

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

EDITED BY J. H. B. BELL



	PAGE
The Evidence of Things Not Seen . . . W. H. Murray	281
To the Cuillin . . . D. J. F.	286
Bad Weather and Bivouacs . . . W. M. Mackenzie	287
Scottish Climbing Clubs: A Survey. II . . . The Editor	295
June in Skye . . . J.S.M.J.	308
Rock Climbing Around Dundonnell . . . E. C. Pyatt	309
Mr Pepys goes "Munroing" . . . William J. Bannister	315
Some Notes on the Northern Area . . . E. W. Hodge	322
A Survey of Mountain Accidents in Scotland, 1925-45 . . . B. H. Humble	325
S.M.C. Office-Bearers	332
A Record of Ben Nevis Climbs . . . B. P. Kellett	333
In Memoriam . . . R. A. Brown, M.C.; W. Lawson	341
Proceedings—New Year Meet; Annual Meeting; District Activities; The Library; Books and Journals	343
New Climbs and Notes	349
The S.M.C. Abroad—Climbing in War-time	356
J.M.C.S.	362

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
SYNOD HALL, CASTLE TERRACE, EDINBURGH, 1

Agents: EDINBURGH, Douglas & Foulis; GLASGOW, Wm. Porteous & Co.

PRICE SEVEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE NET

EDITORIAL NOTES.

AGAIN we regret the lateness of appearance of the *Journal*. The printing industry is still much understaffed, and we are not a priority publication. Also, quite a number of contributors have come forward pretty late with their copy, which doesn't make things any easier. We really need all the articles and longer items before the end of January. Short notes will do a little later, if unavoidable. Also, would correspondents please address queries about dispatch or sales of *Journals*, old numbers included, to the Assistant Editor. This saves a lot of trouble.

We greatly regret to announce that two deaths have occurred in our ranks within the last two months. We have lost **Mr W. R. Lester** (Original Member) and **Mr Norman L. Hird** (Member of Committee). "In Memoriam" notices will appear in our next issue.

S.M.C. and the War.—The Hon. Secretary still asks members who have been on war service to send their particulars to him as soon as possible so that a complete record may be published in the next number of the *Journal*, which will be the last one of the present Volume.

Old Numbers of the Journal.—Mr William Garden (18 Golden Square, Aberdeen) has a number of these for disposal and will welcome inquiries from members. They comprise the following: Vol. 4, No. 24 (2 copies); Vol. 5, Nos. 27, 28; Vol. 7, No. 42; Vol. 10, Nos. 57, 58; Vol. 11, Complete; Vol. 12, Complete; Vol. 15, Nos. 85, 86.

Kinlochleven. — The Leven Restaurant and Hostel, proprietor James Kinniburgh, has recently been opened and provides inexpensive food and accommodation for climbers in the Mamore region. (Phone Kinlochleven 263.)

Notice to Contributors.—When sending accounts of expeditions, and especially new climbs, please be accurate and brief, and have these in the same form and arrangement as they appear in the *Journal*. This saves copying. Please note that the Editor's address from now on is **3 Park Place, Clackmannan**. In any case send the contributions as early as possible, and before 31st January 1947 at latest. We are limited for space, and have now some overmatter in hand for the next issue. Good photographs are welcome, but in the first instance send only small prints and not big enlargements.



BIDEAN NAM BIAN
(From Buachaille Etive Mor)

W. H. Murray

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

VOL. XXIII.

APRIL 1946.

NO. 137.

THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.

By W. H. Murray.

THE moon was new-risen. It balanced like a yellow apple on the black barb of Schiehallion. The flood of its mellow light poured far across the Moor of Rannoch. Driving north from Bridge of Orchy I was obliged, for the first time in my life, to wear sun-glasses at night. I can say truthfully that in three years divided between Asia, Africa and Italy, each famed in story for its bright nights, I have seen but one comparable to this that I shared with Douglas Laidlaw in December 1939.

Our intention was to climb Buachaille Etive Mor by its eastern cliff and we had chanced on the ideal conditions. By the time we reached Kingshouse the moon had swept the sky clear; neither cloud stemmed nor star survived the torrent. At a quarter-mile's distance the inn seemed to float upon the moor, "whiter than new snow on a raven's back," and the tops of the pines were silver-tipped.

After an hour's delay we turned down Glen Etive to Coupal Bridge, whence we crossed the moor to Buachaille. I had imagined I knew this mountain under every whim of the elements, yet here was something more than new: for though we may not postulate absolute beauty of things material, the Buachaille was less clogged with the pollutions of mortality than is normally granted to an earthly form. Therefore let us speak of the unspeakable, for there is no speech so profitable. The east face was washed by intense light, so searching that no shade was cast by ridge or buttress. All detail merged in the vastness of one

arrowy wall, pale as shadowed milk, impregnably erect. At the remote apex a white crest broke like spume on the high seas of infinity :

“ So shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in Himself.”

But I lacked the quick vision of Coleridge. To my unaccustomed eyes the scene at first bore an appearance of unreality ; yet the more I gazed the more surely I knew that I saw not illusion greater than is usual, but truth made manifest : as though our everyday world had been a dull image in the crystal mirror of Shalott, only here woven on the magic loom by an artist, one of true intuition, who, rejecting inessential things, had selected in masterly economy those precious to the truth, thus throwing into high relief the hitherto obscured beauty that underlies the world. Unlike the Lady of Shalott I failed to break the spell and gaze straight upon the ultimate reality ; yet the hills that night were big with it ; its signs unmistakable.

It is this that Goethe calls “ the open secret.” It is this that mountaineers style “ the mystery of hills.” Put more broadly, it is the mystery of the universe, where the forms of man or mountain may be likened to veils that reveal its being yet mask the true essence. Ask Nature what she does and we are answered, as Faust was answered :

“ So at the roaring loom of time I ply
And weave for God the garment that ye see Him by.”

If the answer be taken to heart, our understanding of mountains is broadened and deepened toward an understanding of all things created. But the point of the last line strikes home only when applied to oneself.

Our destination was the base of D Gully Buttress, where we arrived at eleven o'clock. We swarmed up the first few hundred feet and roped where the plinth narrows for the upward drive. All around, the rocks were stark,

scrubbed clean as the decks of a battleship, the shade of palest ash. Near at hand they sparkled with a coarse crystalline glitter, never seen by day. It is affirmed by Chesterton that one is sometimes uplifted as though by trumpet call, not so much by the beauty of Nature as by her generous and defiant ugliness. "Has the poet," he inquires, "for whom Nature means only roses and lilies, ever heard a pig grunting? It is a noise that does a man good." This paradox rejoices the true rock-climber. He is no mountaineer who can look upon the face of those age-gaunt crags and fail to feel their rough honesty go straight to his heart; there to kindle sympathy to a flame of delight. In their mere proximity there is happiness. A contentment of the same kind, if less high, as that where the friendship of two men ripens until the delight of simple companionship removes the need of speech.

We met no rock-work that posed a problem greater than that of daytime. But the cold, steadily growing since sunset, gripped the world in frost, which we countered by wearing gloves as far as the one severe pitch of the ridge. Bare hands and numbed fingers were then the order of the night.

The remainder of the ridge took shape as an attenuated staircase. Half-way up the weather changed abruptly. An icy wind whipped out of the north, and a great cloud-mass, which must have been piling up unseen to the north-west, suddenly tumbled over the summit. With one mighty roll it engulfed us. Snow began to fall, at first idly, with a soft crepitation, then fast and silently. The wind rose.

The light above the buttress was still surprisingly good so we traversed northward on to the crest of Strawberry Ridge. With mist writhing about us and snow shrouding the rocks, we flitted up the Tower like phantoms in a phantom world. On top of the Tower the wind died and the snow stopped. The fog hung dense and still. Well, I thought, we had enjoyed a splendid night-climb, but we must now forego all hope of a still finer prize. However, we had come for the mountain, not for the rock-climb alone, so down we went to the Tower gap

and up the lofty brow to the cairn. The mist was bright and pearly on the summit. Our dead hopes stirred in the first pangs of resurrection. Perhaps——? Who knows——?

We sat down to it.

Just a quarter of an hour: then the clouds began to stir uneasily, rent by deep internal stress. Caverns, vast as mountain corries, swirled open and closed. Yet not a breath of wind touched my cheek. The effect was tantamount to the supernatural: I understood as not hitherto what strange emotion quickened the Ancient Mariner when his sails filled and no breeze blew. The caverns widened, deepened; the mist sank to the Tower and the clear moon burst from a clear sky.

The cloud-bank was now stabilised at 3,000 feet, its spread fleece flowing to every horizon save the south. We looked out upon this glimmering surge as though from "magic casements, opening on the foam of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn." Through the swell of the tumbling billows projected the iceberg islands of Argyll and Lochaber. As the Corellian devil observed, hard frost, like hard times, brings noble work into prominence! And this blanketing of intervening country, combined with the dazzle of frozen snows, drew all the peaks unnaturally close in a fantastic optical illusion. Nevis looked but a stone's-throw, and Bidean nam Bian a practicable leap.

Within an hour the cloud-sea broke up. When the preliminary boilings and heavings had subsided, the surface caved into maelstrom, spraying up streamers of shining mist, which shrivelled to tenuous wraiths and, like the ghost in Hamlet, "shrank in haste away." On every hand the entire mass then dispersed and swiftly rose far above our heads. The final state was a high ceiling of widely deployed cumulus, still as becalmed galleons. But the Mamore and Nevis peaks retained their own bank and, seen now in correct perspective, looked for all the world like a flashing necklace flung down carelessly on a cotton-wool pad. Nor had we ever realised what teeming waters spatter the Moor of Rannoch

until we saw these hosts of white eyes upturned, calmly looking to the moon. Like them we waited,

“With heart as calm as lakes that sleep
In frosty moonlight glistening,
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep
To their own far-off murmurs listening.”

That was our heart's desire—to wait, to wait for we knew not what. Nor did our instinct err. For we had yet to learn that from this inner stillness, which lifts the mind far beyond the imperfect offices of prayer and praise, comes the great flight of the spirit, and its apprehension of glory and beauty eternal.

But the wings do not grow of their own accord.

Toward four o'clock in the morning we returned to Glen Etive. Our most sanguine expectations had been met; our eyes feasted and our hearts elated. We had set out in search of adventure and we had found beauty. Thus we had found them both in their fuller sense; for in the architecture of hill and sky, as in great art and music, there is an everlasting harmony with which our own being had this night been made one. What more may we fairly ask of mountains? None the less, I came down from the summit filled with the acute awareness of an imminent revelation lost; a shadow that stalked at my side ever more openly among the hills. Something underlying the world as we saw it had been withheld. The very skies had trembled with presentiment of the last reality; and we had not been worthy.

Those fairest forms of the mountain way—are they all that is spread out for us to read on the high places of the earth? Something in that night cried out to us, not low, nor faltering, but clear, true, urgent—that this was not all: that not half the wonder had pierced the clouds of our blindness: that the world was full of a Divine splendour, which must be sought within oneself before it might be found without: that our task was to see and know. From the deeps of the earth to the uttermost star above, the whole creation had throbbed with a full and new life; its music, one song of honour to the

beautiful ; its Word, " Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory . . ." And we knew, as surely as men know anything on earth, that the implacable hunter had drawn close. Turn where we would, there was nothing anywhere but He. One's ear caught the ringing of His footstep ; and one's eye, " gleams like the flashing of a shield."

" At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, ' Is there any hope ? '
To which an answer pealed from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand ;
And on the glimmering limit, far withdrawn,
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn."

TO THE CUILLIN.

YOUR fretted ridges leap to meet the clouds,
Ringing your corries in an iron sheath
—Gaunt, inner strongholds that the mist enshrouds,
Buttressed by mighty boiler-plates beneath ;
Down whose uncompromising, rocky sweeps,
Twisting and swaying like a dangled thread,
A milky torrent, curdling as it leaps,
Draws the eye upward ; stirs the urge to tread
Your summits underneath the clinkered boot,
Where the whole world has narrowed to a crest
Barely affording lodgement for the foot,
Shattered and toothed—by wind and rain possessed.
There, where each step so straitly is confined,
There lingers liberation for the mind.

D. J. F.

BAD WEATHER AND BIVOUACS.

**With Notes on Frostbite, Chills, Exhaustion
and Movement at Night.**

By W. M. Mackenzie.

It is better to lock the stable door before the horse has gone. This article has been written especially for those mountaineers and hill-walkers who have some experience of our mountains in the summer-time and little or none of winter conditions. It is said that advice is seldom accepted by young people, but the veteran may at least collect a few hints.

British hills in winter-time are probably at their best ; there is no doubt that snow enhances the appearance of the most minor hills, and it is little wonder that men and women are drawn to them to admire and wander over their snow-covered tops. I would certainly encourage every young person to go to the hills in winter and not to be deterred by our unpredictable weather conditions, but treat the hills with respect and not bite off more than can be chewed.

I will deal briefly with conditions likely to prevail in the winter months. Many people coming from abroad are of the opinion that we have the worst climate in the world ; it must be agreed that it isn't good, but we have grown accustomed to it and are rather apt to take it for granted. The British Isles occupy a very northerly position close to the home of our worst enemy, the "trough of low pressure," otherwise "the depression." That home lies to the south-west of Iceland, and all too frequent are the visitations of its inmates. In the low country conditions may be windy, blustery perhaps, with rain or sleet showers ; but in the hills a full gale, accompanied by snow, may be in operation.

On the high plateaux, which are a feature of the Cairngorms, the ferocity of a winter storm has to be experienced in order to be believed. I have seen fairly hefty men lifted clean off their feet. The average town-dweller, or for

that matter the countryman, has little idea of what conditions can be like. I have also seen conditions of positive calm in the lower valleys, whilst on the upper plateaux a gale was blowing, of which my companion, Frank Smythe, and myself were entirely unaware until we got there. We were almost reduced to crawling in order to reach the cairn of a minor top at 3,300 feet. There was no snow at that time; a heavy stone pitched into the air was carried away in the gale. Wind is an enemy not to be trifled with, and our hills are about the windiest that one could find. As the season advances, snow, as a rule, lies thickly on the higher ground, and a combination of wind and snow is not pleasant. Gales can come out of almost nowhere with little warning, or at least not enough to give a margin of safety to enable a party to escape to lower ground. If, in very fine conditions, with clear blue skies overhead, the sky takes on a milky appearance from south-east to west, it is nearly always a sign of the approach of bad weather.

Before I describe methods of bivouacking I shall describe in a few words several incidents typical of what has been occurring from time to time in the Highlands, with disastrous consequences.

(a) Two young men travelling from Corrour Bothy to Glen Einich Bothies were caught out by a sudden change in the weather when on the high ground between the two places. The time of year was the end of December with heavy snow conditions. A blizzard developed in a short space of time, but the two men fought their way on. Darkness overtook them and it was not long before one collapsed, the other carrying on until he too could go no farther. Both men were fairly well equipped, and, I believe, were in the Cairngorms testing equipment for an expedition to Greenland.

(b) Another two young men were on this occasion spending New Year at the Shelter Stone. One of them was little more than a youth. Conditions were quite unseasonable, the weather being very fine and warm when the couple left for Loch Morlich via Cairngorm and were overtaken by a blizzard whilst traversing the mountain.

Both men were found in a gully, having died of exposure. The youth was wearing shorts, but the older man was wearing more suitable apparel.

(c) The following incident occurred in Iceland under conditions similar to what can be expected at home. A large party traversing high ground from one fjord to another was caught out by a blizzard of sleet and rain. Wind registered elsewhere on the island gusts of 130 m.p.h., not an uncommon force here, as gusts of 150 m.p.h. have been recorded at the old Observatory on Ben Nevis. The party became disorganised, and whereas four men pushed on and perished, the others sheltered in the open where they could and survived, suffering little hardship.

In the two incidents in the Cairngorms there was a large deposit of snow on the hills, and in the Iceland incident very little.

Bivouacs.

Bivouacking is practised a great deal in Scandinavia, as it is by far the most comfortable method of existing in open, deeply snow-covered country, and it also dispenses with the carrying of a heavy tent, giving more room for extra food or clothing.

The most common type of bivouac is the snow cave, which is easily constructed and requires little technical knowledge. The construction of an *igloo* requires a good deal of practice and the right texture of snow. There are other types of bivouacs, but those are mostly of the bush type and hardly concern our wide treeless spaces.

The main object of a bivouac or shelter is to provide (1) shelter from the wind, (2) insulation from the cold, (3) protection from rain.

There are three types of shelters: (a) Natural shelters, such as ice caverns made by streams flowing through a glacier, crevasses that have been roofed over by snow, or caves in mountains. (b) Shelters that can be improvised out of snow, turf and stones and branches of trees, or bivouacs made out of ground-sheets. (c) Shelters which may be found, such as huts in the mountains or a boat cast on a loch shore. Types (a) and (c) require

only ingenuity, but (b) requires a certain amount of knowledge.

Holes burrowed in snow, either with the hands or any kind of entrenching tool, *e.g.*, any part of a mess tin, are extremely warm. The position must be selected with care in some place such as a drift behind a steep bank or a drifted-in gully. In soft snow where a "cave-in" may be feared a dome-shaped roof is preferable. A ventilation hole is essential and a chimney made over it to prevent it becoming drifted over.

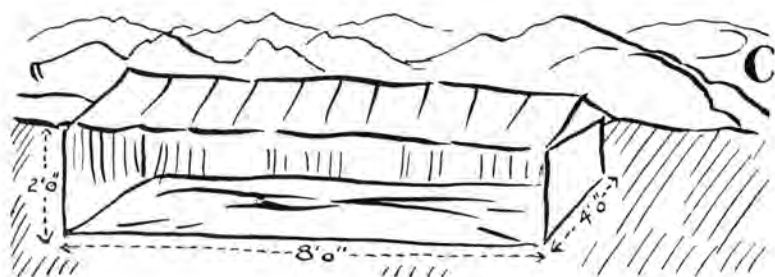
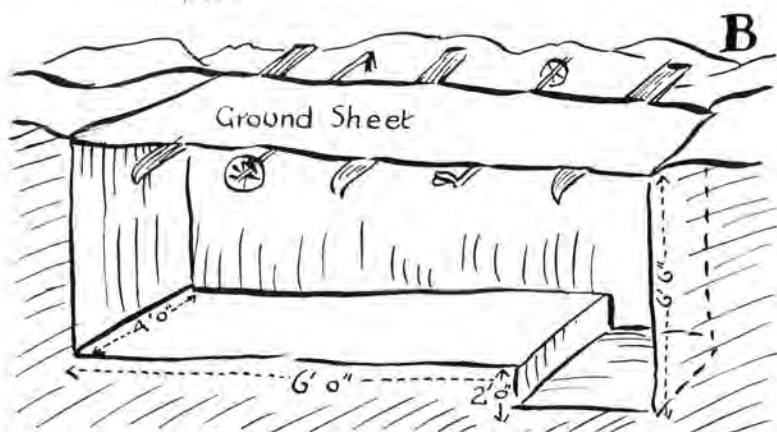
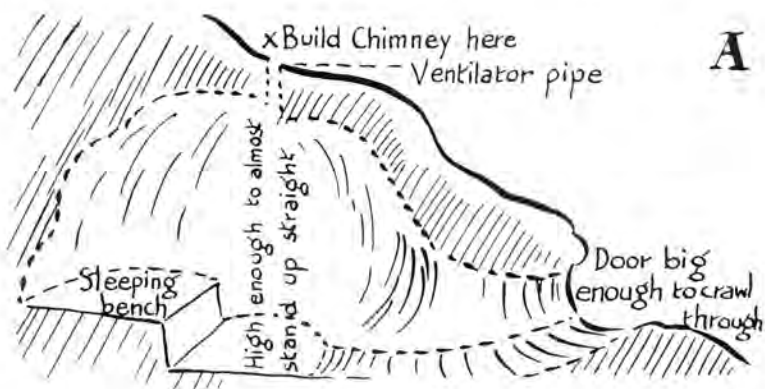
Diagram A shows a hole dug into a drift, B the trench type roofed over with a ground-sheet, and C a trench dug in a hard, shallow snowdrift and roofed over with snow blocks.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that a snow bivouac such as a snow hole is a very warm place to sleep in; 25° F. is about the lowest temperature that can be experienced and the thermometer can go as high as 42° F.* Do not walk over the roof of a snow cave and do not leave any gear, especially entrenching tools, lying about outside. If the party is a large one and more than one cave is made, mark the position of each with an ice-axe or ski. A maximum of one and a half hours should give ample time to construct a snow cave.

There is nothing in Scottish snow conditions to prevent the construction and use of a snow cave. I have used one over a period of changing weather conditions from freezing to "fresh," but the cave suffered no harm. An *igloo* has been known to keep intact for a considerable time in poor conditions.

The two incidents that I have used as examples of what can happen in this country could have been avoided if the unfortunate people involved had known even a little about snow bivouacs.

* "The temperature of 25° F. was taken over a period of time in an unoccupied ice cave. The temperature rose rapidly when the cave was inhabited. By contrast, a tent will, even if inhabited, show a temperature very little higher than that prevailing outside at the time, though it does give protection from wind. The ice cave affords protection against cold as well as wind."



DIAGRAMS OF SNOW SHELTERS

W. M. Mackenzie

When there is no snow, and in conditions of blinding icy rain and sleet, a shelter can be constructed out of stones and turf. It is essential to find protection from wind; a shelter of three walls with a ground-sheet roof 18 inches from the ground can provide the temporary necessity. The storm will roar overhead. In the Iceland incident the men who got off scot-free merely sheltered behind boulders until daylight; they had no particular mountaineering qualifications, but used some common-sense tactics and did not panic.

My advice to people caught out in bad and worsening conditions, with nightfall not far off and a long way to go to the nearest habitation, is to use what is left of the daylight to make a bivouac or shelter and then get down to it for the night.

I would also advise several items of equipment for winter mountaineering. My list is as follows: A good pair of boots suitably nailed; windproofs—the smock of *anorak** type reaching as low as the hips; woollen mitts; windproof gauntlets; two pullovers; balaclava; spare socks; compass; light torch; light mess tin and stove; map; ice-axe; light down sleeping-bag with ground-sheet to which is sewn a shower and windproof top cover;

* *Anorak*.—An anorak is a hooded garment used by the Eskimos, the best ones being made of caribou hide. This style of garment, made of windproof cloth, has been adopted for many years by Arctic explorers and winter mountaineers. The hood, if not worn, can lie down the back; if worn there is an adjusting cord round the face-piece to keep it in position. A cord round the waist is useful. Do not use an elastic band as it will cause overheating. The cord is adjustable. The garment should cover the hips, thereby protecting the small of the back. Pockets should enable one to warm the hands, so that one can place one's hand over the stomach. One large pocket at stomach level with entry for both right and left hands is the best idea. This facilitates searching the pocket. Americans favour zippers for the whole length of the front. The Americans seem to be able to repair these easily when they occasionally go out of order. The fault is usually caused by the tips of the locking device being forced too far apart. A gentle squeeze with a pair of pliers can remedy this. The novice would have to learn this first. Anoraks have been purchasable in Britain (*e.g.*, at Messrs Black, of Greenock).

a good supply of the right kind of food (high calorific values), and a light rucksack.

Do not wear a kilt or shorts on high hills in winter: an Arctic explorer would not wear either, and conditions here can be as bad as any north of lat. 75° (*vide* Nansen's "Farthest North"). Opinions differ as to the best kind of wear to cover the lower limbs, but be sure that it is sufficient and also windproof.

Frostbite.

Frostbite is mainly due to two things—badly fitting equipment, such as tight-fitting gloves and boots retarding free circulation, or just to sheer carelessness. Frostbite is not nearly such an everyday occurrence as the popular novel conveys. In Scandinavian, Swiss and American armies it is an offence to contract frostbite.

The symptoms are unmistakable—very cold, painful condition of the extremities. Instant action must be taken to put matters right and to ascertain the cause, which might be damp gloves or socks, due to perspiration. The affected part must be massaged, *not with snow* but by hand, until circulation is restored to normal, which is rather a painful process as the blood begins to circulate in the frozen part. Rubbing frozen feet or hands with snow might break the skin, which may be in a very tender condition. Snow is composed of icy crystals. Put on a pair of dry socks or gloves and place the damp articles close to the body. Body heat will dry them off. The loss of all sensation in feet or hands is a most dangerous phase of frostbite.

The nose and cheek bones can be easily affected by frostbite. This is not so easily detected, except by one's companions. The affected part assumes a dirty puttyish grey colour. Place a gloved hand over the frostbitten part until normal condition is regained.

Chills.

Prevention is better than cure. A chill is usually caused by overheating followed by an all too quick

cooling down of the body. Never start on a day's march feeling comfortably warm, otherwise overheating of the body will certainly occur. It is quite a usual thing for a whole party to make a halt fifteen to twenty minutes after starting off to adjust clothing and rucksack straps. Prior to any extra exertion take off some clothing such as a windproof or a pullover and put them on again at halts, especially if the halting place is on an exposed position, *e.g.*, a mountain top. Underclothes at the end of a day should be quite dry. The best garment of all to wear next the skin is a string vest, and this type of garment, by its design, provides a constant layer of air between the skin and one's shirt. Overheated air can escape at the neck. The adjustment of a scarf or neck-square (dish-cloth) can allow hot air free exit or keep it trapped. Do not wear heavy, close-fitting garments such as a mackinaw or lumberman's jacket. Light windproofs and good woollens are preferable, even more so in icy rain.

Exhaustion.

Exhaustion is the outcome of insufficient food ; sleep is of minor importance ; it has been proved time and again, especially in recent years, that the body can be pushed to perform terrific feats of endurance. Eat little and often is a good motto ; always carry something in a handy pocket ; capacious ones are most useful. Food is certainly a ticklish problem in these times, especially chocolate and raisins, but I believe pemmican can still be obtained from Bovril Ltd. Pemmican keeps for a long time, and there is no doubt that at times it can be worth its weight in gold. It has a high calorific value and can be eaten hot or cold.

Spirits—whisky or brandy—should not be carried, as it provides but a temporary stimulant and leaves the body in a more exhausted condition than before. If one must burden oneself with a bottle, let it contain a good wine or sherry. A small first-aid kit has often proved useful.

Keeping Going at Night.

If a party is going to make a habit of climbing the more difficult winter courses during the shorter winter days it would be well for each member of the party to carry a torch with a headlight attachment. It is quite an easy matter cutting steps and handholds in steep ice by the light of a torch; my party has had to do that on several occasions. It is quite a difficult matter to assess conditions on Scottish climbs until one is fairly launched on them; times of ascent vary enormously, *e.g.*, a February ascent of Observatory Ridge, Ben Nevis, took fourteen hours in exceedingly icy conditions on the upper part of the mountain; a visit to the same ridge in early May of the following year, when there was an abnormal amount of snow on the mountain and conditions were first rate, resulted in the completion of our climb in half our original time. The former time could not have been cut, for conditions were most difficult and somewhat unusual, more like a great Alpine ridge in very bad condition. Weather conditions on both occasions were ideal.

In winter mountaineering a great deal of determination is required to push home some of our first-rate winter climbs, plus wide experience of snow, rock and ice climbing. We have never had to bivouac on a climb. Local knowledge has been of great assistance, and without it a bivouac might become necessary, especially in a complicated situation. To an inexperienced party it is doubtful if the risk of keeping on the move is worth while, as an accident can quite easily occur. An accident in winter-time can be most serious, not so much from the initial effects, but from the condition of shock that generally develops.

SCOTTISH CLIMBING CLUBS : A SURVEY. II.

A Symposium collated by the Editor.

The Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland.

THE J.M.C.S. is twenty years old. During an Alpine holiday in 1925 an S.M.C. party realised the many advantages to be derived from a secondary club for training applicants up to the S.M.C. climbing qualification. Accordingly, at New Year 1926, the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland held its first Meet, the originators of the Edinburgh Section being Rusk and Bartholomew, while the Glasgow Section was initiated by Hutchison and Rutherford.* The Club is open to all men over the age of seventeen, and as it was intended to be a preliminary one, no climbing qualification is asked for.

At its inception the Sections numbered Edinburgh 34, Perth 11, and Glasgow 9. In ten years Glasgow had become the strongest section with 72 members, Edinburgh then having 48 and Perth 31. In 1938 an Inverness Section was added with a membership of 12. Due to the increased English membership, a London Association of the J.M.C.S. was formed in 1939, and this group functioned with great activity and ingenuity despite the geographical limitations of their district. The steady progress of the Club was maintained, and when war was declared the total membership of the Sections was 225.

At New Year the Sections held a combined Meet at which the Annual General Meeting, followed by the Annual Dinner, took place, uniting business and bacchanal in a way suitable to all tastes. During the rest of the year each Section acted independently in the organisation of climbing Meets and lectures. Glasgow's syllabus usually detailed a score of meetings. Four of these were Meets at various climbing centres; eight more were informal Meets normally only lasting a day, and the others generally took the form of lectures. In December, in conjunction

* See *J.*, 17, 236; 19, 197; 21, 150.

with the Annual Section Meeting, a Photographic Competition was held, which was always splendidly supported and produced a surprising amount of most effective pictorial work.

During the years prior to the war, much of the initiative in Scottish climbing was displayed by the J.M.C.S. Within the course of four years members had made seven new vertical routes and one horizontal route on such a well-worn piece of rock as the Crowberry Ridge. The initial noteworthy feat was the first complete ascent of The Chasm, which was followed by a succession of new routes on mountains in various districts. There were a few on Buachaille Etive Mor, one on Aonach Dubh, another on the Church Door Buttress, and the long ascent of Clachaig Gully. Others included the Cobbler, Sgoran Dubh, the Rosa Pinnacle on Cir Mhor, and several on different Cuillin Peaks. Ben Nevis rightly claimed much attention, and a good contribution of new routes, variations, and filling-in work on existing routes has been made by J.M.C.S. climbers. Possibly the more profitable addition to Scottish climbing was the climbing of many standard courses in winter conditions. Pre-eminent among these were ascents of the Crowberry Ridge, Crowberry Gully, Arch Gully, South Central Gully on Stob Coire nan Lochan, Observatory Ridge, and North-east Buttress on Nevis. Quite a score of traverses of the Main Cuillin Ridge have been marked up, and the second traverse of the Main Ridge with Clach Glas and Blaven was effected by J.M.C.S. men. All the tops of the Mamores have been done in one expedition, as well as several long trips over Blackmount peaks.

The war has not stopped, merely curtailed, activity; indeed, in some respects it has widened the Club's sphere, as members report climbs in the Rockies, the Himalaya, the Apennines, Iceland, Ceylon, Greece—in fact, from all quarters of the globe. While few official Meets have been held, unofficial climbing has continued in an encouraging fashion, and in most of the climbing districts. Despite war-time difficulties many members have kept in touch with Club affairs. Most hopeful feature of all

has been the steady influx of new members. Even on the restricted basis of reckoning, Glasgow's membership numbers 115 and Edinburgh's over 30. The future is hopeful and the prospect stimulating (see p. 363).

Scottish University Clubs.

Corporate mountaineering activity among Scottish undergraduates dates back almost to the end of the last war, but progress has been most uneven, with considerable fluctuations. The initial stimulus has often come from outside the University, or at least outside the undergraduate body, and progress has depended on the coming together, for but a short period unfortunately, of a small group of very active enthusiasts, perhaps under the influence of one or two outstanding leaders. Owing to the short period spent by any student at the University, there has always been a large element of impermanence and fluctuation in the numbers and activity of these clubs. No Scottish club has ever vied with Oxford or Cambridge, either in size or exploratory activity. The well-known impecunious condition of the average Scottish undergraduate may help to explain this. A brief consideration of the history and progress of these clubs will help to bear out the above conclusions.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUNDEE, RUCKSACK CLUB.—This Club was founded in 1923. The main initiative came from the first President, A. Fraser (Engineering), and the first Secretary, D. Myles (Medical). There were soon about 60 members, including both sexes. Meets were held at Christmas and Easter, usually at Corrour Bothy in the Cairngorms for the men, while the women's Meets were less spartan in character. A very considerable amount of snow and ice work was done. The reporter (Dr Myles) remembers one delightful, continuous glissade from Carn a' Mhaim to the River Dee, 1,500 feet! The Club still maintains its activities. Meets have occurred all over Scotland, and an Alpine Meet has also been known.

ST ANDREWS UNIVERSITY M.C.—It is not easy to

see why such a long period of inactivity should elapse before the founding of the St Andrews Club, for there is much coming and going between Dundee and St Andrews. But it was only in November 1934 that undergraduate conditions in St Andrews became favourable. Here, again, our own members, Professor Turnbull and J. Y. Macdonald, took a keen interest in the development, as also did Professor D. E. Innes who helped matters on with the loan of a projector and a lecture room. But the prime movers were D. N. Lowe (first President) and J. D. B. Wilson (now S.M.C., first Secretary). Probably the author of these notes, Dr G. A. Collie, was equally active as a promoter. Membership at foundation was about 30 strong. Since then it has fluctuated roughly between 40 and 20. Many members, termed associates, have attended lectures only, so that rather under 40 per cent. of the membership have attended the Meets, which have been all-male functions, although the membership included women.

Meets were held during vacations, or at mid-term week-ends. The average Meet had an attendance of a dozen or so. Xmas and Easter Meets were devoted to Scottish snow and ice work. Readers of our *Journal* will recollect the excellent paper by J. D. B. Wilson on "The Spring Cuillin," which deals with March Meets in Skye, especially the Alpine conditions of 1937. Rock-climbing Meets were held in summer, the Lake District being visited, and several small Meets having taken place in the Alps. A profusely illustrated "Log" has been kept, and the volumes remain in the University Library.

In 1940, Club affairs were wound up owing to lack of activity and interest. The author of these notes, Dr G. A. Collie, is firmly convinced that the Club will revive in the post-war period. It is, in fact, reported that it has recently been active again, but on a smaller scale.

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY, THE LAIRIG CLUB.—Formerly this was called the Open Air Club, and we have not been able to unearth its early history. In 1940 it was reconstituted as the Lairig Club. Among those present at the meeting were: Dr W. T. Hendry, George

Morrison (since killed in Libya), Leslie D. Duncan (reported missing in the Far East), and Dr Lumsden Walker. These appear to have been the prime movers. Open to both sexes, it had a membership of between 50 and 100. The chief annual event was the summer camp at Derry Lodge; there were also occasional excursions and regular indoor meetings, but no publications. When the other Universities proposed amalgamation of such clubs, Aberdeen stayed out because of its own sufficient numbers. There was an inter-University Meet at Glencoe at Easter 1943 attended by only eight persons, one of whom was from Aberdeen.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY M.C. was an offshoot of the Wilderness Club, which included mountaineering and ski-ing amongst an assortment of activities ranging from conchology to angling. The E.U.M.C. was founded in 1938 as a separate club with a membership of about 30, including both sexes. There is a certain amount of joint activity with the Edinburgh Section of the J.M.C.S., but the E.U.M.C. seems to have a membership of about 30 at present.

GLASGOW UNIVERSITY M.C.—It is curious that the considerable development in recent years of the Glasgow J.M.C.S. and other Glasgow climbing clubs should have taken so long to infiltrate the University, but it was only in the winter of 1939 that a small group of student climbers, on the summit of Narnain, decided to form the above Club. Even then there was a long period of delay, and only in March 1941 did 17 enthusiastic mountaineers meet to constitute the Club, elect a committee, and arrange for the first Meet. The first President was Jas. Mitchell, and the office-bearers included W. Crombie (Secretary), T. C. M'Aslan (Treasurer), G. S. Johnstone, and Miss Baird. The Club's first Meet was at Glencoe in April 1941, but a more spectacular one was held a month later at Glen Loin Youth Hostel, when 24 members disported themselves on the Cobbler. Mr J. A. Garrick generously presented a collection of books, the nucleus of an excellent library. In winter, lectures are held, and the most popular climbing grounds are Glencoe,

Crianlarich, and Arrochar. Membership has gradually declined from 24 (1941-42) to 12 (1944-45), so that activities are now restricted to informal Meets and lectures.

There was a Meet of University Clubs at Glenbrittle in July 1945 for nine days, during which a great deal of climbing was done. The Scottish Universities were represented, as well as Manchester, Oxford, and Cambridge.

The Younger Glasgow Clubs.

This section has been compiled, for the most part, from descriptions furnished by Mr B. H. Humble. The material is extensive and a good deal of condensation has been found to be necessary. Especial thanks are also due to Mr J. B. Nimlin for his account of a typical Meet of the Lomond Mountaineering Club, the largest of these younger clubs.

Professor Ramsay's Cobbler Club was our first mountaineering club; the J.M.C.S. had its birth pangs on the Cobbler, but none worshipped so ardently at this mountain shrine as the groups about to be described. To them the Cobbler revealed his inner secrets. Soon these groups ranged farther, but the essential freedom and toughness of the early days remained, and their records show that they could look after themselves on the mountains, even under the most severe winter conditions. If we regard W. W. Naismith as the father of the S.M.C., we might almost look on J. B. Nimlin as the parent of this new type of climber, as he was the founder of the first of these clubs and has had much to do with most of the others.

THE PTARMIGAN CLUB.—This was founded by J. B. Nimlin and W. C. Dougan in 1929. There were 16 original members and no others were admitted. This group did good climbing in the Arrochar and Glencoe regions in the subsequent years (see *J.* 22, 221, and 21, 348). They would go off on a three weeks' climbing holiday carrying neither tents, sleeping-bags, nor blankets, sleeping in barns, deserted cottages, and caves. Wisely, they did not stint themselves when it came to carrying food. Commandos have been toughened on the hills by

similar methods. Their leader, in his first Alpine season of eight days, climbed Monte Rosa, Breithorn, Klein Matterhorn, and the Matterhorn. The Ptarmigan Club is no longer active as a club.

THE CREAGH DHU MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.—This was formed in 1930 by A. F. Saunders, and was originally composed of youths from Clydebank. At the start they almost lived around the Narnain Stone, and the A'Crois caves knew them well. Meets have been held at Corrour Bothy and the Loch Avon Shelter Stone. Five days at Corrour at New Year time speaks for itself. Being supreme artists at hitch-hiking they traversed all Scotland, and could tell of a hundred howffs of which the hotel-bound climber knows nothing. They participated in many new climbs on the Cobbler, on Ben A'n, and the Raven's Gully on Buachaille Etive. Many of the best routes on rock and on snow and ice were done in Glencoe, on Ben Nevis, on the Cuillin, and on the Cumbrian and Welsh mountains. They favoured nails as against rubbers, on the whole. The war curtailed activity, but new blood was introduced in 1944 and the younger members were trained in the Arrochar and Trossachs districts, so that an icy ascent of Crowberry Gully took place in March 1945.

The personnel has always been limited to 30 members and is at present 22, of whom 6 have served in the Forces (December 1945). Those at home are active nearly every week-end, all year round. A prospective member has to be active with the Club for six months to prove himself, and must then secure unanimous approval at a monthly meeting. Thus a high standard and a friendly Club atmosphere are maintained. The present Secretary is Charles MacPherson, 31 Corkerhill Road, Glasgow, S.W.2, and we are indebted to the former Secretary, Richard Gowers, for most of this description.

THE LOMOND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.—This Club was founded by John Harvey in 1933. It is a mixed Club, and is perhaps the best organised of these younger clubs. Before 1939 there were about 50 members. Almost half have been on war service and a lamentable number

have been killed. At present there are about 70 active members. There are fortnightly Meets and monthly indoor meetings in winter. Last year a quarterly news-sheet was started and circulated to Service members. New members must have had considerable experience of summer and winter climbing, and this is followed by a six-months' apprenticeship with Club members. Attendance at Meets averages 50 per cent. of experienced members.

The Lomonds have many stories of adventures in caves and howffs all over Scotland. One party camped in the Nevis Observatory for two days at New Year. The Club often hires a bus for its Meets, which usually went to Glencoe, but for longer week-ends to the Lake District, Fort William, or Aviemore. The adventures of that bus would fill a book. It often took fantastic skids on icy roads or got ditched, requiring all hands to extricate it. In the years 1938 and 1939 this gaily labelled bus—The Mountaineer—took the members to Switzerland. It aroused much interest, and the kilt ensured a warm welcome everywhere. In one village, long after dark, the local mayor welcomed the members in his nightshirt, plied them with champagne, and ran a dance in their honour.

In 1938 they left Glasgow on Friday night of the Fair Week, camped at Dover on Saturday night, at Arras, Sunday, reached Lucerne on Tuesday and climbed Pilatus. Then they went to Grindelwald, camped at 10,000 feet on the Wetterhorn, and climbed the mountain without guides. The 1939 route also included Pilatus, crossed the Furka and Grimsel passes, and the members had six days of cross-country climbing, doing several passes and being foiled by bad weather on the Finsteraarhorn. The bus was rejoined at Interlaken.

Members are ready to try any means so long as it takes them to the mountains, and last July one small group had an adventurous voyage in an open motor boat from Mallaig to Loch Brittle. Very high seas were running and the trip took seven instead of the expected four hours.

Mr J. B. Nimlin describes a typical Lomond Glencoe Meet as follows :—

“ Members could discuss the composition of parties, the routes, and the sharing of loads in a very congenial climbing atmosphere whilst *en route* to the climbing centre. One party would land at the Glen Etive road, another at the roadman's cottage below the Gorge, and the rest at the quarry by Loch Triochtain, where the bus was usually parked for the week-end. Soon little growths of tents would appear in sheltered corners. The procedure was the same in summer or winter, but in winter fly-sheets, zipper doors, sown-in ground-sheets, and other fug-retaining devices were in evidence.

“ When a start was made on Sunday morning the destination of each party was known to the others, so that relief parties could make a quick contact in the event of any mishap or hold-up in the later stages of a climb. Happily the machinery has never required to be put to the test up to the present.

“ Women are likely to be found in several of the climbing parties, and in this connection I recall an article in a certain climbing journal,* which suggested that a woman's place, even in a tent in Glencoe, was by the cooking pot. Whether this reflects the humour or the prejudice of the reckless man who wrote it, is of little importance ; but I believe that if this man—form permitting—had climbed next to some of the women members during their ascents of the Chasm, Raven's Gully, or Clachaig Gully, his ideas might have been rather different.

“ There were many other centres within the range of bus Meets—Glen Nevis, Glen Clova, Coylum Bridge, Glen Strae, Glen Lyon, Glen Dee, Wasdale Head. During the period of the war, when bus Meets were impossible, there were monthly Meets for those who were free to climb ; but now the bus is back again on its fortnightly runs and the pre-war spirit has been fully recaptured.

* The unnamed reference is to an article by A. H. Hendry in our own *Journal* (*J.* 23, 249). We tender our apologies and would say that we regret any offence which may have been caused by our contributor.

Newly demobbed members start climbing at once ; there are new members and good expectations for the future."

The present Secretary is Mr M. Finlayson, and the Clubroom address is 72 Waterloo Street, Glasgow, C.2.

THE TRICOUNI MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.—This happy little Club was born about 1930 with about a score of members of both sexes. The membership never exceeded 40 and the subscription was nominal, as it was seldom clear who was Treasurer. The climbing qualification was the ability to traverse the three peaks of the Cobbler—somehow—for an agreeable personality counted for more than climbing ability. Every Friday night the members met in a coffee-room to hatch the plans for the week-end, and this resulted in a high level of activity in the pre-war years, sometimes forty week-ends being profitably used. Climbing was wide and varied both in Scotland, where quite a number of new routes were done (see *J.* 21 and 22), and in England and the Alps. A book exists which contains a record of many of these adventures, and also a fine photographic record of Scottish mountain landscape. Unfortunately, the war has ended all this. This Club must be distinguished from another English body of the same name which once issued a journal.

GLASGOW HIGH SCHOOL F.P.'S : MOUNTAINEERING SECTION.—This was started in 1929, membership 20-30, including members of many other clubs. There were regular pre-war Meets. In 1938 there was an Alpine Meet when many peaks were climbed, guides being employed for the traverse of the Matterhorn. Efforts are now being made to revive this body.

Dundee District Clubs.

THE GRAMPIAN CLUB.—This, the strongest of these clubs, was founded on 19th January 1927 by George Chalmers and Robert Ower. The following information is from Mr Eric Maxwell, 42 Oxford Street, Dundee, the present Meets Secretary. The membership is mixed, and rose from 36 at the date of formation to 54 in 1930, 61 in 1936, 65 in 1939, and 68 in 1945, of which latter number

24 were on Service. Associate members are admitted by the Council for a year, during which they are required to attend six Meets, after which the Council may admit them as members or extend the qualifying period. The qualifying period may be waived if the qualifications of the applicant warrant this. Mr J. B. Salmond is Honorary President and Mr G. R. Donald an Honorary Member.

A journal was issued in 1937, and sundry articles have been published elsewhere. The Club has a collection of 1,200 lantern slides and an excellent library of books and journals of climbing interest. Meetings are held monthly, as well as an annual social meeting which used to be a dinner. Week-end Meets are held at Spring and Autumn Holidays and at New Year. There are also monthly Meets, which used to be by bus to such centres as Clova, Callater, Lochearnhead, Crianlarich, Glen Lyon, Glencoe, etc. There is a Summer Meet in Skye. At such Meets parties are arranged to undertake hill walks, rock climbs, or snow climbs. There have been many private Meets also among the members. Rock climbs have ranged from the Maiden Rock, St Andrews, to Lochnagar, Glencoe, Nevis, and Skye, and by private parties in the Lakes, Wales, the Alps, and even the Himalaya! The pre-war Meets have now been restarted and the Club is very healthy as regards membership and finance.

THE CORRIE CLUB.—Three well-known Dundee climbers, Messrs Jack Scott, K. M'Laren, and J. Ferguson started the Corrie Club in June 1937. The membership was 15 (all male) in 1938, and in 1939 a Ladies' Section was started. Unfortunately the war has taken away many members from the 1939 figures of 20 men and 9 ladies. The present Chairman is Mr Jas. Cosgrove, 6 Noran Avenue, Dundee. The Club does both summer and winter climbing on rock and snow, and has ranged from the near-by Glen Clova to Ben Nevis, Skye, and elsewhere. Members have several first ascents in the Clova-Lochnagar district to their credit (see *J.*, 22, 23). The Club has a good library and keeps a Club Log. There is every prospect of revival and good fellow-

ship after the war. Meets used to take place monthly and new members must attend at least three in a year.

THE CREAGH DHU CLUB (DUNDEE BRANCH).—This branch of the parent Club in Glasgow was founded in 1937, the present Secretary being J. Douglas Beedie, 16 Ward Road, Dundee. Associate membership is granted to candidates proposed and seconded by members, but full membership depends on climbing capacity and approval by the members. Spring, Autumn, and Winter Meets at Nevis, Arrochar, and the Cairngorms were in association with the parent Club, but summer climbing was usually in the Clova district. A high light was the first ascent of the severe Diagonal Crack on the Jan Jorge in Upper Clova. The Club acquired a small disused quarry near Dundee for instruction and practice. The strength of the Club was 20 members in 1939. Since 1942 no organised Meet has been held, but one or two members continued to climb, whilst the great majority were in the Services.

Aberdeen and North-East Scotland.

THE MORAY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.—This happy-family organisation was founded at Elgin in 1931 by Finlay Mackenzie (first President), E. M. Davidson, and John Geddes. The membership is mixed, there is no qualification, and a prime object is to train novices. Membership has steadily risen through 120 in 1935 to 172 in 1939, and a big revival is expected now that the war has ended. The following descriptive account of the atmosphere of the Moray Club is from Mr John Geddes, Baile Ur, Elgin.

“ A Moray Meet was like a large, happy family party. The outings were mainly to the Cairngorms and Western Highlands—day trips, week-ends, and a week's stay each Easter at Glenmore Lodge. Members usually travelled by bus with early morning starts, one eye on the weather and the other on the map. Climbers discussed routes, formed themselves into parties large and small with much good-natured banter—altogether a happy band setting forth in eager anticipation of a day on the hills. High

tea would be arranged for, after the day's climb, at some near-by hotel, and then home again with swopping of experiences and popular songs and choruses.

"The most pleasant Meets were at Glenmore Lodge, rented for seven to ten days from the Forestry Commissioners. There might be 50 of us there, and a consequent cadging of camp beds and blankets by the President. One Glenmore Meet will always be memorable, when the Club was honoured by the presence of Mr and Mrs N. E. Odell, he just back from his epic success on Nanda Devi. Each night the climbers came home to the comforts of the Lodge—happy evenings and memories of young, eager faces—a real family party. One evening membership badges were presented to Mr and Mrs Odell, and the former, garbed in a member's Macduff tartan, was installed with mock solemnity as a member of Clan Duff!

"May the day not be long distant when, with the return home of so many of its members, the Moray Club will meet again and view the scenes from the summits of our beloved hills through eyes unclouded by war and the tragedy of war."

The Moray Club has issued a journal on two occasions, 1935 and 1936. This has been reviewed in our own *Journal*, and both were interesting and attractive publications.

THE ETCHACHAN CLUB.—This Aberdeen mountaineering club was founded in March 1938 by W. Lawson (our member who lost his life whilst on service, and whose obituary appears in this issue), Garth Lorimer, and G. A. Beckslinn. The membership is mixed, and started at 38, rose to 54 in 1940, and was 30 in the year 1944. There are Meets once a month at week-ends, held in the Cairngorms, Crianlarich, and Fort William. Attendance at one meeting qualifies for membership.

Note on Several Old Scottish Mountain Clubs.

Mr W. A. Ewen has drawn my attention to the existence of several old Mountain Clubs now defunct. The Innerleithen Alpine Club was founded in April 1889, and dealt with botanical, geological, and antiquarian lore of the county. A volume entitled "Principal

Excursions of the Innerleithen Alpine Club, 1889-94," was published by John M'Queen, Galashiels, in 1895 (311 pp., illustrated). The first issue of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* refers to an Elgin Cairngorm Club, and the second number to the most interesting of these old bodies, the Perthshire Mountain Club, founded in 1875, a section of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science. The qualification for membership was the ascent of a Perthshire mountain of at least 3,000 feet in height. There was a Cairnmaster as Chief Officer who, seated on the cairn, initiated new members with due ceremonies, a Quaighbearer being in attendance. Another office-bearer, the Bard, produced a poem for the occasion, "one of seventeen stanzas being recited at the Beinn Laoigh excursion. The Club motto was *Salix herbacea floreat* (dwarf alpine willow, the smallest British shrub). The first reference to the Club occurs in Vol. I. of "Proceedings and Transactions of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science, 1886-93."

JUNE IN SKYE.

COME sing with me a holiday at Skye in early June,
The freshness of those glorious hills that rise the moors
abune.

Day after day the sun shone fair on Sligachan and Brittle,
We did a wheen o' easy things an' ain or twa mair kittle.
The Coolin ridges, peaks and towers ne'er showed their
glories fairer,

The wild flowers, ferns and mosses surely ne'er looked
rich or rarer.

Day after day the crackling moors slid by beneath our feet;
Day after day we rose anew the sunshine fresh to greet;
Night after night the cuckoo's note pursued us to our beds,
Night after night the Coolins rose empurpled o'er our
heads.

The burns held pools all crystal clear, the sea its sandy
bays,

Where in the coolness we refreshed from labours of the days.
Two chauffeurs in their motor cars provided transport rare,
Recked not of roads, nor ferry planks, nor yet of tip or fare.
What holiday in all the world could bear with this com-
parison

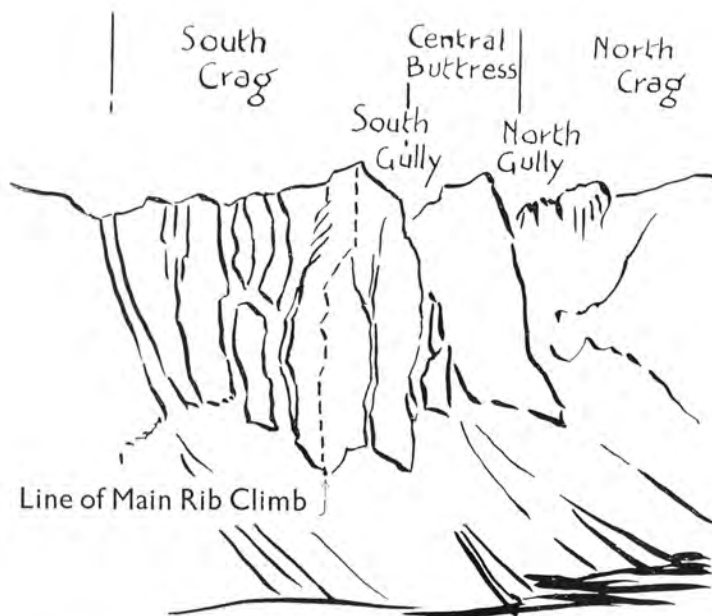
With Allan, Lawson, Menzies, Scott, with Steeple too,
and Harrison.

So while we tread the city street our thoughts will often fly
With gladness to the Coolins of The Misty Isle of Skye.

J. S. M. J.
SLIGACHAN, *June* 1926.



William Bolton
 "THE MOUNTAINEER"—Lomond Mountaineering Club
 (Crossing the Channel)



FACE OF BIDEIN A GHLAS THUILL—AN TEALLACH
 Rough Tracing from S.M.C.J., Vol. 11, p. 172. Suggested nomenclature as shown.
 Hayfork Gully is South Gully



July 1935

B. H. Humble

AN TEALLACH

(Left to right: Corrag Bhuidhe, Lord Berkeley's Seat and Sgurr Fiona)

ROCK CLIMBING AROUND DUNDONNELL.

By E. C. Pyatt.

MESSRS K. C. King and E. C. Pyatt (London Association, J.M.C.S.) spent a week at Dundonnell, Ross-shire, in June 1945 to explore the rock climbing possibilities of the An Teallach area. First impressions were disappointing. The following notes may be of assistance to future parties visiting this district for the same purpose.

The Torridon sandstone is a reasonably good climbing rock from the point of view of texture, but lacks positive incut holds and belays. It is divided up into major features in a general way—huge buttresses, gullies, etc.—but is comparatively featureless in detail. Routes in boots have to follow the few vertical lines of weakness which occur; routes could probably be made in rubbers on the faces, in many places, of approximately similar difficulty. The buttresses are formed by steep tiers of rock with considerable horizontal ledges between, and at each stage it is possible to vary the line of the route either right or left, or even to walk off the crag altogether. In places there are steeper walls which might provide good rubber climbs, but they are short compared with the mountain as a whole.

A long route will, in general, therefore involve a series of "outcrop" climbs, one above the other, and will have to seek difficulties rather than follow a natural easy way up an area of unclimbable rock. The present psychological approach to climbing problems, which makes non-artificiality a basic requirement, will need further development before Torridon sandstone can become a really satisfying climbing medium.

Gneiss is a much more suitable climbing rock. It is steep and slabby and may lack belays (rubbers and pitons would solve these difficulties). Vegetation is profuse in cracks and lines of weakness.

Quartzite has features in detail, little or no vegetation, good holds and belays. The rock gives the impression of looseness but is, in point of fact, substantially sound

in most places : in some other places it looks appallingly shattered and insecure.

The crag possibilities can be summarised as follows :—

An Teallach (Torridon Sandstone)—*The Bidein a Ghlas Thuill Face*.—This is shown in the accompanying diagram, where a possibly suitable nomenclature is suggested. A climb was made on the South Crag (see Appendix 2). Other climbs of similar standard, with difficulties easily avoidable, are possible on the South Crag and the Central Buttress. The Y-shaped gully on the South Crag may give a route. There are some very steep walls on the north face of the ribs and buttresses which might provide hard routes. The North Crag, which is slabby and unsatisfactory, was traversed at about one-third of its height on a broad ledge (rope unnecessary).

The Loch Toll an Lochain Face.—All the buttresses on this side appear too broken up to provide climbing routes. Short steep walls occur in places, which might be climbed in rubbers. We were unable to identify a route on Sail Liath described in *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1937 (given in Appendix 1). Since our return the notes of a further new climb in this corrie have been passed on to me (Appendix 5.) These have been included in order to bring up to date the climbing history of the district.

North Face of Glas Mheall Mor.—There is a small featureless crag here.

North Face of Sail Mhor.—This looks impressive from a distance, but closer inspection reveals the typical, rather featureless nature of the Torridon sandstone.

The Cliffs of Mac'us Mathair.—On the hillside behind the hotel, and only a few minutes' walk from it, are considerable outcrops of rock. These are very similar to the gritstone outcrops of Derbyshire, both in appearance and texture of rock. A number of short gymnastic routes could be made in various places. Similar outcrops occur on the plateau below the floors of the corries of An Teallach.

Beinn Dearg Mhor (Torridon Sandstone).—It is

impossible to carry out climbing exploration of these crags, using Dundonnell as a centre, within the framework of normal meal hours. A base in Strath na Sheallag is indispensable.

Glen na Muice (Gneiss).—At the junction of Glens na Muice Mor and Beag is a steep outcrop of gneiss some 250 feet high (*J.* 20, 88). It is just possible to climb here with Dundonnell as centre, although no time is left for any considerable exploration. A Strath na Sheallag base would again solve the difficulties. A climb which was done on the Junction Buttress is described in Appendix 3. The other buttresses in Glen na Muice Beag also look promising.

Cliffs on the N.E. Side of the Dundonnell Valley (Various)—*Carn a Bhiorain*.—The crag on this mountain which lies on the left of the road from Dundonnell to Fain is revolting, featureless and vegetated. The rock is a mica-schist. There are outcrops on the tops of most of the hills between here and Beinn nam Ban, but most of them are similar in appearance to the above and have no climbing to offer. The rock is mainly Torridon sandstone.

On *Creag Chorcurch*, however, a very pleasant outcrop of quartzite occurs. This consists of two buttresses: the one facing westwards across the valley, the other northwards across a subsidiary gorge, separated by a grass slope running up from the foot of the hill. A climb was done on each of these buttresses (Appendix 4).

The crags on the east side of Coir' a Ghiubhsachain below An Teallach may be of this rock also, in which case they should provide similar good climbing. They appear featureless from a distance, and no close inspection was carried out. Traversing the gorge of Allt a Chairn at stream level provided some interesting scrambling. There appears to be no climbing of any length anywhere on the Dundonnell sides of *Creag na Ceapich*, *Beinn nam Ban*, *Cnoc a Bhaidrallaich*, or *Beinn Ghobhlach*.

Crags on the Coast (mainly Gneiss).—The coast scenery around Gruinard Bay is excellent, and the weather is often fine there when it is raining in the mountains.

There are some low crags offering pleasant scrambling on Carn Dearg an Droma. Behind Mungasdale is an outcrop of fine climbing rock which, however, lacks features in detail and is vegetated. Just round the corner and facing Gruinard Island is a steep rock buttress—a miniature Bochlwyd. There are large exposures of rock on all the hills around here, the most extensive being on Carn na h'Aire above the Gruinard River. Here, again, features in detail seem to be lacking. A small buttress on the roadside facing Fraoch Eilean Mor provided some entertaining short routes. There are no exposures of rock on either side of the Little Gruinard River as far as Fionn Loch.

APPENDICES.

1. (From *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1937, p. 76.)

"An Teallach. Above Loch Toll an Lochain on the spur known as Sail Liath are three conspicuous vertical clefts. They do not reach to the scree below, and the lower two look difficult of access by reason of loose and overhanging rock. The foot of the uppermost was reached by a traverse round a corner and the ascent of a small slab. The gully is divided into two chimneys. A smooth chockstone blocked the entrance to the right-hand one, but the left-hand one was reached by climbing a steep wall, on which the second man dislodged an essential foothold. The chimney, in part inconveniently wide, was climbed by bridging. The leader emerged through a small hole behind a mass of wedged boulders and landed on a slope of loose debris, which descended in torrents; meanwhile the second found shelter in the back of the chimney. The rest of the climb is a steep scramble up the bed of the gully.—J. N. MILLS, J. S. T. GIBSON."

2. AN TEALLACH—BIDEIN A GHLAS THUILL FACE— SOUTH CRAG—MAIN RIB.

The climb starts at the foot of the buttress, left of the Y-shaped gully. The first tier of rocks was climbed by a line of weakness immediately left of the lowest point. The second tier was passed similarly by a line of weakness in its centre. Slabby rocks and vegetation lead to the foot of the final tier. A traverse could here be made into the left-hand branch of the Y-shaped gully. The rocks below this side of the buttress are steep and overhanging. The route went on leftwards and upwards over the upper tier to easy ground. Easy scrambling followed back to the right and up the backbone of the buttress to the top of the mountain. 1st Ascent

by E. C. Pyatt and K. C. King (J.M.C.S.), 10th June 1945. Standard—Difficult (boots). Length, 350 feet. Thread belays have to be manufactured by jamming stones in cracks. Fine and warm.

3. GLEN NA MUICE—JUNCTION BUTTRESS—PASTURE GULLY.

The Junction Buttress stands in the angle between Glens na Muice Mor and Beag. Seen from well round into Glen na Muice Beag the buttress presents a slabby face sloping down into Glen na Muice Mor on the left, and a bulging buttress facing Glen na Muice Beag on the right. These are separated by a prominent vegetated line of weakness sloping up to the left—Pasture Gully.

The lower part—a chockstone-crowned chimney—was avoided by a groove a few feet to the right (cairn). Traverse back left across steep heather into the line of the climb after 20 feet. The route continued on generous heather holds with occasional rock: trees provide good belays. Half-way up was a short, steep chockstone pitch, and farther on, after more steep vegetation, a tree had to be lassoed before progress could be made. The climb finished with a pitch of vertical vegetation followed by a short rock chimney. 1st Ascent by E. C. Pyatt and K. C. King (J.M.C.S.), sharing leads, 11th June 1945. Standard—Difficult (boots). Length, 200 feet. Conditions bad; continuous rain.

4. CREAG CHORCURACH.

Valley Face. A climb of 100 feet was made, starting at the lowest point and climbing a rib, followed by a wide recess. *Gorge Face.* Start towards the left of the face on a "flying buttress," climbed by some easy mantelshelf movements. Traverse right across steep wall to a recess behind a large flake. Climb the steep wall above. Again about 100 feet. Both considered "very difficult" in rubbers, though this may have been because we were worried about the rock, which looks insecure.—E. C. PYATT.

5. AN TEALLACH—LOCH TOLL AN LOCHAIN FACE OF SAIL LIATH—SULPHUR GULLY.

(Notes supplied by J. E. Q. Barford (Climbers' Club).)

"The cliffs of Sail Liath facing Loch Toll an Lochain are split by a wide, easy rake running up left-handedly to the top. This rake is bounded on the right-hand side by an overhanging cliff of considerable height in which there are two gullies; the right-hand one does not properly reach the rake but starts about 50 feet above it. This gully could only be started by means of a very steep and wet wall pitch. The left-hand one is Sulphur Gully, about 70 feet farther up the rake:—

"(1) 60 feet. Up the steep and loose chimney on the right-hand side of the gully to the cave. Thread belay. (2) 60 feet. The

crux. The chockstone which is the roof of the cave is passed by climbing the right-hand bounding wall on small and widely spaced holds. A slight layback on the edge of the chockstone helps the more critical moves. In 15 feet a large boulder-covered shelf is reached (large belay). Continuing up the right-hand side of the gully, dubious thread belays and a small and uncomfortable stance are reached. (3) 40 feet. Climbing over the thread belays, a step to the left leads to the haven of a narrow and comfortable chimney, where a jammed ice-axe belay can be arranged. (4) 60 feet. Continue up inside the chimney easily past a chockstone at 40 feet. Then move out of the chimney to the right, and a long stride gives on to a chockstone terminating a wider and unclimbed chimney on the right. After a few more feet of easy climbing a stance is reached. No belay. (5) 50 feet. Continue up the bed of the gully more easily until another wet chimney on the left gives security but no belay. (6) 90 feet. The gully bed steepens and gives good climbing for some way, the more difficult places being overcome by jamming or straddling until a good stance is reached. (7) 40 feet. Scramble easily to the top of the gully.

Ist Ascent by J. E. Q. Barford, F. A. Pullinger, and M. P. Ward (Climbers' Club), 5th April 1945. Standard—3b. Length, 400 feet. Done in bad snow conditions."

NOTE.—Appendices 1 and 5 may just possibly apply to the same place. It is not possible to decide on present knowledge.

6. The following is from the *Lomond Mountaineering Club Journal*, No. 7, November 1945: "Prominent on the escarpment on the east side of the Coir' a Ghuibhsachan is a fine clean buttress. Situated directly opposite the point where the burn from Loch Toll an Lochan turns down the Garbh Allt Corrie, and easily distinguished by its remarkable whiteness, it gives some 230 feet of delightful climbing. Two routes were made by a party, consisting of H. and F. Grant and J. and M. Haining on 11th September 1945. Both routes are severe and exposed, but the holds, though small, are sound and adequate.

"*Route 1* (Cairned).—Starts at centre of Buttress. (1) 130 feet. Ascend by series of walls and narrow traverses to broad ledge (no belay). (2) 70 feet. Start right and then climb direct to belay. (3) Easier rocks lead to summit.

"*Route 2* (Cairned).—Starts at lowest point a few feet right of Route 1. (1) 100 feet. Go obliquely left to right-hand corner of large oblong block (no belay). (2) 25 feet. Climb direct to broad ledge (belay). (3) 100 feet. From lowest point of ledge climb obliquely right.

"H. W. GRANT."

MR PEPYS GOES "MUNROING."**By William J. Bannister.**

25th March.—To-day comes a letter superscribed to me by a Scotsman who ascends mountains, of which a great store do lie to his credit, so I am told. And I am bidden most civilly by this worthy man to aid him vanquish three of a score or so "Munros" which do still evade his tally. Upon which I am not a little proud, and of a mighty mind to reply straightway that I will risk all and join him in such a noble undertaking this day se'nnight, as he says. But not a little stumbled by Elizabeth, she having little understanding of men or their ways, and would know what business and what manner of man is this. And when I tell her that he do collect the King's Monies, she do scoff that it were better for me were he a Chyrurgeon or the like. So I to the Tavern to consider of the matter, and home and the thing decided, as men must.

26th March.—Much troubled to bethink myself how to carry this business, so did write for counsel. Elizabeth still doth enquire if I am of a mind to venture being killed, and I did promise to give her all in the world I have, but my books, in case I should die over a crag.

28th March.—The Scot did write me this day and did give me the best advice that he could what was best for me. Upon which I was full glad and began to put on nails to my boots and to take walks and to pass all ale-houses. At which my wife do marvel mightily.

31st March.—All prepared betimes, but did fear I had some ill in the stomach. Out for brandy in case of dire need on the mountains, and after great talk on the coming venture, I home from the Tavern mighty fine once more.

1st April.—Up very betimes in order to the fitting of myself to go to meet the great man. On my way at last after much late counsel from Elizabeth, well meant no doubt, till she did ask what day of the year be more fitting for my setting forth. Which I fail to consider, but lay hold firmly of my new axe and to the train, where I find that my coming in my new vestments did not prove so strange as I was afraid it would, for I thought that all the town would have cast their eyes all upon me.

To Stirling where I light and meet the Hillman, who attends me with his coach, and he do receive me very civilly, and with mighty pleasure. I find him a much more ordinary man than ever I durst have thought he was, and of no great size. Yet, as we go on our journey to Killin and Glen Lyon, I do find him a most excellent man of reason and learning. Very good discourse on the way, mostly of matters of mountains and monies, wherein his vein lies. The scenery the finest that I ever saw in all my life. And so come all too soon to Lochs, where we lit to ascend our first mountain, Meall Buidhe, and I am all a-tremble. And while preparations are afoot, there comes a native of those parts of whom we would have an opinion of the weather. Whereby we learn that the Wireless do say we will have rain.

And so to our task. At first the hill do offer grass of no great inclination, and I feel no fault with the heart nor buzz in the head. And presently I do ask how I climb, and the Hillman do make answer that he hath not met with any that have sped better than myself. At which I am highly proud, and do even venture to go higher than he and look around with seeming unconcern, though not a little affeared of the sight of the great bowl on Stuchd an Lochan. In little time we meet with more steepness, and the Hillman do fetch out camera and notebooks and do record the scene, making note of the hour, the state of the sky, the quarter of the wind and much besides, posting them all in his books with an infinity of pains, which I did never see the manner of before. At which I do marvel mightily while attending to some victuals which give me strength for the rubs I expect to meet with in the upper regions. And so with things all in good posture we do proceed. Mighty toil for a pretty while, till of a sudden we are come to a broad wide place no steeper than any part of the King's Highway, which I am told, is the top of the mountain. At which I can scarce believe my wits, but mightily relieved withall. Soon arrived at a great heap of stones, which do mark ye very top, where I, with great content and pride do admire the scene, which is a rare sight, with much water and mountains

all around. And I do marvel at what I have accomplished with no great pains, or bleeding at the nose or other discomfort from the great height. The day unpleasing and windy and cold, and now and then a little dribbling of rain, with cloud too near our heads for comfort. The Hillman do busy himself with his books and instruments, while I make bold to look over on the North side, where a mighty steep slope, and I am pleased that presently we return by the way we are come.

And so swiftly to the bottom, with little heed or care, and soon on our way to Fortingal and Ballinluig, and from thence, with much brave discourse, to Newtonmore, where a fine hostel, and soon we are a-singing in our baths. After a noggin or two of ale to a most excellent good dinner served by as pleasing a damsel as ever I saw, a mighty pretty soul, and a merry jade with ready wit and answer. So we make great game, she returning quip for quip, till the coffee is come and the maid gone. Whereafter we continued light-headed for a spell, and did call for more ale, which served by the groom-porter, who tells us that Mistress Betty is gone out this Saturday night, to our great disappointment.

So we fell to writing, I to tell Elizabeth of this day's extraordinary good sport, and that I still live, while the Hillman maketh shift with his posting. Betimes to bed, and no sooner do I blow out the candle than there come some coaches below my bed-chamber window, and such a shouting I never heard in all my life, and bawling and calling in the street. Whereupon I learn that there has been this day in Fort William a match of the Shinty sort, and a referee hath been a great rogue. And so to sleep, being very well, but weary.

2nd April.—Up late, and mighty sore and stiff. Little discourse at breakfast and no sayings extraordinary witty. It raining, I am of a mind to dally, but am led off to our second task, Carn Ballach, which our Hillman hath trod before, but not to his full satisfaction that he hath compassed the highest point, there being much mist and darkness. Leave the coach to cross over as wet and drear a place as ever I hope to see, with rain aplenty.

Then up with no great toil by a prattling streamlet which soon is lost in mist and vapours, on which I would fain turn back. But I am exhorted, learning that mists and rains and mighty winds and cold come alike to mariners and mountaineers. So concealing my fears I do follow, with many a stop to seek counsel from chart and compass and barometer. And all the while the discontent of the Hillman with the obscurity grows greater, till he do say we have reached a ridge, though to me all is grass and round, though rougher than in parks. So to the left, where I am greatly pleased to find a fence, albeit in disorder, and to know that humans have been here before, though God knows to what purpose. And then begins the strangest play I ever saw in all my life. The Hillman, with compass and barometer and strong words do wander hither and thither with myself at his tail all the while, till we do not leave a patch of that place untrodden, and must have crossed and recrossed a hundred times, and seemed like unto two spiders a-spinning of one great web. At end he do confess himself at ease with his conscience, that he hath attained to the supreme point of the mountain, at which I am full glad, for the wind blows cold, and mighty wet with rain. Down by a different way till, to my huge delight, we see the valley bottom, and with no thoughts for weather or discomfort, sit on stones and partake of damp victuals and cold drink. And it was strange how I began to think, as we came near the bottom, that this business of climbing hath not the difficulty I did imagine, and that I can tread mountains as well as any, till I did place my foot on a round stone and did hit the mountain a most mighty crack, but found myself more feared than hurt, and mightily sobered. Back to the coach and thence to the hostel, where we did bathe and don dry attire, and drink tea and Jamaica spirit. Thence to Beauly with but little discourse, it raining and night fallen, where no extraordinary dinner and a wench with whom we would make pretty speeches. But this wench is not so subtle, but a sober serious maid, and doth answer but with the shrug of the shoulder. Whereat we are wholly slighted and make but an ill dinner, and leave



MR. PEPYS GOES "MUNROING"



MR. PEPYS SOUNDS THE WATERS AND LEADS THE COACH THROUGH

a noggin of ale on the board but half drained, the Hillman saying that he must betimes to his bed-chamber and his posting. But I fear that he doth concoct some discomfiture for them that owe the King money.

I to the Tavern, where good company and fine discourse, till a buffleheaded braggart do talk huge high of his deeds on mountains, to my discomfiture. Yet methinks he was scandalously overserved with drink. So to bed betimes against the assault on the morrow of Creag Toll A'Choin. A foul night.

3rd April.—Up betimes to a wonderful dark sky and shower of rain which do bode no good, and after eating heartily, we in the coach to Glen Strathfarrar, where a mighty swollen river, and the valley bottom do seem more water than dry land. Presently we do find the road cut in two by a flood, and the waters rushing and seeming mighty deep, so that there is general damp over our minds and faces, and things are in a very doubtful posture. But I off with my shoes and hose and roll up my breeches and sound the waters with my shanks. Mighty cold but no great depth. So I lead the coach through with no ill accident in the crossing, the countenance of my companion within all concern and purpose.

Without further hap to Monar Lodge, and more water and less land with every league. Thence to a bothy, where a fine new-born calf, to which I give the finger to suck and do pull the ears, till the Hillman do rate me soundly, saying that we are not come to play with calves, but to see to my boots. On foot to Loch Monar, where many fine trees, and a mighty fine scene in summer beyond all doubt. But to-day the road drowned in many places, and much treading half circles. To the North side of the Loch, where much do and formality in choosing of the way to attain the summit. Much grievous toil in ascending through mire and heather with generous rain. Which once did stop a-falling and we thinking and saying that the day haply might yet be fine, when we are urged forward by hail stones as big as walnuts. Once more into mists and vapours and a very furious blowing wind, and myself lacking breath I do pretend to hunger and

am reaching for victuals when I am asked am I taken leave completely of my senses. And so after much travail we are on a flat which I am told is the top of ye mountain, where much boulders and mud underfoot, and the rain flying as swallows do skim a mere. Even the great man bent and doubled like a hunchback and mighty miserable, and blue in the nose which dripped. At last we spy a heap of stones, which he do prod in savage manner with his axe. Without pause to the right, where a mighty void, and we do turn back in affright, and are at a great stand to think what will become of us, and would neither advance nor retreat. Till the Hillman do look to right and to left and all around and sit down and pass from sight. I follow, and find no crag but a slope mighty steep and slippery. And so down with much cursing and swearing and loss of dignity, through an eternity of time, and what a toss we were in. Arrived at the bottom, praise be, with no bones broken and nothing lost, to meet a great flood which left no passage. The Hillman do again look to right and to left and all around and then at me with wild eye, and would know could human vestments carry more water. And straightway is in the flood above his breeches, and I follow. Thence by a most evil path of soft black mire which did conceal stones, and shake the stomach and turn over the mind. Mighty miserable, and our gait as though fuddled with wine. But the rain stopping at last, soon there comes hope that we are not doomed to pass our days in this wretched glen till the waters do abate. Back to the bothy in a sad pickle and very much daubed with dirt, where I do envy the lot of the calf warm and dry in his pound, and must needs think on the tongue of Elizabeth.

Greatly cheered after making ourselves dry shod and eating mightily at the board of the keeper's good wife. Back down Glen Strathfarrar, the weather fine, and some rare scenery, when of a sudden there is a full-grown stag before us in the road, with head and antlers set against the pine trees, whereof the stateliness exceedingly worth seeing, and of which I did take mighty notice. After a minute, he off, and we continue with no troublesome

passage, thanks be, for we had not been without a great many cares for our return.

Then near Moy the coach engine do tire, and little wonder, and we must needs out in the dark a good hour to coax it. Thence sped to Newtonmore, where the engine do now play the knave and will not stop at its master's behest, till we do counter with a stout stone wall, while our good hostess do remark how some men be never satisfied with their coach engines. So I to the board alone, where served by Mistress Betty, and mighty fine victuals and drink and gallant discourse till she gone out. Presently the din from the yard do cease and the Hillman do enter and seemeth mighty displeased with what chilled victuals remain. So to bed with no ale or posting.

4th April.—Up while the chimes went nine, and both dull. Mistress B. too, out of sorts, and I feared she did take cold by staying so late abroad. So we took our leave, the road pretty good, but rainy to Blair Atholl, where the sun pleased to warm our journey. And it was very strange how our countenances were all changed with joy, and presently we fell a-singing of a song as if mighty pleased that no more hazards of falling or drowning did await us. To Stirling in pretty time, where we took a very civil leave of one another, beyond my expectations.

Thence by train, full of thoughts of the tales I have to tell, and so home, where my wife and I did make a great deal of joy to see one another. When straightway she do say I am not lusty and ruddy from being in the sun as I had foretold. So I start my tale, when a great cry from Jane who is a-delving in my scrip, and the two women do hold up my vestments with Elizabeth crying out I am no better than a chimney sweep who hath soiled the fine green carpet her mother did give us, and she coming to stay that very night, and that a child had more sense than a man. And more I did not tarry to hear, but to the Tavern, where fine company and ready ears. Home late, of a mighty mind for this business of "Munroing," and should the Hillman call again, I will not fail him, though it mean we lay siege for many days, till fine weather come, to make a reckoning with Carn Ballach.

SOME NOTES ON THE NORTHERN AREA.

By E. W. Hodge.

PORING over the map, I had long been curious about the tract between Cape Wrath and Loch Inchar, why it was entirely uninhabited, and whether Sandwood Loch was fresh or salt. I found the loch set among shelterless moors; thin peat on Cambrian sandstone to the south and rather rougher gneiss country to the north. It is separated from high water by a threshold of gneiss with a few sand-dunes, and seemed scarcely higher, but was definitely fresh. From just above the shepherd's cot, untenanted since 1914, one can sight the lantern of Cape Wrath lighthouse. On the seashore some way south of Sandwood stands a particularly graceful pinnacle called Am Buachaille.

Round about Assynt it was a continual surprise to me how the Ben More range contrives to efface itself from notice, though half as high again as almost anything else. But closer acquaintance is very rewarding. One should not miss the thousand-foot reversed fold of Na Tuadhan. The narrow bit of ridge between the main and South tops is traversed in less than five minutes; it has just two careful steps on a slab. (Lurg Mhor in the northern West Highlands has a rather similar notched backbone between its two tops, but on a considerably bigger scale.) The big gully south of the South Top is free from pitches, and the easiest way down to Dubh Loch Mor. From here there is hardly any re-ascent to the Conival-Breabag col: a picturesque and pleasant way home. No path, but with judicious use of sheep-tracks one is not missed.

From Ullapool I cycled up Glen Achall (gate about two miles up says, "No Motors"). Opposite Rhidorroch Old Lodge the good road ends, though the continuation to Loch Damh is possibly passable for jeeps. A sheep-track leads above Allt-na-Caorach. From hereabout one gets exciting glimpses (no more) of the summit of An

Sgùrr, which we formerly knew as Creag an Duine.* (Incidentally, from Eididh nan Clach Geala one sees much less still of it: a dark button above the grassy ridge of Seana Bhraigh.) Soon after the far end of the Allt, one sees one's way clear to the summit of Seana Bhraigh over easy grass. Looking down, the Corriemulzie approach to the mountain looks very dreary, but this sort of impression is often wrong. From the Bhraigh I returned by Glen Douchary, which contains a good deal of bog, though not the deep type of hag. The ridge of Meall nam Bradhan seems preferable. From the point marked "Waterfall" there is a succession of waterfalls down to Glen Achall, one or two of them really fine. But the burn-side track is the sort to avoid, whilst the moor is repeatedly cut by deep tributary gullies.

The excellent Glensguaib track is only one of the reasons why I am anxious to have another day on Ben Dearg of Inverlael. Coire Granda reminded me strongly, in the way the dip of the strata builds up the scenery,

* *The Seana Bhraigh Horseshoe.*—In 1941 I ascended the main summit from Corriemulzie by the Loch Luchd corrie in wet weather. I concluded that the cliffs, though impressive at first sight, were rather discontinuous and unsatisfactory for climbing, although closer examination might reveal possibilities. Mr Mackenzie, the keeper at Corriemulzie, gave me some information, derived from written records by a former keeper, concerning the place-names of the range. The main summit (with the cairn on it) was known locally as Benyag (phonetic spelling). The name Seana Bhraigh was applied to the rounded slope and domed hill to the right of it, as seen from Corriemulzie. To the left was the sharp peak known as Sgùrr (or An Sgùrr), and known as Creag an Duine in the "Guide Book." The name Creag an Duine, according to Mr Mackenzie, applied only to a steep cliff of 100-150 feet in height, well up on the left (looking up the corrie towards Loch Luchd), above the steep gorge of the stream below the loch. The story is that a man set out to rescue a sheep which was in difficulty on this cliff. Both man and sheep disappeared and were not seen again. Creag an Duine means the craig of the *man*. I was also told that high up on the right-hand slopes of Loch Luchd corrie, in the direction of the little col to the right of the cliffs and among the steep crags, is a cave known as the Fairies' Cave. I did not see the cave. It was also amusing to hear of a man who wished to drive a car from Duag Bridge to Ullapool! There is just a faint track, which is very faint beyond Duag Bridge.—THE EDITOR.

of the big corrie of Brandon Mountain in Kerry, though the latter is the finer. But for its barrel-shaped top, rather disfigured also by a wall on the north side, Dearn would be one of our finest hills. This wall, however, would be a most useful guide in mist. It runs straight up from the Sguaib-Granda col to within 150 feet of the summit level, then turns west for a mile or so as a fence above the cliffs. It may be noted that Cona Mheall cannot be seen from either Ullapool or Glensguaib, though Eididh nan Clach Geala can from both.

Turning to Wyvis, does anyone know what is the "Monument" marked on the O.S. map? Perhaps it was merely lost in the immense vacancy of the summit plateau. I ascended from Loch Glass by the good but roundabout path, apparently the only one on the mountain, running west, then south, then east. On top I met a distinguished ornithologist, who entrusted me with a message to the keeper at Eileanreoch. The latter had prepared a hot reception for my trespass, I think, and it was gratifying to watch the rapid smoothing of his countenance as I hastened to present my unexpected credentials.

I have an apology for my note in Vol. 20, p. 355, about the height of A' Mhaighdean. The two points exactly coincident from half a dozen feet below A' Mhaighdean's summit are Meall a'Choire Ghlais, 2,215 (on Ben Airidh Charr), and Meall an Doirein, 1,381. A more careful map measurement of the horizontal (by some seventy yards) makes A' Mhaighdean 3,100, which would be much more consistent with the accepted height of Tarsuinn.

A SURVEY OF MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS IN SCOTLAND, 1925-45.

By B. H. Humble.

THIS survey is made from accounts of accidents of which particulars are available over the twenty-year period. It includes all affairs which involved search and (or) rescue parties. The particulars have been classified under the headings: Date, name, age, club, nationality, locality, details and references, and an analysis gives information which, it is hoped, will be of use to the First-Aid Committee.

Over the entire period notes are available of 90 accidents, involving 106 hill-walkers, tourists or climbers, and there were 45 deaths. From 1930 until the beginning of the war there was a gradual increase, and 1939, with 18 accidents and 8 deaths, was the peak year. During the war years 1940-44 there was an average of 2 accidents per year, while in 1945 the number jumped to 7 accidents with 6 deaths.

Locality.

(a) GLENCOE.—20 (7 deaths).

1. *Kingshouse End*.—Buachaille Etive Mor, 6; Clachlet, 1. Of these, 2 were benightments, 2 accidents to experienced climbers on Crowberry Ridge, 2 to novices (both fatal) and 1 glissading accident on Clachlet.

2. *Clachaig End*.—13. Two benightments (novices), 1 on Ben Vair to a shepherd, 3 on Aonach Dubh, 3 on Aonach Eagach, 1 on The Chancellor, 1 on Gearr Aonach (all slips by novice scramblers, and 3 fatal). The other two were to experienced climbers on Bidean nam Bian.

One notes the accidents to novices on the hills nearest to the Youth Hostel. Of the 20 affairs, 8 involved English and 2 foreign climbers.

(b) SKYE.—16 (8 deaths). Cuillins, 15; Trotternish Hills (benightment), 1.

1. *Sligachan End*.—Pinnacle Ridge of Sgùrr nan Gilleann, 1 (fatal).

2. *Glen Brittle End*, 14.—Of these Sron na Ciche (including the Cioch), 4; Sgùrr Sgumain, 2; Sgùrr Thearlaich (Coire an Lochain face), 1. All these to climbers (3 deaths). Scree slopes around Coire Lagan, 5. Scree slopes, Coire Greadaidh, 1; Coire na Creiche, 1. All these to hill-walkers or novices (4 deaths). The figures appear to show that Glen Brittle has now replaced Sligachan as the climbing centre in Skye, and certainly show that the Skye scree slopes hold danger for novices.

Of the 16 accidents, 11 involved English and 1 a foreign climber.

(c) BEN NEVIS.—16 (8 deaths).

Five to tourists on or near tourist path to summit (1 death); 1 to novice on Tower Ridge, alone; 1 to novice in No. 3 Gully. The other 9 affairs were to climbers on the north-east face of the mountain: of these 1 was benightment; 2 were rock-climbing accidents under summer conditions (1 on Cousins Buttress and 1 on Observatory Buttress) (3 deaths); 6 under snow conditions on the Castle, The Tower Ridge, North-east Buttress, Carn Dearg (glissading), Moonlight Gully and No. 3 Gully.

Of the 16 affairs, 11 involved English climbers. Of the 8 climbing accidents, 6 involved English climbers.

(d) CENTRAL HIGHLANDS.—3.

Sgùrr a Mhaim, 1; Binnein Mor, 1 (both novices); Ben Alder, 1.

(e) CAIRNGORMS.—7 (8 deaths).

1. *From Speyside*, 4.—Two to novice parties visiting Shelter Stone, 1 to experienced hillmen in Glen Einich and 1 to rock-climbers on Sgoran Dubh.

2. *From Deeside*, 3.—One benightment in Glen Derry, 1 on Ben Macdhui and 1 on Lochnagar.

The rock-climbing accident and one Shelter Stone affair under summer conditions, all others under winter conditions. Of the 10 folk involved, 7 were Scots and 3 English.

(f) ANGUS HILLS.—3 (1 death).

Glas Tulachan (benightment to climber), Craig Rennet (Clova) and Mount Keen (both tourists).

(g) CRIANLARICH HILLS.—7 (includes Bridge of Orchy and Ben Lawers areas) (4 deaths).

Ben More, 2.—One slip by member of a search party; 1 lost control when glissading.

Ben Odhar, 2.—One avalanche accident to climber.

Stob Ghabhar, 1.—Climbing accident in Upper Couloir.

Beinn Achalladar, 1; Meall Dearg, Glen Lyon, 1.—Both to novices in winter.

Of the 7, 5 were under winter conditions and 2 under summer conditions. Three involved climbing parties, the others novices or tourists.

(h) LOCH LOMOND AND ARROCHAR AREA.—6 (4 deaths).

Ben Lomond, 4.—Two on tourist path, 2 to folk who had strayed from path and fallen over rock.

Beinn an Lochain, 1; The Cobbler, 1.—Novices.

(i) ARRAN.—1 (fatal).

Ceum na Caillich (novice).

(j) NORTHERN AND WESTERN HIGHLANDS.—2 (1 death).

One benightment, Bargulean Hills, Loch Awe (novices); 1 to climber on Ben Arcuil, Sutherland.

(k) NEAR GLASGOW.—7 (3 deaths).

One on the Whangie; 6 on Campsie Hills—5 to novice scramblers and 3 killed.

(l) SOUTHERN UPLANDS.—2.

Both to tourist parties on The Merrick, and one a benightment.

Season.

Sixty-two when hills free of snow (33 deaths); 28 under snow conditions, 6 being on Nevis at Easter time and 4 on Cairngorms at New Year time (12 deaths). The monthly totals were: August, 18; April, 12; July, 11; September, 10; January, 9 (6 at New Year); March and May, 6 each; June and February, 5 each; November, 4; December, 3; October, 1.

Nationality.

Of the 106 people involved in the 90 affairs, 57 were Scots, 45 English and 4 foreign. Of the fatalities, 25 were to Scots, 18 to English and 2 to foreigners.

These figures show that the highest accident rate is to visitors from south of the border, as the number of Scots climbing in Scotland is many times greater than the number of English climbing in Scotland.

Clubs.

As far as can be ascertained, 34 were members of recognised mountaineering clubs: J.M.C.S., 14 (4)*; S.M.C., 4 (3); Grampian Club, 3 (1); Cairngorm Club, 2 (1); L.S.C.C., 2 (2); Lomond, 1; English clubs, 8 (1) (details are lacking *re* membership of English clubs—figure may possibly be larger than this).

Age.

Under twenty, 30; between twenty and thirty, 54; between thirty and forty, 12; over forty, 10.

* Fatalities in brackets.

Cause of Accident.

Eight of the affairs turned out to be benightments only, but involved large search parties. In one affair a large party were climbing The Merrick; all gave up except two. Near the summit they separated. Both descended safely, but on different sides of the hill. Both at once organised search parties for the other, an aeroplane and a detachment of troops being called out, and a large number spent all day on the hills. In another case a member of a search party slipped and was killed.

Forty-two of the accidents involved only novices, or those showing complete disregard for all normal precautions (24 deaths). These include such cases as long journeys in the Cairngorms in winter by persons neither properly clad nor properly shod; traversing snow slopes without ice axes (two slipped to death); Sunday scramblers on friable rock of the Campsies; rock-climbing alone; ankle and leg injuries on tourist paths, etc. One notes several cases of visitors from the south having an accident on a first excursion immediately after arrival, and before muscles and legs were attuned to hill-walking. In about ten cases the cause was a simple slip, which usually occurred when descending a hill.

In 5 cases, elderly folk had heart attacks on the hills, and 4 were fatal. One notes that three of them occurred whilst resting at the top of an ascent (2 at top of Ben Lomond and 1 at top of Sgùrr Alasdair Stone Shoot).

Of the accidents to experienced climbers, 9 were apparently due to a simple slip on easy ground, and one notes that several of these occurred after the rope had been taken off at the top of a climb. The other causes are lost control when glissading (3), avalanches (2), hit by falling rock (2).

Ten accidents occurred when the parties were roped together on a rock or snow climb. In 2 cases both members of a rock-climbing party were killed, and the rope between them was not broken. In 1 case the leader was killed (rock), in 1 case the second was killed (snow), in the other 6 cases the leader was injured. Of the 6

killed in such climbs, 4 were English and 2 Scots, and the average age was 28.

Nature of Injury.

Full details of the injuries in the non-fatal accidents are not available, but as far as information goes leg injuries are the most frequent: fractured leg, 15; fractured ankles, 4; dislocations (shoulder or ankle), 6; facial injuries, 8; concussion, 2; fractured ribs, 2; fractured pelvis, 1; often there is more than one injury and accompanying bruises and shock.

First Aid Posts and Rescue Organisation.

In pre-war times First-aid Posts were maintained at Glen Brittle, Fort William and Clachaig. More than half the accidents occurred at these centres. The remainder were widely distributed, and it would appear to be a reasonable inference from the available statistics that there is little need for posts elsewhere.

In the climbing season there are usually sufficient climbers in Glen Brittle to carry out any necessary rescues.

As regards Glencoe and Ben Nevis, in pre-war times the call for help usually came to the Glasgow and Edinburgh officials of our Club, who had the task of getting together the rescue parties. Now it is good to see Fort William folk themselves *at last* getting to know the mountains which have meant so much to their town. The recently formed Lochaber Mountaineering Club (now a section of the J.M.C.S.) has already been tested and not found wanting in rescue operations, and in consequence certain of our Glasgow officials will heave a sigh of relief.

Nowadays there will be climbing parties in Glencoe almost every week-end throughout the year. For a Saturday or Sunday search or rescue there need be no difficulty about a party, but it is not so easy to get together a party on other days, when most people are unable to get away from work. But now that all the

younger clubs are co-operating, and full details of the available transport and personnel are listed, this difficulty will be overcome.

The Future.

In pre-war times, owing chiefly to the sensational way in which mountain accidents were reported in the press, the general public got an entirely warped idea of our sport.

The accident on Buachaille Etive Mor on 27th December 1936 was highly sensationalised in the press, and most reports stated that the mountain was covered with snow. There was very little snow, none on the rocks and no ice. The stretcher party ascended by the Curved Ridge, crossed to cairn at top of D Gully Buttress, and found the body in a shallow snow gully beyond. Descent was by the same route. Two members of the rescue party were lowered down about 15 feet to reach the body, but all others got there by an easier route unroped, and the members of the stretcher party were not roped on ascent or descent. Work was not held up by mist.

The next day the following account appeared in the press: "Ten crack mountaineers led the way. Five went below and five others climbed to the summit. Those above were lowered by ropes 300 feet into the gully." Then followed what purported to be a statement by a member of the party: "We had to thread our way inch by inch along narrow rock ledges—occasionally mist enveloped us so that we had to stand in our tracks for ten or fifteen minutes till it cleared. When we reached the top of the crevice, one after another we went down slowly almost a quarter of an inch at a time, as we were afraid the rope might catch on a sharp ledge." (*Daily Herald*.)

An accident would invariably be followed by articles and letters condemning climbing as too dangerous, and suggesting various restrictions (including the closure of Ben Nevis in winter!). Now, instead of the warning, "Don't go to the hills. They are dangerous," there is evidence of the saner and truer voice which says, "Make yourself fit for the hills: then go and enjoy them." The statistics prove beyond all doubt that it is much safer to be a climber than to be a pedestrian, a cyclist or a motorist; and that more than half of the accidents could have been avoided had those involved taken normal precautions and fitted themselves for the hills.

In the coming years greater numbers than ever will flock to our mountains, and it is good to see such organisations as the Air Training Corps and the Central Council of Physical Recreation offering training in mountain craft. The mountaineering clubs are co-operating, and one hopes that newcomers to our sport will take advantage of such opportunities; in that lies the best hope for a reduction of absolutely unnecessary hill accidents in the future.

Bibliography.

S.M.C. Journal (Articles).—"The Achallader Accident," George Sang (17, 179); "The Stob Ghabhar Incident," J.M.C.S. Notes (18, 54); "The Cairngorm Disaster," Professor Gregory (18, 162); "The Buachaille Etive Accident," Alex. Harrison and Robert Jeffrey (19, 107); "The Ben Alder Incident," J.M.C.S. Notes (19, 300); "The Cairngorm Disaster," C. W. Parry (20, 40); "Scottish Mountaineering Accidents," A. Harrison (20, 250); "Accident Lists" (21, 290; 22, 82; 22, 213; 23, 279).

"S.M.C. First Aid Committee Accident List." *Cairngorm Club Journal. Mountaineering Journal.* "Mountain Days in the Isle of Skye," J. E. B. Wright (Moray Press).

S.M.C. OFFICE-BEARERS.

President.—ALEXANDER HARRISON.

Vice-Presidents.—J. S. M. JACK and E. C. THOMSON.

Hon. Editor.—Dr J. H. B. BELL, 3 Park Place, Clackmannan.

Hon. Secretary.—J. L. AIKMAN, 121 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2. Phone, Central 1864.

Hon. Treasurer.—J. G. OSBORNE, "Kilknock," Davidson's Mains, Edinburgh, 4.

Hon. Librarian.—J. B. HOME; *Custodian of Slides.* J. M'K. STEWART.

C.I.C. Hut O.C.—D. J. S. HARVEY, 65 Renfield Street, Glasgow, C.2. Phone, Douglas 3615.

General Guide Books Editor. R. G. INGLIS.

Hon. Assistant Editor.—D. MACKAY, 113 Comiston Drive, Edinburgh, 10.

Committee Members.—J. F. A. BURT, I. H. OGILVIE, R. T. SELLAR, E. W. HODGE, D. G. KELLOCK, GEO. PEAT, T. D. MACKINNON, A. G. MURRAY.

A RECORD OF BEN NEVIS CLIMBS.

By **B. P. Kellett.**

[NOTE.—This record is from the personal notebooks left after the fatal accident on Ben Nevis in September 1944 when Mr Kellett lost his life. It brings to a conclusion his brilliant and painstaking survey and pioneering researches on rock-climbing on Ben Nevis.

Owing to lack of space we are holding over the section from Carn Dearg to Tower Ridge for our next issue.

Where no other names are mentioned, Mr Kellett climbed the route alone. Where photos are mentioned for illustrating topographical details, the numbers given are horizontal and vertical co-ordinates in inches, measured from the bottom left-hand corner of the photograph. G. = "Nevis Guide."—EDITOR.]

GARDYLOO BUTTRESS

22.7.44.

This buttress consists of two ridges, of which the left hand is fairly well defined, with a very shallow depression between them. The upper part of this depression opens out into a wide funnel with what is almost a gully at the back; most of the water from this gully drains down two long grooves slanting down from left to right, very steep and smooth and probably unclimbable. Between the lower part of these grooves and the left-hand ridge is a very steep face of over 100 feet, and above that three more grooves running parallel to the two long grooves, and having slabs on their left, walls on their right; they end after about 100 feet at the same level as the foot of the funnel.

Below the steep face and stretching right across the foot of the buttress is a 150-foot band of easy-angled rocks climbable almost anywhere. On this route serious climbing began at the top of this easy-angled section up two parallel cracks about half-way between the left-hand ridge and the foot of the long grooves. They face towards the Great Tower as they are on the right wall of a tiny subsidiary buttress standing out a little from the main face; they should be unmistakable, as they are narrow at the foot but become broader higher up where the wall between them is made up of splintered blocks. At the top, where

the wall bounding the left-hand crack is formed by a semi-detached flake, they curve over to the right.

The start from the broad shelf between Gardyloo Gully and Tower Gully was made in a straight line below the foot of these cracks. If the climb is started from the broad shelf up the left-hand ridge, then the foot of the cracks is reached by making a 50-foot traverse right, when a piton with two rope slings is found at an easy-angled part of the ridge. It is not certain if this is the highest of the four pitons left by previous parties (see entries dated 25.7.40 and 20.6.41); probably not, as the ridge appears to be climbable for some distance above this, and, indeed, is at a much easier angle than the face on its right; the trouble is that higher up it becomes unclimbable at a place where it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to traverse right.

These twin cracks have good holds and are fairly easy, though near the top one has an uncomfortable feeling that the semi-detached flake might suddenly remember that it had a pressing appointment down in Observatory Gully. For this reason it would probably be better not to use the small sloping stance at the top, especially as the belays are all rather doubtful. From here a short traverse right is made beneath an overhang and then a little overhang is climbed direct to a very small stance; here again it would probably be better not to bring up the second man, as the only belays are small, insecure-looking blocks on the floor of the recess. Possibly the best plan would be to use a 150-foot rope and to climb the whole of this very steep section in one run out.

The 15-foot corner starting on the right of the recess was very strenuous and proved to be the crux of the climb. The left wall is perpendicular, the right wall slightly overhanging; handholds on the left wall, though well placed for climbing straight up it, are not well adapted for preventing the body being pushed off to the left by the overhanging right wall. The key to the pitch is the large spike handhold facing horizontally left; this was used by the left hand and had to take most of the weight of the body, while the mossy holds above were cleaned

and tidied with the right hand. The higher holds had to be groped for as they could not be seen from below, and the whole process proved to be very strenuous so that numerous descents had to be made for rests, and this short pitch took nearly an hour to climb. Once preparations were completed the right hand was shifted from a flat press hold to a much higher hold (rather unsatisfactory) and then the left hand unwillingly left the beautiful spike for another hold, also much higher. This was really the hardest movement as both feet were on very poor holds and the body was being pushed off left all the time by the overhang. Once both these higher handholds had been reached there was no further difficulty in stepping up on to the large flat hold previously used by the right hand and then climbing the remaining few feet of the corner. This led to a series of small broken ledges running below the three parallel grooves already mentioned. The foot of the right-hand groove was slightly undercut and proved to be a little strenuous; delicate climbing, mostly up the slab on the left of the groove, but using also holds in the crack at the back of the groove, then led to a small stance below a 15-foot right-angled corner. This was quite hard, and from its top a step left led to another shorter and easier corner, above which easy ground was reached, with a way-off up the upper part of the right-hand ridge. However, to preserve the central character of the climb the gully in the upper funnel was climbed; this proved quite easy as most of the wet, mossy holds could be avoided by bridging.

The standard was Very Severe owing to the continuously steep and exposed central section of about 250 feet. Climbed in rubbers (socks for the gully). Conditions excellent on the sixth day of a dry spell. The climb would only be feasible under reasonably dry conditions. Time about three hours.

25.7.40. (N. P. Piercey, H. I. Ogilvy.)

An attempt was made on Gardyloo Buttress. The ridge on the left (the right wall of the gully) was climbed

for 350 feet on its crest ; it was Very Severe, slimy, and done in stockings ; rain put an end to the attempt and the party escaped into Gardyloo Gully by means of descents *en rappel*, leaving three rope slings and two karabiners.

20.6.41. (W. S. Scroggie, J. G. Ferguson, G. S. Ritchie.)

Attempted Gardyloo Buttress ; reached H. I. Ogilvy's highest point (see above). Recovered highest of rope slings and karabiner. Further progress very problematical. Four pitons and one karabiner left. Climbed in stocking soles.

16.7.44. GARDYLOO BUTTRESS. CRACK IN TOWER FACE.

The upper part of the Tower Face of Gardyloo Buttress consists of a line of rather smooth slabs ; near the left-hand edge of these slabs is a conspicuous crack, well seen from the foot of Tower Gully. The foot of the crack was reached by an easy traverse from about half-way up the gully, though it could equally well be reached from the foot of the gully. The crack was about 100 feet and the standard Moderate.

THE WEST FACE OF OBSERVATORY RIDGE.

An examination of this face was made on the late afternoon and evening of 8th July 1944.

First a route was made a good way to the left of the original route. From the foot of a wide chimney (cairn) a traverse upwards and to the left was made over a large sharp-pointed block into another chimney. The traverse was continued for a little way beyond this second chimney and the rocks on its left were then followed to the top (cairn). Several cairns were left. Standard : Just Very Difficult. It is suggested that this should be called the LOWER ROUTE to distinguish it from the original (Upper) route.

The Upper Route was then ascended.

The removal of the "small jutting corner of rock" (J. 21, 354) has not made the final chimney impossible; there is a good foothold underneath, and even in boots this chimney was not found very hard.

Two variation finishes were also made up the final tier.

The Easy Way.—A continuation of the "holdless and exposed traverse to the left" leads on to the crest of the ridge without any further difficulty. Standard: Moderate.

The Crack and Groove.—From the original end of the traverse a crack between a flake and the wall can be seen on the left; this is quite easy and leads to the foot of two grooves. The start of the right-hand groove is a little strenuous; when this ends in an overhang, the climb continues up the left-hand groove to a slab leading on to the crest. Standard: Very Difficult.

Immediately to the right of this crack are two parallel chimneys, the first having a curious square recess near its foot; the second looks as if it would go. About 100 feet to the right are the two steep chimneys mentioned on p. 353, both of which looked possible, and beyond them the final chimney used on the first ascent. The traverse right was continued beyond this to the "open chimney with rather bad smooth slabs above." This chimney, containing two small caves, was climbed by back-and-foot, facing left, and was fairly easy; at the top it bifurcates (Photo J. 22, 327, 3·8, 3·3) and the rocks between the two branches led without any trouble to the ledge used on the Girdle Traverse. Above this ledge is the big broken-up face between Observatory Ridge and Point Five Gully,* for which the name POINT FIVE BUTTRESS has been suggested (Photo 4·0, 3·5); its lower half is formed by the hopeless-looking slabs to the left of Point Five Gully. As it was getting dark no attempt was made to find the most interesting route up this face, but by zig-zagging all real difficulties were avoided, though

* Point Five Gully is evidently the frightful, narrow rift full of overhung pitches which divides Rubicon Wall from the nearly vertical slabs on the right-hand edge of the west face of Observatory Ridge.

loose rock was troublesome. A cairn was left at the top (Photo 3·8, 4·1). Standard: Very Difficult.

6.8.42. SLAV ROUTE. (A Comment by S. H. Cross, A. T. Hargreaves, R. E. Hargreaves, A. M. Nelson.)

Had some difficulty in identifying the route and are of the opinion that Severe is a very discreet classification.

17.6.44. ORION FACE, BETA ROUTE WITH A DIRECT FINISH TO THE BASIN.

This route is more or less in a straight line above the crux of Beta Route. Above the crux 50 feet of fairly easy slabs lead to a stance and belay below a steep face of about 50 feet—wet and mossy. This was climbed in socks; the difficulties, though fairly continuous, are nowhere as great as at the crux below. This leads to a ledge and an easy way-off left—an easy traverse below the Basin, leading to the start of the "V" Traverse. However, the rocks immediately above the ledge were climbed—about 50 feet of fairly steep slabs, much easier than the previous section—and led to the Basin, which was reached in a straight line immediately above the crux.

The standard was perhaps just Very Severe, though in drier conditions and with more of the moss removed it might be much easier.

20.6.44. MINUS TWO BUTTRESS, LEFT-HAND ROUTE. (B. P. Kellett, R. L. Plackett, C. M. Plackett.)

The big face between Platforms Rib Climb and Alpha Route on the Orion Face has so far received little attention. To assist descriptions of this and other possible climbs on the face it is suggested that the following nomenclature be adopted (see Photo, *J.* 22, 327). To the left of the Great Slab Rib on Orion Face are two steep, narrow gullies, fairly close together (Photo 2·0, 3·7, and 1·8, 3·5), and a good way to the left of them again is the gully that Platforms Rib Climb partly uses (1·5, 3·3). By analogy from No. 1 Gully, Point Five Gully, and Zero Gully, these gullies have been called Minus One, Two,



W. S. Thomson

BEN NEVIS

N—Summit of North-east Buttress. O—Top of Observatory Ridge. P—Line of Point Five Gully.

3, 2, 1, indicates upper ends of the corresponding "Minus" gullies referred to in the text.

3, indicates top of Platforms Rib.



June 1936

B. H. Humble

ROPING DOWN
(From Crowberry Tower to the Neck, Buachaille Etive Mor)

Three Gullies respectively. The narrow buttress between Minus One and Two Gullies has been called Minus One Buttress, and the broad buttress between Minus Two and Three Gullies, Minus Two Buttress.

Neither Minus One Gully nor Minus One Buttress look at all promising, but Minus Two Gully might go and there are three plausible-looking routes on Minus Two Buttress, one of which was climbed to-day.

The climb starts at the lowest part of the buttress about 100 feet to the right of Minus Three Gully (2.35, 1.8) and goes up two conspicuous parallel cracks in pitches of 100 feet, 80 feet, and 70 feet to a good stance and belay just below and to the right of the big overhanging nose which is such a marked feature of this part of the face.

The steep bulging slab above and to the left constitutes the crux of the climb; three routes were made up it, each of which was considered to be Very Severe.

The first route, which was climbed in socks, went up the wet, slimy crack above the belay for 15 to 20 feet and then horizontally left along the top of the bulge on very small holds to a stance and belay on the far edge of the slab.

The second man came up to this belay by making a 15-foot descending traverse left and round a corner to a foothold in a groove; then a steep, smooth slab was climbed to the stance and belay at the end of the first route. This is probably the safest of the three routes.

Twenty feet of easier climbing led to another stance and belay, and this was used while the third man made an upward traverse left of 15 feet, below the bulge, climbed over the bulge, and then went straight up for 20 feet to the belay.

Above this the climb kept to the left-hand edge of the slab overlooking Minus Three Gully, the pitches being of 110 feet, 100 feet, 50 feet, and 50 feet. This upper part contained one or two short bits that were perhaps just Severe, but for the most part the difficulties, though continuous, were never great.

Rather over 600 feet above the start the broad ledge used by Williams in his route up to the Second Platform

In fine weather and in foul you could always depend on him, not only among the mountains but in the ordinary humdrum affairs of business and home life. We have been alone together in many a "sticky" situation—notably once on Mont Blanc in a severe storm, and again on a heavily iced Crowberry Ridge—but nothing could ever upset Arnold's equanimity or damp his cheerful optimism. He was literally a tower of strength.

He joined the S.M.C. in 1908, and was a regular attender at Meets for many years. He served on the Committee in 1924-26. In later years he was settled in London and found it more difficult to keep in touch with the Club, but he introduced his four sons to the hills and to ski-ing, both in Scotland and the Alps, and one is now a member of the S.M.C. He joined the Alpine Club in 1943.

HARRY MACROBERT.

WILLIAM LAWSON.

1906-1944.

LISTED as missing on active service on 7th November 1944, William Lawson has since been presumed killed. Prior to his joining the R.A.F., Bill was one of the Club's most active members, and served on the Committee. He was a member of the S.M.C., and one of the founders of the Etchachan Club, of which he was the first president.

His influence on climbing, particularly amongst the younger generation, was considerable. He was ever ready to give encouragement and instruction to the novice, and there are many enthusiasts who received their introduction to climbing in a party led by Bill. Quiet and unassuming, he possessed a remarkable patience for detail, and an organising ability which was forever planning new expeditions to the hills. His knowledge of the Scottish hills was very thorough, and there was hardly a Munro which had not been climbed by him. He had also climbed in Austria, and an account of his experiences there appeared in the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, Vol. 15, pp. 40-50.

Besides his interest in climbing, Bill was a keen ski-er, and displayed the same energy and enthusiasm in this field as he did in climbing. All his many friends will long remember his infectious enthusiasm for the mountains and the open air, and those who shared these activities with him will miss his comradeship whenever they revisit the hills which were so loved by him.

GEORGE BECK-SLINN.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1946—CRIANLARICH.

THE New Year Meet was held at Crianlarich Hotel from 28th December 1945 until 3rd January 1946. At one time and another 24 members and 7 guests took part. One member, Mr A. G. Murray, was at Tyndrum. There was some snow on the tops, but not very much. To begin with the weather was excellent and there was sunshine. In the middle it was cold and dull, but there was little fresh snow. Towards the end it was again fine. It was a good Meet and greatly enjoyed. The Hotel was, as usual, very comfortable.

Unna was under doctor's orders not to climb more than 500 feet per day. The record shows his own interpretation of this! On the 31st, Ling claimed to have walked to the Falls of Cruachan. He insisted that he had not used a car, but his companions refused to corroborate this statement! On the same day the President brought his party home at breakneck speed in the dark. It was believed that he feared to be caught out by the dawn. On New Year's Day two members, having roped up a guest and explained how important this was, in the Central Gully of Lui, were somewhat shaken after a long and careful climb, when the President and his party shot past at breakneck speed—unroped.

The following were present at the Meet: The President, Mr Alexander Harrison, and Messrs Allan Arthur, J. W. Baxter, Arthur Dixon, R. R. Elton, Arthur Geddes,

A. H. Hendry, N. L. Hird, K. K. Hunter, J. S. M. Jack, Robert Jeffrey, J. N. Ledingham, W. N. Ling, J. Y. Macdonald, J. E. MacEwen, W. Ross McLean, Harry MacRobert, I. H. Ogilvie, George Peat, J. M'K. Stewart, G. R. Spiers, H. W. Turnbull, P. J. H. Unna (and A. G. Murray at Tyndrum) (members); and Messrs H. I. Drever, Ross Higgins, T. H. Hudson, Peter McLean, Shorter, W. R. M. Watson and Dr R. West (guests).

There were also 9 members of the Club at Kingshouse, where the New Year Meet of the J.M.C.S. was held. They were Messrs R. G. Donaldson, J. F. Hamilton, D. McKellar, W. M. Mackenzie, T. D. Mackinnon, W. G. Marskell, W. H. Murray, D. Scott and A. C. D. Small. This Meet is reported elsewhere.

The following expeditions were accomplished during the Meet:

28th December.—Stob Garbh; Unna and Ling.

29th December.—Stob Garbh, Cruach Ardrain and Beinn Tulaichean; Ogilvie and Drever. Ben More and Stobinian; McEwen, Harrison, Elton and Jeffrey. Ben More; Ling and Hird. Sgiath Chuil; Macdonald. Ben Cruachan; Ledingham.

30th December.—Cruach Ardrain; Ross McLean, P. McLean, Macdonald. Meall Glas; Jack and MacRobert. Beinn a' Chroin and An Caisteal; Drever and Ogilvie. Ben More and Stobinian; Baxter and Dixon; also Watson, Ledingham and Higgins. Beinn Laoigh; Elton, McEwen, Geddes; also Peat, Hendry, Stewart. Beinn Cheathaich; Unna, Ling and Hird. Buachaille Etive Beag; Harrison, Arthur and Jeffrey.

31st December.—Stob Coir' an Albannaich; Drever and Watson. The same along with Meall nan Eun; Harrison, Ogilvie and Ledingham. Buachaille Etive Mor by N. Buttress; Peat, Stewart and Hendry. Beinn a' Chroin and An Caisteal; Baxter, Geddes and Dixon. Ben Cruachan; Arthur and Jeffrey. Beinn Mhanach; MacRobert, McEwen and Elton. Ben More and Stobinian; Hunter, Jack and Shorter. Beinn Laoigh; A. G. Murray. The Falls of Falloch; Ling, Unna and Hird.

1st January 1946.—Meall Garbh; Elton and McEwen. Stob Garbh; Jack, MacRobert and Baxter. Beinn Chaluum; Drever, Hendry, Stewart and Peat. Beinn Laoigh (three parties); Higgins, Watson and Ledingham; Hunter, Shorter and Murray; Arthur, Jeffrey, Dixon and Harrison. These three parties staged the scene

referred to in the second paragraph of the introduction to the Meet Proceedings.

2nd January.—Meall nan Tarmachan; Stewart, Hendry and Peat. Ben Dorain; Geddes, Ledingham, Higgins and Watson. Ben More; Turnbull, West, Hudson and D. Gow (J.M.C.S.). Cruach Ardrain; Hunter and Robinson. The same with Beinn Tulaichean; Baxter and Shorter. Sgiath Chuil, Meall Chuirn, Beinn Cheathaich and Meall Glas; Spiers.

3rd January.—Ben Dorain by E. Buttress; Spiers, West, Hudson and Turnbull.

ANNUAL MEETING, 1945.

THE Fifty-seventh Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Central Hotel, Glasgow, on Friday, 7th December 1945, at 5.15 P.M. Mr Robert Jeffrey, President, was in the Chair, there being an attendance of over sixty members. After approval of the previous minutes, the official reports were submitted and approved, and the officials were thanked for their services. Only a brief mention of outstanding points is subjoined.

The Accounts raised no noteworthy issues. The membership stood at the figure of 296. There had been 4 deaths during the year (Dr Graham Ritchie, E. A. M. Wedderburn, Arnold Brown and William Lawson, Junr.) and one resignation, but 22 new members had been elected. In future, stress would be laid on attendance at a Meet as a qualification for membership. The Editor reported that a further increase in price of the *Journal* to the public and the J.M.C.S. was made necessary by rising costs, that 700 copies were printed and that the 1946 issue would remain the same size. It might become desirable to issue a periodical bulletin intimating notes and current activities, in addition to the *Journal*, but this was not yet decided.

In the absence, owing to ill-health, of the General "Guide Book" Editor, it was pointed out that 1,242 "Guides" had been sold during the current year, and that present unsold stocks were respectively: "Nevis," 62; "Northern," 244; "Cobbler," 59; "Islands," 152; "Nevis Panorama," 301 copies. The Hut Custodian reported only sixty-three hut-nights for the year.

The following recommendations were made for future Meets: New Year 1946, Crianlarich; Easter 1946, Kintail and Fort William; New Year 1947, Dalwhinnie and Newtonmore. The Committee's recommendation for Election of Office-Bearers and Committee was approved, and special votes of thanks were accorded to Mr Jeffrey, the retiring President, and to Rev. A. E. Robertson for his past

services as General "Guide Books" Editor. The list of new Office-Bearers and Committee will be found on page 332.

A long debate occurred on a Committee recommendation that the Club agree to join the British Mountaineering Council. This was eventually carried by a two to one majority against an amendment that, instead of this, the Club should take the lead in the formation of an independent Council of Scottish Clubs to co-operate on equal terms with the B.M.C. on matters of common interest.

A motion that the Club Room and Library be transferred to Glasgow was, after a debate, defeated in favour of the Committee recommendation, that a sub-committee be appointed to examine the possibilities and, if the Committee approved, take action towards the acquisition of a Club Room in Glasgow.

After the meeting most of the members present dined together informally.

The Committee also recommended the appointment of a sub-committee to look into the question of obtaining the use of Laggan-garbh cottage, Glencoe, as a climbing hut. This was agreed to.

The Club desires to extend a hearty welcome to the following new members, elected at the October Committee Meeting: Messrs David Aitken, Robert Anderson, James Banford, John Alexander Brown, Peter Hally Brown, Richard Gordon Donaldson, Ronald Oliphant Halkett Down, Barclay Stewart Fraser, Matthew Verden Hunter, James Norman Ledingham, Archibald MacFarlane MacAlpine, Daniel McKellar, Alfred Ian Lennox Maitland, James Russell Marshall, William Hutchison Murray, Victor Ian Russell, Alexander Cunningham Douglas Small, Angus MacCallum Smith, Charles Selby Tilly, Robert Denison Walton, Thomas Weir, James Rodger Wood.

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES.

Great credit is due to a group of active members who have arranged a syllabus of frequent Meets and Meetings, especially in the West of Scotland district. The driving force here is centred round W. M. Mackenzie, Secretary of the Glasgow Committee. Both Meets and Meetings, up to date, have been most successful. They have been open to members of both S.M.C. and J.M.C.S. The evening meetings have been held at 7.30 P.M. in the Saltire Club Rooms, 144 Wellington Street, Glasgow,

and circulars have been issued to members. Inquiries should go to Mr Mackenzie at 10 Garrioch Drive, North Kelvinside. Transport is arranged for several of these Meets, and advance notice of at least ten days should be given to Mr Mackenzie by those requiring transport or accommodation.

A series of Edinburgh J.M.C.S. Meetings and Meets has also been arranged, and S.M.C. members, on payment of an annual subscription of 3s., may receive relevant circulars and attend these Meets and Meetings. The J.M.C.S. Secretary is Mr D. B. McIntyre, 5 Abbotsford Crescent, Edinburgh, 10.

A brief statement of the Syllabus follows for both Glasgow and Edinburgh activities.

Glasgow: Syllabus 1946.

- Jan. 18. Lecture: "Bivouacs, Frostbite, Chills, etc." W. M. Mackenzie.
,, 26-27. Meet: Inverarnan.
,, 31. Lecture: "Northern Norway." Allan Garrick.
Feb. 13. Lecture: "Winter Mountaineering." W. H. Murray.
,, 23-24. Meet: Killin—Ski-ing Meet.
,, 27. Lecture: "Ski-ing in Scotland." H. MacRobert.
Mar. 13. Lecture: "Sunmore Alps and Western Horunger." W. M. Mackenzie.
,, 23-24. Meet: Glencoe-Laggangarbh.
,, 27. Lecture: "The Alps in Winter"—Films (Ski-ing).
Apr. 10. Lecture: "From Skye to the Himalaya." D. Scott.
,, 19-22. Meet: Easter Meet—Fort William and Kintail.
May 25-27. Meet: C.I.C. Hut and camping in vicinity of Hut.
June 22-23. Meet: Arrochar and Glen Loin House.
July 13 to { Meet: S.M.C., J.M.C.S. Meet at Turtagrö, Norway.
Aug. 17. }
July 13-15. Meet: C.I.C. Hut.
Aug. 2-4. Meet: Glencoe-Laggangarbh.
Sept. 25. Lecture: Subject and Lecturer to be announced.
,, 28-30. Meet: Arran—Corrie and Brodick.
Oct. 16. Lecture: Subject and Lecturer to be announced.
,, 26-27. Meet: Glencoe-Laggangarbh.
Nov. 6. Lecture: Subject and Lecturer to be announced.
,, 23-24. Meet: Inverarnan.
,, 27. Lecture: Subject and Lecturer to be announced.
Dec. 10. J.M.C.S. Photographic Exhibition at 8.15 P.M.
,, 15. Meet: Arrochar.

Edinburgh: J.M.C.S. Syllabus 1946.

All meetings will be held at 7.30 P.M. in the S.M.C. Club Room, Synod Hall.

Thursday, 17th Jan. Lecture by G. C. Williams on "Rock Climbs on Ben Nevis."

Sunday, 20th Jan. — Pentland Meet.

Thursday, 7th Feb. J. R. Hewit will give a talk on his Himalayan Trek.

Sunday, 17th Feb. — Pentland Meet.

Friday, 22nd Feb. — Lecture by Dr A. M. Cockburn on "St Kilda in 1927-28: The Cliffs and the People."

THE LIBRARY; BOOKS AND JOURNALS.

ON account of lack of space, and also because publishers are not sending out copies of new books for review, this note must be a brief one.

The first number of *The Open Air in Scotland*, published at 2s. by W. McClellan, Glasgow, edited by our fellow-member Mr B. H. Humble, is an attractive and promising compilation. It is well illustrated and offers 52 pages of interesting articles on all kinds of open-air activity. Mr Humble gives his ideal of a "Plan for a Park" in the area from Tyndrum to Ballachulish—a good plan, perhaps too well organised. J. B. Nimlin's "Approach to the Hills" takes us to the more primitive and energetic phase of mountaineering, dealing with the exploits of the old Ptarmigan Club. There are many short and attractive articles on Youth Hostels, Cruising, Rare Birds, Canoeing to the Hebrides, Camping, Cycling and Ski-ing. The second issue (now in the press) is also excellent.

The *Lomond Mountaineering Club Journal* is an attractive and topical publication with short articles on rock-climbs, happy week-end bus meets of the Club, and dealing with Ben A'an, Garbh Beinn, Cruachan, The Cobbler, Glencoe, Skye and Cumberland.

The Alpine Journal, No. 271, November 1945, is a good number with articles on Mountain Rescue and the Greene Carrier, Mont Blanc, The Dolomites in War, the Ryan-Lochmatter route on the Plan, and other subjects.

The *Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club*, No. 39, 1945, has one Scottish article, a humorous ascent of the Great Gully on the Scree (Wasdale) in ice and water, "The Rainbow Mountains" (Alpine reminiscences of Miss Fitzgibbon, who also writes the attractive article on the Plan in *The Alpine Journal*), and A. B. Hargreaves' discussion of the National Park for the Lake District.

No books have been received since the last note in the *Journal*. As regards periodicals, the appended list covers the lot: *The Alpine Journal*, Nos. 270 and 271; *Journal of the Fell and Rock Club*, No. 39, 1945; *Cairngorm Club Journal*, No. 84, 1944-45; *Sierra Club Bulletin*; *Appalachia*; *The American Alpine Journal*, 1945 and 1946; *Ladies' Alpine Club Journal*, 1945; *Tararua Trampster*, usual issues, 1945; *Camping and Outdoor Life*, usual issues, 1945; *Mazama (U.S.A.)*; *38th Annual Record of Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club*.

NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES.

North Wall Direct; The Cobbler, South Peak.

THIS was first climbed in perfect conditions on 26th August 1945 by W. Smith and C. Wilson. A week before another party had done it with the assistance of a rope from above on the last pitch. It was done in boots and found severe under dry conditions.

The beginning is the same as the 70-foot pitch on North Wall Traverse (see "Cobbler Guide," *J.* 22, 225). Then the traverse is followed into a crack. The 3rd pitch goes up on sloping holds for 40 feet to a belay in chockstone. The 4th pitch ascends on small sloping holds to a chockstone belay. Then one traverses right on small flakes and up on moderate holds for 5 feet. Traverse left on sloping holds into a crack and so directly upwards to the finish. This pitch takes a 90-foot run-out of rope.

Crowberry Tower, East Face.

Route 1 (140 feet).—Severe and strenuous. Start from cairn a few yards to right of East Chimney. Climb obliquely left for a few feet, then straight up steep rocks to good belay at top of first section of East Chimney. Proceed direct up corner and finish approximately at top of S.E. Ridge. The first 30 feet strenuous, and rock not too sound in places.

Route 2 (130 feet approx.).—Moderate. Start at cairn a few yards farther to right of *Route 1* and at highest point of shallow gully. Climb straight up 30 feet to good stance and belay. Follow shallow scoop directly above, finishing a few feet below summit of Tower.

Both routes are attractive finishes to Tower and were done on 12th August 1945 by Messrs H. W. Grant and J. Haining.

(From the *Lomond Mountaineering Club Journal*, 1945.)

Some New Routes in the Cairngorms.

By RICHARD FRERE.

The Savage Slit, Cairn Lochan, was climbed by R. B. Frere (leading) and J. D. Walker on 17th July 1945.

Pitch 1 (25 feet).—Moderate. Steep rocks are climbed to the foot of the crack. Holds are adequate here. *Pitch 2* (20 feet).—Difficult. The crack is entered by an awkward upward movement; it is then climbed on the right (facing) wall to a chockstone, which is surmounted by a rather difficult movement. This pitch is fairly strenuous. *Pitch 3* (15 feet).—Moderate. Here the crack penetrates deeply into the mountain. One scrambles up the bed and doubles back above the next chockstone. The outward movement is not entirely easy. *Pitch 4* (30 feet).—Very difficult. The right wall

of the crack is climbed to a large chockstone which is a prominent feature of the climb. The chockstone is navigated on the left with the aid of a small groove in the left wall. Exposure here is tremendous. The leader can be safeguarded by the second securing himself far inside the crack behind the chockstone of Pitch 3. *Pitch 5* (50 feet).—Moderate. An awkward move at the start of this pitch is its hardest portion. Thence on, the crack itself may be climbed, or the right wall scaled directly. The latter alternative is the more difficult. Here again there is great exposure. The crack ends in a gap in the buttress. This forms a pinnacle (cairn here). The second party took just under two hours. Conditions were unsettled with some moisture in the crack. The climb is on the buttress which forms the western boundary of Coire an Lochain, above the right-hand corner of the famous slab.

The Centre Barn of Bynack.—This gives a short problem by way of a 20-foot crack; it is an obvious route, but I do not think it has been recorded. The various "summits" of the South (big) Barn are all difficult of access, although it is simple enough to reach the rocky basin between them. Some of these rocks are manifestly impossible of ascent without the use of mechanical agents! The North Barn gives a brief problem; it is not absolutely easy to descend this, especially if one is not tall.

Cripple's Cleft.—This is in the centre of the face of the Third Buttress, Sgoran Dubh. It is quite obvious from the Chimney-stack, which is the sole remaining remnant of the Upper Bothy; a thin crack, rising opposite, with four or five chockstones in its lower part is the climb. The approach is treacherous and can be varied. Once in the chimney, no variation is possible; walls of the smoothest granite set at a high angle demarcate one's line of attack. The first pitch is interesting; the second rather grassy; the third carries one up at a steep angle to a small recess, whence a tricky move is required. This is the most interesting part of the climb. Indefinite work leads into an open gully which is climbed to the summit of the cliffs. The chimney is not as good a climb as the Bachelors' Route on No. 2 Buttress—judged on any criterion of merit—but is of a slightly higher standard of difficulty. It is worth climbing, but—to misquote Johnson—hardly worth going to climb. The name arises from the fact that P. A. Densham, who accompanied me on what I believe to be the first ascent (7th June 1945), was suffering exquisite agony from a strained back; his performance, on this account, was exceedingly meritorious.

Arran; Beinn a' Chliabhain and Creag Dubh.

Beinn a' Chliabhain, Haakon's Highway.—This was ascended on 12th September by Mr and Mrs G. S. Johnstone. It is very difficult and about 300 feet in length. The climb starts 1 foot to the right of the lowest point of the Central Buttress. This buttress

is well defined, with deep-cut gullies on either side, with a western wing of slabby rock and an eastern wing of smaller but steeper crags. An obvious crack cleaves the upper half of this buttress. After this pitch one is confined to the route described. The crags lie across Coire Daingean from A'Chir, and the Central Buttress is to the east of the cyclopean wall which forms the head of the corrie.

The pitches run as follows: (1) 55 feet—passes a doubtful block at 10 feet by obvious corner cracks and ledges to a big ledge on the ridge west—this can be reached from grass slopes north of buttress; (2) 45 feet—goes up crack directly above stance, then to right, then up a groove in a corner to a stance below the big overhang where, as at end of Pitch 1, there is a good belay; (3) 20 feet—walk up broad grassy ledge on right to stance below boulder; (4) 55 feet—up groove on side of buttress overlooking gully—at 15 feet it is possible to take to steep, bad grass, but this is not recommended; (5) 40 feet—up 10 feet of grass in corner and then left to thread belay above apex of grass mentioned in (4); (6) 45 feet—up crack left of belay with difficulty and then by cracks above to stance behind massive block—alternatives may be possible; (7) 40 feet—gain obvious chimney on left and strenuous ascent follows, passing two groups of doubtful chockstones by working outside of them—there is a flake belay 8 feet up; the finish is in the recess at the top of the chimney with a thread belay; (8) 25 feet—the through route is followed and the chimney above to the summit.

Creag Dubh, Fifteen Minute Ridge.—This crag merits closer inspection. There are several parallel buttresses and intermediate gullies. The cleanest buttress seems to be the shortest, starting high up to the right of the biggest scree gully on the crag, about 180 feet of rock leading to the summit. The climb has one good difficult pitch and the rest moderate. It starts from the left corner of the ridge, with an easy 30 feet to the boulder pile below slabs. Then 55 feet follows, traversing right below the overhang past a doubtful block. A stiff crack and a slab on left lead to stances and a broader ridge. The remainder is 145 feet of interesting scrambling on the backbone of the ridge which is fairly narrow. The ascent by Mr and Mrs Johnstone was made on 11th September 1945.

Sgurr Dearg (Inaccessible Pinnacle).

For those who are over-familiar with the ordinary West Climb on the Inaccessible Pinnacle, a slight variation can be recommended—viz., the direct ascent from the col to the shoulder, some 6 feet above and to the right of the mantelshelf. This alters the normal route very little and the standard is probably the same or if anything, slightly harder.

The variation is almost certainly not new, but I have never seen any record of it. It was enjoyed by R. Baxter, F. Baird and myself on 3rd October 1945.

CAMPBELL R. STEVEN.

Aonach Mor (South-east Buttress).

The most prominent buttress in the corrie formed by the south and east ridges of Aonach Mor gave two interesting parallel climbs on 20th September 1945. The buttress is a conspicuous feature of the corrie, when viewed from the Aonach Mor-Aonach Beag col, and is easily accessible from there by moving down leftwards over an area of large scree.

Route 1 (J. G. Fraser and K. Anderson).—Starting in the centre of the buttress the main difficulties were met early on. Higher, it was occasionally necessary to look deliberately for pitches to prevent the climb degenerating into a steep scramble. A narrow neck, of imposing aspect when seen from below, leads to easier rocks and the Aonach Mor plateau.

Route 2 (V. G. A. Freeman, J. Rutherford and F. Baird).—Starting to the right (east), a pitch of 30 feet is followed by a short, overhanging face with small holds. This may be avoided by a traverse right to a sloping slab and up to a small grass ledge. Three moderate pitches land the climber on a ledge overlooking the gully on the right. A 40-foot pitch on small but good holds leads to a crack on the left, and belay, followed in turn by a series of faces, broken by ledges. The total length of the climbing is about 400 feet, and the standard is difficult.

CAMPBELL R. STEVEN.

Ceum na Caillich—Collie Dog on Cuillin.

Mr C. E. Willes Johnson writes that he descended the Broomstick Ridge of Ceum na Caillich, Arran, in March 1944, alone—an earlier date than its ascent by Messrs Townend and Curtis.

He also refers to a Sligachan collie dog which accompanied him in May 1945 over Bruach na Frithe, Sgùrr a' Fionn Choire and Sgùrr a' Bhasteir. He refers to a previous account of a collie ascending Sgùrr Alasdair. This collie slept an hour on Sgùrr a' Bhasteir and finished up at Sligachan, quite fresh.

Former Name of Sgùrr Alasdair.

Mr Harrison quotes Mr Seton Gordon as saying that the late John Mackenzie had told him that the original name of Sgùrr Alasdair was Sgùrr Viorach, or the "Pointed Top."

Three additional "Long Days," making up to one per year the "Fifty Years' Experience" described in article in "Journal," 1945.

1. *2nd January 1945*.—From S.M.C. Meet, Crianlarich, over Beinn Chabhair, Ben a Chroin, and sunset in bitter cold east wind (alone) and perfect visibility, down to the Hotel. 9½ hours; 4,000 feet; 10 miles.



Ben Attow

Sisters of Kintail

PANORAMA from INVERINATE

Sgurr an Lochain

The Saddle

Mam Rattachan

Allan Arthur

2. 10th August 1945.—Glorious hot summer day—perfect visibility. No wind. Left Kinloch Hourn, 1 o'clock, for Larbhein, along the shores of Hourn and up steep rock east face contour to top 5.0 to 5.10. Down long north ridge towards Sgriol, looking magnificent as were all other hills within range, and got back to the car at Kinloch Hourn, 9 P.M. 8 hours; 6,000 feet; 25 miles. Very hot and exhausting. Arrived Tomdoun by car, 10 P.M.

3. From Kintail, left Cluny 1 o'clock: up south-east ridge from there to west of Ciste Dubh. Traversed three fine tops and over the Seven Sisters. Visibility good all the way except at Sgurr Ouran, which was in dense mist. From the Col and down to Kintail, 7 P.M. 6 hours; 6,500 feet; 13 miles.

ALLAN ARTHUR.

Meeting of Representatives of Scottish Climbing Clubs.

(Organisation of First-aid and Rescue Services.)

A meeting of representatives of Scottish Climbing Clubs was held at the S.M.C. Club Rooms on 12th January 1946, with Mr Alex. Harrison, President of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, in the Chair. Representatives were present from the S.M.C., the Cairngorm Club, the Grampian Club, the Dundee Rambling Club, the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club, the Lomond Mountaineering Club, the J.M.C.S., the Creag Dhu Mountaineering Club, the Etchachan Club, and the Lochaber Section of the J.M.C.S. The Moray Mountaineering Club, though invited, were unable to send a representative.

Mr Harrison welcomed those present and explained that the object was to establish an informal joint committee to discuss matters of common interest. He suggested that a formal constitution did not seem necessary, and this was agreed to. A further meeting was intended to be held in Glasgow in March.

The aims and organisation of the First-aid Committee of the British Mountaineering Clubs, instituted prior to the war, and with which the S.M.C. and certain other Scottish Clubs were affiliated, was explained. The F.A.C. desired that First-aid Posts in Scotland be under the organisation and control of the Scottish Clubs, with financial support by the F.A.C., who would supply necessary equipment, and in return expected financial support from the Scottish Clubs, though the basis was not yet determined. The S.M.C. had already contributed, and had installed equipment at several posts—as had the Grampian Club at Derry Lodge.

Dr Duff (Lochaber J.M.C.S.) described the equipment and the work of the Fort William Club, for which he was thanked.

The following is a brief list of existing and projected First-aid Posts and the Clubs which agreed to be responsible for them:—

1. C.I.C. Hut, Ben Nevis (S.M.C.), existing.
2. Fort William, Belford Hospital.
3. Glen Brittle Lodge, Skye (S.M.C.), existing.

4. Clachaig Hotel, Glencoe (S.M.C.), existing.
5. Derry (Grampian Club), existing.
6. Sligachan, Skye.
7. Crianlarich Police Station (Lomond Club agree to supervise).
8. Arrochar (Creag Dhu Club agree to supervise).
9. Lochnagar (Cairngorm Club agree to supervise).
10. Aviemore (Moray Club and Inverness J.M.C.S. be asked to supervise).

Rescue Parties and Personnel.—It was agreed that the Clubs should arrange about this, and that certain key men (names and telephone numbers) be made available to the local people and police, so that skilled climbers could be called in quickly in case of an accident.

In the case of Lochaber and Glencoe, the S.M.C. would be available if an emergency party were necessary. For Deeside it would be the Cairngorm and Grampian Clubs, and so on. No special arrangement could be made for accidents in Skye. The question of payment to voluntary local helpers was discussed, but held over for further consideration.

British Glaciological Society.

Snow and ice, from their mutation and from the part they play in nature as precipitation, agents of erosion and modifiers of climate, come within the range severally of physics, meteorology, geology, physical geography, oceanography and climatology. The behaviour of ice crystals in glaciers has close connection with crystallography and metallurgy.

On the more practical side, the study of the snow crystal has led to advances in the avoidance or prevention of avalanches, and is therefore of value to railway engineers, mountaineers, and ski-runners. Investigations on the freezing-up of rivers and on the effects of snow cover upon "run-off" and floods have been actively taken up by water engineers and surveyors. In addition, the fascination of snow and ice and the beauty of the snowscape make wide appeal to laymen, and many wish to know more about the subject.

It will be seen that these studies cover so wide a field that a central organisation to co-ordinate them and to advise on programmes of research and exploration became a necessity. As a result, the *British Glaciological Society* was formed in 1936 as the "Association for the Study of Snow and Ice," whose primary object was "to encourage research on, and stimulate interest in, the practical and scientific problems of snow and ice." Since then the Society has broadened its activities. For example, it is the responsible body for nominating members of the British Group of the International Commission of Snow and Glaciers, one of the commissions of the International Association of Hydrology in the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics. The Society is also resuming its annual Survey of Snowfall in the British Isles.

Meetings are held at about three-monthly intervals in London, Cambridge, and other places, and the papers with their discussions are printed and circulated in the Society's journal. Membership of the Society is open to all who have scientific, practical, or general interest in any aspect of snow and ice study, and is by nomination. Further particulars may be obtained from the Assistant Secretary, British Glaciological Society, temporary address c/o Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore, London, S.W.7.

In connection with this, Mr G. Seligman, President of the Society, has also sent the following letter to us:—

"In 1938 this Society, or as it then was the "Association for the Study of Snow and Ice," caused to be placed in the Ben Nevis Hut a notebook asking visitors to make notes therein from time to time on the snow depth at the summit and in gullies. If any members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club should find themselves on Ben Nevis, would they be good enough to see if the notebook is still there, and if so send me any pertinent notes it may contain.

"This information is required in connection with a Snow Survey of the British Isles which we intend to resume next winter and for which, incidentally, when the time comes, we shall want volunteers."

Clach Bun Rudhtair, Ben Avon.

Here are one or two notes regarding the curious rock formation, known as the Clach Bun Rudhtair on Ben Avon. The pinnacles run north to south. The first and third are easily ascended by at least two routes each. The central pinnacle is divided by a deep crack; rocks falling into this crack have formed a window, mentioned in the "S.M.C. Cairngorm Guidebook." The part of the pinnacle lying to the north of the crack can be climbed by an easy chimney on its north side; or by a narrow and strenuous fissure on its north-western aspect. That part to the south of the crack can be ascended by a through-route in the top of the window followed by a short traverse to the right. Interesting scrambling can be found in the group of rocks. I note that the "Guide" mentions that one of the rocks had had no recorded ascent. This must refer to the central pinnacle, since the other two are very readily ascended. K. A. Robertson and I climbed it yesterday (7th April 1946).

Furthermore, we had occasion to learn that the road from Tomintoul to Inchroly Lodge is no longer a right-of-way or public motoring road. The upper nine miles are maintained by the proprietor for his own use. Mountaineers, or others, wishing to use the road should inform the gentleman in question by telephone and ask permission. Moreover, the road which rises above the south bank of the Avon is in a highly dangerous condition, much of it has collapsed into the river; a by-pass to the north of the river should be used.

RICHARD B. FRERE.

THE S.M.C. ABROAD—CLIMBING IN WAR-TIME.**Attempted Ascent of "Chombu" (20,872 ft.), Sikkim.**

THE following note is compiled from diaries kept by Duncan McPherson, member of the S.M.C., who has been in India for the last twelve years and is at present Bridge Engineer of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway.

"Chombu" is a fine, pyramidal peak forming the southern shoulder of the Sibu La (17,560 feet), the pass which runs between it and Kangchenjau (24,000 feet), connecting the valleys of the Lachu and Lachen tributaries of the Teesta river. It attracted McPherson's attention on a walking tour of Sikkim in October 1942 and, so far as known to him, has not yet been climbed. The following attempt was made to climb it in October-November 1944.

The party—consisting of C. R. Cooke, who made an ascent of "Kabru" (24,000 feet) in November 1936; John Sugden, who took part in Greenland expeditions less than ten years ago; and McPherson, who had made several Himalayan trips on short leave during the past eight years—left Calcutta on 17th October and reached Siliguri next morning. Here Sugden was disabled by an unfortunate accident and had to be taken to Kalimpong for treatment. Cooke and McPherson went on to Gangtok (5,500 feet), capital of Sikkim, on the 20th and reorganised the expedition, which included three experienced porters, Cooke's "tiger," Ang Tarke, and two others. After five days' march from Gangtok the party reached, on the afternoon of the 28th, the Himalayan Club Hut at Jha Chu (15,000 feet), on the west of the Sibu La and two miles north of "Chombu." For three days Cooke and McPherson suffered from mountain sickness and could do little more than reconnoitre the approaches to "Chombu." The plan then decided upon was (1) to climb on 1st November by a steepish couloir, which led left of an impossible ice-fall on to a snowfield at the 18,000-foot level north-east of the peak, to bring up a Mummery tent with some stores for the night and to send back the porters; (2) the porters to return on the 2nd November with a second tent and the rest of the stores; (3) on the 3rd to take up the tents and stores by a gully on to the north ridge at about 18,700 feet, and to camp there for the night; (4) on the 4th to make a route half-way up the knife-like north ridge and return to the 18,700-foot camp; (5) on the 5th to complete the ridge and camp with one porter and one tent at 20,000 feet; (6) on the 6th to pass along an easier ridge to the summit and return to the 18,700-foot camp; and (7) on the 7th to return to the Club Hut at Jha Chu.

The 1st and 2nd November were both fine days, and the programme so far was completed according to plan. On the morning of the 3rd it was snowing heavily, and a strong south wind was blowing the snow into the couloir of ascent. "With heavy hearts

we realised that the snow in the couloir might avalanche when the weight of the new snow had reached a limit, or might be set off even earlier by our descent. It was obvious that for the safety of our party we must get down as soon as possible." The descent was accomplished with difficulty. "The most dangerous portion was across the slope above the overhanging bulge of snow in No. 5 gully, for, had that avalanched, there was no knowing where we should have stopped. We spread out to the full extent of our ropes, and fortunately nothing happened." It was still snowing when they reached the Club Hut, and though they felt defeated they were convinced that they had done the right thing in not staying up on the mountain. It cleared after two days, but they could not return to the assault as both Cooke and McPherson had to be back to duty in the plains within the month of their leave. On the third day they explored the couloir and found that the deep, soft snow had made it quite impossible of ascent. So they spent their last few days at the Hut, taking photographs and enjoying the scenery, which is thus described in McPherson's diary: "The view from the ridge behind the Hut was almost the widest in Sikkim. In the west, Kangchenjunga rose thirty-four miles away, towering above all else, and to the right of it the fine array of 24,000-foot peaks which separate Sikkim from Nepal. Farther to the right is the range of peaks to the north of Lhonak, separating Sikkim from Tibet. These culminated in Chomion (22,400 feet), only eight miles away. The sheer 5,000-foot rock wall of the Kangchenjha, less than three miles away, blocked the view to the north; and lesser peaks close by prevented Pauhunri, the 23,400-foot peak in the north-east corner of Sikkim, from being seen. . . . To the south-east is the Sibu La, and finally, due south, 'Chombu,' the most beautiful of peaks." After 7th November the party returned by varying routes to Gangtok, Kalimpong and Calcutta. The attempt on "Chombu" failed because there was not sufficient time, first for acclimatisation and second for renewal of the attack after the unexpected and heavy snowfall of 3rd to 5th November (see illustration facing p. 340).

Climbing—"In the Course of Duty."

From September 1943 till October 1945 I had a generous share of climbing experiences with the Commando Mountain Warfare Training Centre. This unit had originally been formed in December 1942 to train Commando troops to fight in high, snow-covered mountain country and, based at Braemar, had put in some intensive work in the Cairngorms. On moving to North Wales nine months later to train the Lovat Scouts as a mountain battalion, the S.M.C. and J.M.C.S. representation became most impressive—P. D. Baird, N. K. Easton, D. W. Howe, J. N. Ledingham, W. M. Mackenzie, I. H. Ogilvie, the late E. A. M. Wedderburn and myself—and I hope that some abler pen than mine is telling in detail the story of the three grand strenuous months spent on the Welsh rocks.

Two of us—Easton and myself—found Cornwall quite good compensation for the Rockies and Italy, whither most of the others proceeded; and for anyone wishing to try the novel variation of sea-cliffs, surf and sunlight, with every type of rock from loose earth to the best granite, I can thoroughly recommend Cornwall. We were kept extremely busy by day and by night in preparation for D Day, and also indulged in a vast amount of experimental work, such as exhaustive tests of nylon rope, casualty evacuation up and down cliffs, and the trial of sundry nefarious devices, at which any sporting British climber would stand aghast. Incidentally, during my two years' association with the C.M.W.T.C., when many hundreds of men were trained, there was not one fatal accident.

Besides cliff-climbing, the unit became highly expert in small boat work, and was called upon to take part in a number of Commando operations in North-west Europe. But that is another—some might say a more thrilling—story. (Easton, who became Major and C.O. of the unit in October 1945, won the M.C. for gallantry during the Elbe crossing.)

In September and October 1945 a climbing course was subtly arranged for the Ben Nevis-Glencoe area. Despite a daunting start in appalling conditions of rain and wind, which wrecked camps in Coire nam Beith and near the C.I.C. Hut, the venture was highly successful. Many climbs were done on Buachaille Etive, Bidean nam Bian (Church Door Buttress, etc.), Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour (Great Ridge), Ben Nevis (Douglas Boulder direct and Tower Ridge, Observatory Ridge and Buttress, Ruddy Rocks, Bayonet Route, etc.), Aonach Mor (South-east Buttress) and Aonach Beag (North-east Ridge). In addition, some of the party went on to Skye and had two memorable days on the Sron and above Coire Lagan. Glen Brittle was friendly in every sense, and on this occasion the tents stood firm.

CAMPBELL R. STEVEN.

The Lovat Scouts.

When the Lovat Scouts began their mountain training in the autumn of 1943 they were still composed almost entirely of the pre-war territorials, who were, of course, all recruited in the north of Scotland. There was, therefore, a good sprinkling of stalkers and other men used to hill work; and though some good men were lost at this time because of the stiff medical examination that was instituted, the reinforcements were specially selected volunteers, so that the unit was especially suited for this training and contained first-class material.

After a period of slogging around the Grampians at Glen Cluny, the regiment moved to Bangor, in North Wales. The object of this stage of training was primarily to learn the technique of rock-climbing. A cadre of N.C.O.'s and likely leaders was first trained during a six weeks' course, and this cadre then instructed the rest of the regiment. The system of instruction used was, I think,

more or less standard throughout the Army, and consisted of giving the first technical instruction and practice on boulder problems and small crags, and then training on standard climbs, beginning with "easies" and becoming progressively more difficult according to a strict programme. The standard of climbing reached was amazingly high. The majority of the regiment did a three-weeks' course, though some late reinforcements only had five days' instruction, and it was quite surprising how much confidence and technical proficiency was acquired even in this short time. Failures were very few, and the number of men who actively disliked the climbing was surprisingly small.

New Year 1944 saw the regiment on the way to the Canadian Rockies. It was intended that the first part of the ski-ing programme should be carried out at Jasper, but there was too little snow in the valley, so that a number of camps of company strength were established higher up at about 6,000 or 7,000 feet. These camps consisted mostly of tents, the normal being an ordinary marquee tent erected over a flooring of fir brushwood, with a wood stove in the centre and a long chimney pipe radiating heat. Another type of tent used was a lightweight Arctic tent holding—or rather supposed to hold—eight men. Some camps were lucky enough to have a chalet or a small log cabin. The ski instructors were a mixed team of Americans, Canadians and British under the guidance of F. S. Smythe and Major Gibson, of Canada, and the instruction was on normal lines. Most of the camps were supplied by "weasels" or "snowmobiles," but some camps had to be established and maintained initially by man-packs. This, combined with the lengthy manoeuvres that entailed carrying supplies for several days' absence from camp, made the men very good at cross-country work, but not so efficient at downhill running.

Learning the difficult art of winter warfare rather interfered with peak bagging, so that there was not much time available for pure mountaineering. Nor were conditions very suitable because of the intense cold and the dangerous condition of the snow. Throughout the winter, until April, snow did not consolidate. However, a lot of winter pioneering was done, many good peaks gained and passes crossed for the first time in winter. For instance, an ascent was made of Chowder Peak, which had only been climbed the previous summer after several unsuccessful summer attempts. An excellent large-scale expedition was made when a whole platoon climbed Mount Columbia (which I suppose was the first winter ascent), an intermediate camp being made in ice caves on the glacier. There are only a few isolated huts scattered about the Rockies in this Jasper Park area, so that parties had to bivouac on all expeditions away from the base camps. This, however, was no hardship, because bivouacs in the bush, which was thick everywhere up to 7,000 feet, were always a sheer joy. In fact, these bivouacs in the forest were the part of the day's work to which everybody looked forward with

the keenest anticipation, not merely because it meant that the heavy rucksack, often weighing up to 50 lbs., could be thrown off for the rest of the night, but also for the fun of the camping itself. Within a few minutes of the final halt, huge fires would be blazing and strange pemmican brews beginning to boil. If there was plenty of daylight left there would be time to build elaborate shelters of various designs using the fir boughs, but usually a hole dug in the snow and lined with springy balsam brushwood provided everybody with as comfortable a bed as could be desired. Although temperatures dropped at times to many degrees below zero, yet our splendid American down sleeping-bags kept us so warm that I never once heard anybody complain of the cold. All the equipment, part British and part American, with which we had been issued had been very carefully thought out, and was first class both in design and quality.

Above the tree line we had to make holes or caves dug out of the snow, and though they were quite habitable, giving good shelter and bringing the inside temperature up to about freezing-point, yet they were uncomfortable and cheerless in contrast to the bush bivouacs.

The Canadian Rockies are a paradise for anyone wishing to indulge in first ascents. Only a small proportion of the thousands of peaks have been climbed, or even mapped; for large areas of the maps that we used were intriguingly blank. It was, therefore, with a feeling of reluctance at parting from so many virgin peaks that we left the Rockies in April, in lovely sunny weather with the upper snows just beginning to change from the winter's powder windslab and crust to delightful spring snow.

We returned to Scotland and soon embarked for Italy, where we were almost continually in action on the 8th Army front until the end of that campaign. Our mountain training was not entirely wasted because we were operating in very difficult hill country all the time, but unfortunately we were never sent to the western part of the front where we could have been used to great advantage as real mountain troops, particularly in the winter of 1944. Our sole real mountaineering in Italy was during a three-weeks' rest period out of the line, which was spent at the Gran Sasso in the Abruzzi at the beginning of February 1945. Here we were able to use the funicular and we had a wonderful ski-ing holiday, which improved our downhill technique considerably.

The month of May saw us moving up to Austria, with several rejoicing at the prospect of seeing the Alps in the summer and the hope of good ski-ing the next winter. Unfortunately, in July, just as we were settling down to the joys of lovely Austria, we were flown to Greece. I did, however, manage to take a small party up the Gross Glockner in June, in bad weather after a heavy fall of snow. The contrast between the lovely Austrian hills and the July heat of the barren, dusty wastes near Salonika was almost more than we

could bear. The only thing to do was to seek refuge from the Macedonian summer by a trip to Mount Olympus, which was probably not climbed until the 1920's because it was impossible to get near it for bandits. The final rocks are quite impressive, and some route-finding is necessary. There is a route that only entails easy scrambling, but the adjoining tops have some interesting climbing and there is a spectacular line of cliffs, rising from the corrie to the north, that looks singularly difficult. The mountain has a definite charm, being partly the freshness of the pine woods and also the wonderful colouring that one gets in the sky and landscape everywhere in Greece, but which is accentuated here by the nearness of the sea to the mountains, and also the immense view of hills, sea and islands.

It was a pity that we were never used in our proper role of mountain troops, but undoubtedly the men benefited tremendously from the training as individuals by the development of their stamina, resourcefulness and initiative. I like to think, too, that many Scouts developed a real love of climbing and ski-ing, so that we shall now often meet in the Scottish hills wild-looking men clad in a queer assortment of American mountain troops' clothing, but wearing a ski-cap bearing the Lovat Scout badge. As a final word I would like to pay tribute to the man who, above all others, was responsible for the initiation and the success of the whole project, for the enthusiasm aroused among all those taking part, and in fact for the whole basis of training. I refer to Sandy Wedderburn, who came to the Lovat Scouts as second-in-command when the regiment was training in Wales and remained with them till his tragic death in Italy in December 1944. His death was a great blow to the Scouts, but the work that he did for them will never be forgotten by the regiment.

D. W. HOWE.

Climbing from an Indian Station.

When first stationed in the North-west Frontier Province I had two Saturdays on the hills near at hand: the first along the steepest and riskiest vegetable ridge I have ever been on, to gain an unknown summit of 5,600 feet; the other to the highest hill in the neighbourhood, just about 7,000 feet, with a grand view to the snows of the Hindu Kush. My second leave was at Srinagar in June. A fifteen-hour day took me to the highest summit (9,300 feet) above Dal Lake, up a long ridge and over several tops.

In the spring of 1945, with a friend, I got thirty-five miles out of Darjeeling on to the Singalila Ridge, getting up to 12,000 feet. The indisposition of my friend caused us to spend a night in a Nepali village over the frontier. From Sandakphu, the highest summit, we enjoyed a magnificent panorama of the main Himalayan chain from Kangchenjunga to Everest.

R. G. INGLIS.

THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF SCOTLAND.

NEW YEAR MEET AT KINGSHOUSE.

THE following members of the J.M.C.S. and S.M.C. were present at Kingshouse Inn (there were no guests):—

J.M.C.S.—J. K. W. Dunn (President), W. Bennet, Rev. R. J. V. Clark, J. Cortlandt-Simpson, Dr D. G. Duff, E. E. Gardiner, W. Leslie, D. B. McIntyre, A. McInnes, G. Parish, W. S. Thomson, W. Whitelaw. D. McCallum and W. Warnock were at Ballachulish. H. Allison, J. Murray, D. McArthur and J. Lowe were at Glen Coe Hotel. W. Wood at Clachaig.

S.M.C.—R. G. Donaldson, J. F. Hamilton, W. G. Marskell, Dan. McKellar, W. M. Mackenzie, T. D. Mackinnon, W. H. Murray, D. Scott, A. C. D. Small.

List of Known Expeditions (many not reported):—

AONACH EAGACH: Dunn and Donaldson, Cortlandt-Simpson and Small.

CLACHLET AND MEALL BHUIRIDH: Mackenzie, McInnes and Murray; Bennet, Simpson, Marskell, Mackinnon.

SRON NA CREISE: Donaldson, Dunn, McKellar, Small, Bennet and Simpson.

NA GRUAGAICHEAN.—AN GARBHANACH: Allison, McArthur and Lowe.

STOB GHABHAR: Allison, Murray and Lowe.

BEN BHEITHIR: McCallum and Warnock.

BUACHAILLE ETIVE MOR.—*Curved Ridge*: Donaldson, McKellar, Small.

North Buttress: Murray, Simpson, Bennet (3 hours).

Crowberry Ridge: Parish, McIntyre, Gardiner (10 hours). (Route: Direct to Abraham's ledge, then right traverse by lower ledge and return by sloping ledge to Macgregor's ledge; thereafter by the upper groove of "Fracture Route" to the Slabs, where a right traverse was made and the route continued straight up and over the Tower. Much snow and the Slabs icy.)

Crowberry Ridge: Murray, Dunn and Scott (4 hours). (Route: Naismith's) Simpson and Bennet (3 hours).

THE GREY CORRIES: Hamilton, Whitelaw and Leslie.

At the **Annual General Meeting** held in Kingshouse on 1st January, two new Sections were established, at Fort William and London.

The membership of each is approximately twenty. Affiliation with the B.M.C. was approved and continued. A special vote of thanks was given to Messrs A. C. D. Small and Marskell, who acted as Central Secretaries during the war, and to whom great credit must be given for maintaining the Club in a live and even healthy condition, so that a resumption of full activity is immediately possible. The membership of the Club is 190.

NOTE ON KINGSHOUSE INN.—Now under the management of Mr and Mrs Maclean. Throughout the week-end the inn was well fired and the food excellent. For the Annual Dinner on 1st January a four-course dinner was served, including roast chicken and mince pies, of a quantity and quality that could not have been obtained in town at double the price. Most beds are too short for a six-foot man, but are otherwise comfortable. The entire floor-space of the house is carpeted. As yet no draught beer is available, but no shortage of whisky, rum, and bottled beer. The Macleans are by nature hospitable, and their kindness throughout the week-end was well tried and proved to be unfailing.

Glasgow Section.—The first post-war Annual Dinner of the Glasgow Section was held on 21st February. It was practically a reunion with so many members just out of the Forces. The President of the S.M.C. was the Guest of Honour, and 36 members enjoyed a very jovial evening.

Combined Meets with the S.M.C. were held on 27th January at Inverarnan, and on 24th February at Killin, where 22 turned up altogether, most of them ski-ing on the slopes of Ben Ghlas and the others traversing Ben Lawers and the Tarmachans in bright sunshine and strong wind. The fortnightly joint evening meetings with the S.M.C. in the Saltire Club Rooms have been very successful.

London Section Notes.—The London Association has continued to prosper during the past year in spite of a shortage of active members. Parties with some London Association members made a new route in North Wales at Christmas 1944, and in Scotland explored the Dundonnell area and made some new routes in Arran. Only a few new climbs were made on the sandstone outcrops at Tunbridge Wells; the campaigns of previous years having left little remaining opportunity. The usual caving trips to Somerset took place during the summer, and two visits were made to the Climbers Club Hut at Bosigran on the north Cornish coast for climbing on the granite cliffs.

Finally, with the help of our many friends in the J.M.C.S., our application for recognition as a full Section of the Club was steered

ROBERT LAWRIE LTD.

Late of 38 BRYANSTON ST., MARBLE ARCH, LONDON, W.1

Alpine and Polar Equipment Specialists

War-time Address

**53 STODMAN STREET
NEWARK-ON-TRENT
NOTTS**

Telephone - - - - - NEWARK 7 6 6

Inland Tel. and Cablegrams "ALPINIST," NEWARK

We regret that owing to present conditions our supplies of Climbing Boots, etc., are strictly limited — but we continue to give the best service possible to our clients.

CATALOGUE ON APPLICATION

(Fee 3d. Board of Trade Regulations)



THE SCOTTISH SKI CLUB JOURNAL

The articles and photographs in this Journal, equally distributed between Scotland and the Alps, are of interest to all mountaineers.

Publication has been suspended for the duration of the war

Some copies of previous issues are available

Price 2/6 each, post free

and may be obtained from

**Mr C. N. FRASER, Hon. Editor,
16 Royal Circus, Edinburgh, 3**

CLIMBING GUIDES TO THE SNOWDON DISTRICT

Published by **THE CLIMBERS' CLUB**

CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU. By J. M. EDWARDS and J. E. Q. BARFORD.
(Reprint from 1942 Journal.)

CRAIG YR YSFA. . . . By A. D. M. COX and H. E. KRETSCHMER.
(Reprint from 1943 Journal.)

**DINAS CROMLECH, CARREG WASTAD
AND CLOGWYN Y GROCHAN.** By J. E. Q. BARFORD.
(Reprint from 1944 Journal.)

Price 2s. 9d. each

Obtainable from

THE CLOISTER PRESS LTD., HEATON MERSEY, MANCHESTER
or from any bookseller

LAKE DISTRICT ROCK CLIMBING GUIDE BOOKS

Series completely rewritten

General Editor : **H. M. KELLY**

In Cloth Boards

1. **Pillar Rock and Neighbourhood**, by H. M. Kelly. *Published 1936. 2/6*
2. **Scafell**, by A. T. Hargreaves. *Published 1936. 2/6*

Obtainable locally, retail, at Chaplin's Library, Keswick, or at "Lake District Herald" bookshop, Ambleside; or by post from The Cloister Press Ltd., Heaton Mersey, Manchester.

INQUIRIES

regarding space for
Advertising in this
Journal should be
addressed to . . .

Mr DONALD MACKAY

HON. ASSISTANT EDITOR

113 COMISTON DRIVE

EDINBURGH, 10



SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB GUIDE BOOKS

***General.** Cloth Covers.

***Ben Nevis.** Cloth Covers. **8s. 6d.** Post, 6d.
Revised Edition now ready.

***Island of Skye.** Cloth Covers.
Including 3-inch to the mile map of the Cuillin.

***Cairngorms.** Cloth Covers.

***Western Highlands.** Cloth Covers.
Deals with the district West of the Caledonian Canal and South of the Dingwall-Kyle of Loch Alsh Railway.

Northern Highlands.
Revised Edition. Cloth Covers. **7s. 6d.** Post, 6d.

***Central Highlands.** Cloth Covers.
Dealing with the district bounded on the South by the L.M.S. Railway from Oban to Dalmally, and the Moor of Rannoch; on the West by the Caledonian Canal; and on the East by the River Spey and Highland Railway to Ballinluig.

***The Islands.** Cloth Covers. **6s. 6d.** Post, 6d.
Dealing with Arran, Mull, Rum, Hebrides, etc., but excluding Skye.

***Map of the Cuillin Hills.** **3s.** Post 2d.
Mounted on Cloth.
Reproduced for the Scottish Mountaineering Club from the 6-inch Ordnance Survey Map of Scotland with the sanction of H.M. Stationery Office.

Ben Nevis Panorama. **2s.** Post, 2d.

Guide to Cobbler Climbs.
Stout Paper Covers. **1s. 3d.** Post, 6d.

★ *Temporarily out of print.*

All the above publications are profusely illustrated, and those in print may be had from :

Messrs DOUGLAS & FOULIS, 9 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2
Messrs WM. PORTEOUS & CO., 9 Royal Exchange Place, Glasgow

OR ANY BOOKSELLER

BACK NUMBERS
of the
S.M.C. JOURNAL

Are still obtainable

Price, 2s. 8d., post free

★ ★ ★

INDEXES—Price 2s. 8d., post free
Vols. 1 to 10; 11 to 20

Obtainable from the Assistant Editor,
113 COMISTON DRIVE, EDINBURGH, 10

or from

Messrs DOUGLAS & FOULIS,
Booksellers and Librarians
9 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2