinctly seen, with a low cliff on one bank, and a slope of 45° on the other of smoothly laminated rock. By placing the ear to the cliff-side, the subterranean murmur of the present stream sounds loud and startlingly near. At the point where the river dives underground, just below the junction of the Glen Dubh Burn, which comes down in sparkling clearness from the 2,750 feet level, far up the scarred face of Ben More, if a piece of wood or other "flotsam" be thrown in, it is seen often to reappear after its subterranean journey a quarter of a mile lower down. Deep, therefore, in the adamantine limestone, over all this tract of country represented by the great Blar-nan-Fiadhag and the limestone of Assynt, an immense drainage percolates, or rushes in great cavernous spaces, spouting out of cliffs as if they had been struck by Moses' rod, rushing up in gathered volumes and forming rivers within a few feet of exit, any one of which would prove an incalculable blessing to the thirsty thousands of a great city (*i.e.*, if 'calculus' did not supervene). One spring, that of Altnaoul Glen, bursts out from its limestone "matrix" in one grand rush of water from perhaps—we speak from memory—a hundred orifices.

But all this time we have lost sight of our primary purpose in climbing the tinkling scaurs of Chaorin—tinkling! the very stones cry out! Does not some one of our Club members remember *that* curious tinkle on a granite *débris* slope or plateau, when one stone strikes another, and that ozonic sulphurous "*smell one feels*"? (Striking off at tangents, alas! seems a common practice amongst the feebler members of our craft!) To resume; we said we had lost sight of our primary purpose. Quite true. Our primary purpose was to search for, and to find, a ptarmigan's nest and eggs. But instead of devoting our attention to this primary object, and searching the chaos of

stones and lichens, mosses and sphagnum at our feet, we have been allowing our soul to soar quite beyond the spheres of our profession.

"Better wait till she reach the top," is the sage advice given at this vacillatory juncture.

So we trudge "Excelsior." Very soon we gain the additional altitude of another 200 or 300 feet, and, conquerors! stand on Chaorin! A great vast plateau of deeply bedded "tinkling" blocks of granite, half hid in sphagnum deep and soft, o'er the surface of which our footsteps glide, or sink as if in deepest piled Turkish carpets—now and then a dull erratic, undisturbed for ages, sends out a mild remonstrance, reminding one, at times almost unconsciously, of the clear small note of the snow-flake or snow bunting; or if one is supersensitive in his ornithological imaginings, causing him almost to start in the momentary hope and belief. We may be pardoned, we hope, this time by our brother Clubbists, because we are upon historic ground, and not a hundred miles away from where the first Scottish snow bunting's nest and eggs were found, and where the first nest and young were also discovered. We had hoped to see this visible proof of a fact—lodged in a vast wilderness before of doubt and hundred-year-old unverified assumptions—placed in one of our Scottish museums, "to make our hearts beat softer." But that is not to be.

And now we traverse the great plateau, our eyes upon the ground around us; and for a full summer's day very nigh, we search in vain. This was the third day within the ptarmigan region we had searched in vain. At last, late on in the bright summer day, when mists of twilight were creeping like lances amongst the lower levels, like shredded cotton tissues against the dark hillsides, like wreaths of blue tobacco smoke; and just as "we were athinking" of retracing our steps, a hen bird scuttled off her nest about ten yards in front of us—our first ptarmigan's nest. "The nest was a deepish cup,"—here at last we come to tangible notes and data—"scraped or chosen in the turf, on the flat top of a rocky slope, sparingly lined with thin grass and lichen, and a few of the bird's own breast and flank feathers. This nest was, as we note, upon the mossy

carpet, and protected from mist and the prevailing cold wind by an upright bank about one foot in height."

Should any of our mountaineering members reach so far in the perusal of our "Day among the Assynt Hills," we fear there may be the deep note of censure, "Tuts, this is not mountaineering at all." But let us humbly add, if we may be allowed so far to presume, the mild advice, "Go and do likewise; and if you meet with—bird, or bee, or bug, big buck or butterfly, the British bear or badger, or the very bunting himself, submit the relation of your pleasures to the sympathetic ears of those of your fellow Clubbists, who "*climb small*" amongst the mighty blocks and boulders, bens and ballochs, blars, and burn-sides of our breezy uplands; and who take deep draughts of health and renewed vigour at lower altitudes, still with an eye to even a *tiny flower*."

*See the "Journal of a Mountain Expedition to the Assynt Hills and
Mont Cramart" by Rev. J. H. Sturges, &c.*

CAIRNGORM ON 2ND JANUARY 1892.

BY WILLIAM BROWN, M.A., LL.B.

IN accordance with a custom, which has now become an annual one, four members of the Cairngorm Club crossed the Cairngorms on the 2nd of January, from Glenmore Lodge to Braemar. The party, which consisted at the start of Ruxton, M'Connochie, Rose, Tough, and the writer, left Aberdeen on the afternoon of 31st December, and reached Nethy Bridge at 8.40 the same evening. During the early stages of the long railway journey the weather was all in favour of the undertaking, but when we alighted from the train at Nethy Bridge a most dismal outlook lay before us. Let the reader imagine a night of exceptional darkness, an aggravating drizzle, descending with a steady persistency, which threatened to last overnight, a blustering wind blowing straight from the hills, the roads half-choked with slush, and he will have before him a tolerably accurate picture of the weather on Speyside during the closing hours of the old year. Fortunately the Abernethy Hotel, where we had arranged to pass the night, is close to the station, and thither we directed our footsteps as rapidly as the darkness and the slushy condition of the roads would permit. It goes without saying that we were hospitably received; indeed, judging from our experience on this occasion, I do not hesitate to say that there are few houses on Speyside which can beat Mr Grant's establishment. It possesses, however, one drawback, which mountaineers will do well to note,—its alarm clock is not to be trusted. That at least appears the most charitable explanation of the fact that, although we intended to start at five o'clock on the following morning, and left orders that we were to be awakened at 4.45, it was fully seven o'clock before we got under weigh. This delay, as it turned out, had most unfortunate results. To ensure an early start it had been arranged that we should walk eleven miles for our breakfast, which, accordingly, was promised at Glenmore Lodge for eight o'clock. As a matter of fact, we sat down to it at 11.45—a variation in

our programme due partly to the loss of those two hours, and partly to the unforeseen difficulties of the route.

When our plans were under discussion on the previous evening, it had seemed an easy thing, over a glass of toddy, to reach Derry Lodge before nightfall, climbing Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui on the way, and accordingly it had been settled, *nem. con.*, that we should make for that point. The weather at the start was exceedingly dull and close, but it was some consolation to find that the wind of the previous night had entirely subsided. Shortly after leaving the hotel, we encountered the first traces of snow, which, hardly perceptible at first for mud, gradually became deeper, till at Forres Lodge (where we lost a quarter of an hour by taking a false turn, and having to retrace our footsteps) its depth was not less than a foot. Above Rynettin the track is very exposed, and here the real difficulties of the walk commenced. Huge snowdrifts, several feet deep, and composed of the softest snow, lay across the path, making progression extremely difficult, and as a consequence painfully slow. At places these wreaths proved so impracticable that we preferred to abandon the beaten track, and to strike out a path for ourselves across the heather, where the snow was lying at a more uniform depth. As the morning advanced, some startling effects were produced by the mist suddenly lifting and revealing great snow slopes stretching from our feet indefinitely upwards, till they merged in the grey and lowering sky. The prospect, however, never became extensive, except towards the east; but, truth to tell, we had no eyes for the beauties of nature till Rebhoan was reached, and the descent into Glenmore fairly commenced. Through the "Thieves' Pass," which we now entered, the "going" was comparatively easy, and shortly after eleven the smoke of Glenmore Lodge came into view. Breakfast over, the inevitable consultation took place, when it was unanimously resolved to postpone our climb till next day, so much time having already been lost that even had the weather been clear, Derry Lodge could hardly have been reached before midnight. Unfortunately this arrangement reduced our small party to four, a business engagement

compelling our chief to return to Aberdeen on the following morning.

The situation in which we now found ourselves might have proved exceedingly awkward had it not been for the kindness of the keeper at Glenmore, who, in view of the peculiar circumstances of the case, readily agreed to find us quarters for the night in his own house. By this arrangement—effected, it is right to state, at considerable inconvenience to our kind host and his family—we were saved a return journey to Nethy Bridge, and enabled to commence operations on the following morning at the very base of the mountain. After taking leave of our companion, who proceeded at once to Boat of Garten *en route* for Aberdeen, we spent the remainder of the day in walking through the forests of Glenmore and Rothiemurchus to Achnachfoichen (near Lochan Eilan), where we exchanged greetings with an old friend, returning later in the evening in time to take part in the festivities with which our hosts at Glenmore were celebrating the New Year. The entertainment opened with a dance, and concluded with a Gaelic song, which was chiefly remarkable for its extraordinary length, and the melancholy air to which it was sung. The singer, however, appeared to think that it erred on the side of brevity, for he apologised at the end for not being able to remember more.

Next morning we all displayed a marked disinclination to part company with our beds, but considering the advantage with which we started there was no particular call upon us to exert ourselves. From a jotting made at the time it appears that we left Glenmore Lodge at 8.45. Unfortunately the weather was still of a doubtful character. A dense mist lay upon the hill-tops, and a stiff wind, which had sprung up overnight, promised trouble on the summit. For the first hour our route lay through the woods, which at this point skirt the base of Cairngorm, and as the snow lay both soft and deep walking was anything but an easy task. A small herd of deer, proceeding evidently in the same direction as ourselves, had marked out a rough track, and as the sagacious animals invariably selected the easiest route, we followed it with considerable advantage until it

became necessary to abandon the level ground and begin the ascent. The first few hundred feet were not accomplished without a good deal of floundering, in consequence of the extensive drifts which covered this portion of the hill. As soon, however, as we gained the ridge, along which the path to the summit extends, immediate relief was obtained, for the wind had swept it clear of snow, and the hard under surface was in capital condition for walking. The readings at this stage were:—Aneroid, 2,000 feet; thermometer, 37°. Quarter of an hour earlier, at 1,600 feet, the latter 'stood at 38°; and at 10.30, when a height of 2,600 feet had been reached, the temperature was 36°. At the next reading a most unfortunate accident befell the thermometer; the wind, which had now greatly increased in violence, catching it up, and dashing it to the ground, with the result that nothing survived the contact but the empty case. When this incident occurred we had reached an elevation of 3,000 feet, and excepting the wind, which was bitterly cold, the ascent so far had been easy and enjoyable to an extent which far surpassed our expectations. Within the next ten minutes, however, we began to realise that our destination was not likely to be reached without a struggle. We were now advancing through a dense mist, with the wind momentarily becoming fiercer, and the cold more intense. Our appearance—to say nothing of our feelings—afforded ample proof of this fact, for the exposed parts of our persons were thickly coated with frozen snow, and we suffered considerable pain and annoyance from the small fragments of ice which the wind tore from the ground and drove in a continuous stream across the hill. At half-past eleven the aneroid warned us that we were nearing the summit, but for some time no trace of the cairn could be discerned. At last a gleam of brighter light burst through the mist, and we espied it not thirty yards distant in a westerly direction. Considering the violence of the wind, it is surprising that it did not drive us still farther towards the east. Simultaneous with the discovery of the cairn came a terrific blast of wind, before which we were glad to throw ourselves face downwards on the ground, and remain in that position till its violence had

subsided. By unanimous consent only a short stay of two or three minutes was made at the summit, during which one of the party, imbued with the true scientific spirit, persisted, in the face of much discouragement, in taking the exact barometric reading, the gale meanwhile raging with an excess of fury which words are powerless to describe.

We had originally intended to proceed next in a south-westerly direction, and ascend Ben Muich Dhui, descending to Derry Lodge by Glen Lui Beg. For some time past, however, it had been clearly apparent that owing to the wind, which was blowing almost due west, that course was out of the question, and accordingly it was now abandoned, practically without discussion. Readers who are familiar with Cairngorm will remember that it has really only two sides (the north and the west) which are easy of access. On the south-east a formidable line of precipitous crags overhangs Loch Avon, with only one opening worthy of the name (Coire Raibert), through which, in winter, a descent to the loch can be safely made. Towards this corrie we would now have headed had the weather been clear and the wind less violent; but in consequence of the dense mist and the drifting snow, which limited our vision to half-a-dozen yards, it was deemed more expedient to make for the head of Strath Nethy. Accordingly, led by M'Connochie, whose encyclopædic knowledge of these hills is equal to any emergency, we began to move slowly in that direction, feeling our way with the greatest care, for this portion of the hill is bounded on the one side by the crags which guard the source of the Nethy, and on the other by an immense mass of rock known as the Eagle's Cliff. When 750 feet or thereby had been descended in this cautious manner, with numerous pauses to make sure that we were not approaching the edge of some precipice, a sudden rift in the mist revealed the jagged summit of Ben Mheadhoin, struggling faintly through a mass of sunlit and storm-tossed vapour, while all around the gloom was still impenetrable and profound. The effect was simply indescribable, and impressed itself upon us none the less forcibly because it communicated the welcome tidings that we were approaching a position of safety. A few

minutes later there was a general uprising of the mist, and we found ourselves overlooking the deep and narrow gorge which separates Bynac from Cairngorm. All cause for anxiety was now removed, for the descent from this point to the "Saddle" (the ridge which divides Strath Nethy from the valley of the Avon), and thence to Loch Avon itself, though exceedingly abrupt, is a perfectly simple matter, except when the ground is ice-bound. On this occasion we found snow lying to the depth of several feet, and a good deal of scrambling and floundering took place before we reached the bottom. Precisely at one o'clock we arrived at the loch. It was frozen from shore to shore, except at the point where the burn from the Loch Etchachan plateau joins it, but on examination the ice proved to be so rotten that we quickly abandoned the idea of crossing it, though the alternative involved a substantial addition to our journey. From the "Saddle" to the Shelter Stone, along the shore of the loch, is a distance of less than two miles, yet so toilsome was the condition of the ground that the time occupied between those two points was exactly an hour and a half. In fact this portion of our walk proved the stiffest part of the undertaking, and exhibited the gymnastics of pedestrianism in their best form. Scrambling over rocks, plunging into and out of snowdrifts, balancing on slippery stones, and executing involuntary glissades—these were some of the feats which our tired muscles were called upon to perform. At last—and none too soon, for the man with the lunch basket had for some time been the object of tender regard—the Shelter Stone was reached, and we sat down to a rather comfortless lunch beneath its time-honoured roof. The interior was found half choked with snow, but it was a luxury to escape for a few minutes from the chilling blast. Outside a flock of ptarmigan—whose confidence in mankind had apparently never been disturbed by the sound of a gun—hopped about on the snow at our very feet, and probably enjoyed the remains of our meal when our backs were turned. Before resuming our walk we paused for a few moments to admire the sombre magnificence of the scene in the midst of which we were now standing. Behind

and on either side an amphitheatre of frowning precipices, deeply scarred with ice, towered above us, running up to meet the leaden sky overhead till the eye became hopelessly deceived, and their height appeared many times greater than it really is. At our feet lay a wilderness of snow-clad boulders, tossed about in the direst confusion, beyond which Loch Avon stretched in unbroken expanse, a pure sheet of white, till a sudden curve shut its farther extremity from view, and the eye rested upon the steep and rugged slopes of Ben Mheadhoin.

At 2.45 we were once more on the move, and attacking with renewed vigour the steep slope which culminates in the plateau of Loch Etchachan. This also proved a slow and difficult process, and when we reached the top the gale, from which we had been protected in the valley, burst upon us again with all its old fury. Fortunately it was now at our backs, and materially assisted our progress across the plateau. Loch Etchachan was found completely frozen over, and covered with snow; but without pausing to examine the condition of the ice, we set our faces immediately towards Corrie Etchachan, down which we were swept by the wind at a most exhilarating pace. As we entered Glen Derry the short afternoon was drawing to a close, and it soon became apparent that only a small portion of that dreary glen would be traversed in daylight. This proved to be the case, and after darkness overtook us our experiences were not such as could interest any one but ourselves. Suffice it to say, that after much drudgery and many stumbles, we reached Derry Lodge in safety at 6.15, and after enjoying an hour's rest and a warm cup of tea set out again, greatly refreshed, to knock off the ten miles which still lay between us and Braemar. These were accomplished without adventure, and at 9.45 (exactly thirteen hours from the start) we were shaking hands with our friends at Deebank, and receiving their congratulations on the success of what they doubtless considered a very mad adventure.

Next day (Sunday) we walked to Ballater (sixteen miles), and on the following morning returned by train to Aberdeen.

One word in conclusion. If any one, unduly impressed by what I have written regarding the difficulties of the ascent, should imagine that it was not an experience which any of us would care to repeat, I can assure him that he is greatly mistaken. These difficulties were at times very real,—especially when we had to find our way through the mist from the top of Cairngorm to Loch Avon without walking over one of its precipices,—but they were also of a kind which yield to care and prudence, coupled with an accurate knowledge of the hills such as one member at least of our party possessed. And although the labour involved was not inconsiderable, there was no suspicion of drudgery in our efforts till darkness overtook us in Glen Derry, and then it was too late in the day to think of murmuring. Taken all in all, the most interesting and enjoyable winter ascent I have made among these magnificent mountains was the last.

CORRIE VASSIE, OR THE CORRIE OF
THE WOLF.

BY CHARLES STUART, M.D.

ROY BRIDGE is easily reached by coach from either Fort-William (13 miles), or by Highland Railway to Kingussie, from thence by coach, which runs in summer, passing the door of Roy Bridge Hotel. It forms a good headquarters for the ascent of a first-class range of mountains, several of the peaks being little lower than Ben Nevis. Roy Bridge is delightfully situated at the entrance of Glen Roy, near the junction of the Roy with the river Spean. The situation is very picturesque, the river being hemmed in by rocky banks which are well wooded, the ground covered with ferns and other subalpine plants; while, sloping away to the higher ground, the moors in August are glowing with the heather bloom. Away to the south, a fine range of mountains bounds the landscape, their corries containing many snow-fields, well seen from the hotel windows. Stob Corrie Clairigh (3,858) is a striking object at all times, with its red perpendicular face and knifelike ridge. Stob Choire an esain Mhoir (3,658), Aonich Beag (4,060), Aonich Mhoir (3,999), are among the most conspicuous, and were ascended during our visit.

By the courtesy of the late Lord Abinger, a party of congenial spirits met at Bridge of Roy, on the 29th July 1886, for a week's exploration of these hills. Mr Cameron, the head stalker, met us there, with his Lordship's instructions to show us all attention. This was in some degree necessary, as the ground was of the roughest description, and the weather conditions far from favourable. In the corries of Aonich Mhoir and Aonich Beag vast quantities of snow, for the season of the year, showed that the temperature had never been high there at all events. Among the rocks of Aonich Beag the golden eagle has her eyrie every season. Shortly before our visit, the forester told me, the nest contained a fawn, a hill fox, and a mountain hare, as provender for the eaglets! He also stated that the eagles annoyed the deer, sometimes alighting on their backs and so frightening them as to lead to their destruction.

After an early breakfast we drove over to Leonachan, the Forest Lodge, on the 30th July, *viâ* Spean Bridge, distance about eight miles. Accompanied by Mr Cameron, we crossed the moor in a south-west direction, crossed the rapid stream coming from the corries, and pushed up the rough ridge next Aonich Mhoir. The inclination was considerable, and there was soon "bellows to mend," which is generally the case on a first excursion. After a short halt we walked with a will, and speedily attained a considerable elevation, in a dense mist and small rain. On a little ridge a fine herd of deer, peering at us through the mist, delighted our eyes. They having taken a good look, trotted gently over the shoulder and vanished. Keeping well to the right, not to disturb them, we came on quantities of *Cornus suecica*, or dwarf cornel, in flower, and *Arctostaphylos alpinus* (black bearberry), a rarity which, although it is said to grow on Ben Nevis, we have never succeeded in finding there. It grew here in tolerable abundance, but is not common except on Ben Hope in Sutherlandshire. Ascending the ridge, we slipped into Corrie Vassie by a rocky staircase. A wilder or more rugged place can hardly be conceived. Its rocks tried our scrambling powers to the utmost. Getting along was a very slow process, consisting principally of creeping, hands and knees, over huge masses of granite fallen from above. In their interstices we gathered many interesting plants, especially *Hieracia* and ferns. *Pseudathyrium alpestre* (the mountain polypody) was very plentiful on one slope, in a most elegant dwarfed mountain form, which was thought to resemble *P. flexile*, but, alas! upon growing it, I find the plant to be only an old friend. *P. flexile* is only found on Ben Alder.* Never was rougher ground seen than in this corrie; and I, as a senior and heavy weight, got much assistance from Mr Cameron's guidance. In the dense mist and rain we would have steered an uncertain course without him. Corrie Vassie, or the Corrie of the Wolf,—in fact it might have been the corrie of any wild beast if stern ruggedness would give it a claim to the name. Over its rocks we scrambled, till at last we reached a hill spring, where we lunched and

Leonachan

* *P. flexile* was first found in Glen Prosen, and probably is still

rested, all agreeing that the water, qualified with a dash of "Long John's Dew of Ben Nevis," had a most restorative effect! Some of us would have hailed with pleasure an order to descend, but no! some of our advanced men wished to go to the Caisteal, which was said to be ten minutes' walk from the place where we were resting. When I write that it took more than an hour to scramble over the worst moraines we had been on the whole day, some idea may be formed of the roughness and steepness of the ground. The ptarmigan ran before us without fear. I don't believe they ever saw botanists before; at least they trusted them, for they sat and looked in the mist, no doubt wondering what took us there in the half-dark. The droppings of the fox and wild-cat were observed among the rocks. These rocks were of so "coggly" a description that they had to be tried by the alpenstok before being stepped on. Progression was necessarily slow, but at length we were under the precipices of the Caisteal, after an exhausting scramble. These rocks are five hundred feet straight up, and the abyss below was fortunately hidden by the mist. Next day, from the top of Aonich Mhoir, when the air was quite clear, and a good survey of the ground could be made out, some of the party determined to avoid the place in future. However, everything is flavoured with some good, for had we not ascended we should have missed the best plants obtained that day. In the shady recesses of the precipices *Saxifraga rivularis* was abundant, and this was a new station. It was found at the edge of the melting snow, in the same circumstances as at Ben Nevis, Loch-na-gar, and Bhein a Bourd. A hearty shout from an enthusiast proclaimed the next glorious find, *Saxifraga cæspitosa* (true), which had not been gathered in Scotland since Dr Martin Barry found it fifty years before near the summit of Ben Avon! All sense of fatigue, hunger, and thirst vanished, and I may also state the feeling that we were gathering specimens on dangerous ground. Some of our friends had scrambled still higher in the mist, sending down pieces of rock and stones at such a pace that, had any one been struck, would have seriously injured if not killed them. Owing to the inclination of the rocks, to get out of the way was easier

had served in the trenches with the Naval Brigade, shouted, "Confound it! this is worse than the cannon balls in the Crimea; unless we remove beyond the elevation of our friends we shall get killed." As we were speaking, a large piece of rock came past me down a perpendicular rent, which covered me with dust as it went past, filling the air with a sulphurous odour. This caused so much alarm, that a retreat across the rent, balancing with the pole, and over dangerously loose rocks afterwards, had to be accomplished at a pace which astonished my companion as well as myself, till we got beyond "the range of fire," for the rumbling heard behind where we were still showed that the rocks were falling. I am afraid some unparliamentary exclamations accidentally escaped the lips of some unclerical members, who wondered if those above us had any evil designs on the lives of their friends! Mr Cameron sang out, "Gentlemen, it is now a quarter past five o'clock; we have three hours' hard walk to the Forest Lodge; we had better descend, as the evening is unpromising." We were still on high difficult ground, but coming to a fine snow-field several acres in extent, and twenty feet deep, we were glad to have a smooth surface to walk upon, and traversed it from one end to the other, getting at the same time "a cooler" for the mouth. Sloping away down the corrie, piloting over stones and bogs, we got to turfy ground at last, which was more comfortable for the feet, and crossing the stream got on the shoulder we ascended in the morning. After a long fatiguing walk through the glen, we came on another large herd of deer, who, being on the look-out, took good care not to allow us too close a view. We gave them a wide berth, which they observed, and continued to graze, the stags standing sentry. There were many hinds and fawns in the herd, and on a nearer approach they all disappeared behind a ridge, and were no more seen. We reached Leonachan about eight P.M., and were hospitably entertained by Mr Cameron, who proved himself the most attentive, discreet companion in the hill we had ever met with. Getting into our conveyances, we got to Roy Bridge Hotel at 9.30, in time for a late dinner, which concluded a glorious excursion.

THE CLUB MEETS.

AT the Annual Meeting held in Edinburgh in December 1890, the subject of "Club Meets" was first mooted, and was practically carried out for the first time at the Crook Inn, Peeblesshire, towards the end of February 1891. Then followed the popular one at Dalmally a month later, where some twelve or fifteen members assembled. Since then Dalwhinnie, Loch Awe, and Arran have been visited, and it may be fairly said that the scheme launched in 1890 has proved an unqualified success.

To bring still better before the notice of members the advantages and real enjoyment of these "Meets," it has been proposed to devote—as has been done in this number of the *Journal*—a larger space than hitherto to their record, so that members who have not as yet taken part, may learn something of what they are like. The following accounts of those of Loch Awe and Arran give a fair idea of what constitutes a "Club Meet." It will be seen to embrace hard work and easy work. If one does not feel quite "fit," he can choose some easy work, or no work at all, and he will doubtless find companions to join him. While if keen for a "big day on the hills," the centres for the "Meets" are always so chosen that some of the best climbing the country can afford is at hand. It will thus be seen that while the main object of these Club Meets is to foster mountaineering, an item of no small consideration is the encouragement of a kindred social spirit in the love of fresh air, fine scenery, and fraternity.

LOCH AWE MEET.

January 1st to 4th 1892.

New Year's Eve brought a pleasant party together at Loch Awe Hotel, — Messrs Maylard, Munro, Gilbert Thomson, Naismith, J. H. Gibson, Lester, Clapperton, and Douglas arriving that night, and Rennie the day following. Telegrams and letters came pouring in from absent members, our President sending one in rhyme from Minchmoor's top, and a mountaineering song came from Mr Stott, which, too good to be lost, is given below :—

AIR—"The Golden Slippers."

OH, the big ice axe, it hangs on the wall,
With the gaiters, and the gloves, and the rope, and all ;
But we'll polish off the rust, and we'll knock out all the dust,
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.

Then our raiment stout shall the cold keep out,
And the good old axe shall again cut tracks,
And the frozen slope shall call for the rope,
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.

Chorus.—Oh, my big hobnailers ! Oh, my big hobnailers !
How they speak of mountain peak,
And lengthy stride o'er moorland wide !
Oh, my big hobnailers ! Oh, my big hobnailers !
Memories raise of joyous days
Upon the mountain side !

Then our cragsmen bold shall swarm up the shoots,
And shall win their way by unheard-of routes ;
While others, never flagging, the tops and peaks are bagging,
When we go up to the mountains in the snow,
Though the hailstones rattle, like the shot in battle,
And the whirlwind and blizzard freeze the marrow and the gizzard,
Though it thunder and it lighten, still our hearts it cannot frighten,
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.

Chorus.

For the best of the Club will then be afoot,
From the President down to the last recruit,
And a merry band you'll find us, as we leave the town behind us,
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.
You may tell Tyndrum that we're going to come,
And at snug Dalmally shall our hillmen rally,
And a lot of other places shall behold our jolly faces,
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.

Chorus.

J. G. S.

January 1st, 1892.—The year was ushered in by a wintry scene of resplendent beauty. Big Ben Lui and his satellites, clad in their snowy mantles, slightly topped with trailing mist, rose from the blue waters of the loch ; while the sun, rising over his shoulder, cast a flood of subdued light on the encircling hills, and lightened up Kilchurn's gloomy towers lying at their feet. Truly a glorious prospect for those who stood on the verandah of the hotel that morning, and one that would have put even the most dyspeptic mortal into a fever of good spirits.

The rock-climbers of the party were off before nine o'clock, to make an attack on what is now known as "the Black Shoot on Stob Maol," but owing to the bad state of the rocks they returned at 4.30 disappointed. They are still hopeful that, given a better condition of the rocks, it yet may be done. Mr Lester supplies the following account:—

"THE THIRD ATTEMPT ON THE BLACK SHOOT.—On New Year's Day Messrs Gibson, Naismith, Thomson, and Lester made an assault on the 'The Black Shoot.' Although fully equipped with alpine appliances, including ropes, axes, and even spikes, the attempt was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, they were rewarded by reaching a point about fifty feet higher than that attained in any previous attempt.

"In the *second attempt*—that of April 1890—Campbell and Lester were brought to a stop in the shoot, where it becomes almost perpendicular, and takes a bend to the right. The climbers were at this point confronted with a wall of rock, some fifteen feet high, leading to the base of a narrow chimney. The rocks of this wall slope the wrong way, are wet and slippery, and as there is no good hold for some way up, the leaders on the present occasion had to stand on the second man's shoulders to scale them. This difficulty passed, the two leading men worked up the chimney for a few yards, until they found further progress barred by a boulder, which had fallen from above and stuck there, and this brought the party to a stop. The rocks in the upper part of the shoot were very wet with ice and dripping water, which was transferred to their clothes while squirming up, and soon soaked them through. The time taken to cover the 300 or 400 feet up and down was about three hours."

Mr Munro accompanied this party to the foot of the shoot, and then climbed the north-eastern spur of Ben Cruachan (Sron an Isean, 3,163 feet—*the nose of the gully*), and reached the cairn at 3.10. He found the top clear of mist, and had a good view of the tops of Cruachan and the surrounding hills.

Messrs Maylard, Clapperton, and Douglas climbed

the Dalmally peak of Ben Cruachan (3,689 feet), by the usual Cruachan Burn route. About 1,000 feet up they reached the snow line, and found it very heavy, having to plough their way through it knee deep, and in places much deeper, until they topped the Bealach an Lochain. Here it had a frozen crust. This crust, however, was sufficiently soft to give a fair foothold, and they easily gained the cairn before one o'clock, in spite of some strong blizzards that now and again attacked them. The top was in mist, and they had no view. The same route was followed in their return, and in it some grand retrospective views were got of the hill as the flying clouds lightly touched the top in sailing by. They reached the hotel before five o'clock.

January 2nd.—The "early train" had carried off four of the party, leaving only Messrs Lester, Gibson, Munro, Rennie, and Douglas to turn up for breakfast. The morning was an unpleasant contrast to that of yesterday, rain coming down in heavy showers, and it was not until 11.45 that their minds were made up to start. Sauntering Dalmally ways for a mile or so, they turned up the glen to the left, following the railway lines, past the stone quarries, and on for two miles—first by the side of the Mhoille, then the Creachan, and then the Ghlais burns—over soft and boggy ground, till they were landed at the back of Ben Bhuridh in Coire Ghlais. Here, at one o'clock, a twenty minutes' halt was made for lunch. A stiff climb up a steep slope, covered with wet snow on the top of wiry grass for a thousand feet, placed them under the cliffs on its north face. The ridge was gained without much difficulty by the west chimney (see *Journal*, Vol. I., page 237), and the top, 2,935 feet, at 3.15. They returned to Loch Awe by its south slopes. The snow, seldom more than six inches deep, was, owing to the thaw, very soft and wet. Several showers of rain and sleet fell during the day.

January 3rd.—Opened with truly wintry weather, the thermometer registering several degrees of frost, the landscape white with falling snow, and the wind howling round the house in angry gusts. Some of the party ensconced in arm-chairs before a blazing fire, enjoying their morning pipes, felt more inclined to leave the hills

alone, than to scale their heights in such inclement weather; but the more energetic members scouted this idea, and proposed the ascent of Cruachan's Taynuilt peak. This being decided on, a trap was ordered to take them the six miles of road to the Cruiniche Burn.

The snow was silently falling in large flakes, as they followed up the west side of the burn, flooring the steep slopes with a dry crisp carpet of full six inches deep, making a delightful surface to walk on. Ascending rapidly they emerged from the shelter of the burn's banks—where it forks into three—on to the main ridge of the mountain, and there met the full force of the gale. Around them circled a whirling blizzard of sharp ice particles, rattling like shot on their faces, and freezing solid on their clothes, moustaches, and eyebrows, forming on them icicles that flapped joyously against their cheeks in the driving wind. The snow underfoot too had changed its character. It was now a solid sheet of ice, on which their big hob-nailers made but little impression. Combined with these difficulties the slope soon grew too steep to proceed without step-cutting, and some genuine ice work was done for the last few hundred feet of the ascent. At one o'clock the cairn (3,611 feet) was reached, two and a half hours from leaving the road. No view was had, and the air still filled with stinging needles of ice made a stoppage of longer than the few seconds required to consult aneroids and note times unpleasant. So intense was the cold, that one of the party whose ears were unprotected showed symptoms of frost-bite, which fortunately was nipped in the bud by a vigorous application of snow.

A sudden momentary pause in the blizzard unveiled the twin peak, with its connecting half-mile ridge, along which they speedily made their way. In crossing this, those without ice axes found it very perilous work, for the polished snow crust gave no secure footing on the slope, and a slip might easily have launched them over the precipice on the left, or on a prolonged glissade to unknown depths on the right.

At the *col* a halt for ten minutes was made for lunch, partially sheltered from the driving blizzard behind a

boulder beautifully bedecked, like all the rocks here, with horizontal opaque-white icicles, shaped somewhat like the leaves of the cactus plant. The wind was roaring, with a noise like that made by the falls of Niagara, up the precipice of Coire Chat, the edge of which was just a few feet from where they were sitting.

Again the blizzard died away, revealing a wonderful picture akin to celestial in its grandeur. Two white peaks, soaring out of the mist, appeared on either side in all their spotless sublimity, struck with a gleam of sunshine, throwing light and shade on their gleaming pinnacles, with wind-blasts howling round them like a legion of "storm fiends shrieking their notes of wailing." It was, for the few minutes it lasted, a scene of impressive solemnity, and they gazed on it in rapt admiration, till the snow mists came sailing up, blotting out the view and enclosed them once more in its cold embrace.

A rough scramble placed them at 1.50 on the top of the Dalmally peak, 3,689 feet, and then by the south shoulder descended to the Bealach an Lochain, 2,700 feet. Here Munro and Rennie went on alone to Meall Cuanail, 3,004 feet, arriving at the top at 2.20. The other three continued down a nasty slope—snow on top of ice, which necessitated roping for the benefit of the writer, who was minus an axe—to the Cruachan burn, where they met again at 3.15. Following the picturesque pathway high above the trees and road, they arrived back at 4.45 o'clock, their outer garments still coated with scales of ice, which clanked like chain armour with every stride.

January 4th.—The "early train" had again to answer for three of the party, Messrs Munro and Rennie alone being left behind. They started on a glorious morning for the Ben Lui group. Mr Rennie has supplied the following notes of their tramp:—Leaving Tyndrum station at 7.45, they kept the railway lines in the direction of Crianlarich for about a mile, and then turning to the right, followed a cart track running along the north side of the Choninish burn, as the infant Tay is called, to the Choninish farmhouse. This they reached at nine o'clock, and crossing the stream by a foot-bridge, the ascent of Beinn Dubh-

chraige was begun. At first the going was easy, what little snow there was being hard; but soon it became much stiffer, the grass for several hundred feet being covered with ice, caused by frozen surface runners. Getting quit of this nuisance by the snow becoming deeper and just hard enough to walk over easily, they reached the cairn, 3,204 feet, at 10.45. Here a rest for ten minutes was enjoyed, basking in the sun, sheltered from the north wind a few feet below the cairn on the south slope, and getting a fine view, in which Ben and Loch Lomond played prominent parts. The loch had all the appearance of a broad meandering river, for the spits of land projecting from either side and the foreshortened view gave to it a winding effect. To the south a glimpse of Loch Fyne was got.

The *col*, 2,550 feet, in the direction of Beinn Oss, was reached at 11.30, and fifteen minutes was here spent for lunch. The ascent of Beinn Oss was begun at first over gentle slopes of hard snow, and then winding up with from two to three hundred feet of steeper snow slope on the south-east side, the surface of which was just soft enough to kick footsteps in. Up this slope Munro led a zigzag way, with Rennie following, till it brought them within a few feet of the small cairn on Beinn Oss, 3,374 feet, at 12.20.

In the descent to the next *col* [2,250 feet, 12.55], Ben Lui was seen to its best advantage, bathed in bright sunshine against a background of clear blue sky; its noble outline, white with snow, reared itself from the grand Corrie Lui, fringed with a sharp snow cornice that overhung its rocky precipice and steep snow slopes—a truly magnificent picture.

The cairn, 3,708 feet, was reached at 2.5, from which most of the surrounding hills were seen. The air was clear and with little haze, save for a few clouds in the extreme distance.

The following is a list of some of the hills that were in sight. To the *east*, Beinn Oss and Dubh-chraige, Stobinian and Ben More, the Chabhair group with Ben Ledi in the distance. To the *south* and *south-west*, Ben Lomond, the Campsie Fells, Meikle Bin (1870), and Earl's Seat (1894) the chimneys and smoke of the Vale of Leven, Dumbarton

Rock, the Firth of Clyde, Cumbræ and Arran in the haze, the Arrochar hills—Vorlich, Ime, Arthur and Vane (the latter cloud capped), Loch Fyne just visible, and Ben Bhuidhe stood out clear and sharp; beyond was the sea, with Islay in haze, the Paps of Jura, Scarba distinct, with slight haze in the direction of Mull, Lismore, and Morven. Nearer, and more to the *west* and *north-west*, a good view of Loch Awe, with all the tops of Ben Cruachan, Beinn a Chochuill, Beinn ^{Er}naich, and in the foreground the round top of Beinn a Chleibh. Round to the *north* a chain of hills—Glen Coe range, the Buchaille Etives, Moor of Rannoch, with part of Loch Lydoch, Beinn Doirean; and still further round, Ben Lawers (capped with cloud) and a glimpse of Schiehallion.

The Beinn a Cleibh *col*, 2,550 feet,* was reached 2.35, and ten minutes halt for rest and a second lunch. From here the view of Ben Lui was very fine, with the shadow of Beinn a Cleibh gradually mounting up the north-west Dalmally slope. The top of Beinn a Cleibh was reached at 3.10 (one or two stones mark the top), and the base (Socach farm) at 3.55, the railway at 4.5, and Loch Awe Hotel *via* railway line at 5.55; ten hours and ten minutes going, in a perfect day, and snow in good condition.

WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

THE ARRAN MEET.

January 29th to 31st.

It will be in the recollection of readers of the *Journal*, and of those who have attended the dinners and other functions of the Club, that certain pernicious and heretical opinions have been expressed from time to time, to the effect that the mountains of Scotland do not supply sufficient subject matter to preserve for any length of time the *raison d'être* of the *Journal*. These opinions,

* As the heights of the *cols* differ considerably from those on page 247 of Vol. I., it is interesting to note what the 6-inch Ordnance Survey makes them, viz.—between Ben a Cleibh and Ben Lui 2,561, Ben Lui and Ben Oss 2,288, and Ben Oss and Ben Dubh-chraige 2,580.

moreover, have been expressed, not by outsiders, but by the initiated. I think that a very cursory glance at Mr Munro's formidable list of orographic "millipedes" will dispel this illusion, and will convince the most sceptical that subjects at least are supplied for unlimited "copy."

It must be borne in mind that the love of the hills is as many sided as it is enduring, it is not confined to the artist, the athlete, or to the man of science, but is shared by all. And as in every mountain there may be found not one, but many points of access of varying difficulty, so in the alternations of the seasons every route assumes an entirely different character, and fresh matter of interest may be found even where the subject has been touched before.

It is without apology, therefore, that I would ask our readers to re-visit with me that paradise of climbers, the Isle of Arran, which has twice before been made the subject of papers in this *Journal*; once in the initial number, when I attempted to describe a long ramble round the cirque of Glen Sannox, and again in the last issue, when that indefatigable seeker after the inaccessible, Mr W. W. Naismith, led us in imagination up the north-eastern face of Cir Mhor.

It is a somewhat remarkable fact that the Arran meet was attended, with the one exception of myself, entirely by adherents in the east country; but the prevalence of the influenza scourge combined with other causes to keep away, at the last moment, a number of members who had intended to be present, not only for the sake of the outing, but to do honour to our late Editor, Mr Stott, who, on this occasion, was made the recipient of a presentation on the eve of his departure to New Zealand, where may God speed him.

It was on the afternoon of Saturday that a party of seven, consisting of Messrs R. A. Robertson, J. G. Stott, W. Douglas, J. H. Gibson, and myself, with two friends, Dr Leith and Mr Hamilton Fleming, embarked at Ardrossan on a somewhat boisterous voyage to Brodick. The heavy gales of the previous week had lashed the waters of the Firth into a state of turmoil, and the good

ship "Marchioness of Lorne" ploughed her way through the waves somewhat after the manner of the "Schooner Hesperus" of blessed memory. The minds of the party seemed to be pervaded by a shadowy idea that "someone" had made arrangements with mine host of the Douglas Hotel for the reception of a considerable number of visitors. This idea proved entirely fallacious, the only member of the party who had had any communication with the Island being Robertson, who was wiser in his generation than his neighbours. His foresight was subsequently rewarded with a fire in his room and dry sheets!

When we arrived in Brodick, we found that the first news of our coming had been received some ten minutes before the arrival of the steamer, a telegram having been despatched from Ardrrossan just before we sailed. Instead therefore of our finding the fatted calf killed and roasted, we learned that it was problematical whether any calf, fatted or otherwise, or any fish, or feathered fowl, was procurable at all. By dint, however, we presumed, of a raid upon neighbouring tribes, our host succeeded in putting before us in an hour or two a most excellent repast.

During the progress of the feast, Mr Douglas, in a graceful speech, handed to Mr Stott a handsome travelling clock and dispatch case, the gift of members of the Club. With these, I am sure, go out the best wishes of Stott's many friends therein, not only of those who like myself have often "paidl'd in the burn" with him, or "run about the braes," or done any of those other feats the recollection of which is wont to bring post-prandial tears to the eyes of loyal Scots, but of those also who have known him only through the pages of the *Journal* he has so ably conducted.

As we sat around the fire after dinner, smoking the pipe of peace, and discussing the merits of Mr Macdonald's whisky, we listened to the sough of the wind outside and to the patter of rain upon the windows, and prophesied evil for the morrow. But the morning belied our fears, and a better day for climbing could not have been wished for. The ragged peak of Goatfell stood out sharp and

clear against the frosty sky, a few long streaks of snow marking the seams upon its eastern face, while at its foot the bay stretched placid as a lake, and glistening in the morning sun.

We were rather late in breakfasting, but ten o'clock saw us fairly on our way. Stott, who owing to a recent illness had been forbidden to exert himself, left us at the end of the village and took the road to Corrie; the remainder of the party turning their steps up Glen Rosa, till we reached the bridge where the Garabh Allt tumbles in a white cascade into the Rosa Burn. Here Douglas left us, electing to follow the glen, whence he subsequently made the ascent of Cir Mhor from the end of the ridge of A'Cir.

The rest of us struck up by the side of the Garabh Allt, and after a stiffish pull of about an hour we reached the summit of Ben a Cliabhan (2,141 feet), whence we could view the ridge of A'Cir, which formed the special object of our climb. It has already been indicated that Cir Mhor (2,618 feet the great Comb or Crest); forms the dominating peak of Arran, and between it and the peaks of Ben Tarsuin (2,706 feet) and Ben Nuis (2,597 feet), which lie to the south-west, runs this ridge of A'Cir (the Comb), so called from its indented appearance. It forms the west side of Glen Rosa, and although practicable to a fair climber for the greater part of the way, it is believed that no one has crossed it from end to end without leaving the summit of the ridge in at least one place, to which reference will be made hereafter. Certain it is that several climbers of ability and experience have made the attempt with but partial success, nor was our party more fortunate upon the present occasion.

For the greater part of the way the passage offers no features of special difficulty, the rock being firm, with good foot and handhold throughout; but an element of excitement is not lacking as the ridge is extremely narrow, being in places only a yard or two across, while it is cleft at intervals by huge cracks stretching away into the valley below, and at almost impossible angles. There is one pass, however, across the ridge into Glen Iorsa called Bealach ~~as~~

Blair Bhogha, or "The Pass of the Bowman," which was, and I believe is still, used by the shepherds.

As we made a point of sticking religiously to the very summit of the ridge, we were rewarded in places by some fascinating little bits of rock work, which without being in any way dangerous were yet sufficiently difficult to tax our agility to a considerable extent. About two o'clock we reached the summit of the ridge; this is marked by a huge boulder, visible from Brodick, whence the ridge presents a striking likeness to the late Lord Brougham — the rock referred to representing his nose, and the forehead being represented by a cliff jutting out from the main ridge, and forming one corner of upper Glen Rosa. Beyond this, towards the west, the ground becomes more broken, and care has in places to be exercised. In one place the path consists of a single block of stone wedged in between two others, in the centre of one of the clefts, and just beyond this a point was reached where further progress proved impracticable, and which was recognised by one of the party as the place where he had twice before been turned.

On the west side, towards Glen Iorsa, the ridge is precipitous for hundreds of feet, great smooth blocks of granite leaving no foot or hand hold to the climbers; but towards Glen Rosa, the descent, though very steep, is practicable in places. What barred our progress now was a huge cleft, something like the Caim na Caillach, alluded to in former papers, but of a much more formidable nature. It is some hundred feet across, and of about the same depth, the drop from the side on which we stood being perpendicular, and, so far as we could see from above, perfectly impracticable. An attempt, however, was made to descend by means of the rope, and Gibson succeeded in getting down for about forty feet, a little to the west of this ridge; but the length of rope at our disposal did not admit of his reaching any firm ground from which further operations could be conducted. It is questionable, moreover, if the remainder of the party could all have got down; certainly for the last man the descent would have been very risky. This attempt therefore was abandoned, and Gibson returned.

so to speak, to the surface. No other means of descent presenting itself, we retraced our steps for some 200 feet to a narrow crack, which descended to the valley on either hand. We hesitated for a little as to which side we should drop on, but decided finally to descend towards Glen Rosa. Even this descent was attended by some difficulty, but we accomplished it by the aid of a "piton," which we fortunately had with us. This being driven in to a crevice in the rock, and the rope passed through its ring, we succeeded in overcoming any difficulty, and dropping for about a hundred feet, and skirting the base of the precipice, we reached the bottom of the great cleft. There a minute examination of the cliff was made, but no route was discovered by which it might be possible to reach the top by the face, nor was there discernible from this side any possible means of descent from the top. It is true that towards the Rosa side we found a crack in the rock, which being passed, access to the ridge was gained by a strip of grass running diagonally up the face of the rocks, and by the same route the descent was again made without dropping below the level of the great cleft. But our design having been simply to follow the ridge up and down, with all its difficulties, we could not even now claim that our end was gained.

Little now remains to tell; the hour was late, and the gathering shadows began to fall upon the hills, and we decided that we should turn our steps homeward. Before doing so, however, we scaled the rocks on the far side of the cleft, as far as a point where a big boulder, overhanging a particularly unattractive-looking precipice, again caused a halt. It may here be remarked parenthetically, that whenever there was any work of a particularly break-neck description to be done, Gibson was invariably selected to do it first. Our self-abnegation in this respect was wonderful in its unanimity. Gibson accordingly was invited to explore the regions beyond, and being roped he successfully negotiated the *mauvais pas*, and following the ridge for a few hundred feet, he returned with the report that it would "go" easily. However we had had enough of it: so leaving to some future day the further, and perhaps

more successful, exploration of A'Cir, we turned our steps downward to the glen. We reached the hotel just as darkness had settled on the scene. Soon within its cosy parlour we were filling that vacuum which nature is said to abhor, but which she provides withal to those who seek her diligently in her high places.

T. FRASER S. CAMPBELL.

NOTES AND QUERIES.



EXCURSIONS.

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

BEN MORE (MULL), *S.M.C.J.*, No. 4, page 177.—Referring to your correspondent's (H. T. M.) note on this peak, I can say from personal experience that if he had tried the ridge running E.N.E. from the summit, he would have found the difficulty of descending it much less than its appearance led him to suppose. I was staying at Glen Forsa in the autumn of 1889, and both ascended and descended by this ridge. It might indeed be difficult to keep to the very crest of the ridge all the way, but the steepest pitches are easily turned by keeping a little below the crest on the eastern side. Of the view from the top it seems to me impossible to speak in terms of too great praise.—HORACE WALKER.

ROUND TYNDRUM — BENS DOIREAN, LUI, AND CHALUIM.
—On Friday, the 12th February, H. Hill, T. H. Smith, and seven other members of the Dundee Rambling Club met at Tyndrum. Saturday opened fine, and a start was made for Ben Doirean. About 2,250 feet the first snow field was encountered. The summit was reached without much difficulty. The only hard bit was the ascent of a chimney, where steps had to be cut out in the frozen snow. The return journey was made by the foot of Ben a Chaistel to the watershed, and thence round by Auchtertyre to the hotel. On Sunday, after a late breakfast, four of the party (Hill, Smith, Low, and Walker) made a start for Ben Lui. After a wetting tramp through the mist the lead mines were reached, and thence by a bee line the corrie. A huge snow field extended from the rocky walls of the corrie well down the burn side below the corrie. Up this the ascent was made. The crucial point was the ascent of the chimney, which reaches the north ridge about two-thirds of the distance from Stob Garbh to the north point. The gradient here was steeper than 60°. Half-way up the snow field a peculiarly granulated appearance was visible in the snow. In these patches the snow gave no support to the foot. One interesting feature of the climb was to find many flies, like the domestic torment, on the snow over the three thousand elevation. The last

fifteen feet was a hard ice slope which required a lot of doing (a rope would here have been more than useful) before the party stood on the north top. The cornice was large and fine. The south top was reached without even a scramble. Owing to the driving mist there was no view. From the south top the return journey was made by the col between Ben a-Ghleibh and Ben Laoigh. The eight miles home on the railway sleepers punished the wet feet badly. On Monday six of the rambles entrained for Dundee, leaving Hill, Smith, and Low to tackle Ben Chalum. They crossed by the Auchtertyre viaduct, in course of completion, struck round the west shoulder, and climbed the west corrie; very stiff, owing to ice, fresh snow, and loose stones; reached the col between the two tops to find a gale blowing the ice particles almost through the skin. A capital view was obtained, from the Ochils to Mull, and from Ben Alder to the Arrochar hills. The descent was made by the long south-westerly shoulder in time to pack, dine, and catch the 5.45 train.—T. H. SMITH.

BEN LUI BY THE NORTH-EAST FACE.—On 6th March, Messrs Lester and J. H. Gibson started from Tyndrum at 10.15 A.M. for this hill by the path leading to the lead mines. After reaching the great corrie to the north-east face, they bore to the left so as to strike the base of a rock buttress that comes down from the ridge, forming the south-east boundary of the corrie. These rocks gave some sport, and by them the ridge referred to was reached at a point on it some distance to the east of what appears from below as a conspicuous notch. Passing along the ridge the top was gained at about 1.45. There was no view to speak of. The descent was effected by the identical route followed by Messrs Naismith, Lester, and Fraser Campbell on 13th April 1891 (see *S.M.C. Journal*, page 214). The snow was hard frozen, and steps had to be cut for about 1,000 feet, after which a rapid glissade of 600 or 700 feet more took the climbers to the bottom of the corrie. Tyndrum was regained at about 6 P.M. This expedition may be recommended as a distinctly interesting little climb, without too much preliminary walking. Rope and axes were used, but there was no real difficulty whatever.—J. H. GIBSON.

BEN VORLICH (3,224 FEET) AND STUC A CHROIN (3,189 FEET).—Rennie and Douglas made the ascent from Lochearnhead Station on 12th March. Leaving the train at 9.35, they climbed the intermediate range, and descended to Glen Ample, crossed the burn, and then on by the shoulder—Cragan nan Gabhair—to the top (1.55). From here, preferring the bow to the string, they got on to Stuc a Chroin's leading spur by a snow slope immediately to the west of the rocky buttress running up from the saddle. The angle of this slope, though it

appeared to be more than 50°, was found on measurement to be merely 43°. The last fifty feet of the slope was slightly steeper, and holes for hands as well as feet had to be cut for every step. It took thirty-five minutes to ascend 150 feet, and the cornice being frozen solid added some extra difficulties to the ascent. This was the only place in which "the legitimate use of the axe" was called for, though it was found exceedingly helpful in many other places. The top was reached at 4.5, the bridge on the Callander and Comrie road at 5.20, and Callander at 7. The sun shone brightly all day. The times were necessarily slow, for although the snow was in excellent order, yet the numerous halts made for photography—twenty-two plates being exposed during the day—occupied a lot of time. The views were extremely wintry and beautiful, though not very distant. Ben Lawers' long range, Stobinian, and Ben More, and their shoulders, shut out a large portion of the horizon north and west.

BENVANE (2,685 FEET) AND BEN LEDI (2,875 FEET).—Rennie and Douglas made the ascent on 13th March. Leaving Callander at 10.5 they walked along the railway line from the Pass of Leny to Laggan farm, from thence they struck across country, passing a burn whose ravine-like sides had to be followed up for a quarter of a mile ere an easy place to cross it was found. The snow was frozen hard; there was a great deal of it on the north slopes. With a slippery surface, making one keep command of all his muscles in walking, Benvane was reached at 2.5, then the watershed was followed to Ben Ledi, 4.10, the lowest point between the two hills being 1,958 feet,—and Callander 6.10. The weather was fine all day, except between two and three o'clock, when they were enveloped alternately in cloud and sunshine, with wonderful mist effects in the valleys below.—W. DOUGLAS.

ASCENT OF BEN NEVIS.—On Friday last, Mr R. C. Mossman, Edinburgh (who relieves one of the observers at the summit), accompanied by an Australian gentleman, and William Stewart, Fort-William, who acted as guide, made the first ascent of Ben Nevis this season. Though the weather was very fine, the snow was in bad condition, being very soft and drifted into deep wreaths. Achentee, at the base of the mountain, was left at 10 A.M. Though there were from four to eight inches of soft snow on the lower grounds, little difficulty was experienced during the first half of the climb, except between the big bridge (1,200 feet) and the lake (1,760 feet), where drifts from two to three feet deep were encountered. The passage of the Red Burn crossing (2,200 feet) having been found impracticable owing to enormous drifts, the party kept up the steep north side of the hill where the going was pretty good. At Buchan's Well (3,800 feet) the observers





NORTH FACE OF BEN CRUACHAN'S TAYNUILT PEAK.

From a Photograph taken March 27th 1892.

from the summit were met with. Here again the snow became soft, but as a track had been made by the party from the Observatory, no difficulty was experienced between this and the summit, which was reached at 2 P.M. Mr Mossman tried the ascent alone on Thursday, but had to turn back at a height of 3,000 feet, owing to thick fog and heavy snowdrift.—*Scotsman*, 14th March 1892.

BEN CRUACHAN'S NORTH FACE. — Although Ben Cruachan may justly be described as one of the most popular and easily accessible of Scottish mountains, yet the north side still remains a *terra incognita* to most of us, and it was with the desire of exploring this undiscovered country that Messrs Gibson, Lester, Macindoe, and I found ourselves at Taynuilt on the evening of 26th March. The following morning proved the changeableness of the Scottish climate—pleasantly in our favour—for, after a stormy night of wind and snow, it broke into a lovely morning, with a clear sky, against which was seen from the hotel windows the sharp white peak of Ben Cruachan. The day was a choice one for hill climbing, though it was still intensely cold,—thirty degrees of frost being registered at the Ben Nevis Observatory during the day.

We left the hotel at nine A.M., and walked down to Bunawe Ferry. The ferryman's house is on the opposite side of the river. The man was apparently as deaf as a door nail, for our shouts, though echoed back from Cruachan itself, failed to meet with the slightest response, and had not a charitable old woman from a neighbouring cottage come to our assistance we should have been forced to walk the five miles round by the railway bridge.

Once across, we wended our way over the benty sides of Loch Etive, enchanted by the ethereal beauty of the day and surrounding scenery. The loch; the Buchailles, white from base to top; Ben Starav's peak and humped shoulder, also spotlessly white,—were ever before us, till they were lost to sight in turning into Glen Noe at 10.30. This glen was peacefully beautiful, lying soft and green, bounded on the north by Beinn a Chochuill, still with an ermine coat well down his ample flanks, and soon Sron an Isean (the north-east peak of Cruachan) rose against the sky from the joining col of the Lairig Noe. Its clam-shaped corrie, filled deeply with snow, was rimmed with a knife-like edge, running up the leading spur on the north in a half circle. Proceeding up the glen there appeared through a break in the foreground, which framed the picture, a frowning range of black rocks slashed with snow. This was one of the shoulders of Cruachan, rising abruptly from Coire an t' Sneachd, and it gave us an idea what was in store for us later on.

Everywhere above a thousand feet elevation had an extremely alpine appearance. The high rocks of Meall an t' Riaghain above us, as we rounded its base, were heavily festooned with immense icicles,

some twenty or thirty feet long, and it was here that I was practically taught the lesson that rocks glazed with ice were not to be treated without due respect, an incautious step having laid me flat on the top of a large one, powerless to get up without assistance.

As we got further into the valley leading to Coire Chat a splendid sight opened on our view. Before us was the range of rocks connecting the twin peaks of Cruachan, with a solitary eagle sailing round them in lonely majesty. Coire Chat itself was floored with large glistening patches, showing plainly that ice as well as snow formed its carpet.

Stob Dearg (3,611 feet)—the Taynult peak—which was to be the scene of our exploits, rose in one unbroken buttress of rock 2,000 feet sheer from the subjacent ground, with a snow slope biting into it like tongues of flame round its base. On approaching the rocks the slope became steeper and its surface harder. Gibson here went to the front, and was soon hard at work at that muscle-forming exercise—step-cutting—which he continued till they were reached.

The rocks were in an extremely bad condition for climbing, thinly glazed with ice, and as slippery as glass. Between them was packed solid ice, which was in many places two or three feet thick. After some consultation, the "alpine men" of the party said "it would go;" accordingly the eighty feet of rope was unwound, and we were tied up. At first fair progress was made, though there was not a single spot where we could put our feet without a step being previously cut; and when a halt was made for lunch at two o'clock, we were not much lower than the col between the two peaks away to our left.

After ten minutes' rest, Lester, up till now the last man on the rope, went to the front, and we made steady but slow progress for an hour, and gradually gained ground till we were brought to a slab of rock lying at a high angle. This, after half-an-hour's trial, declined to "go," and though all the ice was cut off, it still revealed a smooth surface, without a crack to let so much as a finger-nail into. Gibson then came up, and getting on Lester's back climbed on to his shoulders, and then using the top of his axe for a step, managed to reach a hold some nine feet higher, where making himself secure he pulled us all up. After passing this awkward place, more of the same kind followed in quick succession. Hour after hour slipped away, and still the top seemed as far distant as ever. Although the pace was slow it was sure, for when one man was moving all the others remained stationary, well anchored by their axes; thus, in event of a slip, one could only fall the length of the rope.

Many were the strides of fame that were taken, and many were the tons of ice and frozen snow dislodged by the leader on the heads of those following, in making things rough for them, as he successfully pioneered the party on this virgin ascent to the top.

It was now past seven o'clock, and the sun had set with a brilliant afterglow, tinting the snowy southern sides of Beinn a Chochuill like a wall of fire, but the thoughts of how we were to extricate our-

selves from our difficulties before dark left us no time to admire views.

The leading man had been a long time out of sight, for though he was still roped to us the many turns hid him from view, when the joyful shout came from him of "The cairn!" putting fresh energy into our flagging muscles. There was, however, a nasty corner still to get round, with a narrow ledge not much wider than nine inches, overhanging space, along which we were expected to crawl on hands and knees; but our leader gave us little time to hesitate, for, putting a heavy strain on the rope, we were shot round it like a rocket, and up a snow slope on the other side. In a few minutes more we were all standing triumphant on the top at 7.35 P.M., having fought for every inch of the way, and overcome obstacles that would have been impossible but for the patience and skill of our leaders.

The scene from the top was weird in the extreme. The sun had gone down, and the afterglow had faded away, leaving the sea of a dark indigo colour, with the islands a shade deeper apparently floating on its surface. On the other sides of us, the white peaks soared from dark valleys below, and making a wondrously grand combination. The light was going fast, and no time could be spared to admire views. Off we started, still roped together, straight for the Brander Burn. Lester, who was leading, thought that a glissade might improve the pace, and away he went on a frozen slope, Macindoe next, then myself, and Gibson brought up the rear. All went well for a few seconds, then I received a tremendous bump from behind, which sent me spinning past the two in front like a streak of lightning; then I seemed to be stationary for some time, with the snow racing up hill at full speed; then came a sudden jerk, which left me spread-eagled on the slope, and knocked every breath of wind out of me. What had happened was this: we were off before the last man had left the rocks, and when the tug came, it started him faster than he intended, which resulted in his cannoning into me, and thus bringing all the others down at top speed. Lester in passing a rock managed to clutch at it, and hold fast, and stopped himself; while Gibson had brought himself to anchor higher up, thus suddenly stopping our wild career. Our axes were crusted by a quarter of an inch of ice, making them very difficult to hold.

After this we considered glissading in the dark rather too risky an amusement for sober mountaineers, and proceeded with more caution for the rest of the way. So long as we were on the snow the reflection made it light enough, but when we reached the grass, still 1,000 feet above Loch Awe, our troubles began, getting numerous tumbles before reaching the road at 9.45.

A good swinging pace brought us to Loch Awe Hotel at 11.25, having been out fourteen and a half hours, with eight hours' continuous step-cutting in solid ice and frozen snow.—WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

CRUACH ARDRAN.—On the 4th April (Glasgow spring holiday) Cruach Ardran and Ben Tulachan were climbed by a party consisting of Messrs Eric Sutherland, A. H. Crum (non-members), and Gilbert Thomson. Leaving Crianlarich about nine, the route was taken by Stob Coire Bhuidhe, Stob Garbh, Cruach Ardran, Ben Tulachan, and thereafter by a circuitous course determined entirely by the attractions of glissading. The snow was in large patches, but there was no continuous covering on any of the hills, and most of it was soft. The top of Cruach Ardran was reached from the col by kicking steps in one snow slope, and then cutting a staircase up another longer and steeper one—the length (estimated) about 200 feet, and the general angle (measured) 50° from the horizontal. Both rope and axe were used. Many of the patches gave good glissading, but owing to the warmth it was a decidedly wet amusement; it was also responsible for a considerable proportion of the eight hours spent on the round. A heavy haze prevented any distant view.—GILBERT THOMSON.

SCAFELL PIKE (3210 feet) AND SCAFELL (3162 feet).—Messrs G. D. Stirling and H. B. Watt climbed these hills, the highest points in England, on 4th April. Leaving Dungeon Ghyll, Langdale, at 8.30 A.M., the path was followed up Mickleden and Rosett Gill to Esk House, and so to the top of the Pike, which was reached at 11.30 A.M. Traces of a track are never wanting, and numerous cairns and stone men mark it out. It is a tiresome pull, as no fewer than three considerable descents, with of course corresponding ascents, have to be made, and the last 1000 feet or so is over rough stones, but there is no real difficulty. A great square well-built cairn is on the top, and two or three roofless stone huts near at hand. Not much could be seen as light mists were about, and after waiting till noon we started for Scafell itself, which is about three-quarters of a mile distant from the Pike, south-westwards. A very rough descent of nearly 500 feet brought us to Mickledore, a short ridge, precipitous on the northern side, and with the perpendicular cliffs of Scafell abutting on it. Some yards down from the end of the ridge is a chasm, up which a passage can be forced, but as it was running with water (melting snow), and one of us carried a heavy knapsack, we continued skirting the cliffs for an easier opening upwards to the right, and this we found caused a further descent of 500 feet. At last we hit a way, and went up by a small stream into a corrie, the bottom of which was full of snow, the corrie being the only one I noticed on the hill, and though not large, beautifully shaped, and the snow being the greatest mass so far seen. A long steep pull up over stones and scree brought us out on the ridge, and thence easily to the summit, at 1-30 P.M. The cairn is also a fine one, but cylindrical in shape. We found afterwards that our route was that marked in *Balddeley's Guide*. Some magnificent cloud and mist effects were seen in the dales and on the hills, mostly below us, the sun being very

strong and but little wind, but at no time did we have much of a distant view. Our destination being Borrowdale, we made our way back to the Pike, leaving at 2.40 P.M., and at Esk House (where the mist became *Scotch* for the first time in the day) we hit the Borrowdale track, only however to leave it for Grain's Gill, which, while rough and pathless, is more direct, and is drained by a picturesque stream with ravines and cascades innumerable. Stockley Bridge we reached at 4.50 P.M., and Rosthwaite at 6 P.M., where we put up at the "Scafell," which is all that man deserves. As to the condition of the hills we were disappointed in finding little snow, and that little soft and rapidly going in the exceptional warmth of the day. Under the northern cliffs of Hanging Knott lies Angle Tarn (1553 feet), and this being in shade had a sheet of ice covering all but its margin. This side of Hanging Knott (2500 feet) was well plastered with patches of snow, and in such sheltered places this was general. No snow lay on any of the tops, and under 1500 feet there was practically none at all, but at no place did we come across more than at the head of Grain's Gill, about an elevation of 2000 feet. Glissading was quite impracticable. The east face of Great End (2984 feet), mostly bare and perpendicular rock, presented a striking appearance, one or two chasms running right down it being full of snow. This hill, and others in the neighbourhood, e.g. Langdale Pikes (a peak of which from Mickleden presents the most symmetrical thimble-shape), seem to offer better sport for the rock-climber than Scafell. No one seen on the hills all day, and very little life at all; but in Mickleden I was pleased to see a number of wheat-ears, the first of our summer visitants I had observed.—H. B. WATT.

BEN LOMOND.—On Monday, 7th April, Messrs Lester, Naismith, and Fraser Campbell made an ascent of Ben Lomond from Rowendennan, descending by the north corrie into Glen Dubh, and thence to Aberfoyle. Snow had almost entirely disappeared from the south side, but on the north there was still a considerable snow field, by which a glissade was made for some 600 feet. Reascending to the base of the wall of rock which forms the north-east side of the corrie, an ascent was made to the top (300 or 400 feet), a descent being made down the rocks a few yards to the north. The use of the rope was in both cases necessitated. The day was exceptionally warm for the time of the year, and a delightful bathe was enjoyed, during the ascent from Rowendennan, in the waters of the burn, that flows out of the corrie between Ben Ptarmigan and Ben Lomond.—T. F. S. CAMPBELL.

ON THE CAMPSIE FELS WITH NORWEGIAN "SKIS."—For the sake of any uninitiated, it may be explained that skis (*pron.* "shes") are wooden snow-skates, 7 feet long and 3 to 4 inches wide, largely used throughout the northern parts of Europe and Asia (see Dr

Nansen's "Across Greenland"). The best are made of ash or plane, and cost, with fastenings, about £1, but a light serviceable pair of pine can be had for a few shillings by writing to Messrs Hagen & Co., Bergen. On 12th March, shortly after a considerable fall of snow, M. T. G. and W. W. N. climbed the Campsies behind Milton, and followed the crest of the ridge for two miles to the Meikle Bin. From that commanding point, after a snow shower had passed, a grand view was obtained of the Highland mountains all dressed in white, the Ochils, Firth of Forth, tops of Arran hills, &c., &c. On the return journey the same route was followed. The skis were not of much use when ascending, but upon level ground, and especially where the snow was soft, better progress was made with their aid than without them, while a very slight gradient was sufficient to get up tremendous speed during the descent. When the angle was too steep to risk, the skis were slipped off and turned into an improvised toboggan. At one long slope, some 300 yards in length, and inclined at a general angle of 15°, an hour was enjoyably spent, the snow being in perfect order for ski-ing—firm underneath, with a powdering of drifted snow on the surface. This snowbed was crossed by one or two small ridges which imparted a switchback element to the sport, somewhat puzzling to inexperienced amateurs. Of course the party came to grief several times, but they returned home well pleased with their experiment. Skis might often be employed with advantage in winter ascents in Scotland, or rather descents,—for although Norsemen skate up as well as down hills, few men in this country are likely to acquire such facility as to use them when going uphill, but they can be easily towed up, as they weigh only a few pounds. In the Alps it is not unlikely that the sport may eventually become popular, particularly with the *blasé* climber who has "done" everything in the ordinary way, and the individual ambitious of beating all previous "times" in the descent of easy mountains, such as the Breithorn, Cimi di Jazzi, or even Mont Blanc. In the event of the rope proving impracticable, a slight acquaintance with a glacier would reduce the risk from hidden crevasses to a minimum; and as for a gaping bergschrund, an expert would simply fly over it. It is probably no exaggeration to say that a good man on skis could descend *safely* from the top of the Breithorn to the end of the Théodule Glacier in half an hour.—WILL. W. NAISMITH.

THE SCOTTISH ALPINE BOTANICAL CLUB.—A short account of the history of the Scottish Alpine Botanical Club, and the work it has accomplished during the twenty-one years of its existence, may have some interest to the members of a kindred society. The late Professor Balfour of Edinburgh University instituted the Club, in John Cameron's Hotel, Bridge of Lochay, Killin, on the 10th of August 1870. It consisted of ten original members, and at least five of these are dead. The object of the excursions, which are annual, was to explore the higher parts of our mountains in search of the rarer alpinæ. The Flora of Scotland

has been enriched by several discoveries during these excursions by members of the Club. Among the most notable was the discovery of *Gentiana nivalis* L., in Chamacreeg, Killin, by Professor Bayley Balfour, on 3rd October 1872; the discovery of *Carex frigida* (Allioni), a plant new to the British Isles, in Corry Ceanmohr; and of *Salix Sadleri* (Syme), a plant new to science, in the same corry, by the late Mr John Sadler, on 7th August 1874. On the 31st July 1880, the Club discovered a new station for *Thlaspi alpestre* L., in Glen Taitneach, Spittal of Glenshee. Mr W. B. Boyd in 1883 found the *Sagina*, which bears his name, on Ben Avon, Braemar. On 4th August 1885, Dr Craig gathered on Ben Laoigh, Tyndrum, three plants of *Aspidium Lonchitis*, with every frond crested. In our excursion to Glen Spean in 1886, Mr Boyd discovered a new station for that rarest of Scottish plants *Saxifraga cæspitosa*, L., the only known station for this plant in Great Britain. Dr Martin Barry had got it on Ben Avon fifty years ago, and during that long period it has eluded the keen eyes of many plant hunters. During the same excursion two new stations for *Saxifraga rivularis* L., which always grows near the melting snow; and *Luzula arcuata*, Swartz, were found. And during our excursion to Connemara in Ireland, Dr Stuart discovered the heath which bears his name *Erica Stuarti*, in Galway, six miles from Cashel Bay. All these are original discoveries, and are additions to Botanical science. The difficulty in getting accommodation in the wild parts of the country has limited our numbers, so that rarely more than a dozen persons are present at any excursion. Our meetings are always of the most pleasant kind, a reunion of kindred spirits in a delightful pursuit. Although mountaineering is not our chief end, most of us like to be on the summit; and we have during the years of our existence been on the tops of Ben Nevis, Ben Macdhuil, Braeriach, Cairngorm, Ben Avon, Ben a Bourd, Lochnagar, Ben Laoigh, Stobinian, Ben Lawers, Ben Cruachan, Stob Corry Clanrich, and Aonich Morè in Glen Spean, &c., &c. With three exceptions we have kept our excursions to Scotland. We visited Teesdale in Yorkshire in 1884, the Hardanger region of Norway in 1887, and Connemara in Ireland in 1890, obtaining many good specimens. The office-bearers of The Scottish Alpine Botanical Club are Professor Bayley Balfour, President; W. B. Boyd of Faldonside, Vice-President; Rev. G. Alison, Chaplain; Dr Aitken, Minstrel; and Dr William Craig, Secretary. The ordinary Members are Rev. W. Paul, Rev. G. Peyton, Captain F. M. Norman, R. N., Arthur Evans, George Potts, P. Neill Fraser, Robert Lindsay, and Dr Stuart, &c., &c. — CHARLES STUART, M.D.

CLINOMETER OR SLOPE MEASURER.—This instrument is used by geologists to find the angle which strata make with the horizon. Our members could use it to ascertain the angle of slopes, or the angle at which snow lies on Scotch hills. The snow angle has not been much observed in Scotland; and if some observations were taken, they

would no doubt lead to interesting comparisons with snow angles in other countries.

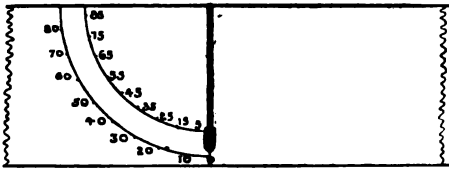


DIAGRAM OF A HOME-MADE CLINOMETER.

In its simplest form the clinometer can, as shown by the accompanying diagrams, easily be made at home. Graduate the quadrant of a circle 0° to 90° on cardboard, or preferably a bit of hardwood, say six inches by two inches; the longer edges of the cardboard or wood to be parallel, and at right angles to a line drawn through centre of quadrant and the 0° point. Attach a metal pendulum at centre, so as to swing freely, and when vertical to point to 0° on graduated arc.

In its more elaborate and expensive forms, instrument makers combine this form of clinometer with footrules and pocket compasses. This last form is the most convenient for the climber, the only draw-

back to its use being the difficulty of getting the short straight-edge on its underside parallel to the slope under measurement. To obviate this an alpenstock or ice axe may be laid on the slope, and the clinometer applied, when the pendulum will point to the slope-angle on graduated arc.



MEASURING SNOW GULLY ON BEN VORLICH.

Care must be taken to select a fair specimen of the slope, or to make several observations, and strike an average; and if the alpenstock or ice axe handle tapers, an allowance must be made for this. A measurement should also be taken, or at least an estimate made, of the length of any slope, so many yards or feet at such an angle.-- J. RENNIE.

PRESENTATION TO MR STOTT.—At the Arran Meet on January 30th, a presentation was made to Mr Stott on the occasion of his leaving Scotland for New Zealand. It consisted of a Repeating Car-

riage Clock and Dispatch Box, which had been subscribed for by fifty-four members of the Club. The following letter may interest the subscribers :—

“ R.M.S. ‘ARCADIA,’ BETWEEN ADEN AND COLOMBO,
“ 24th February 1892.

“ MY DEAR DOUGLAS,—I wish you would take some means of returning my warmest thanks to the Members of the Club for the handsome presents they have given me. Such tangible recognition of the small services I have been able to render came quite as a surprise to me, and is therefore all the more appreciated. I have spent some of my happiest days amongst you, and my only consolation for their temporary stoppage is that I hope to be with you again in the future. With kindest regards to all friends,—Believe me, sincerely yours,
JOSEPH GIBSON STOTT.”

SILVER THAW AT THE BEN NEVIS OBSERVATORY. — In the *Journal of the Scottish Meteorological Society*, with tables, for the year 1890, Mr R. C. Mossman gives an account of the occurrences of silver thaw at Ben Nevis Observatory. The following extracts from his paper may be interesting from a climber's point of view, as the phenomenon must have been experienced by some of our members during winter ascents :—

“The phenomenon of silver thaw, or rain falling when the air was below freezing point, and congealing when it fell, was of somewhat common occurrence at Ben Nevis Observatory. The phenomenon points to an inversion of temperature at the time, so that the temperature on the hill top was considerably lower than at higher altitudes.

. . . A prolonged fall of silver thaw occasioned considerable inconvenience to the observers. Outside objects became covered with several inches of solid uncrystallised ice, through which their original outline could be but faintly distinguished. The chimneys of the Observatory became choked with ice. . . . The rain froze on the observers' coats, gloves, and even on their faces, and thus the taking of outside observations was very disagreeable. . . . In the six years 1885-90, 198 cases of silver thaw were observed, lasting in the aggregate 873 hours, or a mean duration of four and a half hours for each case. In December, January, and February the average duration of each case was six hours, whereas during the other months of the year it did not continue more than three hours.

“Silver thaw was almost wholly confined to the winter months. Nearly all the cases occurred from November to March. It had not been observed in July, and was rare during the summer, owing doubtless to the high temperature prevailing at this season. . . .

“The lowest temperature at which this phenomenon took place was 18°. It was of rare occurrence below 27°; at only thirty-four of the 873 hours it has been observed to fall has it taken place below that

temperature. Fully 90 per cent. of the cases occurred between 28° and 31°.9. Hence the greater number of cases occurred just before a thaw."

Then follow tables on the direction and force of the wind during silver thaw under cyclonic and anti-cyclonic conditions (fully 90 per cent. of the cases were observed when the wind blew with a velocity equivalent to thirty miles an hour); tables of temperature and pressure before, during, and after the occurrence of silver thaw; tables of cloud types; and tables tracing the connection between silver thaw on Ben Nevis and storms.

" . . . 73 per cent. of the cyclonic and 63 per cent. of the anti-cyclonic cases of silver thaw on Ben Nevis were followed or preceded by gales at some of the twenty-seven selected stations on our northern and north-western (Scottish) coasts. . . .

"The results render it probable that the part of the atmosphere in which silver thaw occurs is of considerable horizontal, but of small vertical, extent."

MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

TRAVELS AMONGST THE GREAT ANDES OF THE EQUATOR. By Edward Whymper. London: John Murray, 1892.

THIS is a most admirable piece of work, and one to which it is impossible to do justice in a few lines. Mr Whymper occupies a unique place as a mountaineer, and the announcement that the work over which he has spent eleven years was really to be published, naturally raised the highest expectations in many quarters. It was known that he had achieved brilliant mountaineering successes. It was believed that the scientific results of his travels among the Andes would also prove of great value and importance. The physicist, the geographer, and workers in other branches of science, as well as the mountaineer, awaited confidently a book that was to furnish to each one instruction and information in his special subject. Though all may not be equally satisfied, none, we think, will be disappointed. The award of a gold medal by the Royal Geographical Society sufficiently attests the estimate that geographers set on Mr Whymper's work. The zoologist will find in the "Supplementary Appendix"—a separate volume—descriptions, beautifully illustrated, of a portion of the natural history collection. The mountaineer will possibly be the most exacting reader, and may be disposed to cavil at a work which is not wholly devoted to climbing and adventure. Yet Mr Whymper has provided ample fare for him in the first and second ascents of Chimborazo (20,498), first ascents of Antisana (19,335), Sincholagua (16,365, Reiss and Stübel), Carihuairazo (16,515), Sara-urcu (15,502), and Cayambe (19,186). The heights, save in the instance noted, were determined by

Mr Whymper, by the mercurial barometer. The ascent of Cotopaxi proved simple, as regards climbing, as might have been expected. Mr Whymper gives a graphic, though brief description, of a night on the summit. Throughout the book the threads of adventure, scientific observation, scenic description, and the like, are deliberately woven together, but with a literary skill that never gives a suggestion of patchwork.

The physicist and the physiologist have perhaps been most cared for. The introduction reminds the reader that "the main object of the journey was to observe the effects of low pressure, and to attain the greatest possible height in order to experience it," and Mr Whymper makes the subject of "mountain-sickness" a prominent feature. Mr Whymper recognises that "various affections have been confused and confounded under the single term mountain-sickness." In his opinion "they are fundamentally caused by diminution in atmospheric pressure operating in at least two ways." But into the interesting questions raised by the record of his experiences, it is impossible here to enter. Suffice it to say that Mr Whymper does not express himself very hopefully on the possibility of attaining the highest summits of the earth. He is too keen a mountaineer, and too cautious an observer, to assert that the possibility has been disposed of either by his own work or that of others. It is certain at least that a single experience in the field is worth many experiments in the laboratory. Before long it may be hoped Mr Conway may be able to contribute something to the question which Mr Whymper's book has invested anew with importance.

The illustrations throughout are worthy of the author and of the book.—C. T. DENT.

HOW TO USE THE ANEROID BAROMETER. By Edward Whymper.
London : John Murray. 1891.

WHEN climbing and exploring amongst the Great Andes of the Equator in 1880, Mr Whymper was puzzled by the behaviour of the aneroids he had taken with him. The aneroids did not agree in their readings with each other, and they differed from his standard mercurial barometer.

To find some law or reason for these differences, he, on his return to England, began a series of experiments in the workshop, testing aneroids against the mercurial barometer under the air-pump. It was his theory that if he kept the aneroids and mercurial barometer under artificially diminished pressure for lengthened periods of time, thereby imitating the natural conditions he experienced amongst the Andes, some law of variation would be discovered.

This book of sixty-one pages shows how his attention was drawn to the subject, the means he took to verify his theory, and tables of the

results he arrived at. It is divided into—Preface ; 1. Comparisons in the field ; 2. Experiments in the workshop ; 3. Upon the use of the aneroid barometer in determination of altitudes ; 4. Recapitulation.

The first three parts are so tersely put, and results given in such extended tables, that we can only refer those who are interested in the subject to the book itself, and give here some of the principal results from Part 4, Recapitulation—

The Loss.

All aneroids lose upon the mercurial barometer when submitted to diminished pressure.

When diminished pressure is maintained continuously, the loss commonly continues to augment during several weeks.

The most important part of any loss that will occur will take place in the first week, and first week's loss is greater than any subsequent week's loss.

A considerable part of the loss which takes place in the first week occurs in the first day.

The amount of the loss differs in different instruments. Some lose twice or three times as much as others.

The amount of loss which occurs in any aneroid depends (1) upon the duration of time it may experience diminished pressure, and (2) upon the extent of the reduction in pressure.

The Recovery.

When pressure is restored, all aneroids recover a portion of the loss which has previously occurred. Some aneroids, in course of recovery, gain more than they have previously lost.

Recovery is gradual, and extends over a greater length of time than the period during which diminished pressure has been experienced. In aneroids which have been kept at diminished pressures for a considerable space of time (a week and upwards), the most important part of the amount that will be recovered upon their experiencing restoration of pressure will be regained in the first week.

The greater part of the recovery of the first week is usually accomplished in the first day.

The recovery in the first hour is almost always larger than that in any subsequent hour.

The errors which will probably be exhibited by aneroids during natural variations of pressure may be learned approximately by submitting them to artificially produced variations of pressure ; but the one-hour test which has been commonly applied for "verification" is of little value except for determining errors of graduation, and the errors which will be exhibited at similar pressures *in a similar length of time.*

Large reductions will have to be made in the heights of many positions which have been determined by aneroids. J. RENNIE.

MY HOME IN THE ALPS. By Mrs E. Main.

London : S. Low & Co.

Under the above somewhat misleading title the authoress of "The High Alps in Winter" has collected a series of articles, most of which have appeared in the *St Moritz Post*, dealing with guides and their characteristics, chamois, glaciers, avalanches, and other kindred subjects, together with accounts of some of the writer's own exploits in the Oberland and Engadine.

The book, as Mrs Main is careful to say, is not intended for Alpine climbers; indeed most of the stories about guides, with which the first five chapters are filled, are to be found—and it may be added, in much less diluted form—in "Pioneers of the Alps" and "The Alpine Journal." For the uninitiated, however, to whom these authorities may be inaccessible, the volume may be of some use, more especially if it stimulates them to consult for themselves the works referred to.

Chapter VII. is devoted to chamois and chamois hunters, among whom is noticed a certain mighty hunter of Pontresina, Colani by name, whose notions on the subject of game-preserving seem to have been even more thoroughgoing than those of our own Mr Winans; and in Chapters VIII., IX., and X., Mrs Main discourses on the phenomena of the ice world, but in a style in which the effort to write down to the level of her readers is a trifle too evident. The last three chapters, which tell of some of Mrs Main's own particular doings, are written, on the other hand, rather over the heads of the class of persons to whom the book must appeal. Indeed it may be doubted whether anyone, not tolerably familiar with the Schreckhorn, could understand her description of an ascent of that peak.

As the authoress expressly disclaims any originality for her work, it is doing her no injustice to say that it can in no sense be regarded as a serious addition to Alpine literature, while it may serve as a sort of "First Alpine Primer" to the general non-climbing public.

J. H. GIBSON.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS.

New Members.—By virtue of the powers conferred on the Committee at the Annual Meeting, the following gentlemen have been elected Members of the Club:—Cameron Swan, Esq. ; Alex. Nicolson, Esq., LL.D. ; Lord Lamington ; and Professor Baldwin Brown.

Honorary Members.—The following gentlemen have been elected Honorary Members of the Club:—Sir Archibald Geikie, and Donald Cameron, Esq. of Lochiel.

Annual Subscription.—The Hon. Secretary desires to give notice to any Members who have not paid their Annual Subscriptions that their names will be posted in the Club-Room forthwith. The amount, 10s. 6d., is due on the 1st of January, and is payable to the Hon. Treasurer, Charles Gairdner, Esq., LL.D., Union Bank of Scotland Limited, Ingram Street, Glasgow.



THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

Vol. II.

SEPTEMBER 1892.

No. 3.

SKYE AND SGÜR-NAN-GILLEAN IN 1865.

BY ALEXANDER NICOLSON, LL.D., Advocate.

MY days of climbing, I fear, are over, and I can now only look with fondness from below on the heights to which it was my delight to climb like a goat, and the towering pinnacles over which I used to peep with a shuddering joy.

The hills I like best are naturally those of Skye, where I was born, the chief of which, the Coolin, I used to gaze at from a distance when a boy, with unspeakable awe and admiration, but never became intimately acquainted with till many years after I left Skye for Edinburgh, and came for the first time to Sligachan, a big and bony man. These hills,* as I still perhaps improperly call them, are known to the natives of Skye, and always have been, as *the Coolin* (Gaelic, "*A Chuilionn*"), like as the Caucasus and the Himalaya are called, without the addition of the word "mountains." They were never known until very recent times as the "Cuchullin Hills," a name due, so far as I know, only to the makers of guide-books, who thought it grander than the other, and all the better for being more difficult to pronounce,—the Sassenach tourist, who calls a loch a *lock*, being more apt to say *Cuckoolin* or *Cutchullin* than *Cuchullin*. There was an Ossianic hero of that name,

* Mr Pilkington says that S. Alasdair, "though not so high, is a true mountain, and not a hill, like Ben Lomond and Skiddaw." So say I of Arthur's Seat.

said to have been born and brought up at *Dun-Sgàthaich*, an ancient fort near Ord in Skye ; but though he was undoubtedly a very "superior person," the natives never called the great mountain range by his name, but called it simply "*A Chuilionn*." In this view I am supported by our greatest Celtic archæologist, Dr Skene.

I must therefore request any future writers about them in this *Journal*—of whom I hope there will be many more—not to call these glorious hills by any name but that which they have always borne in the Isle of Skye. In this matter, I am glad to say, Mr Pilkington is exceptionally correct.

I have been asked to write something about "the hills of Skye." If I were to give any account of every one of them I have climbed, not one article in this *Journal* would suffice—nor ten! And, perhaps, I can do nothing better than give something which I wrote in 1872, describing what I did and saw and felt in 1865.

"Supposing the tourist to have spent the Sunday quietly at Sligachan, what should he do next? If he be fit for mountain-climbing, and the weather be suitable, let him by all means try Scoor-nan-Gillean. To a lover of climbing it is an eminently tempting and even fascinating peak. Its height is only 3,220 feet,* and yet, with a fresh recollection of the matchless grandeur of the Jungfrau, and the giant precipices of the Eiger and Wetterhorn, that little hill, as by comparison it may be called, looked, I am glad to say, none the less grand and awful the last time I saw it. Comparative bulk and height are of course important elements in mountain grandeur, but outline and features are, as with human beings, even more important. Napoleon the Great was a little man, but even physically he was a far grander and more awe-inspiring object than Daniel Lambert. So Arthur's Seat, which is but a morsel of a hill, comparatively speaking, has, in virtue of its noble contour and features, more of mountain majesty by far than many lumpish masses three times as high. It is, in point of fact, entitled to be called a mountain, and to receive

* This was written in 1872. The Ordnance Survey height is 3,167 feet.

homage as such. Its being little more than 800 feet high is a mere accident, caused by some stoppage of the volcanic force that raised it. By rights it should have been at least 3,000 feet high; and, if I am not mistaken, Professor Geikie says it originally was so, before the volcano raised the present Lion's Head at all. In like manner Scoor-nan-Gillean ought by rights to have been 10,000 feet high, but that it is only a third of that height really does not matter much. It looks quite high enough; and if you go to the top of it you will be very glad that it is no higher, and when you look down over its narrow crest on precipices that go sheer down some 1,000 feet or so, you will never complain that they are not sufficiently deep and awful. The ascent of such a hill is a small affair, no doubt, compared with going up the Matterhorn. But let no one despise it as an easy performance; if he does, he may find cause to repent. This was sadly illustrated the year before last, in the case of a fine young Englishman, who had travelled in the Alps, and ascended many peaks, and scouted the idea of needing a guide for such a hill as Scoor-nan-Gillean. He did ascend, and he left his card in the bottle at the top, with a pencil note to tell that he had that day 'gone up Scoor-nan-Gillean without a guide.' His descent, alas, was of a woful kind. A thick mist soon misled him, and the insulted spirit of the mountain was fearfully avenged. On the morning of the second day, his mangled body was found at the foot of a sloping precipice not far from the summit. He lay with his back to the rock, his neck broken and one of his legs, his paletot drawn behind him, covered with fragments of the rock.

"In the visitors' book at Sligachan the traveller will find, among other interesting matter, including the royal signature of 'Arthur,' sundry records of ascents made in marvellously short time, usually stated with great precision to a minute. These the knowing mountaineer will not put much faith in. If any man tells you that he went up that hill in less than three hours from Sligachan Inn, you are entitled, as emphatically as is consistent with politeness, to say, 'H'm! indeed?' In point of fact, though it takes less time and labour than Ben Nevis, it is on the whole, so far

as I know, the most difficult ascent in Scotland,* and one of the very few in which any serious risk is incurred. The risk is chiefly connected with the occurrence of mist, and it is this which makes the company of a guide desirable, even to a skilful climber. There is no beaten path, for the ascent is seldom made, and the rocky character of the mountain makes a beaten path on the latter part impossible. The divergence of a few yards from the right direction may thus land you, when surrounded by mist, in hopeless perplexity, and perhaps inevitable danger.

“The ascent is thus sketched in the MS. ‘Guide-book of the Future’ (all rights reserved):—‘Scoor-nan-Gillean, or the Young Men’s Peak, is the highest point of the Coolin range, and forms its north-eastern termination. Its outline is extremely sharp and picturesque, and from no point is it seen to so much advantage as at Sligachan, the nearest habitable place for making the ascent. The following notes will aid the tourist in finding the way, should he be disposed to attempt it without a guide, which, unless he be a very experienced mountaineer, he had better not do. The employment of a guide slightly diminishes the glory, but it certainly saves time, and it may possibly save the traveller’s neck, if that be of any consequence. The ascent may be divided into five stages. The *first* consists of a long stretch of dull and boggy moor, terminated by a steepish and rough heathy ascent. If the traveller wishes to make sure of not having to wade through a considerable stream, he had better follow the road as far as the game-keeper’s house, and then strike across the moor to the fore-said ridge. This will take a good half-hour and more. At the crest of the ridge he will see, at some distance below, a pretty wide corrie, extending to the true base of the mountain, whose north-eastern precipices tower above it in very imposing style, forming a formidable wall of sheer black rock. The summit of these battlements, however, is not that of the mountain, but of the third of five peaks into which it is cleft, and which come into view only when seen

* I had not, when this was written, ascended Sgùr Dubh or Sgùr Alasdair.

from the N. and NW., or from the S. and SE. Looking at it from Sligachan, you have no idea that it is not a continuous mass of rock from the base to the topmost peak. From this point the view is very striking of those strange buck-tooth looking rocks between Scoor-nan-Gillean and the next highest point (Bruach-na-free), which form such a distinctive feature in the view from a distance. The *second* stage of the ascent extends from the top of the fore-said ridge to the top of the scaur on the opposite side of the corrie, and a bit beyond it—*i.e.*, down into, across, and up the south side of the corrie. In the centre of the corrie is a great mass of flat-topped brown rock (*hypersthene*, now called *gabbro*, browned only by water and rubbish), and to the left is a small tarn, overlooking Glen Sligachan towards Marsco, the huge pyramidal hill in the centre of the glen. Keep above or below this mass of rock, according as you think it nearest the point you have reached in the ridge, and then go right up south-west, where you see the grassy and stony slope marked by the scaur aforesaid. It is comparatively good footing, though pretty steep. When you get to the top of this ascent, you have a stretch of less steep but rougher slope, more or less grassy, with some big blocks of stone at its termination. The *third* stage extends from the end of this comparatively easy grassy slope to the summit of the rocky ridge which now faces you, on the other side of a second (but smaller) corrie, which you have to cross. About its centre, through which flow two streams, uniting a little lower down, you see beyond the rock-ledges on your right an indication of a gully. You will go up it a certain way, but not far. If you follow it right among the cliffs, you will go all wrong, and have to return, or else come to grief. Keep to the left, and work your way up among the rocks till you get to the top of them. It is a steep climb, but not bad or dangerous, if you have decently sure feet. At the termination of this stage you get a clear view of the three higher peaks, and the clefts between them, and you see that, if you had followed the gully to the right, you would have got to the foot of inaccessible precipices beneath the final peak. The *fourth* stage extends from the top of the rocky face to the

crown of the terminal ridge. It is not a long stage, but it is pretty toilsome, being over a combination of rock and *debris*, slightly trying to shoe leather, if not to the temper. Here you will undoubtedly feel thirsty, and you will be joyfully surprised to find water, if you listen and look out for it, tinkling, clear and cold, among the black and silent rocks. The *fifth* and last stage extends from the crest of the ridge surmounting this shingly slope to the top of the peak. The distance is not great, but you will be glad when it is done. The crest is very narrow, broken, and rocky, interrupted every now and then by a gash, or a mass of rock, over which you must get as carefully as you can, for on each side there is a steep descent into considerable depths. In two or three places you must use hands and feet vigorously, and if you have not a head to feel a sense of glory in looking into space beneath you, you won't enjoy it. The crown of the peak is a space of a few yards in length and a few feet in breadth, where, however, you find a tolerable carpeting of moss, coarse grass, and lichen, by no means unpleasant to lie upon. Around you are manifest tokens of its being a favourite haunt of the eagle. There I had the luck to find a big quill-feather from an eagle's wing, with which these notes have been written. From this point on three sides of you the descent down is very rapid; probably a stone of moderate size thrown down right in front would descend a thousand feet at least without interruption. The view, it is needless to say, is extremely grand, though in the most interesting direction, looking towards the Atlantic, it is much interrupted and barred by the close neighbourhood of other high peaks. The corries below, to the south—Lota-Corrie and Harta-Corrie—are awfully fine and mysterious. So is the whole wild sea of peaks stretching away round Coiruisik. So is Blaven, with its black crest, looking fixedly up the glen towards Marsco and Glamaig, as if they had some deep incommunicable secret between them. So is the great distant panorama of hills beyond the sea, the mountains of Sutherland, of Ross-shire, and of Glenelg.' So far the MS. Guide-book.

“Curiously enough, though this is the highest point of the

whole Coolin range,* there is a most wonderful echo. I don't think I ever heard so many distinct repetitions as on the top of Scoor-nan-Gillean. It is undoubtedly a very solemn place to be in, and the slight suggestion of danger gives it an awful charm. In such places there is no poet whom I prefer to King David, who, among his other fine qualities, must certainly have been an accomplished mountaineer. If he had not been accustomed to go up and down rocky hills, he would not have sung that glorious strain—

'I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
From whence doth come mine aid.
My safety cometh from the Lord,
Who heaven and earth hath made.
Thy foot He'll not let slide.'

"In these days of Protoplasm and enlarged views, it may seem childish to quote David as anything of an authority. But I am not ashamed to confess that in such a place as Scoor-nan-Gillean, I actually derive some strength and comfort from that old-fashioned sentiment, 'Thy foot He'll not let slide.' It's all very well to know that the 'hypers-thene' on which you plant your foot is of such and such a chemical structure, and affords the most splendid footing. I know it, and rejoice in the fact. But I also know, or at least believe, that it was not a blind and fatal Force, but an intelligent Person, that did in the beginning create the heavens and the earth, that did in due time order the upheaval of Scoor-nan-Gillean, and that does at this hour watch over every creature of His that goes up and down its craggy sides. I have no notion that Providence will preserve me from death if I neglect the plain dictates of common-sense, and the inflexible laws of nature. But I have enough of the old unscientific belief to feel, in going up and down Scoor-nan-Gillean, or any similar place, that

* I am sorry that since this was written Sgùr-nan-Gillean has been discredited. I was still more sorry that the highest place was assigned by the Ordnance Survey to Sgùr Dearg, which I never loved. But since then I have been pleased to know that so good an authority as Dr Collie has assigned the highest place to Sgùr Alasdair, confirming the aneroid calculation I made in 1874.

the only power to keep my foot from sliding originates, not in a soulless Force, but in a Paternal Mind. If Professors Tyndall or Huxley should consider me an ass for this, I don't care. I back David against them both with great equanimity."

At the date of writing the above, I had ascended S.-nan-Gillean twice—first on or about the longest day of the year in 1865 (and a glorious day it was!)—guided by the game-keeper at Sligachan, son of the man, Duncan Macintyre, with whom Principal Forbes made the first known ascent in 1839; second, with no companion, on a cold, dull day in February 1872. On the first occasion, wishing to return by a different way, as I always like to do, in hills or on the highway, I proposed that we should try the north-west ridge, and go down to Coir-a-Bhàsadair. My companion was quite willing, though he said it had never yet been done, the north-west face of the peak being considered impracticable. We proceeded very carefully down that pinnacled ridge till we came to a cleft which seemed to be the only possible way of getting to the bottom, and down which the only mode of progression was crawling on our backs. During the last few yards of our vermicular descent we could not see where we were to stop, and great was my satisfaction when I found my heels resting at the foot of the precipice among a heap of *débris*, and nothing formidable between us and the depths of Coir-a-Bhàsadair. Having plenty of time before us, and our appetite for climbing only increased by what we had done, we went round the corrie at the foot of the rocks, and up to the top of Bruthach-na-frithe,* from which we had a glorious view to the west and north of the parts

"Where the sun sinks beyond Hunish Head,
Swimming in glory,
As he goes down to his ocean bed,
Studded with islands."

* In the older guide-books this is called "Bruach-na-fray," and I believe I am responsible for the change of the name. But I am not sure now that I was right. "Bruthach-na-frithe," pronounced *Bruach-na-free*, means "the brae of the forest," which is perfectly applicable to the mountain. But *B.-na-fraigh*, which means "the brae of the shelves," is not less so, and correctly describes the structure of the slopes leading to the top.

The ascent of S.-nan-Gillean, above described, is the ordinary one, but having come down by an extraordinary one, I determined that I would also go up it that way; but I did not do so till several years later, when I went up with Angus Macpherson, then the principal guide, and a good fellow—now, alas! gone—Mr Hepburn, a good London Scot, and one or two others. We went up that horrid cleft, which I think I found lately mentioned in the Sligachan Hotel Visitors' Book as "Nicolson's chimney," found the rockwork a good deal abraded and softened since 1865, climbed among startling pinnacles, looking like threatening guardians of the top, and reached the summit amid a beautiful soft mist, in which a bird a little below us looked like an eagle, but when disturbed by a stone flung at it, proved to be a solitary ptarmigan.

Here I will for the present end, and, with the Editor's permission, give the song on Skye, which I composed on my return to Edinburgh in 1865, after an Education Commission tour in the Hebrides, and sang for the first time at a dinner of the "Blackie Brotherhood" in the following summer:—

THE ISLE OF SKYE.

AN EDINBURGH SUMMER SONG.

THE beautiful Isles of Greece
Full many a bard has sung;
The Isles I love best lie far in the West,
Where men speak the Gaelic tongue.
Ithaca, Cyprus, and Rhodes
Are names to the Muses dear;
But sweeter still doth Icolmkill
Fall on a Scotsman's ear.

Let them sing of the sunny South,
Where the blue Ægean smiles,
But give to me the Scottish sea
That breaks round the Western Isles!
Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome,
I would see them before I die!
But I'd rather not see any one of the three
Than be exiled for ever from Skye!

What are the wonders there,
Stranger, dost ask of me?
What is there not, I reply like a Scot,
For him who hath eyes to see?

But if you're a delicate man,
And of wetting your skin are shy,
I'd have you know, before you go,
You had better not think of Skye!

Lovest thou mountains great,
Peaks to the clouds that soar,
Corrie and fell where eagles dwell,
And cataracts dash evermore?
Lovest thou green grassy glades,
By the sunshine sweetly kist,
Murmuring waves, and echoing caves?
Then go to the Isle of Mist!

The Matterhorn's good for a fall,
If climbing you have no skill in,
But a place as good to make ravens' food,
You can find upon Scoor-nan-Gillean.
And there will you see at Strathaird,
That Grotto of glittering spar,
With its limpid pool, where mermaids
cool
Their brows when they travel from far.

There frowns the dark Coiruisg,
 Which made the great Wizard wonder ;
 Even Voltaire might have worshipped
 there,
 Methinks, in the time of thunder !
 There towers the wild Cuiraing,
 With its battlements grim and high ;
 And the mighty Storr, with its pinnacles
 hoar,
 Standing against the sky.

Sail round the clifty West,
 And, rising out of the main,
 You there shall see the Maidens three,
 Like Choosers of the Slain ;
 And go wherever you may,
 With a new and deep surprise,
 The Coolin blue will fill your view,
 And fix your gazing eyes.

Were I a Sovereign Prince,
 Or Professor at large in vacation,
 I'd build me a tower in the Isle of Skye
 At the expense of the Nation ;
 And there, like a Sea-King, I'd reign,
 But with a more gentle rule ;
 I'd harry no cattle, nor slay any man,
 But I'd drive all the children to school.

There, in the bright summer days,
 Stretched on the sward I would be,
 And gaze to the west on Blaven's crest,
 Towering above the sea ;
 And I'd watch the billowing mist
 Rolling down his mighty side,
 While up from the shore would come
 evermore
 The music of the tide.

And when the sun sinks to his rest,
 'Mid glory of yellow and red,
 There will flash the light of a thousand
 spears
 On Blaven's cloudy head ;
 And each turreted ridge of black
 Is lit with a flame of gold,
 As they hang on high, 'twixt earth and sky,
 A wondrous sight to behold !

Pleasant it is to be here,
 With friends in company,
 But I would fly to the Isle of Skye
 To-morrow, if I were free !
 Dunedin is queenly and fair—
 None feels it more than I—
 But, in the prime of the summer-time,
 Give me the Isle of Skye !

A. N.

BEN STARAV.

BY FRANCIS J. DEWAR.

HAVING taken a house for the early months of summer at Dalmally, the scene of so many successful "meets" of the Club, my brother D. D. Dewar and I were naturally encouraged, if indeed encouragement were wanted, by the recollection of the doughty deeds done in that district in ice and snow, to emulate them in our humble way under the more kindly influences of summer weather, or such as passes for it in those somewhat ungenial seasons. In due course, therefore, we climbed, in one or two cases not for the first time, the nearer Bens, such as Ben Lui, Ben Eunaich, the many-topped Cruachan, Chochoill, Chlieb, and other minor hills, but our eyes were ever turned longingly to the more inaccessible hills on Loch Etive side, and it was to these that we proposed devoting two or three consecutive days, assisted by the "rucksack" and the chance hospitality of the neighbouring forester or shepherd at Doire nan Saor or Kinloch Etive. But up to the middle of June, business prevented these days being got, and, as July was drawing near—a month I have too often found unsuited for climbing, on account of the cloudy weather which obscures the hill-tops—we resolved on Saturday, 18th June, to have a big day, and to climb at least Ben Starav. Accordingly, at 7.25 A.M. on that day, we left the farmhouse of Corriehoil, about two miles east of Dalmally, and, following the road to Glen Strae, we took the track to the Beallach between Meall Copagach and Ben Lurachan, which is a fairly well-defined one, although in an early number of the *Journal* it is, I think, stated that it exists apparently only in the imagination of Mr Bartholomew. The "Black Shoot," or rather the Black and White Shoots, for there are three or four cracks in close proximity to each other, on the S.E. side of Ben Eunaich, were passed on our left, and it was unanimously resolved to attack them on a later day, Messrs Lester, Gibson, & Co., these redoubted rock-climbers, having, we understood, on the preceding Queen's Birthday, shown that there was a way up them, although it was by no means

certain that where they had gone we could follow. On attaining the top of the pass Ben Starav came into view, or at least the lower part did, for he had not yet (9.30) doffed his night-cap, any more than his neighbours Cruachan, Eunaich, and Aighean, but the wind being north-easterly we hoped that by noon, when we expected to be at or near the top, the weather would have improved, and in this we were not disappointed. A descent of about 2,000 feet brought us into Glen Kinglass, where, by the side of the river, the too-long-delayed after-breakfast pipe was smoked. Starting again at 10.40, we ascended the Allt Hallater, which here falls between Ben nan Lus and Ben Aighean, down a magnificent wooded gorge of great steepness. On the east side of this burn there is a bridle path into the forest from the lodge at Doire nan Saor, about a mile up the glen, which is a great assistance in ascending the lower slopes of the hill. It may be noted that there is here a very fine "shoot" on Ben Aighean, which we estimated at about 400 or 500 feet in length, and which should afford some good climbing in ascending that hill. From this point, and for about a mile or so higher up, there is a really beautiful view of Ben Lui, the top only being visible between two of the hills in Glen Strae. As we got higher up, the extreme baldness and desolation of the hill and its neighbours became very apparent, all vegetation and even the soil itself having in huge patches been swept away, and curiously enough this seems to be the case on the lower slopes to a greater degree than near the top itself. Thinking that there might be a dip if we climbed nearly directly north, we followed the burn in an easterly direction until we attained its source, and thereafter we held somewhat to our left, when we found that we had been mistaken, and that we had taken a somewhat longer route than was necessary. Holding steadily upwards, the next point of interest was a golden eagle, which rose from a rock some forty yards in front of us, and, after wheeling almost over our heads, made its way to the rocky north face of Cruachan. A grassy ride, some two yards broad, made conspicuous by the adjoining portion of the hill on both sides being covered with large stones, leads to the top of a magnificent corrie,

as fine a one I think as I have seen, and from thence the cairn 3,541 is reached. It is situated as far back, so to speak, as the hill will permit, the northern face of which falls at once very steeply to Loch Etive (the wild loch) below. I may here mention that the writer of the statistical account of the parish in which this hill is situated—Glenurchy parish,—quaintly remarks that “Ben Starive . . . forms a noble object in the landscape, . . . and attains an elevation of at least 2,500 feet.” And it is somewhat curious that while the height of this hill is so much underestimated, the altitude of Ben Cruachan is stated to be 3669, which is very nearly correct. He also mentions that the crystals found upon this hill are considered not inferior to those found upon the Cairngorms.

The weather, as we had anticipated, had now (12.40 P.M.) improved, and the view was a magnificent one, the hills in the Black Mount and Glencoe looking their best, although from Beinn' a Beithér (hills of the thunderbolts), at Ballachulish northwards, the clouds were approaching, thus preventing Ben Nevis and those farther north being very distinctly seen. To the southward and eastward again were our familiar friends, whose names are now almost household words among the members of the Club, while of the scene down Loch Etive and seaward over the islands, it would be impossible to say too much.

Thanks to Munro's invaluable list, we were, on leaving the cairn, guided to the subsidiary top, Stob Choire Dheirg (3,372 feet), which is reached by a narrow and in some parts rocky ridge, which, although easily traversed on a fine day in June, I confess I should not care much to negotiate when snow or ice were present, not to speak of mist and wind. I do not find this top, which is marked by a small cairn, given on the one-inch map, and I am rather disposed to think that the more correct spelling of the name is Dhearg, not Dheirg, for if I am right in thinking that it is called “the peak of the red corrie,” then it is very appropriately named, but perhaps—for my knowledge of Gaelic nomenclature is of the most limited—the adjective Dheirg is the same as Dhearg. I may perhaps add here, when on the subject of names, that the grazing on these hills in the old

days must have been much superior to what it appears to be now, for in addition to Ben Aighean, "the hill of the heifers," we find in the immediate neighbourhood Ben Chaorach, or "the hill of the sheep," and I may perhaps also be allowed to say that I am told that Bidean nam Bian means "the pinnacles of the skins," there having on the latter hill, a century or two ago, been on one occasion a great slaughter of deer there. I observe, however, that Mr Gilbert Thomson gives the translation of Bidean nam Bian as "the highest of the hills." I confess to being much interested in this branch of Gaelic philology (*see* Mr Hinxman's paper on the Torridon hills), and I would be glad if any member who has a knowledge of the subject would take the trouble, as an interesting supplement to Mr Munro's list, to give us at some future period a translation of the names of the larger hills, say of those of 3,500 feet and upwards.

Our journey homewards was made by the same route as that followed in the morning, although the pull up the Beallach to Glen Strae seemed most unnecessarily to have doubled itself in length and height, but a "stout heart to a stey brae" overcame all obstacles, and Corrieghoil was reached at 6.30. Our day's work we estimated at about thirty miles of walking, inclusive of some 7,000 feet of climbing. So ended a most successful and enjoyable day, to be repeated later on, we hoped, in the subjection of two more of the Glen Etive giants—Stob Coire an Albanaich and Ben Aighean.

P.S.—Since the above was written, I have made inquiry as to the meaning of the name "Starav." It appears, my informant tells me ("he has the Gaelic"), to be a corruption of "Starbhanach," which means, according to him, a stout, bulky man, with a small head. But be this as it may, it is certainly true that the hill, from some points of view, and particularly from Ben Chleib, answers wonderfully to this description.

"DEEP GLEN LYON."

BY JOSEPH GIBSON STOTT.

RIGHT athwart the western half of the broad fair county of Perth, from the rugged Argyllshire marches to the smiling meadows of Aberfeldy, stretches "deep and dark Glen Lyon." Up at its head a thousand streams pour down the rocky flanks of Ben Creachan and Ben Achallader, Creag Mhor, Ben Vannoch, and Ben Heasgarnich, and unite to form the parent loch, whence the waters of Lyon—already a powerful river—start eastwards on their thirty-mile journey to the Tay. Rich is their course in song, and legend, and tradition,—from the days when Agricola camped his legions at Fortingal, down through the wars of Robert the Bruce, and many a bloody clan battle and foray, to peaceful modern times. Rich is it, too, in all that is fairest in Highland scenery—soaring mountain top, and wild mountain pass; deep shady woodland, emerald meadow; steep braes, where wave the bracken and the heather; thundering linns, where the torrent wars for aye with the rock; the ruins of ivy-clad fortalices, and the more pretentious mansions of the present day. But it is not with Glen Lyon beauties in the aggregate that this paper must concern itself. While we are musing on the changes through which the famous yew tree—said to be three thousand years old—in Fortingal Churchyard has lived, our dog-cart is at the door of the inn, and we must away.

It is a cloudy, sultry morning in August. There is little wind in the glen, and on the hills the grey mist broods heavily. It is only nine o'clock, however, and Munro, a young Canadian friend—who thinks the Lyon knocks the Rhine into fits,—and the writer have some hopes of the day improving, as they jog along through the pass, and onward to the Free Church, nine miles above Fortingal.

Here we are—a bonny spot,—a bold bluff hill, well-named Ben Dearg, from its red shingly shoulders, guarding the tributary Northern Glen on the west side, the steep green slopes of our objective, Carn Gorm (3,370 feet), towering upwards on the other. We leave the road at 10.40, and

take at once to the hill. Half-a-mile up the burn, a tributary corrie—Coire nam Fraochag—opens on our right ; we leave our northern course, turn north-east, and on stiffening gradients plod aloft. For more than a mile we climb diagonally along the steep face of the corrie to a height of about 2,700 feet, the work being of that unpleasant ankle-twisting description inseparable from progress *across* a steep slope. From time to time we stop to examine some specially pretty flower (these Glen Lyon mountains are renowned as a botanical field), and so far we have bonny glimpses of the sun-illuminated glen beneath, and the steep smooth slopes around us. Very soon, however, these latter are taken from us ; for we have hardly begun to face the more direct ascent before the mist envelopes us in a cold damp cloud. Mounting more rapidly now over mossy rocks, and shingle slopes, we reach the cairn at 12.25. View there is none ; and to the mist there is superadded a thin soaking drizzle ; so we merely stop long enough to make some observations with compass and aneroid, and then bear away north-eastward for our next point—the top of Meall Garbh, a couple of miles off.

We descend about 500 feet to the col, and from it have a brief glimpse of Loch Rannoch to the north, and Glen Lyon, still sunny and pleasant-looking, to the south. The height of Meall Garbh is something over 3,200 feet, and we reach it at one o'clock, in thick mist and rain. Short halt we make here. The slope sinks steeply eastward for 500 or 600 feet to the col, and beyond it a momentary thinning of the mist shows us the southern buttresses, the rough bouldery slopes, and confusing summits of Cairn Mairg. But before we attack this mountain, lunch is an important consideration, so a suitable rill is found just below the saddle, and the sandwiches and flask produced, and done justice to.

With the inch-to-the-mile map, the aneroid and compass, we anticipated no more difficulty in traversing Cairn Mairg than we had met on the two summits already surmounted. In this we were entirely deceived. Certainly there was little room for error in our previous work, as in both cases the ridges we had followed led us directly to the somewhat narrow peaks. Cairn Mairg, however, is a much bigger

mountain, and his summit, or summits—for more than one is marked on the map—rise from considerable areas of ground that are above 3,000 feet in altitude. Our subsequent wanderings were so extraordinary and so utterly at variance—corroborated as they were by very frequent use of compass and aneroid,—with what is set forth on the maps, that we have been driven to the conclusion the map is incorrect. A study of the six-inch-to-the-mile map has thrown no light on the subject, and we shall have to wait until we are enabled to make a survey of the hill in clear weather to determine where the error is. I may mention, however, that Mr C. B. Phillip, who has been twice on the hill, is of opinion that the maps are very unsatisfactory.

We left our luncheon spot at 1.40, and took a compass course E.N.E. up the slope, the effect of which should have been to bring us in about a mile to the top, marked 3,250 in the one-inch map. In due course we did reach a height that answered this description, and immediately, in thick fog and pelting rain, laid a course E.S.E. for where the highest top of the mountain (3,419 feet) was marked little more than a mile away. After traversing less than half this distance, we became aware that there was a deepening watercourse on our left (*i.e.*, north), whose waters ran in an easterly direction. This watercourse had no existence on the map. Suddenly the mist thinned, and we saw that this water rose in a boggy hollow north-west of, and well below us. And beyond it a bold ridge started upwards and was soon lost in the clouds. We descended, crossed the depression, gained this ridge, and after following it for over half-an-hour arrived at a long crest, whose height the aneroid gave at about 3,300 feet. Doubtful as to how the barometer had made such an error, and still firmly convinced that we must be on the highest top of the mountain, we laid a south-east course for the neighbouring hill, Creag Mhor. We failed to keep on the shoulder, and soon found ourselves descending through thick heather into a deep corrie full of peat hags. Soon a gleam of daylight again came to our rescue, and showed us a mass of mountain swathed in cloud, due east of us. It must be Creag Mhor, we thought, so we scrambled and jumped through the hags,

and were soon putting stout hearts to the steep ten or twelve hundred feet brae that confronted us. It was a stiff grind; but we topped it at last, and at four o'clock found ourselves on a very fine shattered summit of gneissose rocks, said by the aneroid to be over 3,400 feet high. At this time we literally could not see twenty yards, and the cold, pitiless rain was lashed in blinding volume in our faces by a gale of wind we could hardly stand up to, amid the unstable crags.

Where could we be? Such a top as this could only be Cairn Mairg's highest. We must have come up out of Coire Eachainn, though where we had been wandering before we got into it beat our comprehension.

Things became more understandable now. For a hundred feet or so we picked our way cautiously downward through shivered crags and piles of enormous boulders, where the blast whistled and the rain lashed, then came heather and moss, and we soon sank 800 feet into the south-eastward. Then came another ascent,—on the *real* Creag Mhor this time,—and we topped his 3,300 feet (?) about five o'clock. Our work was done now. Turning south-south-east, we descended rapidly through cloud-land, and presently—lo! the mist was rent from top to bottom for a brief moment, and beneath, far down a dizzy slope, we saw miles and miles of green Glen Lyon, guarded by a vast mountain that, in the curious light, seemed to tower thousands of feet above us. It was Meall Gruaidh, away over by Loch Tay. Then the vapours closed again, dense as ever, but the slope we were on fell fast, and at about 2,000 feet we had the satisfaction of once more coming out into daylight, after nearly six hours of gloom. We reached the glen at Cresthill, pushed on, and refreshed at Fortingal. Drying our utterly sodden garments in anything less than two hours was out of the question, so we marched again to Aberfeldy, where we arrived shortly before ten at night.

There was nothing noteworthy in a day we all had greatly enjoyed despite the wretched character of the weather, and I merely relate our experiences in the hope that they may be of service to any one who wishes to unravel the Cairn Mairg mystery.

THE BLACK SHOOT OF STOB MAOL.

BY W. R. LESTER.

THE Black Shoot has now succumbed to patient and persistent attacks, the last of which was made by four members of our Club on the Queen's Birthday holiday of this year. This party consisted of Messrs Gibson, Naismith, Douglas, and myself; and as I have taken part in all the four attempts which have been made (the three first having been referred to in the last number of the *Journal*), I have been asked to give a short account of them.

It may as well at once be stated that the climb is a pure piece of mountaineering gymnastics, and is a case of seeking out a difficulty for its own sake. There are, of course, perfectly easy ways up the mountain by other routes.

The Black Shoot was first noticed by J. R. Robertson and myself, while coming down Ben Eunach in December 1889. It forms a large deep fissure in the face of an almost perpendicular cliff to the left of the glen, looking up, and is not noticed from below until the pedestrian comes directly opposite.

The shoot then presents almost the appearance of an elongated cave, beginning about 300 feet above the glen, from which it is approached over a steep slope of fallen stones. Above this slope the shoot proper begins, splitting up the face of the cliff for another 300 feet until it debouches on the hillside above.

On the occasion referred to (December 1889, Vol. I., p. 85), being struck by the very unusual appearance of the shoot, Robertson and I decided to go up and prospect as far as was possible under the circumstances, which circumstances were not very favourable for a climb of the sort, all the rocks being coated with snow and ice, and we being equipped with nothing more formidable than walking-sticks.

However, after a stiffish climb over the lower slope of stones and heather, in some parts of which real care was required, owing to the covering of snow which lay on the steep grass and moss immediately below the shoot, we

arrived in the shoot proper, and, Robertson leading, at once set to work to find foot and hand hold in the ice-covered fissure which from this point upwards divides the face of the cliff. This proved no easy matter, as, in the absence of axes, and Robertson's stick having meanwhile disappeared into the depths of the glen below, we were reduced to finding holds in the rock by picking out or melting the coat of frozen snow and ice with our finger tips. Progress, in these circumstances, was neither speedy nor agreeable; and after mounting some hundred feet of the shoot it was decided to beat a retreat.

On return to the Dalmally road, two of the natives whom we met gave the Gaelic name of the place, with its English equivalent; and on inquiry as to whether any one had ever been up it, the reply was, "No, neither man nor beast!" which information was distinctly consoling after our defeat.

Attempt No. 2 (April 1890, Vol. I., p. 85) was made the following Easter, by Campbell and myself. This time we had the rope, but no axe, and all the winter's snow had disappeared, and was replaced by slimy moss and trickling water. The shoot was therefore easier, but quite as disagreeable as before.

We passed the place where Robertson and I had previously stopped, and clambered some thirty feet higher, over rock which approached nearer and nearer to the perpendicular as we proceeded. We then came to a stop, feeling very doubtful whether it was possible for us or any one else to go higher. All that could be seen above was an exceedingly steep and smooth chimney, which had to be approached over wide slabs of rock equally steep and smooth. From where we stood it was impossible to say whether or not there was any exit to the shoot above on to the face of the mountain; and in fact this was a disputed point to the very end,—to within a few minutes of the time that the exit was actually found on a later occasion. We therefore descended, having, as I say, reached a point some thirty feet higher than before.

The next time a party went to the Black Shoot, snow and ice had again covered up foot and hand holds—such as they are. This was on New Year's Day of the present year

(Vol. II., p. 70), and Gibson, Naismith, Thomson, and the writer had come to Tyndrum to make the third attempt. Our old enemy was found to be in a very bad condition. Such parts of the rock as were not under ice ran with water, or were covered with moss like a wet sponge.

This, it will readily be understood, was extremely trying, especially in a chimney which has to be climbed with back on one wall and knees on the other. The whole party being roped at the mouth of the shoot, rapid progress was made with the help of the axes, until the point was reached at which Campbell and the writer had previously turned back, *i.e.*, where the vertical chimney begins. The writer had the honour of leading; and up this chimney, which is in reality a small waterfall, and as wet as anything could well be, he and Gibson made their way for some thirty feet till a large boulder, fallen from above and jammed in the chimney, was arrived at overhead. This obstacle, coated as it was with ice, proved beyond my powers to pass. It was also impossible, owing to the narrowness of the chimney, for any of those below to take my place, unless I first descended to the bottom of the vertical part (where there was standing room for more than one) and, as by this time we were all thoroughly wet and cold, it was once more reluctantly decided, after a climb of about three hours, to give it up.

The following 19th of May found four of us again at Dalmally, with the avowed object of doing the shoot, or *once for all* proving it to be impossible. Gibson, Naismith, and the writer were again there, while our Editor had taken the place of Thomson.

Gibson was unanimously voted leader; and on arrival at the shoot we once more roped, and quickly reached the bottom of the vertical chimney above referred to.

It has seemed to me remarkable how, on each attempt, we, with perfect ease, reached the highest point previously gained, surmounting without difficulty obstacles which had before taxed us severely. It was only after passing these points that difficulties seemed to begin. The unknown above seemed to magnify the obstacles, as no doubt it does in every first ascent.

The top of the chimney having again been gained, it

was now the turn of Gibson to try his skill on the boulder which blocks the exit.

We had previously decided that if this boulder could be turned, few difficulties would remain between us and the top, and the party were therefore doubly anxious to get past it. This belief, however, proved to be a mistake.

Gibson, apparently with great ease, got round the boulder, and we three followed with the help of the rope. We were now on a ledge, with just room for the four of us to stand, and a choice of several routes higher up presented itself. For the better part of an hour, Gibson, with indefatigable energy, tried two of these ways, but could make neither of them go. During this hour the rest of the party had no choice but to stand on the ledge under a small cascade, which empties itself from above.

Finally, Gibson was successful with a third route, and the others again followed.

The angle of the face was now easing off, and the shoot was gradually merging itself into the cliff, which was here strewn with loose stones on the very point of falling. One of these, several pounds in weight, unfortunately was dislodged, and fell at a bound some twenty feet, striking the shoulder of the last man,—happily, however, without worse consequences than a bad bruise.

The shoot had now finally merged into the hillside, and we at last stood on the top, having taken two hours and a half to do the 300 feet. Feelings of exultation were, however, considerably damped by the thorough soaking we had got. We stayed but a few minutes at the top, and it was decided not to try the descent by the same route.

A quick scamper over the hills to the top of Ben Eunach helped to bring back our normal temperature, and the evening saw us safely again at Dalmally.

As to the shoot, on one point we were all agreed, viz., that it would never see any of us again. It had given us enough, and to spare, of its water and its mud, of which my clothes bear traces to this day.

In summer or dry weather the place may possibly be improved, and should any one foolishly decide to follow in our steps, they would be well advised to choose such a

THE CLUB MEETS.

INVERORAN.

14th to the 18th April 1892.

BY A. ERNEST MAYLARD, M.B., B.S.

THE Easter Meet at Inveroran was one that will long be remembered by those who were fortunate enough to be present. Perhaps of all seasons of the year the early spring is the most reliable and suitable of any as regards the weather. April is almost invariably a fine month, with a cold, clear, and bracing atmosphere. The hills at this time, more than at any other, are frequently coated with snow, and the low-lying ground is hardened by frost. Thus, both for climbing and for scenery, this season presents exceptional facilities and pleasure for the mountaineer. The present occasion supplied these various opportunities to their fullest; and if ever the Scottish hills looked like the Swiss Alps, or afforded scrambles that reminded the mountaineer of his bigger exploits abroad, they did so on these memorable April days.

It will not be out of place to give, prior to a detailed account of what the Club did, a brief account of Inveroran itself as a mountaineering centre, and to our worthy President we are indebted for the following notes:—

Inveroran and its surroundings. “The situation of the inn—in which Mr Duncan Forbes made us extremely comfortable—is admirable. Snugly placed close to Loch Tulla, almost amidst the beautiful groups of old Scottish fir which guard the Orchy as it issues from the loch, it is only about nine and a half miles from Tyndrum, a distance which just enables the jaded city man, arriving from Edinburgh or Glasgow, to stretch his legs and win an appetite for dinner on his arrival.

“Within easy reach of the inn are a whole series of first-class tops, of the necessary ‘Munro’ altitude, almost all of them accessible without a weary preliminary tramp over

roads. To the east of the Orchy are several fine hills, which have the great merit of not being enclosed in deer forest, and which therefore are open to mountaineers at all seasons of the year. The hills to our right, as we travel along the road from Tyndrum are—Ben Doirean (Doran), 3,523, and Ben an Dothaidh (Dör), 3,283, with their backs to Glen Lyon; Ben Achallader, 3,399, at the S.W. corner of the Moor of Rannoch, commanding the whole sweep of that peerless moor across to Carrour and Ben Alder.

“To the west of Loch Tulla, and the road which runs north from Inveroran to Kingshouse, and stretching back as far as Glen Etive and Loch Etive, down to Ben Cruachan, lies the great forest of the Black Mount. This grand tract of glen and peak is of course inaccessible during the stalking season; but all other seasons—through the kindness of our Hon. President, Lord Breadalbane—the head forester, Mr Macintyre, is ready to give every help and direction to members of our Club.

“What a grand tract of country this forest covers may be gathered from the fact that it contains no less than nine separate mountains above 3,000 feet, all of them easily accessible from Inveroran, though certainly two, Beinn Eunaich and Ben-a-Chochuill, are more easily ascended from Dalmally or Loch Awe.

“All the points command grand views over the whole country embraced in the circle formed by Ben Cruachan, Ben Lui, Ben Lawers, Shiehallion, Ben y-Vrackie to Ben Alder, Ben Nevis, the Buchal Etives, and the Western Sea.

“The names of the seven peaks specially within the reach of Inveroran are—(1) Stob Ghabhar (Gār), 3,565 feet; (2) The Clachlet, three tops more than a mile apart, 3,636, 3,602, 3,596 feet; (3) Meall nan Eun, 3,039 feet; (4) Stob Coir an Albannaich (Stob Alappanich), 3,425 feet; (5) Glas Bheinn Mhor, 3,258 feet; (6) Ben Starav, 3,541 feet, right over Loch Etive; and (7) Beinn-an-Aighean (Ben Anean), 3,141 feet.”

The first arrivals on Thursday evening, April 14th, were Coats, Rennie, and myself, later followed Douglas and Gunn. The morning of the 15th broke a perfect day, the sky

clear, and a keen north wind. Several degrees of frost were registered during the night, and the ground was in fine condition. At 9.45 we started for Stob Ghabhar (3,565). (It should be stated that Mr Macintyre, the head forester of the Black Mount, whom Lord Breadalbane had kindly instructed to meet us and give us any information we required, arrived at the inn at breakfast time, and from him we were enabled to select routes that would afford us interest and good exercise.) The route chosen was that which leads to the fine corrie at the foot of the N.E. precipitous face of the mountain.

Ascent of Stob
Ghabhar,
3,565.

This corrie cannot be seen from the hotel, and is all the grander from the fact that it is shut in on three sides by the almost precipitous ridges leading from the main top. In about an hour and a half the corrie was reached. The N.E. face, when first seen, is most imposing; it stands out boldly at the head of the corrie, presenting enormous rocky buttresses, between which are deep couloirs, running in places, like the rocks bounding them, almost perpendicularly. The couloirs as then seen were full of snow, and presented, some of them, an unbroken sweep for 1,500 to 2,000 feet down to the little frozen loch at the base. No attempt was made to ascend this face, it was simply prospected with the view of a serious attack on the morrow. The top of the mountain was reached by an ascent of the south-eastern spur. When about half-way up, our worthy Editor took with his camera the excellent photograph seen at the beginning of the *Journal*. It is intended to illustrate the ascent made by a party on the following day.

In the evening the President arrived with a friend, and with this good addition, and the fact that some little exploratory work had prepared the way for better accomplishments, the Club soon settled down into "good form."

At 8.30, ere dinner was over, in walked Naismith and Gilbert Thomson, after a perfectly Herculean feat. In the best part of a night and a day they had come over Ben Alder from Dalwhinnie! The account they gave us, which was for some time the topic of the evening, will be read with interest.

From Dalwhinnie to Inveroran over Ben Alder and the Moor of Rannoch.

Leaving Glasgow by the night train, they reached Dalwhinnie in the early hours of the morning. At 3.30 they left the station. It was freezing hard, the atmosphere clear, and the moon, just past the full, giving sufficient light for loch and road to be seen for some distance.

The scene, they said, was exceptionally fine, as dawn gradually broke. The dark hills had here and there a light veil of mist, the moon was glimmering on the smooth waters of Ericht, while the long vista of the loch, fading into indistinctness, was closed by the dreamy outline of a snow-covered peak, just touched by the sun. "We passed Loch Ericht lodge," continued our narrator, Thomson, "at five o'clock, our course being then over the moor towards Loch Pattack, by an excellent deer path. Near Loch Pattack our path swung round to the south, and we had a grand view of Sgor I Gutharna's 'Lancet-edge' and the two north-east ridges of Ben Alder.* Our first halt (6.50 to 7.10) was made almost under the shadow of Ben Alder, after a path had ceased to be of service. It had been solemnly agreed that difficulties were not to be courted; but the selection of the southernmost of the two ridges—although nominally because it gave the most direct route—was probably due chiefly to the fact that Munro had described it as the more difficult. But for the distance to be traversed, the gully between would have been chosen, as it promised some fine snow-work. There was no great difficulty about the ridge, although the axes were of occasional service, and the cairn was reached at 8.25. A magnificent all-round view was obtained, except that the Cairngorms were hidden. The flat top of Ben Alder was deeply covered with snow, finely corniced, with snow slopes stretching down to the valley. Leaving at 8.45, there was first an almost level walk, then a sharp descent (including a good glissade), and then a gentler slope to Prince Charlie's cave and Ben Alder lodge. The latter was reached at 10.15. Keeping somewhat west from the loch, about a mile distant at its foot, we went down the valley to the west of that of the Ericht, our next point being Dunan on the

* See *Journal*, Vol. I., p. 322.

Gaoire. This river we approached with some fears, but fortunately it was sufficiently low to allow of our fording it easily. Just before crossing we had our longest halt (1 to 1.30), and made an impression on our ample store of provisions. The valley on the south (Gleann Dubh) was pleasant walking for three or four miles, but then we came on an apparently interminable stretch of moor (the Moor of Rannoch), intersected by sluggish streams and bog holes. The last hour of this was further enlivened by a heavy snowfall, beating right in our faces, and it was with considerable satisfaction that we came in sight of Gortan, which was reached at five. A few minutes were spent in paying our respects to the engineering staff of the West Highland Railway, time forcing us regretfully to decline their kind hospitality, and the remainder of our journey was over a steadily improving road. By fording the Orchy just as it leaves Loch Tulla, in place of going round by the Bridge of Orchy, we cut off several miles, though at the cost of considerable floundering in the peat-bog on the west side of the river. The fresh snow had coated hard and soft parts alike, and was responsible for most of the trouble. The snow had stopped falling as we reached Gortan. Exactly at eight we reached Inveroran, after a walk so straight (barring the ascent of Ben Alder, 3,757 feet), that although Dalwhinnie and Inveroran are thirty-five miles apart as the crow flies, our track, carefully measured on the map, was only about forty-one. Roughly speaking, about half of this was trackless, and would have required careful mapping out by compass had the weather been less clear. As it was, the mountains overhanging Loch Tulla on the east formed our landmark for many miles, although the compass was frequently referred to for verification, and was our chief reliance after the snow-storm blotted out our view. We carried nothing save our axes and a stock of provisions, the latter being calculated on a liberal scale to provide for the not impossible contingency of an enforced bivouac."

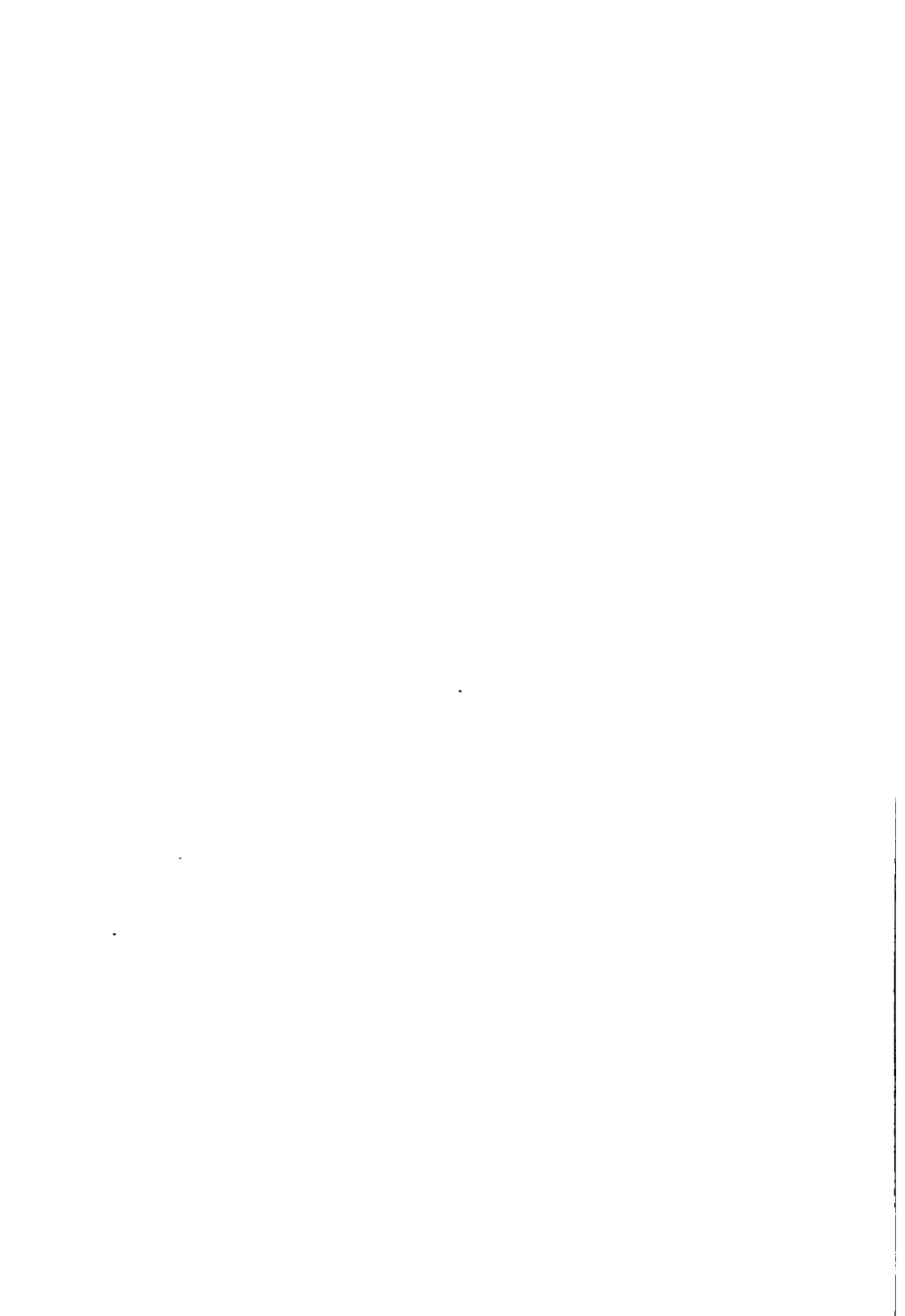
We heartily congratulated our brothers on their day's performance, and then, as the evening was wearing on, we commenced to discuss what our plans should be on the morrow. These evening chats over what we have done,

and what we mean to do, are some of the social delights of these meets. We are usually too tired to keep late hours, and we know that much of the enjoyment of the following day's ramble turns upon the result of a good night's rest. Three plans were finally settled upon—(1) the ascent of Stob Ghabhar, by the precipitous N.E. face; (2) the ascent of the Clachlet; and (3) the ascent of Ben Odhar.

The following morning broke with every evidence of a perfect day. The air was clear and keen. It was still freezing hard, and the ground was frost-bound. Every snow-capped peak stood out clearly against a cloudless sky.

The first parties to get a-foot were the Stob Ghabhar and Clachlet. Their road lay together for a short distance, and within twenty minutes of the start, at nine o'clock, they divided, Ramsay, Coats, Naismith, and myself being bound for the former, Douglas and Rennie for the latter.

The corrie was reached by the same route
Ascent of Stob Ghabhar by the N.E. face. as that taken on the previous day. After mounting easy snow to 2,500 feet, the rope was put on at a rocky "island" in the centre of a large snow slope. This slope was connected with the upper snow by a large couloir, marked "Lower couloir" in the photograph, which illustrates by a dotted line the route taken. Crossing a miniature bergschrund, Ramsay cut a zigzag staircase to the top, a distance of about 500 feet. The angle was about forty-five degrees, and as it had been freezing hard for days, and the place was protected from the sun, the snow was very stiff, and the work of step-cutting arduous. On emerging from the couloir, the face flattened out into a sort of terrace, presenting a choice of routes. The line of the first couloir might have been continued in easier snow, and the summit-ridge struck a short distance N. of the cairn, but a more "sporting" way to the left was chosen. Changing ends to relieve the leader, Naismith proceeded to the front, and attacked a narrow, questionably possible, couloir between nearly perpendicular rocks. (See "upper couloir" on the photograph.) As the angle was severe, and the surface frozen hard, the rocks on the left side were kept close to, and thus the assistance of an occasional handhold obtained. When surveying this place from a distance, a grey band



UPPER SUMMIT
COLLOIR, 8,565 feet.

LOWER
COLLOIR.

BUTTESS.

SNOW GULLY.



NORTH-EAST FACE OF STOB GHABHAR.

From a Photograph taken 15th April 1892.

crossing the middle of the couloir had been noticed. This soon resolved itself into a precipice of fifteen or twenty feet high, covered with hard ice,—in fact, a frozen waterfall,—and voted impracticable. The only way out of the difficulty was to scale the smooth rocks on the right side, and a narrow ledge opposite the waterfall seemed feasible if it could be reached. To get there it was necessary to cut several steps up and across the ice. At first it was of the requisite thickness, but when making the last step or two the axe at once penetrated to the rock. This *mauvais pas* took a considerable time, and those below suffered from the low temperature,—so low that ungloved fingers showed a tendency to stick to the steel of the axe-head. With care the steep ice fall was crossed, and we then found ourselves upon a knife-edge of rock, set at an angle of probably seventy degrees, but affording fair hold, though in a poor state of repair. The edge was scrambled up, and terminated in an acute pinnacle, above which the rocks became easier. Finally we returned to the couloir above the ice fall we had been obliged to circumvent, and cut up steep snow to the sky line, when we found ourselves only thirty yards from the cairn. There, in bright sunshine, we revelled in the sun's warm rays. Some of us had suffered terribly with the cold, and the process of "finger-thawing" caused one of us no little suffering. It had taken us about two hours to do our last 500 feet, and except for Naismith, who had hard work which kept him warm, we had had to stand still and hold on in this narrow gully, where neither the sun reached us nor the relentless north wind relaxed its continuous blast. These passing inconveniences were soon lost sight of in the glorious panorama which unfolded itself before us. The big snow-capped tops, both far and near, stood out clearly, and to the north-east was spread out the vast Moor of Rannoch, with snow-showers chasing one another across its boggy waste. The Western Ocean we also caught a glimpse of.

It being time to descend, we decided to take different routes. Ramsay and Coats selected the south ridge, which leads by an easy gradient to the base; while Naismith and I, with the rope, went down the great buttress which

projects into the corrie, and is joined to the main ridge some hundred yards north of the cairn by a short rock arête,—sharp and serrated,—recalling the pinnacle route up Scur-na-Gillean. The east end of the buttress is composed of steep but good rocks. From the bottom of these, a snow gully to the left (N.) was made for, involving the descent of some glazed rocks and frozen turf—not a nice combination. On reaching the snow, a long glissade brought us right down to the loch. The rest of the road was a walk home by the same route as we had come. The evening was lively enough, for we all had something to talk about regarding our day's expedition. The Stob Ghabhar was voted one of the best Alpine experiences any of us had ever had in Scotland. Rennie and Douglas, who arrived a little later than ourselves, had had an almost equally good expedition.

After leaving us in the morning, they kept the Kingshouse Road to the Ba Bridge, 300 yards beyond which they struck up the hill, sheering a little N. of N.W. to avoid a rough rocky face of Meall a' Bhuiridh. Rennie, who told the tale of their day's proceedings, said :—"The ascent was over grass, patches of hard snow, with bare rock and loose stones near the top. The cairn (3,636 feet) was reached in an hour and fifty minutes from the time of leaving the road. From the cairn we walked west towards the Clachlet, across the Bealach (3,054 feet), up a steep face to the ridge (3,506 feet). Thence, turning north, we reached the unnamed north top of the Clachlet (3,596). Here we got a splendid view of the Stob Dearg, of the Buchaille Etive Mor right opposite, and the Ben Nevis chain in the distance. In half-an-hour we reached the Clachlet cairn (3,602 feet). We then dropped about 1,300 feet to the Bealach Fuar-Chathaidh, and finally ascended Stob Ghabhar (3,565 feet). We left the cairn at 5.40, and came down by the south-east ridge."

Gilbert Thomson had unfortunately to leave us, so that Gunn alone had returned to tell of their expedition.

There was little to narrate regarding the ascent of Ben Odhar. It proved an easy and gradual slope to the top, though somewhat stony as the cairn (2,948 feet) was approached. The only

incident of interest was Thomson's hair! which, from some inexplicable cause, apparently "stood on end"! Being a man not easily frightened, we concluded that his hair rose from some surcharged electrical condition of the atmosphere, and from no startling shock to his nervous system! We learned afterwards that they only "stuck up" for a few minutes. Gunn observed the phenomenon, but strangely escaped himself!

Sunday broke a glorious Easter morn, with again a keen frost, clear atmosphere, and cloudless sky. To some of us it was a day of rest, to others a day too good to lose. Douglas and Rennie left early to climb some of the mountains to the north of Glen Kinglass and Glen Dochard. Coats and Naismith left for Dalmally by Glen Orchy, *en route* home. In the afternoon Rolland and Cockburn came over from Tyndrum. Unfortunately our Club membership does not include ladies, so for connubial reasons these members of the Club had taken up their quarters at the Tyndrum Hotel. They told us they had made several expeditions, including Ben Chaluim (3,354 feet), Ben More (3,843 feet), Ben Doireann (3,523 feet), and Ben Lui (3,708 feet). The snow was generally found to be in good condition, although too hard to permit of extensive glissading. Most of the climbs afforded interesting work, and necessitated the use of rope and axes. Rolland narrated an interesting incident which happened to them when on Ben Lui on 15th April. "We experienced," he said, "a remarkable atmospheric phenomenon. Our ascent was made by the south side of the big corrie facing east, up which we had to cut steps for an hour and a half, until we gained the arête immediately to the south of and close to the cairn. During the ascent there were several snow showers, and twice we heard sounds suspiciously like thunder. On commencing the descent, we suddenly became aware of the air being charged with electricity by the hissing of our axe-heads, and when one of our party raised his cap the others declared that his hair 'stood on end'! These atmospheric conditions lasted until we had descended upwards of 500 feet."

As Rolland suggested, this may not be an uncommon

experience to be had on the tops of our mountains when the conditions are favourable. It will be noticed that, the day following, Thomson experienced a like phenomenon. It is a common event in Switzerland, and I recall one occasion when no sooner had the "hissing" noise appeared and our "hairs stood on end," than we were enveloped in an instantaneous flash of lightning. We were doubtless near the point of contact or discharge between the cloud and the earth, and the way my head ached afterwards, and the great fright we got, made us feel that we possibly had had an escape. Professor Tyndall describes an almost precisely similar experience.

While Sunday began well as regards the weather, it wound up badly with a heavy and continuous snow-storm. Douglas and Rennie turned up about eight o'clock, having had rather a bad time of it for the last hour or two.

Leaving the hotel at 9.20, a two and a half hours trudge brought them to the spot in Glen Kinglass, from which they commenced the ascent of Beinn nan Aighean (Ben Anean), 3,141 feet. In a couple of hours the cairn on the top was reached. Two hours more brought them to the cairn on Starav (3,541 feet), after climbing up some hard snow slopes, in which the axes were of use. Rennie stated that their view from the cairn was somewhat obscured by a snowstorm, but they could see enough to convince them that the slopes to Loch Etive were steep, and likely to afford sport for rock climbing. A descent was made into Glen Kinglass, and then home again by Glen Dochard.

Monday, alas! was to see the last of Inveroran for all of us. The day, however, was too good to let go without a scramble for something. Ramsay, Gunn, and I left for Loch Awe station, going by Glen Euar and Glen Strae. The route is trackless, except as the Loch Awe end is approached. The view of Loch Tulla, as Inveroran is left, is very fine, and that of Loch Awe, as the south end of Glen Strae is reached, equally beautiful. The distance is fifteen miles, and it took us four and three-quarter hours, but we ran it terribly close, catching our train after a

Ascent of
Beinn nan
Aighean and
Ben Starav.

desperately hard push. Rennie and Douglas left Inveroran shortly after us. Walking to the Bridge of Orchy, they then commenced the ascent of Beinn an Dothaidh (3,283 feet), dipped down and Ben Doireann. to the Bealach, between this mountain and Ben Doireann (3,523 feet), and then to the cairn of the latter,—taking an hour and thirty-five minutes from the Bridge of Orchy to the first cairn, and two hours from there to the second. On one of the north faces of Ben Doireann, Douglas got a capital photograph of a very picturesque



ICICLES ON BEN DOIREANN, 18th April 1892.

piece of rock and ice scenery. The picture has been reproduced, and to many of our members, not to speak of the public in general, such a piece of scenery in Scotland will almost be a revelation. In descending to the Bealach between the two mountains, Rennie found specimens of *saxifraga oppositifolia*, L., in full flower, although often peeping out of patches of snow and ice. They reached Tyndrum at 4.10, and by night we were all once again in our own several quarters.

The Easter Meet, from beginning to end, was a perfect success. We missed some old faces, and none more so than our good old editor Stott. His absence away in warm climes we did not forget, in the gusto with which on more than one occasion we sang his stirring song. Munro, too, was well remembered, and many were the regrets that it was on account of illness he was prevented from being with us. Others too, frequenters of the meets but absent, were not forgotten. Space forbids, however, that I should insert all the names. Already, I fear, the limit of allowance has been exceeded ; but it was a real good time we had, right well spent, and long long will be remembered.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

EXCURSIONS.

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

THE LOCHNAGAR RANGE, 10th July 1892.—A long day in the Lochnagar district to determine the height of some of the tops.* A perfect day for walking, the moor dry, and, though dull, the clouds were high and the views good. Left Clova at 8 A.M., and Brae-downie at 8.45. Up Glen Doll to Crow Craigies* (3,014 ft., height and name from 6 in. O.S. map), which lies just to the left and above the right-of-way track to Glen Callater and Braemar. Hence to the Craig of Gowal* (3,027 ft., 6 in. O.S.), at 11.45. Back over the Knaps of Fafernie, which are not worthy to be named, and can certainly not be considered a top, to Creag Leachdach* at 12.35—a pretty little top, ten minutes' walk to the south-west of Fafernie; height about 3,150 ft. Crossing Fafernie we next made our way—at 2.30—(half an hour having been spent over luncheon) to the crags overhanging Loch Dubh, just to the north of the Braemar and Lochnagar track, and marked on the 6 in. map 3,571 ft.* Mr Inkson M'Connochie, in his interesting work on Lochnagar † (page 19), calls this point Cairn of Corbreach, and includes it among the eleven tops of Lochnagar. It cannot, however, be considered as distinct from Càrn a' Choire Bhoidheach, a short half-mile to the S.S.E. The names are identical, the latter being merely the Gaelic spelling of the former; the dip between the two is only a few feet, and though it looks well when seen from below, a closer acquaintance shows that it has none of the characteristics of a separate top. The height of Càrn a' Choire Bhoidheach was again made about 3,630 feet.* But Creag a' Ghlas-uilt*—reached at 3.10—appears to be little, if any, under 3,500 feet. Careful reference has been made to the aneroid readings taken on former ascents, and I fear the approximate height given in the "tables" is therefore too low by nearly 50 feet. From here the south-west shoulder of Creag a' Ghlas-uilt, ten minutes' walk off, appeared a very distinct top. I therefore went off and measured it, making its approximate height 3,470 feet. It is

* See Section 16 of Tables of 3,000 feet Mountains in Vol. I. of *Journal*.

† See *Journal*, Vol. II., p. 35.

certainly a good top, and the Lochnagar summits may consequently still be reckoned as eleven. Lochnagar, Cac Càrn Beag, and Cuidhe Cròm were next visited, the heights being carefully verified by the aneroid at all points. Twenty minutes from the latter, over rough moraine-like boulders, led to the Little Pap at 5.15—a very distinct and pretty little top; approximate height, 3,125 feet. A bridle path was soon struck, and descending the Glas Allt, past its fine waterfall, the head of Loch Muick was reached at 6.15. Hence a steep ascent, and then over peat hags, to the Dog Hillock (2,400 ft.) at 7.50. An easy grassy descent to Braedownie at 9 P.M. and a half-hour's drive to Clova.—H. T. MUNRO.

SGURR DEARG PINNACLE, SKYE.—We believe in one respect, as compared with the pinnacles or rock summits well known to climbers in Great Britain, the pinnacle of Sgurr Dearg is absolutely unique. It forms an actual mountain summit, being in fact the highest point of one of the two highest peaks in the Coolin range. The Pillar Rock in Ennerdale is some hundreds of feet below the top of the Pillar Mountain, and practically forms an abrupt termination of a ridge running down from near the highest point of the mountain. Notwithstanding its huge size, looking at the Ennerdale side of the mountain some distance away, it is not, to those who do not know exactly where to look, easily picked out. The Napes' needle too, on Great Gable is well below the summit, and is a mass detached from the lower portion of the rocks forming the Napes' *arête*. The Deep Ghyll Pillar on Sca Fell is a terminating point, but not the highest point, to one end of the north face of Sca Fell, and is cut off from the main mass by a narrow neck, the head of Steep Ghyll. While the "Parson's Nose" is merely an excrescence on one of the fine ridges which radiate from the top of Snowdon. Unlike all these, and many others, the pinnacle of Sgurr Dearg, variously called the Inaccessible and the Old Man of Skye, may be seen by the most unobservant, on a clear day, from a considerable distance, forming a distinct top to its mountain: and resembling, as Sheriff Nicolson tells us in one of his admirable articles on the scenery and climbing of Skye, from some points a huge horn, and other points a chimney can. It stands quite alone, having no companion points, or ridge of rock, and is a survival of the fittest of the range, being a hard slab of trap which has more successfully than the rest of the mountain withstood the weathering action of the elements. It is fixed into the east side of the mountain summit, its western end forming a point topping the mountain; while running down to the east, a long sloping edge falls for some hundreds of feet at a somewhat similar inclination to the mountain side, until becoming more steep, it terminates in the mountain side. Mr Clinton Dent, in an article on the "Rocky Mountains of Skye" (*A. J.*, 112, p. 422), very aptly likens it to a comb, stuck in the middle of a hair-brush, for convenience of packing.



SOUTH-EAST END OF THE PINNACLE ON SGURR DEARG, SKYE.

From Photographs of the Pinnacles.



Probably the first time it was mentioned in climbing literature was in one of the articles by Sheriff Nicolson, before referred to, a gentleman who shares with Mr C. Pilkington the honour of pioneer of climbing in Skye.

At the time Sheriff Nicolson saw the pinnacle at close quarters, there were still virgin peaks to win, more interesting than rock summits, or it might then have lost its claim to the name of Inaccessible, which it held till 1880, when Mr C. Pilkington with his brother, climbed it by its east edge. Mr Pilkington, in his article on the "Black Coolins" (*A. J.*, 99, p. 433), tells us it was next ascended by a shepherd; afterwards in 1883 by his brother and other two members of the A.C.; while in 1886 Mr A. H. Stocker and Mr A. G. Parker climbed it by its west end. It is now usually crossed, and indifferently from E. to W. or W. to E. The climb by the west end is really quite short, and its chief difficulty consists in passing a few feet of steep rock, which offers no secure foot or hand hold. Commencing at the north corner, a few reaches bring you on a level with a narrow piece of trap, sloping down. Standing on this there is a steeply sloping shelf of rock, about the height of the shoulder, on to which it is necessary to get, when climbing it the usual way. There is little hand-hold, and it is a place to take very carefully, and it is well to make use of all the friction a close hugging of the rock allows. The difficulty is not lessened by too long a search for holds. A slow pull, a wriggle or two, the difficulty is passed, and the rest is easy. Dr Norman Collie found that this end could be climbed by keeping closer to the north-west corner, and good holds all the way.

The east edge is a much longer climb, but it is less steep, and offers little difficulty: all the same the edge is so narrow, and at such a height from the mountain side, that, as Mr Pilkington says, it is a finer and more sensational climb than the west end. To those who first climbed this edge, the difficulty must have been infinitely greater than now, as it is very rotten, and bears unmistakable evidence of having been very thoroughly cleaned. It is necessary to try every hold before trusting to it, but so well has the work of cleaning the edge been done, that on a recent descent, not a single stone was removed.

We know the rock has been climbed in a gale of wind; and also in a mist, when the sides have been streaming with moisture, but it is—notwithstanding the immense temptation to the contrary, when once you have reached its foot—highly unadvisable to climb it under either condition. Mr Howard Priestman, of Bradford, has taken several very successful photographs of this pinnacle, and the illustration in this number is from one of these.—WALTER BRUNSKILL.

CRUACH ARDRAN, STOBINIAN, AND BEN MORE.—On 2nd May, bank holiday (having arranged expedition too late to secure a companion), W. W. Naismith left Crianlarich at 10.40. Climbed Cruach

Ardran, by Corrie Ardran, 12.40. Good view. Cut steps down Mr Thomson's fifty degree snow-slope (*Journal II.*, 88), or a similar one alongside. Started small avalanche of surface snow, sun having shone upon it all morning. Got down to valley (1,600 feet) at 1.40. Top of Stobinian (3,827), 2.50. Saw large bird, probably an eagle prospecting for lambs. Ben More, 3.55. Found tracks in snow, which afterwards proved to be those of Mr Ruxton's party. Descent to Luib by north-east ridge. Good glissade down snow-slope, with island of rock in centre, prominent from railway. Joined road beside Rob Roy's House at 5.15. Back to Hamilton the same evening. Less snow on hills than is usual. The east side of Stobinian, however, retained its ordinary alpine appearance. Distance, ten miles; total climb, 6,300 feet; time, six and a half hours (including short halts). This tallies exactly with a simple formula, that may be found useful in estimating what time men in fair condition should allow for easy expeditions, namely, an hour for every three miles on the map, with an additional hour for every 2,000 feet of ascent.—W. W. NAISMITH.

BEN CRUACHAN.—On 16th July, D. D. Dewar, H. Meikle (non-member), and I, having climbed Ben a Chochuill (3,215 feet), crossed the saddle between that hill and Sron an Isean, and holding immediately behind the latter we ascended the Drochaid Glas (3,312) from the north. The day was beautifully fine and clear, and the whole of the north face of mighty Cruachan was seen to perfection. The route taken by us is, I think, undoubtedly the most "sporting" ascent of the hill, for, although in no place difficult, it affords abundance of stiff climbing over huge boulders, from the right and left of which the descent is very steep, thus making it an agreeable contrast to the somewhat monotonous slope on the southern side of the hill. There are, if I may so call them, two tops before the final one is reached, the central one and *the* summit being connected by a narrow bridge, hence I fancy the derivation of the name "the grey bridge." So far as we could see, the remainder of the north face to either the big peak or to Stob Dearg is quite easily ascended at any point, except perhaps to 100 feet or thereby of the actual summits, and for a climb therefore from this side. I would recommend the route above mentioned. We completed our day's work by following the ridge to the two big peaks, and then crossing over Meall Cunail to Loch Awe station. The three eastmost tops, Stob Diamh, Stob Garbh, and Sron an Isean, we had climbed earlier in the summer. I would like to ask whether, in the computation of hills climbed, these seven tops of Cruachan count as one hill, and if not, then as how many? Meall Cunail, I think, might almost be counted as a separate hill.—FRANCIS J. DEWAR.

BEN LUI.—On the following Saturday, I and a young cousin (D. D. Dewar having left us to do Ben Oss and Ben Dubh Craige)

climbed, or rather tried to climb, Ben Lui from the north-east corrie. We at first intended to go straight up the centre of it; but to avoid the sun, which was blazing down on our heads, we took to our left to the shadow of the rock buttress mentioned by Mr J. H. Gibson at page 83 of the current volume. After climbing a few hundred feet the angle became extreme, so much so indeed that we had in some parts to kick steps, and go almost on "all fours." As this was the first time that my cousin, who is but a lad, had ever been upon a hill, I did not relish the responsibility of taking him farther, although he showed that he was full of pluck and a capital climber. Before giving it up, however, I tried the rock to the left of the shingly crack in which we were ascending, but the footing was simply horribly rotten, and my companion was consequently subjected to a lively bombardment of earth and small stones which very nearly dislodged him. We accordingly descended about 200 feet, more after the manner of miniature avalanches than reasonable human beings, and took the ridge forming the south-east boundary of the corrie, from which we soon gained the top. Here we spent an hour and a half basking in the sun and revelling in the view, every hill from the Cuchullins to Goat Fell standing out in an unclouded atmosphere.—FRANCIS J. DEWAR.

KILLIN HILLS.—H. B. Watt crossed the hills between Glens Lochay and Dochart on 18th July. As seen from the Tarmachans on the previous day, these summits presented little to attract, but they were taken as a mountain road to Luib station. Left the Glen Lochay road shortly after twelve noon, and skirted round the base of Creag Mhor (2,359 feet), where, as an old man assured me, "Uch, there iss not much rock,"—in spite of its name. At 1.45 P.M., after climbing up a little burn-ravine, reached a circular summit, with a small loose cairn, the point marked 2,835 feet in the one-inch Ordnance Survey map, north of Meall-na-Saone. In making this ascent a striking view was got of Ben nan Eachan, which stood out clearly as if a solitary peak, instead of being only one, and not the most remarkable one either, of the Tarmachans; but from the top the whole of this range was dwarfed by the great bulk of Ben Lawers towering up right behind. From this cairn a broad ridge stretched away northwards in a series of knolls and hummocks, mostly covered with short grass and moss, but with here and there outcrops of rock and some rock-faces, none much over 50 feet in height. Small lochs and peaty pools also occurred frequently. One summit, where the aneroid was just over 2,850 feet, was prominently marked by an upright milestone-like rock. Following the tops along, and crossing three broad cols successively about 2,700, 2,600, and 2,500 feet, a steep slope upwards from the last, led to the top of Meall Chuirn (3,007 feet), which was reached at 3 P.M. Just below the top, on the west side, is a rough cairn, from which the slope falls away into the deep glen (drained by the Allt

Lubchurran, a tributary of the Lochay), which intervenes between Ben Dheiceach (3,075 feet) and Meall Chuirn. Proceeded southwards about half-a-mile to Sgiath Chrom (about 3,000 feet—called Sgiath Chuil in Mr Munro's list, *Journal* No. 6, p. 284), which is the point in sight from Killin Junction, and which commands a fine view of the Dochart valley, and of Ben More and its neighbours almost *vis-a-vis*. It has no cairn, but is crowned by large bold rocks, at one spot on the south making a perpendicular face. Left here at 3.45 P.M., and descended leisurely, much enjoying the prospects around. Made the Dochart at Innishewan, and crossing it by the farm-punt, got to Luib station at 5.45 P.M. It may be worth noting that Ben Heasgarnich (3,530 feet) in Glen Lochay, had some patches of snow on its eastern slopes some distance below the top.—H. B. WATT.

GALLOWAY AND AYRSHIRE HILLS.—The best centre for the Galloway and Ayrshire hills is Loch Doon Head, and there very fair accommodation can be had at the keeper's (Downie) house, Craigmulloch. Fishing men frequently stay here, and recently an addition has been made to the house, which makes two good bedrooms, at any rate, available. Further up, at Loch Macaterick, I understand a house is to be built to accommodate the club which has recently leased this and the neighbouring lochs from Lord Ailsa, and accommodation may be available there; but the Rhinns of Kells are not so accessible from here as from Loch Doon Head. The inn at Rowantree, on the Maybole and Newton-Stewart road, marked on many maps, is now a roofless ruin.

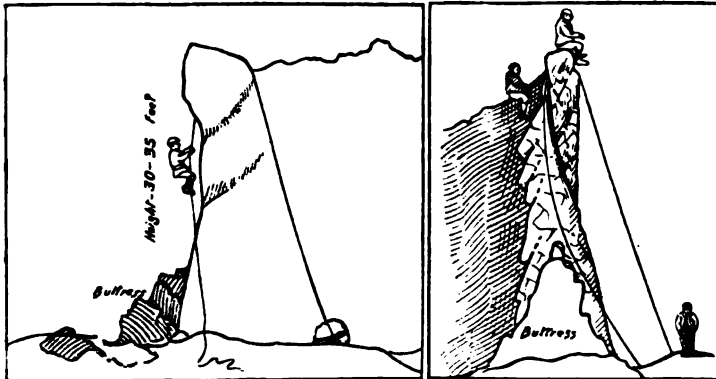
KIRRIEROCH (2,562 feet).—It is doubtful whether this is the highest point in Ayrshire (*vide Journal* No. 5, p. 250). Certainly the top of the hill, which is not marked by a cairn, is in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, the county march being indicated by a dyke which lies to the north, and some feet below the top, as I ascertained on a recent visit. How many feet below I cannot say; but the local belief is that Shallock-on-Minnoch (2,520 feet) is the highest hill in Ayrshire,—a belief shared in by the "Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland."—H. B. WATT.

A NIGHT ON A'CIR.—On Thursday, 9th June, Messrs Gilbert Thomson and Naismith arrived at Brodick about 6 P.M., and at once started for the near end of A'Cir. They followed the crest of the ridge right over the summit to the cleft described by Mr Fraser Campbell in last *Journal*, and there camped at 10.30.

The full moon shone over Ben Tarsuin, and the air was still and warm, so that the few hours of twilight (not darkness) slipped past quickly and pleasantly. The only drawback was that a cooking apparatus, which had aroused great expectations, getting adrift, took a hop, step, and jump into Glen Rosa, and was not recovered till the morning. At 1.30 the party breakfasted, and proceeded to

examine the "Scharte." Fastening their eighty-foot rope to a good place, a few feet back from the edge of the cliff, they saw that its other end trailed on the grass at the bottom of the gap. The lower ledge—twenty feet down—was then reached by the route discovered by Messrs Gibson and Lester, and from that ledge the climbers lowered themselves by the rope, hand under hand, down the forty feet or thereby of overhanging rock. Leaving the rope dangling, they finished the scramble along the ridge to the Cir Mhor saddle, and returned to the cleft. After one or two vain attempts to reverse the previous process and climb up the rope, a unanimous decision was arrived at that a thin climbing-rope is *not* well adapted to gymnastic exercises. Eventually making their way to the top by the grass ledge to the left, the party retraced their steps over the summit of A'Cir, and got down to Invercloy Pier just in time to catch the morning boat to Ardrossan.—W. W. NAISMITH.

THE WHANGIE.—On Saturday afternoon, 9th July, Maylard, Naismith, and Thomson visited the Whangie. As previously mentioned (p. 8, *et seq.*), this ridge had been traversed from north to south with the exception of one point, referred to as "a sheer drop without any hold whatever." The special object was to go from south to north, and to get both up and down the part which we have since dubbed "the pinnacle." The south and middle sections were easily done, and then



PINNACLE FROM THE EAST.

VIEW OF SOUTH END.

The above rough sketch gives a very good idea of the place, but the feet of the figure on the rope should be on the rock, not round the rope.

the pinnacle was attacked. Two ropes, each over forty feet, were joined together, and thrown over the thin edge. One end was made fast to a big stone on the inside of the gully, the outside one was held round the face so as to give a curved handrail. By its assistance, after dislodging a mass of loose stone, it was found quite possible to get up or down the face, a particularly good bit of climbing, about thirty-five feet high. The rocks throughout are rather treacherous,

many being shaky; but although in this respect they are inferior to those of Skye, they can fairly compare with them in their power of producing "lines of cleavage" in the nether garments.—GILBERT THOMSON.

LOCHNAGAR.—The Cairngorm Club held its Spring Excursion on 2d May to Lochnagar, when a party of forty (including several ladies) made the ascent. The route was—Aberdeen to Ballater by rail, drive to Glen Gelder Shiel *via* Balmoral, thence ascend the mountain, descending to Glen Muick at Allnaguibhsaich Lodge, where the conveyances had driven round by Strath Girnock to meet the company. The Club was indebted to Dr Profeit, Her Majesty's Commissioner, for the necessary permission for this route. The Glen Gelder path is "strictly private," as it forms part of the Balmoral grounds, but it gives the shortest *walking* distance to the summit. The weather was warm and agreeable for the first part of the day, but as the Shiel, a little lonely building, was reached at noon, mist began to appear on Cac Carn Beag (3,786 feet), and ultimately settled down for the remainder of the day. The top was reached by the first arrivals at 1.10, and by the last at 2.45, considerable fields of snow being encountered. Of course there was no view, but many of the party seemed to enjoy their first experience of being thoroughly enveloped in mist on a high mountain. A meeting of the Club was held at the cairn, when fifteen new members were admitted. The descent was made by the "Ladder" of Cuidhe Crom, which was found to be quite covered over in the upper parts with snow. Driving down Glen Muick, Ballater was reached at 7 P.M., where train was taken at 7.15 to Aberdeen. It may be interesting to not a few to mention that a pair of golden eagles are breeding on Lochnagar, and, as this is written, two eggs were observed in the nest. Let us hope they will be allowed to remain undisturbed.—ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

CROSSING THE CAPEL MOUNTH.—A party of sixteen bicyclists crossed the Capel Mounth on 1st May. The previous afternoon the wheelmen rode to Ballater from Aberdeen. On their arrival at Allnaguibhsaich Lodge they were escorted by several members of the Cairngorm Club across the Muick to Spital, and on to the commencement of the mountain path to Glen Clova. Dismounting here, the cyclists commenced the ascent, pushing their "safeties" along with them. The weather was glorious, and, for a time, the grand prospect and the novelty of the situation were much enjoyed. But soon a wet track, numerous snow-drifts, slush, swollen streams, and the excitement of frequently dragging man and cycle out of a deep and soft snow-patch, completely changed the aspect of matters. On the summit (2,250 feet) they met a small party of the Cairngorm Club, with whose assistance and creature comforts the magnificent view was thoroughly enjoyed. The cyclists reached Milton of Clova with

only one machine broken, finishing the day's run at Forfar, and returning to Aberdeen *via* Brechin and Fettercairn the following day. This party, it may be noted, are the first cyclists to cross the Capel Mounth—an arduous but exhilarating excursion.

The Cairngorm Club members, met by the cyclists on the Capel Mounth, had crossed the Tolmount the previous day from Braemar, and, descending by Glen Doll, had put up at Milton of Clova. Thence they crossed over to Spital of Muick and on to Ballater.—ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

BRAERIACH—A WINTERY EXPERIENCE IN MIDSUMMER.—A friend and I left Aviemore on the 13th of June to make the ascent of Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm, but finding their summits in a dense mist we changed our plans and decided to explore the Larig Ghrumach and the Garrachorry. To our surprise we found "The Pass" most wintry in appearance. From the 2000 feet contour undrifted new snow lay to the depth of five inches. In crossing the summit (2750 feet) the mist rolled gradually off the Devil's Point, and soon Cairn Toul was entirely clear. Cheered by this promise of a fine afternoon we struck up the steep sides of Braeriach, and ploughed our way through deeply drifted snow, up to our knees in many places, till the high plateau of the summit was reached. Here the mist came down again accompanied by a blinding blizzard of winter severity, with its sharp ice-needles as usual. Against this we held a compass course due W. for a quarter of an hour, until its stinging force became so intolerable that we willingly turned our backs to it—although knowing the cairn was not far off—and gave up the idea of finding the top.

We got shelter as we descended,—by one of the spurs that run into the Garrachorry,—and after some rough scrambling entered the Pass again a mile or two below the Wells, and reached Aviemore at nine o'clock, after being out some twelve hours. A second visit made the following week showed that we were within five minutes of the cairn when we turned.

To those meditating a few days visit to Aviemore, I can recommend Mr Edward Collie's Doune Cottage as a most comfortable place to stop at. It is about half-way between Loch-an-Eilean and Aviemore, on the east side of the Spey. He has accommodation for two or three people in the non-shooting season.—W. DOUGLAS.

DIARY OF A WEEK'S WALK FROM GLENSHEE.

Left Pitlochry on 30th April at 2.35 P.M. for Spital of Glenshee. Kept the high road *via* Moulin over into Glen Brerachan till Enoch-dow was reached. Then struck up hill, keeping Allt Doire nan Eun on right hand. The footpath became divided and indistinct till well up the glen, between Beinn Earb and Meall Uaine. There was soft

snow in patches at the top of the pass, and on the hills around. Arrived at Spital of Glenshee hotel at 8.30 P.M. in the dusk.

1st May.—Was more footsore and stiff than I expected from yesterday's walk on hard road, and with knapsack, so decided on a short day.

Started north by Braemar road on a fine clear morning. At 10.30 A.M. left the road at bridge over burn (1,499 feet point on map), thence north to top of Cairnwell (3,059 feet). Arrived there at 11.30 A.M., and had a clear view of all the hills around. Mist just touched the tops of what I took to be Ben Macdhui and Braeriach. In the other direction, I thought I made out one of the Lochnagar cairns, and decided on walking to-morrow along the ridge from Glenshee to Lochnagar, and thence to Braemar, if weather continued good.

After a longish rest and a good look round, I went westwards over Carn nan Sae to Carn Geoidh and Carn Bhinnein, keeping to the highest ground as much as possible. From Carn Bhinnein I dropped south into Glen Thailneiche, and so down along the burn to Glenshee hotel.

2nd May.—Having sent on most of my heavy things by road to Braemar, I started on a bright hot morning for Lochnagar. I went round by foot-bridge and visited stone circle, thence to top of Carn an Daimh at 9.5 A.M. (2,449 feet). Hills clear all round, sky without a cloud, and only slight haze on horizon.

From this point a wall or fence of some sort extends to between Fafernie and Cairn Bannock, and perhaps farther—but I lost sight of it at that point. The fence keeps nearly to the ridge all along, and should form an excellent guide in thick weather.

I walked over the following—Carn Aighe, Creag Leacach, Glas Maol, Cairn na Glasha, Tolmount, Fafernie, crossing the fence several times. The route was mostly over grass, and large stretches of snow in fair condition.

About 1.30 P.M., just after passing gate in fence, and footpath evidently running between Glen Doll and Glen Callater, mist came down and hid hills to north and east.

The forenoon had been a fine example of mist formation. At 9 A.M. there was a clear blue sky overhead and heat haze on the horizon. In an hour or so the haze had developed into fleecy clouds low down and far off. These gradually increased, and rested on the tops of the more distant hills. Overhead the sky got a uniform grey, and then marked with clouds. The wind got colder, and blew in whiffs, and looking around I saw that most of the near hills had mist on them.

I stuck by the fence, passed Fafernie cairn, and on through mist to some watchers' shelters on Cairn Bannock. Left them at 2.30 P.M., and went north down some steep slopes covered with soft snow, till I came to the burn running into Dubh Loch. Crossed it, and went east by lochside till I came to cairn at end of Loch Muick road,—the mist still thick above me, but sometimes lifting at this level, and showing the slopes on south side of loch.

I left this point at 3.30 P.M., steering a little east of north, and about 5 P.M. came on a small cairn, and round it in the snow saw the fresh tracks of a pretty large party. Afterwards I was told they were those of the Cairngorm Club.

Following these tracks backwards, I soon saw a big cairn built on a bare rock. This must have been the 3,768 feet cairn of Lochnagar. After leaving it in a W.N.W. direction, I was soon brought up by the steep cliffs round Loch Dubh. Keeping away from them to south and then westwards I struck the foot track from Loch Callater, and kept along it as well as I could for three-quarters of an hour. I was then clear of the steep ground on my right, and at 6.15 P.M. began to descend into the Feindallacher burn, crossed it, and at 7.30 found myself under the mist in a round corrie at head of Glen Beg. I climbed out of this westwards to the south of Creagan nan Leachda, struck the Glen Clunie road about two miles south of Braemar, and arrived there at 8.50 P.M.

3rd May.—Rested forenoon, and in evening walked up glen to base of operations for Ben Macdhui.

4th May.—Left lodgings early on a bright cold morning. Went up Glen Derry, with a strong cold wind and snow drizzle right in my face. Turned to the N.W. up Corrie Etchachan, and at 10.50 A.M. arrived at the loch, which was frozen over and covered with snow. The mist lifted occasionally, and showed bits of some fine rocky crags over other end of loch. I now steered W. of N., over stretches of hard snow, till I made out Loch Avon below, then bent more westwards in the direction of the shelter-stone. I kept too much to the hill side, and had some very uncomfortable going over soft snow and big stones before I got there at 11.40 A.M. The entrance under the shelter-stone was clear of snow, but a drift of hardened snow lay in the inner end. Certainly not an inviting place to spend a night in! Here I had lunch and a rest, and a grand view of Loch Avon from end to end under the mist. The dark unfrozen waters made an impressive contrast with the snow on the steep hillsides around and the mist overhead.

At 11.55 I left shelter-stone, and worked along north side of Loch Avon for twenty minutes. I passed a burn, and then turned north up a steep slope, rising 500 feet in twenty minutes. For more than an hour I walked north and up over good snow, with thin mist overhead, often allowing sun to break through, but never lifting to show me where I was.

At 1.25 I got to a cairn eight to nine feet high, and, as the ground seemed to drop a little all round it, and height by aneroid was about right, I concluded I was at the 4,084 feet cairn of Cairngorm. At 1.55 I started on my return trip, steering generally S.W. over level stretches of good snow. At 3.5 I was still in mist at the little lochan feeding the Feith Buidhe and Loch Avon. During a rest here I heard the stones rolling down the slopes of the glen below. I also heard some snow buntings calling, and saw one fly by.

From this a course a little E. of S. brought me to the 4,244 cairn of Ben Macdhu. Passing this, the mist suddenly lifted, and I walked out of it in a few minutes, and saw the 4,296 feet cairn right before me, and all the hills from Braeriach round to Lochnagar bathed in bright sunshine. I got to the 4,296 feet cairn at 4.5, and left at 4.30, after having had a splendid view of the country from W. through S. to E. I worked homewards by the headwaters of the Lui Beg burn, and up the stoney N.W. side of Cairngorm of Derry.

Coming down this on the ridge towards Carn Crom, I was accompanied at intervals by my shadow thrown on thin mist driving down Glen Derry; my head was surrounded by a faintly coloured halo.

Returned to lodgings 6.55 P.M.

5th May.—At 10.30 A.M. was well up Glen Dee on the eastern side of the burn. Crossed this nearly under the Devil's Point, with the intention of going right up the slopes of Cairn Toul. The weather, however, seemed to be getting worse, and mist came well down the hillsides, so I kept up the burnside, recrossed, and walked on track through Learg Ghrumach Pass, and was 500 feet down on north side when the weather took a turn for the better. At 1.40 P.M. I turned south, and climbed to a small cairn on Braeriach (near 3,834 feet point). Clear all round, but no distant view on account of mist. Thence N.W., over hard snow slopes and grass, into Glen Eunach, crossed the river before it got down to the forest, and on to a good road.

Passed Loch-an-Eilan at 5.20 P.M., and on to Aviemore, and by train to Boat of Garten, where I put up at hotel.

6th May.—Left for Blair in Athole by train for a couple of days climb on Loch Tay side, and to join Messrs Douglas and Glendinning at Killin.—J. RENNIE.

ROCK-CLIMBING ROUND WASDALE.—An enthusiastic climber in the Lake District of England sends the following account of the way in which some of the best rock-climbs in that district can be reached from Edinburgh and Glasgow. As the facilities for reaching them are even easier than many that exist in our own country, some members may feel inclined to go and explore:—"I have looked up ways of getting to Wasdale Head from Glasgow and Edinburgh, and find it can very well be done, and almost if not quite as readily as some of the Scotch centres. I give you a few particulars, commencing with train service.

CALEDONIAN RAILWAY.

GOING.		RETURNING.	
	P.M.		P.M.
Glasgow or Edinburgh, dep...	2	Keswick, depart.....	6.30
Carlisle, arrive	4.20	Penrith, arrive	7.25
Carlisle, depart	4.25	Penrith, depart	8.11
Penrith, arrive	4.50	Carlisle, arrive	8.35
Penrith, depart	5.40	Edinburgh, arrive	10.55
Keswick, arrive	6.25	Glasgow, arrive	11

Arriving at Keswick you could be met by conveyances from either the

Scafell or Royal Oak Hotels, Rosthwaite, about eight miles from Keswick, and here you would spend the night. Rosthwaite is only about seven miles from Wasdale Head, by way of Sty Head Pass. Next morning (first day) you could start in climbing order, leaving your heavy travelling rugs, &c., at Rosthwaite, and sending other luggage by pony or ponies, and go to the gullies of Great End,* practically on your way. There are three or four all climbable, and more or less interesting. From the top of Great End you could continue to the top of Scafell Pikes, cross Mickledore to Scafell face, and there spend the day in as many of the numerous climbs as you could get in, including some of the Deep Ghyll Pillar climbs.† On the second day you could go to the Pillar Rock, Ennerdale, and climb as many of the ways to the top as you liked; and if you went in for the long climb, mentioned in *Black and White*, 4th June 1892, you would have a good day's work before you. On the third day, you would find plenty to do on Great Gable,* Napes Pinnacle, † Napes Arête* (one or both), Ennerdale side gullies, &c. Fourth day you could take something—say Piers Ghyll*—on your way to Rosthwaite, and so back. There is plenty for other days, but I think the foregoing is the most interesting. They are mostly rock climbs, but if there was a great deal of snow and ice about, you would find work at hand in each case; but some of the climbs would be practically impossible, I think. I have never been in winter, but have climbed about the Pillar once or twice when there was deep snow about it, and some ice. If you arranged for Easter you must secure rooms at both Rosthwaite and Wasdale Head (Mr D. Tyson, Wasdale Hotel, Wasdale Head, *vid* Carnforth) three months in advance. At any other time you would have little difficulty."

EQUIPMENT.—The May number of the *Alpine Journal* contains as an appendix the report of the special Committee on Equipment, and many of the recommendations are of great interest to climbers—especially winter climbers—in Scotland. The report is such a model of condensation that anything of the nature of an abstract is out of the question, but everything connected with climbing equipment, food, and wearing apparel is fully discussed in one section, while another section deals with what is needed for exploring expeditions. As regards climbing gear, Swiss-made axes are said to be best for actual step-cutting; the axe should be short rather than long, and should not have leather on the handle. Six inches of rubber tube is recommended as a substitute. As a result of actual tests, some of which are detailed, a strong preference is expressed for rope made by Buckingham (194 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.), and the knots recommended and illustrated are—for the end men, a bowline knot; for joining two ropes, temporarily, a

* Described in "Climber's Book," Wastwater Hotel.

† Described in the *Bradford Observer*, 11th September 1891.

‡ Described in the *Pall Mall Budget*, 5th June 1890 and 10th March 1892.

fisherman's bend ; for joining two for a whole day, a figure of eight knot ; and for a middle man on the rope, a running noose with a second noose formed on the running end of the first. For provisions the following is given as a typical list :—Bread, butter, cheese, jam (or honey), meat, sugar, lemons, wine (or cold tea and the like), brandy, biscuits, chocolate, prunes, and perhaps acid drops. Small linen bags are recommended as wrappers in place of paper, and it will be observed that the eternal sandwich does *not* appear in the list. Those who climb much will not wonder why. Cold tea is said to be infinitely superior if made with cold water instead of hot, the proportion of tea to water being as usual, but the soaking taking four to six hours. [On our own mountains, where water as a rule is to be found frequently, a little oatmeal may be carried to mix with the water, the result being a most refreshing drink.] The question of clothing is discussed very minutely. Among other things mentioned, it is said that everything except the boots should be made entirely of wool, that the coat and knickers should be of strong material, and that by dipping any woollen material in a solution of alum its power of resisting wet is greatly increased. [If any one thinks of trying that experiment, however, a garment about six sizes too big should be chosen. *Crede experto.*] Boots, which are a vital point with the mountaineer, are described in detail, and of the various odds and ends nothing seems to be forgotten. A list is given of the makers of the various articles mentioned in the report.—GILBERT THOMSON.

SCOTTISH AND MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

MOUNTAINEERING. By C. T. Dent and others. London : Longmans, Green, & Co., 1892.

FOR the last few months, enthusiastic lovers of mountain climbing have been waiting with considerable interest the completion of Mr Dent's work on Mountaineering. Now that it has appeared, we have to congratulate the authors on producing a thoroughly practical as well as an interesting work, and one that will do much to give a fresh impetus to the fascinating sport it advocates.

Sir Frederick Pollock opens the book with the Early History of Mountaineering ; Mr Dent follows with chapters on Equipment, Mountaineering and Health, The Principles of Mountaineering, Reconnoitring, Snowcraft, Rock Climbing ; Mr Conway writes on Maps and Guide-books ; Mr Freshfield on Mountaineering beyond the Alps ; Mr Pilkington on Climbing without Guides, and Hill Climbing in the British Isles ; Mr Mathews on the Recollections of a Mountaineer ; Mr Willink on Sketching for Climbers ; and Mr Dent on Camping and Photography.

Each chapter in the book being written by an expert on his own subject, leaves little room for outside criticism. The latest and best methods of the craft are recommended. Nothing that a mountaineer

ought to know has been forgotten, and to the climber in Scotland—where there are no trained guides—the book will prove specially helpful. The chapter dealing with snowcraft should have his careful study, for owing to the development of alpine work in Scotland during the winter months of the last two years,—giving hours of step-cutting on steep snow slopes and soul-stirring glissades of six to eight hundred feet in a couple of minutes,—all the experience gained by our comrades in the Alps is necessary for its safe accomplishment. In this chapter he will learn that a good step-cutter will work for a couple of hours with ease, while a bad one, though perhaps a more powerful man, will begin to tire in a few minutes. One of the secrets appears to be, that the blow must be delivered by a swing from the shoulders and of the body from the hips, and the less the arms are used the better.

Most of our members on opening the book will first turn to Mr Pilkington's article on climbing at home. He discourses pleasantly on the joys experienced among our hills, and of the delights of days well spent among them. He has a kindly word too, to say of our not very reliable weather, remarking that "there is an astonishing amount of fair weather in most wet days"! and treats of the difficulties of climbing in cloud and mist, as a most interesting branch of mountaineering. Mr Pilkington is at his best when among the rocky peaks of Skye, and we regret that he has not devoted a little more space to the hills of that island. We are also sorry that he—although an esteemed member of our Club—is apparently unfamiliar with some of the excellent alpine work that is to be had on the north and north-east faces of many of our Scottish hills in the early months of the year. One of the foremost endeavours of our Club is to show what enjoyable sport exists for climbers at seasons of the year when for several causes it is unobtainable elsewhere, and for this reason we naturally regret that a work which will deservedly become popular, fails to sufficiently recognise the real merits of snow and ice work in our own country.

Mr Willink's sensational and amusing illustrations are full of the true mountaineering spirit, and add much to the value as well as to the artistic appearance of the volume.—ED.

OUR WESTERN HILLS: HOW TO REACH THEM; AND THE VIEWS FROM THEIR SUMMITS. By a Glasgow Pedestrian. Glasgow: Morrison Brothers, 1892.

THIS is a cheerful and vivacious little book, written in high spirits by one whose enjoyment both of climbing the hills and writing the book is evidently great. It is some six years since I remember reading the majority of these articles in the columns of a Glasgow daily newspaper (although no mention of this previous publication is now made), and it is to be regretted that the author should continue the autocratic style of the editorial *we*, and that he has not taken a little more care in seeing his work through the press. More than one slip-

shod passage occurs; and what is to be thought of such a phrase as "the Ben pure and simple," which the author has allowed himself to use when endeavouring to fix the reader's attention upon a hill he is about to climb? I casually note the following slips:—The cave at Blair is properly called Cleaves Cove, the Elf House being a local name only (p. 40); Grabh-alt (p. 55) is, of course, Garbh-allt; Schee-chailin (p. 81) is doubtless Schiehallion; there is no Ben More, a neighbour of the Cobbler (p. 92), Ben Ime is evidently meant, and also on p. 99 where Ben Irne appears; the name of Arthur occurs in, at anyrate, one well-known instance not connected with hills (p. 95), viz., Arthur's Oven; Conie Hill (p. 126), should be Conick; Gartness, not Garlios (p. 128), was the birthplace of Napier of the logarithm; and Ben Ledi is 2,875 feet high, not 3,875 (p. 132). The hills discussed are Loudon Hill, Tinto, Cairntable, Ballagioch, Kaim Hill, Goatfell, the Earl's Seat, Dunmyat, Ben Donich, Ben Venue, the Cobbler, Ben Lomond, Mount Misery, Ben Ledi, and the Meikle Ben, and while there is nothing fresh or striking to record in the way of ascents, or any extravagant writing on the features and characters of the hills,—there is even an under-estimate in such a case as the Cobbler,—the "Glasgow Pedestrian" must certainly be congratulated on the good fortune which met him in what seems to have been the chief object of his climbing,—"views from the summits,"—as on each and every occasion he has a great view to describe. One or two of the articles are almost entirely devoted to this, such as that on Mount Misery, which is really a description of Loch Lomond, and that on the Earl's Seat, which deals largely with Strathblane, Campsie, and the neighbourhood. This may induce more general interest in the book, the pages of which also touch on many subjects related to the hills,—botany, geology, topography, antiquities, place-names, &c., in such a way as to promise that the author's wish, expressed in his prefatory letter, to do something for the mountain cult may be fulfilled.

H. B. WATT.

THE PLACE NAMES OF SCOTLAND. By James B. Johnston, B.D.
Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1892.

WHILE this book scarcely meets the request (vide *Journal*, No. 4, p. 183) for a glossary of words in place-names,—being, indeed, so far as the list is concerned, constructed on the plan of rendering present names into their meanings,—it cannot fail to be of interest to those caring for the subject. The list referred to, which is an alphabetical one, covering 250 pages, contains about 3,500 names, and from these I have made up the annexed table comprising the substantival forms of mountain or hill names given in it, illustrated by some of the names themselves and their meanings. In local names, as Canon Taylor says in *Words and Places*, there are usually two component elements, one of these some general term meaning island, river, mountain, &c., and

the other some descriptive term distinguishing one island, &c., &c., from another. It is the general or substantival words which form the basis of my table, but the names given as examples, along with them, serve to show the component parts of the words also. I submit this table of mountain and hill names as material most likely to be of use to readers of this *Journal*, and as a small contribution towards the desired glossary, pointing out that it is merely a compilation from Mr Johnston's book, and making no comments upon his renderings of the names. He is well aware that he stands on perilous ground, particularly in dealing with Celtic names; and in a somewhat apologetic preface, he pleads for "grace and indulgence" as a pioneer, this being the first general work on the subject; and at the same time asks for assistance from fellow-students. In knowledge of localities, many members of the Mountaineering Club could render Mr Johnston valuable help, and a second edition of his book could be greatly improved and modified. In his introduction, the author lays down seven conditions necessary to be borne in mind by the amateur investigator, and then in five separate chapters deals with (1) Celtic names, (2) Norse names, (3) English names, (4) Roman, Norman, and purely modern names, and (5) Ecclesiastical names. Writing of Celtic names, which he estimates outnumber by ten to one all other Scotch place-names, and which are distinguished by their sympathy for nature, hints are given as to Gaelic inflections and pronunciation; and we are assured that, taken along with those words which have already entered English speech, the following thirteen words will enable any one to interpret nearly one-half the Gaelic names in Scotland:—(1) *Aber* or *abhir*, at the mouth or confluence of; (2) *Achadh* or *ach* or *auch*, a field; (3) *Auchter* or *uachdur* or *ochter*, a high field or a field; (4) *Bail* or *baile*, a hamlet or a house; (5) *Barr*, a height or hill; (6) *Blàr* (blair), a plain; (7) *Coil* or *cuil*, a corner or nook; (8) *Dail* (dal), as a prefix, a field or meadow; (9) *Garradh* (gart), an enclosure or garden; (10) *Inver* or *inbhir*, at the mouth or confluence of; (11) *Magh*, *mag*, a plain; (12) *Pette* (pit, pitte, petti), a village; and (13) *Tulach*, a hillock or hill. Speaking of *ben* Mr Johnston says that the earliest date for this word given in the *New English Dictionary* is 1788, but he goes further back to 1771 with a quotation from Denholm's *Tour Through Scotland*, "Prompt thee Ben Lomond's fearful height to climb." This is an instance of the curious and out-of-the-way information which may be found in Mr Johnston's pages; and before proceeding with my table, I give his renderings of the names of some of our best known hills, which do not occur in it, some of which seem to have the freshness of novelty. The following abbreviations are used:—*Dan.* Danish; *Fr.* French; *G.* Gaelic; *Icel.* Icelandic; *Ir.* Irish; *L.* Latin; *M.F.* Middle English; *N.* Norse; *O.E.* Old English or Anglo Saxon; *O.N.* Old Norse; *Sc.* Lowland Scots; *Sw.* Swedish; *W.* Welsh; *fr.* from; *perh.* perhaps; *prob.* probably; *pron.* pronunciation.

BENJOCK. ? hill of the drink. G. *d(h)each*. This, with *Benhar*, *Benrig*, and *Mount Bengerlaw*, are the only Lowland "bens."

- BOURD, BEN-Y. G. *beinn na buird*, table mountain. G. *bord*, a board or table.
- BUACHAILL ETIVE. G. the shepherd of Etive, fr. *bo-ghille*, cowherd.
- CANISP, BEN. Possibly bishop's lake, fr. old G. *can*, a lake, + *easpuig* (L. *episcopus*), a bishop.
- CHONZIE, BEN. Might be = *Choinneach*, G. gen. of St Kenneth; more probably from *chon*, G. gen of *cu*, a dog.
- CLIBRECK, BEN. G. *cliath breac*, spotted side or slope.
- CLOCHNABEIN or -BANE. Prob. G. *clochan ban*, little white rock. It is sometimes called White Stone Hill.
- COULBEG and COULMORE. G. *cùl beag* and *mhor*, little and big back (of the hill).
- CRUACHAN, BEN. G. dimin. of *cruach*, a stack, or stack-shaped hill.
- CUCHULLIN HILLS, properly CUILLINS. First form is a guide-book name only forty years old. Coolin or *Cuillin* is = G. *cu Ghulainn*, hound of Gulann, hero in Ossian.
- FOINAVEN, BEN. Prob. G. *fonn abhuinn*, river land.
- GLOWER-O'ER-EM. Name of a hill with a fine view. Sc. glower is to stare, gaze.
- GRAMPIANS. Origin unknown. The Mounth (*i.e.*, Grampians), G. *monadh*, a hill, frequently mentioned in early Scottish history.
- HALIVAL. ? G. *chalu na bhail*, haven, shore, bay of the village.
- HASKEVAL. Hask is probably corruption of G. *crosg*, a pass. So it will be, pass of the dwelling, *bhail*. Cf. Halival.
- HARRIS. N. *harri*, heights with English plural *s*. Its G. name is *Na Kearadh* (*àirdead*), with same meaning.
- HEE, BEN. Perh. G. *shiadh*, a deer. As likely fr. *shìth* (pron. hee), peace, *i.e.* tame peaceful-looking hill.
- HOPE, BEN. Icel. *hóp*, a haven of refuge.
- LAMMERMUIRS. Prob. G. *lann barra mòr*, level spot on the big height
- LAWERS, BEN. G. *lathar* (pron. lâr), a hoof, with English plural, cloven mountain.
- LOMOND, BEN, and LOMONDS. Prob. G. *leamhna* or *leamhan*, an elm.
- LOWTHERS. Prob. G. *liath dobhar* or *dùr*, grey water or stream.
- MOORFOOTS. Icel. *mór fúeit*, moor place.
- MORMOND. G. *mòr monadh*, big hill.
- MUIRNEAG. G. diminutive of *muirn*, cheerfulness, joy. Name of a beautiful hill in Lewis, which the fishers can see far out at sea.
- NEVIS, BEN. Prob. G. *ninnh uisg*, biting cold water.
- OCHILS. W. *uchel*, high.
- PENTLANDS. Generally thought to be a corruption of Picts' or Pehts land.
- QUINAG. Either G. *cuinneag*, a churn, milk-pail, fr. its supposed shape; or fr. G. *caoinag*, diminutive fr. G. *caoin*, beautiful.
- RINNES, BEN, = Rhynds. Prob. fr. O.Ir. *rinn*, *rind*, G. *roinn*, W. *rhynd*, a point of land. *Es* and *s* are English plurals.
- SAVAL MORE. G. *sabhal mòr*, big barn, fr. its shape.
- SCHIEHALLION. Usually said to be from its shape, G. *sich* or *sine*

chailin (*cailin*, a maiden), maiden's breast. Some think, G. *sìth Chaillinn*, hill of the Caledonians.

SCREEL, BEN. Prob. G. *sgrath-eileach*, turf bank or mound.

SCRIDEN. G. *sgrath-aodann*, turf-covered slope or face.

SHIANTA, BEN. G. *seunta*, enchanted, sacred, fr. *seun*, a charm.

SLIOCH. Prob. G. *sleagh*, a spear.

STOBINIAN. Perh. the little stump of the birds; G. *stoban ian*.

STUC A CHROIN. G. *stùc* is a projecting little hill, a horn; and *crann*, gen. *croinn*, is a plough or a tree.

SUILVEN. Prob. G. *suil-bheinn*, eye-like hill, fr. its shape.

TEE, BEN. Locally pron. Hee. Hill of peace, G. *sìth* or *shi*; i.e. tame-looking hill.

TINTO. Prob. hill of the (signal-) fires by the water, i.e. the Clyde; G. *teinte-abh*.

TRILLEACHAN, BEN. G. for the pied oyster catcher.

TURC, BEN. G. *torc*, *tuirc*, a wild boar.

VENUE, BEN. Said to be G. *meanbh*, with the *m* aspirated, meaning little as compared with its big neighbour, Ben Ledi.

VOIRLICH, BEN. G. *mhòr leac*, big flat rock, or fr. *leacach*, bare summit of a hill.

WYVIS, BEN. Doubtful; possibly corruption of G. *uamh*, a cave with the common English plural *s*.

TABLE OF MOUNTAIN NAMES (SUBSTANTIVES).

ALL, AILL. O.G. a rock, rocky steep. Ailsa Craig. Bonally, G. *bonn-aill*, foot of the rock or cliff. Eildon, prob. G. *aill*, a rock, cliff, *dùn*, a hill.

AONACH. G. a height, a heath, a desert place. Aonach, Mhor, and Beag. Enoch Dhu, G. *aonach dhu*, black, steep hill. Eunaich, Ben, prob. = Enoch. Lathones, prob. G. *leathad aonaich*, the slope of the hill or heath, with common Eng. plural *s*.

ARD, AIRD. G. a height, head, promontory. Aird Dhail, G. *àird-d(h)ail*, height or cape of the meadow. Cf. the Aird of Sleet. Ardchalie, G. *àird-choille*, height of the wood, and numerous other words beginning with Ard. Inchard, G. *innis àird*, isle of the height. Kinnaird, G. *cinn-àird*, head of the height.

BARR. G. a height, top. Auldbar, prob. G. *allt-a-barra*, glen by the height. Barjarg, G. *dhearg*, red. Barrshaw, O.E. *scaga*, a wood. Davarr, G. and Ir. *dà bharr*, two heights. Uamvar, G. *uamh-a-bharra*, cave on the height or hill-top.

BEALACH. G. a pass. Ballochmyle, G. *maol*, bare pass. Garvelloch, G. *garbh aileach*, rough stone house; or G. *bealach*, rough pass.

BEN, BEINN, and the allied VEN, PEN, PIN. G. and W. a head, hence a mountain, hill. Bendouran, more correctly *doireann*, mount of storms; and numerous other words beginning with Ben. Ban-chory, G. *beinn g(h)eur*, sharp-pointed hill. Caskieben, prob. G. *crasg-a-beinn*, pass between the hills. Binny, G. *beinnan*, a little

- hill. Mulben, G. *maol beinn*, bare hill. Corven, G. *corr beinn*, rounded hill. Morven, G. *mòr bheinn*, big mountain. Venlaw, tautology, G. *bheinn* + Eng., *law*, both = hill; cf. Penlaw. *Cockpen*, W. *coch pen*, red head or hill. Letterpin, G. *leitir (leth-tir)*, Ir. *leitir*, land on the slope of a glen + *pin* = *pen*. Penicuck, W. *pen-y-cog*, hill of the cuckoo. Pennan, prob. G. *beinnan*, a little hill (the only Pen north of Perth). Pennygant, prob. W. *pen-y-gan*, hill of the thrush. Pinwherrie, prob. G. *shoithre*, hill of the copse. The most northerly Pin is Pinvally, near Cumnock.
- BRAE.** O.N. *brá* = O.E. *brácw*, *bréaw*, the eyelid; or G. *bràigh*, the upper part or slope. Braemar. Breadalbane, G. *bràghad* (gen. of *bràigh*), *Albainn*, the upper part or hill district of Alban or Scotland.
- CAIRN, CARN.** G., a heap, hill. Cairn Toul, G. *càrn tuatheal*, northern cairn. Carn Leac, G. = cairn of the flag or tombstone; and numerous others beginning with Cairn, Carn. Cockairnie, W. *coch carn*, red heap or hill.
- CEFŃ.** W., a back, hence a ridge. Cheviot; but to explain the *-ot* it is suggested prob. G. *c(h)iabach*, bushy, fr. *ciabh*, hair. Giffen and Giffnock; latter fr. *cefn*, a ridge + *achadh*, a field, or *cnoc*, a hill.
- CLADH.** G., a mound, a hill. Clova, prob. G. *cladh ath*, mound at the ford. Clovuillin, G. *cladh-a-mhuillin*, the mound of the mill.
- CLAOIN.** G., a slope. Clyne. Clynelish, G. *clao-n-lios*, hill slope with the garden.
- COCK.** N. *kok*, a heap, lump. Cock of Arran. Cocklaw,—tautology.
- COMBE.** W. *cwm*, a hollow. Cf. Eng. *coomb*, O.E. *cumb*, a valley, a bowl. Coomb Hill. Mr Johnston does not mention White Coombe.
- CRAG, CRAIG.** G. *creag*, a rock, a crag. Many words beginning with these two syllables.
- CRUACH.** G. a stack, or stack-shaped hill. Craichie. Croick.
- DODD.** Common name of rounded hills in south of Scotland.
- DRUM.** G. *druim* = L. *dorsum*, the back, hence a hill-ridge. Drumfada, G. *fada*, long hill-ridge; and other words beginning with Drum. Drimnin, G. *druinnein*, dimin. of *druim*, a little ridge. Rashiedrum, G. *rasach druim*, hill-ridge covered with shrubs. Tyndrum, G. *teine druim*, hill-ridge of the fire.
- DUN, DUM.** G. and Ir. *dùn*, a hill, then a hill-fort. Dunglass, G. *glas*, grey, wan hill; and numerous other words beginning Dun or Dum. Banton, prob. G. *ban dùn*, white hill. Denino or Dunino, G. *dùn aonaich*, hill on the heath. Bourtie, G. *buar dùn*, cattle hill.
- EDIN.** G. *eadann*, slope or face of hill. Edinbane, G. *ban*, white. Edingight, G. *gaoith*, exposed to the wind.
- FELL.** Icel. *ffjall*, fell; N. *ffjeld*, a mountain or hill. Bogue Fell, G. *bog*, soft. Criffel, G. *crich*, boundary. Artfield Fell,—triple tautology,—*àird*, *ffjeld*, and *fell*, all a hill.

- HAUGH, HEUGH.** O.N. *hauga*, a mound. Haugh of Urr. Youchtrie Heugh, G. and Ir. *uachdarach*, upper, Heugh=hill.
- HILL.** Eng. Numerous examples as a suffix.
- HOY.** Icel. *hár*, Dan. *höi*, high. Heiton. Hynish, Dan. *höi naes*, highness. Old Man of Hoy.
- KEN, KIN, KINN.** G. *ceann*, W. *pen*, *pin*, a head. Ceanncroe, G. *ceann*; G. and Ir. *croagh*, *cruach*, head of the stack-like hill. Kennageall, G. *ceann-na-gil*, promontory, head of the white mark, fr. *geal*, white. Kinblethmount, G. *ceann blátha-monaidh*, prob. head of the flowery mount. Many examples in Kin.
- KIPPEN.** G. *ceapan*, dimin. of *ceap*, a stump or block. Makeness Kipps. Thornkip. Kippenross, G. *ceapan rois*, hillock of the wood.
- KNAP.** G. and W. *cnaf*, knob, button, hence a little hill; O.E. *cnaef*, hill-top. The Knipe. Knapdale, Icel. *knapp-dal*, or G. *cnaf*, knob-dale, *i.e.*, glen with the hillocks.
- KNOCK.** G. and Ir. *cnoc*, a hill. Knockrioch, G. *cnoc riabhach*, brindled, brown, heather-covered hill; and many other Knocks. Sir Herbert Maxwell gives 220 in Galloway. Culnaknock, G. *cùl na cnoc*, the back of the hill. Gilnockie, G. *geal cnocan*, white or clear little hill.
- KNOWE**, softened form of knoll. Sc. *knowe*, O.E. *cnoll*, Dan. *knold*, W. *cnol*, a (rounded) hillock. Broomieknowe, broom-clad hill. Cowdenknowes, G. *cùl duin*, the back of the hill, + Sc. *knowe*. Pyatknowe, magpie's hill.
- LARIG.** G. a path, way.
- LAW.** Sc. *law*, O.E. *hlaw*, a mound, hill, barrow. Cathlaw, G. *cath*, a battle. Fala, *fah law*, pale, dun hill. Glasterlaw, G. *glas tir*, green or greyish land. Harlaw, O.E. *har*, *her*, a boundary mark. Norman's Law, hill of Norman. Ferrielow ?=ferry-hill; poss. fr. G. *fearann*, land, a farm.
- LETTER.** G. *leitir* (leth-tir), Ir. *leitir*, slope, edge. Ballater, G. *bail leitir*, village on the hill-slope. Dullatur, G. *dhu leitir*, dark hill-slope. Findlater, G. *fionn leitir*, white, clear hillside. Letterpin, the slope of the hill; pin=*pen* or *ben*.
- MAM.** G. *mám*, prob. cognate with L. *mamma*, a breast. Mambeg, little round hill, like a breast. Ceann a Mhaim, C. *ceann na mhaim* (gen. of *mám*), head or point of the rounded hill.
- MEALL.** G. *meall*, a lump, boss; cf. W. *moel*, a hill. Sutherland is full of Mealls,—Meall Garve, Horn, &c. Millifiach, G. *meall-a-fitheach*, hill of the raven. Milleur, G. *meall odhar*, grey hill. Vellore, same derivation and meaning as latter.
- MOND, MONT, MONADH.** G. *monadh*, a mountain, moor. Monadh-liath Mountains, G.=grey moor or mountain. Crimond, G. *crich monadh*, boundary hill. Glasmont, G. *glas monadh*, grey hill. Moncrieff, G. *monadh craoibh*, hill of the trees, or *crubha*, of the haunch or hoof. The Mounth (*i.e.*, Grampians) is fr. G. *monadh*. Stormonth, prob. G. *starr-monadh*, distorted, crooked hill.
- MULL.** G. *maol*, brow of a rock or cape, prob. cognate with *maol*, bare.

- ORD. G. *òrd*, a steep rounded height. Ordiqhill, G. *òrd-a-bhuill*, height in the plot of ground.
- PAP. Eng. Maiden Pap and Paps of Jura, both named fr. their shape.
- RIGG. Sc. *rig*, a ridge, furrow, hill-ridge, fr. O.E. *hrycg*, *hrick*, Icel. *hrygg-r*, Dan. *ryg*, a ridge, literally the back. Tod Rig, Sc. *tod*, fox. Trochry, G. *troch*, bad, dangerous + rig.
- SITH. G. a hill. Campsie, G. *cam sìth*, crooked hill or hill range. Memsie, perh. G. *mám sìth*, little breast-like hill. Sidlaws?
- SCOUR, SGOR, SGUR. G. *sgòr*, *sgùr*, a rock mountain. Scour Ouran, prob. St Oran's hill. Scur Vuillin, G. *sgòr-a-mhuilinn*, rock of the mill. Dunscore, G. *dùn sgòr*, hill with the sharp rock.
- SLIABH. G., hill. Slewnark, G. *sliabh n-arc (orc)*, hill of the pig.
- SRON. G., literally a nose; cape, promontory. Struminoch, G. *sron meadh onach*, middle height, promontory. Tynron, prob. G. *teine sron*, beacon-fire point.
- STACK. O.N. *stak*, G. *stac*, a cliff, an isolated rock, cognate with Eng. *stack*. Common in Caithness.
- SWARE. O.E. *swær*, neck or pass on the top of a mountain. Manor Sware.
- TOM. G., a hillock, knoll. Tombéa, G. *beath*, hill of the birches. Tomnahurich, prob. G. *tom na h'uibhraich*, hillock with the juniper bushes. Tamfour, G. *tom fuar*, cold knoll.
- TORR. G. *tòrr*, a hill, heap, mound, fort. Corstorphine, G. *crois tòrr fonn*, cross of the clear (white) hill. Kintore, G. *ceann tòrr-ra*, head of the hill or mound. Torphichen, G. *tòrr phigheainn*, magpie's hill. Torry, G. *tòrran*, a little hill; and other names beginning Tor, Torr.
- TILLY, TULLI, TULLY. G. *tulach*, a hill, hillock. Auchtertool, G. *auchter tulach*, field upon the hill. Mortlach, G. *mòr tulach*, big hillock; cf. Murthly. Newtyle, G. *nuadh tulach*, new hill. Tillyfour, G. *tulach fuar*, cold hill. Tulliallan, G. *tulach àileinn*, hill by the meadow, or fr. *aluinn*, exceeding fair, beautiful. Tullymet, prob. G. *tulach meith*, rich, fat, fertile hill.

H. B. WATT.

GEOLOGICAL MAP OF SCOTLAND. Reduced from the Ordnance and Geological Surveys under the direction of Sir Archibald Geikie. John Bartholomew & Co. 1892.

THERE can be few, if any, members of the S.M.C. who have not read Sir Archibald Geikie's charming book on the scenery of Scotland. It has been the incentive which has led many of us to inquire into the history of the rocks and scenery with which we are so familiar. Published originally in 1865, a thoroughly revised and enlarged second edition was brought out in 1887. To this was appended an excellent little geological map.

In the five years which have since elapsed, however, much has been accomplished by the geological surveyors. The southern half of

Scotland and a large part of the central and north-western Highlands have now been mapped in detail. Sir Archibald Geikie has accordingly prepared a new geological map, which will be of the greatest service to those members of the Club (and we hope there are many) who take an intelligent interest in the nature and character of the rocks and mountains which they climb. On a larger scale than that brought out in "The Scenery of Scotland," it is still small enough to be conveniently carried in the pocket, and the moderate cost at which it is published by Messrs John Bartholomew & Co. (6s.) brings it within the reach of every one. Mr Bartholomew's excellent ten mile to the inch tourist map has been taken, and the geological colouring has been so admirably executed that all the place names are as clearly legible as in an uncoloured map. It can therefore be used by the tourist or mountaineer as a general map, as well as for geological purposes.

To many of us not the least interesting portion will be the twenty pages or so of "Explanatory Notes" which accompany the map, and which "are meant chiefly for the use of the tourist who has no special knowledge of Scottish geology, but who would wish to travel through the country with an intelligent interest in the nature of the rocks which have determined the character of its scenery." As the notes are by the author of the "Scenery of Scotland," it seems unnecessary to say that for conciseness, terseness, and lucidity they could not be surpassed.

The map will doubtless soon be looked upon as an almost necessary part of the Scottish mountaineer's equipment.—H. T. MUNRO, F.R.G.S.

Scottish Mountaineering Club.

Honorary President.

THE MARQUIS OF BREADALBANE.

President.

Professor G. G. RAMSAY, LL.D.

Vice-Presidents.

Sir ALEXANDER CHRISTISON, Bart.

Professor JOHN VEITCH, LL.D.

Honorary Treasurer.

CHARLES GAIRDNER, Esq., LL.D.,
Union Bank of Scotland Limited, Glasgow.

Honorary Secretary.

A. ERNEST MAYLARD, Esq., B.S.,
10 Blythswood Square, Glasgow.

Honorary Librarian.

GILBERT THOMSON, Esq., M.A., C.E.,
75 Bath Street, Glasgow.

Honorary Editor.

WILLIAM DOUGLAS, Esq.,
10 Castle Street, Edinburgh.

Members of Committee.

Rev. GEORGE A. SMITH.

HUGH T. MUNRO, Esq.,
F.R.G.S.

Professor WM. JACK, LL.D.

Rev. JOHN STEEL.

Rev. COLIN CAMPBELL.

WM. W. NAISMITH, Esq.

ROBERT A. ROBERTSON, Esq.

W. R. LESTER, Esq.

Bankers.

THE UNION BANK OF SCOTLAND LIMITED,
Ingram Street, Glasgow.

EXTRACTS FROM RULES.



OBJECTS OF THE CLUB.

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

PROPRIETARY AND SPORTING RIGHTS.

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

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

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

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP.

Gentlemen wishing to become members of the Club must forward to the Secretary at least one month before the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting in December a list of Scottish ascents made by them, or a statement of their contributions to science, art, or literature, in connection with Scottish mountains, accompanied with the names of two members of the Club acting as proposer and seconder. If in the opinion of the Committee the qualifications are deemed sufficient, the name and address of the candidate, with his qualifications, together with the names of

the proposer and seconder, shall be posted in the Club-room upon a card, a fortnight before the day of ballot, and members who wish to support the candidature may inscribe their names thereon.

[Members of the Alpine Club, as also others who have made ascents or supplied valuable contributions, as indicated above, elsewhere than in Scotland, will be *ipso facto* eligible for election.]

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

FEEs.

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

THE CLUB-ROOM.

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

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

THE JOURNAL,

Published three times a year.

January 1890.—CONTENTS—The President's Address, Prof. G. G. Ramsay; The Cairngorms in Winter, A. I. M'Connochie; Winter Ascents, H. T. Munro; Buchaille Etive, J. G. Stott; Glen Sannox Hills, T. F. S. Campbell; &c. &c.

This number has been reprinted, and is for sale at 2s. 6d.

Copies of the following for Sale, 1s. each.

May 1890.—CONTENTS—Suilven, L. W. Hinxman; Three Days among the Cuchullins, W. W. Naismith; The Arrochar Mountains, Gilbert Thomson; Ben Alder, J. G. Stott; The Mountain Scenery of the N.W. Highlands, H. M. Cadell; &c. &c.

September 1890.—CONTENTS—Bidean and the Buchailles, Gilbert Thomson; Winter Ascents, No. 2, H. T. Munro; The Cairngorms in Summer, Walter A. Smith; Adventure on Sgor-na-h-Ullaidh, C. B. Phillip; The Braes of Balquhiddy, F. J. Dewar; Ben Lomond in 1822, Howitt; &c. &c.

January 1891.—CONTENTS—Ben Alder, Prof. Ramsay; Sgurr Alaisdair, Chas. Pilkington; The Blackmount, J. Coats, M.D.; The Ben More Trio, J. G. Stott; Ben Ghlas and Ben Lawers, J. M. Macharg; Highlands of Galloway, C. B. Phillip; Pass of Corryarrick, H. B. Watt; &c. &c.

May 1891.—CONTENTS—Ben Eithe and the Torridon Hills, L. W. Hinxman; Braeriach and Cairn Toul, A. I. M'Connochie; Ben Screel, W. Douglas; Ben Lui, T. F. S. Campbell; Ben Nevis, W. W. Naismith; Winter Ascents, A. E. Maylard; &c. &c.

September 1891.—CONTENTS—Through the Mountains, Walter A. Smith; Winter Ascents, No. 3, H. T. Munro; Knoydart, C. B. Phillip; The Killin Hills, J. G. Stott; Tables giving all the Scottish Mountains exceeding 3,000 feet in height, H. T. Munro; &c. &c.

January 1892.—CONTENTS—The Cuchullins, A. E. Maylard; Practice Scrambles, Gilbert Thomson; Bein Bhan of Applecross, L. W. Hinxman; Cir Mhor from Glen Sannox, W. W. Naismith; The Moorfoots, W. Douglas; &c. &c.

May 1892.—CONTENTS—Androwhinnie, Prof. Veitch; Winter Ascents, No. 4, H. T. Munro; The Assynt Hills, J. A. Harvie-Brown; Cairngorm on 2nd Jan., W. Brown; Corrie Vassie, Dr Stuart; Loch Awe Meet, W. Douglas; Arran Meet, T. F. S. Campbell, &c.

September 1892.—CONTENTS.—Skye and Sgùr-nan-Gilleann in 1865, by A. Nicolson; Ben Starav, by F. J. Dewar; Glen Lyon, J. G. Stott; The Black Shoot, W. R. Lester; Inveroran Meet, A. E. Maylard, &c. &c.

These can be purchased from DOUGLAS & FOULIS, Edinburgh; JAS. MACLEHOSE & SONS, Glasgow; and D. WYLLIE & SON,

THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

Vol. II.

JANUARY 1893.

No. 4.

SNOWCRAFT IN SCOTLAND.

BY W. W. NAISMITH.

“These hielands of ours, as we ca’ them, gentlemen, are but a wild kind of warld by themselfs.”—*Bailie Nicol Jarvie*, in “*Rob Roy*.”

SINCE the Hon. Editor expressed a wish for a paper on this subject, an admirable work on “Mountaineering” has been published, which I take for granted all the readers of the *Journal* have studied. The suggestive chapter on hill-climbing in the British Isles contains a brief reference to snow-climbing in Scotland. As the pursuit of “Alpine work” is one of the main objects of the Club,* it may interest any members, who as yet know the mountains only in their summer dress, to glance at the subject in somewhat greater detail; at the same time noticing some points of resemblance between winter climbing in Scotland, and summer mountaineering in Switzerland. There may be difference of opinion about one or two matters to be alluded to, and the writer would here disclaim the least desire to pose as an authority.

The Alpine climber can always have, if he choose,† the

* If in the Alps the tide of fashion sets towards rock climbing, to the neglect of snowcraft, those of us with conservative instincts will, by encouraging ascents in snow, have the gratification of helping in a small way to stem the prevailing current.

† Climbing the High Alps without guides, by men who know what they are doing, seems to be at once the highest development and the most fascinating form of the sport, and likely to become more and more popular. Perhaps the chief practical drawback is the necessity to carry heavy rucksacks.

aid of the best guides in the world, men habituated from infancy to the mountains in all conditions, and so sure of foot that it appears impossible for them to slip. The "moral" effect of being tied to such men is immense. In Scotland the amateur must undertake all the reconnoitring, the fatiguing step-cutting, and the responsibility of anchoring the party in the event of a slip. Hence it is that climbing at home with rope and axe deserves to be ranked among the noblest forms of recreation. It is a grand school for prudence, self-reliance, endurance, and the other qualities that make up manliness; perhaps better training for a mountaineer than following even famous guides. As yet too there attaches to it something of the zest of novelty which the Alps had for climbers of thirty years ago. There are still any number of "first winter ascents" waiting to be "bagged," as well as endless *variations*.

The use of the ice-axe was unknown in Scotland till about ten years ago, when it was introduced by a few climbers who had served an apprenticeship in the Alps. These pioneers were commonly regarded as eccentric persons, hardly accountable for their actions: so much so, that they were fain, when plotting a snow ascent, to conceal their intentions from kindly innkeepers, who would have sought to dissuade them from their hazardous enterprise. At Dalmally, and one or two other climbing resorts, an ice-axe is now (thanks chiefly to the Scottish Mountaineering Club) almost as familiar an object at Easter as a salmon rod. Since 1889, when the Club was founded, a great many of the mountains have been climbed in snow, for the first time in their history so far as we know, and much valuable information bearing on snowcraft has appeared in this *Journal*.

COMPARATIVE HEIGHT OF MOUNTAINS. — Sydney Smith said that some people would speak disrespectfully even of the Equator! and the height of our "hills" has been treated with equal levity. It should be remembered, however, that mere height is no test of difficulty, for the three highest Alpine summits are more easily reached than many a lower peak. Although several of the Alps soar to over 14,000 feet, they do not afford *climbing*, properly

speaking, throughout anything like that height. The 8,000 or 9,000 feet below the snowline must first be deducted, and from a gymnast's point of view could well be dispensed with. Above the snowline, there is usually a long walk over easy glacier and *névé*, so that, in most cases, the difficult work is confined to 1,000 or 2,000 feet.* Scotland *now* possesses 538 tops of 3,000 feet and upwards, 118 of them above 3,500, and 12 above 4,000 feet. It is evidently possible, therefore, if one knows where to look for it, to discover a winter ascent in Scotland that will vie with some "first-class" Swiss peaks in amount of stiff climbing. For example, when ascending the north side of Ben Cruachan on 27th March last, a strong party took nearly eight hours to mount 2,000 feet of hard snow and ice-bound rocks. (*Journal*, Vol. II., p. 85.)

WHERE TO CLIMB.—In our search for "Alpine work" we get small assistance from guide-books, which expect us to go up the hills in summer, and by the recognised routes. They are written to suit the popular notions of "mountain climbing" (?), which would appear to be—the getting to the top of an eminence commanding a good view with as little exertion as possible.

The best rock climbing is found on the rough peaks, near the Atlantic sea-board, and in the adjacent islands, but the great central ranges of the Grampians and their northern offshoots—extending from Ben Lomond on the south, to the Cairngorms and mountains of Easter Ross on the north—are more suitable for the purposes of winter work. The majority of the Grampians in Mr Munro's list, as well as many that do not come up to his standard, become real snow mountains during a portion of each year—longer or shorter according to their height and distance from the Gulf Stream. The general features of the central ranges, though there are exceptions, are rounded summits and undulating ridges; but while the tops are round, the sides of those "Stobs" and "Mealls" and "Bens" often

* The Matterhorn gives about 4,000 feet of continuous scrambling, but that is exceptional. I know of no similar instance among the snow peaks; and, indeed, 4,000 feet of step-cutting would make an ascent impracticable.

present rugged escarpments. Experience teaches, I believe, that *faces* give better (*i.e.*, more difficult) climbing than *ridges*, and the Grampians are no exception to the rule. If the escarpment looks to the north or east, as is happily true of a great number of the higher hills, one can there make sure of finding employment for the ice-axe. Except where the rocks are too steep to admit of it, snow lies to a depth of several feet during the winter and spring. Being well protected from the sun, it has a firm surface, and if the mountain face is hollowed out into a corrie, so much the better.

The following are a few examples of well-known mountains possessing what may be called, though not perhaps with strict accuracy, "north-east faces":—Ben Lomond, Stuc-a-Chroin, Ben More, Stobinian, Ben Lui, Ben Bhuidh, Ben Cruachan, Stob Ghabhar, Clachlet, Buchaille-Etive-Mor, Bidean-nam-Bian, Ben Nevis, Aonach Beg, Ben Alder, Sgòran-Dhu, Cairn Toul, Braeriach, Ben-a-Bour, Lochnagar, Ben Wyvis.

WHEN TO CLIMB.—Among the higher summits snow may fall in every month, and winter reigns for half the year ; or, roughly speaking, from November till May.* Climbing may be had during the whole of that period, but the months of March and April—the season of dust and east wind—are generally regarded as *par excellence* the time to practise snowcraft. For mountains above 3,500 feet, I should give the preference to April. The snow is then at its best, and extends down to about the 2,000 feet "contour," at least on the colder sides of the hills. Above that temporary snow-line, one can count upon frost every clear night, and frequently in the shade all day as well. At Christmas there is nothing like so much snow, and besides more rigorous weather, the days are six or eight hours shorter.

The April climber has the benefit of a temperature not only cool but equable, and can indulge in severe exercise with comfort, even in the glens. He has nothing corresponding to the enervating grind under a sub-tropical sun, so often undergone in the Swiss valleys.† The result is

* The writer has glissaded in the Cairngorms as late as July.

† Any references to Switzerland in this paper take no account of

that the pace on the lower ground is faster, and if it were not rank heresy, I should say the air is more *uniformly* invigorating than in the Alps.

BAD WEATHER.—The moistness of Scots weather is an unfailling source of innocent hilarity to our friends from the south, which we need not grudge them.* When, however, we look into statistics, it seems doubtful if the popular ideas are well founded. The number of wet days in the tourist season is certainly often deplorable, but April is a grand month in the Highlands, drier I hold than August in the High Alps. If we contrast the rainfalls of Switzerland and Scotland for the whole year, we find that, while ours is spread over more days than theirs, the two countries are nearly on a par as regards the total quantity. In both, as might be expected, the mountainous parts receive more moisture than the plains. The St Bernard Hospice has a little more rain than the Isle of Skye,† these places getting twice as much as Berne and Edinburgh.

Many of the Alpine giants are accessible only during a few days in summer. Men have been known to linger disconsolately a whole season at Zermatt, in the hope of seizing a single suitable day for the Dent Blanche. One gentleman is said to have tried the Weisshorn so often unsuccessfully—his going up to the hut being always apparently a signal for bad weather—that his friends used him as a weather-glass, and postponed their expeditions when they heard he was starting for Randa! In Scotland, on the other hand, be the weather what it may, you can always make tolerably sure of your mountain, if you know how to steer in mist, and don't mind a ducking.

Let us suppose that you get caught in a storm, or that, despising "sage advices," you deliberately sally forth to do battle with the elements. You find yourself in the midst of a howling tempest—a veritable Alpine *tourmente*,—the level snowstorm tearing along as though it were "the wind winter climbing there, a branch of the art now regularly followed by some robust enthusiasts.

* So far back as 1618, Taylor, "the Water Poet," when describing an ascent of Mount Keen, poked fun at our climate, and noted as an interesting fact that "a Scotch *mist* wets an Englishman to the skin."

† Rain-gauges at Kyle Akin and Isle Ornsay.

made visible"; the fallen snow drifting like smoke from the ridges. You can hardly see your companions, much less make them hear. With hair and clothes hard frozen, you stagger on with a "list" to windward; crouching down at times and holding on with your axe, when a more furious gust strikes you. "Where does the pleasure come in?" somebody asks. *It is all pleasure!* If the nature of the ground allow the whole party to move together, the fight with the wind quickens the circulation, and puts you in a glow of exuberant health and high spirits. When at last, after doing your climb, you get out of the clouds and down to the road, you are as jolly as possible. You are wet through of course, for on the lower slopes the snow has changed to rain, and it may be your boots keep up a conversation; but a hot tub and dry garments await you, and at night, round a roaring fire, you fight your battle all over again.

CHARACTER OF SNOW.—Among the Alps, where the snow is exposed every fine day to a broiling sun, the climber must get up in the middle of the night, to make sure of a moderately hard surface during a long ascent. In the Grampians about Easter, on a mountain face of the kind before described, snow will probably—in frosty weather, certainly—be in good condition throughout the day. In fact it is, so to say, more Alpine than in the Alps. The advantage will be appreciated by every one who prefers to breakfast at a later hour than one A.M.! On plateaux and slopes facing south or west, the character of the snow is more variable, and after the sun gets round, it is apt to become soft. In warm cloudy weather also, *any* slope may be in bad order.

Powdery or *granular* snow does not appear to retain its distinctive character for long after it falls, but quickly alters and unites with the old snow. At any rate one rarely comes across it in April: about as seldom as in Switzerland in August. At Christmas, and in the early months of the year when the heavy snow-falls occur, the mountaineer may expect more trouble from it.

In cold weather one occasionally sees steep snow, with a *ripple-marked* surface, which, while keeping the texture of snow, is frozen so hard that a large number of strokes

are required for each step. The axe is extremely liable to stick in that sort of stuff.

Now and then snow is covered with a *crust* of ice, or there may be several layers of crust, with soft snow between. On a level field a thin crust makes walking most fatiguing, but on inclined snow it is sometimes a help to the climber, and enables him to kick a series of "pigeon-holes" with great rapidity.

SNOW SLOPES.—We hope to receive from Mr Rennie accurate information regarding the inclination of snow slopes in Scotland. Meanwhile I venture to predict that old snow will be found to lie on many north-east faces at an angle of 60°. From above, such a slope looks almost vertical. To a steady party however it is quite safe, for the snow can generally be relied on, and good steps—"soup tureens" if necessary—can be excavated, so that there shall be no excuse for anybody falling out of them. As an additional safeguard, only one man need move at a time, the others driving in their axes as far as they will go, and hitching the rope round the shafts. An Alpine slope of equal severity is liable to turn into ice, and where that does not happen, although in good order in the morning, the chances are that late in the day it will be unsafe. It is a question whether snow ever lies among the Alps,* of greater steepness than one finds, for instance, below the crest of the north ridge of Stobinian, or on some of the upper slopes of Ben Lui and Stob Ghabhar.

The rope can be used both more efficiently, and more conveniently, on snow than on rocks, and ought never to be dispensed with on slopes which involve step-cutting; especially if any member of the party is without an ice-axe. Only Alpine Club knots should be employed.

SNOW RIDGES AND CORNICES.—Knife-edges of rock are rare among the central Grampians, and narrow snow *arêtes* are still more uncommon. The writer has never succeeded in finding a satisfactory specimen in Scotland.†

* Not even in such sensational places as the Lauterbrunnen side of the Roththal Sattel.

† The nearest approach to one was on a ridge of Bruch-na-Fray in April.

At the same time it seems likely that a heavy snow-fall might cause any narrow ridge to have for a time a crest of snow. Ridges with one precipitous, and one flat side are common enough, and if the wind has been blowing towards the precipice, the edge is sure to be corniced—the cornice often projecting several feet. The mountaineer has of course in such places no object in approaching the dangerous edge.

SNOW GULLIES (see also under "Ice").—These are numerous among the higher mountains, and many of them offer grand sport to the adventurous climber. They have most of the characteristics of Alpine snow *coulloirs*, and may even terminate in a small *bergschrund*. If the gullies have perpendicular walls, between which the sun's rays seldom penetrate, combined with a north-easterly aspect, they are generally filled with solid snow far into summer, or in rare instances all the year round. It should be borne in mind that gullies are liable to be swept by falling stones, as scores and gashes in the snow sometimes indicate. The chance of stones falling from above is too often ignored by climbers at home, but there is no doubt it constitutes a real danger.

GLISSADING.—For glissading purposes it is equally important here as in the Alps, that a slope should not end in a precipice. The ideal spot is a stretch of moderately hard snow of 35° or 40°, merging into a level snow-field, without any projecting rocks. These *desiderata* may be found on fine afternoons about Easter in the great corrie of Ben Lui, and on many similar north-east faces.* All ordinary and extraordinary modes and postures have been tried with success in the Highlands. One method, applicable to crusted snow, too brittle for a sitting glissade, may be described. The object is to distribute the weight of the body over a still larger surface, and is accomplished by lying on the flat of the back, with the elbows and soles of the boots resting also on the crust, and steering by a touch of either heel. If when glissading, one approaches rocks, it is well to stop the *way* completely, several feet

* One S.M.C. party estimate that they glissaded as much as 2,500 feet in the descent of the north side of Ben More.

above them, as they are frequently surrounded either by a fringe of ice, or by treacherous holes. In Switzerland, old snow often melts unevenly, and assumes the appearance of a ploughed field. The furrows add considerably to the difficulty of maintaining one's balance in a glissade. They are seen in Scotland too, but only in miniature.

FROZEN TURF—SNOW ON GRASS.—A variety of ground peculiar to winter climbing, and demanding special care against a slip, consists of ledges of frozen turf or moss on a rock face. The turf may be nearly as hard as trap rock, and then the axe is of little or no use. If there is any old snow lying about, the climber will generally find good footing in it.

Steep grass or heather, covered with new snow, is a very slippery combination; but there, in the writer's opinion, the axe may be used as an anchor; practise enabling one to feel when the pick is firm enough to stand a moderate strain—more strain than he means to put upon it.

ICE—GLAZED ROCKS.—The Scottish mountaineer does not meet with any formidable slopes of grey or black ice, like those his Alpine *confrère* encounters late in the season, denuded of snow. He is more likely to find ice in gullies than on open slopes, owing to the former being usually covered-up water-courses, or possibly to their containing avalanche snow, which has packed and congealed. After fresh snow caution would have to be used.

Anywhere, in the vicinity of rocks, small patches of ice may underlie the snow. Smooth rocks also, over which water has trickled from melting snow above, are often covered with ice, thick enough sometimes to cut steps in.

If the climber should come across a piece of "unmitigated ice," where it is preferable to prevent a slip, than hope to check it after it has occurred, I believe it is better to hold the axe as if glissading, and dig the *spike* firmly into the ice about the level of the thigh, before each step, rather than to use the *pick* as an anchor—the proper method on hard snow, or ice covered with frozen snow.

Glazed rocks are common after a fall of rain or sleet followed by frost, and require the same care as in the Alps. A similar effect would, I fancy, be produced by a "silver

thaw." Rocks *thinly* coated with hoar-frost, in the early morning or on a foggy day, are nearly, but not quite as bad. After a long "tack" of foggy weather, rocks become covered with "fog-crystals," of beautiful and fantastic forms, mimicking feathers and leaves. The crystals do not necessarily add much to a climber's difficulties, for they are fragile and can be easily scraped off.

AVALANCHES.—Dangerous avalanches occur ordinarily where fresh snow lies on the top of ice, and are not likely to be encountered in Scotland. It is possible, however, that immediately after a severe snowstorm, beds of powdery, incoherent snow might be discovered—lying either on smooth rocks or older snow—upon the back of which one could ride over a precipice as readily as in the Alps. Another variety of unstable snow is occasionally met with on steep slopes in warm weather. On 2nd May last, when descending a slope of about 50° on Cruach Ardran, that had been exposed to a hot morning sun, a thin surface layer, three or four inches thick, peeled off and went hissing past me. My steps were planted in the firm under-snow, and there was no danger whatever, but the incident showed what might be a danger in certain circumstances.

GLACIERS.—It seems necessary for a paper on Snow-craft to contain a reference to Glaciers, even though it resemble a certain "chapter on snakes." While there are plenty of disused moraines, there are no glaciers in the Scotland of to-day, and the branch of mountaineering which deals with *crevasses*, *séracs*, and *ice-falls* must therefore be studied elsewhere. Half a century ago, when the mountain fastnesses of Inverness and Ross were absolutely unknown, and very vague notions about the height of the peaks prevailed, the idea is said to have been entertained in some minds, that hidden away in the inner recesses of the glens, there might still exist the last shrunken remnants of the glaciers of the Ice Age. The idea was not so absurd as it appears at first sight. Considering the moderate elevation of the Norwegian Folgefond and Jostedalbræ—the former in the latitude of the Shetland Islands, it is reasonable to suppose that the upheaval of the Cairngorm range, by about

a thousand feet, would once more adorn the flat tops of Ben Macdhui and Braeriach with permanent ice-caps, with small glaciers radiating towards Loch Etchachan and Glen Dee.

Before concluding, perhaps I may be permitted to say a word to the younger readers of the *Journal*. If the knack of climbing rocks, neatly as well as safely, can best be acquired by a boy in his teens, it is equally desirable, in order to attain that easy confidence upon snow, which young Swiss porters show so markedly, and which is purely the result of practice, that the practice should begin as early as possible. The obvious moral is to invest in a good ice-axe at once, and learn how to use it at home ; and not to wait, as most people do, till they visit the Alps.

I trust nothing that has been said in praise of winter mountaineering in old Scotland will be construed as depreciatory of climbing in Switzerland. That has a fascination all its own. but it is a land of enchantment, and he who once ventures within the charmed circle of the High Alps is ever after haunted by visions of rare beauty, and by mountain voices urgently calling on him to return.

ON THE HEIGHT OF SOME OF THE BLACK
CUCHULLINS IN SKYE.

BY J. NORMAN COLLIE.

DURING the last ten years the Cuchullin Hills in Skye, even in spite of the rain and mist of the West Coast of Scotland, have been steadily acquiring a reputation as a district where some of the best rock climbing in the British Isles can be obtained. Descriptions of them have appeared in the *Alpine Club Journal*, and their attractions have been set forth at length. Still, after all, the district is small, and all the peaks have been ascended; the rugged ridge can be climbed from one end to the other, and the mountaineer will not find much left undone. Although, however, there are no new peaks to conquer, the Ordnance maps still remain; and should any one seek for information whilst actually on the hills from, let us say the one-inch map (printed May 1885), problems more difficult to solve than the ascents of many of the dark weather-worn pinnacles of rock are often found, and one must certainly possess that faith which is said to be able to remove mountains, before a proper understanding of this map can be obtained which harmonises with the environment.

There are, however, later editions, especially the revised map of six inches to the mile (printed in 1887), which are more correct, yet even in this map we are left in entire ignorance of the heights of most of the hills.* Out of the seven highest summits Sgurr Dearg alone has been able to inveigle the surveyor to climb its misty brow; and out of about thirty-three separate peaks amongst the Black Cuchullins, the heights of only eleven have been measured. It was for this reason, therefore, that I began six years ago to try to determine the heights of the various summits omitted by the Ordnance Survey. With the aid of an ordinary aneroid barometer, I soon began to collect some really startling results. The first was, that all

* Mr C. Pilkington has produced an excellent map of the Cuchullins, which can be obtained from John Heywood & Co., Deansgate, Manchester. Post free, 6d.

the measured heights on the map were quite wrong. This did not much surprise me. But when a few days later I took another series of observations on the same peaks, and found that, after all, the hills on that day were about the same height as when they had been measured years before by the Survey, I was reluctantly forced to conclude that either there had been a fall in the heights of hills, or else my aneroid measurements were untrustworthy. This latter seemed the more probable, for on two separate days, after having carefully set the aneroid before starting in the morning, on my return in the evening the whole of Sligachan Inn was found, according to the aneroid, on one occasion below sea-level, whilst on the next occasion it appeared to be elevated in the air to the dizzy height of over one hundred feet. Obviously there was something wrong ; was it the aneroid, or was it something else ? I soon came to the conclusion it was something else, for unless the atmospheric pressure remained constant during the whole day, the results I obtained were just what were to be expected—and also the West Coast is exactly the place where the barometer never remains stationary for any lengthy period. Aneroids also, as Mr Whympfer has recently shown in a most conclusive manner, at high altitudes rapidly lose on the ordinary mercurial barometer, and that on descending they do not at once return to their normal condition. But as 3,300 feet is the limit of height on the Cuchullin hills which has to be measured, this source of error could not be a very large one. In order therefore to obtain observations which were to be at all reliable, two things were necessary, a steady barometer during the whole time a set of consecutive measurements were being taken, and also a reliable aneroid. I was certain of neither of these two requirements ; but by measuring the hills from their tops, and checking the results so obtained by the existing measurements in the Ordnance Survey, a near approximation to the truth could be obtained.

To take an example. I wished to measure the height of the Basteir tooth at the head of the corrie looking down to Sligachan Inn. Having climbed Sgurr nan Gillean, and set my barometer at 3,167 feet, the measured height in the

Ordnance Survey map, I then climbed along the ridge to the summit of the tooth; the aneroid then marked 3,030 feet. On continuing the climb to the summit of Bruach na Frithe, I found the height of that mountain to be 3,140 feet; and as the Ordnance height is 3,143 feet I concluded that during the couple of hours which I had taken to go from Sgurr nan Gillean to Bruach na Frithe the barometric pressure at sea-level had remained constant; and also, as the greatest ascents or descents were small, both the sources of error, namely a changing atmospheric pressure and a faulty aneroid, were reduced to a minimum, and I therefore took 3,030 feet as the height of the Basteir tooth.

By this method the heights measured on the ridge of the Cuchullin hills, either up or down, rarely exceeded 500 feet; and as the time taken between the measurements was short any rise or fall in atmospheric pressure at sea-level would hardly have time to affect the readings to any great extent, and also any change would be at once noticed by the observed heights not agreeing with those of the Survey. The heights were also checked by means of the clinometer whenever it was possible. By using the clinometer on the summit of the Inaccessible peak, Sgurr Alaisdair appeared to be about twenty feet higher. The observations made with the aneroid corroborated this, for the Inaccessible peak was found to be 3,255 feet, and Sgurr Alaisdair 3275 feet.

All the heights therefore given in this paper *are calculated from the observed Ordnance heights*, which are taken as being correct to start with, and in no case are they measured by the aneroid from sea-level. They are, in fact, merely a set of differences measured from the top of one peak to the top of the next.

Sgurr nan Gillean, ...	*3,169	Pinnacle,	2,740
Bealach,	2,920	Lowest point on ridge, ...	2,520
1st Pinnacle,	3,000	1st Summit, Bidein Druim	
2nd Pinnacle,	2,920	nan Ramh,	2,820
Basteir Tooth,	3,030	Dip between 1st and 2nd	
Bealach a' Leitir, ...	2,700	Summit,	2,730
Bruach na Frithe, ...	*3,143	2nd Summit, Bidein Druim	
Bealach at head of Coir' a'		nan Ramh,	2,860
Mhadaidh,	2,520		

* Those heights which are marked with an asterisk are the Ordnance Survey heights.

Dip between 2nd and 3rd Summit,	2,750	Bealach,	2,600
3rd Summit, Bidein Druim nan Ramh,	2,810	Sgurr Mhic Coinnich, ...	3,180
Bealach na Glaic Moire, 1st Summit, Sgurr a' Mhaidh,	2,925	Sgurr Alaisdair, East peak, Dip between East and West peak,	3,230
2nd Summit, Sgurr a' Mhaidh,	2,880	Sgurr Alaisdair, West peak, Dip between Sgurr Alaisdair and Sgurr Sgumain,	3,050
Dip between 2nd and 3rd Summit,	2,820	Sgurr Sgumain,	*3,104
3rd Summit, Sgurr a' Mhaidh,	2,910	Bealach between Sgurr Alaisdair and Sgurr Dubh,	2,810
4th Summit, Sgurr a' Mhaidh,	2,920	1st Summit of Sgurr Dubh, Dip between 1st and 2nd Summits,	3,090
Bealach,	2,760	2nd Summit, Sgurr Dubh, Pinnacle (on main ridge), Bealach a Gharbh Choire, Sgurr nan Eag,	2,900
An Dorus,	2,890	1st Summit, Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh,	3,120
2nd Summit, Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh,	3,180	2nd Summit, Sgurr Dubh, Pinnacle (on main ridge), Bealach a Gharbh Choire, Sgurr nan Eag,	2,740
Bealach,	2,800	Bealach,	2,620
Pinnacle on ridge,	3,040	Sgurr nan Eag,	3,020
Bealach,	2,920	Bealach,	2,550
1st Summit of Sgurr na Banachdich,	*3,167	Summit on ridge,	2,870
Dip between 1st and 2nd Summit,	3,020	Bealach,	2,750
2nd Summit of Sgurr na Banachdich,	3,100	Garsbheinn,	*2,934
Bealach Coire na Banachdich,	2,810	Blath Bheinn,	*3,042
Sgurr Dearg,	*3,234	Bealach,	2,310
Inaccessible peak,	3,255	Clac Glas,	2,590
		Bealach,	2,080
		1st Summit of Sgurr nan Each,	2,360
		2nd Summit of Sgurr nan Each,	2,400
		Bealach,	2,090
		Garbh bheinn,	*2,649

From these measurements it will be seen that Sgurr Alaisdair is the highest hill in the Cuchullins; next comes the Inaccessible peak, the true top of Sgurr Dearg; the third in height is Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh; probably Sgurr Mhic Coinnich is fourth; and Sgurr Banachdich and Sgurr nan Gillean are equal for fifth place. Although I do not claim great accuracy for these measurements, still in the two cases of the comparative heights of Sgurr Alaisdair and the Inaccessible peak, and also of Sgurr Banachdich and Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, I am sure that the heights are nearly correct, for they were very carefully checked by the clinometer. Perhaps before concluding the note on the Cuchullin hills, it would not be out of place to give a few directions dealing

* Those heights which are marked with an asterisk are the Ordnance Survey heights.

with the best routes to be followed on one or two parts of the ridge, where a great deal of time might be wasted by any one who had not the necessary local knowledge.

Sgurr nan Gillean and the four pinnacles.

One of the most interesting ascents of Sgurr nan Gillean is to climb on to the lowest or fourth pinnacle from the Basteir corrie, and thence over the four pinnacles to the summit. On this route there is a drop, after passing the top of the second highest pinnacle, into a small gully, which faces the first pinnacle (the one next Sgurr nan Gillean). The descent into this gully is on the right hand side at the top looking in the direction of the first pinnacle.

All the gullies leading from Coir' a' Basteir up between these pinnacles can be climbed, with the exception of the one between the second and third pinnacle. The faces of the pinnacles themselves also afford excellent rock climbing.

Basteir Tooth.

In traversing the Basteir Tooth from Sgurr nan Gillean to Bruach na Frithe there is a drop immediately on the west side of the summit; the route continues down on the Lota corrie face till a lower point is reached, where a cairn can be seen on the top of a smooth sloping face of rock, from here descend diagonally across the Lota corrie face (in the direction of Sgurr nan Gillean) till it is possible to climb down on to the loose stones at the bottom of the precipice. This point is from 200 to 300 feet below the top of Bealach a' Leitir.

The ridge from Bruach na Frithe to Sgurr a' Mhadaidh.

In traversing this part of the ridge it is better to go westward, for owing to the lie of the rocks the way is easier to find when going in this direction than when the route is reversed.

The ridge from Sgurr Mhic Coinnich to Sgurr Alaisdair.

Directly beyond the peak of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich on the south side there is a very precipitous drop. This can be turned by descending on the Corrie Labain side just

before reaching the summit of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich and then keeping to the left till the bealach is reached.

The ridge between Sgurr Alaisdair and Sgurr Dubh.

If the ridge from the east peak of Sgurr Alaisdair be followed in a southern direction a difficult piece of climbing will be met with, where it is necessary to descend into a narrow cleft in the ridge ; this is probably not possible without a rope. After descending into the cleft the opposite perpendicular side has to be climbed, and the hand and foot hold will be found somewhat scanty. It is not necessary, however, to traverse this part of the ridge, for by descending from Sgurr Alaisdair to the dip between it and Sgurr Sgumain, an easier route can be found.

There are several facts which a climber in the Cuchullin hills will find useful to remember. One of the most important is that once on the ridge no water can be obtained, except from rain pools, and there are not many of these to be found.

Another is that very often the descent in to the corrie below is by no means so easy as it looks, and it is always best to travel along the ridge till a bealach is reached and then to descend. More than once I have started down from the ridge and found no difficulty for the first 300 or 400 feet, then the angle began to increase in steepness, and finally the face became almost perpendicular from smooth slabs of rock which sloped down at an impossible angle and quite stopped farther progress.

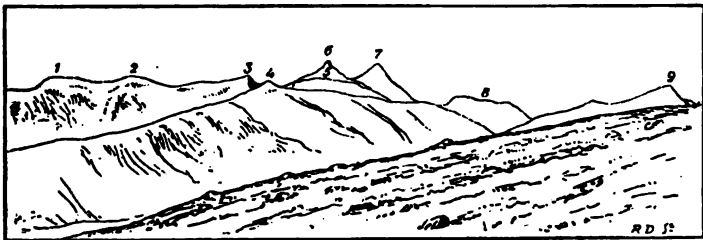
And lastly a rope should always be taken, for although it is not often necessary whilst traversing the ridge, still there are many spots where a dyke has weathered away, or smooth sloping slabs of rock make the use of the rope often very desirable, and time and security will both be gained.

BEN CRUACHAN.

BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

BEN CRUACHAN has often been alluded to in past Nos., and numerous ascents have been recorded in their pages, but up to the present time no paper has appeared that has in any way done justice to this magnificent mountain ; and as it has long been my favourite climbing ground, I feel called upon to attempt its description, rather than it should remain longer unhonoured in the *Journal*.

To describe its geographical position is hardly necessary, for who having the slightest acquaintance with the Scottish Highlands is not familiar with its culminating twin peaks, rising like gigantic hay-stacks from their vast foundations, monarch at once of both Loch Awe and Loch Etive ? Besides, is it not visited every summer by countless tourists, and have not its praises been sung from time immemorial by a host of writers, making its very name dear to many who have never even cast eyes on it ?



VIEW OF THE CRUACHAN TOPS FROM BEN EUNAICH.

- 1, *The Nameless Top* ; 2, *Stob Garbh* ; 3, *Stob Dìamh* ; 4, *Sron an Itean* ; 5, *Drochaid Ghlas* ; 6, *Ben Cruachan* ; 7, *Stob Dearg* ; 8, *Meall an Rìghain* ; 9, *Ben a' Chochwill*.

Let us away then to the mountain itself. From the Loch Awe Hotel, far into the Pass of Brander, we find its base fringed by a belt of trees—alder, hazel, birch, mountain ash, and oak—growing on a slope so steep as often to baffle those who try to penetrate it at other than the few recognised points. From these, up to the 2,500 or 3,000-foot contour line, run grassy slopes of hill pasture land, and above that out crops the smooth sloping slabs of red granite, and great stretches of huge oscillating granite blocks, tumbled one on the top of the other in mighty heaps.

Geologically, the mountain is composed mainly of a coarse Diorite, but the southern slope is traversed by a large fault which brings the Highland schists and quartzites into contact with the Diorite.

There are seven tops to Ben Cruachan (Cruach⁴-a-stack) of over 3,000 feet, and many others that do not come up to this height.

The highest (3,689 feet) is a pinnacle shapely from wherever viewed, and has a noble cliff on its north face, with a grand precipice on the south-east running up from Coire Dearg (red corrie) and the Cruachan burn.

The next in height, Stob Dearg* (pron *jerrack*, "the red stump," 3,611 feet), is half-a-mile to the west of this, and is the more picturesquely shaped peak of the two. It far surpasses the highest in good looks from most points of view, especially when seen from the hills to the north and north-east, such as Ben Starav and Ben Eunaich (Anae). This is the peak that is seen so well from Taynuilt.

To the south, half-a-mile away from the main peak, is Meall Cuanail ("the seaward looking hump," 3,004 feet), a rounded lump overlooking Loch Awe, with precipitous slopes towards Coire Dearg.

A mile to the east of the main peak comes Drochaid Ghlast† ("the grey bridge," 3,312 feet), a mere excrescence on the ridge when seen from the south, but the long narrow shoulder jutting into the north, with precipitous sides ending in a knife-edge ridge of its own, gives to it the appearance of a fine peak from the other side. This top and its shoulder separate Coire Caorach ("the rowany corrie") in the west from a nameless corrie‡ in the east.

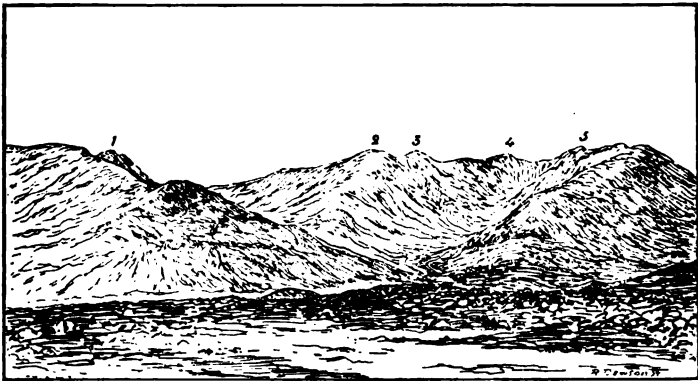
Three-quarters of a mile from this we come to "the horse shoe," so well known at Dalmally. At the north end of this crescent is Sron an Isean§* ("nose of the imps," 3,163 feet); next Stob Diamh* (pron. *daff*, "the stump of the stag."

* Local name. † Named only on 6-inch O.S.

‡ It is called Coire Lochan ("corrie of the loch") in the 6-inch O.S. maps, but as the loch is in the next corrie farther east, and as this one does not possess a loch of its own, that name is evidently a mistake.

§ Sron an Isean forms the east termination of the long ridge extending from the big peaks, as well as the north termination of the "horse shoe" ridge that runs north from Beinn a Bhuiridh.

3,272 feet), a decided peak; then Stob Garbh* ("rough stump," 3,215 feet); ending with a nameless top (3,091 feet).† These four form Coire Creachainn ("corrie of the rock"). The whole south side of this corrie is lined with precipices, but cut up by steep gullies, filled in winter with hard snow



"THE HORSE SHOE OF CRUACHAN."

1, *Beinn a Bhuiridh*; 2, *The Nameless Top*; 3, *Stob Garbh*; 4, *Stob Diamh*; 5, *Sron an Isean*.

protected from the sun, and require the aid of an axe to scale them. Two specially fine ones join the ridge close to the top of Stob Garbh, one of them guarded by sharp pinnacles of rock on either side.

To the south of "the horse shoe" is *Beinn a Bhuiridh* (pron. *vourie*, "the hill of the roaring or bellowing," 2,945 feet), and separated from it by the *Larig Torran* ("pass of the little hill") at the head of *Coire Glas* ("the grey corrie"). Though it does not come up to the 3,000 feet standard, it is a grand hill notwithstanding, and affords some excellent rock-climbing among the chimneys above *Coire Glas* on its north face. Of the two larger chimneys on the lower range of cliffs, the east is quite practicable without a rope, but the one to the west is more difficult. There is also a crack in the rock between the two that has baffled some of our members (*S. M. C. J.*, I, p. 237).

Here we have a goodly array of tops, many of which might almost be considered as distinct mountains, were they

* Local name.

† This forms an eighth top; but, although marked on the 1-inch O.S., there is hardly any dip between it and Stob Garbh, and it does not appear in Mr Munro's tables as a top.

not all popularly known as Ben Cruachan. Mr Munro has divided the hill into two mountains, Stob Diamh being the second.

Of the connecting ridges the finest by far—though little more than half-a-mile in length—lies between the two highest peaks. It is flanked by a grand range of precipices on the north running down to Coire Chat (“the cat’s corrie”), and on the other side by the steep slope of Coire a Bhachail (“corrie of the staff”), and on to the Pass of Brander 3,000 feet below. The surrounding rock scenery is magnificent. The two peaks, with their great northern precipices, rise grim and rugged from either end; the ridge itself, heaped up with broken boulders of immense size, and gashed deeply in many places with great rents, down which one gazes in awestruck admiration in passing their yawning mouths. The largest of these rents lies between the col (3,292 feet) and the top of the highest peak.

The ridge to Meall Cuanail, which is covered with large boulders and sloping slabs, has no special features, except the grand views of Coire Dearg and Cruachan, and the amphitheatre of cliffs. The lowest point at the Bealach an Lochain (“pass of the loch”) is 2,700 feet. This separates



THE TWIN PEAKS, LOOKING WEST FROM DROCHAID GHLAS.

Coire a Bhachail from Coire Cruachan (“corrie of Cruachan”).

The two-mile ridge between the main peak and "the horse shoe" is a very interesting one to traverse, being fairly narrow in nearly its entire length. After the first sharp descent of 200 feet there are few great ups and downs in it, but it gradually dips away to its lowest point, 2,836 feet, before it rises again to Stob Daimh, 3,272 feet.

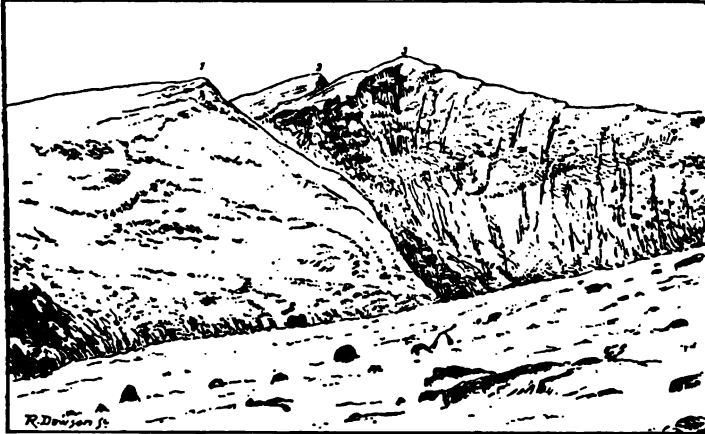
Of the different ways of making the ascent, one of the easiest—supposing we are stopping at Taynuilt or Loch Awe Hotel,—as well as one of the most picturesque, is by the Cruachan burn. Here let us leave the Dalmally and Oban road and penetrate the strip of forest trees where that burn rushes out from under a railway bridge. This bridge is recognised by a carved panel with a boar's head (the Campbell arms) above the centre of the arch. Finding a pathway on the west side of the stream, we follow it under the arch, and on as it zigzags up the hill through the belt of trees, till it brings us into Coire Cruachan,* then it disappears.†

This great corrie is gouged out of the heart of the mountain, leaving in many places walls of rock naked and bare on all sides. The Cruachan burn, still on our right, though little more than two and a half miles in its entire length, is here a formidable stream. As we turn to the west by the edge of the corrie, we arrive in about an hour from the road at its end. Here we find ourselves fronted by towering cliffs, from whose sides the living rock juts out in great seams, relieved here and there by patches of loose granite blocks, lying wherever the steep slope will allow them. The lowest point in the shoulder between Meall Cuanail and the top, at the Bealach an Lochain, offers the least precipitous route, and away we go, jumping from block to block, occasionally sending one or two of the least firmly

* In summer this is often boggy, and it is better to keep as close to the stream as possible, for here the driest ground is found.

† A variation of this portion of the route can be made by leaving the road about half-a-mile from Loch Awe Hotel, following a cart track that skirts the base of Beinn a Bhuiridh above the trees, and joining the Cruachan burn 1,000 feet above sea-level, crossing it by a log and turf bridge. The cart track does not go all the way, but merges into a pathway leading up the hill, when a walled enclosure for sheep is passed. I recommend this variation as distinctly superior to the usual route, both on account of the finer views and that the slope is easier.

fixed crashing down the hill, to be joined by others in their bounding career to the foot. From the bealach the incline all the way to the top is more gentle. In winter, however,



VIEW FROM BEINN A BHUIRIDH.

1, Meall Cuanail; 2, Stob Dearg; 3, Ben Cruachan.

and it is then that I know it best, all the upper part of the mountain is changed. A smooth snow covering cements and fixes these blocks firmly together, and covers them with a carpet, crisp and pleasant to walk on, over which the going is easy when you are properly equipped. No one should, however, attempt the ascent at that season without being armed with an ice-axe, warm gloves, and a protection for his ears,—the blizzards being at times terrific, and on the upper and steeper slopes it is occasionally impossible to avoid an impromptu glissade without the anchoring claw of the axe.

Another popular route, but not so interesting, is from Taynuilt, ascending Stob Dearg first. We leave the Dalmally road at either the Cruiniche ("gathering water") or Brander burns, and have a steady grind all the way to the top, at first over grass, and winding up with the coggly granite blocks.* From Stob Dearg we can continue along that

* An interesting variation of the Taynuilt route is by the Allt Cruiniche, but after reaching the 2,000 feet contour, instead of bearing east, follow the line of the burn till near the *col* between Stob Dearg and the lower top to the north-west, and then scramble up the steep Loch Etive shoulder of Stob Dearg among the sloping slabs of granite.

wonderfully grand connecting ridge to the top (with a descent of only about 300 feet), and then, if we like, descend to the Cruachan burn by the south shoulder; or, take the long east ridge topping all the peaks on the way to Dalmally. In getting off the rocky pyramid of the summit, we may experience some little difficulty before we gain the east ridge, but with care this is easily overcome.

From Loch Awe or Dalmally hotels a pleasant way of ascending the mountain is to climb by one of the two shoulders on each side of Coire Creachainn, and, crossing either Stob Garbh or Sron an Isean, keep to the ridge to the top.

A route that ought to be more popular than it is, is by the north face. Starting from Taynuilt we get ferried over the Awe at Bunawe; then follows a lovely walk, by the edge of Loch Etive for a couple of miles, to Glen Noe.



VIEW FROM THE NORTH.

1, Summit; 2, Stob Dearg.

Turning up this glen we skirt the base of Meall an Riaghain, and soon find ourselves facing Coire Chat. Here we can choose a route for ourselves, either an easy one up one of the more gently sloping spurs, or straight up the rocky buttress of Stob Dearg itself, as is described on p. 85.

Should we be stopping at the Loch Awe or Dalmally hotels, we can follow the Larig Noe (1,832 feet), between Ben a Chochuill ("hill of the husk") and Sron an Isean, and enter Glen Noe from the east. This route is recommended

by Mr Dewar, p. 136. He describes the north ridge of Drochaid Ghlas as being "undoubtedly the most 'sporting'* ascent of the hill, for, although in no place difficult, it affords abundance of stiff climbing over huge boulders, from right to left of which the descent is very steep."

Numerous ascents and descents have been made by special routes both from Coire Cruachan and from Coire Creachainn. Mr Gibson tells me he descended from the top directly down the cliffs to Coire Dearg. This descent he describes as not difficult, but being in the winter time necessitated the use of both axe and rope.

I am unable to speak of the distant view from the top from personal experience, for although I have made the ascent several times, I have never had a perfectly clear day. However, it is one of the most extensive character. Lying as it does at the end of a long range of mountains, and partially isolated from them, it commands as wide a prospect of sea, mountain, lake, and forest as any summit in Scotland, and I hope some day to be able to give a full description of it.†

Botanically Ben Cruachan is not rich, and thus differs greatly from Ben Lui, on the other side of the valley, where the rarest plants and ferns abound. Dr William Craig has been kind enough to give me a list of the best plants observed during the visits of the Scottish Alpine Botanical Club in 1882 and 1885, viz.:—*Ranunculus acris* (alpine form); *Dryas octopetala*; *Sedum Rhodiola*; *Saussurea alpina*; *Saxifraga stellaris*; *Rubus Chamæmoris*; *Hieracium alpinum*, *var. holosericeum*; *Vaccinium uliginosum*; *Asplenium viride* (forked variety); *Polystichum Lonchitis*; *Polypodium alpestre*; *Polypodium flexile*; *Allosorus crispus*; *Hymenophyllum unilaterale*; and *Carex rigida*. One plant of *Sedum Rhodiola* was found with variegated leaves, and one plant of *Nephrodium spinulosum* was also found with variegated fronds. It was chiefly the great corrie on the east side of the mountain that the Club visited.

* In this I differ from him, for I think nothing can beat the north face of Stob Dearg for a "sporting" climb.

† I made out its seven peaks from Braeriach last July, a distance of seventy miles.

Ben Cruachan is not included in a deer forest, and is therefore open to climbers all the year round, and is well off in having two of the most comfortable hotels in Scotland—Dalmally and Loch Awe—planted at its feet.

To make this article as complete as possible, the following references to the literary and historical associations of Ben Cruachan may not be considered out of place.

In the middle of the fourteenth century, Barbour, in writing his history of the Bruce, mentions that no higher hill* may be found in all Britain.

“ On othir half ane montane was,
Sa cumrous he, and ek sa stay,
That it was hard to pas that way :
Crechanben hicht that montane,
I trow that nocht in all Bretane
Ane hear hill may fundin be.”†

These lines occur in describing the battle in 1307 between the Macdougalls of Lorn and the Bruce. The Highlanders had taken up a position on the slopes of Ben Cruachan, above the Pass of Brander, and Loch Awe was occupied by their galleys, which, according to the Duke of Argyll,‡ must have been dragged up from Loch Etive and launched there.

The earliest map to locate its position is Pont's map of “Lorna,”§ published in 1654. In it the words “Krooach an Bain” appear immediately to the north of Auon Au [the Awe] and overlooking “Loch Etyf.”

In 1769, Pennant,|| with his extraordinary faculty for collecting all kinds of information, has a few words to say on it. Though fond of hill climbing, he appears in this instance to have been content with the view from below, and mentioning “that it towers to a great height, its sides are shagged with wood, and its name [he has the modern spelling] means a great heap.”

Thomas Newte, writing about Dalmally in 1791, gives

* To the present day the natives obstinately insist that Cruachan is the third highest mountain in Scotland.

† Barbour's “Brus,” Spalding Club, p. 220.

‡ “Scotland as it was and as it is,” 2nd edition, p. 56.

§ Blaeu's Atlas, 1654.

|| “Tours,” 3rd edition, p. 217.

some information—more curious perhaps than accurate—about our subject. He tells us: “In a neighbouring mountain, called Ben Churachan, there is a lead mine,* which they have just begun to work, and met with very good success. The miners of Benchruachan have taxed themselves in a moiety of their wages for the purchase of books and the gradual establishment of a library for their amusement in their sequestered situation.”†

In 1793 follows a curious description in the “Old Statistical Account,” vol. vi., p. 175, from which I give an extract:—

“The hills are mostly covered with grass: the most remarkable Cruachan Bean, one of the highest mountains in Scotland, thirteen or fourteen computed miles in circumference, affording excellent pasturage for black cattle and sheep. It is very steep towards the N.E., and slopes gently down on the S., but rises with an abrupt ascent towards the summit, which is divided into two points, each exactly resembling a sugar-loaf. The north point is reckoned the highest, and commands a very noble and extensive prospect. The sea-pink grows upon it, and sea-shells have been found on the summit.”

Also in vol. viii., p. 342, of the same book:—

“Ben Cruachan rises in a gentle slope from the sea, and the Lake of Aw; and by the measurement of the late Colonel Watson, with a quadrant, its perpendicular height is said to be 1,130 yards above the level of the sea. The circumference of the mountain, at the base, is above 20 measured miles. Cruachan is the weather-gauge of the people within view of its lofty summit. Before the storm ‘the spirit of the mountain shrieks,’ and its head and sides are enveloped in clouds. On the summit of this mountain was that fatal spring, from which, according to the tradition ‡ of our fathers, issued forth the beautiful and extensive lake of Aw.”

* This may be the one referred to in the New Stat. Acc., vol. vii., p. 481. The writer of the article (in 1844) says: “There is lead ore in part of the hill near to Balercolan house, and something was at one time done in the view of opening a mine here.” I think, however, it must be the well-known one at the foot of Ben Lui that Mr Newte refers to; or perhaps to the furnace for casting pig-iron erected at Bonawe in 1753, by a company from Lancashire, that is recorded in Garnett’s “Tour,” vol. i., p. 130.

† “Prospects and Observations on a Tour in England and Scotland,” by Thomas Newte, 1791, p. 89.

‡ The tradition referred to is preserved in a Highland poem attributed to Ossian. It tells of how “Bera the aged” had charge of a “fatal spring,” which she had to cover every evening. Being tired with the chase, one night the spring was forgotten, and, bursting forth

About the end of the last century Scotland was invaded by a host of tourists, each writing a book, and many have a word to say in praise of our mountain as its peaks come into view. The Hon. Mrs Murray, in 1799, seems to have been pretty familiar with it, for the following account, though written in the enthusiastic spirit of intense admiration, is accurate enough, Loch Awe has just come into sight:—

“ . . . With Cruchan Ben, rising above the clouds in terrific majesty of towering crags, vulcanic concaves and points; also other mountains, with verdant tops and woody sides, but not equal either in height or sublimity to Cruchan Ben, whose northern aspect is as terrific, as are its east and southern, sublime and beautiful.”*

And again,—

“Nothing can exceed the terrific appearance of that huge craggy mountain facing the north; but on the side of the lake, and the beautiful river, the face of it is indeed fair, being covered with wood and verdure.”†

In the same year, Stoddart,‡ when visiting Loch Awe, finds

“Ben Loy glittering like an angel, in the bright rosy dress of morning, and Cruachan, like a gigantic demon, enveloped in the thick purple-black garment of impending tempests.”

Wordsworth, in 1803, appreciates its greatness in his address to Kilchurn. Scott also, in “Nora’s Vow,”§ makes the lady protest that she will not go with the Red Earl’s son, until, among other things,

“The Awe’s fierce stream may backward turn,
Ben Cruaichan fall, and crush Kilchurn.”

Macculloch, 1811-21,|| is the first man to record his ascent. He went up from Taynuilt, and found the climb tedious but not difficult, and likens the view to that from Ben Lomond or Ben Lawers, which he considers in no way inferior to either.

in a great river, flooded the plains below, and thus Loch Awe was formed. The words of this poem, as far as I have ascertained, first appear in Lettice’s “Letters on a Tour in Scotland in 1792,” p. 256.

* “Companion and Guide to the Beauties of Scotland,” 1799, p. 352.

† *Ibid.*, 354.

‡ “Remarks on Local Scenery and Manners in Scotland during the years 1799 and 1800,” by John Stoddart, LL.D., vol. i., p. 272.

§ Scott’s “Poetical Works,” vol. xi., p. 323.

|| “Highlands and Western Isles,” vol. i., pp. 267-270.

"T. H. C.," in 1840, after climbing Ben Lomond and Ben More, is delighted with Ben Cruachan. "The tallest of the gigantic brethren is a sort of sublimer Skiddaw, with a central peak of bare and riven rock."*

Hamerton,† in 1866, made the ascent from Coire Cruachan to the Drochaid Ghlas ridge, and then along it to the main peak. He graphically relates how his servant Thursday nearly lost his life in creeping along the face of a precipice several hundred feet high in order to avoid a huge chasm that separated them from the top. In speaking of the view, he tells us that it is a "splendid panorama but not a picture. The sweetest, and even sublimest, pictures are laid in the habitable earth, and we need not go to the snowy summits to seek them." This is no doubt true from a landscape painter's point of view, but the poet rises within him, and he recommends us to go to the mountain-tops and reflect that the vast circumference of the horizon is but a round spot on its mighty sphere.

It is hardly necessary to come down to the present day, but I must not close without referring to Mr Robert Buchanan's account. He made an ascent lately from Taynuilt, and records it in his "Poet's Sketch Book" (p. 201). He dwells on the magnificence of its red and rugged corries, with lingering snow in their dark fissures as late as June, its pyramids and minarets of granite, and finishes with a glowing description of the view from the top.

If any excuse for this lengthy article on such a well-known mountain is looked for, it must be found in my love for its many peaks and corries, which, ever since I first made their acquaintance in 1887, has grown stronger with every subsequent visit. And as the memory of the eventful days spent on it rise before me, recalling many exciting adventures both in winter and summer, this mountain stands out prominently in my mind as the grandest for all-round climbing on the mainland of dear old Scotland. Therefore I trust I may be pardoned for recording so fully what is possibly already well known to many of us.

* A Descriptive Tour in Scotland, by T. H. C., Brussels, 1840, p. 89.

† "Painter's Camp," 2nd edition, pp. 79-83.

DUN-DA-GU.

BY T. CRAIG-BROWN.

WHEN you are sailing from Oban to the Hebrides, and just as you enter the Sound of Mull, you cannot choose but note a semicircle of hills which stretch their arms round the bays of Craig-i-nure and Scallastle. The two peaks in the centre are wide apart, but differ only twenty-nine feet in altitude. In front of them, and as it were in their lap, lie two huge green mounds—Maol-nan-Uan (“flat of the lambs”), 1,407 feet, and Maol-nan-Damh (“flat of the stags”). If these mounds are 1,400 feet high, what, you ask, must be the height of the two splendid summits which tower behind them? A reference to the Ordnance map reveals that Dun-da-Ghaoithe, to the right or north, is 2,512 feet, and its twin-brother to the south, Mainnir-nam-Fiadh (“pasture of the deer”), is 2,483 feet. No great climb to awake a mountaineer’s ambition, truly; but as you glance at the hills’ entourage on the map, you realise at once their capacity for a splendid view, and you resolve to have it. Something of expectancy is raised, too, by the meaning of Dun-da-Gu, as it is phonetically and parenthetically given on the map. “Height of the two winds” is suggestive of that battle of the elements which most exhilarates “the mountain child.” (By the way, I am told by the minister of Torosay that the name of this his biggest parishioner is wrongly spelled by the O.S., Ghaoithe being the genitive singular; proper spelling—Dun-n-da-Ghaoth.)

To begin our story of the ascent. It is Wednesday, the 17th August, a day in a thousand for hill climbing—clear of mist; breeze just enough to cool us as we rest, and to “heeze” us up a wee bit as we climb; and, best of all, a blue sky, mottled with fleecy clouds, behind which the sun hides his burning face every now and then, just as we begin to think his attentions too demonstrative. It’s all very well for Shakespeare’s “lackey, who from rise to set sweats in the eye of Phœbus,” but we feel we do not need that to “all night sleep in Elysium.” From us Morpheus claims no greater sacrifice than one day’s easy mountaineering.

Dramatis personæ.—(1) A young lady, just over “sweet

seventeen"; (2) a stalwart member of the Scottish Pipers' Society, in the garb of Old Gaul; (3) a young Lowlander, flouting the azure firmament with the bluer blazer of Merchiston; and (4) an elderly cicerone, eager to justify his membership of the S.M.C.

Various advisers about Craignure have various favourite ways of getting to the top of Dun-da-Gu; but, weighing them all, we resolved to go by Scallastle sheep fanks. It proved an excellent choice. In three-quarters of an hour we had reached the ridge of a lofty table-backed hump, from which the slope to the summit seemed, and really was, comparatively easy. Here we took a long breath and a look round. What a landscape!

Cicerone—"I do believe, Tibby, you and I haven't had a good pull up hill together since we did Roccabruna and up beyond the Corniche road in February?"

Tibby—"No, we haven't. How much finer this is!"

Cicerone—"This! Finer, did you say?"

Tibby—"Of course; it's ten times finer! Don't you think so yourself?"

Cicerone—"Well, the Sound to-day is a shade blue, if anything; but you can't compare it for a moment to the rich azure of the Mediterranean. Then think of the country from your feet to the sea! Instead of this barren slope of rock and bracken, first a belt of dark red-stemmed pines, then clumps of olive trees and carobs, merging into orchards of orange trees and citron trees, linked to each other with festoons of vine!"

Tibby—"Oh yes! It sounds all very fine, but it isn't half as picturesque as the slope of Dun-da-Gu. Except when the wind blows its silver side up, the foliage of the olives is a dirty grey; and, besides, they're mostly all in rows, as stiff and formal as anything. Vines, indeed! Peas on peasticks are quite as pretty, and hops ever so much prettier. And what if the water is bluer? You can see nothing else. Not a sail from shore to horizon, and only the hazy extremities of the one coast. Now look down there! See that line of white-winged yachts between the mouth of the Sound and Oban! And even the steamers! I like them too; they tell what we can do in this country. But that's not all.

Where in all the Riviera can you show a line of hills like that? The Esterels? You know that's nonsense—a finger of knobs and knuckles pointing over the sea to nothing. But there, right in front of us, is Ben Nevis, the most exalted of Her Majesty's British subjects; near him the two peaks of Glencoe; then a whole row of eminent summits, ending in Ben Cruachan. Don't they throw back the sunlight? What grand shapes; what changes of colour! Oh, bother Roccabruna! Dun-da-Gu for me, anyway!"

The Piper—"Bravo, Tibby; Scotland for ever!"

Cicerone—"Oban! What's Oban compared with Monte Carlo, and that rare old castle of Monaco, with its watch-tower hanging from the bastion-corner? Anyhow, you can't assuage the pangs of luncheon-time with locust-beans pulled from the tree, as we did close by the Corniche?"

Tibby—"I do believe the Monaco brattice is a crib from Edinburgh Castle; and if we haven't locust beans, we've burns we can take a drink of clear cool water from."

Cicerone—"Well, I never! don't you remember me spoiling my cap by using it for your drinking-cup?"

Tibby—"Ay, for a trickle out of a brick spout—not a rare, tumbling, singing stream like this." (Throws herself along the mossy bank to drink.)

Blue Blazer—"Habet! Tibby wins! Three cheers for "Dun-da-Gu!" (Cheers accordingly, and a few steps of the hullachan.)

Cicerone—"Well, I give in. Really it is a magnificent panorama. Land and water, hill and valley, lake and stream, wood and pasture, sky and cloud. How glorious they all are! Where is the coward that would not fight and die for such a land? But we must be stepping up again. Excelsior!"

So off we went, the three younger members of the expedition flushed with patriotic triumph, and the senior with the consolation (common, of late) that if not the majority, at least all the sense and argument, were on his side.

It was twenty minutes after "the wee short hour" when we touched the cairn on the summit. Looking from the top towards Morven, the view was much the same as from

our first stopping-place—only we saw the blue sea threading its way farther into the bases of the hills, and the whole landscape was more like a model at our feet. The Cuchullins were plainer in far-off Skye, and we were surer that a crescent of blue lying in the dip between two hills was the Atlantic itself. Then we talked a space about Columbus and his trip five hundred years ago this very year. Below us, Duart Castle—that grim, self-asserting, and defiant keep—seemed a mere wart on a tiny promontory; and the ruined Ardtornish was hardly distinguishable. All the way up we had raised only one wing—a blackcock; but here, on the very top, we saw lots of skinny mountain hares—so lean, said the facetious piper, as to give new meaning to a “haresbreadth.” Looking landwards, we were repaid by a fine spectacle—a sea of mossy hills, rolling wave after wave, billow and crest, in front of us, to where Ben More raised his topmost edge 3,169 feet above the sea. To every mountaineer the sight is familiar, but I never remember being so impressed with it.

From Dun-da-Gu we had to descend a good bit and climb again (hateful necessity) to reach the top of Mainnir nam Fiadh (practically the same view, with Loch Don thrown in), and thence homeward by the skyline, or as near as we could hit it, to Craignure. After “high tea” behold us all, like King Harry’s lackey again, “crammed with distressful bread,” but though “with body filled” not “with a vacant mind.” We had a hundred reminiscences of Dun-da-Gu to recall—to chat about. There is no hill-top (not even the belching Vesuvius of ’72) to which I oftener go back in thought, no view so often in my mind’s eye. Craignure is easy to get to—first stop after Oban; and my fellow-members to whom chasms, precipices, and ropes are not the all-in-all of mountaineering would do well to add on their mental alpenstocks the modest five and twenty hundred feet of Dun-da-Gu.

Horary.

<p>11.0 Leave Craignure.</p> <p>11.30 „ Scallastle sheep fanks.</p> <p>12.15 „ Top of hump, or spur.</p> <p>1.20 „ Top of Dun-da-Gu.</p>	|	<p>1.35 Leave Top.</p> <p>2.0 „ Top of Mainnir, &c.</p> <p>3.40 Arrive Craignure.</p>
--	--	---

DARK LOCHNAGAR.

BY H. T. MUNRO.

A REFERENCE to Messrs John Bartholomew & Co.'s excellent tinted map—Sheet 16—shows that a large tract of elevated country lies between the Dee and Strathmore, between the counties of Aberdeen and Forfar. From Creag Leacach (“crag of the side of the hill”), above the Spital of Glenshee, to the Meikle Pap on the east of Lochnagar, is a distance of upwards of ten miles in a bee-line, and except for about a half-mile on each side of the Tolmount the elevation is everywhere above 3,000 feet, while even at these points it only falls to 2,863 feet. This range has already received considerable notice in the *Journal*, and, besides notes, two articles have been devoted to describing its principal summits.*

The southern portion of this table-land is generally called the Braes of Angus, the old name Benchinnans having fallen into disuse. The northern and highest portion usually now spoken of as the Lochnagar summits, or the Deeside mountains, is on the Ordnance Survey maps called “The White Mounts.” The word “Mounts” is a corruption of the old name *The Mounth*, which applied formerly to the range extending the whole length of the river Dee on its south side, and indeed probably at one time right across Scotland. The name still occasionally occurs in its corrupted form in the eastern part of the range, e.g., Cairn o' Mount in Kincardineshire, the Capel Mount between Clova and Glen Muick, the Tolmount,† and in several other instances besides the White Mount. According to Jamieson's *Scottish Dictionary*, “mounth” means *mountain*; the corrupted form is therefore not so far wrong after all. The name Lochnagar, which is now invariably given to the highest summit of the White Mounth, only correctly applies to the little loch in its north-eastern corrie. The meaning of the word is extremely doubtful, but of the suggested derivations the most probable seems to be that it is a corruption of Loch na

* Vol. I., pp. 20, 98, *et seq.*† *Journal*, Vol. I., p. 104.

Gabhar ("the lake of the goat"). How it came to be applied to the whole mountain is not known; but since Byron in his soul-stirring poem sang of "the steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar," it has had a world-wide fame, which has been enhanced by the frequent references made to it by Her Majesty in her "Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands." It is also, however, of considerable interest to the mountaineer. It is the thirty-third highest top in all Scotland, while as a separate mountain it stands twenty-first, and of the twenty which exceed it in elevation only five are to be found outside the Ben Nevis and Cairngorm districts.* The view from it consequently is extensive. Botanically, the mountain itself, and especially the approaches to it on the Forfarshire side, are a very paradise, while it is also of considerable geological interest. In one of the best climates to be found in Scotland, it is within comparatively easy reach of several good inns; while, although there are two regular pony routes to the summit, the climb direct from the *Loch* of Lochnagar will afford the lovers of rock-climbing the nearest approach to "first ascents" that the kingdom can produce.

Let us first define the situation and limits of Lochnagar, and then consider a few of the ways of ascending it. Where an elevated table-land without any marked depression extends for a long distance, it is difficult to decide on the exact boundaries of any one mountain; and in the present case, two of the tops,† which in this article will for convenience be considered as forming a part of the Lochnagar range, may fairly be reckoned as distinct mountains, and have been so counted by the writer in his tables of 3,000 feet tops. ‡

The Dee from Braemar to Ballater, the Muick, the Dubh Loch, a line hence across the hills to Loch Callater, Glen Callater, and the Clunie water to Braemar, may be said to enclose the chain of Lochnagar. These boundaries form an inverted triangle, and the whole

* Ben Lawers, 3,984 feet; Càrn Eige, 3,877; Mam Sodhail, 3,862; Ben More, 3,843; and Am Binnein, 3,827.

† Càrn an t-Sagairt Mor, and Carn a' Choire Bhoideach.

‡ Journal, Vol. I., p. 276, *et seq.*

of the higher portions of the mountain are situated in its south-pointing apex. Eleven of its summits * exceed 3,000 feet, while several others which do not reach that height are worthy of mention.

(1.) Commencing in the west, one and a half mile E. of Loch Callater, the round-topped Càrn an t-Sagairt Mor ("the big cairn of the priest") rises steeply from its shores, and from the Feindallacher burn on the N. It is two and a half miles in a bee-line from the highest point of Lochnagar, and has been reckoned in the 3,000 feet tables as a distinct mountain. Its height is given on the one-inch O.S., but the name is only to be found on the six-inch map. On Messrs Bartholemew's map this and the next top are, however, together called Cairn Taggart.

(2.) A descent to 3,156 feet, and a rise to 3,424, places us on the top of Càrn an t-Sagairt Beag, half-mile E. by N. of Càrn an t-Sagairt Mor. Both name and height of this top are only given on the six-inch map.

(3.) The col to the east of this is 3,296 feet, and then a gradual rise leads to Carn a' Choire Bhoideach ("the cairn of the beautiful corrie"). This name is from the six-inch map alone, the one-inch map giving no name at all, and Messrs Bartholemew calling it "Cairn of Corbreach,"—this, as well as "Cairn Taggart," is clearly only the phonetic spelling of the Gaelic name. No height is given to the summit on any map. The one-inch O.S. gives a large 3,500 feet contour, and the six-inch a height of 3,571 feet, to some crags immediately overhanging Loch Dubh ("the black lake"). Mr Inkson M'Connochie, in his interesting and instructive work on Lochnagar † (page 19), counts both this point and Carn a' Choire Boidheach as tops. The former has, however, no claim to be so considered, for although it looks well from below, it is found when reached that the ground slopes up to the S., with scarcely any intermediate dip, to an elevation of 3630 feet ‡ (approximately). It is a great, nearly level, moor, un-

* One of these, the S.W. shoulder of Creag a' Ghlas-uillt, is not included in the writer's tables.

† Journal, Vol. II., p. 35.

‡ Journal, Vol. II., p. 132.

honoured by any cairn, and falling away very gradually in every direction but the north, where the above-mentioned crags descend abruptly to the fine corrie in which lie the little Loch Dubh, and a half-mile farther down, *i.e.*, north, Lochan an Eoin* ("little loch of the birds"). A very fine view is had of the corrie, which, horse-shoe shaped, extends right round to the two main peaks of Lochnagar itself. Here and there some good scrambling might be obtained, and a pleasant variation from any of the ordinary routes is to descend north through the Forest of Ballochbuie ("the yellow pass"), visiting the falls of the Garbh Allt † (locally called Garawalt, *i.e.*, "rough burn"). Carn a' Choire Bhoidheach, situated nearly midway between Càrn an t-Sagairt Mor and Lochnagar, and one and a half mile S.W. of the latter, has been reckoned by the writer (Tables, Vol. I.) as a separate mountain.

(4.) Creag a' Ghlas-uillt (named only on the six-inch O.S.), also an almost level moor unmarked by a cairn, lies between the Glas Allt ("grey burn") and the Allt an Lochan Bhuidhe ("burn of the little yellow loch"). It is one mile south of Lochnagar, and about the same distance E.S.E. of Carn a' Choire Bhoidheach, with only a slight depression between. Its approximate height as given in the 3,000 feet tables is 3,450 feet, but according to subsequent measurement ‡ its height is probably about 3,500 feet. The one-inch O.S. gives a large 3,250 contour.

(5.) A fair depression separates Creag a' Ghlas-uillt from its S.W. shoulder, one-third mile away, above the Dubh Loch (not to be confused with Loch Dubh referred to above). The approximate height of this top is 3,470 feet.§ It is not included in the 3,000 feet tables.

(6.) We next come to Lochnagar proper. The mountain has two small summits, rising from "an undulating moor

* The writer is informed that these names are incorrect. Loch Dubh should be Lochan an Eoin, and Lochan an Eoin should be the Sandy Loch. He prefers, however, to retain the names as on the O.S. maps.

† Vol. I., pp. 104 and 242.

‡ Vol. II., p. 133.

§ Vol. II., p. 133.

more than a mile and a half long, sloping gently southward towards Glen Muick" ("glen of the sow").* This mile and a half, however, includes Creag a' Ghlas-uillt. The southernmost of these two summits, surmounted by a large cairn, is 3,768 feet high, and is marked on the maps LOCH-NAGAR, though sometimes called Cac † Càrn Mor. It is situated close to the crags forming its N.E. corrie, in which lies the loch of Lochnagar. It is six miles almost due south of Balmoral, and nearly three miles N.W. of the Glasallt Sheil, the Queen's lodge at the head of Loch Muick.

(7.) The northern summit, Cac Càrn Beag, 3,786 feet, and actually the highest point of the mountain, is a pretty little natural cairn, one-third of a mile north of Cac Càrn Mor, with only a slight dip between.

(8.) From here the mountain drops away steeply, though not precipitously, to the north, to an elevation of some 2,800 feet, and then rises to a pretty cone called Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe ‡ ("the hill of the corrie of the foxes' den"), three-quarters of a mile from Cac Càrn Beag. The height of this top as given on the six-inch O.S. is 3,191 feet, the 3,121 of the one-inch O.S. being a misprint.

(9.) From Cac Càrn Mor we skirt the crags which form the grand corrie of Lochnagar, and one mile E.S.E. reach Cuidhe Cròm ("bent [snow] wreath"), 3,552 feet. The name is only on the six-inch, though the height appears on the one-inch map. It is round-topped, with a small dilapidated cairn, but falls away steeply to the east, so that the Ballater track at first takes many zig-zags, and when blocked with frozen snow requires some step cutting.

(10.) To the S.E. a rough bouldery descent, and then a rise, leads in a half-mile to the Little Pap, a pretty rocky little top,—approximate height, 3,125 feet.§ The *name* on the one-inch map is nearly a quarter of a mile too far to the N.W.

* Sir A. Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland," p. 195.

† This word is almost the same as the French and had better not be translated. Those who have seen these cairns will at once acknowledge the appropriateness of the name.

‡ Vol. I., p. 242.

§ Vol. II., p. 134.

(11.) Three-quarters of a mile to the north of Cuidhe Cròm, the Meikle Pap (3,211 feet), very similar in character to the Little Pap, rises from the Ballater track. Only about 180 feet (?) above the col, the ascent can be made in a few minutes, and the view from it of the great corrie of "the crags that are wild and majestic," and of the loch, is among the finest scenes of its kind in Scotland. These three hills are peculiarly well named, Cuidhe Cròm being exactly in the position of the shoulders and the two Paps of the breasts.

Of the tops which do not attain the 3,000 feet standard, the most notable are:—(1.) The chain of summits of an ever-increasing height which, commencing in the N.W. near Braemar, extend in a S.E. direction to Càrn an t-Sagairt; Creag Choinnich, 1764 feet, just above Braemar; Càrn nan Sglait (the "cairn of the slate"?), 2,260 feet; Creag nan Leachda ("crag of the flag stones"?), 2,549 feet; and Meall an t-Sluichd, (the "round hill of hollow"), 2,771 feet. (2.) Creag Liath (the "greyish crag"), 2,825 feet, a half mile to the north of Meall Coire na Saobhaide; and one and a half mile W.N.W. from it the long ridge of Carn Fiaclan (the "cairn of the fangs"), 2,703 feet, drops away to the Dee. (3.) A mile and a quarter E.N.E. of the Meikle Pap the ground again rises 600 feet above the col to Conachraig Hill (the "hill of prosperity"),* 2,827 feet. It extends in a N. by E. direction for a distance of upwards of four miles, with tops of lessening height, until it terminates in the agglomeration of monumental cairns which Her Majesty has erected above Balmoral. (4.) Of the heights between the Girnock burn and the Muick, the only one worthy of mention is The Coyle (coille, *i.e.*, "wood"), 1,956 feet four miles S. of Ballater, which is a prominent feature as Glen Muick is ascended.

Although the whole of Lochnagar lies in deer forest, four routes to the summit always remain open, namely, from Ballater, from Braemar by Glen Callater, and from Clova by Glen Doll, or by the Capel Mounth.

* "Kenneth's Crag" is another suggested meaning.

From Ballater, driving is practicable by either bank of the Muick to Allt-naguibhsaich Lodge (the "burn of the fir-tree"), formerly called the Hut, a distance of nine miles. We are here at a height of 1,355 feet, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the top of Lochnagar, which is reached by a good track. Conachcraig is left on our right; and when we have climbed 900 feet, one of the excellent bridle-paths which traverse the Balmoral Forest in all directions is crossed at right angles to our course. The right, or north, turn is the direct route from the mountain to Balmoral; the left, to the Glasallt Shiel at the head of Loch Muick. Hence the ascent steepens. Meikle Pap can be climbed as above. Cuidhe Cròm is reached by "the ladder," the zig-zags already referred to, and one and a half to two hours from the lodge should place us on Lochnagar cairn.

Variations of the above route are:—First, Ascend Glen Muick as far as the lodge at the head of Loch Muick, and, keeping up the Glas Allt past its fine fall, climb by the Little Pap to Cuidhe Cròm.* Second, Continue still farther up the glen to the Dubh Loch, and, ascending steeply to the north, reach the depression between Carn a' Choire Bhoideach and Creag a' Ghlas-uillt, and so to Loch-nagar; this is recommended on account of the severe grandeur of the scenery around the Dubh Loch.

The shortest and easiest ascent is made from Balmoral, up the east side of the Gelder burn, by a direct path which joins the Ballater route at the foot of the Meikle Pap, as mentioned above, and should not take above two and a half to three hours for the whole ascent. A direct ascent from the little inn at Inver,† two miles west of Balmoral, can be made by the west bank of the Gelder and Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe.

The favourite tourist route is that from Braemar. Glen Clunie is ascended for two miles, and Glen Callater for another three, as far as the lodge at the foot of the loch, driving being practicable so far. Fine views from here of the crags of the Tolmount at the head of the glen on the Forfarshire march. Hence a bridle-path leans away to the

* Vol II., p. 134.

† On the *opposite* side of the Dee. No bridge.

left, in a general easterly direction. It crosses just below and to the right of Càrn an t-Sagairt Mor, which is well worth the few minutes' *détour* occupied in its ascent,* and then, leaving the summit of Càrn an t-Sagairt Beag on the left, ascends to Carn a' Choire Bhoideach, and passing close to the 3,571 feet crags, rises easily to the cairn of Lochnagar. Another pleasant route from Braemar is *via* the falls of the Garbh Allt, and thence up the Allt Lochan an Eoin to the loch of that name, and thence direct to Cac Càrn Beag either by the western face or the more easy northern shoulder.

Undoubtedly, however, by far the most interesting ascent of Lochnagar, and one which the writer hopes some day to see made the special feature of a Ballater meet of the Club, is by the rocks from the loch which gives its name to the mountain. From the point at which the Ballater and Balmoral tracks converge (2,220 feet), the loch can easily be reached, either direct, or by the Meikle Pap. It is 2,575 feet above the sea, and the cliffs, which form a half-circle round it nearly a mile in extent, rise above it "300 to 500 feet in vertical depth,"† or, including the screes at their base, from 1,000 to 1,200 feet. Standing out from these on the horns of the crescent are the bouldery cones of Meal Coire na Soabhaidhe and the Meikle Pap. The loch is encircled and ponded back by glacial moraines, and the granite cliffs present every form of buttress and pinnacle. Huge rifts tear open the face of the rock, and offer the mountaineer a great variety of ribs—mostly difficult—rock faces, shoots, and, at most seasons of the year, snow couloirs; ‡ while by those who would prefer it, an easy route can be found by working round to either of the horns of the crescent.

Besides Ballater, Braemar, and Inver, there are three if not four inns on the Forfarshire and Perthshire side, which may be made the starting-point of a walk across the mountain.§

1st. THE MILTON OF CLOVA.—Comfortable hotel, 15

* Vol. I., pp. 102, 104, and 242.

† "Scenery of Scotland," Sir A. Geikie.

‡ On the 10th July 1892, the writer found some fair-sized couloirs with snow in good condition.

§ Vol. I., p. 99 *et seq.*

miles from Kirriemuir, with coaches two or three times weekly in summer. Hence there are four routes:—

a. Carriage road to Braedownie, three miles. Right-of-way track up Glen Doll to Glen Callater, but when it begins to descend to the latter glen, bear to the right till a sheep-fence is reached, and follow it until the Braemar and Lochnagar track is struck below Càrn an t-Sagairt.*

b. From Braedownie *via* Glen Esk and Bachnagairn, and either by the burn of Gowal, &c., or by the Knaps of Fafernie, to the sheep-fence as above.†

c. From Braedownie north for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the Dog Hillock (2,400 feet), the Glasallt Shiel at the head of Loch Muick, and ascend thence as above.‡

d. From Braedownie over the Capel Mount to Spital of Glenmuick and Allnaguibhsaich.

2nd. INCHMILL INN, Glen Prosen.—Small but comfortable; beer license; 11 miles from Kirriemuir. Coach once or twice a week in summer. Hence *via* Mayar, Tom Buidhe (“the yellow hillock”), and Fafernie, to the track below Càrn an t-Sagairt.§

3rd. KIRKTON OF GLENISLA.—Excellent little hotel; Alyth 10 miles; coach daily in summer. Drive to Tulchan Lodge (10 miles), whence up Canness Glen to Tom Buidhe, Fafernie, &c.

4th. SPITAL OF GLENSHEE.—15 miles to Braemar, 20 to Blairgowrie; daily coach each way in summer, and post-cart to Blairgowrie in winter. The Glas Maol, &c., can be crossed from here to Lochnagar.||

The view from the summit is very extensive, but, like many of the eastern Grampians, suffers from the want of rivers or large lakes in the foreground. Nearly due east, seen over the loch (Lochnagar) and the Meikle Pap, Mount Keen (3,070 feet) rises from a heathery table-land. Turning to the right, the most prominent hill is Mount Battock (2,555 feet), on the Forfar, Aberdeen, and Kincardine march.

* Vol. I., p. 242, and Vol. II., p. 133.

† Vol. I., p. 101.

‡ Vol. II., p. 134.

§ Vol. I., pp. 99 and 104.

|| Vol. I., pp. 23 and 99, and Vol. II., p. 38.

The North Sea between Stonehaven and Montrose, the valley of Strathmore with the eastern Sidlaws, the Isle of May, and at least one of the Lomonds in Fife. The Pentlands, too, can occasionally be seen. In the foreground, over Creag a' Ghlas-uillt and Carn a' Choire Bhoidheach the hills on the Forfarshire march, the Broad Cairn (3,268), Cairn Bannoch (3,314), and Fafernie (3,274). The Driesh (3,105), and the Mayar (3,043), about eight miles off. The conical Mount Blair (2,441), beyond; rather nearer S.W. by S., big flat-topped Cairn na Glasha (3,484), with the Glas Maol (3,502), behind it. Ben Lawers (3,984), Schiehallion (3,547), Beinn a' Ghlo (3,671); Beinn Iutharn Bheag (3,011); Beinn Dearg (3,304), in Atholl, a little to the S. of W.; Beinn Bhrotain (3,795), some eighteen miles W.N.W. looking like the great flat moor that it is; Cairn Toul (4,241), with the Devil's Point, the finest shaped hill in sight, Ben Macdhuil (4,296), and Cairngorm (4,084); then the big mass of Beinn a' Bhuird (3,924), and Ben Avon (3,843). A peep of the valley of the Dee can be seen near Balmoral, but the Castle is not in sight. Ben Rinnes, above Dufftown, lies some thirty miles off almost due north; rather nearer, and a little to the right, Corryhabbie; the Buck of Cabrach yet nearer, and farther east; Morvern, pyramidal, and much nearer, five miles due north of Ballater; and Bennachie thirty-five miles to the N.W. In addition to the above it is said that Ben Cruachan, Ben Nevis, the Moray Firth, and the Caithness coast may also occasionally be seen.*

Lochnagar viewed from the south is certainly a disappointing mountain—but when seen from the north, *e.g.*, Deeside or the Cairngorms—its fine corries and graceful outline with the sharp little peak of Cac Càrn Beag, without approaching the grandeur or beauty of the Sgòrs and

* The above description of the view has been written partly from memory, partly from the information of others, and partly from notes of views from hills from which Lochnagar has been seen; for although splendid views have often been had by the writer from tops all round Lochnagar, he has never been so fortunate as to obtain a perfect view from the summit except once, when the cold was too intense to enjoy it.

Bens of the Western Highlands, are always picturesque and impressive.

Even were the writer competent to deal with them, geology and botany are beyond the scope of a mountaineering article. On these subjects, as well as for much useful and historical information connected with the whole district, members are referred to Mr Inkson M'Connochie's interesting and entertaining book on "Lochnagar."

THE FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER.

THE fourth Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Waterloo Hotel, Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, on Tuesday, the 13th December. The retiring President, Professor G. G. Ramsay, was in the chair. Thirty-five members were present.

The following office-bearers were elected:—*President*—Professor John Veitch, LL.D. *Vice-Presidents*—Professor G. G. Ramsay, LL.D.; Alexander Nicolson, LL.D, Advocate; J. Parker Smith, M.P. *Hon. Treasurer*—William W. Naismith, C.A. *Hon. Editor*—William Douglas. *Hon. Librarian*—Gilbert Thomson, C.E., M.A. *Hon. Secretary*—A. Ernest Maylard, B.S., M.B. *New Members of Committee*—Alexander Inkson M'Connochie; Francis J. Dewar, W.S.; Thomas Fraser S. Campbell.

The following new members were stated to have been elected by the Committee since the last General Meeting of the Club:—Howard Priestman, Walter Brunskill, James Maclay, W. L. Howie, C. W. Patchell, Scott Moncrieff Penney, William Tough, Rev. Hunter Smith, James Rose, John Gordon, M.D., Rev. H. S. Oldham, and four others whose names have already appeared in a preceding number of the *Journal*. The present membership of the Club is now 107.

The following addition and alteration were made to the Club Rules:—

New Rule regarding Honorary Members:—

“The Committee has power to elect, on special grounds, Honorary Members, not exceeding ten in number. Honorary Members shall not be required to pay any Entrance Fee or Subscription, but shall have all the privileges of ordinary members.”

Alteration to Rule XIV., regarding qualifications for Membership:—

“Every Candidate for admission to the Club must forward to the Secretary (on a special form to be obtained from him), at least one month before the Annual General Meeting in December (or any other General Meeting), a list of his Scottish ascents, stating the month and year in which each ascent was made, or a statement of his contributions to science, art, or literature in connection with Scottish

mountains. Such list or statement must be signed by the Candidate, and by two members of the Club acting as Proposer and Seconder. If in the opinion of the Committee the qualifications are deemed sufficient, the name, designation, and address of the Candidate, along with the names of his Proposer and Seconder, shall be sent by post to each member at least one week before the day of balloting.

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

The following were the fixtures made for Club meets :—

Tyndrum—From Dec. 29th to Jan. 3rd.

Lochearnhead—Feb. 15th to Feb. 18th.

Loch Awe—From March 30th to April 4th.

Blair Athole—About the Middle of May.

The Honorary Treasurer submitted his statement, which showed a balance to the credit of the Club of £49. 7s.

The Annual Dinner was held in the Waterloo Hotel. The retiring President, Professor G. G. Ramsay, occupied the chair, and Mr R. A. Robertson acted as croupier. There were thirty-five members and twelve guests present ; this being the largest assemblage of members that has yet taken place, many having come long distances to attend.

The menu card was cleverly designed by Mr Fraser Campbell, giving glimpses of Ben Cruachan, Stobinian and Ben More from Loch Tay, with a party of Club members on a snow slope in the foreground.

Professor Ramsay, in proposing the toast of “The Club,” gave, in a stirring address, a review of the history of the Club since its commencement. He referred to a foggy day in November 1889, when Mr Maylard called on him to ask his help in starting the Club. He described its past achievements, and in a grand oration on the delights and glories of mountaineering fired anew all who heard him with an enthusiastic longing for the hills. The newly-elected President, Professor Veitch, proposed “Our Bens and Glens,” in a speech descriptive of the charms of the Highland mountains and Southern uplands. He called special attention to the attraction which the Highland scenery had for such men as Byron,

Account of Receipts and Expenditure by the Honorary Treasurer of "The Scottish Mountaineering Club," 1892.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
Balance from last Statement,	£40 18 5	R. MacLeshose's Account (for Circulars, Members' Tickets, Rules, and Post-cards,	£10 11 0
Subscriptions received from 96 Members,	50 8 0	Edinburgh Co-operative Printing Co.'s Account (for printing Journal, Vol. I., No. 6, and Vol. II., No. 2,	£39 17 4
Subscriptions (Arrears, 1891) from 11 Members,	5 15 6	Do., Journal, Vol. II., No. 1, and Reprint of Vol. I., No. 1,	22 9 6
Entry-Money from 13 Members,	13 13 0	George Comrie Smith's Account (Club Album and Mounting Photographs),	1 1 0
Douglas & Foulis, Edinburgh,	11 19 8	Kennedy, Robertson, & Co.'s Account (Binding Journals),	0 7 6
Hon. Librarian for Journals sold (1891),	£2 6 0	Hon. Librarian, for Postages, 1891-92,	0 15 7
Hon. Librarian for Journals sold (1892),	2 0 4	Hon. Secretary, for Postages, &c.,	3 0 0
Interest on Bank Account,	0 8 0	Balance in Union Bank of Scotland Limited,	49 7 0
	<u>£127 8 11</u>		<u>£127 8 11</u>

GLASGOW, 21st November 1892.—Examined, compared with Vouchers, and found correct.

GILBERT THOMSON.

Scott, and Professor Wilson, and how its influence was shown in their works; while with regard to the Southern uplands, he urged the members of the Club not to forget our beautiful south country, where, although there might not be rocky peaks to climb, there were scenes of exquisite beauty in hill and glen, and where too the adventurous would encounter bogs as deep and mists as puzzling as any in the Highlands.

Sheriff Nicolson, in his reply to this toast, introduced his own song, "The Isle of Skye." The other toasts were—"The Alpine Club," by Mr W. C. Smith, replied to by Mr J. H. Gibson; "The *Journal* and Office-Bearers," by Mr H. T. Munro, replied to by the Hon. Editor, Mr Douglas; "The Guests," by Mr T. Craig-Brown, replied to by Professor Shield Nicholson; and "The Retiring President," by the Hon. Secretary, Dr Maylard. During the evening Mr Hinxman and Mr Rennie supplied some excellent music; and a brief but expressive telegraphic greeting was despatched to our late editor, Mr Stott, in New Zealand.



"Oh! my big hob.nailors
 a reminiscence. 13/12/92
 F.C.

NOTES AND QUERIES.



EXCURSIONS.

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

ACCIDENT ON THE WHANGIE.—Sufficient allusion has been made to the "Whangie" in previous numbers of the *Journal* to render a further description unnecessary. On the 11th September, W. R. Lester and myself retraced our steps thither, with the intention of making the ascent of "Thomson's Pinnacle," described in the last (September) issue. Arrived at the place, we ascended to the top of the pinnacle by the easy route along the ridge. We had with us a strong rope, which we put on, leaving a slack of about thirty feet between us. Seating myself astride the ridge, with my back to the pinnacle, and where a ledge to the outside gives additional support, I was in a position to secure the climber against any danger from a slip. Thus roped, Lester made, without a slip, a difficult and interesting descent and ascent of the rock on its inside face. Reversing my position, so as to face the pinnacle, Lester made another descent on the outside of the rock, and at the very end of the ridge. I subsequently attempted the ascent at this point, Lester taking my place on the top; but this proved more difficult, and I did not accomplish it. Traversing the middle portion of the ridge, we then proceeded to ascend the south portion, and it was here that an unfortunate accident occurred. It may be noted that in this part of the ascent the rope was not actually necessary, and was not, as a matter of fact, in use; but for the sake of convenience, and to save readjustment in case of our requiring it later on, we did not remove it. "Hinc illæ lachrimæ"! I was now leading, and reached the summit of the ridge without difficulty. It has been remarked before that the ridge is very narrow, and of a very friable nature, and care had to be exercised in testing the security of foot and hand-hold. As I was about to make the last step, with my feet firmly planted and my arms encircling a block which formed the apex of the ridge, the entire mass gave way, pushing me out over the face of the cliff, which is here perpendicular, and fully forty feet in height. Lester was eight or ten feet below me, and a little bit along the ridge. Seeing me fall, he at once stepped over the edge to the other side as far as he could. Had the ridge been a little broader, or I a little

lighter, he might have held ; as it was, the strain was too severe, and he was dragged off, falling heavily on to the rocks below. Although insufficient to stop me altogether, the momentary tightening of the rope between us sufficed to pull me "head up" ; and beyond a few cuts and bruises, and a severe blow on the head from a falling stone, I escaped uninjured, and in a few minutes I was able to go across the moor in search of assistance. This I obtained at Auchineden House, the residence of Mr Pollock, on whose property the "Whangie" is situated ; and returning to the scene of the accident, with several of the men-servants, Lester was carried to the house, where medical aid had been summoned. We were subsequently driven into Glasgow. It was found on examination that, besides severe bruising of the back and limbs, Lester had sustained a compound fracture and dislocation of the left wrist, but it will rejoice his many friends to know that he is now entirely restored to health. I cannot let this opportunity pass without expressing in these pages our warmest gratitude to Mr Pollock and to his men, who did all in their power to relieve our necessities, and to whose prompt and sympathetic aid the freedom from more serious results is in a great measure due.

T. F. S. CAMPBELL.

NOTES ON THE HILLS NEAR GLASGOW.—The following notes are an attempt to give recollections and impressions of visits to the heights in the immediate neighbourhood of Glasgow, practically without ever going out of sight of the city. In one respect the chronicle is that of little things, but in another it is not, for the ground covered is of considerable extent, and includes a greater area of hill-country than might be anticipated. I shall begin on the north side of the Clyde, and work round.

KILPATRICK HILLS extend from the Clyde to Strathblane, and form also the south-western limit of the Lennox Hills, which, under this general name, stretch through central Scotland to Stirling. The highest points are Fynloch Hill and Duncomb, each 1,313 feet elevation, near one another in the centre of the group, on both of which are small cairns. On Duncomb is a talus-slope, examples of which also occur elsewhere amongst these hills. Climbing from the south, a fine spectacular effect is obtained as the climber reaches this top, and stepping from under cover of the hill suddenly opens out the landscape to the north,—Loch Lomond and its islands in the foreground, and the northern mountains behind. Auchineden Hill (1,171 feet) and the Whangie (not named in the present one-inch Ordnance Survey map, but in the issue of 1871 called Wanzie) are some three miles north of Duncomb, and at Craigton, on the eastern bounds of the group, the almost perfect columnar formation of the hill-side is worth observing. The Slacks (1,199 feet), near Loch Humphrey, has a series of terraces coming down abruptly at slight angles, illustrating in a striking way one of the distinctive features of the Kilpatricks. Murroch Glen, in

the Vale of Leven, is cut out of the rock, and has here and there steep mural sides, and the bold tree-clad hill of Dunbuck (547 feet) rises from the edge of the Clyde. The uplands lying between these hills and Strathblane reach their highest on Craigend Muir (634 feet), and other prominent points are the Pillar Craig (rock), Dunglass (501 feet, a boss of rock), and Dungoyach (510 feet).

CAMPSIE FELLS.—These contain the highest point (the Earl's Seat, 1,894 feet) coming within my survey, and, along with the Kilsyth Hills, also offer the best climbing. Their southern face is frequently very steep, a fall of about 1,000 feet in a very short distance being not unusual, and rock abounds. The westernmost point, Dungoyne (1,401 feet, no cairn, rock-face to the west), is one of the most prominent hills in sight in the Glasgow district, standing well clear of the end of the group as it does, while its neighbour, Dunfoyn, a similar hill, is belittled by lying close in. The Earl's Seat is nearly two miles south-east of this, over the Garlocks and the Clachertyfarlie Knowes, the north fronts of which fall abruptly towards Ballikrain Muir. A more immediate route to reach it is by the Ballagan Burn, on which there is a fine "Spout," where the geological strata is exposed in a great series of clearly defined beds or layers. The Little Earl (1,781 feet, cairn) is passed, before reaching the top, which is a very common-place spot, commanding, however, a good view to the north. More than a mile distant, under Allanrowie, lies the Corrie of Balglass, one of the sights of these hills. A good way to reach it is by the Fin Glen from Campsie, and from the point marked 1,552 feet on the one-inch Ordnance Survey map a clear view of it is obtained. It faces north, and has a very abrupt descent of some 600 feet, in a series of steep broken cliffs (the geological formation of which is similar to that seen at Ballagan and in Murroch Glen), and which may be descended in many places. A short distance east of this, under Dechrode, occurs what seems to me a more remarkable place, although not named in the map, nor have I been able to get a name for it otherwise. It may be described as an open corrie, resembling a rather wide and not very deep sea-bay in shape, with much steeper and more massive cliffs than Balglass, falling sheer down hundreds of feet to the grass slopes at their base. The encircling top is more than a mile round, and in a hurried survey I must say that I saw no place of easy descent near the centre.

KILSYTH HILLS.—The road from Campsie to Fintry, locally called the Craw Road, may be taken to be the march between the Campsies and these hills, the highest of which is the Meikle Bin (1,870 feet, small cairn), sometimes called the Cock o' Kilsyth. There are two tops close together S.E. and N.W. of one another, the lesser being about eighty feet lower than the Bin, and having a sharper apex, giving it more of the graceful pointed appearance so characteristic of the Bin as seen from the south of Glasgow, from which the hill has quite a distinguished appearance. To the north is the Little Bin (1,446 feet, no cairn, flat), separated from its big namesake by a deep glen, which necessitates a steep descent of 700 feet. From here it is a fine walk to

follow the Carron to Carron Bridge (Bentend), where there is a small inn, and thence over the hill-road, between Tomtain and Garrel Hill, the summit of which is at an elevation of over 1,000 feet, to Kilsyth. Between the Lairs (1,652 feet, cairn), which affords a good climb from Milton of Campsie, and the Bin, are several points marked by cairns, the highest of which is 1792 feet (unnamed in map), and a good show of peat-hags. Descending by Black Hill, the wild gash in the hill-side at Corrieburn may be visited, a rough little corrie.

LANARKSHIRE HILLS, the eastern bounds of my circuit, attain an elevation of 959 feet in Hirst Hill near Kirk of Shotts, and Torrance (928 feet), also in these Shotts Hills is the highest point of a well-defined terrace plateau. The Moffat Hills near Caldercruix have small rock faces on their north side, but moor and moss are the characteristics of the entire district,—not improved by the near vicinity of numerous coal-pits and iron-works. On the south side of the Clyde, Dechmont (602 feet) is the easternmost point of the Cathkin Braes. Its north face (small cliffs) is the only genuine feature of hill-character it possesses. Farther south the long lift of high moorland comes to a culminating point at Ellrig (1,250 feet, cairn), on the Ayrshire border, commanding a view of the Firth of Clyde. On the heights here are some peat-hags and abundant heather, affording miles of rough walking. Speaking generally, the hills on the south side of the Clyde are inferior to those on the north, not only in height, but also in character. The latter are frequently genuine hills, the former are mostly elevated moorland.

RENFREWSHIRE HILLS are in immediate touch with the last-named group, but are more varied and interesting. Ballagioch (1,084 feet) is well known, and generally thought to be the highest point in the county, perhaps because it is so prominently seen from the southern suburbs of Glasgow, and thus tempts many people to visit it. It has a long flat top, abruptly cut away at the eastern end, and there is a piece of rock on its north face. Dod Hill (895 feet), three miles north-west, has a steep and longish front with some rock on its south-east side, but the neighbouring James' Hill (928 feet) is only moorland again. Neilston Pad (854 feet) is a prominent hill, with a wide, flat, grassy top, and some rock north and south. Rather more than one and a half mile north-east of this is the best rock hill in the district, but this does not mean much. It is unnamed in the one-inch Ordnance Survey map, but is the point marked 600 feet immediately east of Glanderston Dam, and is called the Craig of Carnock. The west side of this hill is precipitous, and the north and north-east have also bold faces, giving it a genuinely craggy appearance, strikingly like an immense lion couchant. It has also been compared to Arthur's Seat. The Lochliboside Hills, and Fereneze and Gleniffer Braes, lie between this and Paisley, reaching their highest point in Corkindale Law (848 feet), marked, but not named in the one-inch Ordnance Survey map. It is a short but steep pull up grass slopes from Loch Libo to this point, which is said to command a view of "half the counties of Scotland,"

also of the Cumberland mountains, and the Mourne and Newry mountains in Ireland. Sergeantlaw (749 feet) and Duchallaw (725 feet) are the highest points in the Fereneze and Gleniffers. Farther west, on the county march, lie the highest hills in Renfrewshire, and by crossing them from south to north, from Lochwinnoch to Kilmalcolm, a point is reached almost opposite that from which a start was made on the other side of the Clyde, and a circuit round Glasgow completed. The hills are usually called the Mistylaw Hills, but the Hill of Stake (1,711 feet), not Mistylaw (1,664 feet), is the highest point. In the Calder Glen are some high mural cliffs, and small but steep hill-slopes, which break in sheer descent sometimes thirty feet right into the bed of the stream. A prominent landmark in the district is Cock-ma-lane (unnamed, but marked 1,087 feet in the one-inch Ordnance Survey map), apparently surmounted by a huge cairn, which on being visited is found to be the gable-end of a ruined house. The point nearer Lochwinnoch, marked 1,110 feet, a rounded boss of a hill, is called Craig Minnan, or the Covenanters' Hill. Mistylaw is one and a half mile north-west of Cock-ma-lane. East Girt Hill (1,673 feet) and the Hill of Stake are led up to by fine grassy slopes, some small scree also occurring. The heather is very thick, and there are also peat-hags.

In enumerating these hills I have described a rough and broken ellipse round Glasgow, the farthest point of which (Hill of Stake) is twenty miles in a straight line from the Royal Exchange, and the nearer points of which are within an afternoon's walk. None of them are beyond attainment on a half-day's outing, and for the climber in Glasgow with only a half-day to spare nothing better presents itself. A whole day, however, is not misspent on these breezy and homely uplands, whose associations and attractions I have scarcely mentioned.

HUGH BOYD WATT.

WHAT OUR MEMBERS DID IN THE ALPS THIS SEASON.—Mr J. H. Gibson formed one of a party of guideless climbers from Montanvers who, among other expeditions, made the ascent of the Aiguille de Talèfre by a new route, which proved to be the most direct yet discovered from that place. The same party also made the first guideless ascent of the Aiguille de Grépon. Fine weather on both occasions.

Mr R. A. Robertson had a capital season in the Alps. Among his successful expeditions were the Nun, the Dent du Géant, Aiguille Grand Dru, and the traverse of the five peaks of the Aig. de Charmoz. All were taken from Montanvers. Weather good in all cases.

Mr Charles Ruxton, in spite of bad weather, which caused many waits and false starts, accomplished the following :—The Dent Blanche (Ferpècle to the Schwarzsee), the Matterhorn (for the second time), Pollux, the Col d'Hérens twice, and the Mischabeljoch.

Dr Joseph Coats stayed at Adalboden, near Kandersteg, for a time, and thence ascended the Albristhorn and Wildstrubel. He also

crossed the Engstligengrat to the Gemmi, and the Petersgrat to the Lötschenthal, and back the same way.

Dr Norman Collie did good work in the Alps this season, as he has often done in the Coolins. His ascents were practically all guideless, and included the Wetterhorn, Nun, Dent du Géant, Aig. de Dru, a traverse of the Charmoz, the first traverse of the Grépon, and the Cols du Géant and de Miage.

Mr Hugh Smith, among other expeditions, ascended the Unter-gabelhorn from Zermatt, in fine weather, and enjoyed a glorious view.

Messrs W. W. King, W. R. Lester, and W. W. Naismith proposed to hold a small meet of the S.M.C. on the top of the Gabelhorn, on 10th August, but unfortunately they were turned by a snowstorm when about 700 feet from summit. A thick Scots mist prevailed below, as was perhaps fitting. Messrs King and Naismith afterwards climbed the peak with an English friend (Mr Lester having left Zermatt) without guides. Day clear; view extended from Monte Viso to the Bernina.

Mr King had a capital month's hard climbing. In addition to minor ascents, he accomplished the following:—Aig. de la Za, Aiguille Rouge, Rothhorn (traverse of), Riffelhorn (from the glacier), Unter-gabelhorn (no guide), left Zermatt *same night* at eleven for Monte Rosa by the Lysjoch route, Matterhorn, Dent Blanche (first ascent of year), Col de Bertol, and Col du Grand Cornier.

Mr Lester ascended, *inter alia*, the Rimpfischhorn from the Adler Pass (an enjoyable rock climb), the Rothhorn, the Col Durand and Pointe de Zinal (without guides), also the Triftjoch. Bad weather prevented an ascent of the Dent Blanche.

Mr Naismith climbed the Dent Blanche (with Mr King and guides), Jungfrau (Bellalp to Grindelwald, in a gale), Petersgrat, &c.

REVIEWS OF MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

BARTHOLOMEW'S NEW SERIES OF REDUCED ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS.

I HAVE before me two sheets of these excellent maps. The Dornoch and Lairg sheet,—No. 25,—extending from Berriedale to the Cromarty Firth, and west so as to include the north-west end of Loch Shin, is the latest published, and appears to have been extremely accurately prepared. The Gallow Hill, above Cromarty, which is 510 feet high, is coloured as under 500. Except for this, and one or two misprints equally trifling, it seems to be entirely free of mistakes.

I am sorry to see, however, that Mr Bartholomew has apparently decided on adopting the rather confusing colouring of which complaint was made in a former review. Although no hill on this map exceeds 3,500 feet, six different shades of brown are used. This is bewildering, and necessitates constant reference to the colour-index. I am strongly

of opinion that the utility of these maps to the mountaineer—and indeed also to the general tourist—would be largely increased, if a greater range of altitude was included under one colour. Different colours should be used for heights under, respectively, 500, 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, and 3,500 feet, while elevations from 3,500 feet upwards should be left uncoloured. This would give green, three browns, neutral tint, and white. If two shades of green were used for heights under 500 and 1,000 feet respectively, as in the excellent maps by Mr Bartholomew in Baddeley's guide-books, this would be an improvement, as it would reduce the number of browns to two, and it would then be possible to tell the elevation at a single glance, without continual reference to the colour-index. These maps cannot be considered as a substitute for, but as a most valuable auxiliary, to the one-inch O.S., which is uncoloured. If, however, they require, with the help of the colour-index, to be spelt out, so to speak, their utility becomes less apparent.

In the other sheet under consideration—No. 19, Isle of Skye—the same colouring has been adopted, but the map has been less carefully prepared. For example, although in the colour-index a sixth shade of brown is given, it has been ignored on the map. Beinn Alligin with summits of 3,232 and 3,021 feet, Mullach an Rathain 3,358, Blaven (Blath Bheinn) 3,042 and 3,031, and the whole range of the Cuillins, being coloured as under 3,000 feet.

On what principle are some roads coloured red and some tracks marked with a dotted red line in all the maps of this series? Why, for instance, is the track leading south from Oykell Bridge (sheet 25) distinguished by a dotted red line, while equally important routes—such, for example, as that along the south side of Loch Glass, that up Strath Rusdale and across to Strath Carron, and innumerable roads in the low country—are left entirely uncoloured? Doubtless Mr Bartholomew has some excellent reason, but an explanation should be given of it at the foot.

Only two more sheets of these admirable maps remain to be published, Nos. 24 and 26, covering the West Coast from Poolewe to Cape Wrath. And while hoping that their usefulness may be increased by adopting a less complicated and confusing gradation of colour, and by indicating on what principle the roads are coloured, I can only wish that in accuracy of detail they may equal the Dornoch and Lairg sheet.—H. T. MUNRO, F.R.G.S.

THE NEW ZEALAND ALPINE JOURNAL: A RECORD OF MOUNTAIN EXPLORATION AND ADVENTURE. By Members of the New Zealand Alpine Club. Christchurch, N.Z.: Whitcombe & Tombs Limited, 2s. 6d.

ALL climbers and lovers of mountain scenery will welcome this new accession to the fraternity of mountaineers. Green, and more recently Mannerling, have already excited the interest of many in the New Zealand Alps; so that the formation of a New Zealand Alpine Club

will be welcomed, for the additional information and pleasure it will give regarding a comparatively fresh field of ice and snow.

The book before us is the first-fruits of this newly sown club, which dates its life from March of last year (1891). It contains some interesting articles on the Earlier Explorations of Sir Julius von Haast ; Mountaineering in Otago ; The Ascent of Mount Earnslaw ; and two useful papers on Alpine Photography and New Zealand Alpine Equipment, by A. P. Harper and B. J. Dixon respectively. The Journal is to be issued half-yearly. In the present number will be found the rules of the Club, and we note with pleasure that ladies may be enrolled amongst its members. The membership already numbers thirty-four, and we doubt not that by this time it has received the valuable addition of our own late editor, Mr J. G. Stott.—A. ERNEST MAYLARD.

SOME RAMBLES ROUND EDINBURGH. BY T. C. OLIPHANT.
Macniven & Wallace, 1s.

THIS little book is written in praise of country rambles for those who spend most of their lives in the city. It takes the reader in a series of walks over Corstorphine Hill to Corstorphine, next to Colinton and the nearer Pentlands, and finishes with a little chapter on Arthur's Seat. All these delightful walks are described very attractively, and plenty of first-hand information is given.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS.

Members are reminded that the Annual Subscription, 10s. 6d., fell due on 1st January, and is now payable to the Hon. Treasurer, W. W. Naismith, Esq., 175 West George Street, Glasgow.

THE SCOTTISH
Mountaineering Club Journal.

Vol. II.

MAY 1893.

No. 5.

EASTER IN THE CUILLINS.

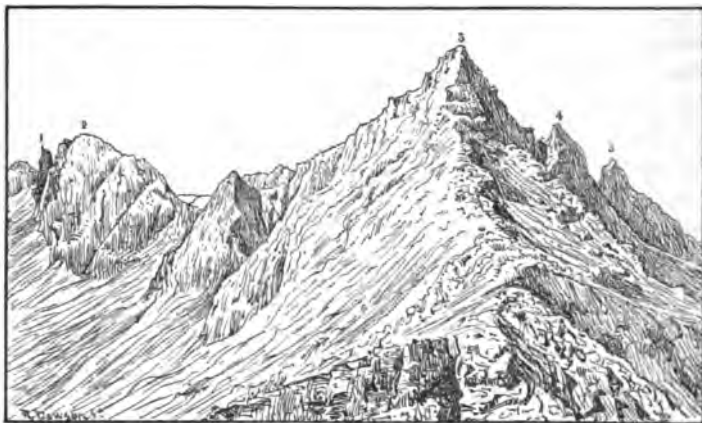
BY J. H. GIBSON.

IT was as far back as the summer of 1891 that the expedition of which this paper is an attempt to give some account, was planned for the following Easter by my friends Wicks, Morse, and myself. Carr eventually increased our number to four, and we duly arrived at Sligachan on the evening of Monday, April 11, 1892. In order to make the most of the six days at our disposal for climbing, and to explore the outlying portions of the Cuillins, we had made arrangements through the kind permission of the proprietor, to spend a night or two at Glen Bhreatail farmhouse. Moreover, should the weather permit it, we proposed camping out for one night on the shore of Loch Coruisk in a Whymper tent that my friends had specially brought with them for that purpose.

The morning after our arrival, so much time was spent over our various preparations that it was fully twelve o'clock before we got off for our first climb—Sgurr-nan-Gillean ("the young man's peak" *), by the north ridge. I may mention here that this late start, though an extreme case, was only the forerunner of a good many others; indeed, on only one occasion did we succeed in getting off before nine o'clock, a state of things that may be attributed to the air of the West Highlands, or to our own natural slothfulness, accord-

* My authority for the translation of Gaelic names, except where otherwise acknowledged, is Alex. Nicolson's papers on Skye in *Good Words* for 1875.

ing to the taste of the reader. Crossing the moor that lies between the hotel and the base of what Mr Dent calls the shapeliest of the Cuillins, we made for the entrance to the Bhastier Corrie ("corrie of the executioner"), from which the north ridge was gained by a steep gully a short distance below the first pinnacle. The route we were following up the mountain is known as "the pinnacle route," from the five pinnacles of which this north ridge consists, the last pinnacle being the top of the Sgurr-nan-Gillean itself. There is a steep drop between the third and the fourth or Knight's pinnacle, and another between the fourth and fifth, and for these drops it is advisable to put on the rope, but the rocks are everywhere firm and good, and the climb is one of the most interesting in Skye. Eventually the summit of our peak was reached about half-past three. The surroundings



From a photograph by Howard Priestman.

BHASTIER AND SGURR-NAN-GILLEAN.

1. Bhastier Tooth. 2. Bhastier. 3. S.-nan-Gillean. 4. Knight's Pinnacle, 3,000 ft.
5. Third Pinnacle, 2,920 ft.

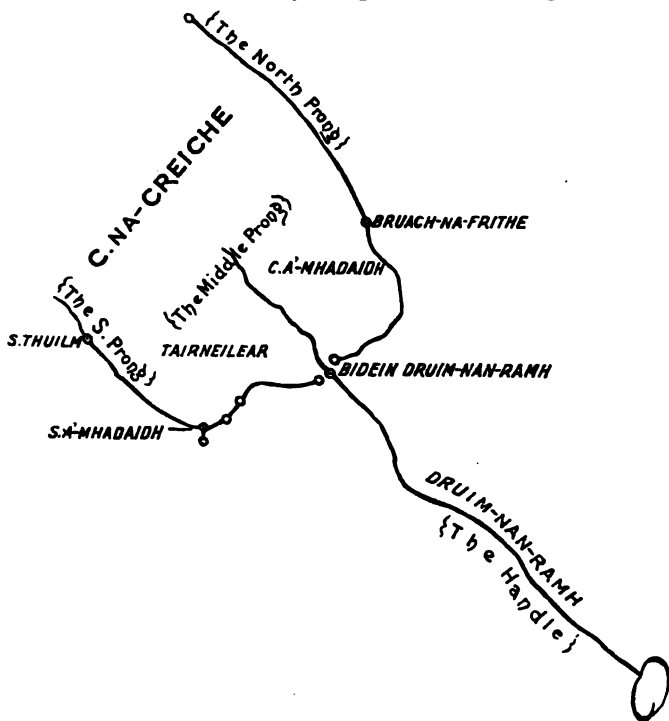
were wintry in the extreme, and a bitter north-east wind made a long halt out of the question. Traversing the western ridge, we next climbed successively Bhastier and Bhastier Tooth, the ascent of which last necessitates a descent into Harta Corrie. Taken in this direction, at all events, there is no difficulty in finding the way up this curious rock-tower, though from Mr Maylard's article in the January 1892 number of this *Journal* it might

be gathered that local knowledge was almost needed. As we passed under the Tooth on our way down into Fionn Choire ("fair corrie"), we had the gratification of seeing a magnificent eagle alight on the topmost rocks, and then sail off towards Sgurr-nan-Gillean. Hard-frozen snow slopes and a tramp across the moor once more brought us back to Sligachan, well pleased with our introduction to the mountains of "the isle of mist."

The following day (Wednesday), we found to our dismay on rising that it was snowing hard, and the ground already covered to a depth of some inches. Taking advantage of a bright interval, we started by the Glen Bhreatail pony track, and rounding the shoulder of Bruach-na-Frithe ("brae of the forest"), entered Corrie-na-Creiche ("corrie of the spoil"), once the scene, as we afterwards learned, of a deadly encounter between the MacLeods and the MacDonalds, when the fortunes of the day were decided by—a *cask of whisky*. We had not penetrated far into the corrie before down came the mist and snow once more. While we are sheltering under the boulders, a word or two about this corrie may not be out of place, if only to make clear our movements on the two subsequent occasions when we visited it. It may be fairly, if profanely, likened in its outline to a gigantic three-pronged toasting-fork. The prongs point in a north-westerly direction, the north prong being represented by the long spur of Bruach-na-Frithe; the middle prong, which is also the shortest, by the short ridge projecting into the corrie from Bidein Druim-nan-Ramh (*raav*), and the south prong by Sgurr Thuilm; the long ridge called Druim-nan-Ramh ("the ridge of oars"), of which the middle prong may be regarded as an elongation, forming the handle of our toasting-fork. It will thus be seen that the upper part of the corrie is divided into two inner recesses, which may be termed, roughly speaking, the eastern and the western branches, the latter being known as T-airneilear ("the thunderer"), and the former as Coir'-a'-Mhadaidh (pron. *vadee*, "the foxes' corrie"). As has been already pointed out by Mr Pilkington,* the last named is a misnomer, as the peak

* *Alpine Journal* for February 1888.

known as Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh rises in the opposite corner of the western branch—T-airneilear; and we thus have the anomalous state of things of a peak called Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh, and a corrie called Coir'-a'-Mhadaidh entirely cut off from one another by a high mountain ridge. It may



be surmised that a possible source of this anomaly exists in that magnificent work of imagination, the old one-inch Ordnance survey of the Cuillins; for there we find Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh figuring in place of Bidein Druim-nan-Ramh, which really does rise directly above this eastern branch of Coire-na-Creiche. The compilers were at least consistent. Misled by this map we find a writer in *Blackwood* some years back, and also the author of a paper in these pages, "Three Days in the Cuillins," both stating that they had climbed Sgurr-a'-Mhadaidh, when as a matter of fact they had really ascended the Bidein. In the new six-inch Ordnance survey of the Cuillins, published in 1887, Sgurr-a'-

Mhadaidh is relegated to his proper place. Should Coir'-a'-Mhadaidh have been shifted too, and, if so, where? At all events it has not been shifted, and as the name Coir'-a'-Mhadaidh has more than once appeared in print as applied to the eastern branch of Coire-na-Creiche, the anomaly, or mistake, if mistake it be, may be regarded as perpetuated; and subject to this explanation Coir'-a'-Mhadaidh it shall be here.

But to return, the weather being considered hopeless for the present, we gave it up, regained the pony track, and made for Glen Bhreatail farm, where we were welcomed by Mr Laidlaw, the manager for The MacLeod. Here we were royally entertained for the next two days, and in the intervals between dinner and bed-time, picked up much valuable information about the Cuillins. Our host, too, to whom no doubt the question of the sheep is the staple object of interest, discoursed to us at length on the respective merits of what he termed "blackfaced ones" and "white-faced ones."

Thursday morning broke clear and fine, and soon after nine we started for Sgurr Dearg ("red peak"), and "the old man of Skye," the so-called inaccessible pinnacle, the extreme tip of which is just visible from Glen Bhreatail. With the exception of the pinnacle itself, Sgurr Dearg is one of the simplest hills to climb in Skye, and after a walk of three hours we found ourselves at the foot of that singular freak of nature, that is familiar to all readers of the *Journal* from Mr Brunskill's description in the September number. Our plans were to ascend by the western and descend by the eastern edge, but we had forgotten to take the effect of the wind into our councils. The western edge of the pinnacle is, for one or two steps, quite difficult enough to make it imperative to discard one's gloves, and the bitter north-east wind and the snow on the rocks rendered it impossible to climb without them. We were forced accordingly to give up the western edge, and making our way round the south face of the pinnacle, successfully climbed it by the longer, more interesting, but easier eastern edge.* The ridge is "not

* This is well shown in the photograph illustrating Mr Brunskill's note in the last number of the *Journal*

so wide as a church door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve," and though a perfectly steady head is absolutely essential, real difficulty there is none. Having descended by the same route, Sgurr Mhic Coinnich ("M'Kenzie's peak"*) next claimed our attention. To reach it we made our way down the huge buttress forming the backbone of the ridge connecting Sgurr Dearg and the last-named peak. The descent of this buttress occupied some three-quarters of an hour, and was probably the most continuously steep piece of descent we had on our whole expedition. A good many of the rocks are loose, and care is needed. If time is an object, it is better, as we subsequently discovered, to keep on the Corrie Labain side of the buttress, where, to all appearances, the going is infinitely better. There is a well-defined pass between Glen Bhreatail and Glen Coruisk, leading over the gap in the ridge between Sgurr Dearg and the peak we are now making for, and in this gap we soon found ourselves. From the pass the ascent of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich can be made by the long north-western ridge. It is one of the most interesting hills in Skye, as even by this the easiest route, there is a very tolerable amount of genuine climbing; and the view from it of the double-peaked Sgurr Alasdair, the finest mountain form I know in Scotland, is worth going a long way to see. It reminded me strongly of the Gabelhorn. From the top of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich we had hoped to find a way down to the col between it and Sgurr Alasdair, as we knew the descent had been made in this direction, but night was drawing on, and after two futile attempts—on which, as it turned out, we kept too much to the east—we were forced, through want of time, to retrace our steps to the head of the pass mentioned before, and make our way down to Corrie Labain by the long-stone shoot. If there be any one still incredulous of the former presence of glaciers in Scotland, let him come to Corrie Labain and be convinced once for all. So vivid is the impression of the agency that has been at work that as the climber makes his way through the rounded masses of gabbro, he almost expects to see the snout of a glacier appearing behind the nearest ice-worn rock.

* See *Alpine Journal*, February 1888.

1 2 3



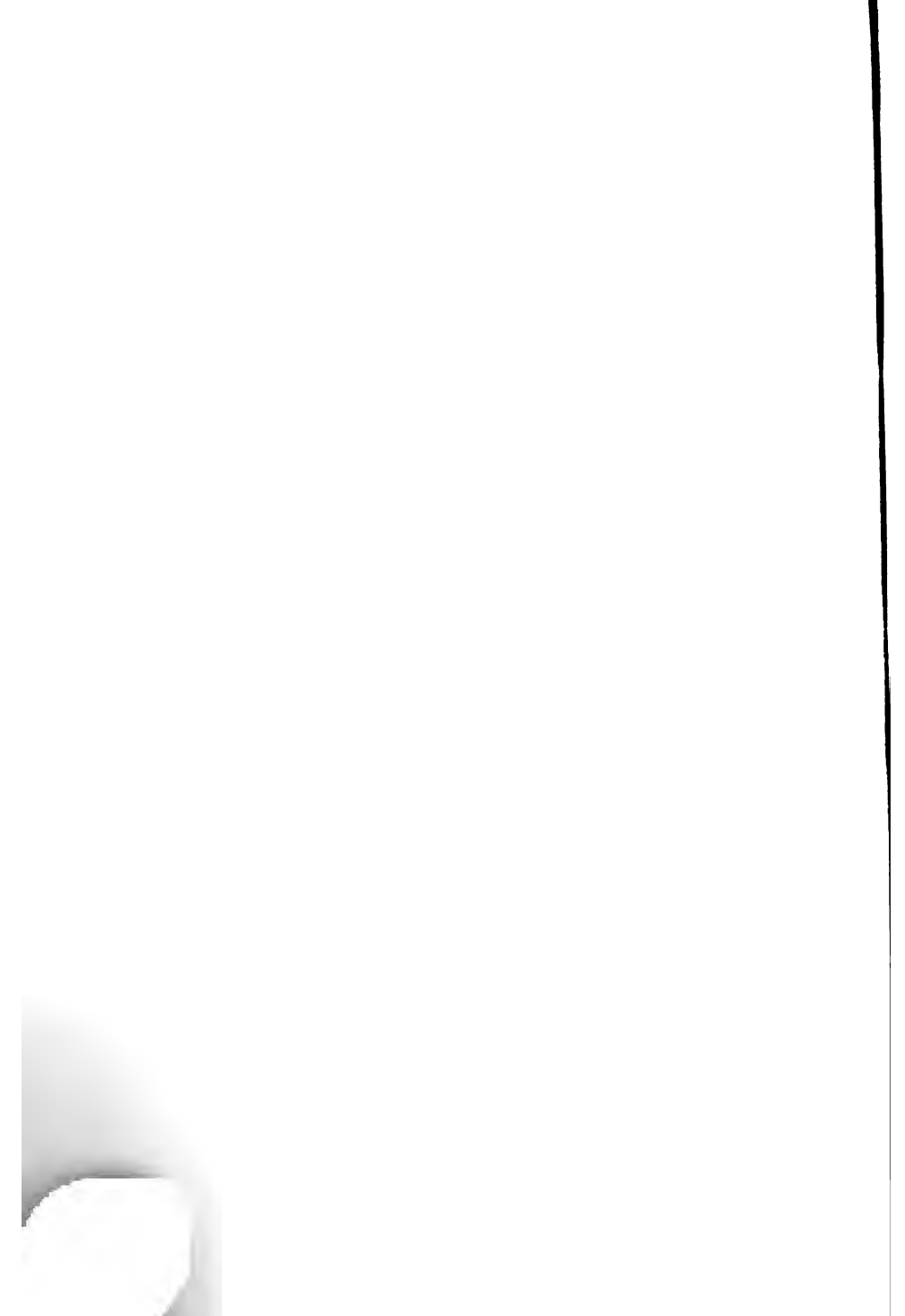
1 Sgurr Mhic Coimnich, 3,480 ft.

2 Sgurr Alasdair, West Peak 3,275 ft.

3 Sgurr Sgumain, 3,104 ft.

CORRIE LABAIN, SKYE.

From a Photograph taken by William Norris, Fraserburgh, June 1861.



Friday saw us ready to start at half-past eight—and our supreme effort—and after bidding good-bye to our host, we reversed our route of the previous evening as far as the entrance to Corrie Labain. The weather was brilliantly fine, and though fresh snow had again fallen during the night, it was rapidly disappearing under the influence of the warm sun. Gaining the outer rim of the corrie, we bore in an easterly direction, so as to strike the rocks forming the eastern wall of the stone shoot that descends from Sgurr Sgumain (“stack peak”). Climbing partly by these rocks and partly by the stone shoot itself, we reached the top of Sgurr Sgumain shortly before eleven o'clock. The rock scenery of this part of the range is extremely grand, and there is everywhere a delightful possibility about the rocks, affording scope for an endless number of variations, adapted to suit the taste of the most and the least adventurous climber. Indeed, in this respect the Skye rocks possess characteristics in marked contrast to those of our central Highlands, where to my mind the difficulty is to find anything between what is a mere walk and what is absolutely impossible. From Sgurr Sgumain we bore eastwards along the ridge, and surmounted the highest peak of Sgurr Alasdair (“peak of Alexander”*), our Gabelhorn of the day before. By this time the weather had undergone a change, and flakes of snow were beginning to drift about to our discomfort. Lunch, however, was now a matter of necessity, so descending into the gap between the highest and the north-east peaks we found a tolerably sheltered place. This gap is at the head of the great stone shoot of Sgurr Alasdair, and is well seen in the photograph illustrating Mr Pilkington’s article on that mountain.† A few minutes’ scramble brought us to the north-east summit, from which we made our way down to the col between Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr Mhic Coinnich. Standing on the col, we faced the steep rocks of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich, the descent of which we had failed to effect the previous day. There had been a sort of tacit agreement among us that we were to make an effort to find the way up those rocks; be it understood merely in order to retrieve

* See *Alpine Journal*, February 1888, p. 442.

† *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, January 1891.

our reputation, as to do so involved going out of our way. But the weather was now looking so threatening that had votes been taken, the party of progress would, I think, have been found in the minority. The energetic person who happened to be leading that day would take no denial, however; and after one or two failures, up those rocks get us he did, and down them once more to the col, which afforded us the most direct route to our camp at the foot of Loch Coruisk. It is, I fear, almost impossible to give any description of the way up this face of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich that could be recognised by any one wishing to make the ascent. Still, any climber standing on our col could hardly fail to notice a broad ledge running round on to the Corrie Labain side of the mountain. This ledge must be followed for fifteen or twenty yards until the foot of a sheer wall some twelve feet high is reached. Up that wall he has got to climb, and that done, an easy ridge leads him to the top. Whether this is the orthodox route or not, I am ignorant, but we could see no other.*

A steep snow gully, down the lower part of which we had a standing glissade, and thereafter a trudge over snow, ice-worn rocks, and heather, brought us to the head of Loch Coruisk, and passing along the west bank, we reached the foot soon after six. Fortunately for us, the weather had been only trying to frighten us, and the evening turned out fine and calm after all.

Mr Sharp, of the Sligachan Hotel, was found to be a man of his word. Tent, wraps, provisions, &c., were discovered reposing on the large boulder that forms such a conspicuous object in the foreground of the well-known photograph of the loch. As the Whympier tent held only three comfortably, Carr had had a little Mummery tent—the poles of which are inverted ice-axes—brought round with the rest of our baggage from Sligachan for his special accommodation, and this being rigged up alongside the larger erection was at once nicknamed “the dependance.”

* Since the above was written I have read Mr Norman Collie's description of his route here. So far as I can gather, he seems to have kept out still more on the Corrie Labain face than we did, so that ours is probably a variation.

Spare clothes, a warm fire, and a varied meal of Irish stew—cooked in a Silver's self-cooking soup tin—coffee, cold beef, tinned peaches, and whisky, made us feel more at peace with ourselves and the world at large.

The moon had not yet risen, but the tent, lit up by the firelight, and our lantern hanging from one of the ropes, looked uncommonly cosy ; and with the loch behind, and the dark outline of the Cuillins in the background, the whole made a picture that one of us at least is not likely soon to forget. Soon after ten we turned in for the night. I am free to admit that before very long the hardness, and also the coldness, of the floor began to make itself evident through our waterproof sheet ; and another cause of wakefulness was presently added by the moon getting up above the hills, and flooding of the tent with light. Indeed, in one of the night-watches, one of the party was heard to exclaim, "Don't you *wish* you were in bed?" which no doubt showed how his thoughts were running. We dropped off at last, but towards morning were roused by an early caller, in the shape of a "blackfaced one" of an inquiring turn of mind, who, being unused to see campers out in April on the shores of Loch Coruisk, saluted us with an indignant "baa!" Fearing that our visitor might take a fancy to nibble one of the strings of "the dependance," and bring down that rather flimsy contrivance, Carr crawled out. This was the signal for a general uprising, or more properly a general outrolling. Breakfast over, and our various belongings packed up and left in charge of the ghillie, who had by this time arrived from Sligachan with his pony, we retraced our steps of the day before as far as the head of the loch, and struck up the hillside for the narrow pass between Sgurr Dearg and Sgurr Banachdich ("smallpox peak"), which, according to our host at Glen Bhreatail, is called "the door," and of which the Gaelic name on the authority of the Ordnance Survey map is Bealach Coire na Banachdich.

The slopes leading up to this pass afford some of the roughest walking in Skye, or in Scotland. Stones of every conceivable shape and size, up to that of a grand piano, appear to have been shot here indiscriminately : and as the

sun was now high, and we were sheltered from the wind, for the first time in Skye we began to feel really hot. Indeed the ascent of these rock-strewn slopes can best be described in the language of Mr Mantalini as a "demnition horrid grind." Higher up a steep snow gully, hard enough to make it necessary to kick steps, brought us to the bealach. The programme for the day was to be what is known as "ridge-wandering," beginning with Sgurr-na-Banachdich, and taking in as many tops as we could conveniently manage before nightfall. Sligachan was once more to be our sleeping quarters, as the following day—Sunday—was to be our last among the Cuillins. As it turned out Sgurr Banachdich, Sgurr Ghreadaidh ("Greeta's peak"), and Sgurr Mhadaidh ("foxes' peak"), with their attendant nameless pinnacles, were as much as we were able to climb. But as we kept fairly well to the crest of the ridge the whole day, this involved a fair amount of ascent and descent. Moreover, all of these peaks have more than one top, and one of them—Sgurr Mhadaidh—no less than four. Though consisting of bold rocky elevations, this part of the range does not rise so abruptly as some of the peaks we had already climbed, and at no period that day was the use of the rope justifiable. There is one characteristic feature of this part of the Cuillins, which is by no means a pleasant one, and that is the rottenness of the rocks of which it is composed, a state of things in marked contrast to what prevails on Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr-nan-Gilleann. The four tops of Mhadaidh being successively climbed, we bore westwards for a short distance along the Sgurr Thuilm (pron. *hulim*, "peak of Tulum") ridge, and descending into Tairneilear the south branch of Corrie-na-Creiche, over hard snow-slopes where steps had to be cut, struck the Glen Bhreatail pony track, and so home to Sligachan.

Sunday, our last day in Skye, was honoured by another late start, for by this time our five consecutive days' walking were beginning to tell, and was devoted to the ascent of Bidean Druim-nan-Ramh, by way of Glen Sligachan, Harta Corrie, and the long ridge called Druim-nan-Ramh. It should be noted that the highest point of this mountain is on this ridge, and not on the main chain. By neglecting to look

at our map, we fell into this error, and this, with our late start and the quantity of fresh snow on the rocks, delayed us so long that it was growing dusk by the time the lowest part of the ridge between Bidean Druim-nan-Ramh and Bruach-na-Frithe was reached. We were, therefore, reduced to descending once more into Corrie-na-Creiche by a steep snow-gully, and thence repeating our route home of Saturday.

We lost nothing by the repetition. The view of Sgurr-nan-Gillean, with all the pinnacles powdered with fresh snow, and bearing a by no means fanciful resemblance to the Meije, more than made up for our failure to include Bruach-na-Frithe among the number of the Cuillins climbed by us.

I cannot bring this paper to a close without making some reference to the Cuillins as a field for our energies when deep in snow as we found them. There can be no question, that the season was an exceptionally late one. On the northern and eastern slopes, the snow lay in large masses, and a wind, generally north-easterly and always cold, numbed the fingers, and made any halting when out of the sun the reverse of agreeable. When in this condition the Cuillins, in all seriousness, are scarcely the place for a party consisting entirely of inexperienced climbers. Any one unused to Alpine climbing, or at all events not competent to take the lead in some of the winter sporting variations affected by some of our members, might get into very considerable trouble here. I am not acquainted with the mountains of Western Ross-shire, some of which Mr Hinxman has described to us. But comparing the Cuillins with our Central Highlands generally, the difference is that while in the latter it requires the exercise of tolerable ingenuity to get into difficulties, in the former it needs no ingenuity whatever; the materials lie to hand. Another point is the rottenness of the rocks on such hills as Banach-dich, Greadaidh, Mhadaidh, and Bidean Druim-nan-Ramh. On our way down the last-named, a stone as big as a moderate-sized coal-scuttle, without the smallest provocation, went straight for the leading man, whom it would certainly have demolished had he not had a sudden engagement elsewhere. Moreover, it is not unlikely that the snow as it

melts may bring down stones in a manner analogous on a small scale to what takes place in the high Alps. Indeed, the assertion may be hazarded that in the matter of rock-climbing the Cuillins may be more fitly compared with the Alps than our Central Highlands with the Cuillins.

To a "strong party," however, this, the finest climbing ground in the British Isles, offers unrivalled attractions at this season of the year, and I cannot wish those who follow our example better weather—in spite of the cold—and a more delightful outing generally than we had when they go to the Cuillins in the snow.

BEN AVON.

BY PROFESSOR HEDDLE.

I AM to tell of Ben Avon, and the climbing thereof. Well, the first thing to tell is that there is no climb,—nothing worth calling that, either as regards height or difficulty ; an ascent, that is all.

They are a poor lot in these respects, this central group of round-topped granite hills. Nature's scalping-knives have left nothing of dignity ; the skull-caps are bare dead bones. All that is in them of interest is due to the scalping-knives. These have cut out grand cliffs and corries, and with the chips of the cutting dammed up and embosomed one grand lake. But for altitude they are nowhere ; great part of their height is their pedestal. Take the 1,100 feet of Braemar—the eastern end of that pedestal—off the 3,843 feet of Ben Avon, or the 1,386 feet of Derry Lodge off the 4,296 feet of Ben Macdhui, and not enough is left to bring them into Munro's list. How different from the west coast giants, which wash their feet each morning in the Atlantic.

The trifling height of Ben Avon was still further diminished for me. Through the interest of one of my companions (the Rev. Mr Michie, of Dinnet—my son was the other), we were housed at and started from Loch Builg Lodge—1,600 feet from sea-level.

I knew this outlying group of the Grampians fairly well ; and from this, the smallest of them, I expected to learn nothing. "Blessed are they," &c.—I was not disappointed.

On this day, perhaps more than upon any such day in my life, was I to see more of the beauty, learn more of the power, and be able to tell more of the wondrous works. I expected nothing, and yet there, on coming out for the start, lay at my feet a thing which geographers say is an impossible thing :—a lake with two outlets.

The recognised—the visible outlet of Loch Builg is at the north end, where its waters flow over a rock shelf—course down the Builg Burn to join the Avon at Inchrory,—and so find their way by the Spey into the Moray Firth. At the south end there cluster the four small Loch-an-Feurachs,—a great dam of moraine matter cutting them off

from Loch Builg, forming in fact that loch, and striving to prevent its waters from coursing along the natural trend of the ground, which is towards the south. The strife, however, is vain. A boiling upheaval of waters near to the centre of the lochan adjacent to the dam, shows that subterranean channels pierce that barrier, and permit much of the imprisoned water to enter the Gairn, and so down to the sea at Aberdeen. Only when the lake is full can its waters lip over the northern rock-barrier; at all times must some portion press through the deep-seated crevasses of the moraine.

Not a step of ascent had been made,—in looking downward came the first lesson of the day.

Of the actual ascent little need be said. There is a steepish bit of about 1,000 feet just above the lodge, a gentle descent for perhaps a mile, and then another ascent similar to but more gradual than the first. It was somewhat wearisome from its monotony and simplicity.

On the second heave of the hill we descried a keeper, and, forgetting that he must hail from the lodge, I immediately bethought me of the antifriction flagon. In beginning a piece of work always oil all the bearings, and remember that with Highlanders and on Scottish mountains this should not be done by greasing the palm with the “penny siller in the pouch”—*mountain dew* is the proper lubricant of the hills. The first demoralises a man; the second makes “aa men brithers.” This one came with us,—there might come to be hard work, and hard work calls for repeated lubrication.

But even this fresh hand at the bellows of talk could not dispel the listlessness of this meaningless hill-side. Was it possible that there was to be no lesson? Grass and heather; heather and grass; not even the things vulgarly called “stones”; nay, had they been there, the keeper knew them not; I was not to be vouchsafed a sparkle of relief such as enlivened Colin Phillip, when at a time and in circumstances of similar despondency his guide made the suggestive remark, “If ye please, sir, they tell me that hill is made of a thing called a Quart.” “A dram good observation!” as another remarked.

From the rise of the second boss of the ascent a spur is thrown out to the south for nearly a mile. In the hope that the *sron* or nose of this might command a fine view we tripped down to it, but again disappointment met us. Lesser heights obscured the greater part of Strath Dee itself; the valley of the head-waters of the Gairn is much of a trench, richly swathed, it is true, but still a trench; the whole coloration was over-brilliant; the veil of dimness which gives middle distance and the tinge of indigo to the far-off was altogether absent; except a peep of the Ben a Bhuid cliffs, over-lighted by a mid-day sun, there was nothing which could please; and it was under the impression that hill and day were to be alike failures that the slope was again breasted. This put us upon the level of what now showed as a skyline ridge, toothed with aiguilles, remarkable both in their individual isolation and in their sharpness.

As we approached the nearest of these aiguilles, Stuc Garbh Mhor, we observed that the skyline ridge environed an amphitheatre upon three sides. This was but little depressed below the toothed ridge itself, the westernmost point of the ridge being the summit of the hill. The almost flat hollow of this amphitheatre, a mile or so in width, seemed in the glaring light to be in motion, and in motion it really was; for before the high wind were scudding successive earth-showers of granitic shingle,—pellets peaisized of quartzose and felspathic particles,—cast loose from the bonds which linked them in the rock, to be swept hither and thither by every breeze, or hurled chipping and chiselling what of solid rock yet remains,—the molecular gravers of a sand-blast in enlarged development. And they were musical withal. A kind of cheeping or chirping was heard, due probably to the particles striking each other in the air, as much as to their collision with the earth. It was a musical gravel.

The interest of the study was retarding our steps, and as we turned the north-west corner of the first aiguille these steps were *arrested*. Before us lay the lesson of the day,—one of the great scientific teachings of our life.

“Look, look, look, Mr Michie, look at that!”

“Well! but that is wonderful; how do you account for that;—what is that?”

What was it that was wonderful,—that made that a day of days,—a white-chalk day?

The aiguille towered above us,—say, 14 or so of feet,—its height was a matter of little interest. On its north-west side there was a flat surface of rock, less than breast high. About the centre of this flat there was a basin-shaped hollow, in size and form about that of the larger built-in basins. No chisel ever cut, no moulder ever moulded, no thrower ever threw and turned a truer or a chaster shape. Water lay to the depth of some inches at the bottom.

“What is it?” was the question. “A wind pot-hole,” was the answer.

“A wind pot-hole! I have never heard of such a thing.”

“Neither have I, but there it is.”

“But how was it made?—explain it.”

“Easily, for it explains itself. Taste that water.—I am sure you never tasted wairsher, for both oxygen and carbonic acid must have been driven out. It is rain water. The wind was the power which cut the basin, the water was the hand which held the tool, and that tool lies at the bottom of the water.”

“At the bottom of the water!—there is nothing at the bottom of the water.”

“There must be; put in your hand,—it may be a little tightly packed, but at the bottom of that water there *must* lie a quantity of those pellets which have been hitting us on the face.”

“So there is;—wonderful!—and quite rounded; but how could these cut out a round basin?”

“Diamond cut diamond;—they have been rounded in doing the grinding work. When the wind blows in one direction it is deflected by this towering face of the aiguille, and sets the water whirling round; the whirling water sets the gravel whirling; and just in the manner in which the river spins a stone or stones in a river pot-hole, so that these stones act as a grinding pestle, does the wind-spun water make this gravel grind. The hole would certainly

have been lop-sided were it not that contrary winds spin the gravel sometimes in the opposite direction."

"Noo, that's just extra-ordinar," said the keeper; "to hear ye, a gentleman who never set fut on the hill afore, tell me just what I've stud here by the hour and wonerred at. The water ae day spin, spin, spinnin' in ae wey, and on anither, jist the ither wey."

The lesson was learned, and learned easily; Ben Avon was exalted; we felt, be it confessed, even as one of Nature's Priests; and yet the lesson was but half learned. It had to be learned over again, and that at the next aiguille,—Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar. [I take the names of these aiguilles from Munro's list; I did not at the time know them.]

This aiguille, though not the summit of the hill, is much the largest and loftiest. It is rounded, smoothed, almost polished by the friction of scouring showers of wind-borne granitic sand. There is in it a great cleft caused by the falling out of a wedge-shaped mass, which had filled the crevasse delineated by two converging but only slightly converging rents. The broken fragments of this fallen mass allow an easy ascent of one-third of the height, which may be 20 or more feet in all. My son and the keeper managed to squeeze themselves through the crevasse, so as to stand on the summit. Mr Michie and I were, or found it convenient to think that we were, too portly.

Somewhat puzzled how so vertical-standing and apparently close-fitting a wedge of rock as this seemed to be could have had all its attachments dissevered, my eye lit, almost at the point where the two rents had run together, upon what looked like the one side or half of a smooth-cut pipe or chimney. This was over two feet in length. "Eureka!"

"Bob,—what like is the top of the rock on which you are standing?"

"It is pretty flat;—hulloa!"

"What is it?"

"Why, it has several holes just like the one we were looking at on the last rock."

"Are they as large?"

"No, they are only about six or eight inches across, but some of them are very deep."

"Look at the crack you got up through; is that groove like any of them?"

"Yes, it is just the same as the deep ones."

These circular grinding mills had worked on and on until one of them had cut through probably the last connecting link, and let out the wedge of rock, and let in a flood of light into some of the secrets of the mills which work when no man knoweth. This quarrying out is the first part of the process of disintegration, but that process has not here ended in the blowing sand and gravel. Digging at several points of the extended and but slightly depressed hollow, the rock could not be reached; but the banks of gravel were found to become finer and finer in grain as the hammer scraped deeper in, until nearly everywhere an almost unctuous felspathic clay was reached.

The encircling ridge prevents the actual escape of the rattling granite showers. It is a limiting cincture to the windy war, and the chipping collisions of particle with particle. Strange and weird sounds must be emitted by these charging clouds of granitic hail during some of their fiercer winter conflicts,—

"Sounding, 'mid their all-night battle,
Pibrochs never heard by men."

This mile-wide hollow, from its surroundings and position, is a wind whirlpool; the air currents welling over the encircling ridge, and split up by the aiguilles of the crest into ungoverned directions, gambol in the trough in puffs and squalls, and whirling and conflicting eddies. The crystalline ingredients—the *grana* of the granitic rock,—when first set loose from it, are sharp-angled from crystalline edges and idiomorphic interlocking; but they have, from constantly recurring impact and mutual abrasion, become pellets of rounded outline. A magnifier shows their surfaces to be covered with myriad fissures. If raised by some eddying squall which promises to sweep them over the verge, they are there met by the steadier wind of which the eddy is but an offset, and are hurled back into the trough

again and again (with ever-diminishing size), to be in that state of motion which is perpetual except in times of calm.

The top of this hill is a huge *wind mill*—a wind *churn* in which the richer portion of the rock,—the alkali-bearing felspar,—gives way before the harder, the quartz, and is reduced to particles so small as to be carried by streams to enrich the flats of Glen Gairn,—formerly and correctly, in virtue of its greenery, Glen *Gairden*,—reduced to particles so small as to yield readily their richness to the gaping stomata of the rootlets of the plant. Through long geologic ages has this mill been working on. The aiguilles are but the harder remnants of that which, in the epochs of the past, had churned itself into pot-holes, and peppered itself into powder. “The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small.”

The summit of Ben Avon is more like a hill-fort than an aiguille; it has an inaccessible rampart to east and south. We stormed it, as did the Polish lancers at the battle of Moskowa, by an attack in the rear.

From the summit of Ben Avon a magnificent cliff-sided and sharp-pointed spur—Stob an t Sluichd,—which rises in an unbroken and seemingly almost inaccessible slope of 1,500 feet from the stream at its base, is seen to project from the northern extremity of Beinn a Bhuid; it is much over a mile in length, and protrudes far in front of the rest of the range into the valley of the Avon. To an eye-shot the distance to this spin seems little over a mile, but it is probably four along the ridge. We made for it, hoping for a view of the northern abutments of the range, and even a peep into the great gash wherein Loch Avon is imprisoned. Before, however, we reached the lowest part of the col the day seemed too far gone, and postponing it for another visit, we contented ourselves with an inspection of an almost totally disintegrated cluster of aiguilles which stand some little way to the north of the semicircular ridge of Ben Avon. This group or cluster, which from its position probably represents what was originally the summit of the hill, reminds one of the illustrations one is familiar with of the “*God sitting in Council*.” But the day has departed:

they have had their day, have none of the independence or dignity of the other aiguilles, and are now nothing more than the chief nursery of the granitic shingle. The rock here is more ferruginous in its paste than elsewhere, this paste is being rapidly peroxidised into red mud, and the crystalline grains set free.

During our descent, while thinking of the wind pot-hole, it flashed upon me that I had read of it, and immediately the where also. So upon my return to St Andrews, I turned to the description of Ben Avon in a series of altogether unrivalled sketches of Highland mountains, published by George Robson in 1814. I there read:—

“According to tradition, one of these rocky protuberances which rises on the north side of Ben Avon, and contains a pool of clear water, was used as a bath by the lady of Fingal; and from a supernatural power thus supposed to be conferred upon it, the place became a temple where pregnant women resorted to pay their vows to the Lacina of the Highlands. The rock alluded to is called the Clach Ban, or Woman’s Stone.”

Two years later the writer returned, for the express purpose of standing on the lighthouse-like summit of Stob an t Sluichd. He again had the advantage of starting from Builg Lodge, but this time without his former companions. He had by map planned out a circuit embracing a good many peaks, all of which an early start enabled him to accomplish.

Taking the track which ascends by the side of the Gairn, he was able in about three miles to ascend 200 feet; then an ascent of about 1,400 along a fine dry eastern spur took him to the summit of Creag na Dala Moire. A turn to the north, a descent of 200, and an ascent of 600 placed him on the summit of Carn Eas. A couple of miles or so of distance, with a descent of little over 400 feet, brought him to the lowest point of the col between Ben Avon and Beinn a Bhuid (3,100 feet).

The succeeding ascent was a little rough, and brought him in face of a somewhat confusing cluster of little heights, and showed him one of the only errors, or rather shortcomings of Munro’s list. Instead of only one height here

over 3,750—Cnap a Chleirich (3,811), there are *three*; and in fog, ignorance of this, in a locality where three ridges join, would assuredly cause at least hesitation. Cnap a Chleirich is near the ridge which leads to Stob an t Sluichd; the other two—the first beside a marsh, Stob an Lochan (3,762), and Carn nan Clach (3,801), lie to the south.

The writer passed between the two highest; the dip between them is about 100 feet; then over the top of Cnap a Chleirich, and out along the ridge to Stob an t Sluichd. At one point this ridge falls to about 3,540, or less. But, alas! the whole west was mist, confusion, gloom, and glamour. Nothing clear. Beinn Chaorriunn and Beinn Mheadhoin throwing out their shoulders, or spouting out volumes of fog from their corries, so as to conceal all but a tip of Loch Avon. Caiplich showing an occasional aiguille through the scud, and what seemed to be a huge hunch of the ugliness of Ben Wyvis in the distance. To the north-east it was better; Rinnes dominant among the lowlies, and Morven and the Scarrabins showing just their tips in the sky; but altogether it was failure, and no stimulant for the remaining, and much the longer part of the walk.

This was back again along the ridge, up the few hundred feet which bring one to the summit of what a Cockney would call that "oogly loomp," Beinn a Bhuid—the Table Mountain—along the edge of the fine cliffs which encircle Corrie nan Clach, out to the peaked point which gives a peep, and it is a fine one, of the Dubh Loch. Here again there had to be the "dissipated energy" of returning miles upon my track, but it took me over Stob an Lochan, and Carn nan Clach. Next followed the now stiff climb of nearly 800 feet to the summit of Ben Avon, taking in Stob Dhu an Eas Bhig by a detour. From the top of Ben Avon I was scudded by the wind straight across the hollow of the shifting granitic sand; climbed to have another look at the split chimney of Mullach nan Gabhar. then down over Stob na Fhurain, West Gorm Crag, Big Brae, and round by the foot of Loch Builg, to see if water was there and then running north.

If the walk the first day was a trifling one, this was a

good one. It measures twenty-one or twenty-two miles, and the enumeration of the peaks reads as follows:—

			FEEET.		FEEET.
Craig na Dala Moire, ...	...	...	3,189	...	1,589
Carn Eas, ...	...	...	3,556	...	600
Cnap a Chleirich, ...	...	...	3,811	...	711
Stob an t Sluichd, ...	...	...	3,611	...	81
Beinn a Bhuird, ...	...	...	3,924	...	384
				[Back again]	200
Stob an Lochan, ...	...	...	3,762	...	42
Carn nan Clach, ...	...	...	3,801	...	81
Stob Dubh an Eas Bhig, ...	...	...	3,563	...	463
Ben Avon, ...	...	...	3,843	...	280
Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar,			3,662	...	50
Stob na Fhurain, ...	...	...	3,533	...	—
West Gorm Craig, ...	...	...	3,354	...	254
Big Brae, ...	...	...	3,100	...	15
					<hr/> 4,750

The first column looks a gallant performance; the second, giving fairly the actual ascents between each height, shows the whole to total little more than the height of Ben Nevis. By leaving out the three carns in the col, and Stob Dubh an Eas Bhig—none of which are possessed of interest,—and descending direct from Big Brae to the Lodge, about three miles and 500 feet of ascent would be cut off. I ascended them to get their heights, and then—"I've got 'em in the list."

BEN-Y-GLOE ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

BY HELY H. ALMOND.

MEMBERS of the Mountaineering Club may be divided into two classes. There are those whose ambition it is to scale the inaccessible side of peaks with unpronounceable names, who look upon a quarry face with fond enthusiasm, as affording chances quite as great, and nearly as glorious, of getting badly hurt, as a genuine mountain does, and to whom the positions of the climbers at pp. 233 and 313 of Mr Dent's "Mountaineering" represent the acme of human felicity. I admire these people; I like to dine with them, and hear them talk; for the sake of a name, I call them the Ultramontanes. It is delicious and inspiring, in these after-dinner moments, to rise to the faith which is beyond reason, and, like various kinds of spirits, above proof, and to murmur, "*Credo quia impossibile.*" But these high thoughts soon pass away. Had it been discovered, some forty years ago, that the peculiar joys and perils of the Alps were attainable in our Scottish Highlands, or on any steep place, natural or artificial, which has got ice upon it and something hard below to tumble on, it might have been different. But let me confess, with all due humility and shame, that I have permanently enlisted in the Salvation Army, which is the name I give to the second class of mountaineers. As our name implies, we like to know that we are safe—absolutely safe. We don't like contusions; we would rather go home to dinner than lie on the ground till people came to set our bones, or carry us off on a stretcher; we have no desire to be the conscious element of an avalanche or a land-slip. And yet, like Mark Twain on his celebrated ascent of the Riffelberg, we like something of the pomp and circumstance of glorious war—an alpenstock, a bit of rope, blue spectacles—a good deal of noise and fuss about it when we come home again. Some of us even like guides. Here I draw the line. With no wish to create divisions—I don't. Now I am going to make a bold assertion—perhaps too bold. I believe the Salvation Army to be in a majority in the Club, and that a vote taken by ballot, and before dinner, would conclusively prove this. And I also believe that we

are the people to make converts. Here and there the Ultramontane may light upon a born martyr; but where he makes one convert, we Salvationists, if we only beat our own drum and sound our own trumpet loud enough, will make a hundred.

In other words, there are thousands who, like myself, abominate pain and danger and extreme fatigue, who yet would go to the Highlands in winter, whenever they can snatch two or three days' holidays, if they only knew what awaits them there. Before January at least, the snow is seldom deep, and when the hills and bogs are firm with frost, walking is much easier than in summer. There is also far less haze, and even less cloud; the air is like a draught of champagne, with no gout or headache at the bottom; there are no grumbling, indolent tourists of the class who hate exertion, who like the hotels to be overheated and full of foul air, and who practically prevent one from getting anything to eat, except at a decorous and tedious *table d'hôte*. And I believe that there is scarcely a really healthy person of either sex, with tolerably undeformed feet, who, if he or she fairly tried the experiment, would not admit that a few days' ramble among the mountains at Christmas time gives keener joy, and leaves behind it ruder health, and higher spirits, and more pleasant reminiscences than any amount of town amusements, "shows," "festivities," or "gaieties"—grim word. Even supposing that the weather is unfavourable, surely seven or eight miles in the worst of weather over Highland roads or paths, make any one feel fresher and brighter than a duty trudge along sloppy streets, or suburban roads, in the smooth garments and fine linen demanded by Mrs Grundy, in air never free from fog and smoke, and where, if you try to warm yourself by a trot, you are stared at by "society," and howled at by the street boy.

Possibly I write with the enthusiasm of one who has just found out a previously untried source of intense enjoyment. Time and experience may show that mountaineering at Christmas time, like other mundane things, has its drawbacks, of which at present, knowing nothing, I shall not speak.

I had long desired to get among the Ben-y-Gloes. I use the plural; for to me, from a distance, there were many of these, some of which I found to belong to the Ben Deargs. But in spring and summer, fishing or slackness had always been in the way. The Chairman's speech at the last mountaineering dinner settled me. Professor Veitch was very eloquent about the Southern Uplands; but I prefer real turtle when I can get it.

When we got to our comfortable quarters at Blair-Athole, people said that we might easily get to the nearer and visible top of Ben-y-Gloe. It would take us about seven hours, so we should start early. I didn't quite see what we should do all these seven hours, so we said that we would see. I understand that we were taken for lunatics; for we started at a run, and bareheaded. Mrs M'Grundy is very strong in the Highlands. We didn't run far, however, cold as it was, for we soon found ourselves going up a steep winding road for about two and a half miles. Then we turned off by a path through a wood to the farm of Monzie, which is about ~~800~~ feet above sea-level. Passing the farm on our left, up a very icy field, we were soon on the forest, and the round mass of Carn Liath stood right before us. Now, had it been August, I daresay we might have been content with the nearer and the visible. But oh! the difference from August. No bogs, no haze, no languor. It was to me a new sensation. I had heard of it from those who had been among the high Alps, but had never known what it was to feel that one might walk on for ever, and never feel slack or tired. Crest after crest was rapidly left behind, and we soon rounded the shoulder of Carn Liath, and the Turkey Peak, which was now the summit of our ambition, faced us on the far side of a ravine.

If we had only started an hour sooner, the highest of the Ben-y-Gloes would have been an easy conquest. But that meant about six miles more, or twenty-five in all, and it was too late for that. Now all Ben-y-Gloe divides itself into three parts. Carn Liath (3,193), the rounded bossy hill, which is conspicuous from Blair-Athole, and which is scaled by the more enterprising of the personally conducted people "in the season". A ridge, for which we were now making

connects it with the second or "Turkey" summit (3,505), at a height of about 2,600 feet. The third, or highest peak (3,671), is separated from both by a deep ravine. Now we ought to have crossed the shallow ravine before us, and gone straight up. But we made our task much longer and harder by going along the slope on the north side of Carn Liath. A word of caution is necessary. There is only one real danger, so far as I could see, in going up this hill, or, I fancy, most hills in frost. It consists in the little burns which run down the steep sides. It looks quite easy to cross them, but the whole ground in their neighbourhood is full of ice, and, innocent as the place looks, a slip might be fatal. On true Salvationist principles we took great care. Our sharp-pointed sticks were found to be quite necessary; but if I go up a hill again in frost, there must be a rope, not for roping the party together, but for keeping hold of, as each crosses these little frozen burns. It would save a lot of time spent in looking out for the safest places to cross. After about a couple of miles of this work, we were on the ridge which connects Carn Liath and the Turkey Peak, and soon began to climb straight up. I hoped we might see some deer, but one solitary hind was all we saw, very high up. When we reached the top, I could hardly believe we were there. Arthur's Seat on a muggy day in August would be a more fatiguing exploit. And what a view! From most mountains, the prospect is spoiled by a house, a road, or tree. But from the Turkey Peak at least, there was absolutely nothing to be seen but hills, some quite white, others, like that on which we stood, with frequent patches of frozen snow. Ben Nevis, with his peculiar flat top, was glittering in the sunlight. And north of us, for the first time, I looked upon the south side of the Ben Macdhuil range, while round the corner of the highest Ben-y-Gloe, we could see the peak of Löhnagar. Schiehallion looked very near indeed, with Lawers just behind it, More and Stobinian farther west, Cruachan (I fancy) farthest of all. It was almost sad to look at the serried mass of the Glencoe hills, and think that one more wilderness was being vulgarised by a railway. It is more sad to think that they may soon make some of their funicular

devilments up some of our greater hills. To ignore manly sentiment, and to discourage the use of the legs, is to impair two of the most important factors in the greatness of a nation. If a falling nation "spectates" at professional football matches, and from Righi tops, a nation in its prime loves the energy of action. Such thoughts as these cast a very momentary gloom over that Christmas Day. The spirit of the first Psalm for the day was more natural and fitting, and soon drove them away. Even civilised man cannot ruin the glory of His works as they were displayed to us on that day. Fortunately it wouldn't pay him.

We came down by a much straighter route, and had some very pleasant glissading, our first experience in this way being involuntary. But it is necessary, on Salvationist principles, to be quite certain that the snow slope ends in heather. When we reached the hotel, we felt as if we could have gone up again (*i.e.*, almost so). Time, six and a half hours; and we took things as easily as it was possible to take them over such ground, and in such an inspiring atmosphere. Now I wonder if that excellent monarch anywhere survives who offered a munificent reward to any one who would present him with a new pleasure. For, if the reward is sufficiently imperial, I hereby offer personally to conduct that monarch to the very far top of the true Ben-y-Gloe in the depth of winter. And we shall start punctually at eight A.M.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON BEN-Y-GLOE.

Before the receipt of the above article, the editor had asked me, as one well acquainted with the district and who knew Beinn a' Ghlo in all its aspects, to write something about that mountain for the current number of the Journal; and, in view of the forthcoming *meet* of the Club at Blair-Athole, it may not be amiss to supplement Mr Almond's amusing paper with a little information of the guide-book type.

Blair-Athole, as every one knows, is situated at the confluence of the Garry and the Tilt; it is 400 feet above the sea, and a station at which all trains stop. It has two

good hotels—the Athole Arms (Vol. I., p. 235), close to the station, and the Glen Tilt, a quarter of a mile off, and less pretentious.

After arrival, one and a half hour's daylight cannot be better employed than by ascending Tulach Hill (1 541 feet) one mile S.S.W. from the station, crossing the Garry by a foot-bridge. The view is fine.

Blair-Athole is the starting-point for Braemar, *via* Glen Tilt, the easiest and shortest route to that place from the Highland Railway, 1,200 feet lower, as well as two miles shorter and much easier than the Learg Ghruamach between Aviemore and Braemar (Vol. II., p. 45), and, although far inferior to that magnificent pass, it is still an interesting walk. The summit is 1,500 feet above the sea, 1,150 feet above Blair-Athole, and 450 feet above Braemar. By driving to Forest Lodge (eight miles), and ordering a carriage from Braemar to Bynack Lodge (twelve miles), the walking distance might be reduced to ten miles; or accommodation may sometimes be obtained at the Linn of Dee, six miles, or at Inverey, four and a half miles from Braemar. This is a great convenience to those who wish the next day to explore the Cairngorms or the Glas Thulachan group (Vol. I., p. 103).

Beinn Dearg (3,304 feet), commanding a most extensive view (Vol. I., p. 323), may either be ascended *via* Struan Station and Glen Bruar, or by keeping the *west* bank of the Tilt for about four miles, and then ascending Glen Diridh—"glen of the ascent"—to its head. Should the climber be tempted to attack the steep face of Beinn a' Chait—"mountain of the cat," 2,742 feet—on the left, the walk over the moor from its summit to that of Beinn Dearg is easy, and should not occupy more than three-quarters of an hour.

Càrn a' Chlamain—"the Kite's Cairn," 3,159* feet—may also be easily climbed in three to three and a half hours by ascending Glen Tilt to a little beyond Marble Lodge, which is four and a half miles from Blair-Athole,

* Name and height from six-inch O.S. map. A 3,000 feet contour on the one inch, and the name Càrn Clabhain on Bartholomew's reduced Ordnance

and then ascending the Cruinnich—*i.e.* “gathering”—Burn (Vol. I., p. 324).

Undoubtedly, however, Beinn a' Ghlo, or as it is often incorrectly written Ben-y-Gloe, will be the main attraction of the *meet*. The name—“the mountain of the mist”—is not one which would commend itself to the mountaineer, were it not that it is only so far applicable in that overtopping, as it does everything short of the Cairngorms, twelve miles north in a bee line, and Lochnagar eighteen miles E.N.E., the summit is presumably more often in the clouds than that of any of its neighbours. Whether seen from Strathmore or the Sidlaws* on a clear day in spring or winter—and in this district such days are common—its snowy summits peeping over the brown heather hills which intervene, or viewed from the Cairngorms to the N., Ben Alder to the W., or the Braes of Angus to the E., it is always a prominent object in the landscape.

The Tilt on the W. and N.W.; Loch Loch on the N.E. and E.; on the S. the Girnaig Burn, which joins the Garry at Killiecrankie Station; and on the S.W. the Garry between the Tilt and the Girnaig, may be roughly said to form the boundaries of the mountain. Three summits, separated by depressions which may warrant their being considered distinct mountains, and have so been reckoned in the 3,000 feet tables in Vol. I., as well as a fourth “top,” are included within these limits. The southernmost, Càrn Liath—“the hoary cairn”—which forms such a picturesque background to the view up the Pass of Killiecrankie, and is also pointed out as Beinn a' Ghlo from Blair-Athole, is on the O.S. maps not included under that name. Its summit, which is 3,193 feet, is four and three-quarter miles in a bee line from the Athole Arms, and it is easily ascended *via* Monzie (pronounced *Monee*), as described by Mr Almond. The height of this farm is nearly 800 feet above Blair-Athole, or 1,200 above the sea. Càrn Liath may as easily be climbed by keeping to the road till directly south of the summit, when a steep pull of 1,700 feet will place us on the top (Vol. I., p. 243.)

* See Vol. II., p. 34.

The bealach between this and the S.W. summit of Beinn a' Ghlo proper is about 2,600 feet, so that we have a climb of 900 feet to Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhalgain* (3505 feet), Mr Almond's "*Turkey Peak*"—the real meaning of which is the "brae of the round, bag-shaped corrie." Hence there is a steep, but easy descent to the Bealach an Fhiodha—the "pass of the timber,"—2,893 feet,† and a climb of 780 feet places us on Carn nan Gabhar—the "cairn of the goat,"—3,671 feet, the N.W. and highest summit of Beinn a' Ghlo.

A long shoulder extends S.S.W., and in a mile rises again to the fourth summit named on the six-inch map Airgoid Bheinn—"the silver mountain,"—which in the 3,000 feet tables has been included as a "top," though not as a distinct mountain. No height on six-inch map—3,250 contour on one-inch.

To the east the mountain falls away steeply, and, in some places, precipitously, to the wild little Loch Loch, 1,500 feet above the sea, noted for its trout. The outflow from this, named the Allt an Lochain, flows north for one and three-quarter miles, until its junction with the Tilt, with which it forms an acute angle, in the apex of which a long shoulder commences, which extends three and a quarter miles right up to the summit of Carn nan Gabhar.

The usual ascent of the mountain is by the route taken by Mr Almond. Up to Monzie Farm—a distance of about three and a half miles; thence climb passing to the N. of Carn Liath, and either topping Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhalgain, or crossing its southern shoulder and face, make straight for the col and attack the S.W. slope of Carn nan Gabhar. The time occupied from Blair-Athole should not exceed four hours.

The ascent may be made from Glen Tilt either over Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhalgain or direct to Carn nan Gabhar up the Allt Feannach; in either case, after crossing to the N. side of the Tilt at Marble Lodge, it should be recrossed by the shepherd's bridge about one and a half miles above. The ascent can of course be combined with

* Name from six-inch O.S. map.

† Name and height from the six-inch O.S. map.

the walk through Glen Tilt to or from Braemar, but unless the journey be broken at Linn of Dee or Inverey, it makes a long day's work.

From Kirkmichael* there is a carriage road to Dail Dubh—"the black field"—eight miles up Glen Fernach—the "Alder Glen"—hence to Carn nan Gabhar the distance is not much more than half as great as from Blair-Athole.

From the Spital of Glenshee,† in April 1886, I crossed all the summits of Beinn a' Ghlo to Blair-Athole, ascending to the very head of Glen Lochy (locally called Glen *Lochsy*), and then crossing Braigh Feith Ghuibhsachain (2,371 feet), misprinted on the one-inch and Bartholomew's maps Chuibhsachain—the "slope of the bog of the little fir trees." From here there is a tedious descent of some 800 feet to the east base of Carn nan Gabhar. A more direct route, though involving a still greater rise and fall, is to steer due west from the Spital Inn, passing to the south of Meall a' Choire Bhuidhe—the "hill of the yellow corrie"—to Dail Dubh, mentioned above.

The geological formation of the mountain is quartzite (Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland," page 205).

It only now remains to give some description of the view from the summit, which, from its great height and commanding position on the frontier of the Lowlands, is very extensive, but, like all the eastern mountains, is somewhat defective in foreground. Due north are the Cairngorms, Cairn Toul, fifteen miles off, appearing over the broad moorland of Beinn Bhrotain (3,797 feet), which is three miles nearer; Braeriach behind it, Ben Macdhui next, and then the uninteresting uplands of Beinn a' Bhuird (3,924 feet). While to the left of Braeriach, across Carn an Fhidhleir and An Sgarsoch, the moorland culminating in Sgòran Dubh (3,377 feet). Eighteen miles E.N.E. Lochnagar stands out, while the level tops of the Braes of Angus, Glasmaol,

* Post cart from Pitlochry (twelve miles), 9 A.M.; from Kirkmichael, 1.30 P.M. Post cart from Blairgowrie (thirteen miles), 10.40 A.M. and 2.30 P.M.; from Kirkmichael, 9.30 A.M. and 2.20 P.M.

† Twenty miles from Blairgowrie, fifteen miles from Braemar; daily coach each way in summer, and post cart to Blairgowrie in winter. See Vol. I, p. 200 and Vol. II, p. 200.

365:

&c., lie to the right, and somewhat nearer. Four and a half miles off, just across Loch Loch, rises the fine conical Carn an Rìgh (3,377 feet)—the “King’s Cairn,”—with Beinn Iutharn Mhor—Beinn Uarn (3,424 feet), on its left, and Glas Thulachan (3,445 feet) on its right, Mòr Sròn (Morrone Hill), above Braemar (2,819 feet), being visible between them. Mount Blair (2,441 feet), fourteen miles E.S.E. above the Kirkton of Glenisla, is easily distinguishable, tapering above the round-topped Forfarshire hills. Across the broad Strathmore many details of which can be made out, rise the Sidlaws, culminating in Craig Owl (1,493 feet) some thirty-two miles off. Behind them may be seen the smoke of Dundee. Farther off to the right the two Fifeshire Lomonds are conspicuous; while, when there is a strong wind to blow away the smoke, the Pentlands, seventy-five miles away, are plainly seen. Due south, and some forty miles away, are the billowy Ochils. Close at hand Ben Bhrackie (Vrackie), above Killiecrankie, always graceful; and some way farther off above Dunkeld, Birnam Hill. Standing out from the heathery uplands, which rise to the south side of Loch Tay, is Ben Chonzie (Honee), 3,048 feet. Next come Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin, Ben Ledi, forty-seven miles off; Am Binnein,* seen over Ben Lawers, Cairn Maing, and Schiehallion, twenty miles off, but looking quite near. Nearer and lower the broken-topped Farragon Hill, above Loch Tummel, Ben Cruachan,† the Black Mount range, Ben Nevis,† Ben Alder and his neighbours, seen over Ben Udlaman, and the flat uplands of Dunnyochter; while across Glen Tilt, Ben Dearg, nine miles W.N.W., completes the circle.

I may add, from a recent visit to the Western Cairngorms in very clear weather, that it is certain that the whole range of the Western Inverness-shire and Ross-shire mountains, from Mam Sodhail (Mamsoul), and possibly also Sgùrr Fhuaran (Scour Ouran), as far as Ben Wyvis, including the Fannich mountains and the Ross-shire Beinn Dearg, can also be seen from Beinn a’ Ghlo.

* Presumably Ben More is also visible, though I have never seen it.

† I have not myself seen these hills.

The above description of the view is written mainly from memory, and is therefore not exhaustive. I hope, however, it will be found tolerably accurate.

It cannot be denied that for the Ultramontane—to adopt Mr Almond's name—Blair - Athole presents few attractions ; but for the Salvationist mountaineer—the lover of breezy walks and wide views, of clear air, and fine scenery—it will prove a very pleasant centre.

H. T. MUNRO.

LOCHNAGAR CORRIE.

BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

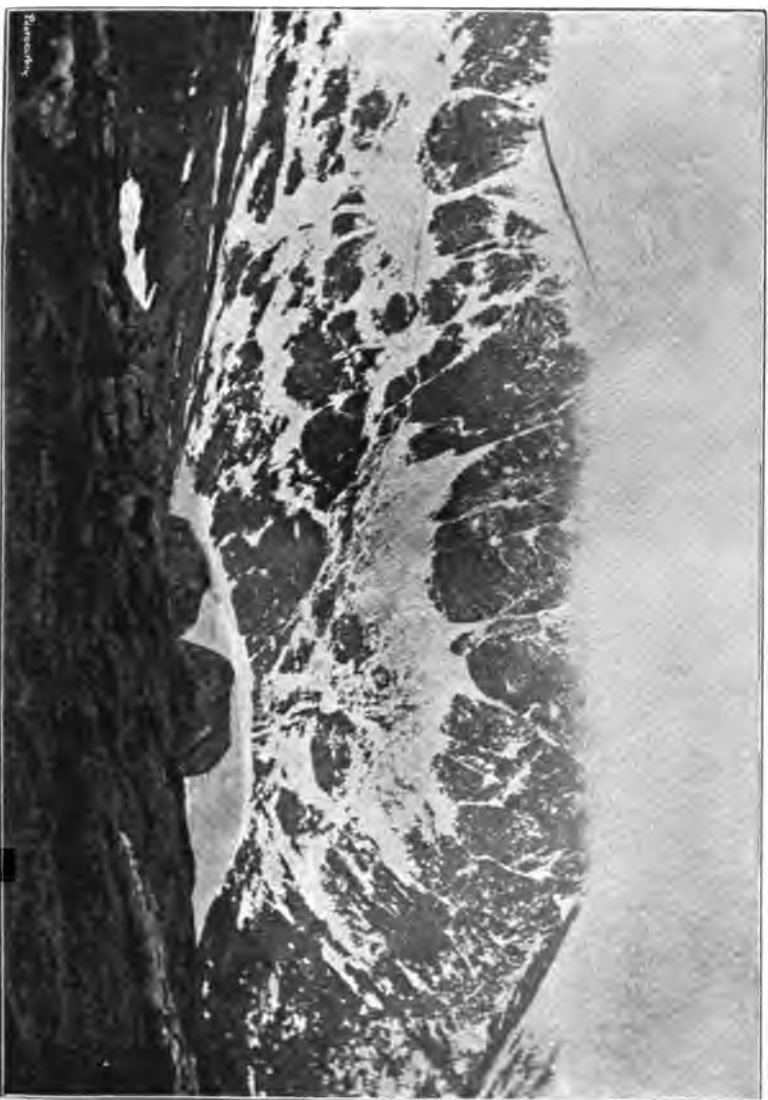
FOR many months past some of our members had talked of making an attack on the well-known cliffs that rise from the loch of Lochnagar to the summit of that mountain, but the difficulties of getting to the spot from either Edinburgh or Glasgow had been a serious obstacle to forming a party, and had not Mr Munro taken the matter in hand, the climb might have remained in abeyance for some considerable time.

On the afternoon of the 10th of March, J. H. Gibson and I took train to Kirriemuir, where we were met by Munro, who drove us up the same evening to the charming little inn of Clova. Next day, in a blowy but fine morning, we shouldered our rucksacks, and started to cross the Capel Mount to Glen Muick. We had hardly reached the top of the pass, when, alas! poor Munro received such a stern reminder of the near presence of his old enemy, rheumatism, that he judged it prudent to give up the climb, and greatly to his and our disappointment, he returned to Clova. Gibson and I then went on alone, and that afternoon surveyed from the base of the cliffs all the possible routes on them. Unfortunately the mist, though high, hung persistently around their summits, and prevented us from making a successful reconnoitre.

The great corrie of Lochnagar, which is one of the grandest in Scotland, faces north-east, and is divided into two half-circles, the western half being about a couple of hundred feet higher than the other. As will be seen from the accompanying photograph of the west corrie, taken the same day by W. Lamond Howie, who, with a party from Aberdeen, was also on the mountain, the face of the cliffs is broken up by many ribs and gullies, the latter being filled with snow. None of these gullies, except the one locally known as the "Black Spout," run in an unbroken line the whole way to the top; they all end on the perpendicular cliffs, and herein lies the difficulty of making a successful ascent.

1

2



LOCHNAVAR CORRIE.

1. East Snow Gully.

2. The Black Spout.

From a Photograph by H. Lamond Brown.



The height of the loch is 2,575 feet above sea-level, and as the tops of the cliffs stand from 3,600 to 3,700 feet, they are about from 1,000 to 1,100 feet above the loch. Half of this consists of a scree slope, and thus the actual cliffs are about 500 feet high.

Having fortunately been able to secure a bed for the night in a little cottage in Glen Muick, we, next morning, by an early start arrived at the foot of the cliffs, *via* Allt-na-guibhsaich Lodge and the col between the Mickle Pap and Cuidhe Crom, at half-past nine.

In the east corner of the west corrie there is a long straight snow-gully, running nearly all the way up, but the top itself was concealed from our view by a veil of mist. We decided to try it, and the rope was put on at ten o'clock. At first the going was easy, owing to the scree slope being covered with snow, soft enough to allow steps to be kicked. As we got into the gully, the snow became harder, the slope steeper, and steps had to be cut with the axe. We estimated that the general angle of the gully was about 50 deg., with steeper pitches where rotten ice took the place of the snow, and made step cutting harder. Steady progress was made, and at the end of two hours and a half we arrived at the top of the gully.

We were now, we estimated, about from 80 to 100 feet below the top, and were faced by a quite impossible vertical wall of smooth black rock. On our left lay a sloping slab of rock some ten feet high, thickly coated with rotten ice, but placed at such an awkward angle that, with only two men on the rope, it was not considered advisable to try it. Beyond we could see all the way to the top, which was apparently about 70 feet above, and although difficult we thought it would have "gone" had these first ten feet been overcome. On our right was an equally nasty corner, round which we could not see, and we decided that it was best to defer a further attempt to another day.

On looking down the gully, which sank in great serpentine waves to some 400 feet below where we stood, I must say I had some misgivings as to how we were to get down, but my confidence was restored by the clear directions and practical assistance given by my companion. I descended

first, with my face inwards, and we reached the bottom of the gully in another hour.

Our time was now very limited, but as we were loathe to leave the mountain without adding a stone to its cairn, we made for the gully before referred to as the "Black Spout," which lies in the west corner of the same corrie. The ascent by this route is very simple and easy. The gully is divided into two about half-way up,—one branch running west, and the other south, the latter leading directly to the cairn of Cac Carn Mor. Following this we reached the top in thirty-five minutes from the foot.

We had in the gullies been quite sheltered from the wind, but when we reached the top, we felt the full force of it, and were enveloped in a driving mist. We hurried along the top of the cliff, still on the outlook for possible routes that would be useful on other attempts, but the mist made this very unsatisfactory. We, however, came to the conclusion that if a meet of the Club were held in the vicinity many interesting ways would be found to the top, and that these cliffs alone would afford excellent sport for several days.

As soon as we obtained shelter from the biting wind, a halt was made for lunch, and then tracks were made for Allnaguibhsaich Lodge by the "ladder path." Here we were entertained to afternoon tea, which unexpected pleasure was most welcome after our prolonged exertions, and thoroughly refreshed, we started at 4.30 on our dreary walk across the Capel Mount to Clova.

We arrived at Clova about eight o'clock, and found Munro sufficiently recovered to take us a long drive to Lindertis. The following morning an early train from Glamis sped us into town.

MOUNTAIN PHOTOGRAPHY.

BY W. LAMOND HOWIE.

MOUNTAIN climbers who carry a photographic camera are becoming yearly more numerous, and as the adequate rendering of the scenery and atmospheric effects of the higher altitudes seems to be a difficult as well as a slowly acquired branch of photographic art, a few random but practical jottings may not be without interest to the members of the S.M.C.

The introduction of the telephotographic lens by Messrs Dalmeyer promises to put a new power in our hands, and great things are prophesied for this latest development of what was known as opera-glass photography. The new lens is 9 inches in length, and nearly 2 pounds in weight. My kit is already heavier than my shoulders enjoy when *post meridian* of a day on the hills has been reached, so I set to work to elaborate something to suit my purpose, of less bulk and weight, and, after experimenting with a field-glass, have attained success by adding to my ordinary lens (an extra rapid Euryscope, by Voigtlander) a sliding tube with a short focus double concave lens, such as is used for the eyepiece of an opera-glass. The Euryscope is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches focus, the eyepiece about 1 inch, and the sliding telescope tube is about 3 inches in length. This I had fitted with Waterhouse diaphragms about one inch from the eyepiece. With this combination—using my 5×4 camera, which extends to 15 inches—I get a fairly crisp image covering the plate, and as my object is to obtain negatives suitable for lantern slides this is more than sufficient for my purpose. The new lens is not focussed by racking the camera in or out, but by adjusting the distance between the Euryscope and the eyepiece by the sliding tube, just as in focussing an opera-glass. The further the camera is racked out the greater the size of the image on the focussing screen, and *vice versa*. To illustrate the power of the new combination, I photographed the tower of the village church with the Euryscope in the ordinary way, and found it to measure $\frac{5}{32}$ inch diameter. I now fitted the sliding tube and eyepiece between the Euryscope

and the camera, which remained at the same extension, and obtained on focussing an image $\frac{2}{3}$ diameter, or sixteen times the superficial measurement. I next racked the camera out to 15 inches, and found the image to measure nearly 2 inches—some 12 diameters, or 144 times superficial. In like manner a photograph of the full moon with the Euryscope appears as a spot the size of a pin's head, and by the new combination the image is almost the size of a sixpence, and shows the lunar markings quite distinctly. The angle of view is very narrow, about 9° ; Dalmeyer's telephotographic lens includes about 11° . All lenses of this class are very difficult to focus, and for good work have to be adjusted with extreme care with the aid of a magnifying lens. The light on the screen with the open stop is only equal to about that given with stop f 64, and I obtained a good strong negative with an exposure of 2 seconds in bright sunshine. When stopped down an exposure of $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 minute is necessary; but length of exposure depends on the amplification obtained by extending the camera as much as on the size of stop used.

From the foregoing it will be inferred that minute details of individual peaks and distant precipices, or rock scenery, snow cornices, and the like, will be suitable subjects for reproduction with a telephotographic lens. I would, however, warn the amateur against disappointment when he discovers that the sense of vastness is not thus obtained. It is a common but erroneous belief that by means of a long focus lens (*i.e.*, of narrow angle) is this sense of size and space best rendered. The most suitable angle is really that of a lens of focus equal to the length of the plate used. For mountain work a lens of even wider angle is frequently most useful, so as to include familiar objects which build the picture, and by which the relative proportion of its component parts may be visually measured.

The photographer who uses a wide angle lens must guard against over-development, and above all against the use of a developer which is heavily restrained, as by this means, while the foreground of a wide angle view is being got out, the mountains and clouds are apt to be buried in the density of the over-developed distance. Chiefly to this

cause is to be attributed the erroneous belief that wide angle lenses abnormally diminish distant objects, and against this loss of vigour in the distance (speaking of the positive print) the mountain photographer must take all possible precautions. If the view obtained by a wide angle lens includes too much, the picture may be cut down to any angle and enlarged. The user of the narrow angle lens has not yet discovered how his picture may be treated in the reverse manner. My Euryscope lens is of $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches focus, and for three years I used this on a $\frac{1}{4}$ plate, till happily I tried it on a 5×4 , when I at once apprehended how many good things I had just failed in obtaining upon the smaller plate,—amongst others, views of the eastern precipices of Braeriach and the great corrie of Lochnagar, from which it is impossible to get far enough away in the line of the best view. My $\frac{1}{4}$ plate prints are cramped and disappointing when compared with the subject; another inch of plate would have made these pictures. My most effective reproductions topographically of this class of scenery, I have obtained by joining two or three prints together; and thus in a panorama—really a view embracing an angle in one direction (right and left) of as much as 180° —an impression in some degree approaching that produced by the scene is obtained. Mr C. T. Dent, the author of the chapter on photography in the *Badminton Library* "Mountaineering," advises a 9 inch lens on a $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ plate, and a 15 or 16 inch if a second be carried. He says nothing about a wider angle lens, and in this I wholly differ from him. In a $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ plate for my first and most important lens I would select one of 6 to $6\frac{1}{2}$ inch focus. This, when divided, would give a 13 inch lens, and I would trust to the enlarging camera to do the rest. The frontispiece to "Mountaineering"—"Mont Blanc and the Aiguille du Geant"—is evidently taken with a narrow angle lens; and although showing a wealth of detail in rock and snow, utterly fails to convey to any but a mountaineer an impression that this is a picture of the highest mountain in Europe. I had the good fortune to visit the exhibition of the late Mr Donkin's photographs in London, and his most effective pictures were certainly those which

included a wider angle. I have two photographs of the Matterhorn in my possession, one merely the peak and the upper glacier, and this is wholly ineffective; the other a real picture, with a chalet in the foreground nestling among pine trees, then the Gorner glacier, a middle distance of great black rocky precipices leading the eye to the Col St Theodule, and, above all, the great peak itself piercing the very sky. Between the two there is no comparison. One represents a magnificent piece of Alpine scenery, and as such it impresses every beholder; the other (the narrow angle view) might be a snow-covered cairn on a hill top. It is well to remember, therefore, that to make a mountain picture which shall suggest the space and effect of the original, care must be taken to place the camera at the right point of view, so as to include objects that shall lead up to sustain the grand principal object.

Mr A. P. Harper, in an extremely suggestive and interesting paper read before the New Zealand Alpine Club, December 1891, and published in their journal, March 1892, says: "A person unacquainted with real Alpine scenery cannot get any idea of it from a photograph, all attempts to show the gigantic size of the peaks and their distance fail hopelessly." This sentiment, of which we are constantly hearing the echo, indicates what babes in art we photographers are. The early painters no doubt propounded the same, and their works show their helplessness; but who that has seen Turner's "Lake Avernus," his "Opening of the Walhalla," or, to come nearer home, his "Loch Achray," will say that gigantic size, space, and distance cannot be adequately suggested within the four sides of a picture frame. If with colour, why not with monochrome? and why not by photography? Analysis of these well-known paintings shows that Turner was, photographically speaking, a wide angle man, but knew how to use his lens and where to place his camera. The same difficulties beset the path of painter and photographer. It is not the paint and brushes which make the picture, and so we must not expect the imperfect mechanical contrivance we know as a camera to do this work for us. A successful photograph is not the work of a camera and a "button pusher," but of an intelli-

gence which can find and place a real picture on the focussing screen.

One more practical hint in conclusion. The enlarging apparatus which in a most convenient form has been designed by Mr Hume, Edinburgh, and is known as the "Cantilever," makes enlarging almost as easy as taking the original negative, with the added advantage that the work may be done at home and at convenience. A demand for negatives suitable for enlarging has thus been created. These must be soft,—that is, the development must be conducted with a weak developer, with the accelerator in excess, and must not be pushed too far. The lens must be well stopped down, to f 32 at least, and the distance previously carefully focussed in the centre of the plate with a lens. To one who does not care to experiment in telephotography with the direct lens, a distant object is best secured as above by placing it in the centre of the plate, and giving a snap exposure with a very small stop, but developing to secure the greatest possible "pluck" by means of a developer rich in pyro and bromide, and with the accelerator reduced to a minimum. The margin of the plate and foreground will be far too thin for use, but the distant object will stand crisp and clear, suitable for enlarging to very many diameters. With a clear atmosphere really wonderful distant effects may thus be secured, but a brilliant photograph is impossible with any lens when the distance is even slightly veiled.

In making the enlargement, it is by no means necessary that it also should be perfectly crisp. If of size suitable for hanging, it is sufficient if when viewed at a distance of not less than three to four feet no blurring be visible. In fact a good platino print from a well-made enlarged negative may show a softness and poetic feeling, the result of this diffusion of focus, which cannot so easily be obtained direct, and is a quality much lauded by certain art critics. Carried to excess, this becomes merely impressionist, or, as some misname it, "naturalistic,"—but in photography as in art there are many schools.

IN MEMORIAM.

THE LATE SHERIFF NICOLSON.

THE members of the Mountaineering Club felt to a man a sharp shock of surprise and sorrow that will endure, when the announcement of the sudden passing away of Sheriff Nicolson appeared in the morning papers of Saturday the 14th January. Though not in quite good health, his death, coming with startling suddenness, was utterly unexpected. He was in his sixty-sixth year, having been born at Husabost in Skye, 27th September 1827, where his father was a large tacksman under Macleod of Macleod. As Vice-President of this Club he was known to almost all the members, and we shall not readily forget his genial face and cheery presence at the Annual Dinner in the Waterloo Hotel about the middle of last December. It was the last time many of us were to see him, and the tones of his voice, in singing his favourite "Isle of Skye" that evening, remain in the memory with a peculiarly sacred charm. Within about a month afterwards, on the 13th January, he died in a moment in his house in Warriston Crescent, a name associated with his family and himself for more than half a century. It is close on forty-eight years ago since I first met Alexander Nicolson. It was on a day in late October 1845. He and I had been competing in a college examination. After it was over, he was standing with his back against a railing in George Street, pondering perhaps over the kind of answers he had made to the questions, and his chance of success. A tall, slim, fair lad, he was dressed in a long brown greatcoat; something in the look of the grey blue eyes, and the gentle, but somewhat languid expression of the face, attracted me. We had some brief talk. Thence there sprang up a friendship and affection which was never broken, which for many years—all during our college days—was of the frankest, intensest kind. We met nearly every day or evening, for winter after winter. He was one of the most lovable men I have known,—simple, guileless, unworldly, and in all things true,—with a humour peculiarly his own, and a feeling for poetry, especially Gaelic song, evidently born with him, and due to his Celtic and

Scandinavian heredity. The student spirit and life was then one main bond between us. Nicolson was in those days a very close and constant student. With but scanty early preparation, he made himself a distinctly good Latin and Greek scholar. In philosophy he worked well and assiduously, and in literature, as to reading, taste, and general faculty, he stood out with a decided pre-eminence among the men of his time.

He was then looking forward to the Church, but this design he finally abandoned. Like others of the time, he was a constant reader of the works of Tennyson and Carlyle, as they were then issuing from the press, and it was partly from them that he imbibed a certain feeling of unsettlement about Church confessions and creeds, though all through his life he remained a man of essentially reverent soul. He was thus thrown on literature for a livelihood. This, I fear, yielded but a scanty and precarious return. But Nicolson never murmured, accepted his lot like a man, saw nothing else to be done, was ever cheerful, genial, and sympathetic, even as far as in him lay was, out of his limited earnings, helpful to his relations and friends. After some desultory work in newspapers mainly, he turned his attention to Law, and passed as advocate in 1860. After this I did not see him constantly, as I went to St Andrews in that year. His career at the bar was not what is regarded as a success. This has been by some, I think unduly, attributed to indolence or lethargy on his part. The truth in the main is, that he was not fortunate enough to have cases offered to him, and had no chance of showing either energy or the opposite of it. The man and his environments did not apparently suit each other. He would have found his true sphere in a chair of Gaelic Literature. What should have been, and probably would have been, the most fruitful literary years of his life, were wasted in a futile pacing of the Parliament House and reporting for the *Jurist*, to eke out a scanty living. The remainder of his career is well known. Appointed Sheriff-Substitute or Stewart of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright in 1872, he remained there until 1885, when he was, perhaps unfortunately, transferred to Greenock. He retired in 1880.

The contributions made by him to literature are, it is to be regretted, greatly smaller than was his power. Besides the miscellaneous articles in newspapers and in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," we have an excellent volume of Gaelic proverbs by him, and his work on Commission Reports on Education and Crofters is exceedingly interesting, and such as few men but himself could have done. He contributed also to the revision of the Gaelic Scriptures. His poems and verses are the things by which he will be best remembered. Of varied types—humorous, caustic, pathetic, patriotic—they were dropped by him on his path through life in the most casual and fitful way; scanty it may be, but true and charming flowers of poesy. There was always in him the ardour of the poet, but it was not out-pressing. There was needed the breeze that bloweth as it listeth to fan the latent fire into song.

Nicolson was an ardent lover of nature and a bold and indefatigable mountaineer. During the sixties, he and I had occasional walks over the southern hills, Hundleshope, Broadlaw, and by St Mary's Loch. He was in Skye in 1865 making several ascents, which he described in the *Scotsman* in 1872. But it was chiefly after his appointment as Sheriff of Kirkcudbright in 1872 that he visited the isle of his birth and youth. I was with him there on one occasion in August 1873. We went by steamer from Greenock to Broadford, where we were landed about one o'clock in the morning, being let down from the deck of the vessel into a boat, along with bags of flour, barrels with various contents, boxes, spades, and other useful implements for the Skye folks. A day or two afterwards we crossed the moor from Sligachan to the western extremity of the Coolins, noting the paucity of the heather, and the richness of the lowly golden growths by the way. We scrambled up Corrie-na-Crich (Cree), amid its bare and bleached rounded stones, where I was told two bands of Macdonalds and Macleods had pretty well mutually extinguished each other in a thieving raid. From the corrie we made up the face to the right, and after scaling a bit of precipitous rock—worn hypersthene fortunately for us—chiefly by help of knees and fingers, we got to the top of the ridge, and found it

about four feet in width, divided by a long running volcanic trough. The precipice with corrie on the other side ran down some 1,200 feet or so, named, I think, Corrie Ghrita. Neither of us had been there before. It was a day of glorious sunshine, and the outlook over the far glimmering sea was very splendid. The summit was, as far as I could make out, somewhat to the west of Bruach-na-Fray (or Bruach-na-Frith), bearing the name of Scur Thuilm. We made our way back in a westerly line along the narrow ridge, and finally got to Sligachan about half-past nine, where our friends, Sheriff and Mrs Glassford Bell had for some hours been complacently waiting for us and dinner. Of this and other excursions Nicolson gave an excellent description in *Good Words* (1875).

Nicolson remained in Skye after I left at this time, and made a great many ascents, chiefly of the Coolins. Some of these had not been done before. One night he paid the mountaineer's penalty, of having to sleep out in his kilt, the mist having come down while he was near the summit with a very ticklish downward path. But in this he rather rejoiced, for in that fine poem "The Heather," that expresses the very soul of Highland solitude and pathos, he tells us:—

"The soft dewy steps of the gloaming
Are climbing the sides of the Ben,
The last flush of light crowns with glory
The Herdman that watches the glen.
Here wrapped in my plaid in the heather,
I envy no monarch his bed ;
Come, dreams of the hills and the Highlands,
And visit in slumber my head."

His name has been given to a height among the Coolins, which he was apparently the first to explore. In the *Alpine Journal* for 1888 it is stated that Sgur Alasdair is called after Alexander Nicolson. This is double-peaked, and has the distinction of being the highest mountain in Skye (3,275 feet). Two things struck one while with him: his intense love of Skye, and his ardent love of mountains. The sight and feeling of those Skye hills filled his heart with an expanding joy in which his whole soul

was absorbed, everything else sunk and forgotten. I have often thought of the lines which Leyden wrote of himself as thoroughly applicable to Nicolson :—

“Bred among heaths and mountain swains,
Rude nature charmed my early view ;
I sighed to leave my native plains,
And bid the haunts of youth adieu.

Enough to me if these impart
The glow to patriot virtue dear,
The free-born soul, the fearless heart,
The spirit of the mountaineer.”

J. VEITCH.

MEETS OF THE CLUB.

TYNDRUM.

30th December 1892 to 2nd January 1893.

AS arranged at the General Meeting, our season opened with the New Year's meet at Tyndrum,—a district already well known to most of us, and where climbing is found within easy distance of the hotel on at least half-a-dozen first-class mountains.

The weather during our stay was very kind to us, favouring us with a clear bright sky most of the time, while under foot the ground was fast bound in the iron grip of frost—rivers, lakes, streams, and turf were all changed into solid ice.

The hills themselves carried little snow, but in many places large areas of their lower slopes were covered with transparent ice, lying in great sheets and in clusters of rounded bulbs, sometimes hidden in long grass, but mostly exposed clearly to view. Where this nuisance was not present, the turf was as hard as iron, making the ascents much more difficult than is usual at this season.

The first arrivals on Friday afternoon were Maylard and Rennie, followed by Brunskill, Campbell, Gibson, Lester, Maclay, Munro, and Douglas; and on Monday the party was added to by the arrival of Naismith, Thomson, and Archie.

A pleasant evening was spent in the snug dining-room, and two parties were formed for next day,—one for the ascent of Ben Lui by the north-east face, and the other for Cruach Ardran. Mr Maclay supplies the following account of the Ben Lui excursion, which is now a favourite one with many of our members:—

BEN LUI BY THE NORTH-EAST FACE.

“The Ben Laoigh party, consisting of Maylard, Brunskill, Douglas, and myself, started at 9.45 A.M. The morning was fine, but dull and cold. Crossing the ridge beyond

the railway, we dropped to the farm of Coninish, and proceeded along an ice-covered track to the old lead workings at the foot of the mountain, which we reached at 11.15 A.M. By this time the top had become covered with mist, and it was not again clear. Snow filled the gullies near the top, and the whole lower slope of the great Coire Gaothach was covered by a sprinkling of fresh snow, which extended to the water side, concealing the ice among the grass, and necessitating care. The frozen streamlets and waterfalls formed a beautiful feature. At a distance they seemed as if in full spate.



North-East Face of Ben Lui.

“The first ascent was steepish till the corrie was reached. In the corrie it was less steep, till the snow slope was attacked, but a strong bitter gusty wind was blowing. Fortunately we were protected from this after the real climb began.

“The snow slope was found to be composed of firm snow, increasing in hardness as we ascended. Steps were

kicked till the lower end of the rocky ribs that run up to the ridge was reached. Here we skirted to the left, and entered a steep narrow snow-gully. This, it was thought,—correctly as it turned out,—would lead almost directly to the summit.

“The slope quickly increased to nearly 50°, as measured by the clinometer, and the rope was put on. The snow was also harder, and recourse was had to the axe. Progress was naturally slow. A loose surface coating of powdery snow often obliterated the steps almost as soon as cut.

“When well up the gully, we worked to the left to a snow-covered spur, where progress was rather quicker. Then ascending through a short gully, and round rocks, we reached the ridge within twenty or thirty yards of the cairn. The top was reached at 3.15 P.M., after a climb of exactly four hours—over two and a half hours being on the rope.

“After a short halt the descent was commenced. Skirting the other side of the hill till beyond the huge buttress (named Stob an Tighe Aird on the six-inch Ordnance Survey map) that forms the south-east side of the corrie, a way was sought down the north-east face beyond. The side proving too steep for a rapid descent, it was resolved to descend a snow-filled shoot. This we glissaded, or scrambled and slid down, not without incident so far as two at least of the party were concerned. Then cutting steps across some frozen streamlets, and skirting round a hill-side, rendered treacherous by concealed ice, we descended to the water side. Here one member hurried on, and succeeded in catching the 5.30 P.M. train. The others, taking things more leisurely over the slippery hill tracks, reached the hotel at 6 P.M., the total time occupied being thus eight and a quarter hours. J. M.”

Mr Munro sends the following notes, recording the experiences of the Cruach Ardran party:—

CRUACH ARDRAN, &C.

“Campbell, Rennie, Gibson, and I started at 9.50. A grey morning, with the clouds high. Before we left the road, however, they began to settle on the tops.

“ Through Crianlarich, and south towards Glenfalloch, in a few hundred yards we left the road (at 11.15), and crossing the Allt Coire Ardran, we struck up the north-west slope of Stob Coire Bhuidhe. Leaving the summit on our left, at about 2,700 feet, we got into the clouds, which, however, were neither very wetting nor very cold, and there was little wind. The ascent is uninteresting, and we reached Stob Garbh (3,148 feet) at 1.15, and after a quarter-hour descent halted for luncheon. We were here just at the bottom of the mist, and right opposite Am Binnein. A little to the S.S.E. from Stob Garbh is a col 2,984* feet, and just beyond it a rather doubtful top of 3,034* feet; then comes a drop to 2,810* feet, and a rise to the north-eastern and highest top of Cruach Ardran, 3,477* feet. The general direction of the ridge from Stob Coire Bhuidhe to Cruach Ardran is north and south, while to the east and west the ground drops away steeply and deeply. We had therefore only to steer a southerly course, being careful not to descend below 2,800 feet, and we were bound to reach Cruach Ardran. We soon crossed what must have been the 3,034 feet top, and then the very simplicity made us careless, and no one took the trouble to lead, so that the wind, which should have been blowing steadily in our faces, would keep shoving us along from behind, with the result that, after some half-hour's walking in the mist, we came on our own footprints in the snow. After a little more uncertain wandering, it was decided resolutely to keep a southerly course, wherever it might lead us, and we soon found ourselves climbing a big hill, which rapidly steepened. We got into a good snow gully, which required a little step cutting, and in which, if it had been longer, the rope might have been serviceable. It was not unlike the north-east face of Ben Laoigh, though not quite so steep, nor nearly as long.

“ At 3.15 we found ourselves at the top of it, and within a few feet of the cairn of Cruach Ardran. Had any doubt existed as to the position of this gully, it would have been solved two days later, when from the top of Am Binnein

* Six-inch O.S. Map.

we recognised it in the E.N.E. face of Cruach Ardran, which appears from the six-inch map to be named Creagan Dubha. A few minutes took us to the 3,428* feet (south-west) summit, about a quarter of a mile from the higher north-east top, and then we struck north-west down the steep but easy face into Coire Ardran, where, at 4 o'clock, we made a ten minutes' halt for refreshments.

"At 5 we reached the road where we had left it, and Crianlarich Inn a few minutes later. Three-quarters of an hour here for tea and a smoke, and we entered the hotel at Tyndrum at 7 P.M. H. T. M."

BEN LUI—NORTH-EAST FACE.

1st January.—There were only three candidates for the hills to-day,—viz, Gibson, Munro, and Rennie, who started at 10.40 for Ben Lui. They followed the same route as yesterday's party, but made no use of their steps, and reached the top by 3.45. Got a clear view all round, and returned to Tyndrum at 7 o'clock. Munro told us that they had several showers of light snow during the day, and that he had never before seen the country more entirely frost-bound. The lakes, he said, were covered with a sheet of clear black ice; the very waterfalls were frozen solid; the burns, and even big streams, were actually frozen right across with ice smooth and slippery, and being frozen up and down hill, it was impossible to cross them in an upright position.

2nd January.—Another lovely morning, with the whole circle of hills from Cruach Ardran in the south, Stobinian and Ben More in the east, and right round to the lovely cone of Ben Doran in the north, sharply outlined against a clear blue sky, and looking their very best. The entire party, with the exception of Lester, left in a trap at 9.15, and an hour later arrived at Ben More farm. Breaking up into little parties of twos and threes, each in search of their own special form of mountaineering, a delightful day was spent. Most of us reached the tops of Stobinian and Ben More; and Munro and Rennie included Stob Coire an

* Six-inch O.S. Map.

Lochain (3,497 feet), Creag a' Bhragit (3,000 contour), Meall na Dige (3,140 feet), and Stob Creagach (2,966 feet).

The views were grand and distant in the early part of the day. And Munro tells me from his diary that from Ben More he saw to the south Stobinian, Ben Lomond, very conspicuous. Turning to the right a good view of Loch Lomond. In the near foreground Cruach Ardran, only two and a half miles away, and on the side facing us, we could make out all the details of our snow face of two days before. Sixty miles away to the S.S.W. the hills of Arran very distinct; while over the low northern end, in the extreme distance, some high ground, which was either to the south of Campbeltown, in the Mull of Kintyre, or, as some of us thought, the high land near Ballycastle in Ireland. South-west the Paps of Jura, sixty-five miles off, looked comparatively near; but the low island of Colonsay, seen to the right of it, and not more than five miles farther, seemed, from its inferior elevation, a great distance off. Ben Buidhe, at the head of Loch Fyne, conspicuous; and Ben Laoigh, of course, looked quite near. The Mull mountains, Cruachan and his neighbours, the Black Mount hills, and the hills rising on the north-west side of the Moor of Rannoch, the hills at the head of Glenlyon, Meall Ghaordie, the Tarmachans, Ben Lawers, and Loch Tay, were all visible; but the northern view was the least clear. E.S.E. Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin; the Ochils, with the Abbey Craig and Wallace Monument, very distinct; the Pentlands, sixty miles away; and Ben Ledi, complete the round of the compass.

On our return to the Tyndrum Hotel, we visited, by walking across a splendid sheet of black ice, the ruins on the little island of Loch Dochart.

Brunskill and Maclay left for the south by the afternoon train, but our party received the goodly addition of Naismith, Thomson, and Archie, who had also spent the day on Ben More and Stobinian, although we had seen nothing of them.

Next morning saw us all speeding homewards. May all our meets prove as successful!

W. D.

LOCHEARNHEAD.

15th to 18th February.

The evening of Tuesday, 14th February, found me at Lochearnhead Hotel, prepared for the Club Meet appointed for the next day. The weather was wet and forbidding, with the wind from the west, and as yet no other member had appeared. On inquiry I learned from the courteous hotel proprietor that there was no person in the village specially qualified to act as guide on the neighbouring mountains, but there was one Peter Angus, a *boatman*, who was accustomed to take tourists up Ben Vorlich in summer. Peter was summoned; I laid my plans for the morrow before him, to ascend Ben Vorlich, Stuc-a-Chroin, and possibly Ben Each, returning by Glen Ample. He shook his head; said he had never climbed in winter, except "going after white hares," but would go with me if the day was fine. The route to be taken was that described by Dr Maylard in his famous paper in the *Journal* of May 1891. I confess that, after talking it over with Peter, I had little hope of being able to reach Stuc-a-Chroin by the east face of rock, especially as I believed it was then more or less covered with ice. Certainly I had no desire to encounter the same dire results to my clothing *or person* which distinguished Dr Maylard's ascent. At 11 P.M. snow was falling, the wind had gone round to N.W., and it was bitterly cold. Morning broke grey, with a lazy mist creeping up slowly to the tops, where it rested for some hours. Snow lay low down the mountains, almost to their feet. The day was certainly promising, and after breakfast Peter was saddled with the rope and luncheon. He had only a stout walking-stick, which he managed afterwards to lose on Ben Vorlich. I carried my ice-axe, with compass and aneroid. Before starting at 10.15, a tempting telegram was sent to the Secretary in Glasgow, as a counter-attraction to the Club's Exhibition of Photographs of Scottish Mountain Scenery. A little beyond the Edinample kennels we struck the hill, making for Ben Our as straight as the compass would guide us. At first the snow was soft and gave us much labour, but somewhere between the 1,000 ft. and the

1,500 ft. limits it began to get crusty, under the influence of the N.W. wind, which was now blowing freely with a temperature of about 30° F. At noon we reached the Ben Our cairn. A hurried look round gave us Ben Lawers and Ben More, both partially veiled in mist, as were also Ben Vorlich and Stuc-a-Chroin immediately to our south. On the ridges of both these peaks a blizzard was in active operation. We pushed rapidly along under the ridge of Creagan nan Gabhar on its east side. Here Peter had his only sight of a white hare that day. We were soon on the shoulder of Ben Vorlich, breasting it as quickly as the slippery snow would allow us. Step-cutting was here and there necessary, and I now saw it would be useless to attempt the east face of Stuc-a-Chroin. At 1.30, by following the deer fence, in a blinding blizzard with gleams of sunshine, we reached the summit, and ate our frugal lunch in the shelter of the cairn. The cold was intense, owing to the high wind. The whirling snow prevented a distant view. A few minutes sufficed to decide our future movements. Bearing a little to the south to avoid the steep rocks on this side of the mountain, we made a rapid descent into Gleann an Dubh Choirein, in snow which here and there permitted glissading. It was Peter's first experience of being roped. He had now no stick, and I put on the rope to pull him up if he floundered. A sip of water from the burn below, which was almost entirely covered with snow, and soon we were ploughing our way up the soft sides of the opposite ridge. We crossed it somewhere between points 2,395 and 2,579 on the map. Here the snow was hard. Another rapid descent down to the stream that issues from Loch a Chroin brought us into our most toilsome bit of work. The whole of the basin here was full of soft snow, which we did not get clear of till we topped the Beinn Each ridge between the summit and Meall na Caora. Gathering black clouds warned us to hurry on, and at 4.20 we stood on Beinn Each. Passing along the ridge, at 5 we reached the summit, marked 2,795, where we ate our remaining sandwiches; and as there was now little light in the sky we made a special spurt, and surmounted Stuc-a-Chroin in mist at 5.30. The wind had fallen. We retraced our steps till we were sure we were

clear of the east face, and then made as fast as we could for Creag Dhubh, Peter again being secured by rope. The darkness was increasing. Yet in our rapid descent we had time to glance upwards at Ben Vorlich. He was clad in obsidian blue, while all the other peaks were in sombre grey. I had never seen a similar sight even in the Alps. Down through Glen Ample we hurried as fast as the long heather would permit us, and we reached the hotel about 7 o'clock.

16th February.—Weather unpromising; mist all over the mountains. Walked to Killin through Glen Ogle; in returning was well battered by snow and rain at top of the pass. Landlord met me at hotel door with the joyful news that Mr H. T. Munro was expected that evening. Dr Maylard had shown him my telegram in Glasgow, and like a true mountaineer he answered the summons. After dinner we discussed plans for the morrow, and whatever we should do we promised ourselves a "good day" of it. Eventually we agreed to proceed to Crianlarich by the morning train, take Beinn Chabhair (3,053 ft.) from Glen Falloch; next, An Caisteal (3,265 ft.), Beinn a Chroin (3,101 ft.), Stob Glas (2,673 ft.), and Beinn Tulachan (3,099 ft.) in succession; and home by Inverlochlarig, a conveyance to be in waiting for us at the shepherd's house there. An ambitious programme for one day! All the peaks were new to us both, and Munro was rejoicing in the prospect of adding four climbs of over 3,000 feet each to his already stupendous list of Scottish ascents.

17th February.—Weather unsettled-looking at 7 A.M. Took Peter with us, at my request; a mistake, as being without an ice-axe he had to have many steps cut for him in the course of the day. At Lochearnhead station the sight of our axes caused a retired police constable to inquire of Peter if we were out prospecting for gold! Rope and axe are still mysterious-looking instruments in that part of the world. At 10.10 left Crianlarich station; rain or snow or both impending. The navvies at the new railway works much excited, thinking we were brethren on the lookout for a job. At 11.10 left the Glen Falloch road, along which we had seen several newly exposed, glacier-smoothed

rocks, and struck off towards the Allt a Chuilinn in a snow shower, Munro leading in fine form. The snow, both old and new, was in excellent condition, and we took the N.N.E. face (easy) almost straight up. Step cutting was necessary here and there. In a cold wind and thick mist we reached the summit at 2. Munro carefully laid out on the snow the bearings of An Caisteal, one mile N.E. from our point, across a deep dip, into misty space. At 2.20 left summit of Beinn Chabhair, retraced our steps for a few minutes, glissaded down a few slopes, and then held a little more to the right to ensure being on the proper side of the col, which we reached at 2.40. The snow had ceased, but the mist was still thick. We lunched under the col, and started again at 2.55. In easy going, snow in perfect condition, the broad summit of An Caisteal was gained at 4.10. No time could now be lost. Besides, a blizzard was preparing, and after Munro had taken the compass bearings of Beinn a Chroin we started. Our object was to gain the col almost S.E. from where we stood, beneath our feet, but owing to numberless rocks and crags through and round which we had to thread our way, guided by our almost infallible leader Munro, we missed our true direction, and after thirty minutes' hard work, in the face of a blinding blizzard, we came on our old tracks again at an altitude of about 2,700 feet. I judged the col was beneath us to the left, and accordingly we traversed the ridge on some difficult ice, where step-cutting was imperative, at least for Peter, and reached what we believed was the col at 5.10. The blizzard continued, and as it was now late we reluctantly abandoned the ascent of Beinn a Chroin, which, in justice to ourselves, especially to Munro's splendid leading, we might have added to our "bag" had we been unencumbered. My mistake in adding Peter to our party had several times in the course of the day become apparent. I was sorry for Munro's sake. There was nothing for it, however, but to dip down as rapidly as we could in the growing darkness and snow to the river Lochlarig. Night fell upon us as we cautiously crept among the peat-haggs, and crossed the endless burns that feed the river, and breasted their high banks, that seemed to get higher the

LANTERN EXHIBITION OF MOUNTAINEERING VIEWS.

ON Wednesday ~~morning~~, the 15th of February, an exhibition of lantern slides of mountaineering views was given by members in the Windsor Hotel, Glasgow. This exhibition was an experiment got up to see what, and how much, material was available, and how members and friends would turn out to it. Some 180 slides were shown in two hours, but there were in the room enough slides to have filled up another hour. About sixty members and friends were present.

The first slides shown were by Robert Davies,—several views in Arran, and one in Wales. Howard Priestman sent eighteen views of the climbing centre in Skye,—round Glen Brittle and Sgur Alasdair. J. Rennie showed a dozen views,—Stuc-a-Chroin, and some of Ben Lui and Ben More, taken at the last New Year's meet. William Douglas had three dozen of Ben Cruachan, Ben Vorlich, Ben Lawers, and of the Black Mount district.

After a short interval, W. Lamond Howie showed a fine series of over a hundred mountain views, beginning with Ben Lomond and Ben Lawers, and up to the Ben Muichdhuì range, among which were some admirable views of snow, snow cornices, and drifts; also a view of a rock covered with snow crystals by Mr Annan (non-member). Mr Howie also showed some bromide paper enlargements, several of which he has since presented to the Club Library.

At the close of the Exhibition, Professor Veitch made a few remarks, and thanked the different exhibitors, and J. Rennie for working the lantern.

This exhibition showed that there was a large number of views of Scottish mountain scenery in the hands of members. The views only want to be worked up into slide form and arranged, to make a most interesting and unique collection of Scottish high level scenery — one

which it would be peculiarly suitable for the Club to possess.

It is proposed to make this "slide collection" one of the departments of the Club Library. A beginning has already been made. About eighteen slides have been presented, and I have to ask members who are photographers and slide-makers to be good enough to present duplicates of their slides to the Club. If not slide-makers, I shall be pleased to have the loan of negatives of Scottish mountain scenery, so that I can make slides from them for the Club. There is no better way to show negatives than to make slides for the lantern. Once fairly started, this department of the Library would grow apace by gift or exchange.

In thus bringing the idea of a "slide collection" before members, it is not intended that it should take the place of the Club album of paper views, which has now got a fair start, but rather that the two should grow together.

J. RENNIE.

WELLCROFT, HELENSBURGH.

NOTES AND QUERIES.



EXCURSIONS.

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

BEINN MHOR, COWAL.—On 26th December D. M'Kenzie and H. B. Watt left Kilmun in the morning, and proceeded leisurely up Glen Massan. Splendid winter morning, misty, but sun shining, thermometer 26° F. Holy Loch was covered with ice more than an inch thick, through which steamer broke her way. The bottom of this glen is flat and open, and at Glenmassan Farm we were only about 250 feet above sea-level. From here at 12.25 P.M. we struck up the hillside over Sron Mhor to the top of Beinn Mhor (2,433 feet), which we reached at 1.45 P.M. There is a good cairn, around which rock crops out, but grass-slopes lead right up to it. Only some small patches of snow were seen, but the ground was white with hoar frost, except where the sun had licked it up. Breeze from north brought thickish mist; no view at all; thermometer 30° F. Descended by Coire an Tee, which we found completely frost-bound, with much ice all the way down, and a good deal of snow in the tops of the gullies. Waterfalls were frozen white, and from many rocks masses of immense icicles were hanging, making a wintry scene. In spite of trying for an easy place (we had only sticks with us), it was an hour before we got to the head of the glen, the foothold being really very bad. I apprehend that it is this part of the hill on which the guide-books lavish their epithets,—“deep fissures . . . vast corridors . . . chambered recesses . . . profound depths.” Reached Loch Eckside at 3.30 P.M., and had another fine walk to Kilmun, arriving at 5.10 P.M.—H. B. WATT.

BEN AVON AND LOCHNAGAR ON THE FIRST DAYS OF THE YEAR.—On the last day of 1892 Messrs M'Connochie, Rose, Brown, and Tough left Ballater for Inchrory, with the view of celebrating the advent of 1893 upon the summits of Ben Avon and Ben a' Bhuidr. The distance between the two places is eighteen miles, and the route chosen—for there are two—was by Glen Gairn and Loch Builg. The road was in many places coated with ice, and the steep slopes which

run down to it offered numerous tempting opportunities of displaying their skill to the axe-men of the party. Time, unfortunately, did not permit us to avail ourselves of these to any extent. Loch Builg was entirely frozen over, and, as we went stumbling along the rugged path by its side under the weight of our heavy knapsacks, we thought with regret of our skates rusting at home. When Inchrory was reached at last, the proverbial mountaineering appetite was clamant, and we did full justice to the abundance of good things hospitably prepared against our arrival.

As every one knows who has gone mountaineering among any of our great northern ranges, one of the chief difficulties to be contended with is the want of a suitable "base of operations." The nearest public place of entertainment to Ben Avon, on the Aberdeen side, is Cockbridge Inn. But even it is six miles from the foot of the mountain, and twelve from Ballater. We were exceedingly fortunate therefore in the permission accorded us to put up for the night with Mackenzie, the head-keeper, at Lagganalt, just above Inchrory. We could not possibly have been more comfortable than we found ourselves under his kindly roof.

The first morning of the year did not open well. There was more than a suspicion of snow in the air when we made a start at 8.30 A.M., and the day proved of a character which fully justified our gloomiest anticipations. Our first task was to tackle Meall na Gainneimh, a spur of the enormous mass of Ben Avon proper. The ascent, though fairly steep, presented no difficulty, as the snow was just of the proper consistency for walking, and we reached the top (2,989 feet) in almost exactly an hour after we set out. Inchrory stands 1,336 feet above sea-level. There the aneroid had marked 28.8 inches, and the thermometer 28 degrees. The readings were now 26.95 inches, and 17 deg. respectively.

In the meantime the mist had come down on the mountains with a steady, resolute persistency that boded us no good. From the cairn we could not see fifty yards in any direction. Even the huge mass of the Clach Bhan, or Woman's Stone, which we knew was close at hand, could not be discovered through the dense white cloud. We had therefore reluctantly to give up our intention of visiting this rock, said to have been the goal of many an interesting pilgrimage in times gone by.

As local knowledge was of comparatively little avail in those circumstances, we carefully took our bearings by map and compass before leaving the cairn. By walking in Indian file at intervals of a few yards, so that any deviation of the leader from the true route could be more easily detected, and with an occasional glance at the compass for the purpose of verification, we were fortunate enough to strike the exact summit of Ben Avon at 12.30. We had now reached a height of 3,843 feet. The ascent from Meall na Gainneimh was very gentle, and the walking, over a field of hard snow into which the point of axe and alpenstock sank with the crunching sound so musical to the ear of the

mountaineer, was delightfully easy. As the pace was good the whole way, the time we took will give some idea of the mass of Ben A'an.

The cold at the summit was intense. The anemometer carried by the scientist of the party showed the rate of the wind to be twenty-two miles an hour, while the thermometer indicated nineteen degrees of frost. Under those conditions we did not trouble the cairn long with our company, but quickly scuttled down the lee side of the great rock on which it is built, to obtain some protection from the blast, which would have chilled us to the marrow in a few minutes.

Those gigantic rocks which crop out all over the summit of Ben Avon, and give it so characteristic an appearance when seen from a distance, were, of course, mostly hidden from our view. One huge stone, however, attracted our attention from its close resemblance both in size and style of "architecture" to the "kirks" erected by our non-æsthetic forefathers, in days when any ecclesiastical adornment whatever was looked upon as deadly sin.

The next important point in the programme of our day's journey was the Sneck. This is a ridge only a few feet wide at the top, and sloping very rapidly away on both sides. As its name is intended to indicate, it forms a kind of natural bridge, across the deep gully which separates Ben Avon from Ben a' Bhuid. But we failed to find it in the mist, and holding too far to the southward, found ourselves at last, after much weary plodding up and down steep snow-clad slopes, close by the cairn which decks the summit of Creag na Dala Moire. We only learned our exact position, however, by the mist clearing suddenly off the hill, while we were engaged in an animated discussion as to what was to be our next move.

We had now barely time enough left to enable us to get off the mountains before darkness set in. A start was at once made down hill towards the head of Glen Gairn. The long slope was covered with snow in splendid condition; but it was not steep enough (it was about 30°) to allow us the pleasure of a glissade. On reaching the bottom we crossed the Gairn, and rapidly surmounting the shoulder of Creag na Dala Bige, where we saw two large herds of deer, we, in due time, struck the path leading to Invercauld House, and finally reached our night quarters at Inver shortly after seven o'clock. We had not even seen Ben a' Bhuid.

Next day we visited Lochnagar *via* Glen Gelder. M'Connochie made straight for the summit. The rest of us, having a particular object in view, descended the steep slope above the loch. Here steps had to be cut in the hard snow, though had all the party been provided with ice-axes this would not have been necessary. Our object was to ascertain, from the climber's point of view, the possibilities of "the crags that are wild and majestic"; and we subjected them to a pretty close survey. But for the approaching darkness, an attempt would have been made on the "Black Spout." It was necessary, however, to get clear of "the most difficult ground on the whole Balmoral estate" while it was yet day, and we had to bow before the inevitable.

In spite of much that has been said to the contrary, I think the Black Spout might have been done, though it would not have been easy in our circumstances. In summer the ascent is child's-play, and although we, in our unorganised condition, *might* have failed, there should be no difficulty which a properly equipped climbing party could not readily overcome, even in mid-winter. I should state that I have never climbed the Black Spout; my opinions are merely formed upon what I saw on 2nd January, and on what I have heard regarding summer ascents. There are several other "shoots" in the face of the cliffs which I would commend to the attention of the "cracks" of our Club. They will find among "the steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar" plenty of scope for "first ascents" both summer and winter. That several of these will be successfully accomplished I do not doubt; at all events there is room for much interesting work.

W. TOUGH.

BEN LAWERS.—In spite of its 3,984 feet, bulky Ben Lawers 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 sixteen-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, which may almost be described as a "new route" will be found, it is believed, under certain conditions of frost and snow, to put a pretty severe tax upon the powers of the average hillsman. This is the route which a small party of three, composed of William Douglas, J. H. Gibson, and the writer, followed during a recent ascent (5th February 1893).

A start was made from Killin along the North Tayside road at 9.20. It was a morning abhorrent to the souls of mountaineers bent upon "Alpine" work. Everything ran with moisture, from the clouds and mist overhead to the loch on our right hand, and the muddy road under foot. In the circumstances, ice-axes and a coil of rope must have appeared quite as ridiculous as skates in June, but we had reason, later in the day, to congratulate ourselves on having brought them. Leaving the road about a mile to the S.W. of Lawers Inn, we skirted the wooded flanks of Meall Odhar (1,794 feet), and rising steadily over grassy slopes, now dank and sodden with last night's rain, struck the Lawers burn at a height of 1,500 feet. Our old enemy the mist, which had gradually retreated before us as we ascended, now took up a position high enough to expose the snow-clad summits of Meall Gruaidh, Meall Garbh, and An Stuc, whose steep rugged sides, all seamed and scarred with ice, formed a striking picture of Alpine grandeur, as they soared out of the dark valley, which

winds round their base. Lochan a Chait is the very sanctuary of this wild scene, and when we reached it at 1.5 we sat down for a quarter of an hour to enjoy the surroundings and discuss our subsequent route. The mist, which had risen from An Stuc and his neighbours, still obscured the face of Ben Lawers, and beguiled us into the error of attacking the steep snow slope in front of us, instead of working our way up some steep rocks, which lay rather more to the east. Thus, instead of striking the summit directly, we emerged, after a weary and monotonous grind over snow, which only became hard as the top was neared, upon a narrow ridge considerably to the south of the cairn. Up here, on the crest of the ridge, the wind was bitterly cold, and the snow which, lower down, was in a melting condition, was frozen into all manner of beautiful shapes, amongst which feathers and leaves were the most common. Presently the cairn loomed through the mist, and while we stood on its top at 2.15, the curtain of mist rose for a couple of minutes, and spread out before us a magnificent panorama of snowy mountain tops and brown heath-clad valleys, over which detached fragments of mist and cloud raced furiously on their wild course eastwards. The descent to the col between Ben Lawers and Ben Ghlas lay over slopes which the chilling blast had paved with a thin coating of ice, so slippery in places that, after several falls, it was deemed prudent to call in the aid of the rope. Below the col all traces of ice had disappeared, and in its place were isolated tracts of sodden snow, through which we floundered and splashed till the snow, in its turn, gave way to grass, and from the grass, following the course of the Allt an Tuim Bhrìc, we stepped at last on to the road. Thence a walk of an hour and a half brought us back once more to Killin, which was reached at 5.45.

W. BROWN.

BEN VORLICH, Perthshire, 6th February.—As the record of one's failures is sometimes as instructive as that of successful climbs, the following notes on our Ben Vorlich tramp may not be without their use. Our excursion, as originally planned, included the ascent of Ben Vorlich in a direct line from the head of the right-hand branch of Glen Vorlich to the cairn; then by the rocky buttress of Stuc a Chroin to the top of that mountain, and along the ridge of Beinn Each to Callander; but unfortunately, owing to the abominable condition of the weather, most of this had to be omitted. It was not actually raining when we (Gibson, Brown, and Douglas) left Lochearnhead Station at 8.45, but the mist lay low on the hills, and a dirty sky overhead did not promise much for a fine day. Passing Edinample and Ardvorlich Cottage, and turning into Glen Vorlich, we were soon enveloped in a genuine Scots mist, that not only obscured all landmarks and prevented our selecting the most "sporting" way up the north face, but penetrated our raiment with astonishing rapidity. After an exceedingly monotonous trudge of an hour to the head of the glen, we ascended to the ridge about a quarter

wind when we reached the top of the ridge met us with the force of a hurricane, and being at the same time heavily laden with a close wetting mist, our position was distinctly the reverse of pleasant. Staggering along against wind and rain, guided by the dilapidated wire fence, which was still festooned with its winter mantle of icicles, we reached the cairn at 11.30. Things now became so uncomfortable that we were not long in agreeing to go no more that day in search of fresh adventures, and to make straight tracks for Callander. Turning our faces southwards, with compass and map in constant use till we joined the Comrie road, we arrived at Callander shortly after three o'clock. The whole day's outing was a disappointment. There were none of those lovely peeps through parting mists which are worth hours of clear weather, and that so often tend to make a walk of this description enchanting. The temperature also was above freezing point, and everything ran with water. Even short blizzards of hail and snow would have been preferable to a long day in weather such as this. Notwithstanding, when rejoicing in the comfort of dry clothes and a good dinner, we looked back on our day's discomforts with singular complacency.—W. DOUGLAS.

BEN VENUE IN A SNOWSTORM.—On 26th February Howie and Douglas climbed this hill. The day was one of the wildest description, with a blinding storm of snow and wind, that soughed loudly over the hill tops from the north-east. The papers of next morning showed that this storm had raged with great violence in all parts of Scotland. Leaving Aberfoyle at 9.30, we kept the side of Loch Ard till we came to the farm of Ledard, at the foot of Eas Chagill. Following this burn to its source, we crossed the bealach at the head of its eastern fork, and carefully steering by compass and map we reached the cairn (2,393 feet) at 3.45. The storm did not make itself felt till we had nearly reached the tops of Ben Venue's shoulders, we having until then been quite protected from the wind in our deep and narrow glen. On reaching the bealach before referred to, the full force of the storm struck us, and whirled round us volumes of snow dust, with much noise and flurry, rejoicing in its strength and in the opportunity of having two undaunted mountaineers to wrestle with. Fortunately for us the falling snow was soft; had it been otherwise I don't think we could have stood against it, for by keeping a little below the ridge on the lee side it was at times just bearable. No view, of course, was had from the top, except of Nature in her wildest mood! and, leaving the subsidiary peak unclimbed, a bee line was taken for Gleann Riabhach. We followed the burn that flows down this glen for a short distance, and then a weary tramp of three miles, over an uninteresting stretch of moor on snow-covered heather, brought us to the Trossachs and Aberfoyle road; and four miles more landed us at our hotel again shortly after seven o'clock.—W. DOUGLAS.

THE FANNICHS AND THE TEALLACHS.—An informal Meet was held at Dundonnell at Easter, the chief object being to climb and photograph the Teallachs. A special attraction was the report, unfortunately not true, that one of the peaks had never been ascended. As the Fannich hills lay almost in the direct route to Dundonnell, several of the party took them on their way. On Thursday night, 30th March, Messrs W. Wickham King, Hugh T. Munro, and J. Rennie (the last named after a week's rambling in the west) met at Garve, and drove on Friday morning to Loch Fannich Lodge, from which they traversed the whole of the main ridge of the Fannichs, descending in the afternoon to Loch a Bhraoin, and thence going on to Dundonnell. Messrs W. Douglas, W. W. Naismith, and Gilbert Thomson came to Garve by the first train on Friday morning, Douglas and Thomson having spent the night on the journey. Douglas had undertaken to convoy the baggage to Dundonnell, and therefore had to leave at Garve to take the mail coach, while the other two went on by train to Lochluichart, walked to Loch Fannich, and followed the route of the first three over the hills. The wind was high, and rain or snow fell almost continuously. Dundonnell was reached about eight.

Next day, Saturday, after a start in a drenching downpour, the weather cleared up beautifully, although there were occasional snow squalls. The photographers, Douglas and Rennie, took the Teallach ridge from one end, the remainder starting from the other, and the two parties met and passed at the roughest part of the ridge, giving the photographers a chance of shots at their companions. The ridge was extremely interesting, though not difficult, and the rock gave splendid hold for hands and feet.

Sunday was spent very quietly, some of the party going to church at Ullapool, and returning across the hills, while others took the hills first, and attended an evening service at Dundonnell. On Monday morning the party broke up, Munro, Rennie, and Thomson returning home, Naismith going for Ben Wyvis on his way to Inverness, while Douglas and King left for Kinlochewe to have a day or two among the Torridon hills, climbing Sgur Ban and Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair on the way.

GILBERT THOMSON.

SNOWCRAFT IN SCOTLAND.—I have read with great interest Mr Naismith's valuable contribution on this subject, which forms a good sequel to Mr Pilkington's article, "British Hill Climbing," in the Badminton Book on "Mountaineering." There is one matter, however, I would like to recall to Mr Naismith's memory. He says that ice is rarely met with. Now many of the Highland hills are particularly well watered, they abound in springs and runnels. In the winter these get frozen, and it is no uncommon thing to come upon large patches—little rivers indeed—of ice on the slopes. These can generally be turned, if they are too steep or too slippery to be crossed comfortably; but as they are frequently covered up with a slight depth of snow it is

well to be prepared for them. I well remember Mr Munro and myself getting some nasty tumbles, under such conditions, on Meal Ghaordie, in December 1891; but then darkness was coming on rapidly when we were still above the snow level.

I recollect a very pretty little snow *arête*—a wintry formation Mr Naismith says he has never really encountered—on Ben Oss, in April 1891. The snow was lying to a great depth—many feet I fancy—on the saddle connecting this mountain with Ben Dubh Chraige; and for some little distance—fifty or eighty yards—on the ridge, the wind had piled it up as a steep little comb of great sharpness.

Avalanches, or something of that nature, I have seen twice in Scotland. At the Dalwhinnie meet in May 1891, while the others of the party were on Ben Alder, and I was on Sron Coire n'h Iolaire, a mass of rock that must have weighed a good many tons fell from a cliff near the top of one of the great buttresses of Ben Alder, and went rumbling and crashing down the snow slopes. The other occasion was on a corrie on Ben Dor, also in the month of May, when some lumps of rock came bumping down one of those icicle-fringed cliffs, smashing the colossal pendants, and raking the slope beneath for some distance. On very steep ground—in summer—you are occasionally apt to be bombarded by stones sent down by sheep scurrying away above you. On the whole, however, danger from above—of the nature of falling material, unless indeed it be loosened by some of the party—is not much to be apprehended in Scotland.

I was considerably interested by the account, in last September number, of the electrical phenomena observed by some of our members among the Tyndrum hills. The only previous mention I have seen of this, in Scotland, is in one of "Nether Lochaber's" pleasant books—"Betwixt Ben Nevis and Glencoe," if I mistake not.—J. G. STOTT.

BEN CRUACHAN'S NORTH FACE.—On 2nd April Cruachan was ascended by a party consisting of Prof. Bower, Rose, and Fraser Campbell, accompanied by a guest from London—Mr C. C. S. Moss. Beginning the ascent at the Falls, Meall Cuanail (3,004 feet) was crossed, and the main peak reached about 2.30.

On the following day Cruachan was again attacked by Messrs Maclay, Rose, F. Campbell, and Moss. Leaving Loch Awe by train at 7.50 for Taynuilt, they crossed the ferry at Bun Awe, and proceeded along the shores of Loch Etive to Glen Noe, a district of exceptional beauty, which however was obscured by a heavy mist lying low down on the hills. Following the glen (Noe) for some miles Coire Chat was reached about 11.30, and the real ascent was begun about 12 by a ridge running up to the left of the corrie. This afforded an hour and a half of delightful climbing, free from any real difficulty, but diversified by one or two steep snow fields, and some good rock-work. A dense mist covered the hills to the very top, and the weirdness of the scene was heightened when from the cliffs below the cairn a solitary raven

flew out with a hoarse croak and disappeared. This ridge ascended was, we believe, a little to the right of the face ascended by Messrs Gibson, &c., in March of last year, when the climatic conditions were much more unfavourable.

The top of Stob Dearg (3,611 feet) was reached about 1.30, and the main peak half an hour later. Time pressed, and a rapid descent was made into the great corrie, and across the burn and round the side of Beinn Bhuiridh, the hotel being reached just in time to enable some of the party who were returning home to make a hasty toilet, snatch a bite of lunch, and catch the 5.5 train south.

The expedition is an altogether delightful one, but it is recommended that more time be given to it, as it cannot be done really comfortably in less than ten hours.—T. F. S. CAMPBELL.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

THE ORDNANCE SURVEY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. By Lieut.-Colonel T. PILKINGTON WHITE, R.E. Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons, 1886.

AN untechnical account of how our maps are made, and of the State Department maintained for their production and revision, should interest all map users. We have this in the above work.

Starting with the questions, What is the Ordnance Survey? How did it begin? and how is it carried on? the author gives an account of the origin, rise, and methods of the Ordnance Survey. We can only refer those wanting detailed information to the book itself, and proceed to pick out some of the main points in his treatment of the subject.

From a climber's and walker's point of view the O.S. might be defined as the Government organisation responsible for the maps of the country, and indirectly for the coloured imitations and reductions derived from them. But the O.S., in its wider sense, renders services to all classes and professions,—to engineers, landowners, politicians, on one hand, and archæologists, geologists, and astronomers, on the other. It is a modern Domesday Book, using maps and drawing rather than writing as a means of expression, and it is as a Domesday Book and historical document that it will be regarded in time to come, with this great advantage in favour of the O.S. maps and records that they will be, by their revisions, a living and not a dead record.

The idea of making a topographical survey of the kingdom originated out of the troubles of the '45 rebellion. The military authorities felt that the difficulties of moving troops in the mountain districts of Scotland would be lessened by the possession of reliable maps of these parts. Accordingly, Lieut.-General Watson, an engineer, with the help of William Roy, assistant quartermaster-general, surveyed the district round Fort Augustus. This was in 1747. This military survey sketch was extended to the Lowlands of Scotland, was interrupted in 1755.

and little more done till 1783, when the French and English governments agreed to determine the relative positions of the Paris and Greenwich observatories.

William Roy, now a General, was appointed to superintend the operations on the English side. In 1784 he measured a base line of over five miles on Hounslow Heath, and by 1787 had carried down his stations to the Kentish coast, and in October of that year the triangular connection with the French stations was completed.

In Chapter II. triangulation is explained as the fixation of a number of points over the area of a country. A base line is carefully measured, and the angles between it and a distant point instrumentally observed. The length of these two sides is calculated. These three sides in their turn form base lines on which other triangles are built, and this process is repeated till all the main points of the country are fixed. These large triangles are split up into smaller ones to be measured and mapped by the surveyor.

This process seems to be simple enough, but allowances have to be made for curvature of the earth's surface, for refraction, for deflection of the plumb line, for instrumental and personal errors of observation.

The longest side of triangle observed (111 miles) was the line across the Irish Channel between Sca Fell Pike in Cumberland and Slieve Donard in County Down.

To resolve the observations obtained in the field, brings the O.S. into the sphere of the higher mathematics and astronomy.

From 1791 work was resumed by Roy's successors, Captain Mudge and Lieut.-Colonel Edward Williams. The Hounslow base line was remeasured, and in 1794 a base of verification nearly seven miles long was measured on Salisbury Plain. In 1798 another base line of verification was measured at Sedgemoor in Somerset. Out of these operations data were collected to determine the terrestrial measurement of meridional arcs and of parallels for longitude, leading on to the determination of the probable general figure of the earth.

From 1803 to 1824 work was carried on generally in England from south to north, spreading into Wales, and across to the Isle of Man, and into Scotland up the east coast to Fife. The publication of maps on a scale of one inch to the mile was also carried on pretty steadily.

In 1824 the survey of Ireland was begun on the six-inch scale, and finished in 1842. In 1827 a base line was measured on the shore of Lough Foyle.

In 1838 the triangulation of Scotland was resumed, and in 1852 the grand primary triangulation of the United Kingdom was finished.

The accuracy of the work done may fairly be described as wonderful, for when the length of the Salisbury base was computed from the Irish base, 350 miles distant, the computed length differed from the measured length by less than five inches.

Chapter V. contains a history of the battles of the scales, and a list of the various scales in which maps are now published.

Chapter VI. gives an account of how the surveyor, working from

the "trig." stations, goes to work to do his share of map making. The division of labour necessary to complete a map reminds one of the making of a pin. One set of men does the triangulation, another the surveying, others plot the measurements on paper, engrave, reduce to smaller scales, print, and so on. Others are responsible for the place-names, antiquities, and description of whatever may be on the ground. Then these puzzling points are explained—the correct representation of sloping ground on a map, and sea-level—which last for Great Britain is the level of mean-tide at Liverpool.

Up to 1855 the National Survey Department was immediately responsible to the Honourable Board of Ordnance—hence the name, Ordnance Survey. Since then it has passed under the control of two departments, and is now under the Board of Agriculture.

The services rendered to public departments by the O.S., amongst others, are—co-operation with the Admiralty in the survey of the coast line, supplying special maps to the Metropolitan Sewerage Commission, maps for the Board of Health and War Office, and for the Foreign, Colonial, and Indian Offices.

The facsimile reproduction of old MSS. and books, such as the "Great and Little Domesday Books," by photozincography, is another sphere of the Ordnance Survey's activity, and one which is little heard of.

Chapter VIII. is on the comparison of the various national measures of length—the metre, toise, yard, &c.—with one another, and on the connection of the British and French triangulations in 1861—repeating Roy's work of 1787—and the measurement of a grand arc of parallel in latitude 52°.

The discovery of photozincography gave a great impetus to the quick publication of good and cheap maps. It is now possible to turn out a first edition of the six-inch map a few weeks after the ~~1870~~ plans come to Southampton. It was by learning the details of this process, and applying them to French maps, that the Germans in the war of 1870 were so well acquainted with French territory.

Colonel White ends his very interesting description of over a century's work by an appeal for a constant and regular revision of the existing maps.—J. RENNIE.

[*Note on Old Scottish Maps.*—Before the time of the Ordnance Survey there were many maps of Scotland in existence, and although they are very incomplete, it is extremely interesting to trace in them the gradual rise of our geographical knowledge. Had these early map-makers given us an account of how they gained their knowledge of a country so uncivilised as ours then was, it would have been nearly as interesting as the maps themselves; but, alas! in some cases not even the compiler's name is known, and only the maps themselves remain to tell their story.

little information as to be not worth consideration), is a manuscript map of the thirteenth century. The original is in the Bodleian Library. An excellent reproduction in facsimile of it is given in the Nat. MSS. of Scot. (Part III.). It is a most wonderful piece of work, with cathedrals, castles, mountains, &c., drawn in relief. A stag is placed on the top of one mountain, and a wolf on another.

(2.) Another old map is also reproduced in the Nat. MSS. of Scot. (Part II.). It is a facsimile of one that appears in the only MS. copy known to exist of Matthew Paris's "Chronicle," and is thought to be of the thirteenth century also. This map is still more extraordinary than the foregoing, for among many other ridiculous blunders, it perpetuates the old idea that Scotland was divided into two by the sea,—the north portion, called "Scotland beyond the Sea," joined to the south merely by a bridge at Stirling.

Of the early printed maps that I have seen, the following is a list of the most important :—

(3.) 1578. A map of Scotland is published with Bishop Leslie's "De Origine Moribus et Rebus Scotorum" (Rome, 1578). Very few of the few existing copies of this book contain the map, but a reproduction of it is given in "Scotland before 1700" (Edin. 1893).

(4.) 1592. A map of Scotland is published in Plantin's splendid "Atlas of Abraham Ortelus" (Antwerp, 1592). A copy of this is in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

(5.) 1595. A map of Scotland in two sheets is published in an Atlas printed at Dusseldorf in 1595 at the expense of the heirs of Gerard Mercator. It is reproduced in "Early Travellers in Scotland" (Edin. 1891).

(6.) 1611. A map of Scotland is published in John Speed's "Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain" (London, 1611).

(7.) 1654. Blaeu's Atlas of Scotland (Amsterdam, 1654), called "Theatrum Scotiæ." This Atlas contains, besides a map of Scotland, 45 district maps on a larger scale. In the dedication to John Scot, of Scotstarvat, dated from Aberdeen in 1648, it is stated that Timothy Pont, in collecting material for these maps, went over the whole country on foot, visiting all the islands with their hostile and barbarous inhabitants, and that no one had done this before. To Robert Gordon, of Straloch, was entrusted the preparation of Pont's maps for the engraver, and to Pont's were added those of Fife, Aberdeen, Banff, Moray, Ross, and Sutherland, from Gordon's own survey and measurements.

Each of these seven maps shows an advance in geographical knowledge on the one previous, and since Blaeu's Atlas appeared there are no better maps until those of our own day.—ED.]





Sketched from a Photograph taken July 1893.
THE PINNACLES OF SCURR NAN GILLEAN FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

Vol. II.

SEPTEMBER 1893.

No. 6.

THE PINNACLE ROUTE AND WESTERN RIDGE OF SGURR NAN GILLEAN.

BY W. W. NAISMITH.

SGURR NAN GILLEAN has three main ridges, running respectively S.E., N., and W. The tourist route reaches the summit by the first of these. The other ridges, which are narrower and more serrated, have been several times referred to in the *Journal* (Vol. II. pp. 5, 172, and 214), but they both give such splendid rock-climbing that it will probably not be out of place if, at the command of my fellow-traveller the Hon. Editor, I try to give some further information about them.

With the reader's consent, I would ask him in imagination to climb the mountain by the northern ridge, or "Pinnacle Route" as it is called, and to return by the western ridge, which connects Sgurr nan Gillean with Bruach na Frithe. This climb has several recommendations. It is a grand example of the best sort of work one gets in the Coolins. It can be done in all weathers, for there is little difficulty in finding the way in mist. Of all the Coolin expeditions moreover, it is the nearest to Sligachan Hotel, and can be accomplished by good climbers within eight hours. The route may be reversed without adding appreciably to the difficulties.

As seen from Sligachan, the N. ridge is "end-on," and the lower pinnacles cannot be distinguished, except when a background of cloud forms behind any of them. For the sake of clearness, I had better repeat the explanation

already given in the *Journal*, that the pinnacles are usually numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, *going upwards*. The fourth, or second highest, is called "Knight's Peak" or "Knight's Pinnacle," and the fifth is Sgurr nan Gillean itself.

There are numerous ways of approaching the first Pinnacle. The easiest, and in point of time the shortest of them, is to keep the ordinary Sgurr nan Gillean route* for nearly half-a-mile beyond Loch a' Choire Riabhaich, till you are well over the ridge, and close under a line of perpendicular cliffs on your right. You then turn W., and make straight for the lowest Pinnacle up gentle slopes of grass and debris. Another and more difficult way is to leave the ordinary route where it crosses a ridge before reaching the Riabhach Corrie, and scale the rather smooth rocks at the end of the Pinnacle ridge (shown in profile in the accompanying illustration). Climbers may also ascend the first Pinnacle from the Bhasteir Corrie by several gullies and ribs of rock, of various degrees of difficulty. One gully, followed by Mr Douglas and myself, was easy.

From the first Pinnacle, at a height of between 2,500 and 2,600 feet, the Pinnacle Route follows, as nearly as may be, the crest of the ridge, "up hill and down dale," to the summit of Sgurr nan Gillean. Some of the obstacles to be encountered might be shirked by omitting the third and fourth Pinnacles, and looking for an easier path below them on their E. side, but that would not be *playing the game*. The drops between the first and second Pinnacles, and between the second and third are quite short and simple, and the real climbing only begins at the foot of the third Pinnacle. There the character of the ridge changes, and from that point to the top of Sgurr-nan-Gillean—involving altogether about 600 feet of ascent and 180 feet of descent—the climber's hands are almost constantly employed. At one or two places considerable care is needed.† The upper part of the third Pinnacle (height by Dr Collie's measurement 2,920 feet) consists of a large mass of gabbro, poised

* The track is for the most part indistinct or non-existent, but occasional stone-men mark the line.

† Especially so when the route is reversed, and the steep rocks of Sgurr nan Gillean and Knight's Pinnacle have to be descended.

insecurely on the top of other loose blocks. The descent of this Pinnacle is by way of a shallow gully on the Bhasteir side of the ridge, and the drop into the gully is a little trying. The usual way follows the crest of the ridge for forty feet beyond the cairn, and then, turning to the right, goes down ten feet of perpendicular rock. The holds though good are far apart, and if the last man has not a long reach, he had better pass the middle of a sixty feet rope round a convenient block above, and hold both ends as he descends. It is not a place to go down with a run, because the rocks below slope steeply and end in a precipice. Mr Charles Pilkington discovered an alternative method of reaching the gully in question without a rope, namely, by its W. side, at a point some thirty feet nearer the top. Once you get into it, the gully is simple enough.

From the next col, the ascent of Knight's Pinnacle starts with a traverse to the right along a ledge. The ledge overhangs the Bhasteir Corrie, it slopes outwards, is littered with loose chips, and at one part is very narrow. You soon leave it by one of several chimneys, and so regain the line of the ridge. The route to the top of the Pinnacle can be considerably varied according to "the taste and fancy" of the mountaineer. Although some of the rocks are steep, and there is a risk of dislodging stones—*the chief danger in the Coolins*—the climbing is easy. Knight's Pinnacle has two tops, both of them delightfully acute, the northern being rather the higher (3,000 feet). Starting from between the two tops, the descent is made by a ledge on the right (W.) side of the main ridge, which is readily found. It may be remarked that, considered as a distinct mountain, Knight's Pinnacle affords a good climb from whatever side it is taken; and it would certainly be looked on as a fine peak, if it were not overshadowed by its big neighbour. Talking of that, one ought to be careful to say nothing of a confidential nature on Knight's Peak for the "neighbour" is sure to repeat every syllable.

At the col between the fourth and fifth Pinnacles the climber is confronted by an impossible tower. This he skirts by descending slightly on the Bhasteir Corrie side, round an awkward corner. From the cleft beyond the

tower, the route goes up smooth, but not steep rocks, with few holds for the first ten feet. Afterwards the ascent is similar to that of Knight's Pinnacle; and, like it, it may be varied a good deal. Half a dozen zig-zags eventually land you in a notch, through which you look down into Lota Corrie. The notch is on the western ridge, and only twenty yards from the cairn on the summit of Sgurr nan Gillean (3,169 feet).

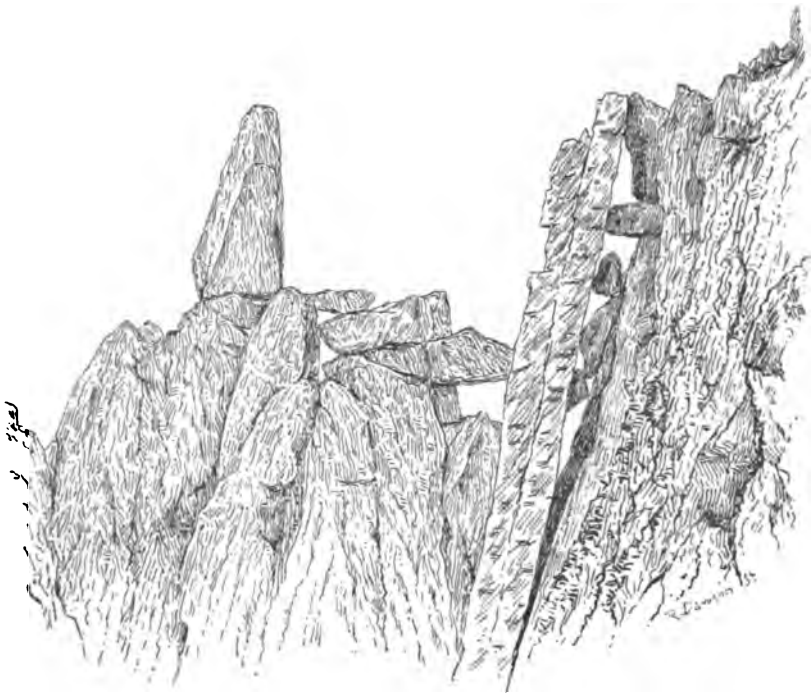
Space forbids any attempt to catalogue all that can be seen from that commanding position. Suffice it to say that the panorama, in clear weather, is one of the most charming and extensive in the whole kingdom. Alas that it is so seldom clear! Out of four visits the writer was only once fortunate in finding the top free of cloud.

The Western Ridge, by which we shall descend, as described by Mr Pilkington, "is broken into all kinds of graceful pinnacles, and affords an interesting climb."* The crest of the ridge frequently dwindles to a knife-edge, with sheer cliffs on both sides. A climber can, however, make his way from Sgurr nan Gillean to Bhasteir without leaving the ridge, excepting at one point, a short distance E. of Bealach a' Basteir, where a straight drop of about twenty-five feet must be circumvented, by returning a few yards, and going down a chimney (forty feet high) on the N. side.† Shortly before reaching the straight drop, a difficulty is encountered, in the shape of a gap in the ridge, about ten feet deep, and as many wide (see illustration). On the near side a trap dyke, woefully in need of *pointing*, crosses the ridge at right angles, and projects from the surrounding rock, which has crumbled away in the most extraordinary manner. On the far side of the gap rises a small gabbro *gendarme*, tapering to a point, referred to by Mr Maylard as "the Tooth of Sgurr nan Gillean" (*Journal*, Vol. IV., p. 6). At the bottom of the gap one or two large blocks are wedged. The ridge

* *Alpine Journal*, Vol. XIII., p. 435.

† Half-way between Sgurr nan Gillean and this place, any one desirous of shortening the climb can leave the ridge by a long, straight, and apparently easy chimney ("Sheriff Nicolson's Chimney"), which leads down to the screes at the head of the Bhasteir Corrie.

here is narrow and falls precipitously to Lota Corrie on one side and Bhasteir Corrie on the other. Underneath it is perforated by a perfect network of holes, and looks decidedly insecure. When Mr Douglas and I first viewed this sequestered spot one stormy evening, the passage of the cleft promised to be sensational, if possible at all—indeed, we hardly thought it would “go.” Before retrac-



THE TOOTH OF SGURR NAN GILLEAN (LOOKING N.).

From a Photograph taken July 14, 1893.

ing our steps, however, we adopted a plan which succeeded more than once in critical places in the course of our Coolin scrambles. We camped in full view of the difficulty, discussed it leisurely, smoked a pipe over it, made fun of it, and finally—strolled across without much trouble. On arriving at the *policeman* already alluded to, we climbed

him until we could put our arms round his neck, and so swing ourselves right round him, and drop to the ridge at his back. This "bad step" is undoubtedly the *pièce de résistance* of the ridge.

From the Bealach a' Basteir—the lowest part of the whole ridge—there is an easy route down into either corrie, or the ridge may be continued towards Bhasteir and the Bhasteir Tooth. If you should return to Sligachan by the Bhasteir Corrie in mist, all you have to do is to keep the Bhasteir Burn in sight, until you reach the open moor above the gamekeeper's cottage; but it is advisable to avoid a ravine below the loch, by crossing a ridge of ice-worn rocks to the right. The ravine contains a linn which some adventurous mountaineers swam through on one occasion, but which is impassable if one wishes to observe "the ordinary mountaineering proprieties."*

Whether the party should be roped together or not, while they are upon those Coolin ridges, must be decided by the climbers themselves. Probably the rope adds to the security in a climb such as that described, so long as due care is exercised to prevent its pulling down loose stones. Nearly everywhere among those rough crags, one readily finds firm projecting knobs, over which a bight of the rope can be hitched, so that, in case of a slip, the whole party would be hung up, as it were, on a hat-peg.

* *Alpine Journal*, Vol. XV., p. 433.

DIARY OF A WEEK'S RIDGE-WALKING IN
THE NORTH-WEST OF SCOTLAND.

BY J. RENNIE.

HAVING agreed to join some members of the Club at Dundonnell for a few days' climbing at Easter on the Teallachs, I wanted, on the way there, to see some parts of Scotland new to me. I could find no one to accompany me on this preliminary trip, so made up my mind to go alone.

I left Glasgow on Wednesday, 22nd March 1893, for Fort-William *via* Oban.

Thursday, 23rd March 1893.—Fort-William. Started for top of Ben Nevis at 8 a.m. A bright and frosty morning with every promise of a splendid day—which was amply fulfilled. I may as well describe the weather I had for this and the next eight days as nearly perfect for climbing,—a little too hot perhaps. The mornings up to 10.30 were clear and frosty. From then till 1 p.m. the hot and thirsty stage lasted, if a top or ridge exposed to the slight eastern or northern airs had not previously been reached. From about 1 p.m. to sundown was the most enjoyable part of the day. Usually during the afternoon the route was along some ridge near the 3,000 feet contour, with a magnificent panorama of hills on all sides; those to the south and south-west showing up well with their snow-covered corries and slopes. My route was over Bridge of Nevis and up Glen Nevis by road and pony track to the wooden hut about 2,000 feet level. I carried a camera, clothes, maps (12 lbs. in all), and an ice axe, and was inclined to take things easy the first day. I left the track a little past the hut and struck straight up the hill over hard snow, sighted a row of posts and cairns at 11.10 a.m., and arrived at Observatory at 12 noon. After a rest there and a chat with Mr Omond, I went out to inspect the snow slope and ridge leading to Carn Mor Dearg. It was in too dangerous a condition, soft snow over hard, for me to attempt descending it alone. I left the top at 1.50 p.m., returning for three-quarters of a mile on my upward route,

then north to edge of cliff which I followed along westwards, photographing the north slopes of Ben Nevis and the Carn Mor Dearg ridge till I got to Carn Dearg (3,961 feet). From this I made for the hut on pony track, getting there at 2.55, and passing over one snow slope which afforded a 40-50 yards glissade. From the hut I walked north, down the glen (Allt Coire an Lochain), over the moor, and arrived on high road at the lodge of Inverlochry Castle at 4.25. The rest of the day was a road walk *via* Highbridge to Gairloch Inn, 7.30 p.m., during which I often looked back on the slopes of Ben Nevis bathed in the evening light. I should mention that the bridge at Highbridge is out of repair; I crossed it by going over the one parapet left, on all fours. Gairloch Inn, very comfortable indeed—after you have persuaded them to put you up.

Friday, 24th March 1893.—Left Gairloch at 8.25 a.m. North by road to Bunarkaig, over hill through wood to Mile Dorcha—a fine tree-shaded road—up Gleann Cia-Aig, keeping the burn on my left hand. Hot work in the sun and without a breath of wind. At 12.10 p.m. lunched half-mile to the south of house marked Fedden on map, then turned east and zig-zagged up the grass slope of Sron a Choire Ghairbh, 3,066 feet. Got to cairn at 2.30 p.m. and spent half-an-hour admiring the grand corrie to the north and picking out the hills to N. and W. which I intended to climb within the next two days. Creag a' Mhaim stood out well. I kept on over grass and snow round the edge of the corrie N. and E. in the direction of Beinn Tee to a point about one mile N. of the Sron a Choire Ghairbh cairn, then turned W. of N. and made a bee line down hill across hags and heather to Greenfield, crossed the river Garry by boat at ford, and on by road to Tomdown Inn, 6.30 p.m.

Saturday, 25th March 1893.—Left Tomdown Inn at 8.40 a.m. by road for Clunie Inn, kept it up Glen Loyne to mile stone marked 1,310 feet level in 1 in. O.S. Up Creag a' Mhaim S.E. slope by stalking path to cairn, 12.50 to 1.15 p.m. A magnificent panorama with some mist on distant tops. I walked along ridge to Aonachair Chrith cairn, 2.45 to 2.50 p.m. Here a snow squall came on; I got out of this by going down a snow slope, knee-deep and slushy, in

direction of Clunie Inn. At 3.30 I was off the snow and 1,420 feet below the cairn. Clunie Inn, 4.40 p.m.

Sunday, 26th March 1893.—Clunie Inn. Leaving at 11.15, I took an easy day up Carn Fuaralach, top 1 p.m. Strolled in sun along ridge to Sgurr a Bhealaich Dheirg, 3 p.m. Basked there in sun, photoed and picked out surrounding hills till 4 p.m. Down in S.E. direction into corrie, at first over soft snow then grass to Clunie Inn, 5.15 p.m. A most enjoyable day for weather and view.

Monday, 27th March 1893.—Left Clunie Inn, 7.50 a.m. Kept Tomdown road to point marked 1,310 feet level on 1 in. O.S. S.E. of Creag a' Mhaim. Thence by stalking paths up Glen Loyne, and down to Alltbeithe. A dreary walk—day, sullen and grey—the only sound, the croaking of a pair of ravens away up the hillside in the mist, and for live things in sight some deer in the distance and an eagle which beat about ahead of me till I got well over the watershed. Mist and rain hung low down on hills to W. and S., and kept me from climbing Gleourach as I intended. After lunch near Alltbeithe, the sky showed signs of clearing, and at 1 p.m. I started up E. face of Sgurr Coire nan Eiricheallach. Long before I got to top the sky had cleared overhead with the distant views as fine as ever. I shall not soon forget the view spread around me by the time I had walked along ridge to Sgurr a Mhóraire cairn—hills, sea, and lochs spread out on all sides and mellowed by the golden light of the afternoon sun. Right under me was Loch Hourn like a black ragged trench cut in the landscape. There is a curious stone man on slope to N.E. of Sgurr a Mhóraire cairn. I should guess it to be thirty feet high. I saw it first from the ridge half-way between Sgurr Coire nan Eiricheallach and Sgurr a Mhóraire cairn. From this line it stands out against the sky; it cannot be seen to advantage from the south. From the Sgurr a Mhóraire cairn I dropped down the steep hillside to Kinlochourn, and got to the farm about sunset. My watch stopped to-day, evidently objecting to the rough life it was leading, so I had to go by the sun for the rest of the trip. Not getting a bed at the farmhouse I went on to Macmillan's at Skiary, and after some persuasion got put up for the night. This is not

a place for a party of three or four climbers to suddenly descend on with demands for beds. Better make arrangements beforehand, and come prepared to rough it in the matter of accommodation. I may mention as a set-off that I found the food good and abundant, and that the beer was excellent.

Tuesday, 28th March 1893.—Got up when I thought the day was aired enough, and found it after 9—a glorious morning, sun actually shining on this side of the deep gash. At 10 a.m. was put over loch in boat to north side. Ladhar Bheinn to the west looked like an 8,000 feet hill twenty miles off, through the clear air and with the bright morning sun lighting up the snow corries and black rocks on its eastern side. From the sea beach I had a hot little pull up through some scattered trees and brushwood, and was reminded by seeing my first primrose for the season that the lower world was thinking of spring. Within two hours I was up again among bare rocks and patches of snow near Sgurr na Sgine cairn. Thence I dropped to bealach towards The Saddle. Climbing up this slope I startled the largest herd of deer I had yet met, and got a snap shot at them as they filed over a broad patch of snow above me. I gained The Saddle ridge near eastern end, but did not climb the rocky point with cairn on it at eastern extremity, contenting myself with photoing it. I turned ~~east~~ and north keeping the ridge, and passing Sgurr na Creige, Sgurr Leac nan Each, and Sgurr a Gharg Gharaidh. This ridge and the corrie with loch at bottom was a most impressive sight. The grey rocks, streaked with long snow-filled gashes, stood out clear and distinct under the brilliant sunshine. Here there are any number of snow gullies to be “cut up” by our alpinists, and rocks enough to amuse a rock-climbing party for days on end. I lounged slowly along this ridge, crossing the edge from N. to S. many times, and opening up at every turn new combinations of rocks and snow. The south side is tame and grassy, but the corrie to the N. and W. of this ridge, in the condition I saw it, is certainly the grandest I have seen in Scotland. But the longest day has an end, and from Sgurr a Gharg Gharaidh I hurried down the glen to Shiel Inn, where I arrived late in the gloamin, well

satisfied with my long, but by no means fatiguing, day on the hills.

Wednesday, 29th March 1893.—Left Shiel Inn at 9.10 a.m., and took high road as far as Croe Bridge. Evidences of a recent flood all round here. Tons of stones and gravel washed down from hill face to north, and deposited like a top dressing several feet thick on the grass fields alongside river. Kept on a track up the Amhainn Chonaig and on over the Bealach na Sroine. Thence over hags and heather down to the Falls of Glomach—very little water falling over owing to the recent dry weather. After lunch, south, keeping the east side of stream running out of Loch Gaorsaic and Loch a Bhealaich to south end of latter. A weary hot grind over soft and broken ground, with never a sign of the track marked so beautifully on 1 in. O.S. I worked up the N.E. ridge of Beinn Fhada, keeping almost to track of dotted line in 1 in. O.S. and got to the 3,383 cairn late in the evening. The sky was now overcast and weather showed signs of breaking, and altogether it was not an inviting out-look for more ridge wandering, so I made off down the hill almost in the direction of Sgurr Fhuaran to the river Croe half-mile N.W. of two or three houses. By track down the glen to Morvich, thence by high road to Shiel Inn, about 7.40 p.m. A fatiguing hot day—mostly under the 1,400 feet level.

Next day I left by mail cart for Strome Ferry, thence rail to Garve, where I was joined by Messrs Munro and King that afternoon. The day after, with them over the Fannichs in a wetting mist to join the Teallach party at Dundonnell Inn.

LOCH EUNACH, SGÒRAN DUBH, AND THE WESTERN CAIRNGORMS.

BY H. T. MUNRO.

FAR away, up in the recesses of the Western Cairngorms, lies Loch Eunach. It can be reached from Aviemore Station by a fair carriage road—a short two miles to Coylum Bridge, whence about eight miles due south. The situation of this loch, surrounded by a grand amphitheatre of mountains, is magnificent, and among the wildest and most impressive scenes of its kind in Scotland. Great splintered granite cliffs rise for upwards of 2,000 feet from its shores, and although not so steep but that they can be easily climbed, there are many places which might afford good scrambling, not to mention gullies of every variety of steepness, where the snows linger late into the summer, and in which the—in Scotland—rare treat of an unbroken glissade of at least 2,000 feet may be obtained. Immediately above the east side of the loch, the big plateau of Braeriach attains an elevation exceeding 4,000 feet. The highest point of the mountain lies a mile farther back, and is not in sight. At the head of the loch the cliffs are neither as steep nor as high, nevertheless they rise 1,000 feet above the loch, and two small burns tumbling over them add to the beauty of the scene. The finest point of all, however, is about the centre of the western side where the natural cairn of Sgòran Dubh, 3,658 feet above sea-level, immediately overhangs the loch.

Sir Archibald Geikie, in his "Scenery of Scotland," page 199, says of the granite of the Cairngorms, that "it combines in its decay a grandeur of lofty cliff, with a smoothness of mountain top which none other of the Highland rocks can boast;" and this is strikingly exemplified here, for climb by one of those snow gullies, or, if you prefer it, those rocky ribs which run right up to the summit, and you will find yourself standing on a vast undulating table-land over which, for a distance of more than five miles in a straight line, you might almost canter a horse without ever going below 3,000 feet. To the west and

south it slopes away gradually to the Glen of the Feshie, which, with its tributary, the Eidart, forms three sides of a square enclosing this plateau.

The view is, of course, very similar to that from Braeriach, though naturally not quite as extensive. Due east across Loch Eunach rises Braeriach itself. Beyond it, and across the Learg Pass, Creag na Leacainn, and the other summits leading up to Cairngorm, from here, as from most other points, looking high, but uninteresting. Over its left shoulder Corryhabbie is seen, with Ben Rinnes—thirty miles to the N.E. Sgòr an Lochain Uaine—locally called the Angel's Peak—and Cairn Toul, are hidden by the big Plateau of Braeriach. To the right of this plateau Cairn na Glasha is seen, both Lochnagar and the Glasmaol being hidden. Near at hand to the S.E. are the round uplands of Monadh Mòr and Beinn Bhrotain, which hide most of the Cairnwell Hills. Càrn an Rìgh, however, is in sight. A little to the east of south all four tops of the Beinn a' Ghlo* range are seen over An Sgarsoch—3,300 feet, and Càrn an Fhìdhleir—3,276 feet. Just to the left of the Athole Beinn Dearg, but double as far away, one gets a peep of Farragon. Schichallion does not look well, showing his broadside. The Ben Lawers range behind, and beyond, and to the right a mass of hills—among them the Glen Lyon mountains and Cruachan. Ben Alder very conspicuous, the depression between it and the group immediately to the north, being very marked; among the latter, Sgòr Iutharna—Stott's "lancet edge,"—showing up well. Much closer—eighteen miles W.S.W.—Meall na Cuaich, near Dalwhinnie, stands above his fellows. The Creag Meaghaidh range—thirty miles off—looks massive and well, with some fine crags, and a curiously sharp-cut cleft to the north of the blunt cone of its main peak. In the depression between this range and the Ben Alder group, the Ben Nevis range stands out, with just to the right of it, a great distance off, a hill, which is either one of the Ardgowder mountains or Frosbheinn (Rosven), in Moidart. West, across the monotonous uplands of the

* I include the massive shoulder called Airgìod Bheinn, see Vol. II., page 242.

Monadhliaths, is a noble diorama of Western Inverness-shire and Ross-shire mountains, in variety of outline far eclipsing all else in sight. Sgòr na Ciche at the head of Loch Nevis, upwards of sixty miles away, Càrn Eige and Mam Sodhail, Sgùrr na Làpaich, the whole range of the Fannich hills showing very clear; the Ross-shire Beinn Dearg—sixty-five miles away, and then the long ridge of Ben Wyvis N.W., with some lower mountains away to the N.E. of it. In the foreground, the eye wanders to the south over the uninteresting moorland already described, but to the west and north there is a charming view of Strathspey, while, as before said, to the east there is the grand cauldron of Loch Eunach, with Braeriach rising behind it.

I had in February 1890 (Vol. II. p. 47), made the high level circuit of the loch, but of the western table-land had only ascended the highest point, Sgòran Dubh. On the 13th April last, tempted by the glorious weather, I determined thoroughly to explore the range. The day previous a slight sprinkling of fresh snow had fallen on the tops, and in the night there was a sharp frost. Under the influence of the hot sun, however, all traces of it speedily vanished. The day was absolutely still, the sun hot, and the views good, so that not only were some two and three quarter hours spent in halts, but the pace was slow, although the short grass and moss was dry and springy to walk on. The following times, therefore, cannot be taken as a guide :—

Lynwilg Inn	...	...	...	...	7	A.M.
Foot bridge over Spey, below confluence of Feshie	...	...	...	...	7.45	"
Geal Chàrn—the "white cairn," 3,019 feet	...	...	...	...	10.35	"
Meall Buidhe—the "yellow hill," 3,185 feet	...	...	...	...	11.20	"
Sgòran Dubh <i>Mhor</i> —"the greater black Sgòr," 3,635 feet	...	...	...	...	12.25	P.M.
Sgòran Dubh <i>Bheag</i> —"the lesser black Sgòr," 3,658 feet	...	...	...	...	12.55	"
Càrn Bàn—the "white or fair cairn," 3,443 feet	...	...	...	...	1.45	"
Meall Dubh-achaidh—the "hill of the black meadow or haugh," 3,268 feet	...	...	...	...	2.15	"
Meall Tionail—the "hill of the gathering," 3,338 feet	...	...	...	...	3.10	"
Druim nam Bo—the "ridge of the ox," 3,005 feet	...	...	...	...	3.30	"
Diollaid Coire Eindard—the "saddle of Corrie Eindard," 3,184 feet	...	...	...	...	4.40	"
Top half-mile S.S.E. of Lochan nan Cnapan, 3,009 feet	...	...	...	...	5.40	"
South Plateau of Braeriach, 4,149 feet	...	...	...	...	6.45	"

4,061 feet Cairn Braeriach	...	...	...	...	7	P.M.
Top above Loch Coire an Lochan, Braeriach,	4,036 feet...	7.10	„			
Foot of Loch Eunach	...	...	...	...	7.45	„
Lynwilg <i>via</i> Coylum Bridge and Aviemore	...	...	...	...	11.15	„

The ascent of Geal Chàrn is best made by the north shoulder to avoid the steep pull to the intermediate height of Creag Mhigeachaidh. The height—3,019 feet—is from the 6-inch map. There are two cairns some minutes' walk below the real summit.

A third of a mile to the S.E., a very small 3,000 feet contour on the 1-inch map indicates a pretty little stony top; the slight depressions on each side do not, however, justify its being counted. Meall Buidhe is the local name for the N.W. end of the next 3,000 feet contour; it is a good top, unmarked by any cairn—height, from the 6-inch map, 3,185 feet. Between it and the north top of Sgòran Dubh—called locally Sgòran Dubh *Mhor*—is another doubtful top. Sgòran Dubh *Mhòr* has a large cairn. The southern and highest summit, locally known as Sgòran Dubh *Bheag*, has only a natural cairn. Between the two, at the edge of the cliffs, is a semaphore for signalling to the bothy at the foot of Loch Eunach. A third of a mile S.S.W. from Sgòran Dubh, in the direction of Càrn Bàn, some rocky ground on the moor is dignified on the 6-inch map with the name of Sgòr Ghaoithe.

Càrn Bàn, which has a cairn with a stick on it, is a mere swelling on the moor,—a good “top,” but it should not in the 3,000 feet tables in Vol. I. have been reckoned a separate mountain. Meall Dubh-achaidh, marked by a cairn and stick, is very similar, and is also a doubtful “mountain,” though a good “top.” Meall Tionail, separated from it by the fine corrie of the Garbhlach, may more properly be considered a mountain, both on account of its distance from Sgòran Dubh and of the corries which partially isolate it. Its summit is marked by a triangle of three sticks about a foot high, with a fourth in the centre. Druim nam Bo (height 3,005 feet, from the 6-inch map) is a mere shoulder—not even a top. Diollaid Coire Eindard (name from the 6-inch map) is the point marked 3,184 feet on the 1-inch map. Although undignified by any cairn, its

distance from Meall Tionail—one and a quarter miles east, as well as its nearly equal height, entitles it to be considered a "top." From here it is an hour's walk to the mossy excrescence on the moor which constitutes the top above Lochan nan Cnapan. Its height, 3,009 feet, is from the 6-inch map; without a cairn it is difficult to say where the highest point is, so broad and flat is the moor. Still it falls away decidedly all round, and is an undoubted "top."

The big southern plateau of Braeriach is too well known to need description. The 4,149 feet and 4,061 feet points have well-built cairns, though the latter should scarcely be considered a top, and has not been counted in the tables—the 4,036 feet top above Loch Coire an Lochan has no cairn. The sunset view was magnificent, the west being particularly clear, and the pink afterglow quite Alpine. The gullies descending to Loch Eunach were filled right to the lake with old snow in splendid condition for glissading. During the day some large snowfields had to be crossed, but the walking was mostly on dry moor. A few deer, several eagles, and a large number of snow buntings, mostly in pairs, were seen. Near the top of Diollaid Coire Eindard, a small nest was found, unfortunately without eggs. Except the glissade to Loch Eunach, the whole climb could have been done on horseback. This range suffers from its proximity to the higher Cairngorms, and does not receive the attention which from its great height it deserves.

STOB COIR AN ALBANNAICH AND GLAS
BHEINN MHOR.

BY FRANCIS J. DEWAR.

A HEAVY thunderstorm which broke over Dalmally district in the early hours of the morning, after two days and nights of almost tropical warmth, augured well for clearer skies and cooler airs. But the accumulations of electricity were not to be so easily dispersed, and next morning the heat was as great as ever—heavy sulphurous clouds lying low on the horizon betokening a further disturbance. But the stalking season is rapidly approaching when the Club must debar themselves from at least the “forested” country; and where in a season such as this the deer are in forward condition, and stalking will be general by the first week of August, it should be kept in mind that by intruding on the forest in the last fortnight of July it is quite possible to materially affect the sport of the beginning of the season. For example a herd of deer may have systematically frequented a certain limited portion of the forest all summer, and the forester on whose beat they are may have carefully noted their haunts at different periods of the day and arranged his plans accordingly for stalking. During the heat of the day they may be perhaps on the higher parts of the hills, and towards evening feeding in some grassy corrie. The forester moreover will know almost with certainty for what point they will make when disturbed, and he will thus be able to carry out a successful stalk, if not at the first attempt, then at the second. But if the amateur, be he solitary hillman or gregarious tourist, disturb the quiet of the forest, it may be that he will shift a whole herd from one forest to another, not to return perhaps for weeks. And this, it may be noted, is more particularly the case when the wind is in the east or north, as for some reason which does not appear to be very clearly understood deer are more restless and on the alert when the wind is blowing from these points, and when disturbed they are very apt to travel a considerable distance before again settling down. “To do to others as we would be

done by" is a golden rule in this matter as well as in many others, and being given from November to mid-July without let or hindrance the run of the bens and glens in the "forests" of Scotland, the public who *will* into them, and fortunately they are few in number, should leave them undisturbed to the stalker during the remainder of the year. Such being my views, I determined on Saturday, 8th July last, to make without further loss of time another expedition to the famous Blackmount Forest, and climb Stob Coir an Albannaich, Glas Bheinn Mhor, and Beinn nan Aighean.

When, at this time last year, we climbed Ben Starav from Dalmally *via* Glen Strae and Glenkinglass, I am not ashamed to confess that on the homeward journey we found the ascent and descent of the bealach between these two glens a very severe strain at the end of a long day, and now being a year older and, will I say, stiffer, I did not contemplate a repetition of it on this occasion with equanimity, more especially as Stob Albannaich is even more distant than Ben Starav. To shorten the day, therefore I took the early train from Dalmally to Taynuilt* and the steamer from Bonawe pier to the head of Loch Etive

The beauty of the loch and its surrounding bens upon that morning beggars description. There at least the thunderstorm had for the time cleared the atmosphere, and it was early enough (9 a.m.) to prevent the heat haze from yet obscuring the hills. The mighty mass of Cruachan with Bens Chochuill and Eunaich, Stob an Duine Ruaidh, and Starav and Chaorach, flanking "the wild loch" to the right, the hills of Benderloch on the left, less in altitude it is true, but most striking in their steep rock faces and deep-cut watercourses, and in the foreground the giant spurs of Bidean nam Bian, Ceitlein, Clachlet, and the Buchaille Etives, make up a picture of surpassing grandeur.

The head of the loch is reached at 10.30, and the tourists for the Ballachulish coach are disembarked in one large boat, while I am honoured by the courtesy of Captain Darroch with a special boat to the south side of the loch,

* Edinburgh, 4.45; Glasgow, 5.10; Taynuilt, 8.54; Steamer from Bonawe Pier, 9.

thus obviating the difficulty of crossing the Etive, which after last night's rain was running pretty fast. A rough track leads from the point of disembarkation, along the foot of Ben Starav, and past a stalker's house, to the junction of the Allt Mheuran with the Etive. The hill on the farther side of this burn is Ben Chaorach, but it and Stob Albannaich are practically one. Nothing is to be gained, however, by ascending from this point, but the burn should be followed, as within a hundred yards it opens up a gorge of remarkable beauty, for the view of which alone it would be well worth while to come a long distance. A reference to the map will show that the burn drains not only the big corrie of Ben Starav and Stob Dheirg, but also the north face of Glas Bhein Mhor, and the corrie between that hill and Stob Albannaich. There must, therefore, at times, be a great volume of water to be discharged into the Etive, and it has made for itself a deeply cut channel of separation through the solid rock between Ben Starav and Ben Chaorach, which in some places, and especially at the junction of the three burns, is so deep as to be almost unfathomable to the sight, although no wider than an active man could jump across. Whether viewed from above or below, the effect is equally fine, and the view of Bidean nam Bian from the confluence of the burns forms a unique background to the whole.

Leaving this point, a toilsome ascent through grass and heather is redeemed by the grandeur of the surroundings,—the rounded cone of Glas Bheinn Mhor on the south, with its companion hill (unnamed on the maps), and the magnificent corrie of Ben Starav, with the "ruined castles" of the rocky ridge of Stob Coire Dheirg. In due course I reach the huge tableland extending without a break, and, if it were not for the figures of the Ordnance Survey, one would say, with a scarcely perceptible gradient between the cairn of Chaorach (2,848 feet), and the cairn of Albannaich (3,425 feet). Our late respected Editor used to speak of the forty acre croft of Ben Alder. I do not know what he would have styled the tableland of this hill. To me it looked like nothing else than a huge golf course with bunkers and all complete, but some seventy or eighty red

deer and a covey of young ptarmigan rather militated against this idea.

At one o'clock, two and a half hours' easy going after leaving the steamer, I reached the cairn which I may say was as eccentric as the hill, being wide, flat, and *turfed over*, with quite a heavy crop of grass upon it, ready for the scythe. I was greatly disappointed with the tameness of the hill, but then I had been "brought up" by Stott to expect great things of it. Its name—which, both in the vernacular and as translated ("the round top of the Scotsmen"), is a very fine one—must have misled both him and me. I need not explain why. Any members of the Club who have heard Stott's pronunciation of it, *ore rotundo*, will easily understand how he conveyed to one's mind the impression that it was one of the mightiest of the Highland bens. *Slainte Joseph*,—may I climb it, and many another good hill, with you yet!

But a thunderstorm is gathering from the south, and over Cruachan and all the hills it is growing forebodingly dark. There is no time to lose if I am to get up Glas Bheinn Mhor and Ben Aighean before the storm breaks against them. I therefore rapidly descend the 800 feet to the saddle connecting with the former hill, and as hurriedly ascend a like distance. This "big grey hill" has no cairn, perhaps because the Ordnance Survey people exhausted themselves over that of its neighbour. But there is no time to spare in making a careful examination, for now the storm is on me, and I am too near the lightning, which, both forked and sheet, is playing all around me, while the rattle and the roar of the thunder at this altitude is literally awful. I accordingly seek the south face and descending about 500 feet make my way by the deer tracks to the col, from which ascends the north-east shoulder of Ben Aighean. The face is steep, and at no time an agreeable walk, but this is not an occasion to pick and choose, as the storm increases in fury, and now the rain begins, and in a couple of minutes I am thoroughly soaked. Truly such a storm as this is very grand and very awful, but I would like a companion to share it with. I cannot help speculating whether if blinded by one of those almost

unintermittent flashes I would walk uphill or down. But I dismiss all such thoughts as too gruesome. The loneliness and the darkness are enough of themselves without conjuring up imaginary mishaps.

At the saddle between the two hills I call a momentary halt and contemplate Ben Aighean, but the storm is now if possible worse than before, and I do not like the idea of getting some 2,000 feet nearer these vivid flashes of lightning. They are close enough down in the glen. I therefore take my way homewards. By the time the Kinglass is reached the storm has rolled away northwards, and is now growling among the "hills of thunderbolts" above Ballachulish.

From the top of Stob Albannaich to the top of Glas Bheinn Mhor took me about half-an-hour, and from the lower hill to Dalmally (exclusive of lunch and pipe at the Kinglass) the time was a little under three and a half hours, but then I was going fast on account of the storm.

A WALK ACROSS THE FANNICHS.

BY GILBERT THOMSON.

A NOTE in the last number of the *Journal* gave a brief account of a visit paid to Ross-shire by some Club members, and from that it would be noticed that the real object of the visit was the Teallachs, and that the Fannichs were merely taken on the way. They are, however, interesting hills, and of considerable height—the highest peak reaching 3,637 feet. They are sometimes spoken of as the Ross-shire Alps, and as seen from the road near Ullapool, they have an air of great dignity. The central peak has a curious resemblance to the best known photographs of the Matterhorn, the profile being *a little* less steep. The ridge, however, is perfectly easy from end to end, and cannot in that respect rival its prototype.

Among the points in which Scotland, from the climber's point of view, does rival the Alps, the latest is the possession of "exhausted centres." The various meets in the neighbourhood of Tyndrum, Dalmally, and Loch Awe, have made these districts familiar to the Club veterans, and a number of them decided to utilise the Easter holiday by going farther afield than the official meet at Loch Awe. Dundonnell was fixed on for headquarters, and as the party was to gather from all directions, the muster was to take place there on Friday night, 31st March. For transport, an arrangement was made that a conveyance from Dundonnell would meet the Ullapool mail coach at its nearest point, and take one section of the party with all the luggage, while the remainder of the party, after crossing the Fannichs, would be met by a second conveyance at Loch a' Bhraoin. The arrangements turned out as follows:—Rennie, after a week's climbing and photographing in the west, reached Garve on Thursday, and was joined by King and Munro. The three were to start early on Friday, walk past Lochluichart—a nearer station, but no train there till 11.20—on to Loch Fannich, and so over the hills. Naismith, who was already in the Inverness district, was to meet Thomson (who would leave Glasgow on Thursday night), at

Dingwall on Friday morning, and the two, going by train to Lochluichart, were to follow the previous party, adding their quota of luggage to the pile already at Garve. Douglas and some others were to leave Edinburgh early on Friday, go to Garve, pick up all the luggage, and go on by coach. The programme was varied to this extent that Douglas's companions did not turn up, and he, in bitterness of spirit at finding himself left alone, came on to Perth by the last train on Thursday.

So much for impersonal introduction. The remainder must be a narrative of personal experience. The unexpected meeting with Douglas at Perth transformed the writer's solitary journey into something much more enjoyable, and the "mixed" Highland train became quite endurable.

Breakfast and a stroll in Inverness, meeting with Naismith at Dingwall, parting from Douglas at Garve, and reaching Lochluichart at twelve o'clock (forty minutes late), filled up the forenoon, and Naismith and I started to tackle the Fannichs, and to make up our list of joint peaks to about thirty. It began to rain as we left the station, but it was only a single shower (of six hours' duration), and it cleared up just before we reached Loch a' Bhraoin on the other side of the Fannichs. It was heavy while it lasted, and by way of variety it "whiles snawed." We both disapprove of "record" climbing, but occasionally circumstances are too many for us, and on this occasion we had promised to reach Loch a' Bhraoin as soon as possible after six, and we had each a bet of one penny with Douglas that we would be at Dundonnell by nine. The pace was therefore pretty fast. Starting from the station, we soon diverged from the high road on to a private road, and before long began to suspect that the earlier party had not carried out their programme exactly. We could see no trace, on the unfrequented road, of hobnailers; but we did see hoof marks, a carriage and pair having evidently gone and returned. Our suspicions afterwards proved to be quite correct.

As we came near the base of the hill, a deep corrie was prominent in front; and immediately to the left of it, a

bold and steep spur of the hill. We had walked about five miles, and had now reached the place where the road turns sharply to the left for Loch Fannich. Some friends had told us that there was hereabout a corrie out of which no human being had ever got except by the entrance, although a stag, hard pressed, had oncè succeeded in scaling the surrounding cliffs. The corrie before us answered the description very well, and we had some ambition to be the first human beings to go up. Time, however, was pressing (we were at this point, as we afterwards found, full three hours behind the others), and a snow gully at the upper end looked as if it might be a hard nut to crack, especially as the snow bore traces of falling debris. We therefore attacked, instead, the rocky rib to the left, and found that although steep, it was perfectly easy. Halting for lunch under an overhanging rock, we formed not a bad example of "British Hill Weather," although our shelter was a trifle better than in the "Mountaineering" picture. Once on the top, it was evident that the ridge itself presents no difficulty. Munro describes it as remarkably straight, the north-east side being characterised by some grand cliffs and corries, with wild lochans, or tarns, in their hollows, while to the south-west the ridge falls away in gentle slopes. His experience, like our own, was rain and fog practically all day. From the top we had a look down into the big corrie, and decided that the stag had no special credit in getting up. The main snow gully as we saw it would be easy; steps could be kicked or at most scraped all the way. It might, of course, be different in other circumstances. The ridge is broad, and our walk from Loch Fannich to Loch a' Bhraoin was almost a straight course from south-east to north-west, the precipitous side, sometimes heavily corniced, being close on our right all the way.

We crossed An Coileachan (3,015 feet, with a dip of several hundred feet beyond) and Meall Gorm, which is merely a spur of Meallan Rairigidh (3,109 feet), and reached the last at three o'clock. Each of these is marked by a cairn. (I should say that for most of the topographical information I am indebted to Munro, who not only kept note of what was seen on the hill, but has examined the

six-inch maps for heights, &c., and has sent me his notes.) A halt of fifteen minutes was made at Meallan Rairigidh, while a second instalment of lunch was disposed of. Another descent of two or three hundred feet, and an almost equal amount of climbing brought us to Meall nan Peithirean, marked by a flat cairn, but not prominent as a peak. From it there is a tolerably steep pull over patchy snow to Sgùrr Mòr, the highest of the range. This we reached at five o'clock, and found that the descent on the other side was the only bit of real scrambling in the whole ridge. It was not much after all, but as the descent was over rocks, some fast and others loose, and all coated with snow, it formed an agreeable relief after the grassy ridge we had previously traversed. The summit has a big cairn with a stick in it. Following on this sharp descent, we had the only difficulty in the way of steering. From a small summit, Carn na Criche (3,148 ft.), three-quarters of a mile on from Sgùrr Mòr, the main ridge takes a sharp turn to the left, leading on to Sgurr nan Clach Geala (3,581 feet), the second highest of the range. There would be no difficulty in following the ridge, but as we wished to keep right on for the loch across Meall a' Chrasgaidh, we had to quit the main ridge and take a subsidiary one. At this one point we had some difficulty, and had to steer carefully through the mist by compass, the tendency to keep the main ridge being unconsciously very strong. The previous party had experienced exactly the same difficulty. We reached Meall a' Chrasgaidh (3,062 feet) at 5.45, and as the weather was beginning to improve, we were able soon after to distinguish Loch a' Bhraoin below us. Naismith goes down a steep place as easily, and with as little apparent concern, as an india-rubber ball, and he set a pace which sadly troubled his companion to imitate. At 6.30 we reached the road in a state of very thorough saturation. Various reasons had caused our companions to modify their plans, and we found that they had picked up Douglas and gone on with the luggage, leaving the second conveyance, a dogcart, to wait for us. They had left a message, which we did not notice, written on the ground, but after a little skirmishing about we got hold of our trap. They had most fortunately left our bags, so that

we had the wherewithal to change, and we added one more to our list of queer dressing-rooms by getting out of wet and into dry garments while jogging along towards Dundonnell. The modest occupant of the back seat had got into a condition of sansculottism when the alarm was raised that several ladies were coming, but the inherent improbability was too great, and the fiction had not the desired effect.

The drive to Dundonnell is a most beautiful one, and the long steep stretch of road is hemmed in by the steep hills on one side, and the narrow river gorge on the other. The Teallachs, with their masses of giant masonry picked out with white, showed beautifully as we drove along in the gloaming, and raised high our anticipations for the morrow. It must be left to some one else to tell how these anticipations were fulfilled. We reached Dundonnell about 8.30, and found that if the leading three had been lazy in the morning, they made up for it at night, as they had walked from Loch a' Bhraoin with the waggonette following. We had crossed the Fannichs in a little over five hours, from Loch Fannich to Loch a' Bhraoin, but the hour longer which the others spent on the ridge is really a more suitable allowance. The only halts were those made for eating purposes, the view being entirely hidden except just at the cols, at some of which we got below the mist level for a few minutes.

SGURR BAN AND MULLACH COIRE MHIC
FHEARCHAIR.

By the Mountain Pass from Dundonnell to Kinlochewe.

BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

EXTENDING from the rugged northern shores of Loch Maree to the sheltered waters of Little Loch Broom, lies a vast tract of mountainous land still retaining that glorious seclusion which a country given over entirely to deer must always possess. The oft-quoted Dr MacCulloch, from the elevated summit of Ben Lair, let his eye wander over this uninhabited district, and, in the highly coloured language of his time, tells us that in describing mountain scenery it is usual to speak of rocks and precipices, whether present or not; but that here they exist without any need of exaggeration. "There is the reality in this district," he says, "and not merely the name—mountains whose faces show the very skeleton of the earth, in all the details of its stratification for miles together, with deep and wide valleys of enormous dimension, bounded by vertical acclivities, just as the little ravines of torrents are in other places. Everything is gigantic and terrible, wild, and strange, and new."*

The idea of walking through this glorious country had for years past been one of my pet schemes, and although some five summers ago I came to Dundonnell for the purpose of making out this excursion, it was unrealised until last Easter. On this occasion I was with a party of the S.M.C., and one of them, an ardent geologist, agreed to accompany me—his enthusiasm being fired by hearing that a home of the newly discovered fossil, *Olenellus trilobites* had been found near the head of Loch an Nid.

The morning of 3rd April was cold, dull, and unpromising, with a wetting mist hanging low on the mountain sides, hiding completely the familiar outline of the jagged Teallach range, that had formed, for the last few days, the scene of our climbs; but remembering Mr Pilkington's promise of lots of fine weather in most wet days,† we

* "Highlands and Western Islands," 4 vols., 1824; vol. ii., p. 302.

† "Badminton Mountaineering," p. 326.

decided to go, and by eight o'clock were stepping eastwards from Dundonnell, heavily laden with our marching kit of ropes, rucksacks, and axes. For three miles we followed the Braemore road and then turned to the south along the rough cart tract that commences opposite a place named Corryhallie, on our maps, and, leading through Gleann Chaorachain, rises steadily till it reaches Loch Coire Chaorachain in two miles.

Up and up we went, with a long swinging stride, over this hill road, and with our collars buttoned tightly round our throats, for now it was raining hard, we gained the summit level of the pass (1,250 feet). Now we were favoured by a bright interval that revealed, as far as the eye could reach, a sodden and desolate moor of heather, bog, and stone, receding with the shoulders of the encircling mountain masses into the coiling wreaths of mist that rested on their sides.

Still holding to the well-defined track, we gradually descended some 500 feet, and seven miles from Dundonnell, entered Strath na Sheallag, a broad green valley, with the east end blocked by high cliffs from which tumbled a magnificent waterfall, with a noise that echoed far and wide; and to the west the long Loch na Sheallag disappeared from view into the heavy banks of rolling mist.

Here we left the path to make a short cut, and crossing with a running-jump a deep but narrow stream, we traversed some rough and boggy ground, and encountered another rainstorm before we found the path again. It had by that time dwindled into merely a bridle path leading for four miles through the narrowing glen as far as Loch an Nid, whose placid surface, as we passed it, lay in dead calm, making it appear weirdly lonely and gloomy under the dark light of its misty canopy.

An interesting feature in the view at this point was the well-defined strata of rock on the naked lower slopes of Sgurr Ban. The great western shoulder of this mountain presented a perfectly smooth and unbroken surface sweeping down to Loch an Nid at one uniform angle, with no vegetation growing on it to speak of.

Rounding the head of the loch, we crossed its feeding

burns. In one of these, called in the six-inch O.S. map, Allt Meallan an Laoigh, and flowing from Sgurr Ban, the fossil my friend was in search of had been found.

By this time it was half-past twelve, the mists were rolling back on the hills, and above the swiftly flying clouds, occasional visions of blue sky held out fair promises of finer weather for the rest of the day. I had taken up my position on a heathery knoll, lazily watching the distant Teallach pinnacles, one by one, shaking themselves free from their airy mantles, while my friend with the hammer was hard at work whacking stones in the burn below. Half-an-hour thus passed, and then he joined me with his hands and pockets laden with rocks, and another half-hour went in discussing our sandwiches, and in wrapping up specimens in the disused papers.

To the west of us, rising into the mist, were great slopes covered with boulders of broken quartzite, almost rivalling in whiteness the fields of shrunken snow-drift that still hid large portions of its surface. These were the shoulders of Sgurr Ban (*i.e.*, "the white scaur") and Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair (*i.e.*, "the hill of the corrie of the son of Farquhar") that towered their summits some 2,000 feet into the mist above us. We decided to ascend both these hills, not only for the sake of the climb, but to take the aneroid height of the latter, which is not stated on the Ordnance map, and has given rise to some conflicting evidence.*

From the head of Loch an Nid we turned to the west, and in following the Allt Meallan an Laoigh struck a very remarkable bit of rock formation. A natural high road of about twenty to thirty feet broad extended up the mountain side for nearly half a mile, in the centre of which rushed a large body of water. The whole extent of this roadway is composed of a single sheet of basal quartzite of the Cambrian, from which the stream had washed off all the debris soil, exposing the dazzlingly white surface of the rock, dipping to the loch at one uniform angle. The centre

* Had we continued due south from Loch an Nid, we should, in some four miles of cross country walking, and with only a rise of some 500 feet, have joined another bridle path at Loch an Fada, leading, in nine miles more, to Kinlochewe.

of this road must be hollowed out to hold the rapid burn, but to the eye it appeared level, and as the mountain torrent, clear as crystal, races along, rising in cascades wherever it comes in contact with horizontal cracks in the bed, the effect is truly marvellous.

This must be what attracted Pennant's attention in his voyage from Dundonnell to Kinlochewe, in 1772, when he tells us:—"On the west side is an amazing mountain, steeply sloping, composed of a whitish marble, so extensive, smooth, glossy, and even, as to appear like an enormous sheet of ice, and is no doubt as slippery."* The "roadway," however, was not slippery, and gave to our hobnailers a fairly good foothold, as we paced up it with giant strides; and we were only too sorry when it disappeared into the coggly blocks of broken quartzite.

Half-an-hour of "experience does it,"† and we came to a field of snow of the right angle and hardness to walk on with comparative ease, and this led us the rest of the way to the top of the mountain. The mist all the while had kept step with us, steadily rising only a short distance overhead, but we overtook it a few paces below the top of Sgurr Ban. On reaching at 3.15, this flat and boulder-strewed summit, we rested awhile behind the large ten-foot cairn that crowns the mountain, to enjoy the magnificent view of mist effects, as ever and anon the airy curtain opened and closed around us, unveiling fleeting pictures of rugged corries, of snow-capped mountains, and of shining lochs and glittering streams winding through dark valleys below. Soon we shaped a course for the col lying to the south of us some 500 feet beneath. Down we went by a steep scree and snow slope, now and then getting a glissade, but as the greater part was over the scree, necessitating jumping from the sharp edge of one boulder to the sharp edge of another, the rate of progress was not rapid. Rising again over the same sort of ground we reached the summit of Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair, at 3.55 P.M. When we arrived there the aneroid showed it to be only

* "Pennant's Tour in Scotland, 1772," p. 328.

† "Badminton Mountaineering," p. 254.

some seventy feet higher than Sgurr Ban, thus making it 3,264 instead of the 3,320 of Mr Phillip's, or the 3,284 of Professor Heddle's measurements. The reading of a more reliable instrument than the aneroid will require to be taken before the true height can be decided.

As from Sgurr Ban, distant view there was none, but there was what to me is always far grander,—mists boiling in profound corries, mists one moment surrounding us, and then parting swiftly, showing snow-seamed cliffs, then quietly blotting out the vision, and again presenting the aspect of wild scenery in ever-varying forms. It was too cold to stay long, and we descended by the right shoulder of the corrie, facing south-east, and running in a direct line for the east end of Lochan Fada. At first our route led us over the large angular boulders that on all these mountains so plentifully abound, and then over the waste of boggy moorland that forms the carpet of Coire Mhic Fhearchair.

As we left the corrie the entire loch came gradually in sight, revealing in the expanded view a gorgeous picture of sombre grandeur, to which I shall always look back with fond recollection. Heavy clouds, richly coloured by the setting sun, were hanging just clear of the dark massive mountains of Slioch and Ben Lair, rising snow-slashed from the still waters of the loch; the long shadows of evening were throwing deep gorges and corries into inky blackness; an intense stillness filled the air, and the profound solitude of our surroundings, all combined to make the scene one of impressive power. Right across the loch, a dark ravine cut deeply into the east shoulder of Slioch, through which the waters of Lochan Fada were racing to Loch Maree, and framed by its steep walls appeared the white peaks of Ben Eighe, shining brightly as a vision of a better world, seen through the depths of the lower regions.

At the east end of Lochan Fada a well-built bridle path begins, leading to Kinlochewe (*i.e.*, "head of Loch Ew"*)

* Loch Ewe was the old name for Loch Maree; in "Blau's Atlas" it is called Loch Ew. Dr Reeves says the present name is derived from the principal island of the lake, Inis Maree, *i.e.*, Maelrubha's Island ("Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.," vol. iii., p. 286).

about nine miles distant. A shorter route leads through Gleann Bianasdail, but this way is rough and pathless, and I doubt not it would be no saving in time.

We found the bridle path at a quarter-past five, and cheerily we made the long miles short by many a story, reminiscence, and song, as we tramped gaily down the narrow but ever-widening Gleann na Muice, reaching the main road before daylight was gone with still three miles more to go. Soon Ben Eighe hove in sight, and then Slioch appeared again from a different point of view. When Lord Cockburn was here in 1841 he saw these black mountains looking at the loch, and he describes the scene thus:—"It is all rock—not the gigantic flags of unbroken rock that inlay the sides of Coruisk, but the ordinary fragments that refer themselves to the mountain mass they have fallen from. It is woodless, ploughless, and nearly heatherless and grassless—a region of stone. It seems as if the genius of sterility had sometimes left Skye, and sat down on the top of Ben Lair."*

Soon we came to signs of habitation, and the first person we met proved to be a keeper, about three miles from Kinlochewe. We were amused at his suspicions as to the purpose to which our rope was put, there being many eagles' nests in the neighbourhood, and he thought we had an eye to their eggs.

At eight o'clock we entered the snug little inn of Kinlochewe, after twelve hours of as pleasant a day on the hills as it is possible to spend; for although we were occasionally wet through, we quickly dried again, and the combination of rain, mist, and sunshine lent that varied charm to the scenery which all lovers of nature must ever admire.

* "Cockburn's Circuit Journeys," Edin., 1888, p. 134.

DEPTH OF SNOW AT BEN NEVIS
OBSERVATORY.

Extract from Mr R. T. Omond's Letter, 1st June 1893.

" I ENCLOSE copy of the depths of snow as measured at a post standing in the centre of the hill top taken on the 1st and 15th of each month. Of course much greater depths are found in wreaths at some places on the hill top.

" Mr Miller has copied this from the Observatory records. . . . The depths on each day are on the daily sheets in Dr Buchan's office."

The years 1883-4 to 1885-6 were deep snow years. 1884-5 has the biggest measurement of the ten, and the maximum depth recorded, 142 in., occurred on 3rd April 1885. The average maximum depth is 89.8 in., and the corresponding date is 15th and 16th April.

The lightest snow year is 1888-9, when the snow, as in this last spring, had melted off the top before the 15th of May.

Judging from this return alone, August and September would seem to be the only months when the top is free from snow, but the daily sheets will probably contain records of slight falls of short duration.

J. RENNIE.

DEPTH OF SNOW AT BEN NEVIS OBSERVATORY—INCHES.

Year.	October 15		November		December		January		February		March		April		May		June		July		August 1		Maximum	Date.
	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15	1	15		
1883	...	...	...	80	70	107	105	114	114	113	105	117	120	80	55	...	...	...	...	...	...	1884	141	May 8
1884	...	...	5	33	46	66	122	119	122	136	135	128	134	124	87	55	7	...	...	...	...	1885	142	April 3
1885	31	34	23	44	44	85	86	85	92	85	122	104	92	94	63	30	...	...	...	...	...	1886	123	" 10
1886	...	...	...	13	43	35	39	44	44	50	49	67	51	15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1887	69	" 28
1887	...	...	...	18	52	46	43	48	56	56	61	67	64	36	23	...	...	...	...	...	...	1888	71	May 6
1888	...	...	...	14	21	33	37	44	44	50	47	53	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1889	57	Apr. 24
1889	...	...	...	3	23	24	65	66	69	82	88	92	70	26	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1890	96	" 25
1890	7	...	...	8	13	10	42	38	35	44	56	58	36	30	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1891	59	May 4
1891	...	...	...	28	50	52	68	69	70	66	57	64	52	30	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1892	74	Mar. 9
1892	23	20	8	14	25	26	41	54	58	60	55	34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1893	66	" 17
TEN YEARS AVERAGE	6.1	5.4	5.3	12.2	31.1	38.7	42.8	57.8	67.4	68.5	72.3	74.9	77.9	78.4	61.9	43.5	22.8	8.8	.7	...	...	89.8	Ap. 15/16	

NOTES AND QUERIES.



EXCURSIONS.

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

BEN WYVIS, Monday, 3rd April.—W. W. NAISMITH left the coach road at Garbad, 4 miles from Garve, and crossed Ben Wyvis to Dingwall. Four of the seven tops were visited in mist, and then a couple of hours were agreeably spent on the snow slopes above the fine N.E. corrie, which is a feature of the mountain. Snow soft owing to recent warm weather. Small loch at bottom of corrie black with gusts of S.W. wind. The day at first stormy, afterwards improved, and ended with a lovely sunset in gold and crimson.

SGURR BAN OF BEN EIGHE, 3,194 feet.—On 4th April, Mr King and I made an ascent of this mountain by the ridge of "the Black Men" from Craig Dubh. The whole of this ridge is seen from Kinlochewe with "the Black Men" sticking up like chimney cans close to the top of Sgurr Ban. The day was gloriously fine, and the view superb. The atmosphere was of such an intense clearness that Skye appeared to be quite close to us. We named every peak in this matchless range, and even had a debate on the different routes we imagined were visible (40 miles away) on the face of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich, so distinct did it appear. The other serrated range, the Teallachs, was also within sight, sharply outlined against the sky behind the ponderous bulk of Slioch. For the rest of the view see Mr Hinxman's admirable article in Vol. I., p. 187. In describing the ridge of "the Black Men" he says that "it narrows to a few feet, and is moreover cut into a series of sharp teeth, separated by deep ugly-looking gullies. The worst of the dividing gaps can only be passed by climbing down upon, and stepping gingerly across, a fallen block that is wedged into the chasm, and which, supported only at two points, seems in anything but a stable position."* The ridge is narrow enough, and on coming to the gap referred to, it looked so bad that I called for the rope, although, as it turned out, it

* *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, vol. i., p. 188.

was hardly necessary. When we got close to the fallen block, lo and behold a safe col appeared to the east of it, across which we walked and climbed the steep face of rock on the other side. Judging from the number of loose stones that had to be cleared away, we said at the time (not remembering what Mr Hinxman had said of it) that this face looked as if it had never been climbed before. We descended by the ridge leading to Sgurr a Conghair, glissading most of the way to the col, and had another short glissade into the corrie on our left. This was one of our "lazy days," and we were not out more than six hours.

W. DOUGLAS.

LEAGACH, TORRIDON.—Mr King and I on 5th April made a traverse from west to east of this isolated mountain. Leaving the road, a couple of miles east of the Torridon Inn at half-past ten, a stiff ascent, diversified by a little chimney work in following the crest of the shoulder lying to the west of the burn that takes its rise and flows southwards from near the top of Mullach an Rathain, placed us on the cairn of the first peak, 3,358 feet, at a quarter-past one, and an hour was spent there. It was exceedingly hot. Some "ridge wandering no shirking" was then indulged in as we gradually worked our way eastwards. First over several pinnacles (the number of which I have forgotten), all formed of Torridon sandstone as rough as a file, and giving a sure grip and foothold, then over a steep slope strewn with angular blocks of broken quartzite on the top of Spidean a' Choire Leith, 3,456 feet. Looking back we were charmed with the view of the unclimbed ridge* of Meall Dearg running with its seven pinnacles due north-east from the top of Mullach an Rathain. Had we known of it earlier we might have tried the ascent by this north-east ridge, instead of from the south, approaching it by following the Allt a Choire Dhuibh Mhoir to its source, from the summit level of the Torridon road.

From the top we glissaded over snow lying many feet deep on the shaded eastern side to the col. From here to near the top of the next peak, the ridge was in places so narrow that a stone with the least touch would roll off the top to either side and disappear hundreds of feet below. The last top, Spidean a Choire Dhuibh Bhig, was left at five o'clock, and the descent by the east face, which at first seemed blocked, gradually opened out as we advanced. There is no water to be found near the ridge, and those likely to be afflicted with thirst should carry a gourd. We reached the road at 6.45 and the hotel at Kinlochewe at 8.

W. DOUGLAS.

COOLINS.—Mr Douglas and I spent part of July at Sligachan. Although the weather was unsettled, several good climbs were accomplished, varied by photography, fishing, and an attempt at golf. The

13th July was devoted to "practice-scrambles" in the Bhasteir Corrie and among the pinnacles and chimneys of Sgurr nan Gillean. On the 14th we ascended the mountain by the Pinnacle Route and descended by the Bhasteir Ridge (see page 285). Next day, in glorious weather, we drove to Glen Brittal, accompanied by John Mackenzie, and made a circuit of the peaks surrounding the wild Corrie Labain—namely, S. Sgumain (by its W. buttress, a grand scramble), S. Alasdair, N.E. Peak, S. Mhic Coinnich, S. Dearg and its Pinnacle. The views from S. Dearg of Skye and the Hebrides under a brilliant sunset will not soon be forgotten. On 21st July, after Mr Douglas had left for Speyside, I took my sister up Sgurr a' Bhasteir, Bruach na Frithe, the Bhasteir Tooth, and Sgurr nan Gillean, the last being ascended by the Lota Corrie face and descended by the Pinnacle Route. On the 22nd Mr F. W. Jackson (of Manchester) and I had a long day's ridge-wandering. Climbing S. Thuilm from Corrie na Creich we *traversed* to An Dorus and went up S. a' Ghreadaidh. From that point we followed the main ridge as closely as possible to Bruach na Frithe, surmounting *en route* the various pinnacles of S. a' Mhadaidh, Bidean Druim nan Ramh, and the Castles. On the 24th, the same party with the addition of Messrs Patrick Duncan and W. M. Geldart of Oxford, and Murdo Mackenzie (a brother of John) as guide, climbed Blaven by its W. face, and went down its N. shoulder by a stiff chimney where the rope was used. Near the foot of the chimney, and just where the Clach Glas ridge joins Blaven, an inviting pinnacle was discovered, which we were told had never been ascended. On one side it is only about thirty feet high, but on the other side there is a long drop. Mackenzie and I got up after a little negotiation, and left a small cairn on the big clump of moss which crowns the pinnacle. The party then traversed Clach Glas and two easy hills beyond, viz., Garbh Bheinn and Marsco. The descent of the N. end of Clach Glas is one of the steepest climbs in the Coolins, but the rocks give such capital holds that we considered the rope unnecessary.

WM. W. NAISMITH.

BEN SGULIAIRD.—This hill, 3,058 feet, lies at the head of the sea loch, Loch Creran, in North Argyle, and between Lochs Etive and Fasnacloich. D. D. Dewar and I climbed it on 15th July last. We took the steamer from Bonawe Pier to the head of Loch Etive, and following the Allt a Bhiorain to the small lochs at the watershed, distance about three miles, we reached the top of the hill about one o'clock. The wind being northerly, we were favoured with a magnificent view, the Cuillins and many of the big hills in Ross-shire being seen to great advantage. Descending the steep north side to Glen Ure, one of the choicest spots among the many beauties of the West Highlands, we struck the road about a mile east of Fasnacloich Loch and *via* Loch Creran side, Barcaldine, and Glen Salach and the Ferry at Bonawe, caught with only a few minutes to spare the last

train (7.10 p.m.) at Taynuilt. We cut things much too fine by spending an hour on the top of the hill, and the last three miles had to be done at such a trot as we could raise at the end of a twenty-five mile day. Result for the next forty-eight hours, very hot feet and "crocky" knees.

FRANCIS J. DEWAR.

SNOWCRAFT IN SCOTLAND.

DEAR SIR,—I read Mr Stott's note under the above heading in the May number of the *Journal*. As Mr Naismith in his paper on snowcraft in the January number very truly says, *ice slopes*, as the term is understood in the Alps, are not met with in Scotland; though, of course, of ice pure and simple we have enough and to spare. I allude to my agreement with Mr Naismith here, because on a kindred topic, I am sorry to say, I entirely join issue with him.

On page 165 of the January number 1893 Mr Naismith says:—"If the climber should come across a piece of 'unmitigated ice,' where it is preferable to prevent a slip than hope to check it after it has occurred, I believe it is better to hold the axe as if glissading, and dig the *spike* firmly into the ice about the level of the thigh, before each step, rather than to use the *pick* as an anchor—the proper method on hard snow, or ice covered with frozen snow."

We are not told whether the climber is supposed to be standing in a step or not—though it may be perhaps assumed that he is—or whether he is ascending, descending, or traversing; but I confess when I read the above-quoted paragraph I felt myself turned into stone, figuratively speaking. For if there be one matter upon which mountaineers may be held to have a settled mind, it surely is that when dealing with ice, in critical situations, the pick must be used, and the pick only.

Mr Naismith admits that "to use the pick as an anchor" is "the proper method on hard snow, or ice covered with frozen snow": then *a fortiori* it is the proper method on "unmitigated ice."

I am quite unable to follow Mr Naismith into the distinction he seems to wish to draw between what ought to be done "to prevent a slip," and what ought to be done "to check it after it has occurred." To my mind these are only different names for the same thing; and on ice that is "use the pick." I take upon myself to assert of my own knowledge that unless ice be of exceptional hardness—ice, in fact, such as I personally have never seen in Scotland, and but seldom in the Alps—a climber is well able, if enough force be used, to get at least a fair hold in ice with the pick, provided always the axe-shaft be kept rigid. Such a hold is quite sufficient to prevent a slip; and even after a slip has occurred, if the pick be driven in promptly the fall can be checked—*crede experto*.

On page 178 of "Mountaineering" (Badminton Library) we are told how to act when on ice of abnormal hardness, viz., "a hole may

be cut to admit the point of the pick at the level of the waist." But I find nothing said about the use of the spike in such a case.

It is true that Mr Dent, when speaking of an *icefall* on the same page, says: "If the ice is at all hard, it is safer to make *handholds* than to trust to using the point of the pick as an anchor." Moreover, when the ice is so steep as to be fairly termed an ice wall, then such handholds are a necessity, as it is impossible, by reason of the steepness of the angle, to get any support with the pick. True, but manifestly it would be still more out of the question to employ the spike!

In fact if Mr Naismith is right to treat "unmitigated ice" (the expression, I suppose, is quoted from "Mountaineering," page 160) in Scotland in the manner he describes, then clearly he would be right to conduct himself in the same fashion on an ice slope in the Alps. I do not think he can escape that conclusion. Would he descend an ice slope in that way? I hesitate to believe it, for I certainly should be sorry to be on the same rope with him if he did.

If any one wishes to be convinced that Mr Naismith's method is not the "proper method" on an ice slope, let him look at the illustration facing page 52 in "Mountaineering." But such refutation is not needed. In every standard work on mountaineering, the rule has been laid down, if not always expressly, at least by implication, that the pick must be used on ice, as a safeguard against a slip, and to arrest a pick after it has occurred. That the rule has not been laid down oftener expressly, is because it has never occurred to any one to question it.

Can Mr Naismith produce a single authority in the whole range of Alpine literature in support of his opinion? I question it.

I trust Mr Naismith will not consider my attempt to criticise his paper as unfair. No doubt it is open to him to say, "I am only expressing a pious opinion of my own, no one is bound to take my advice." That is true. But, if I mistake not, his paper was addressed more particularly to beginners, to men some of whom had not handled an ice-axe, and knowing as we all do know that our Treasurer *is* the authority on snowcraft in Scotland which he does not pose to be, they may be very reasonably disposed to take his advice. And this advice, I venture to think, in this case is mistaken. Were Mr Naismith other than he is, I should not have thought it necessary to trouble you with this. But

"Madness in *great* ones must not unwatched go."

Yours faithfully,

J. H. GIBSON.

The Editor, *S.M.C. Journal*.

DEAR SIR,—Mr Gibson has been good enough to show me a letter he proposes to send you. I may say at once that when an expert like my friend Gibson tells me that all the authorities are against me, I accept his dictum almost as a matter of course, and beg therefore that the objectionable paragraph in the "Snowcraft" paper may be regarded as withdrawn. I am not sufficiently sure of my ground to

imitate the Irish juror who, finding himself the only dissentient in an otherwise unanimous jury, exclaimed, "Eliven more obstinate men I never did meet!" At the same time I should like, with your kind permission, in the rôle of counsel for the *spike*, to give my reasons for believing that on some kinds of ice—exceptional no doubt—a climber had better treat his axe solely as a lateral prop, and not trust to it as an anchor.

The place I had in my mind was not a slope of *excessive* steepness. There we are agreed that holes ought to be cut for the hands, and the axes not used at all (except the leader's of course). I meant a moderately steep patch of bare ice, so hard that a good blow would only sink the pick about an inch. It would be very difficult for a man, who slipped out of the steps on ice such as that, to stop himself; and if we suppose a precipice close below, he might not have time to do so. As long as there is anything to grip (if, for example, the ice be covered with an inch of frozen snow, or if the surface be soft, or honeycombed like glacier ice), by all means let the pick be used; but when the pick fails to grip satisfactorily, my theory is that the climber would do well to abandon, so to speak, his second line of defence, and concentrate all his energies on preventing a slip.

I venture to differ from Mr Gibson when he says that to prevent a slip, and to check it after it has happened, are the same thing. The one seems to me entirely a matter of keeping one's balance, if the steps are properly made, while the other involves a violent effort. To assist the legs in preserving the equilibrium of the body, the axe might, theoretically, be employed either as a *tie* or a *strut*, *i.e.*, either with a pull or a push. Practically, however, the former does not appear to be so good for the purpose on hard ice as the latter. The question then is which end of the axe will make the handiest and safest *strut* or prop, and my view is that the spike answers best. It may *look* safer to use the pick, but that method is open to at least two objections. It offers the temptation to put an outward strain upon the axe to which the hold is perhaps unequal, and unless it is held rigidly the axe may turn in the hands and cause a spill.

The illustration on page 52 of "Mountaineering" is not my idea of "unmitigated ice," for the axe-heads are there represented as buried to a depth of several inches; still I believe some good Swiss guides would come down even that slope with their axes held like alpenstocks.—Yours faithfully,

WM. W. NAISMITH.

HAMILTON, 18th August 1893.

The Editor, *S.M.C. Journal.*

MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

"THE CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL." Edited by Alex. Inkson
McConnochie. No. 1, July 1893. Aberdeen: D. Wyllie & Son.

It will come with no little surprise to some to find that a second Journal has been started, and so much in the lines of our own that but for the name and the colour of the cover it would be impossible

to distinguish the one from the other. Were it not so much in the heart of every mountaineer and lover of mountain scenery to greet with true hearty fellowship every kindred endeavour to further the aims and interests of everything that pertains to mountains, it might prove a somewhat tempting question to ask, why, when there already exists a Journal which welcomes worthy contributions from all parts of Scotland, and which we believe fairly fulfils all the requirements of the case, it should be deemed needful to publish a second periodical on, so far as can be judged, precisely similar lines? Far be it from us, however, to cast any disparaging reflections, or to withhold that hand of fellowship and goodwill, which, as we have said, we would desire to extend; but we must confess to a feeling of curiosity to understand, why a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, a member of the Executive, and a worthy contributor to its *Journal*, should have thought fit to edit what is practically a *facsimile*. Under the circumstances, it is right for us to consider what amount of material is likely to exist suitable for publication. Doubtless our field is an extensive one for essentially practical purposes; but whether that field contains a sufficiently inexhaustive stock of material and a sufficient number of those capable of giving suitable expression to it, without sinking to what might be termed twaddle and commonplaces, are questions sufficiently grave to be well pondered over; and we hope they have been well considered by those who have deemed it wise to thus widen an outlet for what may possibly have a limited source of supply. It could never have been the wish, nor do we believe it could ever in the least degree have been entertained, that by thus issuing a *facsimile* of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* the success of the latter should be endangered or its usefulness curtailed; nor could it have been in any sense surmised that what might be sufficient for one periodical would possibly prove inadequate to support two, with a result disastrous to both. It is right that we should seriously consider these questions; for it would be a source of profound regret to all, that through a little want of foresight, those, who from the very nature of their pleasures are so wont to work in harmony and good fellowship, had, through a want of concordant action in this particular matter, led to such a result as has been vaguely conjectured. However, we sincerely hope that no grave fears need be entertained, and that that love of mountaineering and mountain scenery which is our safe and sure bond of union will prevent any breaches; and if it is to be competition, then let it be as good and as healthy as that enjoyed on the very mountains and glens from which we derive our all. Reverting to the *Journal* itself and its contents, nothing but praise can be offered regarding this the first number. The first article is by the Right Hon. James Bryce, M.P., on "Some Stray Thoughts on Mountain-Climbing." It bristles with all the freshness and fervour of the true mountain-spirit. Every item that contributes to the peculiar pleasure and invigorating pastime of the climber is touched upon; and the most critical sceptic of mountaineering will not fail to feel that there is something more in

successfully scaling a difficult mountain than merely the performance and accomplishment of "an awful grind." The Rev. Robert Lippe follows with a readable little article on the somewhat romantic origin of the Cairngorm Club. Mr James Rose, Mr William Brown, and Mr H. T. Munro, all contribute excellent articles on, respectively, Ben Lui, Ben a' Ghlo, and Sgoran Dubh. The longest and concluding article is written conjointly by Dr Cruickshanks and Mr Alexander Copland, on the Blue Hill, an eminence of 467 feet in height, situated in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen and apparently in the enjoyment of considerable local veneration. A few pages on Excursions and Notes complete a Journal so like our own as regards paper, print, and illustrations, that we modestly forbear expressing the approbation which otherwise we should have been glad to accord to this particular department.

A. ERNEST MAYLARD.

FRAGMENTS OF EARTH LORE. By JAMES GEIKIE, D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., &c. Edinburgh: John Bartholomew & Co., 1893.

UNDER the above title, Messrs John Bartholomew & Co. have lately published a most interesting series of articles and lectures, most of which have already appeared in the pages of the *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, *Good Words*, *The Scottish Naturalist*, &c.

Although the book "deals chiefly with the history of glacial times, and the origin of surface-features," it is not so severely geological as to preclude its being read with interest by the most unscientific member of the Club; and the vivid descriptions of Scottish scenery—notably of the Cheviots and the Long Island—will make it acceptable to every class of reader.

An introductory chapter traces the connection between Geography and Geology, and shows that, as in the teaching of History it is impossible to ignore Political Geography, so the study of Political Geography is interwoven with that of Physical Geography, which, in its turn, leads inevitably to the consideration of Geology.

The second chapter treats of "the physical features of Scotland," which, divided into the Highlands, the Central Lowlands, and the Southern Uplands, are tersely defined and graphically described; while in the third chapter, on the origin, growth, and decay of mountains, under the heading of "Mountains of Circumdenudation," Dr Geikie has much to tell us about the pedigree of our Scottish hills. To the mountaineer it is humiliating to learn that, "properly speaking, there is not a true mountain in the country," but it is somewhat consoling to know that, compared with our Scottish hills, we may look down on the Alps as the veriest *parvenues*, and moreover that in place of the three or five "ranges," which, on antiquated maps, "are represented as sprawling and wriggling about like so many inebriated centipedes and convulsed caterpillars," there is no reason why the

whole country should not be massed under one head as the "Scottish Range."

The Cheviot Hills occupy the next sixty pages; and not only is their geological history considered, but their picturesque attractions so warmly advocated, that one is almost tempted to steal a few days from the Highlands to explore their recesses, and enjoy their scenery. On the whole, though, as we are told that the hills of the Southern Uplands have less variety of contour and colour than the Highlands, are flatter atop and smoother in outline, with a general absence of beetling crags and precipices, and as moreover "the eventual disappearance of the peat that clothes the hill tops and valley bottoms is only a question of time," I think I will wait awhile and leave our President in undisputed solitude.

The intending tourist in the Outer Hebrides could not do better than take as guide Dr Geikie's charming chapter on the Long Island. He will get more practical hints in the first dozen pages than he will ever find in a guide-book.

The remaining two-thirds of the book are mainly devoted to the consideration of the Ice Age, or more correctly Ice Ages—for there are at least four;—while the Evolution of Climate and the Geographical Development of Coast-lines are also dealt with. Want of space forbids that I should give particulars. I would, however, call the attention of members to the remarks—most interesting to mountaineers—on isochional lines and isotherms, to be found at the commencement of the chapter on the Glacial Period, and the Earth Movement Hypothesis.

The volume contains several useful maps and diagrams, which, like all published by Messrs Bartholomew & Co., are clear and good. I notice, however, that the small orographical map of Scotland, at the commencement, appears not only to have reproduced all the errors complained of in previous reviews, but to have patented a few new ones of its own. As an example, it is enough to point out that, while Ben More in Mull is correctly marked with a small black dot to indicate its height of over 3,000 feet, Skye is not credited with a hill attaining even the 2,000 feet elevation.

I would, in conclusion, recommend Dr Geikie's charming book to all lovers of Scottish scenery.

H. T. MUNRO.

SOLID ALTO-RELIEVO MODEL OF SCOTLAND.

I HAVE lately seen a new alto-relievo model of Scotland brought out by Messrs William Martin & Co., of 67 West Nile Street, Glasgow. The size, 3 feet \times 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ feet; Scale—Extent, $\frac{1}{590,000}$; Raised Surface, $\frac{1}{120,000}$. Price, £3. 4s. It appears to have been carefully prepared, although I noticed a few inaccuracies, as for instance, that the

whole chain of the Ochils are made far too low as compared with the Highland hills. It is doubtless the largest and most correct relief model of Scotland which has yet been issued, but it is far too small to be of any practical interest to the mountaineer, and Mr John Bartholomew's capital Orographical Map,—scale, ten miles to the inch—which can be bought for half-a-crown, will be found of far more real use.

H. T. MUNRO.

SADDLEBACK.—The following extract, from an account of the ascent of Saddleback (2,847 ft.) in 1793, taken from Hutchinson's "History of Cumberland," may be of some interest as showing the difficulties of mountaineering a hundred years ago, "mountain sickness" being apparently experienced, though surely it cannot have been brought about by the excessive height of the hill. The writer proceeds in his description thus :—"When we had ascended about a mile one of the party, on looking round, was so astonished with the different appearance of objects in the valley, so far beneath us, that he declined proceeding. We had not gone much farther, till the other companion (of the relator) was suddenly taken ill, and wished to lose blood, and return." Which apparently he did, as only the relator and the guide "attained the ridge or summit of the rock, where we found a passage three or four yards broad : on the right the descent to the lake looked truly awful, while the steep rocks on the other side were lofty, and not to be climbed by human steps, . . . and after having been enveloped in a very dense vapour, so that we were obliged to keep near each other : the sudden change was almost incredible. It was with difficulty my guide regained the passage, or dry bridge, which we missed on several attempts ; and one incautious step would have plunged us in the horrid abyss had not the fog soon afterwards dispersed, as precipitately as it came on, and left us again under a serene sky, so that we passed to the foot of Foul-Cragg to view its wonderful precipices from their base : and again safely reached Mr Clement's house, after a laborious travel of four hours."

And in an account of an ascent of Skiddaw Mr Hutchinson says :—"We ascended this mountain on horseback, an undertaking not to be recommended." And after describing the view he says :—"The Isle of Man being also discernible, if we might believe our guide, but that was an object we could not discover. In the vale it was remarkably hot and sultry, but on the mountain we were obliged to dismount to bind down our hats and button our upper coats, the wind was so fierce and cold."

There is also in the same book a good example of the strange feelings experienced by those who ascended exceeding high mountains, which may also be interesting. "The scene that now presented itself" (near Seathwaite, about ten miles from Keswick) "was the most frightful that can be conceived. We had a mountain to climb for above seven hundred yards in a direction so nearly perpendicular that we

were in doubt whether we should attempt it ; however, recovering our resolution, we left our horses at a little house that stood by itself on the utmost verge of the county, and approached the mountain." (And after describing some black lead mines the writer goes on)—" We had now reached the summit of the black lead hill ; but were astonished to perceive a large plain to the west, and from thence another craggy ascent of five hundred yards, as near as I could guess. The whole mountain is called Unne-terre, or, as I suppose, Finnisterre, for such it appears to be. Myself and only one more of our company determined to climb the second precipice, and in about another hour we gained the summit. The scene was terrifying ; not an herb was to be seen, but wild savine growing in the interstices of the naked rocks ; the horrid projection of vast promontories, the vicinity of the clouds, the thunder of the explosions in the slate quarries, the dreadful solitude, the distance of the plain below, and the mountains heaped on mountains that were piled around us, desolate and waste, like the ruins of a world that we had survived, excited such ideas of horror as are not to be expressed. We turned from this fearful prospect afraid even of ourselves, and bidding an everlasting farewell to so perilous an elevation we descended to our companions, repassed the mines, got to Seathwaite, were cheerfully regaled by an honest farmer in his *puris naturalibus*, returned to Keswick about nine," &c. Published in *Gent. Mag.*, 1751.

DAVID D. DEWAR.

AN TEALLACH.—A paper on this interesting group has been prepared, but was unfortunately not finished in time for this issue ; it will, however, appear in the January number.

ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS, AND REMARKS.

BY HUGH T. MUNRO.

THE map researches entailed in the compilation of the tables of mountains of 3,000 feet and upwards, published at the end of the first volume of this *Journal*, brought to light many inaccuracies and shortcomings in previous articles. It has been a source of great satisfaction to me to find that in the current volume, members appear as a rule to have followed either the tables or, what comes to nearly the same thing, the Six-inch Ordnance Survey Maps; and also that generally speaking the O.S. spelling has been adopted. I am well aware that this spelling is often most incorrect, but "of two evils choose the lesser," and surely it is better to follow a standard, even if occasionally wrong, than for each member to spell according to his own particular taste, the same name sometimes being spelt in several different ways in one article.

It was of course inevitable that the tables should contain some inaccuracies, and I am gradually collecting information and correcting them. For this purpose I have derived most valuable information from contributions to the *Journal*—notably from such articles as Dr Norman Collie's on the heights of the Cuillins and Professor Heddle's on Ben Avon. But while I am correcting the tables, I am at the same time carefully reading over each article with the help of the tables and the O.S. maps, and noting in the margin any inaccuracies or differences from the O.S. As this is the last number of the volume, and other members may like to follow my example I give below my notes for Vol. II., premising:—

First.—That where the only error (if such it can be called) consists of a different—and perhaps more correct—spelling than that of the O.S., the note has been printed in *italics*. Muich Dhui, for instance, is undoubtedly more correct than Macdhui, but as the latter is the O.S. spelling I have included it in the list in *italics*. Misprints are, however, given in ordinary type.

Second.—That where the only error consists of the omission of accents, the changing of "Beinn" to "Ben," or spelling "corrie" differently from the O.S., no notice has been taken of it.

Third.—That the familiar Ben Lui and Stobinian occur so often that they have not been changed to the O.S. Beinn Laoigh and Am Binnein.

Fourth.—That Schichallion is repeatedly misprinted Schiehallion, *e.g.*, page 122, line 27; 199, last line; 238, line 34; and 244, line 24.

Fifth.—That the various spellings of the Cuillins, Cuchullins, Coolins, &c., have not been altered to the O.S. Cuillin *Hills*—see the late Sheriff Nicholson's remarks, page 99. It will be noticed that he uses the spelling Coolins, and is followed by Mr Walter Brunskill (page

134), and by Mr Naismith (pp. 285, 320, *et seq.*). Mr Maylard (page 3, *et seq.*) keeps to the old guide book form, Cuchullins; Dr Norman Collie (page 168) has Cuchullin Hills; while Mr Gibson and Mr F. J. Dewar (page 321) follow the O.S. spelling of Cuillin, merely dropping the objectionable "Hills."

Lastly.—I have not had an opportunity of comparing the O.S. maps with the articles and notes on pages 13, 17, 25, 32, 41, 51, 75, 138, 206, and 273 (first note), but these appear to be fairly accurate.

PAGE.	LINE.	
3	6	for " <i>Alpine Club Journal</i> of 1889," read " <i>Alpine Journal</i> of 1888."
4	36	Drumhain is a corruption of Druim nan Ramh; the ridge extends from Bidein Druim nan Ramh all along the north shore of Loch Coruisk.
11	24	for " <i>Ben Voirlich</i> " read " <i>Ben Vortlich</i> ."
11	25	"The Cobbler," as is well known, is called "Ben Arthur" on the O.S.
33	last note.	Heading, line 2, and last line of page— for "Craigowe" read "Craigowl."
34	32	This is hardly a correct description. Beinn a' Ghlo does stand boldly out, but the two main peaks do not from here show the big depression that lies between them.
37	7	for "There are two" read "These are two."
47	8	for "bridal" read "bride."
48	16	for "Narn" read "Uarn."
57	6	} for " <i>Ben Muich Dhui</i> " read " <i>Ben Macdhuì</i> ."
60	8	
58	15	for " <i>Achnachoichen</i> " read " <i>Achnacoichin</i> ."
58	16	for " <i>Lochan Eilan</i> " read " <i>Loch an Eilein</i> ."
64	3	The coach runs daily, winter as well as summer.
64	18	for " <i>esain Mhoir</i> " read " <i>Easain Mhoir</i> ."
64	18	} for " <i>Aonich Beag and Aonich Mhoir</i> " read " <i>Aonach Beag and Aonach Mòr</i> ."
66	21	
65	1	for " <i>Leonachan</i> " read " <i>Lianachan</i> ."
66	30	for " <i>Bhein a Bourd</i> " read " <i>Beinn a' Bhuird</i> ."
71	1	} Though the highest summit of Ben Cruachan is often spoken of as the "Dalmally Peak," it is incorrect to do so. It is not even visible from Dalmally, and forms no part of the "Horse shoe," see page 176.
73	19	
75	9	for "Ennaich" read "Eunaich."
78	last word	for "au" read "an."
79	1	for " <i>Bhir Bhogha</i> " read " <i>Fhir Bhogha</i> ."
82	12 & 15	for " <i>Ben Doirean</i> " read " <i>Beinn Doireann</i> ."
82	19	for " <i>Ben a Chastel</i> " read " <i>Beinn a' Chaisteil</i> ."
83	6	for "Ben a-Ghleibh" read "Beinn a' Chleibh."

332 *The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal.*

PAGE.	LINE.	
91	29	for " <i>Ben a Bourd</i> " read " <i>Beinn a' Bhuid.</i> "
86	5 & 8	for " <i>Coire Chat</i> " read " <i>Coire Chait.</i> "
91	30	for " <i>Stob Corry Clanrich</i> " read " <i>Stob Choire Claurigh.</i> "
91	31	for " <i>Aonich More</i> " read " <i>Aonach Mòr.</i> "
100	22	
101	6, 20, & 22	} for " <i>Scoor-nan-Gillean</i> " read " <i>Sgùrr nan Gillean.</i> "
102	12	
103	5	
105	3	
102	13	See note, page 105.
103	6	for " <i>Bruach-na-free</i> " read " <i>Bruach na Frithe.</i> "
104	33	for " <i>Coiruisik</i> " read " <i>Coruisik.</i> "
109	11	for " <i>Chlieb</i> " read " <i>Chleibh.</i> "
111	18	for " <i>Beinn a Bheither</i> " read " <i>Beinn 'a Bheithir.</i> "
112	27	for " <i>Stob Coire an Albanaich</i> " read " <i>Stob Coir an Albannaich.</i> "
112	last line	for " <i>Ben Chleib</i> " read " <i>Beinn a' Chleibh.</i> "
114	30, 35 & 40	} for " <i>Cairn Mairg</i> " read " <i>Càrn Mairg.</i> "
116	11 & last line	
115	16	This top on the 6-inch map is named " <i>Meall a' Bhàrr.</i> "
116	32	for " <i>Cresthill</i> " read " <i>Chesthill</i> " (pronounced Chesl).
117	14	} for " <i>Ben Eunach</i> " read " <i>Beinn Eunaich.</i> "
120	32	
122	5	for " <i>Ben Doirean</i> " read " <i>Beinn Doireann.</i> "
122	7	} Ben Achallader. There is a point marked 3,404 feet on the 6-inch map, lying a little to the S. of the 3,399 feet point.
122	28	
122	30 <i>et seq.</i>	for " <i>Buchal</i> " read " <i>Buchaille.</i> "
122	30 <i>et seq.</i>	{ The seven peaks named have in all eighteen "tops" as follows :—

Stob Ghabhar has five, viz. :—

(1.)—(a.) Stob Ghabhar, 3,565 feet.

(2.)—(b.) Stob a' Bruaich Leith (name from the 6-inch map), is the 3,085 feet point on the 1-inch map, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles W. of Stob Ghabhar.

(3.)—(c.) Sròn a' Ghearrain is 3,240 feet. This height, from the 6-inch map, is a little to the S.E. of the point marked 3,159 feet on the 1-inch map.

(4.)—(d.) Sròn nan Giubhas, half a mile N.E. of Stob Ghabhar, has on the 6-inch map an elevation of 3,174 feet (3,000 feet contour on 1-inch map).

(5.)—(e.) Aonach Eagach, 3,272 feet, is the S.E. shoulder of Stob Ghabhar; name and height from 6-inch map.

(6.) $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles E. by N. of Stob Ghabhar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile N.W. of Beinn Toaig, is a small 3,000 feet contour on the 1-inch map. This is

Stob a' Choire Odhar, 3,058 feet, 6-inch map, and certainly ranks as a distinct mountain.

Clach Leathad—*or*, according to the more common spelling, followed in the article, Clachlet—also has five tops, of which—

(7.)—(a.) Clach Leathad itself, 3,602 feet, is only the second highest.

(8.)—(b.) $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N. of Clach Leathad, the 3,506 feet point of the 1-inch map is on the 6-inch map named Mam Coire Easain.

(9.)—(c.) $\frac{3}{4}$ mile E. by N. from this is the highest point of the mountain—Meall a' Bhuiridh, 3,636 feet—name and height from 6-inch map.

(10.)—(d.) 1 mile N. of Clach Leathad, and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N. of Mam Coire Easain, is a top locally known as Creise, although Stob Glas Choire (see below), lies between it and the point marked "Sròn Creise" on the O.S. It is the second 3,500 feet contour on the 1-inch map north of Clach Leathad; its highest point is 3,600 feet (6-inch map), and lies about 200 yards S. by W. of the 3,596 feet point referred to on page 128, line 28, which see.

(11.)—(e.) $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N. of this top, and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile S. of "Sròn Creise" on the 1-inch map is a top called Stob Glas Choire, 3,207 feet, name and height from the 6-inch map.

(12.) Meall nan Eun—3,039 feet.

(13.) Stob Coir an Albannaich—3,425 feet.

(14.) Glas Bheinn Mhòr—3,258 feet.

Ben Starav has three tops, viz. :—

(15.)—(a.) Ben Starav—3,541 feet.

(16.)—(b.) Stob Coire Dheirg—3,372 feet— $\frac{1}{4}$ mile E. from Ben Starav; name and height from 6-inch map.

(17.)—(c.) Meall Cruidh—3,049 feet— mile S. from Ben Starav; it is the long 2,750 feet contour of the 1-inch map; name and height from the 6-inch map.

(18.) Beinn nan Aighean—3,141 feet.

It may be added that Beinn Doireann, Beinn an Dòthaidh, and Beinn Achallader (two tops), mentioned at the top of page 122, as well as Beinn Creachan—3,540 feet—the highest of the Glenlyon mountains, with its two shoulders Meall Buidhe—3,193 feet—(6-inch map), and the N.E. top above Coire Dubh—3,145 feet—are more easily ascended from Inveroran than from Tyndrum.

PAGE.	LINE.	
123	26	This S.E. spur is Aonach Eagach, 3,272 feet (see above).
124	17	for "Jutharna" read "Iutharna"
126	7	} Beinn Odhar is the mountain $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles N. of Tyndrum.
128	last four lines	
130	34	

PAGE.	LINE.	
137	35	should not "northwards" read "westwards"?
138	3	Sgiath Chrom is $\frac{1}{4}$ mile S. of Sgtath Chuil, the approximate height of which Mr Colin Phillip and Dr Heddle have made about 3,050 feet.
141	13	for " <i>Larig Ghrumach</i> " read " <i>Learg Ghruamach.</i> "
144	18	for " <i>Learg Ghrumach</i> " read " <i>Learg Ghruamach.</i> "
142	15	for "Carn an Sae" read "Càrn an Sac" (same misprint in 3,000 feet tables).
142	46	An easier and—in point of time—shorter route is to keep the fence due N. from Fafernie until the Braemar and Lochnagar track is struck at right angles below Càrn an t-Sagairt (see page 198, also 133).
143	9	Of course the easiest route down is to follow the Glen Callater track all the way.
144	20	This is Sròn na Leirg, 3,875 feet.
144	25	for " <i>Loch-an-Eilan</i> " read " <i>Loch an Eilein.</i> "
158	28	The public meeting at which the Club was founded took place in November 1888.
170	34	for "1st Pinnacle" read "4th or Knight's Peak."
170	35	for "2nd Pinnacle" read "3rd or Central Pinnacle."
170	36	for "Basteir Tooth" read "Bhasteir," what is locally known as "Bhasteir Tooth" being some 130-140 feet lower.
173	26	for "rcck" read "rock."
175	5	for "(Cruach-a-stack-)" read "(Cruach-'a stack-)."
175	33	"Nose of the Imps," this meaning is doubtful.
176	13	after "though" add "it."
180	17	for " <i>Meall an Riaghain</i> " read " <i>Meall Riaghain.</i> "
186		As stated lower down the O.S. spelling is " <i>Dun-da-Ghaoithe.</i> "
186	4	" <i>Craignure</i> " is the O.S. spelling. In Mull, however, it is always pronounced " <i>Craig-i-nure.</i> "
192	21	for "corries" read "corrie."
198	last line	for "on" read "near."
202	31	for "1889" read "1888."
217	5	for "anomly" read "anomaly."
223		With reference to the remarks on snow in the Cuillins which Mr Gibson makes in his most useful as well as interesting paper, I may say that in the beginning of February 1891 the range was entirely free of snow (see Vol. I., page 259, <i>et seq.</i>), and on several occasions that I have seen it in winter there has been very little snow on it, when the mainland hills have been often deeply covered.
223	35	for " <i>Greadaidh</i> " read " <i>Ghreadaidh.</i> "

PAGE.	LINE.	
227	19	The height of Stùc <i>Gharbh</i> Mhòr is 3,625 feet (6-inch map); it is situated on the county march, the <i>name</i> on the map being given to the spur mentioned on page 227, line 2.
229	12	Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar, height 3,662 feet (6-inch map), is on the county march 300 yards S. by E. of the point marked 3,608 feet on the 1-inch map.
233	5 and 6	} Stob an Lochan and Carn nan Clach; I have been unable to identify these points on the map. The information in this article is most valuable.
234	8 and 9	
233	33	} Stob <i>Dubh</i> an Eàs Bhig. The height 3,563 feet given by Professor Heddle must be some way north of the county march. The <i>name</i> appears on the 6-inch map nearly 1½ miles S. of Ben Avon.
234	10	
233	36	for " <i>Mullach nan Gabhar</i> " read " <i>Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar</i> ."
233	37	} for " <i>West Gorm Crag</i> " read " <i>West Meur Gorm Craig</i> ."
234	14	
233	37	} Stob na Fhurain, 3,533 feet. I cannot find this name or height. On the 6-inch map, however, ¾ mile N.N.E. from the 3,662 feet top of Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar in the direct line for the West Meur Gorm Craig, which it will be seen was Professor Heddle's next point, is what appears to be a mass of rock marked 3,553 feet. There does not appear from the Professor's list to be any dip between it and the Mullach, and it has not been included in my tables.
234	13	
234	3	for " <i>Craig na Dala Moire</i> " read " <i>Creag na Dala Moire</i> ."
235	Title	" <i>Ben-y-Gloe</i> ." The more correct spelling is that of the O.S., viz., " <i>Beinn a' Ghlo</i> ."
237	20	Monzie is about 800 feet above Blair Athole or 1,200 feet above the sea.
243	32	for " <i>Sgòran Dubh</i> (3,377 feet)" read " <i>Sgòran Dubh</i> (3,658 feet)."
244	4	for " <i>Beinn Uarn</i> (3,424 feet)" read "(<i>Ben Uarn</i> 3,424 feet)."
244	29	for " <i>Dunnochter</i> " read " <i>Drumochter</i> ."
256	34	for " <i>Corrie-na-Crich</i> " read " <i>Coire na Creiche</i> ."
257	3	for " <i>Corrie Ghrita</i> " read " <i>Coire a Ghreadaidh</i> ."
263	20	for " <i>Ben Doran</i> " read " <i>Beinn Doireann</i> ."

- Although as stated in the text we came on our track after half-an-hour's walk from the summit, in reality it was evident that we were very little off our course, as the ascent and descent lay for some way by the same ridge, and we had merely failed in the broken ground, mist, and snow to keep the actual crest of the ridge.
- 271 1 for "morning" read "evening."
 271 21 for "*Muichdhuì*" read "*Macdhuì*."
 279 9 for "Fannich Lodge" read "three miles short of Fannich Lodge."
 294 23 This rocky point is locally known as Sgùrr na Forcan, and is approximately 3,100.
 294 25 for "east and north" read "west and north."
 302 32 *Clachlet*, the O.S. spelling is Clach Leathad.
 303 37 Ben Alder, the O.S. spelling is Alder.
 320 11 for "*Leagach*" read "*Liathaich*."
 320 35 for "Spidean a Choire Dhuibh Bhig" read "Stùc a' Choire Dhuibh Bhig."
 321 5 for "*Brittal*" read "*Brittle*."
 321 21 for "*Blaven*" read "*Blath Bheinn*."
-

INDEX.

- at Aviemore 135*
- ACCOMMODATION at Aviemore, 141; at Skiary, 293.
- A' Cir, Arran, ridge, 78; a night on, 138.
- Alpine Season 1892, 209.
- An Caisteal, ascent, 268.
- An Coileachan, ascent, 308.
- Androwhinnie, 41.
- Aonachair Chrith, ascent, 292.
- Avalanches, 166.
- “Badminton Mountaineering,” reviewed, 146.
- Bad Weather, 161.
- Ben a' Bhuirid, 37.
- Ben a' Bhuiridh, Cruachan, ascent, 71; described, 176.
- Ben a Chleibh, 75.
- Bena Ghlo, or Ben-y-Gloe, ascent, 235; described, 239; view from, 243.
- Ben Alder, ascent, 124.
- Ben Avon, 37; described, 225-234; ascent, 272.
- Ben Bhan, Applecross, ascent, 13; thunderstorm on, 15.
- Ben Chabhair, ascent, 268.
- Ben Chaluim, ascent, 31, 82, 129.
- Ben Cruachan, ascent by Cruachan Burn, 71; by Cruiniche Burn in severe storm, 73; N. face of Stob Dearg, 85, 280; N. face of Drochaid Ghlas, 136; geology, 175; peaks, 175; ridges, 177; routes, 178; botany, 181; historical associations, 182.
- Ben Dheiceach, Glen Dochart, 31.
- Ben Doireann or Doran, ascent, 82, 129; from Inveroran, 131.
- Ben Dothaidh, ascent, 131.
- Ben Dubh chraige, ascent, 74.
- Ben Each, Ben Vorlich, ascent, 266.
- Ben Eighe, 319.
- Ben Fhada, 295.
- Ben Harran, Assynt, 51.
- Ben Lawers, ascent from Loch-na-Chait, 276.
- Ben Ledi, 84.
- Ben Lomond, ascent from Aberfoyle, 21; north face, 80.
- Ben Lui, or Laoigh, ascent from Ben Oss, 74; from Tyndrum, 82; N.E. face, 83, 129; attempt on N.E. face, 137; ascent of, 259, 263.
- Ben Macdhuil, ascent, 49, 143.
- Ben Mhor, Cowal, ascent, 273.
- Ben More, Perthshire, ascent, 129, 135; ascent and view, 264.
- Ben More, Mull, 83.
- Ben nan Aighean, ascent, 130.
- Ben Nevis, first ascent in 1892, 84; ascent, 291; depth of snow, 1883-92, 317 and 318.
- Ben Odhar, ascent, 128.
- Ben Oss, ascent, 74;
- Ben Rinnes, 37.
- Ben Sguliaird, ascent, 321.
- Ben Starav, ascent from Dalmally, 109; from Inveroran, 130.
- Ben Vane, ascent, 84.
- Ben Venue, ascent in a snowstorm, 278.
- Ben Vorlich, Perthshire, ascent from Lochearnhead, 83, 265; north face, 277.
- Ben Wyvis, ascent, 319.
- Bhasteir, Skye, 170, 172, 214.
- Bhasteir Tooth, ascent, 5, 214, 321.
- Bidein-druim-nan-Ramh, ascent, 4, 170, 222, 321.
- Blackhope Scar, 26.
- Black Shoot, third attempt, 70; ascent, 117.
- Black Spout, Lochnagar, 248.
- Blaven, or Blath Bheinn, 171, 321.
- Braeriach, ascent from Sgoran Dubh, and view, 48; snowstorm in summer, 141; 144, south plateau of, 298.
- Brocken Spectre, 31, 32, 144.
- Bruach na Frithe, 172, 321.
- Cac Carn Beag, Lochnagar, ascent, 134; described, 194.
- Cac Carn Mor, Lochnagar, described, 194; ascent, 248.
- Cairngorm Club Journal*, reviewed, 224.

- Cairngorms, 45.
 Cairngorm, ascent from Aviemore, 49;
 from Abernethy, 56; from Loch
 Avon, 143.
 Cairn Maing, 115.
 Cairn of Corbreach, or Carn-a-Choire
 Bhoideach, Lochnagar, 133,
 192.
 Cairns on mountain tops, 38.
 Cairnwell, 142.
 Campsie Fells, 207.
 Capel Mounth, bicyclists' cross, 140.
 Carn an t-Sagairt Beag, Lochnagar,
 192.
 Carn an t-Sagairt Mor, Lochnagar,
 192.
 Carn Ban, 298.
 Carn Bhinnein, Glenshee, 142.*
 Carn Dearg, Ben Nevis, 292.
 Carn Fuaralach, 293.
 Carn Geoidh, Glenshee, 142.
 Carn na Criche, 309.
 Carn nan Sac, 142.
 Cartland Crags, 9.
 Cir Mhor, Arran, ascent from Sannox,
 17.
 Clach Glas of Blaven, 321.
 Clachlet, ascent, 128.
 Clinometer, 91.
 Club Song, 69.
 Corrie Vassie, 64.
 Craigowl, view from, 33.
 Craig of Gowal, Lochnagar, 132.
 Creag a' Ghlas-uilt, Lochnagar, 133,
 193.
 Creag a Mhaim, ascent, 292.
 Creag Leachdach, Lochnagar, 133.
 Cruach Ardran, ascent, 88, 135, 261.
 Cuidhe Crom, Lochnagar, 195.
 Cuillins, 3; magnetic rocks, 5, 99;
 heights of, 168; Easter in the,
 213.
 Dalwhinnie to Inveroran, 124.
 Deep Ghyll Pillar, 134, 145.
 Diollaid Coire Eindard, 298.
 Drochaid Ghlas, Cruachan, ascent
 from the north, 136; described,
 175.
 Druim nam Bo, 298.
 Duncomb Hill, Kilpatrick, view from,
 11.
 Dun-da-Gu, 186.
 Equipment, 145.
 Fannichs, ascent of, 306-310.
 Frozen turf, 165.
 Fynloch Hill, Kilpatrick, 11.
 Garbh-bheinn, Skye, 321.
 Garsbheinn, Skye, 171.
 Geal Chàrn, 298.
 Geikie's, Sir Archibald, "Geological
 Map," reviewed, 154.
 Geikie's, James, "Fragments of Earth
 Lore," reviewed, 326.
 Glaciers, 166.
 Glas Bheinn Mhor, ascent, 303.
 Glazed rocks, 165.
 Glissading, 164.
 Glomach, Falls of, 295.
 Goatfell, 18.
 Great End gullies, 145.
 Great Gable, 145.
 Icicles on Ben Doireann, 131.
 Johnston's "Place Names," reviewed,
 148.
 Kilpatrick Hills, 206.
 Kilsyth Hills, 207.
 Kirriereoch, 138.
 Lanarkshire Hills, 208.
 Leagach, ascent, 320.
 Learg Ghruamach, 45, 144.
 Little Pap, Lochnagar, 194.
 Lochnagar, 35; tops, 133; Cairn-
 gorm Club on, 140; ascent from
 Glenshee, 142; geographical posi-
 tion, 190; botany, 191; tops,
 192; routes, 196; view, 198;
 ascent of Black Spout, 246;
 ascent by Glen Gelder, 273.
 M'Connochie's "Lochnagar," re-
 viewed, 35.
 M'Connochie's "Ben a' Bhuid and
 Ben Avon," reviewed, 37.
 M'Connochie's "Ben Rinnes," re-
 viewed, 37.
 Main's "My Home in the Alps,"
 reviewed, 97.
 Maps, Nos. 19 and 25 of Bartholo-
 mew's Series, reviewed, 211;
 Geikie's Geological Map, re-
 viewed, 154, making those of the
 Ordnance Survey, 281; Note on
 old Scottish, 283.
 Marsco, 321.
 Meall a Chrasgaidh, 309.
 Meall an Rairigidh, ascent, 308.
 Meall Buidhe, 298.
 Meall Chuirn, Glen Dochart, 31,
 137.
 Meall Cuanail, Cruachan, 175.
 Meall Dubh-achaidh, 298.
 Meall Glas, Glen Dochart, 31.
 Meall Tionail, 298.
 Meall nan Peithirean, ascent, 309.
 Mickle-dore, 145.

- Moorfoots, 25.
Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair, ascent, 313.
- Napes *arete*, 145.
Napes Needle, 134, 145.
"New Zealand Alpine Journal," reviewed, 211.
Nicolson's Song of Skye, 107.
Nicolson, Alex., biographical notice, 254.
- North and North-East faces ascended — Ben Cruachan, 85; Ben Lawers, 276; Ben Lomond, 89; Ben Lui, 83, 129, 259, 263; Ben Vorlich, 277; Examples, 160; Lochnagar, 246; Stob Ghabhair, 126
- Olipphant's "Rambles Round Edinburgh," reviewed, 212.
"Our Western Hills," reviewed, 147.
- Photography, Mountain, 249; appeal for slides, 272.
Pillar Rock, Ennerdale, 134.
Piers Ghyll, 145.
Practice Scrambles, 8.
Proceedings of the Club—
 Third General Annual Meeting and Dinner, 1891, 28.
 Balance-sheet, 1890-91, 29.
 New Year's Meet at Loch Awe, January 1892, 68.
 January Meet at Arran, January 1892, 75.
 Easter Meet at Inveroran, April 1892, 121.
 Fourth Annual Meet and Dinner, December 1892, 201.
 Balance-sheet, 1891-92, 203.
 New Year's Meet at Tyndrum, January 1893, 259.
 February Meet at Lochearnhead, February 1893, 265.
 Easter Meet at Loch Awe, April 1893, 269.
 Lantern Exhibition, February 1893, 271.
- Quarry faces, 9.
- Renfrewshire Hills, 208.
Rope, 145.
- Saddle, The, ascent, 294.
Saddleback, 328.
Scafell Pike, 88, 145.
Scottish Alpine Botanical Club, 90.
Seiath Chuil. Glen Dochart. 31. 138.
- Sgòran Dubh, ascent, 47; described, 296; view from, 297.
Sgurr a Bhealach Dhearg, ascent, 293.
Sgurr a Gharg Gharaidh, ascent, 294.
Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, Skye, 171; ascent, 222, 321.
Sgurr Alasdair, Skye, 170, 171; to Sgurr Dubh, 173; ascent, 218, 321.
Sgurr a' Mhadaidh, to Sgurr nan Gillean, 3, 171; ascent, 222, 321.
Sgurr a Mhoraire, ascent, 293.
Sgurr Ban, ascent, 313.
Sgurr Ban of Ben Eighe, 319.
Sgurr Coire nan Eiricheallach, ascent, 292.
Sgurr Dearg pinnacle, Skye, described, 134, 168, 171; ascent, 217, 321.
Sgurr Dubh, Skye, 171.
Sgurr Leac nan Each, ascent, 294.
Sgurr Mhic Coinnich, Skye, 171; ascent, 218, 321.
Sgurr Mor, Fannichs, ascent, 309.
Sgurr na Banachdich, 171; ascent, 222.
Sgurr na Creige, ascent, 294.
Sgurr na Sgine, ascent, 294.
Sgurr nan Eag, Skye, 171.
Sgurr nan Gillean, ascent by western ridge 3. described, 100, 170, 172; ascent by pinnacle route, 214; pinnacle route, described, 285-295; ascent from Lota Corrie, 321.
Sgurr Sgumain, 171; ascent, 219, 321.
Sgurr Thuilm, 321.
Shelter Stone, Loch Avon, 143.
Silver thaw, 93.
"Skis" on the Campsies, 89.
Snow, character of, in Scotland, 162.
Snowcraft in Scotland, 157; note on, 279; letter from Mr Gibson, 322.
Snow gullies, 164.
Snow ridges and cornices, 163.
Snow slopes, 163.
Spectre of Tarduff Hill, 32.
Sron a Choire Ghairbh, ascent, 292.
Sron an Isean, Cruachan, 175.
Stob Coir an Albannaich, ascent of, 301-305.
Stob Dearg, Cruachan, ascent from the north, 85, 280; described, 175.
Stob Diamh, Cruachan, 175.
Stob Garbh, Cruachan, 176.
Stob Ghabhair, ascent, 123, by N.E. face, 126.
Stobinian, ascent, 135, 262.

- Stott. J. G., presentation to, 77,
92.
Stuc a Chroin, 83.
Thunder cloud on Ben Lui, 129.
Tooth of Sgurr nan Gillean, 5, 288.
Wasdale, climbing round, 144.
Wells of Dee, 46.
- Whangie, ascent, 10, 12 n., 139; 20¹/₂.
accident on, 205.
Whitehope Law, 26.
White's "Ordnance Survey," re-
viewed, 281.
Whymper's "Andes," reviewed, 94.
Whymper's "Aneroid," reviewed, 94.
Witch's Step, Arran, 24.
Windlestraw Law, 27.
-

Ascents

1892

1	Jan'y	Girt Hill		1673	ft.
"	"	Hill of Stake		1711	"
9	"	Dechmont		602	"
13	Feb'y.	Craig of Carnock	} p. 206-9.	600	"
5	March	Dungoyne		1401	"
12	"	Fynloch		1313	"
"	"	Duncomb		1313	"
3	April	Langdale Pikes (shoulder)	say	1700	"
4	"	Scafell Pike	} p. 88	3210	"
"	"	Scafell		3162	"
15	"	Ellrig	say	1100	"
18	"	Campsie Fells	} p. 207	1552	"
"	"	Dechrode		1305	"
30	"	Cock-ma-Lane (Lochwinnoch)		1087	"
2	May	Kilsyth Hills;			
"	"	Lairs	} p. 207	1652	"
"	"	Meikle Bin		1870	"
"	"	Little Bin		1446	"
28	"	Duchal Law	p. 209	725	"
18	June	Rhinns of Kells;	p. 138		
"	"	Meaul		2280	"
"	"	Carlin's Cairn		2650	"
"	"	Consrine		2668	"
"	"	Millfire		2350	"
20	"	Nick of Carclach			
"	"	Shalloch on Minnoch		2520	"
"	"	Farfessock		2282	"
"	"	K...		25...	"

Ascents

<u>1892</u>			
22 June	Caornmore of Fleet		2331 ft.
16 July	Ben Lawers		3984 "
"	Ben Ghlass		3657 "
17 "	Meall Dhuin Croisg		2431 "
"	Crag na Caillich		2990 "
"	Meall nan Tarmachan		3421 "
"	Meall Garbh	3350/	3400 "
"	Meall Liath		1852 "
18 "	Meall na Saone	} pg. 137	2535 "
"	Meall Chuirn		3007 "
"	Sgiath Chrom		abt. 3000 "
24 "	Arran:		
"	Cairn above Loch na Leirg in O.S. Map		1070 "
25 "	The Saddle		
"	Caisteal Abhail		2735 "
"	Cir Mhor		2618 "
1 Augt.	Ellrig (2 tops)	} pg. 208	1215 "
3 Sept.	Neilston Pad		834 "
"	Craig of Carnock		600 "
26 Decr.	Beinn Mhor (Cowal). pg. 273.		2433 "
<u>1893</u>			
2 Jan'y	Balenock	} Glenfruin	2092 "
"	Beinn Tharsuinn		2149 "
"	Beinn Chaorach		2338 "
31 March	Dungoyne		1401 "
"	Clachertyfarlie Knowes		1781 "
"	Earl's Seat		1894 "
1 May	Mickle Corun		1935 "

Ascents

1893

1 May	Bencluch	2363 ft.
"	Craighorn	1904 "
"	Bengenzie	
"	Colnaut Hill	1832 "
6 "	Kilpatrick's; Craighton to Old Kilpatrick via Loch Humphrey	
13 "	Clachestuffarie Knowes	1781 "
17 "	Eildons; Mid Hill	1385 "
3 June	Ailsa Craig	1114 "
6 July	Stobinian (Am Binnèin)	3827 "
"	Ben More (Glen Dochart)	3843 "
29 "	Ballagioch	1084 "
14 Augt.	The Saddle	
"	Cioch-na-h-Oighe Two tops to southwards	2168 "
26 "	Culter Fell	2454 "
"	Middle Rig	1925 "
28 Sept.	Schieallion	3547 "